

**CHAPTER 53. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS**

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## CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

### Statement of Purpose

It is the primary purpose of the Student Government of The University of Texas at Dallas, to represent the student body, and provide a unified voice in student dealings with individuals and agencies outside of the Student Government. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Representing those ideals, goals, and programs that are of general interest to the student body to the administration and other groups within and outside the University structure.
2. Serving as a forum for the presentation of student interests and desires, determining which of those represent the opinions of a majority of the student body, and then acting as an agency to further the accomplishment of those goals.
3. Enhancing the intellectual life of the University, and ensuring that the opportunity is available for students to expose themselves to the widest possible range of contemporary thought and opinion.
4. Working with the administration and faculty to ensure that adequate programs are provided to meet the students' needs for sports, recreation, and entertainment.
5. Advising the administration of student opinion of proposed University programs.

### ARTICLE I Student Senate

#### *Subarticle A*

#### *Section 1. Composition*

(1) The senate seats shall be allocated based on the classification of the student body i.e. freshman, sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students. For each classification, one senate seat shall be allocated for every 500 students within that classification. If a classification has between five hundred and one (501) and one thousand (1000) students, it shall be appointed two Senate seats, and so forth. The seats will be contested at large. Students will be classified according to University classification of their hours. Students have the right to appeal their classification to the Election Board. The freshman seats shall be filled by appointment within the first month of the fall semester.

(3) The Chair of the Student Organization Forum (SOF) shall be a nonvoting exofficio member of the Student Senate. If the Student Organization Forum is not in existence, then a representative of student organizations shall be selected by the Senate to serve as a nonvoting member.

(4) A member of the Executive Board of the Alumni Association of UTD may serve as a

nonvoting ex-officio member of the Student Senate.

(5) The advisor(s) to the Student Senate shall be nonvoting exofficio member(s) of the Senate.

(6) The UTD members of the Student Advisory Council to the Board of Regents shall be nonvoting ex-officio members of the Senate.

(7) The executive officers of the Student Senate shall include a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a chairperson of the Academic Affairs Committee, a chairperson of the Communications Committee, a chairperson of the Student Affairs Committee, a chairperson of the Technology Committee, a chairperson of the Residential Student Affairs Committee, a chairperson of Legislative Affairs Committee, and a chairperson of the Graduate and International Affairs Committee, who shall fulfill the qualifications set forth in Article III of this Constitution.

### ***Section 2. Selection of Members***

(1) Neither the President or Vice-President can serve in any other position elected by the student body or appointed by a member of the Executive Committee within the Student Government; however, either is eligible for recommendation to positions exterior to the Student Government.

(2) All senators shall be elected during the month of Spring of each year.

a. An elected senator will be allowed to take his/her seat in which the powers and responsibilities of each are vested after meeting the requirements specified in the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

b. Concurrent holding of Senate seats by one student shall not be allowed.

(3) The offices of Secretary, Treasurer, and the Chairpersons for the Committees of: Academic Affairs, Communications, Student Affairs, Technology, Graduate and International Affairs, Residential Student Affairs, and Legislative Affairs shall be filled by the Student Senate from among its membership by majority vote.

(4) The Director of Student Development shall serve as the advisor to the Student Government. In the event that the Director of Student Development is unable to serve (such as for reasons of medical leave or position vacancy), the Student Government Executive Committee, Dean of Students, and Vice President for Student Affairs will determine a temporary advisor.

### ***Section 3. Term of Office***

(1) The term of office for the President and Vice President and all other Executive Officers of the Student Senate shall be from the first day of May to the last day in April.

(2) The term of office of all other graduate and undergraduate senators shall extend from the first day of May until the last day of April of the following year. Vacancies occurring in the Student Senate shall be filled in accordance with Article VI of this Constitution.

#### ***Subarticle B***

##### ***Section 1. Presiding Officer***

The President of the Student Government shall preside over all meetings of the Student Senate and may vote in the event of a tie vote. The Student Government Vice President shall preside over all meetings and/or portions of meetings in the absence of the President and shall

exercise the option to vote on all matters before the Senate unless he/she is acting as chair of the meeting. In this case, the Vice President would vote only in the case of a tie.

### ***Section 2. Quorum***

One-half of the current membership of the Student Senate, rounding up, shall constitute a quorum. The presence of three-fourths of the current membership of the Student Senate shall be necessary to vote on proposed amendments to this Constitution.

### ***Section 3. Meetings***

The Student Senate shall hold a regular meeting twice a month during the Fall/Spring semesters, and once a month during summer sessions.

