

Student Government Association of Middle Tennessee State University Senate By-Laws

Preamble

We, the members of the Student Government Association Senate of Middle Tennessee State University, in order to promote the welfare of the student body to which we belong, establish democratic principles of self-governance, provide the means for educated and open debate relating to issues affecting student welfare, and encourage student action in the same do hereby establish these Senate by-laws.

Article I. Name

Section 1: The name of this assembly shall be the Student Government Association of Middle Tennessee State University. The Constitution will act in accordance with the MTSU Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. In case of conflict, the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook will take precedence.

Section 2: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Senate in all cases concerning parliamentary procedure; the Senate may adopt additional rules and regulations upon favorable passage.

Article II. Membership

Section 1: Seats in the Senate will be apportioned according to Article 5, Section 2 of the SGA Constitution. Each Senator will possess one vote. The Speaker of the Senate will also appoint, with approval from the body, a secretary/clerk and a parliamentarian, each of whom will be non-voting members of the Senate body.

Article III. Officers

Section 1: The Executive Vice President of the Student Government Association shall serve as the Speaker of the Senate and preside over its meetings. The Speaker of the Senate shall have no vote except in the case of a tie.

Section 2: The Speaker of the Senate shall appoint, from within the Senate, a Speaker Pro Tempore. The Speaker Pro Tempore will serve as the Speaker and preside over the meeting of the Senate in the absence of the Speaker of the Senate. The Speaker Pro Tempore shall retain his/her privilege of voting except when he/she is presiding over the meeting. The Speaker Pro Tempore of the Senate shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate.

Section 3: The Speaker of the Senate, with approval from the Senate, shall also appoint chairpersons to the four standing committees (See Article 5, Committees).

Section 4: The Secretary of the Senate shall record the minutes of each meeting and keep a file of them, and shall be in charge of typing Legislation. This person shall be appointed by the Speaker of the Senate, and shall not be a senator. The Secretary of the Senate shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate.

Section 5: The Parliamentarian position for the Senate shall see that Senate meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. This person shall be appointed by the Speaker of the Senate, and shall not be a senator. The Parliamentarian shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate.

Article IV. Committees

Section 1: There shall be four (4) standing committees of the Senate consisting of Academic Affairs, Internal Affairs (also referred to as the Judiciary Committee), External Affairs, and Student Life. Each of the four committees shall maintain an equal number of members from the Senate.

Section 2: Legislation shall be submitted the Speaker of the Senate which will then distribute legislation to the appropriate committee. The legislation must find a favorable majority vote in order to reach the Senate floor. It is the responsibility of the appropriate committee to fix all typographical mistakes, so as not to alter the intent of the legislation. The Legislation must be returned to the Speaker of the Senate within five (5) work days in order to be placed on the following agenda.

Article V. Meetings of the Senate

Section 1: The Senate shall meet bi-weekly. A majority of all sworn-in members of the Senate shall constitute quorum. Absentee voting shall be allowed provided that the Senator is away on University business. Those voting by means of absentee will not count toward the total to reach quorum.

Article VI. Attendance

Section 1: Any member who shall miss any three meetings or two consecutive meetings within the same semester shall be subject to impeachment. An Academic University sanctioned event or medical emergency, with proper documentation, shall be the only excused absences. An excused absence shall not count towards the total number of absences obtained for that semester.

**Article VII.
Senator Hours**

Section 1: Each Senator shall be required to complete no less than twelve Senate hours per semester of their term. Senators may acquire these hours working for any SGA Cabinet member or by working on any approved Student Government project or activity. The cabinet member is required to keep track of the hours each Senator earns through them and relay that information to the Speaker of the Senate. Any Senator who does not complete the required twelve Senator hours shall go before the Internal Affairs Committee for disciplinary action.

**Article VIII.
Order of Business**

Section 1: The following shall become the order in which the Senate conducts business:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Special Guest Speakers
- C. Roll Call
- D. Reading of the Minutes
- E. Approval of Minutes
- F. Committee Reports
- G. Agenda for current meeting
- H. Old Business
- I. New Business
- J. Announcements
- K. Adjournment

**Article IX
Introduction and Debate of Bills**

Section 1: Legislation may be introduced by any senator per the procedures set forth in the SGA Constitution. He/she shall arrange with the presiding official to have his/her legislation placed on the agenda prior to the meeting of the Senate.

- A. Only the legislation placed on the agenda for a given meeting shall be given priority at that meeting.
- B. Other legislation introduced shall be placed on the agenda for subsequent meetings.
- C. The Speaker of the Senate shall have the authority to decide the priority of legislation to be considered for the Agenda.
- D. The Speaker of the Senate shall have the authority to adjust the agenda in order to consider legislation not previously placed on the agenda.

Section 2: The Senator introducing the legislation shall have the right to speak on behalf of that legislation immediately following the introduction of the legislation. Further debate may take place after the legislation is presented.

- A. Debate shall alternate equally between the advocacy of the legislation and the opposition, when it exists.
- B. The presiding official shall recognize those Senators desiring to participate in debate and shall grant them the privilege of speaking in an orderly fashion.
- C. The right of debate shall not be denied any member of the Senate unless the Speaker of the Senate permits it.
- D. The presiding official shall have the right to call on individuals who are not members of the Senate to present information pertinent to the legislation under the discussion, provided this individual can relate information not already known to the Senate.
- E. The delegate presenting the legislation may petition to show support of a particular piece of legislation.

Article X. Recognition

Section 1: The Senate may bestow recognition upon any member of the University Community in the form of a Resolution of Student Opinion.

