

Constitution of University of Tennessee at Martin  
Student Government Association

# UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION



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Constitution of University of Tennessee at Martin  
Student Government Association

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# **Constitution of University of Tennessee at Martin Student Government Association**

## **PREAMBLE**

Whereas, the students of the University of Tennessee at Martin desiring to assume certain privileges and responsibilities of self-government; to strive for higher standards within academic and social climates; to provide official channels through which student opinion may be expressed; to serve the general welfare of the University community; and, to secure valuable experience in democratic processes, preparing ourselves to assume the responsibilities as productive citizens; have ordained and established the following Constitution and form of student government herein stated, consistent with the policies of the University of Tennessee.

The responsibilities of Senators and Executives shall be all the following herein contained in the constitution and all other responsibilities deemed necessary by the Senate of UTM.

## **ARTICLE I**

### **NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Suffrage and Membership**

Every student of The University of Tennessee at Martin shall be a member of the Student Government Association and shall enjoy equal rights of suffrage under this government. Membership in the Student Government Association shall be open to all students without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status. All representatives of the Student Government Association must be enrolled academic students in good academic standing at the time of election or appointment and during their term of office.

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## **ARTICLE III**

### **Organization**

**Section 1.** The Student Government Association shall be composed of 3 branches: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. SGA shall also oversee the Freshmen Council and Elections Commissioner, following the guidelines established in this Constitution and Bylaws.

**Section 2.** The SGA shall have only those powers and duties as enumerated in this Constitution and its Bylaws. The SGA Constitution shall not infringe upon any rights or privileges afforded to the students of UTM by the Constitutions of the University of Tennessee, The State of Tennessee, and The United States of America.

**Section 3.** Any member of the Student Government Association shall be eligible for appointment to serve on any student, faculty, or administrative boards or committees where appropriate.

**Section 4.** The regular advisors of the SGA shall be the following: Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and other representative(s) that the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs shall appoint by the second meeting of the General Assembly. These advisors should attend the regular meetings of the SGA and serve in an advisory capacity to all matters regarding the SGA.

## **ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**Section 1.** The executive powers of the SGA shall be vested in the SGA Executive Council which shall consist of the Student Body President, Vice President, Secretary General, and the Press Secretary all of whom shall be elected by the Student Body.

A. The Chief Executive Officer of the Student Government Association shall be the President of the Student Body

**Section 2.** The Executive Branch of the SGA shall also include the Chief of Staff, Athletic Liaison, Elections Commissioner and all Executive Assistants.

**Section 3.** Executive Branch shall not vote on SGA legislation, except as afforded under this Constitution and Bylaws. They also may not introduce any legislation except as prescribed by their respective powers recognized by this Constitution.

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**Section 4.** Executive Council officers shall be full-time students with a minimum of a 2.75 cumulative grade point average at the time of their nomination and shall maintain a 2.75 cumulative grade point average during their tenure of office. One must have completed 30 semester hours before taking office, be an undergraduate student, and maintain undergraduate status throughout the duration of their tenure.

**Section 5.** Elected Executive Council officers must have served at least 2 full semesters by the time they assume an Executive Office in the Student Government Association in any of the following positions: Associate Justice, Chief Justice, Solicitor General, Attorney General, Chief of Staff, Speaker of the Senate, Athletic Liaison, elected Senator, and any Senator or Justice who is appointed to a vacant position resulting from lack of candidacy or resignation within the elected senate.

A. This provision excludes Freshmen Council and Executive Assistants.

**Section 6.** Senators-at-Large shall be eligible to run for an Executive Council office assuming they complete all of the following stipulations:

A. Senators-at-Large must meet all of the requirements necessary for a Senator in addition to getting an additional 25 signatures from full time UT Martin students on their petition to run.

1. A member wishing to run must receive 2/3 Senate approval within 2 weeks after party packets are made available by the Elections Commissioner.

2. He or she must have served the entire Fall semester as well as the Spring semester as a Senator-at-Large or higher position prior to taking office

**Section 7.** The President, Vice President, Secretary General, Press Secretary, Freshman Council Executive Council, Chief Justice, Athletic Liaison, Elections Commissioner, Chief of Staff, Speaker of the Senate, and all Senate Committee Chairpersons shall conduct regular meetings at least every 2 weeks during the academic year.

A. This body shall be known as the Legislative Council.

B. Any 5 members of the Legislative Council may call for an emergency meeting via a written request, provided one of the members is an Executive Council member. If an emergency meeting is called for, the Legislative Council must meet within 24 hours.

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C. All members of the Legislative Council are required to attend every Legislative Council meeting. Failure to attend a meeting will result in a ½ absence, unless a member is excused by the Secretary General.

**Section 8.** Each Executive Council officer will be required to maintain 10 constituent service hours per week. Failure to maintain the constituent service hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of constituent service hours missed.

**Section 9.** No SGA Executive Council officer shall maintain or employment over 20 hours a week while serving in their respective and elected Executive Council office. This restriction can be waived with 2/3 approval of the Senate.

**Section 10.** No more than 21 credit hours, and no fewer than twelve credit hours shall be taken each semester by any elected executive council officers. More than 21 hours may be attempted only with a 2/3 approval of Senate.

**Section 11.** The Executive officers and anyone deemed necessary shall entertain credit-charging privileges on behalf of the Student Government Association.

**Section 12.** Two-thirds of the Executive Council shall be present at all administrative meetings, except in the cases of academic functions, illness, or Executive Council vacancies.

**Section 13.** The Executive Council shall be subjected to the same debate restrictions as the rest of the assembly.

## **ARTICLE V: JUDICIAL BRANCH**

**Section 1.** The judicial powers of the Student Government Association shall be vested in the Judicial Branch, otherwise known hereafter as the UTM Student Judiciary.

**Section 2.** The 4 Associate Justices, along with the Chief Justice, shall compose the SGA Student Court.

**Section 3.** The 5 Justices, in cooperation with the Attorney General and Solicitor General, shall establish, adopt, and enforce the Judicial Branch's rules of procedure provided they do not conflict with this Constitution.

**Section 4.** The Student Court shall be responsible for and have the power to:

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- A. Serve as primary legal advisor to the Executive and Legislative Branches on all constitutional questions and legal matters pertinent to the business of the Student Government Association. The Student Court shall serve as the legal and constitutional advisor to the Freshmen Council as well;
- B. Hear and decide all issues of constitutional questions, including the interpretation of this Constitution, Bylaws, and all other laws and/or resolutions passed by Senate or Freshmen Council. Student Court decisions pertaining to such matters shall be final and binding;
- C. Hear and decide, in cooperation with the office of Student Affairs, cases involving alleged student violation of disciplinary rules and regulations. Decisions involving student violations may be appealed to a higher appellate body within the University Guidelines;
- D. Hear and decide all cases of impeachment within the Student Government Association, Appeals to the Student Court's decision will be recommended to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, whose decision shall be final and binding.
- E. Issue subpoenas for documents, files, attendance records, meeting minutes, financial records, receipts to elected or appointed SGA officers for use in Student Court proceedings.
  - 1. Subpoenas must be relevant to the case at hand and approved by two Justices on the court.
  - 2. Personal information may not be requested in a Student Court Subpoena. This includes text messages, personal emails, academic records, medical records, etc.
- F. Summon SGA Representatives to appear before the Student Court for official proceedings. Failure to appear will result in one (1) full absence towards said person's attendance record. Excuses may be given by the Chief Justice in special circumstances involving illness or academic functions.
- G. Hear and decide all appealed cases from the Procedures Committee concerning violators and/or violations of election rules and regulations. Appeals to the Student Court's decision will be recommended to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, whose decisions shall be final and binding.
- H. All opinions of the Student Court, including majority, concurring and dissenting opinions shall be filed with the Chief Justice within 48 hours of the court's final decision.

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1. Opinions must be supported by rules outlined by this SGA Constitution and its Bylaws;
2. Opinions shall be filed with the Secretary General and copied to the Vice President and Procedures Chairperson for their record keeping purposes.

**Section 3.** The Judicial Branch shall meet once a month, with additional meetings as required while the Student Government Association is in session. These meeting times shall be determined by the Chief Justice and special non-scheduled meetings may be called by the Chief Justice as circumstances deem necessary.

**Section 4.** All members of the Judicial Branch must be present at any official meeting of the Senate.

**Section 5.** All Judicial Branch Members will be required to serve at least 2 hours aiding in the functions of the Judicial Branch or the daily operations of the Student Government Association in general.

**Section 6.** Any Judicial Branch Member that is found to be committing malfeasance, nonfeasance, or other official misconduct of their respective duties of office may be removed by a petition for impeachment brought by the Procedures Chairperson to the Senate. A 2/3 vote by Senate will remove the member temporarily from their respective position. Appeals in this area will be recommended to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, whose decisions shall be final.

**Section 7.** All Judicial Branch members shall be elected with the same eligibility requirements as those of Senate but are disallowed from party affiliations. In the event of vacancies, the President shall have the power to appoint replacements, with a 2/3 Senate approval, so a full Judicial Branch is maintained.

**Section 8.** Members of the Judicial Branch must maintain a cumulative 2.5 GPA during the Fall and Spring terms in office and have such GPA at the time of their election or appointment. Failure to maintain this GPA or above will result in a request for impeachment being filed by either the Secretary General or the Procedures Chair to the Senate for action.

