

The University of Tampa Student Government Constitution



Updated
July 27, 2009

Article I. Purpose

Section 1.01 It shall be the mission of the undergraduate Student Government at The University of Tampa to promote a unified, healthy and vibrant student body.

Section 1.02 The Student Government shall be the representative voice of the undergraduate student body with its elected officials, bills, and resolutions being the proper conduct for opinions and positions of the Student Body.

Section 1.03 The Student Government shall be the coordinating body of all undergraduate campus organizations recognized by the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement.

Article II. General Provisions

Section 2.01 All currently enrolled full-time undergraduate students at The University of Tampa shall be considered members of the Student Government and shall be extended equal voting privileges in general student body elections.

Section 2.02 Responsibilities

- (a) All responsibilities extended by the President of the University to the Student Government shall include but are not limited to: allocation of the Student Government fee, oversight of student government judicial processes, and opportunities for consultation on and approval of policies pertaining to student life.
- (b) The Student Government also serves as the representative voice of the undergraduate student body and maintains the ability to oppose University policies not approved by the Student Government.

Section 2.03 Advisors

- (a) The President of the University has the duty of appointing staff advisors to the Student Government.
- (b) Each branch of Student Government is empowered to select its own faculty advisor annually.

Section 2.04 The duties of the Student Government shall be divided into legislative, executive and judicial branches. No person belonging to one branch shall have powers over any other branch unless expressly outlined in this Constitution.

- (a) No person may hold more than one office within Student Government at a time. Acceptance of a new office serves as a resignation from any previously held position.
- (b) The Student Government shall not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, age, religion, or disability.

Article III. Legislative Branch General Provisions

- Section 3.01** The Legislative Branch of Student Government shall consist of two parts; the General Assembly and the Student Senate.
- Section 3.02** The Legislative Branch shall be responsible for the consideration, debate, and decision of all matters of concern of the Student Body.
- Section 3.03** Any entity of the Legislative Branch may request information from any officer on a specific issue. University officials may be interviewed by any authorized Student Government member or asked to provide information via email or in the form of a report.

Article IV. The General Assembly

Section 4.01 Membership

- (a) The General Assembly shall consist of representatives from the various undergraduate campus organizations and independent students. All recognized members of the Assembly will be referred to as representatives.
- (b) A full meeting of the General Assembly will take place at least twice a semester to include a President's State of the Campus address. In addition, the Speaker of the Assembly shall reserve the power to call full meetings at his/her discretion.

Section 4.02 All undergraduate campus organizations must be registered with the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement and maintain good standing to be recognized by Student Government. Please see By-Laws Article IV Section 4.02 C

- (a) Every undergraduate campus organization must send a representative to the General Assembly meetings of Student Government in order to be recognized by Student Government and receive funding.
 - (i) *The means by which representatives are chosen shall be at the discretion of the individual organization.*
 - (ii) *Organizations may change their representative during the academic year.*
 - (iii) *A representative can only represent one organization at a General Assembly meeting. Student Government officers and chairpersons of General Assembly committees cannot represent an organization at General Assembly meetings.*

Section 4.03 Independent students not representing any organization may join the General Assembly by registering with the Speaker of the Assembly, according to the By-Laws.

Section 4.04 Committees of the General Assembly shall be the origination point of legislation to the Legislative Branch, unless expressly outlined in this constitution. Legislation can be proposed by either the Executive Branch, Executive Council, or within the committee itself.

- (a) It shall be the duty of the various committees to debate, consider, and recommend to the Senate all matters that fall under its purview.

- (b) General Assembly committees must vote to recommend for approval of a bill or resolution before the piece of legislation can move to the Student Senate for final approval. A vote of approval shall be majority.

(i) If the General Assembly Committee does not recommend a bill or resolution to the Student Senate, the legislation either fails or may be amended by the author in order to meet the committee's reservations.

Section 4.05 If the Student Senate rejects a bill or resolution, it is returned to the General Assembly committee of origination who may then amend the legislation in order to gain Senate approval.

Section 4.06 Responsibilities of Representatives

- (a) All representatives are required to attend all meetings of the full General Assembly and their respective committees.
- (b) The duty of organization representatives is to keep his/her organization and its officers up-to-date on the business of Student Government and adequately represent the organization at Student Government meetings.

