

**Bylaws of the *Senate* of the Student Government Association of  
The University of Alabama in Huntsville**

**W**e, the *Senate* of the Student Government Association of The University of Alabama in Huntsville, in order to provide ourselves with a set of rules and guidelines for governing the actions of this body, and to provide a framework for the members to freely and openly express the student ideas and opinions, do hereby establish these Bylaws for *Senate* of the Student Government Association of The University of Alabama in Huntsville, further referred to as UAH. These bylaws, hereinafter referred to as the Bylaws, are in accordance with the Constitution of the Student Government Association of The University of Alabama in Huntsville, hereinafter referred to as the Constitution. Furthermore, these Bylaws shall act as the official governing document for the daily operations of the SGA *Senate*.

**Article I: Committees**

All functions of the SGA *Senate* shall be awarded, according their relevance, to specific committees created for the express purpose of overseeing various aspects of student life and meeting the requirements of the *Senate* as delegated unto the body by the SGA Constitution. The standing committees of the SGA *Senate* shall include: Rules and Revisions, Student Organizations, Campus Affairs, and Public Relations. All committees shall have no less than three (3) members.

**Section 1:** The *Speaker* shall serve as an ex-officio member on all committees, standing and special.

**Section 2:** Committee meetings and their attendance are required as follows:

1. Committees will meet, at a minimum, bi-weekly to conduct business.
2. Committee meetings may be conducted via the following methods, as approved by the *Speaker*:
  - a. In person
  - b. Telephone
  - c. Email
  - d. Other electronic communication, as technology permits. The form of communication must be available to all members of the committee.
3. Committee Chairs shall be required to submit minutes of all business conducted to the *Speaker* forty-eight (48) hours after the conclusion of the meeting. If the *Speaker* determines that a committee is not meeting the requirements of assigned tasks, he or she is empowered to call for a special session of the offending committee.
4. Absences from committee meetings shall be counted toward the Senator's absences from *Senate* meetings. A committee absence shall be counted as a half-absence.
5. Committee absences may be excused at the discretion of the *Vice President*, in conjunction with either the *Speaker* or the *Parliamentarian*.

**Section 3: Committee Leadership**

1. The Committee Roundtable
  - a. Once per month it shall be required that all standing and special committee chairs attend a meeting with the *Speaker*, with the purpose of such meeting being, but not limited, to establish goals, submit progress reports, and to assign members to open committee positions.
  - b. At the first meeting of the new legislative year the committee chairs shall appoint Senators to committees based on preferences submitted during the first meeting of the *Senate* in a given legislative year, with the order of the review of such preferences based on a Senator's seniority within the organization.
2. Each committee at its first meeting of the new legislative year shall internally elect an assistant chair who shall serve as the chair pro-tempore.
3. It shall be the duty of committee chairs to establish and hold regular meetings, to which all members of the committee are required to attend.

**Section 4: The *Senate* Rules and Revisions Committee**

1. The Rules and Revisions committee is responsible for the review of all legislation and the internal implementation of all rules and regulations of the *Senate*.
2. The Rules and Revisions committee shall be limited to no more than seven (7) members in addition to the minimum membership defined above.
3. The duties and responsibilities of the Rules and Revisions Committee are as follows:
  - a. To meet as required by the Rules and Revisions Committee Chair.
  - b. To review all *Senate* Bills and Resolutions for errors and make revisions prior to their passage.
  - c. To review old legislation for obsolescence and revisions.
  - d. To familiarize members of the *Senate* with the rules of order, and these Bylaws.
  - e. To review infractions of the rules in place and/or these Bylaws and make recommendations to the *Senate* concerning such.
  - f. To contact members of the *Senate* and issue warnings for rules violations.
  - g. To present all Bills of Removal to the *Senate* for consideration.
  - h. To act on any referrals sent to the committee by the *Senate*.
  - i. To oversee and review the progress of all resolutions passed since the 2006-2007 legislative year.

**Section 5: The *Senate* Registered Student Organizations Committee**

1. The Registered Student Organizations committee is responsible for the confirming the eligibility of all applicable student groups and the oversight thereof.
2. The duties and responsibilities thereof are as follows:
  - a. To meet as required by the Student Organizations Committee Chair.
  - b. To make recommendations to the *Senate* as to grant or reject a club's charter, both pending and historical.

