

SIU Southern Illinois University
CARBONDALE



SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
~ CONSTITUTION ~



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ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization will be referred to as the Undergraduate Student Government, further referred to in this document as the USG.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The USG in its representative capacity will inform the student body of the aim, policies, and mission of the University administration, and will be recognized as the voice of the undergraduate student body.

ARTICLE III – MISSION

The USG represents the undergraduate student body at Southern Illinois University Carbondale in all matters pertaining to student welfare, student activities, and student participation in University planning and administration. The USG is a recognized constituency body by the Southern Illinois University Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Every student enrolled at Southern Illinois University Carbondale is considered a member of USG based on their enrollment status at the University. Members may participate in regular Senate Sessions during public comments but are not allowed to vote. Only recognized Senators in good standing have the right to vote.

The USG will be comprised of three branches: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial. Each branch is designed to support and balance the others. No branch will hold more power than any other branch.



ARTICLE V – THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

SECTION 1 – Composition and Qualifications

- a) The Executive Branch will be composed of the following members:
 - i. President
 - ii. Executive Vice-President
 - iii. Vice-President of Student Affairs
 - iv. Chief-of-Staff
 - v. Vice-President of Finance
 - vi. Executive Assistant
 - vii. Any other executive appointments except for the Judicial Board
- b) Executive Branch members must meet the following qualifications:
 - i. Be an undergraduate student enrolled in at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of full-time status.
 - ii. Have and maintain a minimum of a 2.5 cumulative GPA.
 - a. This GPA requirement will be waived for students with disabilities with provided documentation from Disability Support Services and/or Southern Illinois University's ACHIEVE Program.
 - iii. Be in good judicial and academic standing.
 - a. Proof of at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of full-time status and 2.5 cumulative GPA will be confirmed by the Office of Student Affairs.
- c) Has not been impeached from the USG within the last academic year.
- d) The President, Executive Vice-President, and Vice-President of Finance will hold office for one year, beginning and ending on the last Friday of the Spring Semester.
- e) The Vice-President of Student Affairs, Chief-of-Staff, and any other executive appointment will hold office from the time they are appointed until the end of the term of the Executive who appointed them.
- f) No member of the Executive Branch will serve in the Legislative Branch or the Judiciary Branch, with the sole exception of those who serve on Executive Committees an Executive Branch member is required to chair, or else those committees which elect to appoint an Executive Branch member to serve in an advisory role.



- g) Executive Board members that serve on committees will not have voting rights on those committees.
- i In the instance of a tie, an Executive Board member serving on the committee may serve as the tie breaker.

SECTION 2 – Executive Board Duties and Responsibilities

All Executive Branch duties and responsibilities are outlined in the bylaws.

SECTION 3 – Executive Succession

- a) If the office of President becomes vacant, the order of executive succession is the Executive Vice-President, Vice-President of Student Affairs, and then Chief-of-Staff.
- b) If any office other than the office of the President becomes vacant, the President will appoint a replacement to fulfill the remainder of the absent executive's term.

SECTION 4 – Executive Wages

- a) The President will receive a wage not exceeding \$2,500 per semester.
- b) The Executive Vice-President will receive a wage not exceeding \$1,800 per semester.
- c) The Vice-President of Student Affairs will receive a wage not exceeding \$1,800 per semester.
- d) The Vice-President of Finance will receive a wage not exceeding \$2,000 per semester.
- e) The Chief-of-Staff will receive a wage not exceeding \$1,500 per semester.
- f) Other executive appointments will receive a wage not exceeding \$1,200 per semester.



ARTICLE VI – THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

SECTION 1 – Name and Composition

- a) The Legislative Branch of the USG is comprised of the Senate. The Senate is the representative body of the USG.
- b) The Senate will consist of at most fifty (50) Senators, as outlined in Article VI, Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5.

SECTION 2 – Academic College Seats

- a) The senate will consist of two senators from each academic college, two with undeclared majors and one from each stand-alone School that serves undergraduates.
- b) It is encouraged that these Senators are chosen by the student umbrella organization within the academic college.
- c) The academic college must notify USG before the second USG meeting of their senator appointments. If they do not notify the USG, they are subject to lose their Senate representation (Senate seats) to at-large senators.
- d) All Senators must meet the eligibility requirements, as indicated in Article VI, Section 6, at the time they are sworn into office and throughout their term.

