

Columbus State University

Student Government Association By-Laws

Nothing that follows should or is intended to replace or supersede the Columbus State University, Student Government Association Constitution. In the event of a conflict, the Judicial Council will review and render a decision, as is provided for by the Constitution. Upon their findings, it is expected that the President should appoint a subcommittee to edit these by-laws and submit those edits to the Forum for their approval.

I. Forum - Rules of Order¹

Section 1: Introduction

These meeting rules shall govern the conduct of business in regular and special meetings of the Student Government Association (SGA) of Columbus State University. The Chair of the meetings shall be the President SGA or Vice President in the absence of the President. The Speaker of the Senate shall act as the Parliamentarian, keeping time and informing the Chair of any point “out of order”. The Secretary shall keep a record by way of minutes which will include: 1) agenda, 2) attendance, 3) announcements, 4) reports from: officers, committees, and groups 5) motion outcomes – Senator who brought the motion, the second, defeated or passed, vote tally, 6) tabled items, and 7) other business.

Section 2: Order of Business

The following order of business shall be followed in all regular meetings. The order of business for special meetings will be the same as for regular meetings except that there will be no committee reports, old business, or proposals from the floor.

A. Call to Order

Promptly at the scheduled time, the Chair will ascertain whether a quorum of Senators is present by a roll call. A quorum consists of 51% or more voting members, including the Chair. If a quorum is not present, the Chair will announce that no business may be conducted and adjourn the meeting. If a quorum is present, the Chair will call the meeting to order.

B. Announcements

The first order of business will be announcements. The Chair will call for announcements and may recognize any person present for the purpose of making an announcement. During announcements there can be no motions or discussion. However, specific questions may be asked and answered in order to clarify the announcement.

¹ Adopted from: Meeting Rules of the Rice University Faculty Senate, Retrieved September 28, 2006 from:

C. Report of Officers and Standing Committees

The second order of business will be reports, if any, from officers or standing committees. These reports need not be written and are intended to inform the membership of the relevant activities of these individuals. The Chair's report should indicate when and how often the Executive Committee has met since the last meeting and provide a succinct summary of the work the committee has done. The Chairman of all Standing Committee's report should indicate when and how often the Standing Committee has met since the last meeting and provide a succinct summary of the work the committee has done. During these reports there can be no motions or discussion. However, specific questions may be asked and answered in order to clarify the report.

D. Working Group Reports

The next order of business will be reports, if any, from working groups. Working group reports need not be written and are intended to inform the membership of what work the working groups are doing or are planning to do. Working group chairpersons or their designated representatives should indicate when and how often the working group has met since the last meeting, succinctly state any proposed motions that have been delegated to the working group and what work the working group has done or intends to do to investigate them. The report should also indicate any other work the working group is planning on undertaking. The Chair should periodically call on each active working group to report to SGA. During working group reports there can be no motions or discussion. However, specific questions may be asked and answered in order to clarify the report.

E. Unfinished Business

Unfinished business consists of any motion that has been previously considered but was tabled for consideration at the current meeting or that was on the agenda of the previous regularly scheduled meeting, but was not disposed of before adjournment.

F. New Business

Items of new business may either appear on the SGA Agenda or be proposed from the floor.

a. **Proposals from the Floor:** The Chair will call for proposals from the floor (the student body at large opportunity to address SGA) before considering any other new business. Such proposals will only be in order if they are in accordance with Section 4. Proposals from the floor may not be made at any other time during the SGA meeting.

b. **SGA Agenda Items:** Items of new business that appear on the SGA Agenda will

be considered in the order in which they appear on the agenda. The Chair may alter this order as necessary for the efficient conduct of business.

G. Adjournment

The meeting will be adjourned under the rules for adjournment described below.

