

## **Article I- Purpose**

The Bylaws of the Senate shall govern the proceedings of this body, second only to the Student Government Association Constitution.

## **Article II- Parliamentary Authority**

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern this Senate in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order adopted by the Senate.

## **Article III- Officers**

### **A. President of the Senate**

1. The Vice President of the Student Government Association shall serve as the President of the Senate.
2. He shall have voting power only in cases where his vote would affect the outcome, and shall have veto power in regard to the Bylaws.

### **B. Duties of the President of the Senate shall be:**

1. To preside over all Senate meetings.
2. To make all appointments concerning the functioning of the Senate and its standing committees.
3. To call meetings of the Senate and to be responsible for the overall function of the Senate.
4. To be an ex-officio member of all Senate committees.
5. The Senate President, with the consultation of the committee chairs, shall set the rules for debate in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

### **C. President Pro-Tempore**

1. Shall be appointed by the President of the Senate and approved (by a 2/3 majority) by the newly formed Senate from within its membership.
2. Shall be approved by the Senate for a term of one full year.
3. Must have served on the Student Government Association for at least two consecutive semesters.
4. Should be a senior unless no senior meets the above requirements. In that case, an underclassman may be considered.

### **D. Duties of the President Pro-Tempore shall be:**

1. To collect all committees' reports from chairpersons at the end of each month and send them to the Treasurer/Secretary of the SGA.
2. To perform the duties of the President of the Senate in his absence, refusal, or failure to do so.
3. To assume the office of the Vice President should that position become vacant.

4. To be an ex-officio member of all Senate committees.
  5. To meet with the chairperson of each standing committee once per month for the purpose of discussing committee work.
- E. Secretary of the Senate
1. The Student Government Association Secretary will act as the recording clerk for the Senate.
- F. Duties of the Secretary of the Senate shall be:
1. To serve as recording secretary for the Senate.
  2. To file and maintain all records pertaining to the Senate.
  3. To conduct and tally roll call votes.
- G. Parliamentarian
1. Shall be appointed by the President of the Senate upon two-thirds consent of the Senate body.
- H. Duties of the Parliamentarian shall be:
1. To guide the legislative body in parliamentary procedures using Robert's Rules of Order.
  2. To be available in the case of questioning regarding the SGA Constitution, Senate Bylaws, and/or Robert's Rules of Order.
- I. Senate Page
1. Shall be appointed by the President of the Senate upon two-thirds consent of the Senate body.
- J. Duties of the Senate Page shall be:
1. To read all papers called for by the Senate in the normal order of business.
  2. To be the official timekeeper for the Senate.
  3. To be the official messenger on the Senate floor.
  4. To perform tasks deemed necessary during a Senate meeting by any member of the Executive Committee.
- K. Attorney General
1. Shall be appointed by the President of the SGA upon two-thirds consent of the Senate body.
  2. May or may not be a Senator.
- L. Duties of the Attorney General shall be:
1. To keep order on the floor.
  2. To meet with the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and aid in the duties of that committee.
- M. Sergeant-at-Arms
1. Shall be appointed by the President of the Senate upon two-thirds consent of the Senate body.
  2. May or may not be a Senator.

- N. Duties of the Sergeant-at-Arms shall be:
  - 1. To keep order on the floor.
- O. Chaplain
  - 1. To be appointed by the President of the Senate upon two-thirds consent of the Senate body.
  - 2. Shall not be a Senator.
- P. Duties of the Chaplain shall be:
  - 1. To give the opening prayer and benediction.
  - 2. To be available for counseling if so desired.

## **Article IV- Committees**

### **Section I- Committee Membership**

- A. All chairpersons shall be appointed by the Senate President with a two-thirds majority approval of the Senate.
- B. Chairpersons shall be selected based upon the amount of time they have served in the Senate and on prior activity on that particular committee.
- C. Chairpersons should have served at least two consecutive semesters in the Senate, if at all possible.
- D. The Senate President shall appoint all Senators to committees, with experience and the Senator's preference in consideration.
- E. Seniority shall not be the sole basis for committee assignments.
- F. All committee chairpersons will provide a written summary at the end of each week.

### **Section II- Standing Committees:**

- A. Rules Committee (President's Cabinet)
  - 1. Oversees the functions of the Senate committees. Performs the duties as directed by the Senate.
  - 2. Assigns legislation to various committees for review.
  - 3. Ensures attendance policies are enforced.
  - 4. Composed of the President of the Senate, Secretary of the Senate, Committee Chairpersons, and the Attorney General.
  - 5. Does not make report unless assigned to review legislation.
  - 6. Carries out any duties assigned by the President of the SGA.
- B. Student Affairs Committee:
  - 1. Investigates, when assigned, all matters concerning on campus students.
  - 2. Cooperates with the Commuter Committee on all issues concerning students on and off campus.

