

# SMU STUDENT SENATE BY-LAWS

*Amended April 2nd, 2024*

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## ARTICLE I.

## MEETINGS

### Section 1. Quorum

One-half plus one of the current voting members of the Student Senate shall constitute a quorum.

### Section 2. Chamber Meetings

1. The Student Senate shall meet regularly every Tuesday at 3:30 P.M., beginning the second week school is in session in the fall through the first Tuesday in December. The Student Senate will resume the second week school is in session in the spring through the last Tuesday in April. The Student Senate will not meet during scheduled breaks or University holidays.
2. Meetings of the Student Senate may be cancelled only with a properly made and seconded motion that passes with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote.
3. The Senate meeting shall adjourn no later than 5:30 P.M.-
  - a. The Secretary of the Student Senate shall, in conjunction with the Senate Advisor, monitor and approve exemptions for any Senate Member to leave at 4:50 who has a class starting at 5:00 PM. Further, exemptions should be considered a last resort option by any Senator seeking exemption for class attendance. Any Student Senate Member must show the need to take a specific class at 5:00 PM that corresponds to their degree program through either an academic advisor and or any other system the Student Body Secretary wishes to use to verify enrollment and need.
  - b. Any approval for regular early dismissal from the Student Body Secretary shall only be granted for attendance in class, and any other need to leave early shall follow the set standards in the Student Senate By-Laws.
  - c. To avoid disruption, dismissal from Senate shall only take place at 4:50 PM and the Student Body Secretary shall note any Members leaving early in the attendance tracker.
  - d. The Senate Speaker is recommended to adopt an agenda that maximizes participation during new and old business. In practice, The Speaker is hereby recommended to craft the agenda to see votes before the 4:50 dismissal and place any voteless discussion (i.e., Speaker's Podium, Reports, and Senatorial Discussion) after new and old business. The Speaker shall be required to send out the agenda at least 24 hours in advance of the start of chamber to allow Senators adequate time for review in the case that they have to leave at 4:50 for class.

4. The Student Senate operates under the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* regarding parliamentary procedure.

### Section 3. Responsibilities of Student Senate Members

1. Responsibilities of Student Senators shall be as follows:

- a. Senators are required to attend all Student Senate chamber meetings, all required retreats, and required committee meetings.
- b. Senators are required to engage with their community which can be fulfilled by attending 2 hours of senate-sponsored events ie. tabling, HOR or a senate-funded event in which you are acting in your capacity as a senator each quarter of the school year (2 times per semester). Failure to fulfill this requirement will result in an absence which will be recorded by the Student Body Secretary quarterly.
- c. Senators are required to meet with their respective deans if they are representing one of the six colleges on campus. Each Senator is required to host an event that represents their constituents ie. Cox Senators tabling in the Cox building, Hispanic Senator organizing or assisting in the facilitation of an event with their community, etc.

2. Responsibilities of Student Senate Committee Chairs are as follows:

- a. Chairs are required to attend all Student Senate chamber meetings, required retreats, and required committee meetings.
- b. Chairs are members of the Cabinet of the Student Body President and as such are required to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee designated by the Student Body President as Cabinet Meetings. The Cabinet will meet twice during the semester and attendance is mandatory.
- c. Chairs are responsible for fulfilling their respective committee's objectives, as outlined in the Student Senate By-Laws, and the respective committee's by-laws.
- d. Chairs should update the Chief of Staff on their committee progress monthly in a detailed report via email, slack, or in person.
  - a. Chairs are encouraged to meet with the Chief of Staff to discuss concerns and issues regarding their position
- e. Chairs are required to take attendance of all Student Senators and General Members at their respective committee meetings. They must submit these records the Student Body Secretary by a 11:59 PM Sunday prior to chamber.

- f. Chairs have the power to oversee governance of their respective committee through the power to appoint within the membership of their committee a vice chair(s).
3. Responsibilities of Student Senate Vice Chairs are as follows:
  - a. Vice Chairs are required to attend all respective committee meetings
  - b. Vice Chairs are required to assist their committee chairs in discharging the duties of their respective committees as defined by the Student Senate By-Laws and that committee's by-laws.
4. Responsibilities of the Student Body Officers are as follows:
  - a. Student Body Officers are required to attend all Student Senate chamber meetings, all required retreats, and required committee meetings.
  - b. Student Body Officers serve as members of the Executive Committee and Cabinet
  - c. Student Body Officers will fulfill all duties outlined in the governing documents.
5. Responsibilities of the Student Senate Officers are as follows:
  - a. Student Body Officers are required to attend all Student Senate chamber meetings, all required retreats, and required committee meeting.
  - b. Student Body Officers serve as members of the Executive Committee and Cabinet
  - c. Student Body Officers will fulfill all duties outlined in the governing documents.

#### Section 4. Absences

1. Senators, Chairs, Student Senate Officers, and Student Body Officers shall be counted absent upon missing the roll call by the Student Body Secretary during regular Senate meetings.
2. Senators, Chairs, Student Senate Officers, and Student Body Officers shall be counted tardy upon arriving 10 minutes past the start of chamber and misses the roll call by the Student Body Secretary during regular Senate meetings.
3. Senators, Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Student Senate Officers shall be counted absent upon missing more than half of a scheduled meeting of their designated committee. Committee absences shall count as a tardy and may be excused by the Committee Chair.
4. A Senator shall have penalized one tardy for every absence from a mandatory function of the Student Senate.
5. For every two tardies, the member will receive an absence.

