

The Constitution of the Student Government

Preamble

The Student Government shall be the sole governing assembly of the student body, responsible for representing the student body at large. It is the duty of elected members of the Student Government to represent their constituents to the best of their ability. The Student Government shall provide an opportunity for students to engage actively with and enact change within the University of the South. Furthermore, the Student Government shall be responsible for continuously engaging the student body in conversations concerning the activities of the University.

Article I – The Student Senate

Section 1 – Name

- a) The name of this organization shall be the Student Senate.

Section 2 – Organization

- a) The Student Senate shall be composed of students elected each year by the student body. Five students from each class shall be elected as representatives of their fellow classmates.
- b) Student Senators, with the exception of freshmen, must have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA prior to being elected and must be in good standing with the Dean of Students. While in office, all Senators shall maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA and remain in good standing with the Dean of Students.
- c) Student Senators may not serve on the Honor Council, on the Discipline Committee, as an officer of the Interfraternity and Intersorority Councils, as a member of the Residential Life Head Staff, as the President of the Order of Gownsmen, nor as a Student Trustee.
- d) The Student Body President shall preside as Speaker of the Student Senate. If a tie occurs within the Senate, the President shall be the tiebreaker.
- e) The Student Senate will elect one Senator from the Student Senate to serve as Secretary of the Student Senate. He or she must be a Junior or Senior.
- f) The following five individuals shall serve as the Senate Advisory Board and shall be given non-voting seats in the Senate: the President of the Order of Gownsmen, the Head Proctor, the Senior Student Trustee of the College, a representative from the Interfraternity and Intersorority Councils, and a representative elected by all multicultural student organizations under the guidance of the University's Office of Minority Affairs. These individuals shall have the power to present legislation without a co-sponsor or co-author from the Student Senate.
- g) When any vacancies occur, the Speaker of the Student Senate shall appoint individuals to fill said vacancies. These appointments shall be made upon approval by the Student Senate.

- h) The Student Senate shall have the sole authority of chartering all student organizations on campus. The Student Senate must approve charters for all organizations that seek Activities Fee Committee funds.
- a) The Student Senate shall adopt and publish standing rules and guidelines by which it shall be governed in the ordinary course of carrying out its purpose.
- i) If any Student Senate member misses four or more meetings in an academic year, he or she shall be removed from office immediately.

Section 3 – Legislative Powers

- a) Legislation considered by the Student Senate will be in the form of bills. These bills may pertain to all areas of student life and shall express any concerns of the student body relating to university policy.
- b) Each bill must be sponsored and presented by a member of the Student Senate, except where otherwise prescribed.
- c) Any student of the University may co-sponsor a bill and assist in its presentation, but only Senators are allowed a vote.
- d) A three-fifths vote is required by the Student Senate for the passage of a bill. After the bill is passed, it is the responsibility of the Student Body President to facilitate its implementation.
- e) All bills shall be archived upon their submission to the Student Senate.
- f) The Student Senate shall also have the power to pass bills revising the University Honor Code. The procedure shall be:
 - i. The Student Senate must pass a resolution proposing changes to the Honor Code.
 - ii. The proposed changes must be presented and approved by the Honor Council.
 - iii. The proposed amendments shall then be presented to the Vice Chancellor in conjunction with the University Legal Counsel for approval.
 - iv. Once approved by the Vice Chancellor, the proposed amendments will be accepted into the code by way of the approval of the College Faculty.
 - v. Upon College Faculty approval, the amendments are effective immediately.

Article II – The Student Body President

Section 1 – Name

- a) The name of this office shall be the Student Body President.

Section 2 – Organization

- a) The Student Body President shall be a rising senior elected by the entire student body.
- b) The elected President shall appoint a Director of Communications.

- c) The Student Body President and the Director of Communications shall together be responsible for communicating all Student Government activity to the student body at large.
- d) The Student Body President shall act as the liaison to and attend regular meetings of the senior level administrative staff. Additionally, he or she shall present successfully passed legislation to the University Administration and Faculty. Additionally, he or she shall present successfully passed legislation to the University Administration and Faculty.
- j) The Student Body President must have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA prior to being elected and must be in good standing with the Dean of Students. While in office, the Student Body President shall maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA and remain in good standing with the Dean of Students.
- e) The Student Body President may hold no other office within the Student Government.
- f) The Student Body President shall organize at least one meeting per semester, open to the entire University, at which he or she shall present the agenda and activities of the Student Government.

