



# **THE BYLAWS**

**OF THE  
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION  
OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY**

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# ARTICLE I: LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

## Section 1: Agenda

- A. The senate secretary shall be responsible for formulating the agenda.
- B. The resolutions, reports, and other material to be placed in the agenda or to be distributed with the agenda shall be presented to the senate secretary no later than 4:00 pm one day prior to the senate meeting.
- C. The senate agenda shall be organized within the following components:
  1. Public Forum
    - a. Any person in attendance shall be allowed to speak when recognized by the Speaker of the Senate.
    - b. Each speaker will have a maximum of 15 minutes to speak, followed by a ten minute question period.
  2. Approval of minutes
  3. Executive reports  
The President, Vice President, and Speaker Pro Tempore shall have the power to speak during Executive Reports.
  4. Committee Reports
    - a. Committee Reports shall be typed and distributed at meetings.
    - b. Committee Chairs shall have the ability to give oral committee reports and answer any questions Senators might have about said reports.
  5. Old Business
    - a. Resolutions appearing as General Business shall only be considered for final disposition if it appears on the agenda under Old Business.
    - b. Before appearing in Old Business, a motion must be submitted in New Business.
  6. New Business
    - a. Resolutions appearing as Senate Business shall be considered upon their first appearance during New Business.
    - b. Items in New Business shall be submitted by either oral or written report.
  7. Announcements  
Agenda items may not be discussed in Announcements.
  8. Adjournment

## Section 2: Minutes

- A. Copies of the minutes of the previous meetings must be made available in the Senate offices and on the SGA website no later than five pm one day prior to the next meeting.
- B. Minutes shall be composed of the same components contained within the agenda and shall include the names of Senators making and seconding approval, disapproval, or tabling of motions, reports of all votes other than voice votes, and summaries of all Reports, Public Forum Speeches, and Announcements.

### **Section 3: Attendance Policy**

- A. Absence from more than three regularly scheduled Senate meetings during an academic semester is grounds for removal from the Senate.
  - 1. After a Senator accumulates four absences, he/she will go before a disciplinary board headed by the Sergeant at Arms and consisting of three other members, who are to be appointed by the Vice President.
  - 2. If the disciplinary board concludes that the absences were invalid, it will recommend that the Internal Affairs Committee present a resolution to the Senate calling for the dismissal of the Senator in violation of the attendance policy.
- B. Senators are required to serve one office hour per week at a pre-selected time. This office hour can be made up, if missed, within five academic days of the regularly scheduled office hour. One missed office hour shall equal one Senate absence. Senators are required to serve on a standing committee and shall be required to attend regular meetings of that committee. One missed committee meetings shall equal one Senate absence.
- C. Senators are required to attend a training session within the first four weeks of being sworn in. This training session will be led by the President, Vice President, Speaker Pro Tempore or Chief of Staff.

### **Section 4: Oath of Office**

I, (state your name), do solemnly (swear of affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of (name of office) and will, to the best of my ability, uphold the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Southwest Missouri State University.

### **Section 5: Limitation of Debate**

The length of time a person is allowed to speak at any given time during debate shall be limited to five minutes.

### **Section 6: Absentee Ballots**

- A. A Senator may cast an absentee ballot on any resolution put before the Senate.
- B. Absentee ballots will be made available in the SGA office.
- C. All absentee ballots must be addressed to the Vice President.
- D. Motions that are amended, except for stylistic changes, shall invalidate all absentee ballots.
- E. Absentee ballots must be cast before the vote takes place.

### **Section 7: Senate Resignations**

- A. Senators wishing to resign shall tender resignations in writing and shall address letters of resignation to the Vice President.

B. The Vice President shall announce resignations to the Senate in his/her report.

C. The Vice President shall keep letters of resignation on file.

**Section 8: Parliamentary Procedure**

All meetings shall be conducted according to the rules set forth in the newest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise regulated by these bylaws.

## **ARTICLE II: EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE SUB-DIVISIONS**

### **Section 1: Standing Legislative Committees**

#### **A. Academic Affairs**

The Academic Affairs Committee will address issues concerning the teaching, research, and service functions of SMS by providing educational and service programs – undergraduate, graduate, outreach, credit and non-credit – to meet the needs and interests of our students and citizens.

#### **B. Administrative Services**

The Administrative Services Committee will address issues that deal with constructing and maintaining a safe, secure, well-maintained, competently-staffed, efficient, functional environment conducive to, and for the purpose of, developing educated persons.

#### **C. Student Affairs**

The Student Affairs Committee will address issues concerning the general welfare of the student population, particularly in the areas of student services and student rights.

#### **D. University Advancement**

The University Advancement Committee will address issues concerning public and governmental support of SMS, intercollegiate athletics, and student pride.

#### **E. Financial Services**

The Financial Services Committee will address issues concerning the University budget, including tuition, fees, and allocation of funding.

#### **F. Internal Affairs**

The Internal Affairs Committee will address issues concerning the internal functioning of the Senate, including executive appointments, removal of Senators, and new organization petitions and constitutions.