6. If a member receives two unexcused absences in one semester, upon receiving an additional unexcused absence or tardy in that same semester, the member shall forfeit membership in the Senate, all its committees, and elected or appointed advisory boards.
7. A request to excuse an absence for chamber must be submitted on to the Student Body Secretary via Slack prior to the beginning of the meeting for which the absence will occur.
- ~~8.~~ Absences can be approved at the discretion of the Student Body Secretary.
9. Attendance by proxy is prohibited.
10. A request to excuse an absence for a committee meeting must be submitted to the Committee Chair or Vice Chair prior to the beginning of the meeting for which the absence will occur.
11. Any member of the Senate who forfeits membership due to absences, impeachment, or recall, may not run for or be a member of any function of the Student Senate for the upcoming school year plus any part of the remaining current school year. This includes any elections as well as participating as a committee member of any committee. Committee members of any Student Senate Committee that forfeit membership also fall under this rule.
12. Members of the Student Senate that resign under their own will shall be allowed to regain membership. All resigning members must submit a resignation form. The Executive Committee must accept the tender of resignation before it takes effect.

#### Section 5. Voting

Voting by proxy and absentee voting shall not be allowed. Methods of voting are outlined in the Student Senate Policies and Procedures.

#### Section 6. Open Meetings

All regularly scheduled meetings or special sessions of the Student Senate will be always open to all students at Southern Methodist University, with the following exceptions:

1. If the Senate needs to take disciplinary measures against one of its members,  
or
2. To plan or consider an official investigation or matter relating to crime prevention or law enforcement, or
3. To avoid the premature disclosure of an honorary award, degree, prize, scholarship, or any other such honor.
4. Attendance at a meeting is a privilege, not a right; and disruptive guests may be removed by the Parliamentarian, at the discretion of the Speaker.

5. Disruptive members of the Student Senate may be removed only by a majority vote of the body and will be permitted to return for any votes that are taken on any measure.
6. Recording (audio or visual) during a chamber or committee meeting without the consent of the governing body by  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote taken before such recording has taken place may result in the removal of a senator or visitor from the chamber or committee meeting. A member of the Communications Committee will be permitted to record for Senate purposes during each chamber or committee meeting.

## ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1. Verification

1. The Student Senate Advisor is responsible for verifying the compliance with the requirements for office as outlined in Article IV, Section 4 of the Student Body Constitution and reporting students for failing to meet those requirements to the Student Senate Membership Chair for further action. This verification by the Senate advisor will occur once before each semester to ensure compliance with the guidelines.
2. The Student Senate Membership Chair shall verify enrollment through the University Registrar's Office prior to each election to determine the proper number of representatives to the Student Senate from each respective school
  - a. No elected Senator may be removed from Senate if that school's enrollment decreases during their term of office.
  - b. The Senate Membership Committee shall interview candidates for any vacant or additional seats and make recommendations to the Student Body President, except when those vacancies or additional seats are in or allocated to the delegations from the Law School or the School of Theology whose own governing councils shall have the power and ability to elect, appoint, or otherwise fill those vacancies. The committee shall be comprised of Senators via the guidelines set in the Election Code.
  - c. The Student Body President, after receiving recommendations from the Membership Committee, will appoint, subject to confirmation by a majority of the voting members of the Senate, any additional Senators or Chairs.



## Section 2. Special Interest Senators

The following Senators will be elected according to the guidelines in Article II, Section 3, of the Constitution:

- a. Asian Pacific Islander Senator;
- b. African-American Senator;
- c. Hispanic Senator;
- d. International Senator;
- e. Athlete Senator;
- f. Queer Senator;
- g. MILVET Senator;
- h. Transfer Senator;
- i. First Generation Senator

## Section 3. Committee Assignments

1. Each Senator must be a member of at least one Student Senate committee or be designated as a Project Senator.
2. The Chief of Staff shall coordinate with the Chairs and assign Senators to the committees upon which they will serve.
3. Returning Senators may request and shall be granted placement on the committee they served on during their previous term.
4. Senators may fulfill their committee requirement through membership on an Ad-Hoc Committee only if the legislation creating or activating that committee explicitly notes that members shall not have to serve on standing committees.

# ARTICLE III. STUDENT SENATE OFFICERS

## Section 1. The Speaker of the Senate

1. Upon election of the Speaker, the Speaker's former Senator seat shall be filled according to the following procedure.
  - a. The next elected member from the same academic or special-interest seat containing at least 20 votes shall be appointed to fill the vacancy.
  - b. If the above requirement is not met, then an application process conducted by either the membership committee or the governing council of the Law School or the School of Theology, as appropriate, shall fill the vacancy.
2. The Speaker of the Senate shall preside over all meetings of the Student Senate, voting only in case of a tie.
3. The Speaker shall be well versed in parliamentary procedure and the governing documents of the Student Senate.

4. The Speaker shall also be empowered to create deadlines for the submissions of legislation, officer reports, and committee reports.
5. If both the Speaker and the Parliamentarian are not present at a meeting of the Student Senate the Senators will elect a Senator to serve as acting Speaker for the duration of the meeting in question or until either the Speaker or the Parliamentarian arrives at the Senate meeting and assumes their responsibilities as presiding officer.