Article III – Judiciary Bodies

Section 1 – Honor Council

- a) The Honor Council is responsible for upholding the traditions of the Honor Code of The University of the South.
- b) The Honor Council shall be composed of four seniors, three juniors, two sophomores, and one freshman. These members shall be elected by their respective classes and shall serve a term of one year, save juniors, who shall serve for two years and comprise three of the four seniors on the Council. The Election Committee shall prescribe the method of election and oversee said election.
- c) The election and organization of the Honor Council, its jurisdiction, its rules of procedure, and other relevant matters are subject to oversight by the Student Government.

Section 2 – Student Discipline Committee

- a) Enforcement of student life regulations is entrusted to the Discipline Committee of The University of the South in conjunction with the Dean of Students.
- b) The Discipline Committee shall be composed of four seniors, three juniors, and two sophomores and shall serve a term of one year, save juniors, who shall serve for two years and comprise three of the four seniors on the Council.
- c) The Discipline Committee shall make recommendations to the Dean of Students concerning violations of student life regulations.

Article IV – Committees

Section 1 – Student Government Representatives on University Committees

- a) The Student Government shall provide the Faculty with a list of nominated representatives for all committees established by the University that provide a seat to student membership.
- b) At the first Student Senate meeting after the Easter Semester Elections, the incoming Senate Advisory Board and the incoming Student Body President shall nominate Senators for placement onto the University committees. Subsequently, the Student Body President may open the floor to student applications for all remaining seats on committees. Any student in good standing with the University may submit a letter of intent and resume to the Student Body President to apply. The Senate must approve all nominations.
- c) It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Senate to maintain a list of active committees that provide a seat to student membership.
- d) After each committee's respective meeting, student representatives must prepare a report to be presented at the next meeting of the Student Senate.
- e) Failure of a student to remain active within a University Committees shall result in a recommendation of his or her removal from both the Committee and, if applicable, the Student Senate, by the Student Body President as per Article VII.

Section 2 – Activities Fee Committee

- a) The purpose of the Activities Fee Committee is the administration of the Student Activities Fee funds. The Activities Fee Committee shall administer these funds in concurrence with the Provost.
- b) The Activities Fee Committee shall be composed of five members. One shall be the Assistant Dean for Student Leadership Development. The remaining four members shall be selected by the process described in Section 1.b.
- c) The terms of the student members of the Activities Fee Committee shall be for two years and shall commence at the beginning of the Advent Semester for which they have been selected to serve.
- d) At its first meeting of the Advent semester, the Activities Fee Committee shall select a chairperson who shall be a student.
- e) Prior to the primary hearing in the Easter Semester, the Activities Fee Committee shall adopt and publish standing rules and guidelines by which it may be petitioned for funds and which establish such procedures and policy, as it deems appropriate, by which it shall be governed in the ordinary course of carrying out its purpose.
- f) Notwithstanding the foregoing, there shall be three budget hearings in each academic year. The primary hearing shall be held during the Easter semester for the purpose of allocating funds for the following year and one contingency-funds hearing shall be held at the beginning of each semester.
- g) The Activities Fee Committee shall prepare a report each semester to be presented to the Student Senate. This report shall outline the AFC's proposed budget with a detailed description for each money allotment greater than \$2000.

Additionally, the report shall contain a description of how funds were spent in the previous semester by those groups that received \$2000 or more. Money allotted during the contingency-funds hearing must be included in the bi-annual report.

Section 3 – Committee on Grievances

- a) The Committee on Grievances shall be composed of three students selected from the Order of Gownsmen. The Order of Gownsmen shall determine its own procedures and rules for the selection of the members of this committee.
- b) The Committee on Grievances shall adopt and publish standing rules and procedures. The Student Senate may change adopted standing rules and procedures by a three-fourths vote.
- c) The Committee on Grievances shall be responsible for handling the removal of Student Government members as prescribed in Article VII.

Section 4 – The Student Government Election Committee

- a) The Student Government Election Committee shall be comprised of the Order of Gownsmen President and Secretary.

Section 5 – Committee Creations

- a) The Student Senate and Student Body President shall both have the power to create standing and *ad hoc* committees.