## **ARTICLE II Functions and Powers**

### ***Subarticle A***

#### ***Section 1. Legislative Power***

The legislative power of the Student Body shall be vested in the Student Senate and shall be the highest level of elected Student Government of The University of Texas at Dallas.

#### ***Section 2. Powers and Responsibilities of the Student Senate***

The Student Senate shall have the power and responsibility to:

- (1) Be the official representative of the student body.
- (2) In accordance with Series 50203 of the *Rules and Regulations* of the Board of Regents, express its opinion concerning any topic that is of interest to the Student Body and discuss any questions or matters within the scope of this Constitution, or relating to the powers and functions of any organizations provided for in this Constitution, and may make recommendations to any individual or group, or both, on any such matters or questions.
- (3) Recommend or enact legislation.
- (4) Appoint, or recommend the appointment of, from among the Student Body, the student members of all Student-Faculty Committees and other University-wide committees in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents and the laws of the State of Texas. These members may be removed upon a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
  - a. Members of the Student Fee Advisory Committee, or the committee which makes recommendations concerning the use of student union and student service fees, shall be appointed by the Student Senate.
- (5) Confirm all appointments made by the Student Government President.
- (6) Ensure the right of the Student Association members to address issues during the course of all meetings.
- (7) Form special subcommittees to investigate and recommend solutions to situations deserving special attention.
- (8) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

(9) The President, along with the Vice President, shall have the power to recommend Executive Officers from the Student Senate pending approval by a simple majority vote of the Senate. The appointments shall be made after the Spring elections in accordance with the Standing Rules.

***Section 3. Voting by Proxy***

Voting by proxy on matters before the Student Senate or other bodies set forth in this Constitution shall not be allowed.

***Section 4. Parliamentary Authority***

Unless otherwise prescribed in this Constitution of the Student Body of The University of Texas at Dallas, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall serve as the official rules of procedure.

***Subarticle B***

***Section 1. Powers and Responsibilities of the President***

The executive powers shall be vested in a President. The President shall have the power and responsibility to:

- (1) Preside at all meetings of the Student Senate and Executive Committee meetings
- (2) Recommend legislation to the Student Senate.
- (3) Execute all legislation passed by the Student Senate.
- (4) Execute and enforce all decisions rendered by the Student Judicial Board.(5) Unless otherwise prescribed in this Constitution, set the agenda for all Student Senate meetings.
- (6) Exercise the option of voting in the case of a tie vote.
- (7) Serve as a representative to the Student Fee Advisory Committee, or the committee which makes recommendations concerning the use of student union and student service fees.
- (8) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.
- (9) Serve as the official student voice of the UT Dallas student body.

***Section 2. Powers and Responsibilities of the Vice President***

The Vice President shall have the power and responsibility to:

- (1) Assist the President in the execution of his/her duties.
- (2) Perform the duties of the President in the case of his/her absence.
- (3) Exercise the option to vote on all matters brought before the Senate unless he/she is acting as chair of the meeting.
- (4) Become President, if the office of President should become vacant, for the remainder of the term of office in accordance with Article VI of this Constitution.
- (5) Serve as a representative to the Student Fee Advisory Committee. (6) Be the official representative of non-degree students as defined by the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.
- (7) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 3. Secretary of the Student Senate***

The Secretary of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Maintain a record of all proceedings of the Student Senate in conjunction with the Student Senate office secretary.
- (3) Assist the President and Vice President in the execution of their duties.
- (4) Oversee, under the direction of the Student Body President, all Senate correspondence.
- (5) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 4. Academic Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate***

The Academic Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Serve as Chairperson of the Academic Affairs Committee.
- (3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 5. Communications Chairperson of the Student Senate***

The Communications Chairperson of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Serve as Chairperson of the Communications Committee.
- (3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 6. Legislative Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate***

The Legislative Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Serve as Chairperson of the Legislative Affairs Committee.
- (3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and the Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 7. Student Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate***

The Student Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Serve as Chairperson of the Student Affairs Committee.
- (3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and the Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 8. Technology Chairperson of the Student Senate***

The Technology Chairperson of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.