- c. To assure paperwork of all registrations on file with the SGA is current and up to date.
- d. To aid organizations with recruitment and retention of new members.
- e. To connect RSOs with senators for roundtable in Article III.
- f. To act on any referrals sent to the committee by the *Senate*.

**Section 6:** The *Senate* Campus Affairs Committee

1. The Campus Affairs Committee is charged with the betterment of campus and student conditions.
2. The duties and responsibilities of the Campus Affairs Committee are as follows:
  - a. To meet as required by the Campus Affairs Committee Chair.
  - b. To determine ways to improve student life on campus.
  - c. To determine and initiate projects to better the University.
  - d. To address student complaints on campus.
  - e. To work to improve student life and promote student involvement.
  - f. To act on any referrals sent to the committee by the *Senate*.

**Section 7:** The Public Relations Committee

1. The Public Relations Committee is charged with the advertising and promotion of all SGA events.
2. The duties and responsibilities of the Public Relations Committee are as follows:
  - a. To meet as required by the Public Relations Committee chair.
  - b. To promote all SGA sponsored activities on and off campus.
  - c. To promote events with a direct SGA involvement.
  - d. To collaborate with the Public Relations Committee Head.
  - e. To act on any referrals sent to the committee by the *Senate*.
  - f. To assist the Director of Communications in upkeep of the SGA website.

**ARTICLE II: *Senate* Leadership**

**Section 1:** *Speaker*

1. In addition to the powers and responsibilities defined within Article IV, Section Five (5) of the Constitution, the *Speaker* shall have final say in all disputes between committee chairs,
2. The *Speaker* shall be required to serve a minimum of six (6) office hours per week.

**Section 2:** The Line of Succession

1. In the event that the *Vice President* or the *Speaker* should be removed, absent, or incapacitated the line of succession for the *Senate* shall be defined as follows: *Vice President, Speaker, Rules and Revisions Committee Chair*.
2. Within each Committee, the Assistant Committee Chair shall act as the Committee Chair in the absence, removal, or incapacitation of the chair.

## ARTICLE III: RSO Liaison

### Section 1: RSO Meetings

1. In addition to the Office hour per week requirement as defined in Article IV, Section 4 of the Constitution, all senators are required to attend one (1) open-door RSO meeting per month.
2. The *Speaker* of the *Senate* shall be in charge of organizing and delegating senators to respective RSO meetings. College Senators will be given preference over RSOs in their college. Class senators will be assigned to non-college affiliated RSOs.
3. The RSO committee shall be responsible for determining RSO interest and connecting the RSO to the senator that the *Speaker* assigns.

## ARTICLE IV: Meeting Format

**Section 1.** The *Senate* will operate by the parliamentary procedure contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, eleventh edition. Variances from this parliamentary procedure shall be contained within these Bylaws. Privileges of the Floor in the *Senate* are reserved for unusual and final business; all other business shall be conducted in the various committees of the *Senate*. Minutes for meetings of *Senate* shall be distributed within forty-eight (48) hours of the conclusion of the meeting.

**Section 2.** The *Vice President* shall be responsible for providing the Orders of the Day at the beginning of the meeting. The Orders of the Day provide an agenda for the proper conduct of business and are the official order in which business shall be considered at that meeting. The Orders of the Day can be distributed in electronic or hardcopy form. The Orders of the Day shall include, at a minimum, the following:

1. A Call to Order: The *Vice President* shall call the meeting to order.
2. A Quorum Call: The *Secretary* of The *Senate* shall call the roll to determine if a quorum is present.
3. Approval of the Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting of the *Senate* shall be read by the *Secretary*, unless a motion is made to waive the reading thereof with passage of such motion requiring a simple majority. After such event the *Vice President* shall call for any objections or amendments members desire to make to the minutes, following which they shall call for the approval of the minutes as read and or amended, with approval being dependent on a simple majority of the voting body to vote in the affirmative.
4. Guest Recognition: The *Vice President* shall inquire if any guests present wish to be recognized in the official minutes of the body.
5. Announcements: The *Vice President* shall make any necessary announcements to The *Senate* at this time.
6. Old Business: The *Vice President* shall open the floor for previously discussed business. Any legislation or discussions that are being continued from a previous meeting are proper for discussion at this time.