Article V – Elections and Regulations

- a) The Student Government Election Committee shall prescribe the methods of campus-wide elections and oversee all Student Government elections. Furthermore, the Student Government Election Committee shall handle any vacancies that occur within the Student Government, unless proscribed elsewhere.
- b) All elections shall take place in the Easter Semester preceding the academic year in which the elected students shall serve with the exception of the freshmen senators and freshmen honor council representative. The elections for these positions shall take place between the first and twentieth day of October.
- c) All elections during the Easter Semester shall be completed by the last day of March. No later than the first day of May, the Student Government shall be composed of only the newly elected representatives. During the transition month, Student Government leaders shall work to transition powers as smoothly and comprehensively as possible.
- d) All terms for elected representatives shall be one academic year, except where prescribed elsewhere.
- e) All elected members of the Student Government shall be sworn into his or her office following the methods and rituals prescribed by tradition.

- f) All elected positions may resign their respective offices or positions by submitting their resignations, in writing, to the President of the Student Body. A resignation is immediate and irrevocable once it has been accepted. The President must notify the Student Government as such.
- g) The President of the Student Body may resign his or her office by submitting a letter of resignation, in writing, to the Vice Chancellor of the University. He or she must also notify, in writing, the Secretary of the Student Government of his or her resignation. A resignation is immediate and irrevocable once it has been accepted. Upon the President's resignation, the Secretary of the Senate shall fulfill the duties of the President of the Student Government.
- h) Any elected official may be removed from office according to the method and procedure set down in Article VII of this Constitution.

Article VI – The Order of Gownsmen

Section 1 – Role in Student Government

- a) The Order of Gownsmen has the ability to present resolutions for consideration by the Student Senate for the purpose of maintaining the spirit, traditions, and ideals of the University of the South.
- b) The Order of Gownsmen, through the Student Government Election Committee, shall facilitate the Student Government elections process.

Section 2 – Organization

- a) The executive power and authority of the Order of Gownsmen shall be vested in the President of the Order of Gownsmen.
- b) The Order of Gownsmen may determine the rules of its proceedings and enforce necessary discipline.
- c) The President of the Order of Gownsmen shall have the power and authority to appoint the Secretary of the Order of Gownsmen in the Easter semester preceding the academic year in which he or she shall serve or whenever there is a vacancy in the said office.

Section 3 – Elections

- a) The membership of the Order shall elect the President of the Order in the Easter Semester preceding the academic year in which he or she shall serve. The Student Government Election Committee shall prescribe the method of election and oversee said election.
- b) The President of the Order of Gownsmen may resign his or her office by submitting a letter of resignation, in writing, to the Vice Chancellor of the University. He or she must also notify, in writing, the Student Body President of his or her resignation. A resignation is immediate and irrevocable once it has been accepted.

Article VII – Grievances of the Student Government

- a) Any member of the Student Government can be impeached. The impeachment process shall be commenced when:
 - i. A written petition signed by one-quarter of a member's constituency is presented to the Committee on Grievances.
 - ii. A written statement by a member of the Student Government specifying the complaints against the accused member is submitted to the Committee on Grievances.
- b) The accused shall receive a fair and impartial hearing before the Committee on Grievances. If a member of the Committee has brought the charges, said member must step down as a Committee member. In such a case, the Chair of the Committee on Grievances shall select another member of the Order of Gownsmen to replace said member.
- c) Upon the Committee on Grievances' recommendation to impeach a Student Government member, that member shall immediately be removed as a member of the Student Government.
- d) A member of the Student Government may overturn the decisions of the Committee on Grievances by calling for a roll-call vote within the Senate and garnering a four-fifths vote of quorum.

Article VIII – Conflicts with the Constitution

- a) Any portion of a student organization's governing documents that conflict with this constitution shall be considered null and void.

Article IX – Amendments to the Constitution

- a) Amendments to this constitution may be made in one of two ways:
 - i. An amendment may be written and presented as a piece of legislation in the Student Senate. After its initial presentation, it must garner a vote of one-third of the Senate. Upon obtaining this, it is tabled for one week. After one week, the amendment must garner a four-fifths majority vote from the Senate. After obtaining this vote, the constitution is considered amended.
 - ii. An amendment to the Constitution may be made by the student body in a referendum. The amendment shall be made if such a referendum yields a two-thirds majority of voting students in favor of the amendment, with at least one-half of the student body voting or actively abstaining.