SECTION 3 – Umbrella Organizations

- a) Umbrella Organization duties and functions are outlined in the Umbrella Organization Guidelines.
- b) The Senate will also consist of Senator(s) from each of the following Umbrella Registered Student Organizations that represent a population of undergraduate students. It is to the organization's discretion how their Senator(s) are selected. The umbrella organization must notify USG before the second USG meeting of who these Senators are.
- c) All Senators must meet the eligibility requirements, as indicated in Article VI, Section 6, at the time they are sworn into office and throughout their term.



d) Organizations allowed representation are as follows:

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|-------|--|-------------------------|
| i. | <u>Fraternity and Sorority Life:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| ii. | <u>International Student Council:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| iii. | <u>Black Affairs Council:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| iv. | <u>Hispanic Student Council:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| v. | <u>Latino Cultural Association:</u> | <u>One (1) Senator</u> |
| vi. | <u>Saluki Rainbow Network:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| vii. | <u>Agricultural Student Council:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| viii. | <u>College of Engineering, Computing, Technology and Math:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |

SECTION 4 – Departmental Seats

- a) The Senate will also consist of Senator(s) from each of the following departments that represent a population of undergraduate students.
- b) The department must notify USG before the second USG meeting their Senator appointments. All Senators must meet the eligibility requirements, as Article VI, Section 6, at the time they are sworn into office and throughout their term.
- c) These departments and the respective number of seats are as follows:

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|------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| i. | <u>University Housing:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| ii. | <u>University Athletics:</u> | <u>One (1) Senator</u> |
| iii. | <u>Veterans Organization:</u> | <u>One (1) Senator</u> |
| iv. | <u>Non-Traditional Students:</u> | <u>One (1) Senator</u> |
| v. | <u>Students with Disabilities:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |
| vi. | <u>Exploratory Students:</u> | <u>Two (2) Senators</u> |

SECTION 5 – At-Large Seats

- a) The Senate will consist of fifteen (15) at-large Senators. Any remaining Senate seat not accounted for in Sections 1-4 of Article VI will also become an at-large Senate seat.
- b) At-large Senators represent the larger student body and do not necessarily represent a specific college, organization, or department.



- c) The current USG Senate may vote in these Senators who have successfully petitioned and met all qualifications, as indicated in Article VI, Section 6, to represent the overall undergraduate student body.

SECTION 6 – Qualifications and Restrictions

- a) A Senator will meet the following qualifications:
- i. Be a full-time undergraduate student, with the exception of seniors in their last semester who are not full-time.
 - ii. Have and maintain a minimum of a 2.5 cumulative GPA.
 - a. This GPA requirement will be waived for students with disabilities with provided documentation from Disability Support Services and/or Southern Illinois University's ACHIEVE Program.
 - iii. Remain in good standing with Student Rights & Responsibilities.
 - iv. Cannot have been impeached from the USG in the last semester.
- b) All Senate terms will end on the last Friday of the Spring Semester.
- c) Senators elected during the Spring Election will take office the last Friday of the Spring Semester and will hold a term of office for one calendar year.
- d) The Senator-elect's petition must first be submitted to the Chief-of-Staff so that the Chief-of-Staff can ensure the legitimacy of the petition and inform the Senator of the next steps.
- e) A Senator elected in this fashion will take office upon completion of the oath conducted by the President.
- f) Senators will not serve in either the Executive or Judicial Branches unless appointed to an executive committee or elected by the Senate to serve as a Justice on the Judicial Board as described in Article VII, Section 1, Subsection b).