7. New Business: The *Vice President* shall open the floor for new business. Any legislation or discussions that have not been previously presented to the *Senate* are proper for discussion at this time. For all matters of legislative nature three readings of the article shall be required before final action may be taken. The first reading thereof, shall be conducted by the *Senate* Rules and Revisions Committee, the second done before with the third reading to be held before the entirety of the *Senate*. Only the third reading of the article may be waived, with such a motion requiring a supermajority, to vote in the affirmative.
8. Officer Reports: The *Vice President* shall grant each Officer of the SGA such time as they need to report on their activities.

## **ARTICLE V: Voting Procedures**

For all legislation and other matters requiring a vote a motion to approve with a second must be made. No motion shall be considered unless a second is received within ten (10) seconds of the initial motion. For a vote to be official, quorum must be present in the meeting. The following methods shall be used in all matters requiring a vote:

### **Section 1. Voice Vote**

A voice vote is allowable where the motion is a procedural one and the motion only requires a majority vote for passage. A voice vote consists of a call for ‘ayes’ and ‘no’s’; after which the *Vice President* shall determine whether the ‘ayes’ or ‘no’s’ carried the voice vote and rule accordingly. Any Senator who disagrees with the decision of the *Vice President* shall be allowed to call for division and request that a vote by show of hands be taken. The *Secretary* shall record the decision of the *Vice President* in the minutes.

### **Section 2. Show of Hands Vote**

A show of hands vote shall be allowable in all situations, except for final passage of legislation and confirmation of appointments made by the *President*. A show of hands votes consists of the *Vice President* calling for “all those in favor” and “all those opposed” to raise their hands as directed. After each of the three calls the hands shall be counted by the *Vice- President* and the *Secretary*. The *Secretary* shall record only the results of the vote in the minutes.

### **Section 3. Roll Call Vote**

A roll call vote shall be allowable in all situations, but it is recommended only for final passage of legislation and any other situation where the exact record of the ‘ayes’ and ‘no’s’ would be appropriate. To conduct the roll call vote, the *Secretary* calls the roll of the Senators by last name, at which point they vote ‘aye’ if they are in favor, ‘no’ if they oppose, or ‘I abstain’ if they choose not to vote.

### **Section 4. Secret Ballot**

A secret ballot vote shall be allowable in all situations, but it is recommended only for voting on appointments made by the *President* and any other situations where the vote is sensitive. The Senators shall record their vote, either ‘aye’, ‘no’, or ‘I abstain’ on a slip of

paper and hand it to the *Secretary*. The *Secretary* shall record only the results of the vote in the minutes.

## **ARTICLE VI: Attendance, Impeachment, and Motions of No Confidence.**

**Section 1.** Senators shall be limited to no more than two (2) unexcused absences from *Senate* meetings in their elected term. Half-absences shall be counted for any Senator that arrives to the meeting after the calling of their name in the roll call or leaves before the final roll call of dismissal. Half-absences may be determined, at the *Vice President's* discretion acting in conjunction with either the *Parliamentarian* or the *Speaker* of the *Senate*, to be either excused or unexcused. Senators arriving after the call of his/her name in the opening roll call may not be counted towards quorum and shall not have voting privileges until recognized by the *Vice President*. This recognition shall be noted in the official minutes and its effects on quorum.

**Section 2.** Senators who violate the maximum number of unexcused absences may have action taken against them, to possibly include a Bill of Impeachment, as defined in Article VII, Section 6 and 7 of the Constitution for negligence of duty and failure to serve.

**Section 3.** All Normal Bills of Impeachment are to be presented as follows:

1. The Rules and Revisions Chair shall present Normal Bills of Impeachment, after an initial reading by the Rules and Revisions committee, and shall oversee the prosecution for the impeachment.
2. The defendant is issued notice of the pending Bill of Impeachment a minimum of two (2) days before its first reading to the *Senate* by the Presiding Officer.
  - a. The Presiding Officer shall be the *Vice President* for the impeachment of any Senator.
  - b. The Presiding Officer shall be the *Parliamentarian* for the impeachment of any *Executive Branch* member.
3. Two readings of the Bill of Impeachment are required before final action may be taken.
4. Readings of any Normal Bill of Impeachment cannot be waived.
5. The defendant shall be given a minimum of one (1) week after the first reading to prepare a defense before final action.
6. A special session may be called for Bills of Impeachment as long as the defendant's time to prepare is not infringed.
7. After the first reading of a Bill of Impeachment, the defendant's voting rights are suspended pending the outcome of the Bill of Impeachment.
8. With the passage of a Bill of Impeachment, removal of a Senator is immediate. A statement to the effect is to be issued to the Exponent, the SGA Advisor, and the *Vice President* of Student affairs, along with a signed copy of the Bill of Removal.