Section 4.07 Committee Chairpersons

- (a) The various chairpersons of General Assembly Committees must see to the timely consideration, proper handling, and due deliberation of all matters of business placed before their respective committees.
- (b) The various General Assembly committee chairpersons shall, when invited by the Student Senate, speak on behalf of their committee's legislation.
- (c) Committee Chairpersons are responsible for submitting a monthly public report of the actions and progress of the committee. Please see By-Laws Article IV Section 4.04 F.
- (d) Committee Chairpersons are responsible for taking the attendance of their respective committees and informing the Speaker of the Assembly when committee members are placed on probation for attendance reasons. Please see By-Laws Article IV Section 4.04 B.

Article V. The Student Senate

Section 5.01 The Student Senate shall consist of two senators from each academic class and six elected campus-wide.

- (a) All senators will be elected by campus wide elections.

Section 5.02 The Student Senate shall be chaired by the Vice President of Student Government.

Section 5.03 The Student Senate shall be the primary voting body of the Student Government. The Student Government President may veto any Senate approved legislation. The Student Senate may override the veto with a 2/3 vote. This shall be the official position and decision of the Student Body.

Section 5.04 All business before the Student Senate must first be processed and approved through the General Assembly. Emergency legislation from the Executive Branch will be reviewed by the Student Senate.

Section 5.05 Meetings of the Student Senate are open for observation by any member of the undergraduate student body. The Vice President must provide the agenda, minutes, and vote-count of all meetings as public record.

- (a) The President of Student Government shall be extended the privilege of serving as an ex officio member of Student Senate meetings.

Section 5.06 A Senator should not be absent from meetings of the Student Senate. Please see By-Laws Article V Section 5.01

Section 5.07 Vacancies shall be filled by an appointment by the Executive Branch and a vote of approval by the General Assembly representatives.

Article VI. Operations and Procedures of the Legislative Branch

Section 6.01 All meetings of the Legislative Branch shall follow Robert's Rules of Order. The chairperson of each General Assembly committee and Vice President for the Senate will ensure that proper parliamentary procedures are followed.

Section 6.02 A simple majority of voting members is required for an item to pass any of the entities of the Legislative Branch. Exceptions to this rule include the impeachment of officers and constitutional amendments (which require a 2/3 vote).

Section 6.03 The General Assembly committees and the Student Senate shall both meet at least once a week throughout the academic year. Meeting time and places shall be determined by either the Vice President for the Student Senate, or the Speaker of the Assembly for the various General Assembly committees.

- (a) Meetings are not required the first academic week of the semester weeks that contain final exams, as well as weeks that include school closures.
- (b) The Vice President, the Speaker of the Assembly, and the various committee chairpersons can call or cancel meetings of their respective entities, as they may deem necessary, as long as they e-mail all members at least 24 hours in advance.

Section 6.04 A quorum must be present to conduct the business of any of the entities of the Legislative Branch. Quorum shall be defined as a majority of registered members.

Article VII. Judicial Branch General Provisions

Section 7.01 The Judicial Branch is charged with the proper conduct of the Student Government as outlined in this constitution, the oversight of Student Government judicial processes, and the execution and validity of Student Government elections.

Section 7.02 The Judicial Branch shall meet as the Judicial Advisory Board (JAB).

Section 7.03 The Judicial Branch shall consist of a Chief of the Judicial Advisory Board, one appointee from each of the four colleges, and four Student Government President appointees. Appointees must then gain a majority approval of the Student Senate in order to serve in their positions.

- (a) The Chairperson of the Judicial Advisory Board shall be appointed annually in the spring by the outgoing Student Government President in conjunction with the incoming president. Vacancies to this position will be filled by appointment by the Student Government President and approved by the remaining Student Government officers.
- (b) The Committee members representing the various colleges shall be appointed annually by the dean of that college.
- (c) The four Student Government President appointees shall serve a maximum of two consecutive years as long as the Judicial Advisory Board members remain eligible. The Student Senate must approve of these members each academic year.
 - (i) *Appointees must be of at least sophomore class standing at the time of appointment as determined by the Registrar.*

Article VIII. Judicial Advisory Board Operations & Procedures

Section 8.01 The Judicial Advisory Board shall serve as the student representatives to various committees of the Office of Student Conduct which require student input. The Judicial Advisory Board shall also make recommendations to the University Traffic Board.