SECTION 7 – Senatorial Duties

- a) A Senator is entitled to one vote.
- b) A Senator will represent the undergraduate students from their district and will perform all duties required by the position.
- c) All Senators are required to attend retreats held each semester.
- d) Senators are required to hold at least one constituency meeting in their respective representative districts each month. Senators must fill out the Constituency Report following each meeting and submit it to the Chief-of-Staff by the end of the month to be placed on file. Any Senator who fails to meet this requirement will be subject to impeachment.
- e) A Senator is required to attend every USG Senate session unless the Senator has found a proxy to take their place and the proxy has been approved by the Executive Vice-President or majority of the Senate. If the Senator cannot find a proxy or the proxy has not been approved, the Senator can request an excused absence.
 - i. Proxies must be approved by the Executive Vice-President no later than 1:00 pm on the day of the meeting.
 - ii. Proxies must meet the same requirements as a Senator for the USG, as outlined in Article VI, Section.
 - iii. Senators are only allowed two excused absences per semester.
 - a. Excused absences include: At least 24-hour prior notice to the President and approval from the President as such, or by majority consent of the senate.
 - iv. Senators are allowed one unexcused absence.
 - a. Unexcused absences include: tardiness to a meeting, missing a meeting without communicating to the President, leaving a meeting early.
 - v. If a Senator has more than two excused absences in a semester, the Senator will be subject to impeachment unless waived by the President.
 - vi. Senators are required to be on time to Senate meetings and to remain in attendance for the duration of said meetings. Senators who are late to meetings will be considered absent and unexcused.



- vii. Senators are required to attend meetings in business casual attire. This excludes jeans and t-shirts. Business casual is defined as blouses, skirts, dresses, slacks, or button-downs. A tardy will be issued for improper dress at the discretion of the USG Advisor.
- f) Senators are expected to communicate efficiently and effectively with the USG Executive Branch Members, Advisors, and their constituents. Failure to do so may be grounds for impeachment.
- g) Each Senator is required to complete two and a half office hours per week. Office hours are defined as any business being conducted on behalf of the USG, including committee meetings. Any Senator who misses four office hours in a semester will be subject to impeachment.
- h) Senators are required to serve on at least one USG Committee.
 - i. Committees include: the Internal Affairs Committee, the External Affairs Committee, the Governing Documents Committee, the Student Funding Board, and any other ad-hoc committee.
 - ii. Failure to attend and/or participate in the committee as indicated by the Committee Chair, may be grounds for removal from the committee and/or impeachment.

SECTION 8 – Senate Powers

- a) The Senate is solely empowered to pass legislation, which consists of the following:
 - i. Resolution – Statement of policy or opinion.
 - ii. Mandate – Direction for action to any part of either the Legislative or Executive branch.
 - iii. Bill – Legislation dealing with a direct action.
 - iv. Amendment – Written change(s) in the constitution or other governing documents.
- b) The Senate will study proposals made by student organizations and undergraduate students and will communicate all requests and opinions to the University administration.



- c) The Senate will consider recognition of registered student organizations.
- d) The Senate will ratify the annual USG elections. Without this ratification results will not be considered official.
- e) The Senate will recommend and bring about policy that represents the interests of the undergraduate student body.
- f) The Senate can create and discharge standing or special committees as it sees fit.
- g) The Senate may override any Presidential veto, including a "Pocket-Veto", by a two-thirds majority affirmative vote of the Senate.
- h) The Senate may meet weekly rather than bi-weekly for a period of time determined by an affirmative vote of the Senate.

SECTION 9 – Senate Legislation

- a) Legislation will become official immediately upon signature of the President, unless otherwise stated within the legislation.
- b) Legislation not acted upon by the President before the next Senate session expires and does not go into effect.

SECTION 10 – Referendum

- a) Referendums dealing with powers of the USG will be binding upon the USG.
- b) Placement of a referendum on the USG President ballot requires one of the following prior to the election petition deadline:
 - i. Legislation approving the referendum passed by the Senate and signed by the President.
 - ii. A petition containing the signatures of ten percent of the undergraduate student population on file with the legislation.



SECTION 11 – Parliamentary Authority

- a) The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order will govern the Senate and Senate committees in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this constitution or Standing Rules and Procedures the Senate or Senate committees may adopt.

ARTICLE VII – THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

SECTION 1 – Composition and Qualifications

- a) The Judicial Board will consist of five (5) Justices. One Justice will be a Senator appointed by a majority of the Senate, and one will be appointed by the President without consent of the Senate.
- b) Elected members of the Judicial Board must meet the requirements outlined in Article VI, Section 6.
 - a. Elected members of the Judicial Board will serve for one year or until they no longer meet the requirements.
- c) Justices appointed by the Legislative and Executive branches will serve for the duration of the term during which they were appointed to the Judicial Board.
 - a. If the President appoints a student not affiliated with the USG, the appointee will serve for the duration of the term of the President by whom the student was appointed.
- d) Each Justice will be sworn in by the President before the Senate at the first available Senate Meeting.