3. Coordinates at least one activity benefiting on campus students each semester.
  4. Advertises Student Government Association events pertaining to on campus students.
  5. Investigates, when assigned, all issues concerning campus grounds and facilities.
  6. Investigates, when assigned, all issues concerning food services on the campus of Charleston Southern University.
  7. Carries out any duties assigned by the President of the SGA.
- C. Commuter Committee:
1. Investigates, when assigned, all matters concerning off campus students.
  2. Cooperates with the Student Affairs Committee on all issues concerning students on and off campus.
  3. Coordinates at least one activity benefiting commuter students each semester.
  4. Advertises Student Government Association events pertaining to commuter students.
  5. Carries out any duties assigned by the President of the SGA.
- D. Judiciary Committee:
1. Aids in the clarification and interpretation of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Senate.
  2. Investigates and supervises impeachment proceedings of any SGA officer or Senator who is charged with dereliction of duty, breach of confidence, or any other case that is so specified by the President of the Senate.
  3. Makes annual revisions to the Constitution and the Senate Bylaws when needed.
  4. Oversees all monies spent and raised under the SGA's name, and receives an itemized SGA account report from the Secretary/Treasurer monthly.
  5. Coordinates and oversees all SGA elections.
  6. Maintains a proper relationship with the Pan-Hellenic Council and executes proper procedures laid out by the Student Handbook.
  7. Carries out any duties assigned by the President of the SGA.
  8. Confers upon issues of an immediate nature.
  9. Five members must be present when investigating official complaints.

### **Section III- Special Committees**

The President may appoint, at his discretion, committees for special projects.

## Article V- Standing Rules

### Section I- Ex-Officio Members:

Ex-officio members are the President of the SGA, Secretary/Treasurer of the SGA, Attorney General, Chaplain, and the SGA Adviser (Ex-officio meaning without the power to vote, but shall be entitled to recognition on the floor).

### Section II- Senate Meetings

- A. The Senate shall meet every Monday at 4:00pm and/or at any other time deemed necessary by the President of the Senate and the President of the SGA.
- B. Senate meetings shall be limited to two and one-half hours from the time the Senate is officially called to order. The exception shall be when a two-thirds majority of the Senate votes for a continuance.
- C. Absences
  1. A Senator may have four unexcused absences per semester. The fifth unexcused absence shall result in automatic expulsion of the Senator from the Senate. The expulsion shall be subject to appeal by a member. Any appeal will have to go before the entire Senate to be excused by two-thirds vote of the full membership of the Senate.
  2. An absence includes missing a Senate meeting, Committee meeting, and mandatory Senate activity. One must have notification of a mandatory Senate activity at least seven days prior to the event.
  3. Any Senator who arrives at a Senate or Committee meeting after the completion of roll call shall be considered tardy to the meeting. Three tardies is equivalent to one absence.
  4. Any Senator that does not arrive at the meeting until after *New Business*, or who leaves before the end of *New Business*, shall be marked as absent from that meeting. Any exception will have to be approved by a two-thirds vote of the full membership of the Senate.
- D. Senators shall write a letter requesting an excuse for absences before reaching the limit of four unexcused absences per semester. If a Senator misses five or more unexcused absences, that student will not be allowed to be elected/appointed to another part of the SGA for a period of one year. Excuses for Senate absences shall be made on the following:
  1. Death of a family member/close friend.
  2. Illness when accompanied by a medical notice from a doctor.
  3. Nationally recognized religious holiday.
  4. Attendance of a member of the Senate at another event where he/she is an official representative of a club, sport, or organization.

5. In a questionable situation the manner will be brought before the Cabinet whereby they will use their discretion in deciding.
6. In the case of a special Senate meeting, a vote of two-thirds of the full Senate can excuse the absence.