## Section 2. The Chief of Staff

1. Upon the election of the Chief of Staff, the Chief of Staff's former Senator seat shall be filled according to the following procedure:
  - a. The next elected member from the same academic or special-interest seat containing at least 20 votes shall be appointed to fill the vacancy.
  - b. If the above requirement is not met, then an application process conducted by either the membership committee or the governing council of the Law School or the School of Theology, as appropriate, shall fill the vacancy.
2. The Chief of Staff shall help to coordinate the interaction between committee chairs.
3. The Chief of Staff shall meet with and assist the committee chairs as needed.
4. The Chief of Staff will assist in training incoming committee chairs if the outgoing chair is unable to assist in the training of chairs.
5. The Chief of Staff shall serve on and be the representative and advocate for committee chairs to the Executive Committee.

## Section 3. Parliamentarian

1. Upon the election of the Parliamentarian, the Parliamentarian's former senator seat shall be filled according to the following procedure:
  - a. The next elected member from the same academic or special-interest seat containing at least 20 votes shall be appointed to fill the vacancy.
  - b. If the above requirement is not met, then an application process conducted by either the membership committee or the governing council of the Law School or the School of Theology, as appropriate, shall fill the vacancy.
2. The Parliamentarian will serve as a non-voting member who provides expertise to the chamber on procedures and the governing documents. They will serve as an impartial advisory source.
3. In the event of the Speaker of the Senate's absence; the Parliamentarian shall preside over a meeting.

4. The Parliamentarian shall also assist the Vice President of the Student Body and the Membership Committee in the training of appointed Senators and Chairs.
5. The Parliamentarian shall also serve as the sergeant-at-arms for the Student Senate.
6. The Parliamentarian shall also serve as the authority in interpreting the governing documents of the Student Senate and Student Body, subject to the constitutional appeal procedures provided in this document and the Southern Methodist University Student Body Constitution.
7. If the Parliamentarian is not present at a meeting of the Student Senate the Speaker shall settle all questions or disputes that would ordinarily be settled by the Parliamentarian for the duration of the meeting in question or until the Parliamentarian arrives at the Senate meeting and takes over the responsibilities of the Parliamentarian's office.

#### Section 4. Selection Procedures

1. Candidates for Student Senate Officers shall be nominated on the first official Student Senate meeting after Inauguration.
  - a. After nominations are closed, each candidate shall have a one-minute candidacy speech.
  - b. A secret ballot vote shall be cast by the Student Senators
2. Any Student Senator who is elected a Student Senate Officer and is sworn into their new office before the vote for any other Student Senate Officer position has occurred shall also be entitled to vote in any such Student Senate Officer election as if they were still a Student Senator.
3. In case of a tie among the top vote getters, the Vice President of the Student Body shall vote.

## ARTICLE IV. STUDENT SENATE AIDES

### Section 1. Legislative Clerks

1. The Legislative Clerk is appointed by the Parliamentarian during the second chamber of each term. One Legislative Clerk serves on each topic committee. They must be a Student Senator.
2. The Legislative Clerk will retain their Senate seat.
3. The Legislative Clerk will serve underneath the Speaker and Parliamentarian, and the Parliamentarian can replace the Legislative Clerk at the Parliamentarian's discretion.
4. The Legislative Clerk will fulfill this role for the entire legislative term, unless replaced by the Parliamentarian.

5. In the case of vacancy or removal, the Speaker will select a new Legislative Clerk.
6. Reads over all submitted legislation/proclamations to ensure formatting and grammar is correct prior to the first chamber it is heard.
7. They are responsible for leading a Speaker's Podium within the first couple chambers each semester detailing how to write legislation and proclamations.
8. They are responsible for creating/maintaining a spreadsheet of administrative contacts to help connect senators to the correct administration whenever a point of contact is needed.
9. They will proactively serve as the point of contact for senators who request assistance writing legislation or proclamations.

## Section 2. Directors

1. The Student Senate Directors are appointed by the Student Body President during the second chamber of each term following the selection of topical committees. The appointment must be confirmed by Senate with a majority vote.
2. The Director can be a Senator or from Student Body.
3. If applicable, the Director will retain their Senate seat.
4. The Director will fulfill this role for the entire legislative term, unless replaced by the President.
5. In the case of vacancy or removal, the President will select a new Director and the same conformation process will be followed.
6. They are tasked with overseeing initiatives and projects on a specific topic.
7. They have the responsibility of being the point of contact to administration on that topic.
8. The selection of topics that require a Director must be approved by Senate with a majority vote. Topics that require a Director are not covered by standing or topical committees.
9. Senators may propose additional Director positions after the second chamber of each term by petition to the Student Body President. Additional Director positions must be confirmed by Senate with a majority vote.
10. Two topics will require Directors each year without exception: the Director of Sexual Assault Prevention (DSAP) and the Director of Disability Advocacy (DDA).
  - a. The Director of Sexual Assault Prevention will follow the guidelines set out for the position in S-108-09.
  - b. The Director of Disability Accommodations will be recommended to serve on the President's Commission on the Needs of Persons with

Disabilities (PCNPD) and advocate for the needs of disabled students on campus. If the DDA is a senator, they will be granted a seat on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion topical committee. If the DDA is a general member of senate, they will be granted a general member seat on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion topical committee and will have rights to co-sign on pertinent legislation.