**Section 9.** Members of the Judicial Branch will be subject to an attendance policy that allows no more than 2 unexcused absences per semester total, unless otherwise stipulated under this Constitution and its Bylaws. A member of the Judicial Branch having more than 2 unexcused absences, regardless of the



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reason, shall be referred to Senate for impeachment by either the Secretary General or the Procedures Chair.

## **Chief Justice**

**Section 10.** The Chief Executive Officer of the Judicial Branch shall be the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice shall be nominated from the standing justices by the Student Body President, in collaboration with 2/3 approval of Senate, and in accordance to the rules and regulations set forth in this Constitution and its Bylaws.

**Section 11.** The Chief Justice shall be reviewed on his or her ability to complete the responsibilities and duties of said office. He or she shall be reviewed by a review committee made up of the Solicitor General, Attorney General, Vice President, Speaker of the Senate, and Procedures Chairperson.

- A. If it is found that the Chief Justice has not completed his or her responsibilities for the semester that has already passed, he or she will be removed from his or her position and will not be allowed to hold that position again for 1 full semester, not including summer semesters; however, he or she will still hold an Associate Justice position. A new Chief Justice must be appointed by the second Senate meeting of the next semester. Appeals in this area will be recommended to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, whose decisions shall be final.

**Section 12.** The Chief Justice shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Preside over all official proceedings of the Judicial Branch in cooperation with a SGA Advisor;
  - 1. The Chief Justice shall announce 48 hours in advance, all proceedings of the Student Court to all parties involved, except in emergency situations.
- B. Be responsible for keeping a fair record of all judicial activities and proceedings, which will be copied and made accessible by the Secretary General for archiving and record keeping purposes;
- C. Serve at least 5 office hours per week with the exception of special circumstances. Failure to maintain the office hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of hours missed;
- D. Shall conduct a Constitution workshop with a visual aid by the first Fall meeting of the Senate for all members of the Student Government

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Association regardless of specific branch or duty. The Chief Justice shall also be responsible for conducting a Constitution workshop for the Freshmen Council by their second meeting of the Fall semester;

- E. Shall monitor the Executive Council members' attendance as set forth by the Student Government Association constitution.

## **ARTICLE VI: LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

### **Section 1.** Composition of the Legislative Branch:

- A. The Legislative powers of the SGA shall be vested in the Senate, which shall be chaired by the Speaker of the Senate, Vice President, or the Procedures Chairperson and comprised of senators elected in accordance with the Bylaws of this Constitution;
- B. Any person that is elected or appointed to serve as a Senator shall be a full-time student in good academic standing with the university at and during the duration of their term in office;
  - 1. Students classified as Freshmen are not allowed to become Senators or Senators-At-Large.
- C. Senators must maintain a cumulative 2.5 GPA during the Fall and Spring terms in office and have such GPA at the time of their election or appointment. Failure to maintain this GPA or above will result in a request for impeachment being filed by the Secretary General to the Senate for action;
- D. Senators will also be subject to an attendance policy that allows no more than 2 (2) unexcused absences per semester total, unless otherwise stipulated under this Constitution and its Bylaws. A Senator having more than 2 (2) unexcused absences, regardless of the reason, shall be referred to Senate for impeachment by the Secretary General or the Attorney General;
- E. Senators-at-Large may be appointed to help facilitate the representative work of the Student Government Association under the following provisions:
  - 1. Senators-at-Large shall submit an application for a Senate-at-Large seat, which shall be made available to the Student Body via the Executive Council within 2 (2) weeks of the beginning of

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the Fall Term. The President, in consultation with the Executive Council, shall recommend those candidates to Senate that qualify under the guidelines set forth in the Constitution and its Bylaws. A 2/3 majority vote is needed of the Senate for appointment to their office;

2. Senators-at-Large shall be appointed in a number not to exceed 1/3 of the total number of elected Senators which are elected in the regular Student Government Association General Election;
3. Senators-at-Large shall be subject to the same requirements as regularly elected senators as set forth in this Constitution and its Bylaws. These requirements include membership eligibility criteria, membership duties/responsibilities, and punishments/punitive sanctions therein contained.

F. Senators-at-Large shall reserve a vote on their Standing Committees and any ad-hoc committees they are placed upon after their initial appointment. They shall not possess a vote in the context of the full Senate unless otherwise amended into this Constitution;

### **Section 2. Senate Powers and Responsibilities**

The Senate shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Consider Acts, Resolutions, and/or recommendations introduced by the Senators. Such legislation, after approval action of Senate, shall then be sent to the President for approval and Chief Justice and the Judicial Branch for constitutional review.
  1. Legislation/bills that are to be considered by the Senate that require the Student Government Association to perform a task or take action shall be written as AN ACT. An act can only be approved if the action to be taken as a result of the bill is within the bounds of this Constitution and Bylaws. It shall be the duty of the Executive Branch of the Student Government Association to ensure that the act is carried out.
  2. Legislation/bills that are to be considered by the Senate that are an expression of the opinion of the Senate body shall be written as A Resolution.
- B. Propose, consider and approve any rules or regulations deemed necessary for the most efficient operation of the Student Government Association;

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- C. Bring forth charges of impeachment against any Executive, Legislative, or Judicial Branch Member by 2/3 vote of the Senate, with all impeachment actions being governed under the guidelines for member impeachment found in the SGA Constitution and its Bylaws;
- D. Enact or repeal Bylaws or initiate any specific amendments or revisions to this Constitution of this Constitution by 2/3 vote on 2 consecutive readings to be held no closer in time than 1 week;
- E. Meet regularly at the time and place specified by majority vote of the Senate;
- F. Approve the annual SGA budget by 2/3 vote no later than the second meeting in the Fall Semester;
- G. Make recommendations on all matters deemed worthy of Senate attention. Constituency Reports of student concerns, to be discussed outside of formal legislation, are strongly recommended and should be filed with the Secretary General within 48 hours of the next scheduled Senate meeting where the business shall be addressed;
- H. All Senators shall serve on at least 1 standing committee of the Senate;
- I. All Senators that are appointed to serve on an Administrative Committee outside of the specific role as a Senator shall report back to the Executive Council on the actions and business of their respective committee at the regularly scheduled Senate meeting immediately following their Administrative Committee's meeting;
- J. All Senators shall hold meetings for the students in their college at least once during each semester, excluding summer sessions. These meetings are to be conducted by 1 or more Senator(s) at least 3 weeks prior to the end of the semester. Failure of a Senator(s) to hold his/her college meeting before the 3 weeks will result in the responsible senator(s) receiving 1 full absence against their total accumulated attendance record;
  - 1. A Campus Wide Meeting can be substituted for these individual college meetings by a 2/3 action vote of the Senate to hold 1 each semester. Each Senator must participate and encourage constituents to be in attendance at the meeting. A written record by the Secretary General shall be kept at

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aforementioned meeting to determine which Senators fulfill this requirement and those that are in violation.

- K. Approve all appointments by 2/3 vote, unless otherwise expressed by this Constitution;
- L. Recommend any appointments by Senate Resolutions if vacant positions are not appointed by President within 2 weeks of a vacancy. The appointment must receive a 2/3 vote and then to be sent to the President for approval.
- M. Override any Presidential veto by 2/3 vote within the guidelines stipulated in this Constitution;
- N. Coordinate and proactively initiate policies to benefit the student body with the campus administration;
- O. Senators will have the sole power to vote and make motions in Senate.

## **Speaker of the Senate**

### **Section 3. Speaker of the Senate**

- A. The Speaker of the Senate shall be responsible for the following:
  - 1. Serving as chairperson of the Senate;
  - 2. Creating the agenda and sending it to all members of the assembly 48 hours before regularly scheduled Senate meetings;
  - 3. Reporting to the Vice President about issues within the Senate;
  - 4. Serving 5 hours per week in the SGA office. Failure to maintain the office hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of office hours missed;
  - 5. Introducing actions, resolutions, and/or recommendations to the Senate for its consideration;
  - 6. Voting to break a tie, in the occurrence of such an event. However, the Speaker of the Senate shall not vote to create a tie.

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**Section 4.** In the event that the Speaker of the Senate sponsors legislation, the chair of the meeting is to be turned over to the Procedures Chairperson or the Vice President, for the length of the debate on said legislation.

**Section 5.** Selection Process for Speaker of the Senate

- A. Candidate for Speaker of the Senate must be a current elected Senator or have previously served in an SGA elected position for a minimum of 2 semesters;
- B. Nominations for Speaker of the Senate can be made by the Vice President and/or current Senators;
- C. Nominated Senators shall preside over a mock session of the Senate during the first meeting of the semester, for the duration of 1 piece of debatable or controversial legislation, which shall be drafted by the Procedures Committee of the previous general assembly;
- D. Senators nominated for Speaker must score at least 80% on the National Association of Parliamentarians Membership Examination. The test shall be proctored by the Chief Justice, or, if the Chief Justice has not been appointed, the Vice President. A candidate that scores less than 80% on the exam shall have 1 opportunity to retake the exam. This requirement must be fulfilled at least 1 week prior to presiding; a. The Chief Justice or Vice President reserves the right to condense the testing material as he/or she sees fit;
- E. In the event that no candidate passes the NAP Examination, the Vice President shall preside until a qualified candidate is selected;
- F. Selection of the Speaker shall be by secret ballot. A simple majority shall be required for selection. If no candidate obtains a simple majority on the first ballot, the second ballot shall be a runoff between the 2 candidates with the most votes on the first ballot;
- G. The Senate seat rendered vacant by the selection of the Speaker shall be refilled in accordance with this Constitution and its Bylaws;
- H. The Speaker of the Senate shall be chosen by the second Fall meeting;
- I. Dual office holding is prohibited. A committee chair shall not become Speaker of the Senate, and the Speaker of the Senate is prohibited from seeking a committee chair position, in the event such a vacancy occurs.