Section 3: The Student Government Agenda

- A. The term “SGA Agenda” is defined as the agenda of all future regular SGA meetings taken together.
- B. In accordance with the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Columbus State University, the Executive Committee, acting upon proposals by Senators, the student body at large, and its own initiative, will set the SGA Agenda.
- C. Any Senator may submit to the Chair a proposal to include an item of business on the SGA Agenda. Any student at large, with the supporting signature of at least one Senator, may submit to the Chair a proposal to be included as an item of business on the SGA Agenda.
- D. A proposal to include an item of business on the SGA Agenda should contain only one item of business and this item must be in the form of either a general discussion or a main motion. If a proposal is not received in the proper form, but can be put into the proper form without changing the intent of the proposal, the Executive Committee may do so. If this is not possible, the proposal will be returned to the individual who submitted it without further action.
- E. A proposal to include an item on the SGA Agenda must be submitted either in writing or by email to the Chair. Upon receipt, the Chair will put the proposal on the agenda SGA meeting.
- F. Once a proposed item of business is added to the SGA Agenda, the Chair may assign it to a working group for investigation, but this is not required.

Section 4: Proposals from the Floor

- A. A proposal from the floor is a formal request for the SGA to consider an item of business. No such proposal is in order unless (1) it has met the requirements as general discussion or presented as a motion.
- B. Once a proposal from the floor has been made, a Senator must second it or it may not be considered further. If it is seconded, the issue of whether the item of business should be considered may be debated. If a majority of the voting Senators present approves the proposal for additional discussion, the Chair may begin discussion or assign the proposal to a working group for investigation, then bring their findings back to a future SGA meeting in the form of general discussion or a motion.

Section 5: General Discussion

- A. The SGA Agenda may include or the Chair may at anytime call for general discussion of any topic. In addition, a Senator may make a proposal from the floor calling for general discussion of any topic.
- B. Under no circumstances will a call for general discussion be in order unless it includes (1) a topic of discussion and (2) a maximum time limit for discussion. (maximum 7 minutes with no one Senator exceeding 1 minute. Other Senators may yield their time to another).
- C. Once general discussion has begun, the Speaker of the Senate will keep the time and, when the specified time has elapsed, will announce to the SGA that the time for discussion of the topic has expired. Once this announcement is made, the discussion must stop unless the Chair extends the time limit for a specified period.
- D. No motions may be made during general discussion.

Section 6: Motions

The business of the SGA other than announcements, reports, and general discussion will be conducted by acting on the several types of motions described below.

- A. A motion is a proposal for the SGA to take specific action on some subject. No motion can be made when another motion is pending. If a motion is in order and is seconded by a Senator, it must be debated. No other business may be raised until it is amended, tabled, passed or defeated.
- B. Debate on a motion will continue until it has been tabled or amended, or a motion to end debate has been passed. At that time, the Chair will read the motion and call for a vote on the motion. If a majority of the voting Senators present vote in the affirmative the motion is passed; otherwise, it is defeated.
 - a. Any Senator when recognized during debate of a motion may offer an amendment to the motion. The amendment will be in order if it (1) proposes specific changes in the language of the motion; (2) is, in the judgment of the Chair, germane to the motion; and (3) is seconded by one other Senator.
 - b. An amendment that is in order must be debated until a motion to end debate has been passed. At that time, the Chair will call for a vote on the amendment. If a majority of the Senators present vote in the affirmative, the motion is defeated and the amended version is in order for debate as the motion.
 - c. Amendments may not be tabled. If the SGA adjourns before voting on an amendment, the amendment fails.
 - d. The Chair may vote on motions and amendments only in the event of a tie.

- e. Any motion that is passed shall be called a “Resolution of the Student Government Association”, given a unique resolution number, be included verbatim in the minutes, and be published on the SGA Website.

C. Motion to Table

Any Senator when recognized during debate of a motion may offer a motion to table the motion. The motion to table will be in order if one other Senator seconds it. The motion to table may be debated until a motion to end debate has been passed. At that time the Chair will call for a vote to table the motion. If a majority of the Senators present vote in the affirmative, all action on the motion stops and it is put on the agenda of the next regular SGA meeting under unfinished business.

D. Motion to End Debate

A motion to end debate is in order at any time during debate of a motion, an amendment to a motion, or a proposal from the floor.