### **Section III- Senate Legislation**

- A. All matters to be voted on in the Senate shall be referred to as legislation.
- B. There are four basic types of legislation:
  1. Bill- a proposed statute concerning an area of the non-academic conduct of the student body over which Senate has jurisdiction.
  2. Resolution- an act of the Senate whose purpose is to declare facts or express opinions on behalf of the Senate.
  3. Recommendation- an act that recommends a change to the Faculty and/or Administration that affects the student body.
  4. Amendment- refers to changes made to an original piece of legislation. A constitutional amendment changes the SGA Constitution.
- C. Proposed Senate legislation must be typed and double-spaced.
- D. The legislation must state exactly what is to be changed or added and a brief reason why this action was proposed.
- E. All legislation must be given to the Senate President by the Thursday prior to the Senate meeting to be scheduled on the Senate agenda. If it is not on the agenda it will not be presented unless the rules have been suspended.
- F. A copy of the legislation must be provided to each member of the Senate.
- G. The legislation can be amended during debate, but the amendment must be in writing before the legislation is passed.

### **Section IV- Senate Procedures**

- A. Two-thirds of the membership shall constitute a quorum to do business, but a smaller number may be authorized to represent the Senate as appointed committees.
- B. If, at any time during a Senate session, a Senator should raise a question about a quorum being present, the presiding officer shall direct the Senate Clerk to conduct a roll call vote. The motion shall move without debate.
- C. If it is determined that a quorum is not present, no business shall be in order, except a motion to recess until a quorum is present or a motion to adjourn.
- D. Only Senate seats actually filled by voting members will be used to determine the number needed for a quorum.
- E. Seats filled by Senators with blanket excuses are counted when determining a quorum.

- F. Debates on the Senate floor shall follow the limitations and statutes of the nationally recognized handbook of Robert's Rules of Order. It is up to the President of the Senate, with consultation of committee chairs, to determine the statutes of debate regulations specific to this Senate body.
- G. A Senator may make a motion for an extension of up to 5 minutes of debate. A simple majority vote is required for the motion to pass. There is a limit of three extensions.
- H. Constitutional amendments shall be passed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Senate provided previous notice has been given about the vote.
- I. All Senate business, unless specified in the SGA Constitution, these Bylaws, and/or Robert's Rules of Order shall be passed within a majority vote.
- J. The Senate shall approve all appointments made by the President of the Senate and the President of the SGA.
- K. All main motions shall require a second. The recording secretary shall, at all meetings, possess a list of all main motions pending, their authors and the makers of the second.
- L. The Senate shall set up permanent or temporary committees from within the Senate membership.
- M. The Senate may grant student organization and publications the privilege of establishment on campus. The Senate shall charter such organizations as may deem necessary for the proper functioning of the SGA or for the general welfare of the entire student body. All rules and regulations governing and regulating chartered groups will be provided in the individual chartered constitutions for each group. These charters must be approved by a two-thirds vote.
- N. All voting in the Senate on bills and amendments shall be done as a roll call vote, and the results shall be published in the Senate minutes as a matter of public record.
- O. Any amendment to legislation that is in debate on the floor of the Senate must be submitted to the presiding officer in writing before the amendment is voted on. This includes "friendly amendments."
- P. A letter of recognition, congratulations, etc. may be sent at a time that is deemed proper by the Senate. Once the letter is written it is to be read before the Senate and then voted on.
- Q. All legislation shall be assigned a number when presented to the Recording Clerk. This number shall be used to identify the legislation until final approval. The legislation shall be numbered as a Student Legislation, followed by a number and then by the term (i.e. SL01-13).

- R. Executive Session shall be called if the Senate desires to discuss a sensitive issue and restrict the discussion of the issue to only those members entitled to be in attendance. All Senate members shall be entitled.
- S. Those officers that are not actual members of the Senate shall be allowed to remain on the Senate floor during Executive Session and shall be bound to the Breach of Confidence Clause as set for Senators.
- T. Executive Session shall be called for the following:
  - 1. Matters concerning personnel.
  - 2. Contract negotiation.
  - 3. Subjects of security.
  - 4. Investigations of allegations of misconduct.
- U. Each Senate President shall decide the dress code.
- V. Override of a Presidential veto can occur by a three-fourths majority vote of the Senate.
- W. The Senate can conduct impeachment trials for all SGA and class positions. The process can be referred to in Article VI of this document.
- X. All Bills and Amendments shall be before the Senate a minimum of two weeks (i.e. presented first week, debated and voted on the second week). Bills and Amendments can be before the Senate for the whole term; however, any matter not decided on by the end of the term shall be considered dead and must be submitted again for further action.
- Y. Senators shall not be disrespectful of each other while the Senate is in session.
- Z. Senators shall not interrupt one other.
- AA. Only Senate members recognized shall be entitled to speak on the Senate floor. A Senator shall be ruled out of order if he speaks without having the floor. If he excessively speaks out of turn, he may be censured for a period not exceeding one month by a two-thirds vote of the Senate (censure is the loss of speaking privileges).
- BB. The Senate President may present a piece of legislation with the consent of two-thirds of the Senate. If this should happen, the President Pro-Tempore shall preside until action is taken on the legislation.
- CC. The Senate shall allow a non-member to address the Senate only upon invitation and it is subject to majority approval.
- DD. The Senate can allow no proxies, substitutes, or alternates to act in the place of a Senator.
- EE. The Senate may pass resolutions, which are not subject to a veto.