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**Section 6.** Speaker of the Senate Impeachment Procedures shall be as follows:

- A. The Speaker of the Senate can be impeached and removed from the assembly in any manner in accordance with this Constitution and its Bylaws. The Speaker can also be removed from this position, but not the assembly, through a vote of no confidence. In the event a motion for a vote of no confidence is made, a 2/3 majority shall be required to remove the Speaker of the Senate.
  
- B. In the event of a successful vote of no confidence, the removed Speaker shall revert to being a Senator of his or her college. If that college is full, the removed Speaker shall become a Senator-at-Large. If the assembly has the maximum allowed number of Senators-at-Large, the removed Speaker shall be first in line for a vacant Senator-at-Large seat.
  - 1. If the removed Speaker wishes to appeal, they must appeal to the Student Court within 48 hours of the decision;

## **ARTICLE VII: ELECTIONS**

### **Elections Commissioner**

**Section 1.** The Elections Commissioner shall be appointed by the President with 2/3 Senate approval.

**Section 2.** Duties of Elections Commissioner shall be as follows:

- A. The Elections Commissioner shall manage all elections and referendums of the Student Government Association in accordance with this Constitution and its Bylaws;
  
- B. The Elections Commissioner shall be under the supervision of the Procedures Committee and shall report all issues, actions, recommendations, and other information necessary to the said committee;
  
- C. The Elections Commissioner shall, under the supervision of the Procedures Committee and at least one Student Government Association advisor, be responsible for tabulating and announcing results of Student Government Association elections.

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- D. Supervise and direct the arrangements of the Elections Commission for the proper execution of elections;
- E. Serve 2 hours per week making arrangements for elections or aiding in the daily operations of SGA. Failure to maintain the hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of office hours missed. The Elections Commissioner shall also attend all Senate meetings per semester;
- F. Announce to candidates the rules and regulations of the Election Commissioner and provide this information to anyone upon request; provide to the candidates in written form any and all rules and regulations of the Elections Commissioner that will be considered in matters pertaining to election operation and candidate disqualification. This shall be done no later than 1 week prior to open campaigning;
- G. Promulgate rules for elections deemed necessary by the Commissioner which shall supplement and expand those outlined by this SGA Constitution and its Bylaws;
- H. Be responsible for the enforcement of the election laws, rules, and regulations as established by the Student Government Association Constitution and Bylaws;
- I. Provide adequate information concerning all elections to the Press Secretary for publication purposes before, during, and after the election. The information released before the election shall include a list of all poll locations, and a list of all candidates appearing on the ballot and which office they are seeking. This information shall be made available at least 1 week prior to any SGA sanctioned election;
- J. Maintain a permanent public record of the final results of all elections for 2 months following every election. The official tally sheets, electronic and/or paper versions from the said election, shall be kept in the SGA office under locked supervision and care of the Elections Commissioner;
- K. Work with the University Center Director, Assistant University Director, and Information Technology Services in order to facilitate fair and efficient elections;
- L. Take any other actions necessary to execute fair and efficient elections in accordance with this Constitution and its Bylaws.

**Section 3.** Administrative Duties of the Elections Commissioner shall be as follows:



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- A. Arrange for polling area(s), ballots, and other items necessary for an efficient and legal execution of elections;
- B. Screen and disqualify candidates due to regulations of this Constitution and its Bylaws with cooperation and supervision of at least 1 Student Government Association Advisor;
- C. Appoint, with the approval of the Procedures Committee, the number of persons necessary to operate the poll(s);
- D. Make and announce all campaign procedures not herein stated, with 2/3 Senate approval;
- E. Set and announce all dates for all Student Government Association referendums and elections at least 4 weeks prior to the date. When announcing election dates, the commission shall announce those items to be voted on and/or those positions to be filled by election. These announcements shall be made to the University of Tennessee at Martin Student Body by any and all available forms of mass media available to the Student Government Association that is accessible to the Student Body;
- F. Shall set and announce all due dates for petitions of potential candidates;
- G. Recognize political parties in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws;
- H. Approve the format of the official ballot;
- I. Enforce the election laws provided in the Constitution;
- J. Administer a standardized, 20 question test on the Student Government Association Constitution with multiple versions created from a larger test bank to all candidates for SGA Executive, Judicial, and Senate offices. This test, composed by the Elections Commissioner and/or his or her Council, shall be updated at the same time as the Constitution is updated every 2 years. A candidate must score at least 70% on the test in order to be eligible to fulfill the Student Government Association seat in which they seek;
  - 1. The Student Government Association Constitution test will be administered 3 times during an election period;

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2. A candidate may not attempt the Constitution test more than 3 times in a given election period;

3. Should a candidate fail the Constitution test 3 times during the election period in which they seek a Student Government Association seat, he/she will be ineligible to fill the seat to which they were seeking;

K. Shall designate a place and time, on the day(s) of the election, for all candidates to obtain a written copy of the voting breakdown.

**Section 5.** The Elections Commissioner shall be a member of the Executive Branch and is required attend all Legislative Council Meetings.

**Section 6.** If the Elections Commissioner will be a candidate in any SGA election, then said commissioner shall resign his/her post as Election Commissioner. Failure to do so shall disqualify the candidate by default.

## **ARTICLE VIII: ELECTION RULES & PROCEDURES**

### **Section 1.** Executives

- A. The President, Vice President, Press Secretary, and Secretary General of the SGA shall be elected by the student body at large. A candidate for 1 of the above named offices must receive more than 50% of the votes cast to win on the first ballot. If none of the candidates receive more than 50% of the votes cast, a runoff will be held between the 2 candidates receiving the greatest number of votes to determine the outcome of the election;
- B. These officers shall assume office immediately following the last scheduled meeting of the Spring semester.

### **Section 2.** Legislature

- A. The Senate shall consist of elected officials from the following schools: Agriculture and Applied Sciences; Humanities and Fine Arts; Business and Global Affairs; Health, Education, and Behavioral Sciences; Engineering and Natural Sciences; Parsons Center; Jackson Center; Ripley Center; Selmer Center; and Somerville Center. In Senate elections, candidates receiving the highest vote percentages shall win on the first ballot. In the event that two or more candidates tie in an election for a senate seat, a

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run-off will be held between the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes to determine the outcome of the election;

- B. One Senator shall be elected for every 250 students enrolled in each school, with a guaranteed minimum of at least 1 Senator for each school. In the event that a school's enrollment increases to that of 60% percent plus 1 students exceeding the stated Senator to student ratio, said school shall receive 1 additional Senate seat at the next election;
- C. A candidate for the Senate must be a member of the school in which they seek to represent. A member is any student with the major that is a part of the school they seek to represent. Furthermore, only students enrolled in a particular school shall be allowed to vote for candidates which seek to represent said school;
- D. Undeclared major candidates shall run and vote under the College of Humanities and Fine Arts;
- E. Senate seats shall be apportioned in such a manner that the size of the Senate does not exceed 30 elected Senators;
- F. There shall be one senate seat for each of the University of Tennessee at Martin's satellite campuses: Jackson, Ripley, Parsons, Selmer, and Somerville. If no one is elected into the position, the Director of the UTM Center will recommend students to go through an interview process. Students may be elected regardless of their academic major.

### **Section 3. Terms of Office**

- A. All regularly elected or appointed offices and positions in Student Government Association shall be for a term of 1 year unless terminated or vacated by resignation, disqualification, incapacity, death, recall from office by special election, or removal from office following impeachment;
- B. A candidate for any position in the Student Government Association is ineligible to seek any other elected position in the Student Government Association at the same time.

### **Section 4. Election Rules and Procedures**

- A. The Student Government Association General Election must be held within the first 2 weeks of March and no later than the second week of April of the Spring semester;

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### **B. Declaration of Candidacy**

1. Prospective candidates for the Student Government Association offices must deliver to the Student Government Association office a petition with the signatures of 25 full-time UTM students for all elected positions excluding the Executive Council which requires 50 signatures. The candidates shall also provide their advisor's signature proving that the candidate meets the grade requirements for election. The petitions shall be submitted on or before the date specified by the Elections Commissioner. Any late or incomplete applications shall be void;
2. After filing a declaration of intent, a candidate or a political party shall be responsible for obtaining thorough knowledge of all election regulations. Ignorance of such regulations shall be no excuse for any violation thereof. Consequences of violations, which may include the disqualification of a candidate, shall be left up to the discretion of the Elections Commissioner. If a candidate who is running on a political party is found to be in violation of this constitution and is disqualified, resigns, or leaves for any reason after the deadline in which petitions are due, the party will not be able to replace the candidate.