- c. The Director of Sustainability will be in charge of helping lead initiatives for sustainability across campus to help reduce SMU's carbon footprint. They should promote and advocate for organizations on campus promoting sustainability to the student body and chamber.
- d. The Director of the House of Representatives (HOR) is responsible for organizing multiple HOR meetings throughout the semester to ensure organizations are aware of new changes across campus and update the leaders on the progress of the Senate. They should promote the events via Slack, email, and other social media platforms to ensure good attendance. They should assign someone on their committee to record senator attendance.
- e. The Director of Civic Engagement oversees voter-friendly events and initiatives throughout the year. During an election year, they should coordinate voter registration events, and other events to ensure the SMU Student Body is civically engaged. They should promote other organizations on campus with similar ideals and initiatives to the student body and chamber.

## ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES

### Section 1. Committee By-Laws

Committees (not including topic or ad hoc committees) shall generate and maintain a set of By-Laws which shall be reviewed by their respective committees at the end of each year. Chairs can recommend changed to the By-Laws in a report to the Student Senate as they deem necessary. All voting members of the Student Senate have the power to amend the By-Laws by a two-thirds vote. The By-Laws of each committee shall be enforced by their respective Chair.

### Section 2. Standing Committees

#### 1. The Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee shall serve as the planning and decision-making body of the Student Senate. It shall review prior to presentation

to the Senate all appointments of the Student Body President and dismissals of Student Senators and Senate committee members. It shall be the primary body to hear and decide on member absences from Senate meetings as well as removal of Senators due to excessive absences.

2. The members of the Executive Committee shall be the Student Body Officers and the Student Senate Officers, as well as the Student Senate Advisor(s), who shall serve as (an) ex-officio, non-voting member(s). The Student Body President shall preside over meetings, voting only in case of a tie. If the President is absent, the Vice President of the Student Body shall preside.
3. Meetings of the cabinet will consist of the above members of the Executive Committee and will for means of convenience be held as if they were meeting of the executive committee but under no circumstances will any person not serving as a Student Body Officer, Student Senate Officer, or as the Student Senate Advisor(s) be considered a member or the Executive Committee or allowed to vote on Executive Committee business.

## 2. The Communications Committee

1. The Communications Committee shall provide channels of communication for the Senate and its committees as well as promote a greater awareness of the Student Senate to the student body. Senate committees shall request advertising via the online Internal Request Form and the Communications Committee shall be responsible for all needed design, printing, and distribution of the advertisement as well as any associated costs. The Communications Committee will be comprised of one Meadows Senator and other individuals. The committee chair may use their own discretion concerning the creation of a Webmaster position in the committee. The committee chair will also be responsible for all advertising related to the Student Senate as well as all requests for advertising space from all chartered organizations. The Communications Committee will be responsible for posting relevant and timely content to the Student Senate's social media accounts.
2. All use of the Student Senate logo for advertising purposes must be reviewed by the Communications Committee. This includes all advertising materials used by chartered organizations to promote Student Senate-funded events. Following the recommendation by the Finance Committee to approve funding and before any advertising for the event commences, the group receiving funding must submit any advertising

materials to the Communications Committee. This submission process will be set up by the Communications Committee. The Communications Committee will confirm that advertisements adhere to the Student Body Constitution, the Student Senate By-Laws, the Student Code of Conduct, and the SMU Values Statement, and thus meet the standards of use for the Student Senate logo. If the Communications Committee denies an advertisement for distribution, a reason must be given to the organization requesting permission. If the organization members disagree with the decision of the Communications Committee, the organization may appeal this decision to the full Student Senate who shall make a final decision with a majority vote. If the group requesting funding fails to submit the advertising to the Communications Committee prior to publicly advertising the event, the Finance Committee shall recommend to the Senate to reduce the funding to that organization for the event if they find the violation to be severe. Any funding reductions shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the Student Senate before they can be enacted.

### 3. The Finance Committee

1. The Finance Committee shall review all requests for funding from either the Senate Fund or the Chartered Organizations' Fund and make recommendations to the Student Senate. The committee is also responsible for reviewing Fully Chartered Organization's requests for semester budgets and then making recommendations to the Student Senate. The Finance Committee shall make recommendations on the allocation of the funds designated for the semester budgets process and for appropriating money from the Chartered Organizations and Student Senate Funds. The committee shall oversee the expenditure of student activity fees by chartered organizations to ensure all appropriated spending is within its designated line item.
2. The Finance Committee is advised to be comprised of seven Student Senators and five general members. Total membership is advised to be twelve members. The Finance Chair shall appoint one Vice Chair and one Secretary.
  - a. The Vice Chair shall oversee tasks assigned by the Finance Chair to ensure efficient operations and weekly meetings
  - b. The Secretary shall take notes during all the meetings and store them in a location deemed accessible for future viewing.
3. The Finance Chair shall oversee the Finance Committee Outreach Initiative whereby all the committee members will be designated as

points of contact for groups of organizations with similar missions. These groups will be determined by the Finance Chair.

- a. The Finance Chair will have the responsibility of making sure the committee members meet with their respective organizations and advise them on how to better proceed through the Senate funding process.
4. The Finance Chair will be responsible for arranging annual meetings with the director of campus recreation to discuss sports club and intramural sports club budget requests.
5. The Student Body Treasurer may attend Finance weekly meetings or semester budget retreats at their discretion. They will stand as a non-voting member. The Treasurer may choose to attend meetings to help better inform themselves of where senate funds are going. If the finance chair position is vacated and there isn't a reasonable amount of time left in the spring semester for a nominee to learn and execute the chair's role in a satisfactory fashion; the Student Body Treasurer may be appointed by the Student Body President as the Interim Finance Chair for the remainder of that semester. Should the Student Body Treasurer be appointed as the Interim Finance Chair, they will not be eligible to receive the Finance Chair's stipend. The Student Body Treasurer when serving as the Interim Finance Chair will be required to select a member of the Finance Committee to train and educate on the Finance Chair role to ensure future expertise on the committee.