- (2) Serve as Chairperson of the Technology Committee.
- (3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and the Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 9. Residential Student Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate***

The Residential Student Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Serve as Chairperson of the Residential Student Affairs Committee.
- (3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and the Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 10. Graduate and International Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate***

The Graduate and International Affairs Chairperson of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Serve as Chairperson of the Graduate and International Affairs Committee.
- (3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and the Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 11. Treasurer of the Student Senate***

The Treasurer of the Student Senate shall:

- (1) Be an elected member of the Student Senate.
- (2) Provide monthly reports on financial status to the Student Senate.
- (3) Publish by January 1 and June 1 of each year a financial statement which includes amounts appropriated to each activity, total allocations to date, current balance to date, and other information the Student Senate may designate.
- (4) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 12. Executive Committee of the Student Senate***

The Executive Committee of the Student Senate shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chairperson of each Standing Committee.

- (1) The Student Government President serves as the chair and only votes in the case of a tie. UT Dallas-
- (2) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

**ARTICLE III  
Qualifications and Elections**

***Section 1. General Qualifications***

No person shall be a candidate or hold office under the authority of this Constitution unless he/she shall:

- (1) Be regularly enrolled at UT Dallas for at least a minimum of nine (9) hours on the

undergraduate level or six (6) hours on the graduate level.

(2) Hold a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75 and not be on disciplinary probation, scholastic or otherwise. Students interested in serving on the Executive Committee must have a cumulative grade point average of a 3.0 and at least one semester of experience on the Student Senate.

(3) Be a regularly enrolled student and remain a member in the school from which he/she was elected in order to continue membership in the Student Senate.

(4) To be elected to the office of President, the candidate must have previously served on the Student Senate at least one full term prior to running for election. Should a President-Elect not fulfill his/her term to April 30 prior to taking office, he/she is no longer eligible. To be elected to the office of Vice President, the candidate must have previously served on the Student Senate for a complete regular semester (either the semester preceding the election semester or any other regular semester).

### ***Section 2. Voting***

All students enrolled at The University of Texas at Dallas are entitled to vote in all student elections.

### ***Section 3. Elections***

(1) All elections provided for in this Constitution shall be administered by the Elections Board as specified in the Bylaws and the Standing Rules of the Student Senate.

(2) To be elected President or Vice President of the Student Body, a candidate must receive a simple majority vote.

(3) All votes shall be cast by secret ballot. No write in candidates are allowed.

(4) In the event of a tie vote, a runoff election shall be held.

(5) Special elections may be called by the Student Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the Student Senate.

## **ARTICLE IV Standing Committees**

### ***Section 1. Standing Committees***

The standing committees of the Student Senate shall consist of the Student Affairs Committee, the Residential Student Affairs Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Communications Committee, the Legislative Affairs Committee, the Technology Committee, and the Graduate and International Affairs Committee.

### ***Section 2. Composition***

Each committee shall be composed of at least one senator in addition to the committee Chair at the discretion of the Student Government Executive Committee.

### ***Section 3. Chairperson***

The Chairperson of each committee shall have the right to include items on the agenda of the Student Senate meetings subject to the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

***Section 4. Committee Responsibilities***

- (1) Communications Committee  
Shall be responsible for maintaining awareness between the Student Body and the Student Senate.
- (2) Student Affairs Committee  
Shall be responsible for addressing and responding to areas of interest and concern related to Student Life.
- (3) Technology Committee  
Shall be responsible for overseeing and maintaining the Student Senate technology, and addressing areas of concern from the student body in regards to technology.
- (4) Graduate and International Affairs Committee  
Shall be responsible for addressing and responding to the areas of interest and concern for graduate and international students.
- (5) Academic Affairs Committee  
Shall be responsible for addressing and responding to areas of interest and concern related to the academic programs at The University of Texas at Dallas.
- (6) Residential Student Affairs Committee  
Shall be responsible for addressing and responding to the areas of interest and concern for residential students.
- (7) Legislative Affairs Committee
  - a. Shall be responsible for coordinating all Student Senate sponsored communications with Legislators, Representatives, and Municipal Governments.
- (8) All committees shall be responsible for any other duties as may be enacted in the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

**ARTICLE V**  
**Student Judicial Board**

***Section 1. Duties***

The Student Judicial Board shall arbitrate over matters of interpretation of this Constitution and acts of the Student Senate. Any member of the Student Senate may petition the Student Judicial Board concerning any matter heretofore mentioned. The Student Judicial Board shall decide, by unanimous consent of all its members, whether to hear a case and shall, by a simple majority, render a decision that shall be final and binding upon all concerned parties.

***Section 2. Composition***

The Student Judicial Board shall be composed of five (5) members of the Student Discipline Committee, as selected by the Dean of Students, who do not sit on the Student Senate. Of the five (5) members, there shall be at least one undergraduate and one graduate member, the remaining members to be selected from either group.

### ***Section 3 Term of Office***

Members of this committee will serve for the full academic term in which they were selected.