- a. A motion to end debate must be seconded and may not itself be debated, tabled, or amended. Any Senator who has been recognized by the Chair may make a motion to end debate. Once such a motion has been seconded, the Chair will read the motion, amendment, or proposal under consideration and ask if there is any objection to voting on it. If there is no objection, the motion to end debate passes. If there is an objection, the Chair will immediately call for a vote on whether to vote on the motion, amendment, or proposal under consideration. If a majority of the voting Senators present vote in the affirmative, the motion to end debate is passed; otherwise, it is defeated.
- b. If a motion to end debate passes, the Chair will immediately call for a vote on the motion, amendment, or proposal to which it applied.

E. Motion for Adjournment

A motion for adjournment will be in order as described in Section 8 below.

Section 7: Requests of the Chair by Senators

Any Senator that is recognized may ask the Chair to initiate a general discussion or to entertain a motion at any time when these actions would be in order, to end debate on a motion, to create or dissolve a working group, or to consider whether a quorum is present. The Chair must grant the request, deny it, or declare it out of order.

Section 8: Adjournment

A. The SGA may be adjourned either by the Chair or by a motion for adjournment as specified below. The Chair may adjourn the SGA meeting at any time after the published agenda of the meeting has been completed or when the published ending time of the meeting has passed or when he or she has determined that there is no longer a quorum of Senators present.

a. Senators may not make a motion for adjournment before the scheduled ending time for the SGA meeting. Once the scheduled ending time of the meeting has expired, the Speaker of the Senate will announce this fact to the SGA and any Senator may make a motion to adjourn at any time thereafter. The motion requires a second and, if seconded, must be considered immediately. With no objection, the motion is voted on immediately with no debate. If there is an objection, the motion may be debated for no more than two minutes with no possibility of extension. If a majority of the voting Senators present vote to adjourn, the SGA is adjourned.

b. If the meeting is adjourned before the published agenda is completed, the remaining agenda items will be added to unfinished business of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the SGA.

II. Executive Committee - Regular Tasks

Section 1: Year Round

- A. SGA Calendar maintenance: keep the SGA website calendar up to date.
- B. University Policy Changes: Keep all organizations up to date on new University policies that affect them and advocate on their behalf.
- C. Maintain binders: Each officer should maintain a binder with regard to the functions and activities of their office. This binder is open to any SGA member upon request and reasonable notice.

Section 2: Fall Semester

- A. Review the SGA Constitution for duties and responsibilities.
- B. Update Contact Sheets and SGA website with all organizations and their voting representative OOC website/mail list: Refresh the members list after elections
- C. Training: Inform new members of the SGA of relevant processes.

Section 3: Spring Semester

- A. Review the SGA Constitution for duties and responsibilities.
- B. Review RSO's SGA membership criteria and representatives at the first Forum.
- C. Request a list of new RSO officers and representatives at the last Spring Forum.
- D. Administer and officiate SGA elections.
- E. Conduct an in-service training for the newly elected officers at which time they will present them with their binders.

III. Election Rules

Section 1: Definitions

- A. A campaign shall be defined as any person acting on a candidate's behalf.
- B. Campaigning shall be defined as any act used by the candidate, or his/her campaign, for the purpose of advancing said candidacy.
- C. Campaign materials shall be defined as materials purchased and/or used by the candidate or

his/her campaign, for the purpose of advancing said candidacy.

D. A constituency is the pool of eligible voters for each respective office.

E. The Elections Commission shall be composed of all non-candidate members of the Executive Committee, along with the Chief Justice.

Section 2: Qualifications

A. Nothing that follows should replace or supersede the qualifications set forth per the SGA Constitution.

B. No person shall be a candidate for more than one office simultaneously. C. Candidates must submit an application to the Election Commission by the designated deadline to be eligible to run.

C. Candidates should attend an Information Session hosted by the Dean of Students and the current SGA President.

Section 3: Campaigning

A. Candidates shall not use University funds or resources for campaign purposes.

B. Candidates shall not provide gifts or giveaways to constituents while campaigning.

C. Candidates shall not tamper with or electronically manipulate the voting process.

D. Candidates or person(s) defined in Section 1.A. of the Election Rules, cannot be within 10 feet of any student while they are in the process of voting.

E. Campaign materials must be removed no later than 48 hours after the election results are posted on the SGA website.

F. Candidates must follow all campus posting policies.

G. Campaigning through mass e-mails is expressly prohibited. This includes the use of group aliases or mailing lists, including those belonging to dorms, houses, classes, and clubs. H. Candidates should be aware that “smear campaigns” will not be tolerated and may be subject to judicial sanctions.