#### 4. The Organizations Committee

1. The Organizations Committee exists for the purpose of oversight, regulation, and support of student organizations.
2. The Organizations Committee shall oversee all student organization affairs. This includes facilitating and reviewing applications for temporary and permanent chartership, submitting recommendations to the Student Senate for the approval or denial of said charters, conducting and submitting to the Student Senate an annual comprehensive review of the status and condition of all Student Senate recognized student organizations, conducting investigations and submitting recommendations for revocation of charters to the Student Senate when necessary, and providing general support to organizations when necessary. In addition, the Organizations Committee shall be responsible for execution of the Mandatory Organizations Meetings (MOM) training in conjunction with the Division of Student Affairs.



3. The Student Senate is the authority on all matters relating to recognition and oversight of student organizations. The Organizations Committee has the following authority:
  - a. To recommend the Student Senate approve or deny (an) application(s) for temporary or full charter; to recommend the Student Senate suspend or revoke an organization's temporary or permanent charter.
    - i. Recommendations of the Committee to the full Student Senate will be decided based on a simple majority (half of voting members plus one) opinion and communicated by the Chair to the full Student Senate.
  - b. To suspend a student organization's temporary or permanent charter for no more than one month with a simple majority (half of voting members plus one) vote of the Organizations Committee.
  - c. To generate and implement a set of standard practices relating to committee operations and recommendations. This set of standards shall be generated and considered by the Chair and must be approved by a simple majority (half of voting members plus one) vote of the committee.

#### 5. The Investments Committee

1. The Investments Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the Student Senate Investment Fund, making investment decisions, and making recommendations to the full Student Senate. The Investments Committee shall make recommendations on the investment of existing funds in the Student Senate Bank Account.

### Section 3. Seasonal Committees

#### .1. The Membership Committee

1. The Membership Committee shall recommend appointments to the Student Senate. This committee shall also conduct all Student Body and Student Senate elections (except those for Law Senators and Perkins Senators). The committee shall keep a record, in concert with the Executive Committee, of candidate's ineligible to participate in all Student Body and Student Senate elections. The committee shall record the results of all validated and invalidated Student Body elections and polls to the Election Results File and Student Senate Public Information File. The committee shall revise an enforceable Student Senate Election Code when deemed necessary by the Chair.
2. The Membership Committee Chair shall, throughout the course of the year, work with the Student Body Vice-President and the Parliamentarian

in training newly appointed Senators, Chairs, Student Body Officers, and/or Student Senate Officers.

3. All members of the Membership Committee shall be Student Senators.

## 2. The Scholarship Committee

1. The Scholarship Committee shall accept applications from, interview, and make recommendations to the Senate on recipients for Student Senate Scholarships and shall screen applicants for other scholarships as necessary. The committee will also be charged with a development initiative in order to establish new scholarships to provide to the members of the Students' Association, and as such shall work intimately with Development & External Affairs.
2. The committee shall be comprised of a Chair who will lead the development initiative and the distribution of scholarships. In addition, the committee membership shall be no less than two Student Senators and three general members.
3. Any Senator serving on the Scholarship Committee will be ineligible to receive a scholarship granted by this committee.

## Section 4. Topic Committees

1. The Student Body Vice President will preside over the topic committees to ensure progress. Each committee is run by a Committee Head and is assisted by a Legislative Director.
2. During the first official chamber of each semester, the Vice President will lead an initiative to select three topics for the committees to tackle. One of the committees must be Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Other examples of topics are academic development, health, and student experience.
3. Every three weeks, in a rotating schedule, one committee will present their progress during chamber to the Student Senate.

## Section 5. Meetings

1. Committee Chairs shall meet with the Chief of Staff as the Chief of Staff deems necessary.
2. Topic Committees and Standing Committees shall meet weekly. Seasonal Committees shall meet at the discretion of the chair and Chief of Staff.
3. Open Meetings: All regularly scheduled meetings or special sessions of committees of the Student Senate will be always open, to all senators and officers of the Student Senate, space permitting, with the following exceptions:
  - a. If the Committee needs to take disciplinary measures against one of its members, or

- b. To plan or consider an official investigation or matter relating to crime prevention or law enforcement, or
- c. To avoid the premature disclosure of an honorary award, degree, prize, scholarship, etc., or
- d. During the Semester Budget Retreat or proceedings to allocate Student Senate scholarships, or
- e. During a final vote resolving a committee recommendation or complaint.
- f. Attendance at a meeting is a privilege, not a right; and disruptive guests may be removed by the committee chair.
- g. Complaints regarding possible violations of this section should be taken to the Student Senate Executive Committee, for appropriate disciplinary measures.
- h. Any member of the Student Senate may address any committee for any reason relevant to the performance of that committee's duties or concerning a topic of relevance to that committee for a reasonable amount of time. Irrelevant or disruptive uses of this right may result in the member's removal from the meeting or disciplinary action imposed by the Student Senate.

#### Section 6. Quorum

One-half plus one of the current voting members of a committee shall constitute a quorum, unless otherwise stated in the committee's By-Laws.