### **Section 5. Political Parties**

- A. In order for a group of candidates to qualify on the official ballot as a political party, that party shall:
  1. Record at the time of qualification, the name of party chairperson. The deadline for qualification of political party shall be determined by the Elections Commissioner and made public in the same manner as other information related to the elections;
  2. Furnish a list of candidates and the offices for which they are running by 5:00 p.m. of the last day of qualification. The list shall be alphabetized and shall include the name and phone number of each candidate. Failure to comply with the above shall result in the disqualification of the entire party;
  3. Names used by political parties shall be approved by the Elections Commissioner;

### **Section 6. Campaigning Rules**

- A. The Elections Commissioner shall set the time for the beginning of formal campaigning to be composed of no less than 10 academic days. There

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shall be no formal campaigning except within this specified time. Formal campaigning includes hanging banners and posters, circulating printed material, and soliciting votes before groups;

- B. The placement of campaign materials shall be done in accordance with The University of Tennessee at Martin's Sign Posting Procedures;
- C. The Elections Commissioner shall set the spending limits at least 4 weeks prior to formal campaigning for all elected offices. This limit shall be set for 1 year. If the Elections Commissioner fails to do this, the previous year's limit will be in effect;
- D. All candidates shall submit a written itemized budget to the Elections Commissioner by 5:00 p.m. the day before the opening of the polls. Failure to submit a budget will result in the disqualification of the candidate and removal from the ballot, unless the candidate is on a political party, in which case, the party shall submit a written itemized budget pertaining to the entire party. If a candidate is independent or spends money independently of the party, he or she must submit an itemized budget;

All candidates shall conduct their campaigns in accordance with the Student Government Association laws governing campaigns as deemed by this Constitution, Bylaws and/or Election rules and procedures;

There shall be no voting by proxy;

Computers shall be used in all elections. Once the voting begins the computer tabulation shall be under supervision by the Director of Computer Services. The data shall be viewed by the Elections Commissioner, Elections Commissioner advisor, and Commission only for purposes needed to ensure a secure and fair election process;

There shall be no campaigning within the polling place(s); the limits of the polling area(s) shall be determined by the Elections Commissioner and approved by the Senate Procedures Committee. Candidates and their staff members may campaign outside the designated polling area during the time in which voters cast their ballots in the election. Any complaints to the Elections Commissioner of voter harassment by a candidate and/or their staff members shall result in immediate action being taken against a candidate by the Elections Commissioner, including but not limited to, revocation of campaigning privileges outside of polling locations or other appropriate actions deemed sufficient by the commission;

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There shall be at least 1 member of the administration present at the opening of the computer tabulation. Each candidate shall reserve the right of having a representative present at the opening of the computer tabulation. None of these advisors shall be a candidate; N. A write-in candidate is eligible only if he or she takes the Constitution Test 24 hours before the polls open, submits said number of signatures, and turns in an itemized budget.

### **Section 7. Election Complaint Procedures**

- A. All complaints regarding elections must be received by the Elections Commissioner by the published closing time of polls. The only post-closing complaint that may be heard shall be instances of voting irregularities discovered in the tabulation process;
- B. The following procedure shall govern the disposition of complaints presented to the Elections Commissioner:
  - 1. Following receipt of a complaint, the Elections Commissioner shall promptly investigate the matter to determine its validity.
  - 2. If a complaint is found to be valid and will not result in disqualification of a candidate, the Elections Commissioner shall decide how to handle the Complaint.
  - 3. If a complaint is found to be valid and will result in a recommendation of disqualification, the Elections Commissioner shall submit the complaint with a recommendation and reasoning for such recommendation to the Procedures Committee Chair. The Committee shall review the matter. Any appeal to Student Court shall be the final forum for the complaint.
  - 4. If a complaint is found by the Elections Commissioner, upon a thorough review of all available information, to be invalid or of a frivolous nature, the Commissioner may dismiss the Complaint as lacking a valid claim. The decision to dismiss the complaint may be appealed to Student Court; the Court may affirm or reverse the decision to dismiss the claim only.
- C. The Election Commissioner in his/her sole discretion may waive the requirements of part A if it reasonably believed that the complainant could not have known the information giving rise to the complaint by close of polls, and that the complaint alleges conduct which is reasonably

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believed to have altered the outcome of the election. Nothing in this part shall compel the Elections Commissioner to hear a complaint following the closing of polls."

### **Section 8. Homecoming Royalty Elections**

- A. All election rules and procedures as outlined by this Constitution and Bylaws shall apply for Homecoming elections, except as established herein;
- B. Homecoming Royalty elections shall be held no later than the Wednesday of the week of Homecoming. Voting will be limited to a period of 1 day, except in the case of a runoff;
- C. The candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be named the Homecoming King and Queen. In the sole event of a tie between two contestants, a run-off election will be held between the candidates with the tied number of votes to determine the outcome of the election. The run-off shall be held on the day after the first ballot is completed. The following four additional members of the Homecoming Court will be determined by the election outcome in declining order following the King and Queen.
- D. The Elections Commissioner shall verify and oversee all Homecoming election results;
- E. The King and Queen must be a registered full-time student of the University of Tennessee at Martin. Homecoming Royalty candidates must be sponsored by only 1 registered student organization;
- F. Homecoming Court shall be announced at the pep rally prior to game day, with the King and Queen being crowned at halftime of the football game.

### **Section 9. Referendum Procedure**

- A. Any student or recognized university organization may petition for an item to be placed on the official ballot during the Student Government Association led election;
- B. In order for an item to be placed on the ballot, a petition must be signed by either 250 students or 10% of the number of students who voted in the preceding Student Government Association elections, whichever is greater. The petition must be turned into the Election Commissioner in the

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same manner that qualifying petitions are due for those who are running for office in the general election. Each petition must clearly state the referendum, the sponsor, and have numbered lines where students write their names and student ID numbers;

- C. The Elections Commissioner will verify the student signatures and they may reject the referendum if it fails to meet any of the above qualifications, or if it is inappropriate or offensive. The Elections Commissioner must provide a written response to the sponsor of any rejected referendum detailing the reasons for its rejection. Senate may override the Elections Commissioner's rejection by a simple majority vote;
- D. A referendum must be approved by a majority of students voting in the election for it to pass. Any referendum that passes will be implemented in consultation with and subject to final actions and decisions by the University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor, University of Tennessee President, and The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees;

### **The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member**

**Section 10:** The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member shall be appointed as follows:

- A. All nominees for The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member position must be enrolled full time at the University of Tennessee at Martin and in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of the election, of appointment, and during the term of office.  
Note: Good academic standing for Student Member position is classified as having a 2.75 cumulative grade point average at time of nomination and should maintain a 2.75 cumulative grade point average during the tenure of the position.
- B. Nominees must be willing and able to serve as the University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member for one full year. (July 1 through June 30). The Student Representative shall attend all Advisory Board Meetings, SGA Senate meetings, SGA Freshman Council Meetings, and SGA Legislative Council meetings.
- C. Nominees must complete the pledge form stating that they have read the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees Bylaws in detail, and will pledge to fulfill all duties and requirements of the position if elected. A copy of the Bylaws will be made available in the SGA office and is available online at <http://www.utm.edu/advisoryboard/> .



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D. Nominees must complete the Elections Rules Compliance Form stating that they will comply with all rules and requirements set forth by the Elections Commissioner and the SGA Constitution.

E. To qualify for candidacy, nominees need 50 signatures on an Elections Petition Form.

F. Nominees must comply with rules of Campaign Finance and complete the proper Campaign Finance Forms. These forms must be turned in to the Elections Commissioner by the date election packets are due.

G. Nominees are allowed to run for any SGA position and the Student Representative position, excluding executive council positions.

H. The top three vote recipients for the University of Tennessee at Martin Advisory Board Student Member position in the general election will be submitted to the Chancellor's Office for final selection.

### **ARTICLE IX: INSTALLATION OF SGA OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1. Installation and Assumption of Office**

A. The Senate shall provide for appropriate installation ceremonies for students who have been certified as duly elected or appointed to office;

B. At ceremonies, the presiding Chief Justice of the Student Government Association shall administer the following ` to the newly elected or appointed officers:

*"I, (state your name), do solemnly promise, upon my honor, to support and defend the needs, concerns, and general welfare of the student body of the University of Tennessee at Martin; and, to faithfully execute all requirements, duties, and responsibilities hereunto stated by the constitutions of the Student Government Association, the state of Tennessee, and the United States of America. So help me God."*

1. In the absence of the Chief Justice, the senior most Associate Justice may administer the oath.

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## **ARTICLE X: FRESHMEN COUNCIL**

### **Freshmen Council**

**Section 1.** The Freshmen Council shall represent the needs and interests of students classified as Freshmen at The University of Tennessee at Martin. All decisions will be made in consultation with the Freshmen Council Advisor (Vice President of the Student Body) who will have the final verdict. The Freshmen Council shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Establish committees that the Council deems necessary for its efficient and effective operation. The Freshmen Council committee structures should mirror the structure of other SGA standing committees that are constitutionally stipulated in this document;
- B. Elect officers consisting of a President, Vice President, and Secretary General;
- C. Upon the event of a Senate vote to hold a Campus Wide Forum, all members of the Freshmen Council must participate and should be encouraged to bring 1 constituent from the current freshmen class to be in attendance at the meeting. A written record by the Secretary General shall be kept at the aforementioned meeting to determine which members of Freshmen Council fulfill this requirement and those that are in violation.

**Section 2.** The application process, screening process, and election of officers shall be governed within the guidelines of the Freshmen Council Bylaws found in this constitution.

**Section 3.** The Freshmen Council Executive Council shall each have a vote in Senate which must align with the prior votes of Freshmen Council. Should a vote come in Senate in which the Freshmen Council has not had the opportunity to vote on as a Council, the Freshmen Council Executive Council shall have the power to vote the way in which the Executive Council personally feels best serves the Freshmen Council's interests.