Section 4: Other

- A. Elections must last for at least twenty-four hours.
- B. The Elections Commission may choose to publicly warn and/or disqualify a candidate who violates the Election Rules and/or they may cancel and reschedule an election in which a candidate has committed a violation.
- C. All candidates have a right to a hearing in the event that they are accused of violating an election rule. Any such hearing will be conducted by the SGA Judicial Council. The Dean of Students will observe the hearing and consult the Judicial Council, as needed. The decision of the Judicial Council is final.

IV. Fund Management and Requests

Section 1: Introduction

The Student Government Association encourages all organizations to be active in campus life through programs and events. Therefore, SGA provides monetary assistance to organizations hosting events that cater to the student body; not to fund them entirely. Student organizations that have been officially registered with the Student Government are eligible to receive funding. An organization must be in good standing with the University and SGA in order to make a request.

Evidence of fundraising activities will be a consideration in the approval of requests. An outside source of funding shows that the organization is committed to the activity. These other sources could include funding through a department related to the organization, fundraisers, collection of fees/dues from each member attending, or partnerships with other organizations.

The Vice President of Finance should ensure that the SGA website is current, within 10 working days, of all allocation approvals and expenditures.

Section 2: Allocation of Funds

- A. The Executive Committee has the authority to expend SGA funds to maintain the necessary clerical, administrative, and travel duties, as needed. These expenditures must be posted as described above.
- B. The Vice President of Finance has the authority to approve funding requests up to \$250.00.
 - a. The Vice President of Finance may require a project description and rationale, line item budget, and advertising flyer (as appropriate) before rendering a decision.
 - b. In the event an organization makes a second request within a semester of \$250.00

- or less, the Vice President must present the request to the Forum explaining that this is the organization's second such request during the current semester.
- C. The Executive Committee has the authority to approve funding requests between \$250.00 and \$500.00 by a simple majority during the Executive Conference.
- a. The Executive Committee may require a project description and rationale, line item budget, and advertising flyer (as appropriate) before rendering a decision.
 - b. In the event an organization makes a second request within a semester between \$250.00 and \$500.00, the Vice President of Finance must present the request to the Forum explaining that this is the organization's second such request during the current semester.
- D. The Forum has the authority to approve funding requests of \$500.00 or greater by a simple majority.
- a. The requesting organization must follow the rules set forth in *Section 3: The Student Government Agenda* and present their request during the call for *New Business*.
 - b. Organizations should be prepared to present a project description and rationale, line item budget, and advertising flyer (as appropriate) when presenting to the Forum.
- E. The organization must complete all appropriate forms and requirements by the Office of Student Affairs and/or the Business Office. It is the requesting organization's responsibility to meet with the Office of Student Affairs to complete this work.

Section 3: Appeals

- A. The President shall appoint 1 Senator and 4 Representatives to serve as the Finance Committee, with the Speaker of the Representatives serving as chair.
- B. Appeals of the decision of the Vice President of Finance or the Executive Committee must be made in writing to the Finance Committee.
- a. The Finance Committee must post their written decision on the SGA web site within five working days of the appeal's submission.
 - b. The Finance Committee's decision is final.
- C. Registered Student Organizations that are suspended during the Academic Term and want to be reinstated into the Student Government Association need:
- a. An approved Appeal (with signatures)
 - b. Attend 2 Consecutive Forums
 - c. A hearing with an approved appeal
 - d. The blueprints of a planned event and/or meeting that should consist of:
 - i. An eQuest (if applicable)
 - ii. If funding is needed, you must submit your funding request following approval to rejoin SGA to the Speaker of the Representatives
 - iii. A detailed itinerary of said event or meeting

- iv. Date and time
- v. Location

D. In the event that this is approved, said RSO would have to execute this event to maintain their previous good standing. This will be verified by either Speaker of the Representatives or Chief Justice and/or in other cases, any other executive board member who sees fit.

E. The probationary period will last no longer than one week. Failure to follow these procedures will invalidate your appeal regardless of approval.