### **Section V-Constituency Program**

- A. The purpose of the constituency program is to provide a way for the Senate to receive input from the Students at Charleston Southern University.



- B. The program shall consist of a question and answer desk, constituency reports, and the possible pairing of Senators and student organizations.
- C. The question and answer desk, which will be manned by two senators, will be set up in the cafeteria bi-weekly.
- D. Each Senator will be required to complete one constituency report a month. These reports shall be turned in to the Senate President by the end of each designated Senate meeting.
- E. Senators may be paired with no more than three campus organizations for the purpose of maintaining contact with organization interests. This will be done only if it appears needed, as determined by the SGA officers.

### **Section VI- Code of Ethics**

- A. All Senators, officers, ex-officio members, and those affiliated with this Senate body are expected to do the following:
  - 1. Put loyalty to the University and to the students above loyalty to personal gain, a party, or a club.
  - 2. Uphold the student bodies' Constitution, Senate Bylaws, Honor Code, and all other regulations of the Senate.
  - 3. Give earnest effort and best thought to the performance of duties.
  - 4. Seek more efficient ways of getting tasks accomplished.
  - 5. Never discriminate unfairly by dispensing special favors or privileges to anyone whether for remuneration or not; and, never accept favors or benefits under circumstances that might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of Senatorial duties.
  - 6. Expose corruption whenever found.
  - 7. Uphold these principles, ever conscious that public office is public trust.

### **Section VII- Breach Clause**

- A. Breach of Confidence shall be divulging the action, the reaction, and any information from a closed Senate meeting not meant for public record, personal quote, and/or personal opinion.
- B. Proof of violation must be first hand. The Judiciary Committee will decide if someone has made a breach of confidence if the information is reliable. If it is found reasonable and the evidence points to a violation, the Judiciary Committee will turn the matter over to the Senate for action.
- C. The Penalties are:
  - a. Verbal reprimand and/or loss of Senatorial privilege
  - b. Resignation-no punitive action
  - c. Expulsion
- D. Appeals may be made to the Judiciary Committee if new evidence exists.

- E. Second offenses will result in expulsion with no appeal.

## **Article VI- Impeachment**

### **Section I- Investigation**

- A. A request to investigate a member of the SGA may be made by any member of the student body. The request must be filed with the SGA Secretary.
- B. The reasons for an impeachment investigation include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Violation of the Oath of Office.
  - 2. Failure to uphold the Constitution of the Student Body.
  - 3. Dereliction of Duty.
  - 4. Conviction of a code of Conduct rule at Charleston Southern University.
  - 5. Conviction of a state, local, or federal crime.
- C. Once a request has been made, the SGA Secretary shall inform the chairperson of the Judiciary Committee and to SGA Adviser. The chairman of the Judiciary Committee shall conduct the investigation.
- D. When the investigation is complete, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee will present the results to the Judiciary Committee. The committee needs to be made up of at least four Senators, excluding the chair; otherwise the Senate President will appoint Senators for the purpose of review. If, after review of the evidence, at least three members of the committee should find reason to impeach, a formal charge is made.
- E. The formal charge is given to the SGA Secretary and the Attorney General.
- F. The Attorney General shall inform the subject of impeachment of his rights as outlined under the Judicial Code. A trial date is set for the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting.
- G. The Senate is notified.
- H. The person who filed the complaint shall be informed of the results of the investigation.

### **Section II- Trial**

- A. A quorum must be present.
- B. The trial shall be conducted in Executive Session.
- C. The chairperson of the Judiciary Committee will present the evidence first.
- D. The accused will be given the opportunity to speak on his behalf.
- E. All Senators may ask questions of the accused.
- F. The accused will be dismissed during the Senate debate and vote.
- G. A vote of four-fifths of the full Senate is required to remove someone from office.

H. When a verdict is reached, the accused will be notified in writing immediately. There is no appeal.

**Article VI- Amendments**

Amendments to these Senate Bylaws shall be made with two-thirds vote, provided prior notice is given.