### **Section 2: Sub Committees**

A. Each committee shall have at least two, but no more than three, subcommittees.

B. The titles and the chairs of each subcommittee are to be appointed by the standing committee chair.

### **Section 3: Ad-Hoc Committees**

A. Ad-Hoc Committees may be formed by an Executive Order or by a simple majority vote of Senate seats filled.

B. No more than two ad-hoc committees shall exist at any one time.

### **Section 4: Committee Membership**

All Senators must serve on at least one committee.

**Section 5: Committee Guidelines**

- A. All committees shall meet weekly while Senate is in session.
  
- B. Unexcused absences from committee meetings shall constitute one absence for attendance purposes.

**Section 6: Standing Commission**

- A. Wyrick Student Project Fund Commission  
This commission administers the Wyrick Student Project Funds for the good of the student body in accordance with the Wyrick Commission guidelines.
  
- B. Elections Commission  
This commission shall oversee all regular and special elections of the SGA. This commission shall also monitor the behavior of the candidates in campaigns to ensure adherence to the SGA Constitution, Bylaws, and city, state, and federal statutes. Chief Commissioner shall be submitted for Senate approval by the President (or his/her designee) no later than the last SGA meeting of October.
  
- C. Senators may choose to serve on a commission instead of, or in addition to a committee.

**Section 7: Ad-Hoc Commissions**

The President shall have the sole power to form Ad-Hoc Commissions.

## **ARTICLE III: EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1: Ethics Statement**

- A. The elections shall be impartial and non-partisan, and no member of the Elections Commission shall endorse any candidate, ticket, proposal, or issue in any way.
- B. No member of the Elections Commission shall serve concurrently in any other office of the SGA or as President or Vice President of any club or organization on campus.
- C. Any member of the Elections Commission shall resign his/her post before running in any sanctioned election or in the event that any other conflict of interest shall arise as determined by the Campus Judicial Board.
- D. Members of the Elections Commission shall not place themselves in a situation which would cause conflict and should by all means avoid any situation which could cause such a conflict to be perceived.

### **Section 2: Elections Commission, Powers and Duties**

- A. The Chief Elections Commissioner shall choose no less than two students to serve as Elections Commissioners within the first two weeks of his/her appointment.
- B. The Elections Commissioner, under the direction of the Chief Elections Commissioner, shall organize and publish all constitutional provisions, bylaws, and resolutions concerning student voting and the qualifications and procedures of the voting area.
  - 1. The Elections Commission shall review, revise and publish annually a guide pertaining to election campaigning for all SGA elections and work the appropriate authorities for elections concerning Wyrick proposals.
  - 2. The Elections Commission shall also continually revise and update a guide for operation of elections by which all elections shall be run in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.
- C. The Elections Commission shall review annually all Constitutional provisions, bylaws, operating procedures, resolutions and issues concerning student voting and candidates or issues in accordance with all relevant sections of this Article. Recommendations shall be forwarded to incoming the incoming Administration prior to the end of the academic year.

### **Section 3: Polling Sites**

- A. Polling shall be conducted online, at a secure website that requires a student's PIN number to be entered before voting can occur.
- B. The website will begin functioning at 8:00 am on the first day of elections, and will cease to accept votes at 5:00 pm on the last day of elections.
- C. The polling website shall contain clear instructions in written and visual form indicating to the voters how to use the online voting system.



- D. An official display of all issues and candidates shall be posted online. No other form of campaign information or endorsement shall be within fifty feet of any computer lab, nor shall any official or volunteer at any computer lab make any endorsement or wear any visible sign or endorsement of campaigns or issues.
- E. A computer lab is hereby defined as any group of three or more computers within a five foot radius of one another that is provided and maintained by the University.
- F. No candidate or their campaigners shall be allowed to campaign in a computer lab during the time which the polls are open.
- G. All voting shall be done online, with no paper ballots.

#### **Section 4: Ballots**

- A. The candidates' names shall be listed on the ballot in the order that their petitions were received and validated by the Elections Commission. Wyrick ballots shall be prepared in accordance with corresponding guidelines.
- B. Ballots shall be partitioned in such a way that no ballot shall be distributed which contains an office or issue for which the voter is ineligible to vote.
- C. All categories on a ballot shall have an option for abstention and voters shall be instructed to mark that if they do not wish to make a choice.
- D. In the election, a plurality of votes cast is needed to win. If abstentions receive the plurality of votes, then neither candidate shall win and new elections shall be called. These elections must be held by the third week of the fall semester. The new Senate shall be convened by the outgoing Vice President and shall elect a Speaker Pro Tempore who shall serve as President until such elections are held.
- E. The Elections Commission shall take all means necessary to safeguard the ballots before, during, and beyond the validation of an election, for a minimum of one year.

#### **Section 5: Voting**

- A. Any person enrolled at SMS shall be allowed to vote in the Executive and Wyrick elections, referendums, recalls, and all other elections as specified in these Bylaws and in the SGA Constitution.
- B. Students must login with their PIN to vote.

#### **Section 6: Validation of Elections**

- A. The ballots shall be counted as soon as possible after the polls close.