SECTION 2 – Chief Justice

- a) The Chief Justice will be decided by a majority vote of the five Justices at the first meeting.
- b) The Chief Justice will preside over all court proceedings and will have administrative authority over the Judicial Branch.
- c) The Chief Justice will appoint a Court Clerk to keep the records of the court.



SECTION 3 – Jurisdiction and Powers

- a) The Judicial Board will have original and exclusive jurisdiction in all matters related to the interpretation of this constitution.
- b) The Judicial Board may reconsider a decision to deny an organization RSO status if it can be proven that the procedures for considering a request for recognition were not properly followed. The Judicial Board may overturn a decision to deny an organization RSO status if it can be proven that the decision was based on bias.

The Judicial Board may act as the Appeals Board for funding appeals. The Judicial Board may reconsider a decision to deny a RSO funding if it can be proven that the procedures outlined in the Student Funding Guidelines were not properly followed. The Judicial Board may overturn a decision to deny a RSO funding only if it can be proven that the decision was based on bias.

- c) In cases pertaining to the USG constitution, conflicts between the branches, funding appeals, or elections, the decisions of the Judicial Board are final.
- d) The Judicial Board will act as an appellate court on grievances pertaining to elections.
- e) If specified in the majority opinion, any decision made by the Judicial Board is binding on all future cases proven to be similar.
- f) The Judicial Board may choose to ignore, alter, or overturn any past precedent.

SECTION 4 – Procedures

- a) Upon the convening of the first meeting, the Judicial Board will choose to retain or amend the procedural rules from the previous year. These procedures must align with the policies and guidelines of the University and state.
- b) The Judicial Board will maintain records of its proceedings.
- c) The Judicial Board will report their decisions to all relevant parties including the Legislative and Executive Branches within two business days.
- d) The Judicial Board will not generate its own cases. Plaintiffs must file a Writ of Certiorari with the Judicial Board explaining the reasons of appeal.



- e) The Judicial Board may choose not to hear cases.
 - i. The Judicial Board must contact the plaintiff within three business days upon receiving the Writ of Certiorari informing the plaintiff of the decision on whether the Judicial Board will hear the case. If the Judicial Board will hear the case, the notice must contain a date for the first hearing and this notice must also be sent to the defendants.
- f) The Judicial Board will meet when necessary to hear cases.
- g) No case, upon being accepted by the Judicial Board, will remain unheard longer than one semester.
- h) Each Justice will write an opinion for each case to be kept on record.
- i) If any rule is violated by the Judicial Board or its officers, grievances must be submitted to the Senate to be reviewed for possible impeachment.

SECTION 5 – Rights of the Involved Parties

- a) All parties involved in cases brought before the Judicial Board will enjoy all rights granted to them by the United States Constitution and Illinois State Constitution.
- b) Either party will be entitled to receive at least one continuance; any further continuances will be at the discretion of the Judicial Board.

ARTICLE VIII – THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

SECTION 1 – Composition

- a) The Department of the Treasury will be composed of the following members:
 - i. The Vice-President of Finance
 - ii. The Student Funding Board



SECTION 2 – Student Funding Board

- a) The Student Funding Board will be composed of seven (7) members, one of which will be the Vice-President of Finance.
- b) The remaining six (6) members will be appointed by any member of the USG Senate and confirmed by a simple majority affirmative vote of the Senate.
- c) The Student Funding Board will act in accordance with the Student Funding Guidelines.

ARTICLE IX – ELECTIONS OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The USG Executive Elections Policies and Procedures will be the governing document for the election process. All proceedings of the election will be in accordance with this document.

ARTICLE X – IMPEACHMENT

SECTION 1 – Order of Removal of Senators

- a) Allegations of constitutional violations may be brought to the Internal Affairs Committee (IAC) by any member of the USG.
- b) The IAC will produce a Bill of Impeachment to the Senate if the violations, upon the preponderance of the evidence, are found to be true.
- c) The Senator will only be removed by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Senate.
- d) The Senator has the right to speak on their behalf but may not vote on the Bill of Impeachment.

SECTION 2 – Order of Removal of the President or the Executive Vice-President

- a) Deliberation on Charge(s)
 1. Written charge(s) of constitutional violations may be brought to the IAC by any member of the USG.
 - i. The IAC will then investigate the charge(s) and deliberate on their legitimacy. To determine legitimacy, the IAC will consider whether the charge(s) represent a



sufficient basis for action and whether the weight of the evidence is sufficient to require a presentation from the accused.

