

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

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**CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT ASSOCIATION 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, hereafter known as the Student Senate, to represent the Student Body, hereafter known as the Student Association, and provide a unified voice in student dealings with individuals and agencies outside of that Association. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Representing those ideals, goals, and programs that are of general interest to the Student Association to the administration and other groups within and without 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 Association, 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) At the undergraduate level, the Senate shall be chosen according to class (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior). Each undergraduate school shall be entitled to one senator to represent the junior class and one senator to represent the senior class unless otherwise specified in the Constitution, Bylaws, or Standing Rules. The number of freshman senators shall be equal to the number of undergraduate schools within the University. The number of sophomore senators shall be equal to the number of undergraduate schools within the University.

(2) The Senate shall include a number of graduate senators equal to twice the number of schools within the University to be elected on an at-large basis within the graduate class.

(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 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) The President and Vice President of the Student Association shall be chosen by an at-large election of the entire Student Association during the month of March of each year. Concurrent holding of these offices, or either of these offices and the office of senator, shall not be allowed.

(2) All senators shall be elected during the month of March of each year. Sophomore and graduate senators will be selected on an at-large basis.

Freshman senators shall be selected from the Executive Board of the Residential Senate, specifically the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as three (3) commuter students appointed by the President of the Student Association and approved by the Student Senate.

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 UTD.

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 advisor(s) shall be a member(s) of The University of Texas at Dallas faculty and/or administrative staff, selected by the Executive Committee, approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

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 Association shall preside over all meetings of the Student Senate and may vote in the event of a tie vote. The Student Association 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.

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 long 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 Association 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 Association.
- (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 Association 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 Association, 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 Academic Senate Standing Committee on Student Life, 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 Association 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 UTD.
- (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 April 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 Association 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.
- (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 Union Fee and Student Service Fee Advisory Committee, or the committee which makes recommendations concerning the use of student union and student service fees. If the composition of that committee is such that a representation is allocated according to the college in which the student members reside, and the President and Vice President are from the same college, only one of them shall serve on the aforementioned committee.
- (8) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UTD.

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. If the composition of that committee is such that representation is allocated according to the college in which the student members reside, and the President and Vice President are from the same college, only one of them shall serve on the aforementioned committee.
- (6) Be the official representative of non-degree students as defined by the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UTD.
- (7) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UTD.

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 Association President, all Senate correspondence.
- (5) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD.

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 UTD members of the Student Advisory Council to the Board of Regents shall serve as nonvoting ex officio members on the Executive Committee.

(2) Voting rights shall be allocated according to the number of persons serving on the Executive Committee.

(3) Fulfill other such duties as may be specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Student Senate of UTD.

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 UTD 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.

(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 or 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

No person shall be entitled to vote in an election held under the authority of this Constitution unless he/she is a regularly enrolled member of the Student Association. Those defined as non-degree students in the Bylaws of the Student Senate of UTD shall be entitled to vote in University at-large 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 Association, a candidate must receive forty (40) percent of the votes cast for that office in a general Student Association election. If no candidate receives the required forty (40) percent or there is a tie, there will be a

runoff between the top two candidates. If two candidates receive at least forty (40) percent and neither receives a majority, there will be a runoff between these two candidates.

(3) Write-in balloting shall not be accepted in any runoff election.

(4) All other elections shall be decided by a plurality of the votes cast, provided that 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 UTD.

Section 4. Committee Responsibilities

(1) Communications Committee
Shall be responsible for maintaining awareness between the Student Association 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.

(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 UTD.

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 Association who do not sit on the Student Senate or hold any other elected or appointed office on campus. 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 the Student Judicial Board shall serve for the duration of their current academic degree programs.

Section 4. 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 5. Selection Process

All members of the Student Judicial Board shall be selected by the Executive Committee and approved by a simple majority of the Student Senate.

Section 6. 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) Any person serving under the provisions of this Constitution may, upon petition by the Executive Committee or by one-fourth (1/4) of the Student Senate, be removed from office upon approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Student Senate.

(2) If at any time a person serving under the provisions of this Constitution can no longer meet the minimum requirements outlined for the office of this Constitution, that office automatically becomes vacant.

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 UTD.

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 or write-in candidates, the following will apply:

- a. If there are any undergraduate seats vacant, and all graduate seats have been filled, then and only then can the remaining candidates who had filed for graduate seats be assigned the vacant undergraduate seat.
- b. If there are any graduate seats vacant, and all undergraduate seats have been filled, then and only then can the remaining candidates who had filed for undergraduate seats be assigned the vacant graduate seats.

(2) Upon a vacancy occurring in any elected office, a special election may be held to fill that vacancy. Persons elected in special elections shall serve until the next regularly scheduled election for that office.

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 UTD.

(1) The petition must be submitted to the Student Association 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.

Section 5. Student Judicial Board Vacancies

Vacancies on the Student Judicial Board shall be filled as specified in Article V of this Constitution.

**ARTICLE VII
Ratification and Amendment**

Section 1. 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 three-fourths (3/4) of the total membership of the Student Senate favor the amendment, it must be submitted to the Student Association for approval as stated in Section 3.

Section 2. Student Association Initiated Amendment

If members of the Student Association 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 approved by the Student Senate in accordance with Article VII, Section 1 shall go into effect 30 days after formal notice of the proposed change has been given to the Student Association.
- (2) Amendments may only be passed during regular fall and spring semesters.
- (3) The period of formal notice shall begin once the following has been completed:
 - (a) A copy of the proposed amendment has been prominently displayed on the informational bulletin boards of the Student Union and the SG office.
 - (b) A reasonable effort has been made to email a copy of the proposed amendment to the entire student body.
- (4) The SG spokesperson will release the official SG opinion stating why the amendment has been approved.
- (5) During the period of formal notice, members of approved press organizations, as defined in the bylaws, have the right to obtain the official opinion of or an interview with this spokesperson to inform the Student Association about the amendment.
- (6) During the period of formal notice, students may conduct a petition demanding a formal vote on the amendment, and upon presentation of a petition containing signatures from current students equal to or greater than 5% of the voting students in the last spring election to the SG office, and election must be held within 30 days of the presentation of the petition.
- (7) Any amendment proposed under Section 2 of this Article or any amendment subject to a

general election as provided by subsection (6) of this Section, shall then become effective following the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the Student Association voting on said amendments in an election. The Election Board shall certify the results of the election, and the amendments shall go into effect after approval by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System through its prescribed procedures.

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.