Section 8.02 The Judicial Advisory Board may request annual reportable security statistics from the Office of Student Conduct.

Section 8.03 A representative from the Judicial Advisory Board will serve as the Student Government representative on the Coalition for an Alcohol Responsible Environment (C.A.R.E.) Committee.

Section 8.04 The Judicial Branch shall author legislation and make recommendations for the approval by the legislature on matters pertaining to student conduct.

Section 8.05 The Judicial Advisory Board shall review the conduct of the Executive Branch and Legislature to ensure the proper following of the Student Government Constitution and By-Laws is upheld. Unconstitutional actions taken by either branch can be voided by a majority decision of the Judicial Advisory Board.

- (a) If either branch would like to appeal the Judicial Advisory Board's decision they will do so in a written report sent to the Chief. The Chief of the Judicial Advisory Board will then meet with the Student Government Advisor, Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement (OSLE), and the Dean of Students to either vote to uphold the board's decision or reverse it.

Section 8.06 The Judicial Advisory Board shall issue interpretations of the Student Government Constitution when requested by a Student Government officer.

Section 8.07 The Judicial Advisory Board may request the presence and testimony of Student Government officers during impeachment proceedings.

Section 8.08 The Judicial Branch shall see to the execution of fair and open Student Government elections.

Section 8.09 The Judicial Advisory Board shall meet at least once every other week throughout the academic year. Meeting time and places shall be determined by the Chief of the Judicial Advisory Board. Cancellations will be e-mailed to all members at least 24 hours in advance.

- (a) Meetings are not required the first academic week of the semester weeks that contain final exams, as well as weeks that include school closures.
- (b) Meetings of the Judicial Advisory Board are closed; its decisions and agendas will be made available as public record, available in the Student Government office and posted to the Web site.
- (c) A quorum must be present to conduct the business of the Judicial Advisory Board. Quorum shall be defined as a majority of registered members.
- (d) A Committee member should not be absent from meetings of the Judicial Advisory Board. Please see By-law Article VI Section 6.06.

Article IX. Executive Branch General Provisions

Section 9.01 The Executive Branch shall consist of the President, Vice President and the Cabinet of Student Government.

Section 9.02 The Executive Branch is charged with the good governance of the Student Government and that the interests of the students are being served.

- (a) The Student Government President is charged with proposing the budget for the Student Government funded organizations for the following academic year, for approval by the legislature. The President shall assemble a committee of no less than five individuals to assist him/her in the authoring of the budget. Only that committee can edit the specifics of the budgets if the proposal is rejected by the legislature. Please see By-Laws Article VII Section 7.01
 - (i) *This committee reviews all budget requests from the SG- funded organizations and prepares the overall SG service budget and submits the budget to the General Assembly and Senate. The completed document is to be submitted to the Dean of Students on a date he/she issues.*
- (b) The Executive Branch is charged with arranging all interactions between the Student Government and the Board of Trustees or President of the University, as well as filling committee openings which request a Student Government representative.
- (c) The Executive Branch is charged with seeing to the proper, timely, and ethical stewardship of Student Government funds, keeping the records of all Student Government financial matters, conducting monthly audits of the Student Government books, and monitoring and reporting the budgets and balances.
- (d) The Executive Branch is responsible for the posting of government documents, agendas, and minutes, as well as the posting of Student Government officers' office hours. These are to be made available in the Student Government office and on the Student Government Web site. Please see By-Laws Article IX Section 9.04

- (e) The Executive Branch is to see to the proper care, usage, and availability of Student Government funded resources including: The Student Government Office and all supplies therein and the Student Organization Suite and all supplies therein, as well as all SG projects/services.
- (f) The Executive Branch is responsible for the coordination, promotion, and execution of Student Government functions.

Section 9.03 Vacancies within the Executive Branch shall be filled by the appointment of the Student Government President and approved by the Student Senate.