#### Section 7. Absences

1. At the beginning of each semester, the Committee Chairs shall meet with the Chief of Staff and will schedule the number of mandatory committee meetings which will be held and establish the absence policy the committee will use during the semester.
2. A member shall be recorded absent upon missing more than half of a mandatory meeting as calculated by the Committee Chair.
3. A request to an excuse an absence for a committee meeting must be submitted on Connect.smu.edu to the Student Body Secretary and Committee Chair prior to the beginning of the meeting for which the absence will occur.
4. The Committee Chair will decide whether to approve the absence request. Removal from a committee due to absences will result in the member's removal from the Student Senate. Only the most recent absence may be excused.
5. The Committee Chair shall be responsible for reporting committee member unexcused absences to the Student Body Secretary.

6. In the event a committee member is removed, the Chief of Staff will fill the vacancy on the committee in concert with the Committee's Chair.

#### Section 7. Voting

1. Unless otherwise stated in the committee's By-Laws, all committee members shall have full voting privileges, except the Chair, who shall vote only in the case of a tie.
2. Voting by proxy and absentee voting shall not be allowed.

#### Section 8. Budget

The Committee Chair will submit a budget prior to the announced deadline to the Finance Committee Chair. The Student Body Treasurer shall submit a comprehensive budget for all standing committees for presentation to the Finance Committee.

#### Section 9. Committee Chair Selection

1. Membership Chair:
  - a. Applications for Membership Chair will open at the beginning of the Spring term.
  - b. The Membership Chair must be appointed with ample time before the Spring election so they can propose revisions to the Election Code, form their committee, and plan for the election.
  - c. Applicants for the Membership Chair will be interviewed by a committee comprised of the outgoing chair, the Senate advisor, and members of the Executive Committee who are not seeking another term. If there are no members of the Executive Committee not seeking another term, the Executive Committee shall determine other members of the Student Senate not seeking another term who will assist the outgoing Membership Chair in interviews.
  - d. The individual that is selected to be Membership Chair will be required to meet with the Chair they are replacing once a week. If possible, they must attend all committee meetings of the committee they will be leading until they are inaugurated. If either of these requirements cannot be filled, either because of chair vacancy, negligence, or time conflicts, the Chief of Staff will meet weekly with the incoming Chair until inauguration.
2. Communication, Finance, Organization, Investment, and Scholarship Chairs:
  - a. Applications for chair positions will be opened within one week of the announcement of the results of the general spring election.
  - b. The interview, deliberation and decision-making process shall be conducted by the Student Body President – Elect, the Vice-President of the Student Body – Elect, the Treasurer – Elect, the Secretary – Elect, the outgoing Chief of Staff, the newly selected Membership Chair, the Senate

advisor, and the outgoing chair for the committee in question, unless the outgoing chair is applying to retain their position.

- c. Voting members will be the Student Body President – Elect, Vice President – Elect, Treasurer – Elect, the Secretary – Elect, the outgoing Chief of Staff, and the Membership Chair.
  - d. Individuals that are selected to be Chairs will be required to meet with the Chair they are replacing once a week. If possible, they must attend all committee meetings of the committee they will be leading until they are inaugurated. If either of these requirements cannot be filled, either because of chair vacancy, negligence, or time conflicts, the Chief of Staff will meet weekly with the incoming Chair until inauguration.
3. Topic Committee Chairs:
- a. Committee Chairs are appointed by the Student Body Vice President during the second chamber of each semester. They must be a Student Senator. The appointment must be confirmed by Senate with a majority vote.
  - b. One Committee Chair will be appointed for each topic committee.
  - c. The Committee Chairs will retain their Senate seats.
  - d. Committee Chairs will fulfill this role for the duration of a topic committee (one semester).
  - e. The Committee Chairs will serve under the Student Body Vice President.
  - f. The Vice President can call meetings with the Committee Chairs at the Vice President's discretion to discuss progress within the committees.
  - g. The Committee Chairs shall steer their committees towards action, follow deadlines and goals set forth by the Vice President, and work to implement change on behalf of the committees' views.
  - h. The Committee Chairs can organize tabling events on behalf of the committees to gather students concerns/opinions.
  - i. In the case of vacancy, the Vice President will select a new Committee Chair and the same conformation process will be followed.

## ARTICLE VI. AD HOC COMMITTEES

### Section 1. Establishment of Ad Hoc committees

1. The Student Senate can establish ad-hoc committees by a majority vote.
2. To address changing needs, Student Senate is encouraged to bear in mind the following pre-established institutionalized ad-hoc committees, which are automatically activated once a Senator has made a motion

- (which does not need to be seconded) to elect members to them and such an election has occurred and resulted in members being elected:
- a. Research & Recommendations – Reviews the operations of the Student Senate, recommending changes to Senate’s structure and documents as needed.
3. The President of the Student Body may convene the Committee on Campus Inclusion to respond to urgent concerns posed by incidents in which members of any SMU minority community are targeted. Responses may include, but are not limited to, issuing statements to the student body, hosting open forums or tabling events, and promoting events intended to create a more inclusive campus environment. However, this committee will have no authority to investigate any incident or have any disciplinary authority over any organization or member of the SMU community. This committee will consist of all members of the Student Senate Executive Committee, all Special Interest Senators who represent the minority communities targeted, the Chair of the Diversity Committee, the Student Senate Advisor (who shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member), and three other Student Senators who are to be elected to the committee, in the same process as outlined in the previous subsection, in the next meeting of the Student Senate following the first meeting of the committee. Due to the necessity for urgent response to events that happen on or directly affect the SMU campus, the President of the Student Body may convene this committee before the next meeting of the Student Senate that occurs after the incident(s) in question. However, the President of the Student Body must provide a description of the incident(s) in question to the Student Senate and report any actions the committee has taken in every succeeding meeting of the Student Senate in which the committee continues to convene. If the president is unable to give the report for any appropriate Student Senate meeting, another member of the committee shall give the report on committee updates.