### ***Section 3.Presiding Officer***

The presiding officer of the Student Judicial Board shall be the Chairperson, and he/she shall be elected by the members of that body for his/her term of office.

### ***Section 4 Other Duties***

The Student Judicial Board shall act in any other such matters as directed by the President of The University of Texas at Dallas.

## **ARTICLE VI Vacating an Office**

### ***Section 1. Removal from Office***

(1) *Removal of appointed officials.* Any appointed official may be removed from their position by their appointer. If the removal involves a position that had previously been approved by the Senate, a simple majority vote of the Senate is required for removal. This section applies only to executive appointments, such as but not limited to: ad-hoc chairpersons, task force chairpersons, sub-committee chairpersons, and liaisons of the President.

(2) *Removal of Elected Officials.* Any elected official of the Student Government shall be removable from his or her office by means of impeachment or acts of malfeasance in office.

Procedures to remove an elected official shall be handled as follows:

- a. The Senate shall have solo power of impeachment, and possible removal from office. The Chair of the Student Judicial Board shall preside over the hearing. Should charges be brought against the Chair of the Student Judicial Board, the Vice Chair of the Student Judicial Board shall preside.
- b. A resolution shall be submitted to the floor of the Senate by any Senator outlining the reasons for impeachment. With a simple majority approval of the resolution, the Speaker shall appoint a committee of five Senators for the purposes of general investigation. If the committee determines that their findings support the accusations, the committee shall present to the floor a resolution outlining formal Articles of Impeachment. If this resolution passes by a simple majority, then the Chair of the Student Judicial Board will preside over the final impeachment hearing. Any questions involving procedure shall be resolved by a vote of the Senators. A two-thirds vote in favor of any one of the formal Articles of Impeachment shall result in removal from office.

- c. Any official who has been removed from office pursuant to Article VI, Section 2 shall not be permitted to hold any office or serve in any other capacity within the Student Government for the remainder of his/her attendance at this institution.

### ***Section 2. Succession***

If for any reason the Office of President should become vacant, the Vice President shall become President.

If the office of Vice President should become vacant, it shall be filled from among the current membership of the Senate in a method to be prescribed in the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

### ***Section 3. Vacant Senate Seats***

(1) On completion of the election, if there are any seats either at the undergraduate or graduate level that have not been filled by the filed candidates, the following will apply:

- a. The President shall have the power to appoint with simple majority approval by the senate.

### ***Section 4. Recall Elections***

Any elected person serving under the provisions of this Constitution shall be subject to an automatic recall election upon presentation of a petition bearing a number of signatures of the appropriate constituency specified in the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UT Dallas.

(1) The petition must be submitted to the Student Government President, or if the office of President is in question, to any member of the Executive Committee.

(2) After receipt of the petition by the appropriate official, a recall election must be held in a timely manner.

(3) The election shall be conducted as if it were a regular election for that office. The member in question shall be a candidate by right and shall continue in office until the election results are certified by the Elections Board.

## **ARTICLE VII Ratification and Amendment**

### ***Section I. Student Senate Initiated Amendments***

Any member of the Student Senate may propose amendments to this Constitution. The proposed amendment must lay on the table for twenty-eight (28) days, after which the Student Senate must vote on the proposed amendment. If two-thirds (2/3) of the total membership of the Student Senate favor the amendment, it must be submitted to the Student Body for approval as stated in Section 3.

### ***Section 2. Student Body Initiated Amendment***

If members of the Student Body equal to at least fifty (50) percent of the certified vote count from the last regular Spring election petition the Student Senate to amend the Constitution, the

Student Senate must call an election within thirty (30) days for approval or disapproval of said amendment.

***Section 3. Ratification***

(1) Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by the Student Government Senate at any two regular meetings, or by petition of the student body signed by at least five hundred (500) students.

(2) Any amendment proposed by petition shall be brought to immediate vote of the student body.

(3) Amendments proposed in the Senate shall be approved only by a two-thirds vote at the next regular meeting succeeding the meeting of presentation.

(4) Upon approval by Senate, the proposed amendment shall be presented to the students of The University of Texas Dallas in a referendum that shall be publicized for at least two weeks in advance.

(5) If said amendment is approved by a two-thirds vote of the students voting, the amendment shall then become a part of this Constitution.”

***Section 4. Permanent Copy***

Such amendments shall be attached to the permanent copy of this Constitution preserved in the records of the Student Senate.

***Section 5. Deletion and Substitution***

Amendments by deletion and substitution are allowed.