Article XI. Awards

Section 1: The Bob Womack Distinguished Faculty Award

- A. The name of this award shall be the Bob Womack Distinguished Faculty Award. This award shall be named after Dr. Bob Womack who has significantly contributed to Student Life and Middle Tennessee State University.
- B. The purpose of this award is to recognize a Middle Tennessee State University faculty member who has made a significant contribution in the classroom.
- C. The award shall be administered in accordance with the following guidelines:
 1. The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs shall oversee the award process along with the President of the SGA.
 2. The process of selecting the recipient will be preformed as follows:
 - a. An advertisement campaign shall be designed by the Vice President of Administration and Public Affairs to notify members of the Middle Tennessee State University community of the award. Possible means of advertisement shall include: notification to Department

Chairs, Sidelines, Student Organizations, Pipeline-MT, the SGA website, etc.

- b. Applications will be submitted to a selection committee that consists of the SGA Advisor, SGA President, SGA Executive Vice President / Speaker of the Senate, SGA Vice President of Administration and Public Affairs, and one SGA Senator from each college as a nominee.
3. The recipient(s) shall have their portrait(s) and a brief biography displayed in the Student Union Building.
4. Recipients of the Bob Womack Distinguished Faculty Award will have \$1000 in books donated in their name to the James E. Walker Library.
5. To be eligible for consideration for this award an individual must be a tenured or tenured track professor that has made significant contributions in the classroom at Middle Tennessee State University.

Section 2: The John T. Bragg, Sr. Distinguished Service Award

- A. The name of this award shall be the John T. Bragg, Sr. Distinguished Service Award. This award shall be named after John T. Bragg, Sr. who has defined service with his distinguished career at Middle Tennessee State University.
- B. The purpose of this award is to recognize a Middle Tennessee State University faculty or staff member who has made a significant contribution in service to MTSU.
- C. The award shall be administered in accordance with the following guidelines:
 1. The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs shall oversee the award process.
 2. The process of selecting the recipient will be preformed as follows:
 - a. An advertisement campaign shall be designed by the Vice President of Administration and Public Affairs to notify members of the Middle Tennessee State University community of the award. Possible means of advertisement shall include: notification to Department Chairs, Sidelines, Student Organizations, Pipeline-MT, the SGA website, etc.
 - b. Applications will be submitted to a selection committee that consists of the SGA Advisor, SGA President, SGA Executive Vice President / Speaker of the Senate, SGA Vice President of Administration and Public Affairs, and a SGA Senator from the same college as that of the nominee.
 3. The recipient(s) shall have their portrait(s) and a brief biography displayed in the Student Union Building.

4. To be eligible for consideration for this award an individual must be a full time faculty or staff member that has made significant contributions to the State of Tennessee, Community, Middle Tennessee State University, and/or Student Life on campus.

Article XII.

Student Government Sponsored Travel

Section 1: The Conference on Student Government Associations (COSGA) is an annual conference held at Texas A&M. It is a chance for student government representatives from around the nation to develop their leadership skills and share their ideas and experiences with one another.

- A. Up to eight members of the Student Government Association shall be sent to COSGA each year. Participants will be selected using the following criteria:
 1. To be considered, participants must be current members of the Executive Branch, the Cabinet, or the Senate.
 2. Members of the Executive Branch will receive priority over other interested students.
 3. No participant shall have attended COSGA more than twice in the past.
 4. No more than three participants for the current year may have attended COSGA in the past.
 5. Participants must have at least one semester prior involvement with SGA.
 6. Participants should exhibit a desire to continue their involvement with SGA in the future.
 7. Contributions to the SGA and MTSU will be considered when selecting participants.
 8. Participants should have at least one more semester of coursework at MTSU.
- B. COSGA expenses shall be incorporated into the yearly budget by each SGA President.
- C. Fee payments, travel expenses, and meal stipends shall be provided to each member out of the approved COSGA budget.

Section 2: The Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature (TISL) is an annual gathering of student teams from colleges within the state of Tennessee. During a four-day session, students sponsor legislation on state issues and attempt to persuade their colleagues in the House and Senate to join their point of view.

- A. Up to eight members of the Student Government Association shall be sent to TISL each year. Participants will be selected using the following criteria:
 1. To be considered, participants should be current members of the Executive Branch, the Cabinet, or the Senate.

2. Non SGA associated students may be considered if they possess adequate knowledge of Parliamentary and Legislative procedures.
 3. Contributions to the SGA and MTSU will be considered when selecting participants.
 4. Participants should have at least one more semester of coursework at MTSU.
- B. TISL expenses shall be incorporated into the yearly budget by each SGA President.
- C. Fee payments, travel expenses, and meal stipends shall be provided to each participant out of the approved TISL budget.

Section 3: Student Regent Nomination

- A. Applications shall be developed by the SGA Advisor in agreement with the SGA Executive Officers.
- B. Applications shall be returned to the SGA office with copies forwarded to the SGA Advisor.
- C. A committee comprised of the SGA Executive Vice President, the SGA Advisor and three SGA Senators shall review the applications and conduct a personal interview. The committee shall agree on one nominee and one alternate.

**Article XIII.
Amendments**

Section 1: Amendments to the Senate by-laws shall be presented to the Senate at one meeting and upon favorable passage by 2/3 of those members present, the amendment(s) shall go into effect at the following meeting.

**Article XIV.
Enactment**

Section 1: Upon passage, by 2/3 majority vote of the sworn in members present, these bylaws shall be enacted.