## ARTICLE VII. FINANCES

### Section 1. Allocation of the Budget

1. Authority for allocating the annual chartered organizational budgets shall be vested in the voting members of the Student Senate.
2. The Student Senate shall make the allocation by majority approval. The Finance Committee shall prepare a report for the Student Senate’s

approval describing the most appropriate and feasible budget allocation. The Comptroller shall serve as a non-voting consultant to the budget allocation process.

3. The Finance Chair will work to coordinate the budget process and guide the Finance Committee toward budget allocations. The Comptroller and the Student Body Treasurer shall serve as a non-voting consultant to the budget allocation process.

## Section 2. The Senate Fund

1. All requests for finances from the Senate Fund shall be governed by the procedure established in the Student Senate Policies and Procedures.
2. Senate Weekly Fund requests should be made in the specific names of non-chartered/temporary chartered organizations or departments
3. Chartered Organizations may request money from the Senate Weekly Fund only if they demonstrate a unique, unforeseen need that wasn't accounted for during the annual distribution. The finance committee can fund these requests on a case-by-case basis; however, the committee should carefully fund these requests in order to preserve funding for non-chartered/temporary chartered organizations.
4. After the Senate has approved a recommendation for funding, the Finance Chair shall notify the relevant organization of the allocated funding decision.
5. The Finance Committee has the authority to adopt any standards to help guide funding. The Student Senate may review any funding standards and may amend these standards by a 2/3 majority.

## Section 3. Restrictions on All Funding

1. Senate does not fund for debt. Debt shall be defined as items already purchased, items ordered, or items/services that have been guaranteed payment through a binding written or oral agreement prior to the allocation of funds for those purposes by the Student Senate.
2. No student organization or any of its committees funded by this Senate shall be permitted to solicit any sort of application fee. Application fees shall be defined as any fee that is paid as part of the application process for membership to an organization. This rule does not apply to dues paid after the application process is complete

## Section 4. Standards for Information

1. The Student Senate and its committees may request any pertinent information and ask such relevant questions in order to ensure that the Senate has the information it needs to make an educated and knowledgeable decision on all funding requests.

2. Organizations and individuals requesting money from the Student Senate are expected to provide truthful, complete and accurate information to the Student Senate always. Should information presented to the Senate or its committee's change during the funding process, those requesting funding have an obligation to notify the Student Senate with such information.
3. If a Student Body Officer, Student Senate Officer, Student Senator, Committee Chair, or standing committee member believe an organization, group, or other person requesting money has purposefully provided misleading information in a funding request or has purposefully withheld pertinent information from the Senate or its committees a majority vote will be held by the Student Senate to consider repealing the relevant funding decision. The vote will be held according to a recommendation measure by the Finance Chair and Student Body Treasurer
4. The majority vote considered by the Student Senate can include additional measures such as but not limited to, requiring partial or complete re-payment of funds, reducing a percentage of an organization's current or future budget, or, in extreme circumstances, recommending that an organization's charter status be revoked..
5. The Student Senate will review the decision of the Executive Committee and may approve, amend or reject it, after any debate, by a majority vote.

#### Section 5. Breakdown of Student Fee Allocation

1. Funds allocated to the Students' Association will be distributed in the following manner:
  - a. The The Students' Association account (1-50-00-01) will maintain a reserve balance of at least \$100,000 at the end of the spring semester to cover unexpected expenses and timing differences between fund expenditures and receipts
  - b. \$40,000 will be allocated to the Student Senate for its operations including annual expenses, one-time initiatives, and stipends. At the beginning of the Spring semester, the Student Body Officers and Finance Chair will meet and consult with the Comptroller about sweeping any remaining portion of the Senate Exec Account that is expected to go unspent that semester into the Senate Weekly Fund Account or Endowment Fund Account. According to S-104-17 & S-108-16: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer as follows: President \$5,000, Vice President \$2,000, Secretary \$2,000, Treasurer \$2,000, Speaker \$1000, Chief of Staff



\$1000, and Parliamentarian \$1000. Stipends for Student Body Officers were effective beginning 2019-2020 and for Student Senate Officers were effective beginning 2023-2024, and paid in installments in September, November, February, and April. This amount will be reviewed and adjusted every year ending in 5 and 0. The Student Senate Advisor shall be the only one able to alter these amounts during the year. The Student Senate Advisor can work with students and allocate their funding to best meet their financial position. If a new Student Body Officer succeeds to a vacated paid position, the new member's stipend shall be paid according to a percentage of the maximum amount listed above, based on the number of monthly payments remaining in the year at the time of the new officer's swearing in. The individual Student Body Officer has the option to abstain from payments as they deem appropriate. The Senate Finance Chair receives a stipend of \$2,450 payable quarterly.