- ii. The IAC must meet to hear the charge(s) against the accused within five working days from when the charge(s) were brought to it.
- iii. Only IAC members, those bringing charge(s), those having charge(s) brought against them, and witnesses for the charge(s) may be present at this meeting. A motion must be passed to officially close the meeting. A motion must be passed to allow comments from the floor. Both motions must pass for the meeting to be legitimate and official.
 - a. The person bringing the charge must be present. Persons bringing the charge(s) are considered to be only those individuals who had signed the written charge(s) at the time they were presented.
 - b. If more than one person brings the charge(s), only one of them may represent those bringing the charge(s).
 - c. The IAC may choose to bar the accused from attending the meeting if it considers this action necessary to protect those bringing the charge(s). The identity of any witnesses or sources of information will remain confidential if they so choose.
- iv. The IAC will listen to the charge(s) and any evidence the charging entities wish to provide, and discuss it only after all persons, except members of the IAC, have left the hearing room.
- v. The IAC will vote on whether the charge(s) are legitimate. A majority vote in the affirmative will determine the legitimacy of the charge(s).
- vi. If there is a simple majority vote in the affirmative, the Chair will forward a copy of the written charge(s), a copy of the meeting minutes, and any evidence presented at this meeting to the accused and the Judicial Board.
 - a. Any information identifying the person(s) bringing the charge(s) should be omitted from this correspondence. The identity of any witnesses or sources of information will remain confidential if they so choose.



b) Hearing of the Defense

- i. The IAC must meet to hear the defense of the accused.
- ii. A quorum of the IAC must be present for the hearing to take place. If one does not exist, the hearing, discussion, and vote must be postponed until the next meeting. The discussion and vote on the retainment of charge(s) will only be postponed one meeting. A vote must be taken at the next meeting even if a quorum is not present.
- iii. Only IAC members, the accused, and their witnesses may be present in the room during this portion. A motion will be made to clear the room of non-essential people. A motion will be made to officially close the meeting.
- iv. The IAC will listen to the entirety of the defense and evidence. A motion may be made by a member of the IAC to extend discussion beyond the time allotted if needed. A motion to extend the time for discussion requires a majority affirmative vote of the IAC. The IAC will then vote on whether to retain the charge(s) against the accused. The vote will be taken by secret ballot; and requires a majority vote in the affirmative to pass.
- v. If the IAC votes in the affirmative, the Chair of the IAC will prepare a Bill of Impeachment and present it to the Senate at the next regular Senate meeting.

c) Voting on Removal of the Executive

- i. The Chief Justice will chair impeachment proceedings in the Senate.
- ii. The IAC will read the Bill of Impeachment to the Senate and present the collected evidence.
- iii. The accused has the right to speak on their behalf to the Senate.
- iv. The President or Executive Vice-President will only be impeached by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Senate following the impeachment proceedings.
- v. The President or Executive Vice-President has the right to speak on their own behalf.

d) All other members of the Executive Branch serve at the discretion of the President.



SECTION 3 – Order of Removal of Justices

- a) Allegations of constitutional violations may be brought to the Internal Affairs Committee (IAC) by any USG member.
- b) The IAC will produce a Bill of Impeachment to the Senate if the violations, upon the preponderance of the evidence, are found to be true.
- c) The Justice will only be removed by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Senate.
- d) The Justice has the right to speak on their own behalf.
- e) Removed members of the Judicial Board cannot appeal to the Judicial Board.

ARTICLE XI – STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

This organization will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, or veteran status.

ARTICLE XII – STATEMENT OF NON-HAZING

This organization will not conspire to engage in hazing or commit any act that is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any fellow student or person attending the institution.

ARTICLE XIII – STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH UNIVERSITY AND CAMPUS REGULATIONS

This organization will comply with all University and campus policies and regulations as well as all local, state, and federal laws.

ARTICLE XIV – AMENDMENT

This constitution can be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds majority of the entire membership of the Senate upon being announced one meeting prior to consideration and the signature of the President.



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ARTICLE XV – ADVISOR(S)

The advisor(s) of the USG will be an appointed member of Student Affairs. This person(s) serves as an ex-officio member of the USG and may sit on and support any USG committee, board, commission, or council.