- (a) If both the Student Government President and Vice President positions need to be filled simultaneously, then appointments shall be made by a joint meeting of the Speaker of the Assembly and the Chief of the Judicial Advisory Board, with approval by the Student Senate.

Section 9.04 The four officer positions of the President, Vice President, Speaker of the Assembly, and Chief of the Judicial Advisory Board shall collectively be called the Executive Council. This council shall represent the leaders of the three branches.

Article X. The Cabinet

Section 10.01 The Executive Branch shall have the authority to establish its Cabinet and to hire and dismiss members as they deem necessary to see to the good business of the Student Government.

Section 10.02 At a minimum the Cabinet should consist of a Treasurer who is appointed immediately after the spring election, a Director of Communications, a Director of Special Events, Director of Public Relations, Director of Web Services, and the Residence Hall Association (RHA) and Spartan Commuter Organization (SCO) Presidents. Other Cabinet positions can be created or eliminated based on the discretion of the Student Government President, with approval by the Executive Council.

- (a) The individuals in the Cabinet must be approved by a majority vote of the Student Senate.
- (b) The President shall meet weekly with his/her Cabinet. The President shall set the time and place of the meeting.
- (c) RHA and SCO presidents will be elected by their respective Constitutions.

Article XI. Student Government Officers

Section 11.01 President [See the By-Laws Article X. Section 10.01 for additional responsibilities.]

- (a) The President shall be the principal representative of the Student Body.
- (b) The President shall be the representative of Student Government in all formal matters and at all formal functions.
- (c) The President shall be the chief executive of the Executive Branch.

Section 11.02 Vice President [See the By-Laws Article X. Section 10.02 for additional responsibilities.]

- (a) The Vice President shall act as President in the absence, disability, resignation, or impeachment of the elected President.
- (b) The Vice President will serve as Chairperson for the Student Senate and be responsible for the good governance of the Student Senate.

Section 11.03 The Chief of the Judicial Advisory Board [See the By-Laws Article X. Section 10.11 for additional responsibilities.]

- (a) The Chairperson of the Judicial Advisory Board is responsible for the governance of the Judicial Advisory Board.

Section 11.04 Speaker of the Assembly [See the By-Laws Article X. Section 10.08 for additional responsibilities.]

- (a) The Speaker of the Assembly is responsible for the good governance of the General Assembly.
- (b) It shall be the duty of the Speaker of the Assembly to establish and oversee the committees of the General Assembly. In case of absence, the Vice President will chair the meetings.

Section 11.05 Senators

- (a) Student Government Senators, as the representatives of the Student Body, are responsible for the due consideration and ethical vote of all matters of business placed before them.
- (b) A Student Senator is expected to excuse him/herself from business, which could be perceived to present a conflict of interest.

Section 11.06 Qualifications of Student Government Officers

- (a) Officers of Student Government subject to the following qualifications shall be the President and Vice President.
 - (i) A student eligible to be a candidate for an office must:
 - 1) Be regularly enrolled at The University of Tampa and carry at least 12 semester hours.
 - 2) Have a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 as determined by the Registrar.
 - 3) Be in good standing at The University of Tampa as outlined in the By-Laws. Please see the By-Laws Article IX Section 9.02.
 - 4) Only declare candidacy to a single office in the election.
 - 5) Previously attend The University of Tampa for at least two full consecutive semesters at the time of the election.
 - (ii) A student eligible to hold an office must:
 - 1) Be regularly enrolled at The University of Tampa and with at least 12 semester hours.

- 2) Have a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 as determined by the Registrar.
- 3) Be in good standing at The University of Tampa outlined in the By-Laws. Please see the By-Laws Article IX Section 9.02.
- 4) Not be a president or editor of any other campus organization, unless expressly outlined in this constitution.
- 5) Diligently carry out the duties of their respective office.

Section 11.07 Officers of Student Government subject to the following qualifications shall be the Speaker of the Assembly and the Chief of the Judicial Advisory Board.