- c. Each Each Graduate School will be allocated 100% of its graduate students' fee contributions."
- d. The Spring annual budget allocations shall be equal to 90% of the anticipated annual student fee allocation remaining after the items in Article VII. Section 6.1a, 6.1b, and 6.1c have been paid."
  - i. 30% Within the spring annual budget allocations, 35% of the anticipated annual student fee allocation will be distributed to the following groups: Student Foundation, Program Council, and Sports/Intramurals Clubs. These groups must exhibit the following criteria (with the exception of sports/intramurals based on their contribution to student body wide sports culture at SMU): a mission statement aimed at unification and inclusion of the entire SMU student body, significant attendance (exceeding attendants for at least one event), dedicated paid Student Affairs staff advisors, and a non-SMU student/faculty impact including populations such as: alumni, Dallas community, and student families.
  - ii. within the spring annual budget allocations, 55% of the anticipated annual student fee allocation will be distributed to the remaining chartered organizational pool. Upon consideration of this funding, the Committee should prioritize cultural status, event size/impact, value added to SMU, value beyond SMU, community service,

significance and/or growth of attendance, mission statements, and appropriated spending rates in addition to the Finance Standards.

- e. The spring annual Chartered Org Fund and Senate Weekly Fund allocations shall be equal to 6% of the anticipated annual student fee allocation remaining after the items in Article VII. Section 6.1a, 6.1b, and 6.1c have been paid. The Endowment Fund allocation shall be equal to 4% of the anticipated annual student fee allocation remaining after the items in Article VII. Section 6.1a, 6.1b, and 6.1c have been paid.

### Section 6. Unspent/Unallocated Money

1. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, any unspent funds remaining in the Summer Senate Fund shall be placed into the Students' Association account.
2. At the end of fall semester, all unspent and unallocated funds shall be placed into a clearing account, except for the following organizations which are allocated annual budgets: Student Senate (including but not limited to the Student Comptroller account, Senate Operations, Senate Executive, the Senate (Weekly) Fund, Senate Investment Fund, Senate Endowment fund and the Chartered Organizations' Fund), Student Foundation, Program Council, Sports Clubs, and Intramurals.
3. The clearing account will reimburse the Student's Association Account if the reserve is Section 6.1(a) above is depleted. The remaining clearing account funds from the fall semester will be distributed as follows:
  - a. 50% to the Chartered Organization Fund.
  - b. 50% to the Senate Weekly Fund.
4. At the end of the spring semester, all unspent and unallocated funds shall be swept into a clearing account except for the Senate (Weekly) Fund, the Senate Endowment Fund, the Senate Investment Fund and the Chartered Organizations' Fund. The funds in this clearing account will be distributed as follows, after ensuring the reserve amount is Article VII Section 6.1 (a) is met:
  - i. During Section 7.1 and before the Spring Finance Committee Budget Retreat, the Student Association Comptroller will prepare a list of all chartered organizations and the amounts swept from their appropriated account to present to the Finance Committee. Should any organization fail to spend more than 67% of their annual budget (including any weekly allocations) and leave more than \$500 in their appropriated accounts, these chartered organizations shall lose access to their annual budget in the upcoming Spring Budget Retreat. These organizations may submit requests through the Finance

Committee Weekly process for the preceding year wherein the Committee can closely assist with advising and budgeting for each organization affected.

- ii. Upon completion of that probationary year, the Committee may recommend on an individual basis that each organization regains their annual budget or they may recommend to the broader chamber to hold a group through another annual probationary period subject to a majority vote of the chamber. Additional probationary periods would be recommended for organizations that continue to struggle with appropriated spending rates as well as responsible management of their funding.
- iii. 20% will be added to the Student Endowment.

#### Section 7. Projects Funded Via Legislation

1. The following is a list of legislation passed by the Student Senate the requires a long-standing funding commitment from the body. The details of the funding request lie in the legislation. These have been added to the by-laws to ensure future funding. These projects should be overseen by the Student Body Treasurer.
  - a. The NAMES Act – S-108-06 and S-108-10
  - b. The Rotunda Scholars Fund & Expansion S-108-Rotunda and S-110-07
    - i. The SMU Student shall vote yearly to renew the expanded amount of \$170,000 toward the Senate Rotunda Fund over the next 9 years

### ARTICLE VIII. CONSTITUTIONAL APPEALS

Appeals to the SMU Student Body Constitution must be submitted to the Parliamentarian for review. After review, the Parliamentarian will present a decision to the complaining party. If either party disagrees with the decision of the Parliamentarian, they may appeal the Parliamentarian's decision to the Rules Tribunal.

If the complaining party does not agree with the Rules Tribunal's decision, the appeal will be forwarded to the University Conduct Council along with the Rules Tribunal's recommendation without consideration by the Student Senate.

If the complaining party agrees with the decision of Rules Tribunal, then the appeal will be presented to Student Senate. At that time, Senators will have the opportunity to file complaints against the decision of the Rules Tribunal concerning the Constitutional appeal. The Rules Tribunal will review the submitted complaints and the

appeal will be voted on by the Senate at the following meeting. If Senate does not vote to pass the appeal, it will be forwarded to the University Conduct Council (UCC). If the complainant disagrees with Senate's final decision, he/she may request review by UCC. The University Conduct Council appeals process can be found in the Student Handbook and can be clarified by the Dean of Student's Office.

## **ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSION**

These By-laws can be amended at any Senate meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members, provided that the amendment has been presented in writing to the Senate at a previous regular meeting. No part of this document shall be suspended for any period for any reason.