**Section 4.** All Expedited Bills of Impeachment, as defined in Article VII, Section 7 of the Constitution, are to be presented as follows:

1. The *Vice President*, with the *Parliamentarian* and/ or the *Speaker* of the *Senate* shall present a bill to the Rules and Revisions committee for an Expedited Impeachment
2. The Rules and Revisions Chair shall present the Bill of Expedited Impeachment after an initial reading by the Rules and Revisions Committee and shall oversee the prosecution for the impeachment.
3. The defendant is issued notice of the pending Bill of Expedited Impeachment a minimum of 2 days before its first reading to the *Senate* by the Presiding Officer, and their voting rights may be immediately suspended at the discretion of the *Vice President*.
4. The defendant shall be given two (2) days after the notice to prepare a defense.
5. The Bill of Expedited Impeachment will be introduced as new business to the *Senate*, and the second reading of that bill may be waved.
6. With the passage of a Bill of Impeachment, removal of a Senator is immediate. A statement to the effect is to be issued to the Exponent, the SGA Advisor, and the *Vice President* of Student affairs, along with a signed copy of the Bill of Removal

**Section 5.** The *Senate* may at any time call for a Vote of No Confidence against any internally-elected or internally-appointed officer. A Vote of No Confidence shall be comprised of a motion and a second brought to the *Senate* floor, and requires a hyper-majority of the entirety of the *Senate*, including absent members, with the votes of absent members to be collected electronically within forty-eight (48) of the motion. The *Secretary* shall notify all absent members of the vote as soon as the meeting is concluded. Upon a successful Vote of No Confidence, the officer shall be removed from their appointed or elected position as an officer only.

**Section 6. Impeachment Succession.**

1. In the event that that *Vice President* and/or *Parliamentarian* is absent, incapacitated, or the position is currently vacant the missing position's responsibilities fall to the *Speaker* of the *Senate*, unless the *Speaker* of the *Senate* or *Vice President* is the defendant
  - a. In the case that the *Speaker* of the *Senate* or *Vice President* is the defendant the Rules and Revisions Chair shall fulfill the missing position's responsibilities and the Rules and Revisions Chair's responsibilities shall fall to the Rules and Revisions Assistant Chair.
2. In the event that the Rules and Revisions Chair is the defendant, their responsibilities shall fall to the Assistant Rules and Revisions Chair. In the event that the Assistant Rules and Revisions Chair is absent, incapacitated, or the position is currently vacant the responsibilities of the Rules and Revisions Chair shall fall to another committee chair at the discretion of the *Speak* of the *Senate*.

## **ARTICLE VII: Amendments and Resolutions**

**Section 1.** These Bylaws may be amended by a hyper-majority vote by the *Senate* after the amendment has undergone three (3) readings. The first reading shall take place within the Rules and Revisions Committee, with the subsequent readings to take place within the *Senate*. The first reading before the entire *Senate* may not be waived.

**Section 2.** A notation shall be made in this Section of these Bylaws for all bills of amendment that have been passed by hyper-majority vote of the *Senate*, with reference to a copy of the bill of amendment, its vote totals and signatures, and the date of ratification, to be kept on file in the SGA Office for future reference by all members of the student body. All changes to these Bylaws shall be officially incorporated into the text at the time of the next election of the *Senate*, and new copies of these Bylaws provided for all members with the requisite changes.

**Section 3.** Each bill passed shall follow a certain format which shall be set forth upon entrance into the SGA. Such format shall include resolution number, persons who introduced said resolution, *President's* signature, if passed and date of passage, and the action to be taken.

## **ARTICLE VIII: Ratification**

These Bylaws for the *Senate* of the Student Government Association of The University of Alabama in Huntsville, and any amendments thereto, shall be considered ratified when a hyper-majority of the presiding Senators votes in the affirmative and take effect immediately upon ratification. Any conflict between the binding legislation and the Bylaws shall yield in favor of these Bylaws. Powers not explicitly delegated in the Constitution or these Bylaws fall to the discretion of the *Vice President*. Past tradition shall take precedence when applicable.

We, the undersigned, by affixing our signatures to this document, do hereby ratify these Bylaws for the *Senate* of the Student Government Association of The University of Alabama in Huntsville and agree to the above statement regarding the authority of the *Senate*.