**Section 4.** Freshmen Council shall be elected as outlined in Article III of the Freshmen Council Bylaws.

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## **ARTICLE XI: SGA COMPENSATION**

### **Compensation for SGA Officers**

**Section 1.** The President, Vice President, Secretary General, and the Press Secretary shall be compensated with stipends and their textbooks on a loan basis and at the beginning of each semester.

- A. The President shall receive a full scholarship per semester
- B. The Vice President shall receive a \$4,000 scholarship per semester
- C. The Secretary General shall receive a \$3,500 scholarship per semester
- D. The Press Secretary shall receive a \$1,500 scholarship per year

**Section 2.** The Athletic Liaison, Elections Commissioner, Chief of Staff, Chief Justice, Standing Senate Committee Chairpersons, Student Advisory Board Representative, the Freshman Council Executive and the Speaker of the Senate shall be compensated with a \$500 scholarship per semester during their respective terms of service.

**Section 3.** Textbook scholarships shall be capped at \$500 for all recipients of a textbook scholarship from the Student Government Association.

## **ARTICLE XII: SGA CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Code of Conduct**

**Section 1.** Ethical Standards for SGA Representatives:

- A. SGA Representatives are to adhere to their duties as outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws.
  - 1. A representative is any person who holds any position in the Student Government Association. This includes the Executive, Legislative Branch, Judicial Branch and all their assistants.
- B. Additionally, anyone a part of a SGA election is also to adhere to this code of conduct
- C. Representatives are to be forthright, honest, and fully transparent in their communications with their constituents. They shall never knowingly misrepresent the truth in their capacity as a representative of the Association.

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- D. Representatives are prohibited from bestowing favors, making undue use or influence of powers of office, or offer special considerations of any kind in exchange for anything of material or intrinsic value.
- E. Representatives are to conduct themselves in a professional manner when interacting as a representative of the Student Government Association.
- F. Representatives are prohibited from misusing, mismanaging, or misappropriating their position and/or equipment, facilities, or SGA funds.
- G. Representatives are to put the wishes of the student body as expressed through resolutions of the Student Senate before their personal agendas. They shall work diligently to enact legislation in a timely manner after its passage.
- H. Representatives are to maintain respect for the University, its employees, their fellow public servants, and themselves.
- I. Representatives who commit a felony or misdemeanor are required to forfeit their position.

### **Section 2. Process for Alleging a Violation**

- A. Any student of the University of Tennessee at Martin can bring forth an allegation of wrongdoing against a SGA representative.
- B. No representative of SGA may make complaints against themselves.
- C. Allegations of violating the Code of Ethics must be presented before the Procedures committee in some form of documentation outlining the allegation and providing at least one form of evidence listed herein: Original photograph(s), unedited video, email or other official correspondence, certification of a violation of the Student Handbook, or any other original documents or content that may serve as proof that a violation has occurred.
- D. Allegations shall be sent to the Procedures Committee Chairperson and/or the Attorney General for a special review hearing.

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1. If the Procedures Chairperson is accused of a violation of the SGA Code of Conduct or has a conflict-of-interest in a particular case, another Procedures committee member shall serve as Chair of the review hearing.
2. If a representative is found to be in violation of the SGA Code of Conduct by the Procedures Committee then the Procedures Chairperson, Attorney General, or another Senator shall file Articles of Impeachment against said member for those charge(s).

**ARTICLE XIII: IMPEACHMENT**

**Section 1.** Impeachment and Removal of Student Government Association Representatives

- A. Grounds for impeachment shall be failure to perform the duties of office as stipulated in this Constitution, Bylaws and other rules and regulations governing the University of Tennessee at Martin Student Government Association or for official misconduct pertaining to that individual's office or position;
- B. Impeachment proceedings may be brought against an individual by a fellow Senator or by recommendation of the Attorney General in limited circumstances specified in the Constitution such as violations of the SGA Code of Conduct, attendance policies, GPA requirements or misuse of Student Government Association funds. A 2/3 vote of senate is needed for passage of charges and referral to Student Court;
- C. The Student Court shall be the judging body. Appeals to the Student Court's decision will be recommended to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, whose decisions shall be final.
- D. Confession of guilt causes the office to be declared vacant and requires immediate resignation of the office by the member in question;
- E. Any person found guilty of the impeachment charges by the Student Court shall have 2 academic school days to vacate their office and remove any personal items or effects from the Student Government Association office or other respective place of Student Government Association business;

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- F. A written notice of resignation is to be filed within 24 hours of the effective resignation with the Secretary General. This is true for all cases of member resignation.

## **ARTICLE XIV: AMENDMENTS AND RATIFICATION**

### **Amendments**

**Section 1.** Any specific amendment to the SGA Constitution or Bylaws must be proposed by a Senator. The proposed amendment shall lie on the table for a period of at least 2 weeks and must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Senate before going into effect.

**Section 2.** Any constitutional amendment must have a petition of 30 signatures from current students before it is submitted for consideration.

- A. Amendments that are exclusively grammatical or amendments proposed by the Constitution Revision committee or exempt from this rule.

**Section 3.** Any amendments passed by the Senate should be immediately updated into the Student Government Association Constitution in its electronic form. Revised copies of the Student Government Association Constitution shall be made available every year, with the Chief Justice having responsibility for overseeing and implementing this process of updating and current accuracy.

### **Ratification**

**Section 4.** This Constitution and/or any amendments made by the members of the Senate shall be ratified by a 2/3 vote of a seated quorum at a regularly scheduled meeting. This provision shall also extend to any provisions and/or amendments recommended bi-yearly by the Constitutional Revision Committee, whose recommendations shall be ratified in the same manner, pursuant to the guidelines outlined in this constitution.

### **Constitution Revision Committee**

**Section 1.** Every 2 years, the Student Government Association President shall appoint a committee to review the Constitution. This committee of 7 members shall be composed of the Secretary General, Chief Justice, the Procedures Chairperson, 4 Senate members, and 2 Freshmen Council members, where Senate is the majority of the appointed members, and the Chief Justice serves

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as chairperson of the committee. The Chief Justice may vote only to break a tie in this committee on voting matters only.

**Section 2.** Any needed revisions and/or changes being deemed necessary by a recommendation from this review committee shall be forwarded to Senate via the Chief Justice.

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UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION  
BYLAWS



LAST REVISED: March 2020



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## **ARTICLE I: CONSTITUTION**

Section 1: Those duties and powers assigned to the SGA and its officers in the constitution are considered as implied under these bylaws.

Section 2: When judging discrepancies between the constitution and the Bylaws, the Constitution shall be considered authoritative over these bylaws.

## **ARTICLE II: DUTIES OF OFFICE**

### **EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

#### **President**

**Section 1.** The Chief Executive Officer of the Student Government Association shall be the President of the Student Body and shall have the power and/or duty to:

- A. Uphold the Student Government Association Constitution; execute legislation enacted by the Senate; and represent the interests, concerns, and needs of the student body;
- B. Assume responsibility for the execution of the duties of all Executive Branch members;
- C. Appoint temporary committees and Executive Assistants as deemed necessary by the executive branch, and to abolish such bodies and assistants with discretion;
- D. Appoint a new Vice President and/or Secretary General in the event that the office of the Vice President and/or Secretary General becomes vacant. The President, in conjunction with the Procedures Committee and Executive Council, must give public notice if one or both of these positions become vacant. In the event that no Procedures Committee has been established at this time, the President shall appoint an ad-hoc Procedures Committee to give recommendations to him/her on the selection of a new Vice President and/or Secretary General. A written application shall be composed for the appointments that all persons interested in the vacant position may use to apply. Candidates for these vacancies shall be interviewed by the Procedures or ad-hoc Procedures Committee, the President, and Executive Council prior to the presidential recommendation to Senate. All candidates wishing to apply must meet

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the eligibility requirement for an executive council officer as outlined by this Constitution and its Bylaws. The recommendation requires 2/3 Senate approval to become effective;

- E. Submit at the first Senate meeting of the Fall semester, a report of programs and activities the Student Government Association should strive to obtain;
- F. Recommend to Senate for appointment, within 2 Senate meetings after elections, the following: 1. Executive Assistant to the President, 2. Executive Assistant to the Vice President; 3. Executive Assistant to the Secretary General; 4. Chief Justice; 5. Elections Commissioner; 6. Chief of Staff; 7. Committee Chairs; 8. Press Secretary; Senate must approve such appointments by a 2/3 vote;
- G. Recommend to Senate for appointment the following:
  - 1. The President shall reserve the right to appoint replacements for all Student Government Association vacancies as they occur during the academic year in which the Student Government Association is in session. Candidates for vacancies except Senators and Senators at Large shall fill out an application and shall be interviewed by the President in collaboration with Procedures Chairperson prior to recommendation to the Senate;
  - 2. This process does not apply to executive council vacancies that occur. Executive council vacant positions that occur should be filled following the process established in this Constitution. The President shall have the power to recommend to Senate for appointment any individuals wishing to serve as Senate-at-Large representatives in Student Government Association. Senate must approve such appointments by a 2/3 majority vote;
  - 3. The President shall have the power to appoint students to fill positions on any student, faculty, and/or administrative boards or committees, as provided for by this Constitution, the faculty or administration of UTM, or other applicable guidelines pertaining to such bodies; those members appointed by the President shall be required to report to the President and the full Senate of the proceedings of their particular committee meeting at the regular Senate meeting immediately occurring after the board/committee meeting;
- H. Remove from office any appointees who fail to fulfill their duties as outlined in this Constitution or the Senate rules of order. Said appointees