- B. Votes shall be tallied online and verified by the Elections Commission. If the election contains Wyrick proposals, the Wyrick Commissioner or his/her designee shall be present.
- C. Immediately following the ballot count, the Chief Elections Commissioner shall submit a written statement to the Campus Judicial Board, suggesting that the election be declared valid or invalid. This statement shall carry with it the citations of specific infractions and violations of Elections Bylaws that may have changed the outcome of the election. The Campus Judicial Board shall meet immediately upon receiving this statement to confer with the Chief Elections Commissioner.
- D. The CJB's decision and reasons for said decision shall be posted on the SGA bulletin board.
- E. The Elections Commission, in consultation with members of the CJB, shall forward a report of all sufficiently documented campaign violations to the Dean of Students.
- F. If a computer, computers, or voting program becomes inoperable, voting at all sites shall cease until the problem is corrected.

#### **Section 7: Notification and Deadlines**

- A. The Elections Commission shall notify the campus media and the SGA Senate of the date that filing procedures become available, filing deadlines, campaign briefing sessions, and the names of candidates and issues on the ballot as soon as this information becomes available.
- B. The Elections Commission shall make petitions for candidacy available no later than 8:00 am on the Monday of the second full week of the spring semester.
- C. Petitions will be due by 5:00 pm on the last Friday of February.
- D. Publicity, as delineated by Section 9, subsection F of these Bylaws shall be permitted upon notification of certification of candidacy petition.

#### **Section 8: Campaign Eligibility**

- A. All candidates and campaign officers for any special project or issue must be an eligible voter during the semester in which the election is held and must meet the requirements of all appropriate sections of these Bylaws and the Student Government Constitution.
- B. No person may file for more than one office during a single election period.
- C. All candidates and any other campaign organizations must pick up the filing procedures pertaining to their campaign and file them in accordance with all appropriate section of these Bylaws and the Student Government Constitution.

- D. The Elections Commission shall post notification on the Student Government Association bulletin board of the certification status of all candidates and campaigns within four academic days after the filing deadline. The Elections Commissioner should also notify all candidates, tickets, and supporters of proposals or issues of their validation results through personal contact.
- E. Candidates shall have one academic day after the ruling of the Elections Commission to conform to certification requirements.
- F. The Elections Commission shall have two days to rule on appeals.

### **Section 8: Campaign Procedures**

- A. Candidates, tickets, and supporters of proposals and issues must be in accordance with the following policies:
  - 1. Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities
  - 2. Public Forum Policy
  - 3. Speakers and Facilities Usage
  - 4. Advertising, Distribution, and Solicitation Policy
- B. The following rules will apply for campaign expenditures:
  - 1. All campaign expenditures for the Student Body President and Vice President or Senior Class President are limited to a total of six hundred dollars per ticket, excluding taxes for the duration of the campaign.
  - 2. All other candidates, tickets, proposals, and issues are limited to a total of three hundred dollars per ticket, excluding taxes, for the duration of the campaign.
  - 3. Expenditures are defined as all donations and purchases of materials and media valued at a fair market price.
  - 4. Campaign expenditures shall be presented to the Elections Commission within the guidelines established by the Commission and shall describe, in detail, the source of funds, all expenditures made, and shall be accompanied by receipts of materials purchased.
- C. Microphones and other amplification devices may be used to speak at engagements arranged in advance. All other use of sound amplification equipment is strictly prohibited. This Section of the Bylaws is subject to interpretation by the Elections Commission in consultation with the members of the Campus Judicial Board.
- D. Parades and rallies shall only be allowed with the permission of the Chief Elections Commissioner, the Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her designee, and the Assistant Dean of Student Life or his/her designee.
- E. Off-campus campaign material is restricted to privately owned property with the permission of the property owner(s).
- F. Each candidate, ticket, proposal, and issue shall have no poster larger than 11" x 17".

- G. Unsolicited mass emailing shall not be allowed by any candidate, ticket, proposal, or issue.
- H. The following campaign materials may not be displayed or used until after midnight on the morning of the first election day:
  - 1. Each candidate, ticket, proposal or issue shall be limited to one hundred square feet of banner space. Banners can be placed on the exterior of any building owned by Southwest Missouri State University.
  - 2. The number of yard signs placed shall not exceed one hundred fifty per candidate, ticket, proposal or issue.
  - 3. Sandwich boards may not be used during this time period.
- I. There shall be no campaigning or campaign materials in the SGA office or in the SGA chambers. The only exception to this rule is that the Speaker or the Senate may recognize candidates or their representatives to speak during public forum.
- J. The SGA office and equipment shall not be used for any campaign purposes.
- K. Candidates must remove all on-campus campaign material within twenty-four hours of the close of the polls on the second day of elections. In the event that campaign materials must be removed by university personnel, the candidate, ticket, or supporter of the proposal or issue will be assessed the cost of the personnel's time.
- L. Any candidate, ticket, or supporter of a proposal or issue found to be in violation of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to a removal from the ballot, nullification of all votes cast in favor, or a ban from holding office in SGA.