- (a) A student eligible to be a candidate for an office must:
 - (i) Be regularly enrolled at The University of Tampa and carry at least 12 semester hours.
 - (ii) Have a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 as determined by the Registrar.
 - (iii) Be in good standing at The University of Tampa as outlined in the By-Laws. Please see the By-Laws Article IX Section 9.02.
 - (iv) Only declare candidacy to a single office in the election.
 - (v) Previously attend The University of Tampa for at least two full consecutive semesters at the time of the election.
- (b) A student eligible to hold an office must:
 - (i) Be regularly enrolled at The University of Tampa and with at least 12 semester hours.
 - (ii) Have a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 as determined by the Registrar.
 - (iii) Be in good standing at The University of Tampa as outlined in the By-Laws. Please see the By-Laws Article IX Section 9.02.
 - (iv) Diligently carry out the duties of their respective office.

Section 11.08 Qualifications of Student Senators

- (a) A student eligible to be a candidate for a Student Senate seat must:
 - (i) Be in good standing and regularly enrolled at The University of Tampa and carry at least 12 semester hours.
 - (ii) Have a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 as determined by the Registrar.
 - (iii) Senators elected to represent their class must have the appropriate number of credit hours and grade point average when elected.
 - 1) This requirement can be waived by the Judicial Committee for incoming freshmen with sophomore standing.
- (b) A student eligible to hold a Student Senate seat must:
 - (i) Be in good standing and regularly enrolled at The University of Tampa and with at least 12 semester hours.

- (ii) Except for a first-year students, have a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 as determined by the Registrar. First-year students must have a 2.50 at the end of the first semester, in order to continue in office for the remainder of the year.
- (iii) Diligently carry out the duties expected of a Student Senator.

Article XII. Elections

- Section 12.01** The offices of Student Government President, Vice President, and the Speaker of the Assembly, as well as all Senators are all elected by the Student Body.
- Section 12.02** The President and Vice President shall be elected on a single ballot.
- Section 12.03** Senators representing the various classes can only be elected by members of those classes. Campus-wide Senators shall be subject to the vote of the entire Student Body.

Article XIII. Impeachment

- Section 13.01** Elected officers of the Student Government may be impeached by a 2/3 vote of the Student Senate.
- Section 13.02** Impeachment proceedings may be initiated by any committee of the General Assembly or by the Judicial Advisory Board. A Committee may be requested to initiate proceedings by any officer in the Student Government.
- Section 13.03** The Judicial Advisory Board is tasked with attesting to the validity of charges against the elected official. If by a 2/3 vote the committee votes to go ahead with impeachment the decision is then forwarded to the Student Senate.
- Section 13.04** The officer whose impeachment is being considered has the opportunity to speak for his/herself at the Student Senate meeting prior to the impeachment vote.

Article XIV. Legislation Defined

- Section 14.01** A bill shall be defined as any proposed legislation within the operation of Student Government, which either seeks to alter the By-Laws of Student Government or tasks the Executive Branch with the execution of some policy recommendation.
 - (a) A financial appropriation shall be considered a bill of the Student Government.

Section 14.02 A resolution shall be a piece of legislation stating an opinion of the student body or calling the University to take some action over which the Student Government does not have direct control. While resolutions are not binding in nature, they do reflect the position of the Student Government and its constituents on a particular topic.

Article XV. The By-Laws

Section 15.01 The By-Laws of Student Government shall be a separate document and shall not be considered a part of the Student Government Constitution.

Section 15.02 The By-Laws shall serve as the standing rules and procedures of the Student Government. The By-Laws helps to support the Constitution.

Section 15.03 The By-Laws can be passed similarly to a regular bill and can be authored by any entity of Student Government.

Article XVI. Amendments and Revisions

Section 16.01 Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by any officer of Student Government or General Assembly committee.

Section 16.02 The proposed amendment shall be forwarded to the Judicial Advisory Board, which will debate, consider, and vote to pass the proposed amendment along to the Senate. The amendment cannot advance to the Senate without a 2/3 vote of the Judicial Advisory Board.

Section 16.03 A vote of 2/3 of the Student Senate is required to enact an amendment to this Constitution.

Section 16.04 Amendments to this Constitution go into effect after the spring election cycle.

Section 16.05 Only after approval by the legislature of the Student Government and the administration of the University shall an amendment become part of the Constitution.