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may appeal to the Senate which may reinstate them with 2/3 Senate approval;

- I. Recommend needed legislation and actions to Senate;
- J. Enact Executive Orders that are deemed necessary and appropriate to carrying out the duties of the Student Government Association Presidency and/or Executive Branch. Such executive orders shall be limited in duration to the time in which the President is serving in their current term. The Senate shall have the authority to nullify any executive order by 2/3 vote;
- K. Call special meetings of the Student Government Association when circumstances deem such action is necessary;
- L. Call special meetings of the Student Government Association when circumstances deem such action is necessary;
- M. Veto all enactments of the Senate to which strong exception is taken within 14 days of the legislation's final passage. The President shall return to the Senate any vetoed legislation with an explanation of the action. The Senate shall have the authority to overturn the veto with a 2/3 vote. The President may also neither sign nor veto an enactment of the Senate. An explanation of the inaction shall be presented to the Senate and the Chancellor;
- N. Serve as a voting member on the Board of Directors of the Student Activities Council (SAC) and act as an official liaison between the Student Government Association and the Student Activities Council;
- O. Conduct a transition meeting with the incoming Executive Council;
- P. Report the status of legislative enactments that have been dually approved by the Senate and the President at each Senate meeting. The report must take place at the next Senate meeting following the act's passage and approval.
- Q. Give a "State of the SGA Address" to the Student Body in the Fall semester educating the public about SGA as well as outlining the policies, ideas, issues, etc. that they aim to address during their term of office;
- R. The President must maintain office hours of at least 10 hours per week, with the exception of special circumstances.

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## **Vice President**

**Section 2.** The Vice President shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Serve as the president in the event of the President's resignation, incapacity, conviction of impeachment, absence, or death;
- B. Appoint a new Vice President in the event that the office of the President must be assumed by the current Vice President. The new President, in conjunction with the Procedures Committee, must give public notice of the vacant position. In the event that no Procedures Committee has been established at this time, the new President shall appoint an ad-hoc Procedures Committee to give recommendations on the selection of a new Vice President. A written application shall be composed for the appointment that all persons eligible for the vacant position may apply. Candidates for this vacant position shall be interviewed by the Procedures or ad-hoc Procedures committee and the new President prior to presidential recommendation to Senate. All candidates wishing to apply must meet the eligibility requirements for an Executive Council Officer as outlined by this Constitution and its Bylaws. The recommendation requires 2/3 Senate approval to become effective;
- C. Serve as ex-officio member of all special and standing committees of the Senate, but shall not vote on such committees;
- D. Assist the President;
- E. Call Senate meetings and serve as President of the Senate;
- F. Require electronic or written reports of all committees for review. Written reports of committee activities shall be required by the Vice President within 48 hours of the committee meeting. The Vice President shall then ensure a copy of such reports is filed with the Secretary General for official record keeping purposes;
- G. Appoint special temporary committees of both the Student Government Association and non-Student Government Association persons, if deemed necessary by circumstances pertinent to the execution of their official duties, and the chairpersons of such committees;
- H. Recommend to the President one Executive Assistant for appointment;
- I. Serve as the advisor to the Freshmen Council and appoint the Chief of Staff, or another legislative council member as a co-advisor;

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- J. Oversee the filing and progression of any Senate legislation during its cycle as a legislative action in accordance with this Constitution;
- K. Recommend to Senate for appointment, by mid-term of the Fall semester, any vacancies in the Senate not filled in the last general election, as well as any Senator and Senator at Large vacancies that occur throughout the year;
- L. Report to the President on passed legislation and any other Senate business.
- M. The Vice President must maintain office hours of at least 10 hours per week, with the exception of special circumstances.

## **Secretary General**

**Section 3.** The Secretary General shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Assist the President, Vice President, Press Secretary, Senate, Judicial Branch, Elections Commissioner, and Freshmen Council in fulfilling their respective duties and obligations;
- B. Be responsible for the drafting of all official correspondence as designated by the Senate or an Executive Officer;
- C. Post at a place designated by the Senate and/or Vice President accurate copies of any bill under consideration by the Senate, current Senate agendas, and meeting minutes to include votes and resulting outcomes of current Senate actions within 48 hours. Reports of all committee meetings, Freshmen Council meetings, Elections Commissioner meetings, and Judicial Branch meetings and actions shall also be placed in this location within 48 hours of their occurrence;
- D. Maintain all Student Government Association records and files with the most currently available information. These records include the public posting of attendance records of Senators within 48 hours of all Senate meetings in the Student Government Association office;
- E. Prepare, after consultation with the Executive Council, advisor, and Committee Chairs, the Student Government Association Annual General Budget, which is to be presented and approved by the Senate no later than the second meeting of the Fall Semester. In the event that the

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budget is not approved within this time, the previous year's budget will serve as the spending guideline for the Student Government Association's operations until the current year's budget is passed;

- F. Authorize all purchases and expenses involving Student Government Association funds under \$100. Amounts over \$100 but not exceeding \$300 must have Executive Council approval. Amounts over \$300 but not exceeding \$1000 must have Executive Council approval, with concurrence of the Procedures Chair and the Chief Justice. Spending actions in this area must be made known to Senate at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting." Amounts over \$1,000 total must have Senate approval;
- G. Recommend to the President an Executive Assistant for appointment.
- H. The Secretary General shall have no vote on Senate legislation.
- I. The Secretary General shall not sponsor Senate legislation, except in special circumstances pertaining with monetary bills;
- J. The Secretary General shall not chair or serve on any standing committee of the Senate.
- K. The Secretary General must maintain office hours of at least 10 hours per week, with the exception of special circumstances.
- L. The Secretary General shall apportion office hours to be served as deemed appropriate depending on any holiday or vacation time during the academic year that may occur while the Student Government Association is in session.

## **Press Secretary**

**Section 4:** Duties of the Press Secretary will be as follows:

- A. Maintain and update the different types of media sources used by SGA.
- B. Ensure that media sources are being used efficiently for communication to students.

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- C. Deliver information about SGA legislation, events, vacancies, elections, etc. to the student body in a timely manner.
- D. Regularly promote SGA through on-campus media outlets, including but not limited to: the campus newspaper, radio station, org sync, email lists, etc.
- E. Create graphics, flyers, press releases, and other visuals to promote SGA meetings, events, etc. to the student body.
- F. Serve as the liaison between SGA and the campus media.
- G. Report to the President on SGA communications
- H. Recommend to the President an Executive Assistant for appointment.
- I. The Press Secretary shall have no vote on or sponsor any Senate legislation.
- J. The Press Secretary shall not chair or serve on any standing committee of the Senate.
- K. The Press Secretary must maintain constituent service hours of at least 8 hours per week, with the exception of special circumstances.

**Section 5:** The Elected Press Secretary must have served at least 2 full semesters by the time they assume office in the Student Government Association in any of the following positions: Associate Justice, Chief Justice, Student Defender, Attorney General, Chief of Staff, Speaker of the Senate, Athletic Liaison, Press Secretary, elected Senator, and any senator or justice who is appointed to a vacant position resulting from lack of candidacy or resignation within the elected senate. This provision excludes Freshmen Council,

## **Chief of Staff**

**Section 6.** The Chief of Staff shall be appointed by the President with 2/3 Senate approval.

**Section 7.** Duties of the Chief of Staff will be as follows:

- A. To coordinate the Executive assistants, and to assist the executive officers in any task or project deemed necessary.



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- B. The Chief of Staff shall complete 5 office hours per week performing official Student Government Association business and assisting their respective Executive Officers in the execution of their duties and responsibilities and shall attend all Senate Meetings. Failure to maintain the office hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of office hours missed.
  
- C. The Chief of Staff shall plan and execute 1 campus forum for each college once a semester. If Senate votes to hold a campus wide forum in lieu of the individual college forums, he or she will be responsible for this instead.
  
- D. Assist the Freshmen Council Secretary General in the planning and executing of the Freshmen Fall Forum.

## **Executive Assistants**

**Section 8.** Executive Assistants may be appointed by the SGA President to assist Executive Council Officers in the execution of their duties. Senate must approve such appointments by a 2/3 vote;

- A. Executive Assistants must be a student enrolled and in good standing at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

**Section 9.** The Executive Assistants shall possess the power and/or duty to assist with their respective executive in any task or project deemed necessary

**Section 10.** Executive Assistants shall neither vote on nor sponsor Senate legislation. They shall not vote or participate in the committee actions of any Student Government Association standing committee.

**Section 11.** Executive Assistants shall serve at least 2 office hours per week performing official Student Government Association business and assisting their respective Executive Officer in the execution of their duties and responsibilities.

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## **Athletic Liaison**

**Section 12.** An Athletic Liaison will be chosen by the UTM Athletic Director, who will provide a letter of recommendation to the Student Government Association President. The President will then recommend the chosen liaison to Senate which will be approved by 2/3 vote.

**Section 13.** The duties of the Athletic Liaison shall be as follows:

- A. Coordinate bi-weekly meetings with the UT Martin Athletic Director.
- B. Coordinate 5 meetings with 5 different UT Martin athletic sports coaches per semester.
- C. Provide Senate with bi-weekly updates on the meetings that have been conducted within the athletics department.
- D. Provide UT Martin Athletic Director with bi-weekly updates in regard to the Student Government and its actions.
- E. Facilitate Student Government involvement in athletic events on the UT Martin campus.
- F. Attend all Senate meetings.
- G. The Athletic Liaison shall not have a vote in Senate
- H. Complete 5 office hours per week in the SGA office. Failure to maintain the hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of office hours missed.
- I. Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5
- J. The Athletic Liaison cannot exceed more than 2 absences per semester or he or she will be subject to impeachment by the Student Government Association Judicial Branch.

