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Student Government Association (SGA) Senate Bylaws

# Article I. ATTENDANCE

**Section 1.01** Mandatory Events

1. Attendance at all Senate General Body Meetings is mandatory. The SGA Secretary shall call roll at every meeting.
2. Attendance at other events may be set by the Executive Board when provided one week’s notice.
3. Attendance at the Senate Retreats is mandatory.

**Section 1.02** Excuses

1. Excuses must be submitted to the Secretary at least 24 hours prior to an absence of a mandatory event. Excuses submitted less than 24 hours in advance shall be accepted at the discretion of the Executive Board.
2. Excuses shall be voted on by the Executive Council to determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused.
3. Three (3) or more unexcused absences will result in immediate impeachment.

Senators whom are impeached will not go through the Process for Inquisition.

1. The Secretary shall issue a warning after the second unexcused

## **Article II.** PROCESS FOR INQUISITION OF SENATORS

**Section 3.01** If said senator is not following nor giving regard for SGA’s rule and responsibilities, he/she may be brought up for review by the Executive Board, only on the approval of a motion to do so by the Senate with a majority vote.

1. This review will not have the power to inflict any sanctions or punishment on the person in question; but it will present its recommendation to the Senate.
2. The Senate then enacts this recommendation through a motion, enact any motion they see fit, or move on with further business.
3. Any recommendation presented by the Senate to the Executive Council will be presented in an Executive Session of the Senate in order to protect the Senator’s rights.
   1. *During this time no one will be allowed to sit in the gallery, and the room must be vacated by all observers excluding the Senate and its advisor(s).*
   2. *All business concerning personnel should be handled in Executive Session.*

## **Article IV.** TRANSITION AND RETREATS

**Section 4.01** There shall be two (2) SGA Retreats. One shall be held each semester within one month period following the commencement of classes in the fall semester and spring semester.

1. These Retreats will serve as mandatory functions for all members of the Executive Council and Student Senate.
2. The Executive Senators shall be responsible for the planning and execution of the mandatory retreat.

(i) *The Retreat content will cover the SGA Constitution, Senate Bylaws, expectations of Senators, and any other information determined necessary by the Executive Council.*

**Section 4.02** There shall be one Transition after the announcement of election results and before the commencement of classes. This meeting is mandatory for all elected officers.

(A) The Vice President is responsible for the planning and execution of officer transitions.

(i) *The Transition will consist of a formal review of all positions and expectations. Each outgoing officer is expected to provide the incoming officer with a binder outlining all responsibilities.*

## **Article V.** LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

**Section 5.01** The procedure by which a Bill or Resolution becomes Student Senate Policy is as follows:

1. All business transacted is called legislation, and proposed law is the form of a bill.
2. Legislation must take on one of the following designations:
   1. *Resolution: expressing the Senate’s opinion or concerns about a given issue.*
   2. *Referendum Bill: expressing an opinion or action of the Student Senate that must be voted on by the Student Body.*
   3. *Bill: enacting any policies within the jurisdiction of the Senate.*
3. The member introduces the bill/referendum/resolution to the Senate by submitting the legislation to the Vice President and the Legislative Affairs Committee Chair the Thursday prior to the meeting it will first be discussed.
4. The Vice President will place the legislation on the following week’s agenda.
5. The Legislative Affairs Chair will distribute the bill/resolution/referendum to their committee for examination.
6. First Reading: The bill/resolution/referendum is read to the Student Senate during New Business. The matter is then officially tabled until the next meeting to allow for through examination. Only questions of clarification will be allowed during this part of the process. This includes no debate.
   1. *Fast Track: A bill or resolution may skip the first reading and be advanced to Second Reading by a ¾ vote of the Student Senate. Fast Track shall only be used on a case-to-case basis and will not be bound by the previous decisions or precedents.*
7. Review by Committee: The Legislative Affairs Committee will convene between the first reading and the Second Reading to discuss the proposed bill. During this meeting the committee will make a decision as to whether they support or do not support the bill.

Amendment to the bill may also be submitted at this time.

1. Second Reading: The matter is reintroduced to the Student Senate during Old Business of the following meeting. The bill will be read, debated, and voted on by the members of the Student Senate.
   1. *Debate: During the Second Reading, the debate process will be overseen by certain guidelines:* 
      1. The bill’s sponsor will read the bill and then have the floor first for debate.
      2. Following their comments, the Legislative Affairs Chair will have the floor. The Legislative Affairs Chair will state the committee’s opinion (“support” or “do not support”) and then present any proposed amendments made by the Legislative Affairs committee.
      3. Only the Legislative Affairs Chair, unbiased on behalf of the committee or senate, will have the ability to propose amendments. These amendments will be voted on upon the motion of the Legislative Affairs Chair.
      4. Any member of the Senate may motion to make an amendment not proposed by the Legislative Affairs Chair.
      5. Debate will continue and will be open to all members of the Senate.
      6. At the conclusion of debate (or decision of the Vice President) the Student Senate will vote on whether or not to pass the bill/resolution/referendum.
   2. *At any point during debate, the sponsor can choose to pull their bill and have it removed from consideration by the Senate. Decorum in debate:* 
      1. Remarks must be confined to the merits of the pending question.
      2. A member’s motives may not be attacked.
      3. No member may comment adversely on any prior act of the Senate that is not pending.
2. Once passed by the Senate, the bill or resolution is sent to the Student Body President where he/she will either sign or veto the bill.
3. If vetoed, Senate can override the veto and pass the bill/resolution/ referendum by a two-thirds (2/3) vote. The vote on a motion to override a veto will occur using the Roll Call method.
4. After being enacted, the bill/resolution/referendum will be passed on to the Legislative Affairs Chair who will be responsible for ensuring the bill’s goals are reached.

# Article VI. AMENDMENTS

**Section 6.01** Any member of the Student Senate or Executive Council may propose an amendment to the Bylaws of the Longwood University SGA.

**Section 6.02** The proposed amendment must be submitted to the President fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting at which it is to be proposed to the Senate.

(A) The submission shall be in written form and include the signature of the member submitting the amendment and four additional members of the Senate.

**Section 6.03** The presentation of the amendment will then follow the Legislative Process outlined in Article V.

**Section 6.04** Adoption of an amendment must be by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Senate.

## **Article VII.** COMPLIANCE WITH CONSTITUTION

**Section 7.01** These Bylaws were written in accordance with the Constitution of the SGA.

**Section 7.02** The SGA Constitution is the supreme governing law of the SGA.

(A) Any current section of the Bylaws of the SGA that are in conflict with the constitution shall be deemed null and void.

## **Article VIII.** RATIFICATION

**Section 8.01** The Bylaws of the Longwood University SGA shall become effective upon a positive three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Student Senate.

**Section 8.02** This bill shall become effective immediately, subject to the action of the Student Body President.

*As Approved by the Senate on January 18, 1996*

*As Amended September 1996*

*As Amended July 2002*

*As Amended September 11, 2004*

*As Amended December 2014*

*As Amended April 2018*