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## **The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member**

**Section 14:** The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member shall be appointed as follows:

- I. All nominees for The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member position must be enrolled full time at the University of Tennessee at Martin and in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of the election, of appointment, and during the term of office.  
Note: Good academic standing for Student Member position is classified as having a 2.75 cumulative grade point average at time of nomination and should maintain a 2.75 cumulative grade point average during the tenure of the position.
- J. Nominees must be willing and able to serve as the University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member for one full year. (July 1 through June 30). The Student Representative shall attend all Advisory Board Meetings, SGA Senate meetings, SGA Freshman Council Meetings, and SGA Legislative Council meetings.
- K. Nominees must complete the pledge form stating that they have read the University of Tennessee Martin Advisory Board Bylaws in detail, and will pledge to fulfill all duties and requirements of the position if elected. A copy of the Bylaws will be made available in the SGA office and is available online at <http://www.utm.edu/advisoryboard/> .
- L. Nominees must complete the Elections Rules Compliance Form stating that they will comply with all rules and requirements set forth by the Elections Commissioner and the SGA Constitution.
- M. To qualify for candidacy, nominees need 50 signatures on an Elections Petition Form.
- N. Nominees must comply with rules of Campaign Finance and complete the proper Campaign Finance Forms. These forms must be turned in to the Elections Commissioner by the date election packets are due.
- O. Nominees are allowed to run for any SGA position and the Student Representative position, excluding executive council positions.
- P. The top three vote recipients for the University of Tennessee at Martin Advisory Board Student Member position in the general election will be

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submitted to the Chancellor's Office for final selection.

**Section 15:** Duties of the University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member will be as follows:

- A. To attend all Tennessee Advisory Board meetings failure to do so resulting in an absence.
- B. The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member shall complete 5 office hours per week in the SGA office. Failure to maintain the hours specified will result in a ¼ absence per week of office hours missed.
- C. Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.75 in accordance with the election requirements.
- D. Attend all Freshman Council, Senate, and Legislative Council meetings.
- E. The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Member cannot exceed two absences or will be subject to impeachment by the Student Government Association Judicial Branch.

## **JUDICIAL BRANCH**

### **Chief Justice**

**Section 1.** The Chief Executive Officer of the Judicial Branch shall be the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice shall be nominated from the standing justices by the Student Body President, in collaboration with 2/3 approval of Senate, and in accordance to the rules and regulations set forth in this Constitution and its Bylaws.

**Section 2.** The Chief Justice shall be reviewed on his or her ability to complete the responsibilities and duties of said office. He or she shall be reviewed by a review committee made up of the Solicitor General, Attorney General, Vice President, Speaker of the Senate, and Procedures Chairperson.

- A. If it is found that the Chief Justice has not completed his or her responsibilities for the semester that has already passed, he or she will be removed from his or her position and will not be allowed to hold that position again for 1 full semester, not including summer semesters; however, he or she will still hold an Associate Justice position. A new Chief

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Justice must be appointed by the second Senate meeting of the next semester. Appeals in this area will be recommended to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, whose decisions shall be final.

**Section 3.** The Chief Justice shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Preside over all official proceedings of the Judicial Branch in cooperation with a SGA Advisor;
  1. The Chief Justice shall announce 48 hours in advance, all proceedings of the Student Court to all parties involved, except in emergency situations.
  
- B. Be responsible for keeping a fair record of all judicial activities and proceedings, which will be copied and made accessible by the Secretary General for archiving and record keeping purposes;
  
- C. Serve at least 5 office hours per week with the exception of special circumstances. Failure to maintain the office hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of hours missed;
  
- D. Shall conduct a Constitution workshop with a visual aid by the first Fall meeting of the Senate for all members of the Student Government Association regardless of specific branch or duty. The Chief Justice shall also be responsible for conducting a Constitution workshop for the Freshmen Council by their second meeting of the Fall semester;
  
- E. Shall monitor the Executive Council members' attendance as set forth by the Student Government Association constitution.
  
- F. Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5

## **Attorney General**

**Section 4.** The Attorney General shall serve as the Chief Prosecutor of the Student Court. The Attorney General shall be primarily responsible for bringing forth all charges against alleged students before the Student Court in cooperation with an SGA Advisor and the Senate in matters of member impeachment and removal.

**Section 5.** The Attorney General shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Serve as primary prosecutor for all Student Court proceedings.

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- B. Enforce the SGA Constitution and its Bylaws and the SGA Code of Conduct.
- C. Assist the Procedures Committee with Code of Conduct investigations
- D. Request subpoenas documents, records, files, attendance records, meeting minutes, financial records, receipts to elected or appointed SGA officers for use in Student Court proceedings.
- E. Request summons for witnesses to appear before the Student Court.
- F. Serve at least 2 hours per week performing official Student Government Association business.
- G. Appoint a Deputy Attorney General to aid him/her in the execution of their duties and responsibilities. The Student Court must approve such appointments by a majority vote;
- H. Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5

### **Deputy Attorney General**

**Section 6.** The Deputy Attorney General may be appointed by the Attorney General to assist him or her with the execution of their duties. The Student Court must approve such appointments with a majority vote;

- A. The Deputy Attorney General must be a student enrolled and in good standing at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

**Section 7.** The Deputy Attorney General shall possess the power and/or duty to assist the Attorney General as Co-Prosecutor in Student Court Proceedings or in any task or project deemed necessary.

**Section 8.** The Deputy Attorney General shall neither vote on nor sponsor Senate legislation. They shall not vote or participate in the committee actions of any Student Government Association standing committee.

**Section 9.** The Deputy Attorney General shall serve at least 2 hours per week performing official Student Government Association business and assisting the Attorney General in the execution of their duties and responsibilities.

### **Solicitor General**

**Section 10.** The Solicitor General shall serve as the primary defense counsel for any alleged student appearing before the Student Court

**Section 11.** The Solicitor General shall possess the power and/or duty to:

- A. Serve as primary prosecutor for all Student Court proceedings.
- B. Request subpoenas documents, records, files, attendance records, meeting minutes, financial records, receipts to elected or appointed

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- SGA officers for use in Student Court proceedings.
- C. Request summons for witnesses to appear before the Student Court.
- D. Appoint a Deputy Solicitor General to aid him/her in the execution of their duties and responsibilities. The Student Court must approve such appointments by a majority vote;
- E. Serve at least 2 hours per week performing official Student Government Association business
- F. Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5

### **Deputy Solicitor General**

**Section 12.** The Solicitor General may be appointed by the Solicitor General to assist him or her with the execution of their duties. The Student Court must approve such appointments by a majority vote;

- A. The Deputy Solicitor General must be a student enrolled and in good standing at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

**Section 13.** The Deputy Solicitor General shall possess the power and/or duty to assist the Solicitor General as Co-Prosecutor in a Student Court proceedings or in any task or project deemed necessary.

**Section 14.** The Deputy Solicitor General shall neither vote on nor sponsor Senate legislation. They shall not vote or participate in the committee actions of any Student Government Association standing committee.

**Section 15.** The Deputy Solicitor General shall serve at least 2 hours per week performing official Student Government Association business and assisting the Solicitor General in the execution of their duties and responsibilities.

## **ARTICLE III: LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES**

### **Section 1. Bill Process**

- A. Any Senator, Speaker of the Senate, or SGA members in special circumstances may submit a Bill to for Senate Consideration.
  - 1. No individual shall submit over ten (10) pieces of legislation in the same General Assembly session.
- B. All Bills sponsored by an individual Senator or group of Senators not making up a committee, shall be submitted to the Vice President of the Student

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Government Association in hard copy form and/or in an electronic copy form that will then be presented at a Legislative Council meeting prior to being assigned to a committee. This process shall be known as "filing a bill;"

1. The Bill's title must match any action(s) that the bill is recommending, suggesting, enacting, etc. A bill may not take any action(s) that does not coincide with its title.
  2. No amendments may be applied to a bill that does not coincide with the intent of its title.
- C. After the bill(s) is/are filed, the Vice President shall assign each bill an individual "Senate Bill number," that shall serve as the bill's number throughout its life as a piece of legislation;
- D. The Vice President shall keep record of all Bills including but not limited to: Bill Numbers, Bill Titles, and Bill Sponsors, of all bills filed in the SGA office;
- E. All records shall be presented to the Secretary General for the purpose of being recorded into The University of Tennessee at Martin Student Government Association Legislation Log Book that can be accessed as public record. The University of Tennessee at Martin Student Government Association Legislation Log Book shall be kept in the Student Government Association Office and on the Student Government Association website.

**Section 2.**

- A. All Bills filed in the Vice President's office are to be directed to the appropriate committee(s) at the discretion of the Vice President with consideration of the bills direction and impact in mind;
- B. The bill(s) is/are to be delivered to the appropriate committee's chairperson or representative in hard copy form and/or electronic form via e-mail.

**Section 3.**

- A. The committee in which a bill(s) is/are referred to shall conduct business regarding all bill(s) received at the first scheduled meeting of the committee on the date immediately after the bill(s)' filing date in a timely manner not to exceed a 2 week time period, while the Student Government Association is in session.



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**Section 4.**

- A. If the bill fails in committee, it is sent back to the sponsor(s) of the bill for reconsideration and revision;
  
- B. If a bill passes a committee vote, it is the responsibility of the committee chairperson or representative to inform the Speaker of the Senate, Vice President, and Secretary General of the results of the vote, along with any actions of the committee specific to the legislation considered within 24 hours;
  
- C. Upon the notification of the bill's passing it is the responsibility of the Speaker of the Senate, or composer of the next scheduled Senate Meeting Agenda, to add the bill(s) that have been passed out of Senate since the last meeting of the Senate to the next Senate Agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - 1. Hard copies of newly submitted bills shall be made available in the Student Government Association office in a timely manner not exceeding 48 hours of the bill's passage out of its appropriate committee;
  
  - 2. The Speaker of the Senate shall notify all Senators of the newly submitted bill and its full text, via e-mail or alternative but official form of communication 24 hours before Senate meeting.
  
- D. All bills of the Senate shall be passed by majority vote recorded by roll call vote except where specified differently in this Constitution or in its Bylaws;
  
- E. Bills of the Senate shall be governed primarily by the Senate Rules of Order, with the modern edition of Robert's Rules of Order as a reference.

**Section 5. Senate Rules of Order**

- A. Special meetings of the Student Government Association may be called/scheduled at the discretion of the Vice President or the President;
  
- B. In the event that a meeting loses or does not obtain quorum, Senate business is to be rolled until the next meeting;
  
- C. Regular attendance shall be defined as the attending of each scheduled

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meeting. The format which will be used in conducting business of the Senate will be as follows:

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Executive Reports (shall only be limited by 2/3 vote of the Senate)

IV. Advisor Reports (shall only be limited by 2/3 vote of the Senate)

V. Committee Reports

VI. Old Business

VII. New Business

VIII. Announcements

IX. Roll Call

X. Adjournment

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This procedure may be removed or adjusted in special meetings at the discretion of the Executive Council;

- A. There will be a roll call by the SGA Secretary General at the beginning and end of each meeting. Those members not present will be given 1 absence. Those Senators not present for 1 of the roll calls will be given 1 half of an absence. These absences shall account towards a senator's total absence count for the semester;
  
- B. No meeting of the SGA shall be cancelled without just cause to be justified upon the next scheduled meeting by the Student Government Association President;
  
- C. There will be no excused absences from an Student Government Association regular meeting except when a Senator, Executive Officer, or other member is out on official documented SGA business, official documented University business, documented illness and /or other circumstances deemed acceptable by the Secretary General. Excuses pertaining to official SGA or university related business should be filed in writing either 24 hours prior to or immediately following the missed Senate meeting, with the Secretary General. Cases of documented illness shall be filed within 1 week of the signed and dated notice from a physician or other medical authority verifying the absence. Cases of serious medical emergency shall require a signed and dated notice from a physician or other medical authority filed with the Secretary General and will be handled on a case by case basis. Validation of these excuses will be at the discretion of the Secretary General. Any Student Government Association Member missing more than 2 meetings per semester will be found in violation of the Student Government Association Attendance policy and is subject to a recommendation for impeachment by the Secretary General.
  - 1. In the event that the Secretary General is found in violation of this policy, the Procedures Committee chairperson shall be responsible for filing this action with Senate.
  - 2. Unexcused absences may be appealed to the full senate and excused by a 2/3 vote of approval by Senate. Sending an alternate is strongly encouraged and will result in only a half absence per meeting for the Senator;

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- B. Alternates attending a Senate meeting in the place of a Senator shall be verified in writing by the Secretary General no later than 24 hours before the scheduled Senate meeting where the Senator is to be absent. Verification of alternates shall require the notice to be signed by both the alternate and the Senator requiring the absence, agreeing that the alternate shall serve in full and voting capacity during the meeting on behalf of the absent Senator;
- C. Any official business must be submitted to the Speaker of the Senate and posted in the Student Government Association Office by 5:00 p.m. 2 school days prior to the actual meeting of the Senate. All resolutions and bills submitted to be placed on the agenda are required to be written out in full, both on the copy submitted for the agenda and the agenda itself. The appropriate form for writing and submitting legislation can be found on the Student Government Association website or from the Vice President and must be followed unless special circumstances are deemed appropriate in writing by the Vice President. Any exceptions to this rule are to be filed with the Secretary General before the legislation is submitted for committee consideration and notification given to the appropriate committee chair.;
- D. Committees will be required to turn in attendance records for their meetings. Each absence from a committee is equal to 1/2 absence. This provision shall include the 5 standing committees, Legislative Council, Constitution Revision committee, Judicial Branch, administrative committees, and all other committees members of the Student Government Association serve on. These absences shall account towards a member's total absence count for the semester. Excused absences from committee meetings will be determined by the committee chairperson. These records are to be submitted to the Student Government Association Secretary General for official record keeping purposes within 24 hours of the committee meeting. A copy should also be made available to the Vice President in the same consistent manner specified above.

**ARTICLE IV: STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE**

**Section 1.** Standing Committees of the Senate

Committee Structure

- A. All Committees shall be composed of a minimum of 3 Senators and a maximum of 6 Senators, excluding chairpersons;

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- B. Any Senator interested in Chairperson positions may apply to the Executive Council. After an interview process, the Nominating Committee, composed of the newly elected Executive Council Officers, shall submit a nominee for each Chairperson position to the Senate for approval. All chairpersons shall be confirmed by the Senate with a 2/3 vote;
  
- C. Standing Committee members shall be appointed no later than the 4th week of the Fall semester by the Chief of Staff. Senators shall have the right to express their committee preference in writing to the President prior to the appointment of committee members;
  
- D. Quorum for all the following committees shall be the chairperson and a majority of the total members for that committee. In the absence of the Chairperson, a majority of the remaining members will constitute a quorum;
  
- E. The Chairperson of all standing committees shall serve 5 office hours per week, which includes the 2 hours required as a Senator. Failure to maintain the office hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of office hours missed;
  
- F. All Chairpersons shall appoint a Chairperson from the Freshmen Council members of their committee, excluding Freshmen Council Executive Council members, by the second committee meeting of the semester;
  
- G. All Senators-at-Large shall reserve committee voting status but no vote in Senate;
  
- H. All committees shall meet on the week Senate is not in session, except under extenuating circumstances;
  
- I. The Senate shall entertain 5 standing committees. They will consist of: Academic Affairs, Campus Opportunities, Multicultural Affairs, Procedures, and Student Affairs;
  
- J. At the end of each semester, each Committee Chair shall be reviewed on their ability to complete their general chair responsibilities as well as their ability to complete their committee specific duties. They shall be

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evaluated by a review committee made up of the Executive Council and the Freshmen Executive Council. The Chief of Staff will also be present, but will cast his or her vote only in the event of a tie among the original review committee;

- K. If it is found that the committee chair has not completed their duties and responsibilities for the semester that has already passed, he or she will be removed from his or her position and will not be allowed to hold the position again for 1 full semester, not including summer semesters. A new Chairperson must be appointed in their place by the second Senate meeting of the next semester;
- L. If the chair feels he or she has been unjustly removed from his or her position, he or she is allowed to appeal to Student Court.
  - 1. Appeals must be made within 48 hours of the decision being made.
  - 2. If the Student Court upholds the removal, the chair is allowed to take the appeal to the office of Student Affairs. The hearing at the Student Affairs level shall be made up of 3 of the following members: Student Conduct Officer, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, or the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. Any decision made by Student Affairs shall be final.
  - 3. If the appeal is still in Student Court by the second Senate meeting, a temporary chair will be appointed by the President in his or her place until a decision is reached.

## **Academic Affairs Committee**

### **Section 2. Academic Affairs Committee**

- A. The Academic Affairs Committee shall be responsible for the following:
  - 1. Promoting academic excellence throughout the University;
  - 2. Acting as a liaison between students, faculty, and administration in all academic matters;
  - 3. Hearing student grievances as to academic services and policies, class structures, teaching practices, and any other concerns related therein;

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4. Initiating or assisting any students in an appropriate investigation of all grievances through the proper channels of University Administration and protocol;
5. Making recommendations pertaining to academic matters and policies to various faculty and administrative committees for consideration and action;
6. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Student Government Association President, a liaison with the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs to expedite such matters related to student academics. This liaison will be vested in the committee chairperson or their designee as needed;
7. Conducting 1 survey per semester while the Student Government Association is in session in order to obtain students' perspective on academics at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

## **Campus Opportunities Committee**

### **Section 3.** Campus Opportunities Committee

- A. The Campus Opportunities Committee shall be responsible for the following:
  1. Investigating and pursuing appropriate action concerning all matters of campus distress and student safety on behalf of the students;
  2. Monitoring and evaluating University facilities and grounds, suggesting changes to the proper authorities when deemed necessary;
  3. Serving on appropriate administrative/University committees that relate to campus welfare as deemed necessary by the committee chairperson or Student Government Association President and the University Administration;
  4. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Student Body President, a liaison with the following UTM Administrative heads: Director of Public Safety, UTM Physical Plant Director, Director of Dining Services, University Center Director, Director of Housing, and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs to maintain consistent communication relating to the work of

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this committee. This liaison will be vested in the committee chairperson or their designee as needed.

5. Planning and executing, Student Appreciation Week which shall be held during the month of September.
6. Bring diverse and various opportunities to the the student body for the student's and the campus's benefit.

## **Multicultural Affairs Committee**

### **Section 4.** Multicultural Affairs Committee

- A. The Multicultural Affairs Committee shall be responsible for the following:
  1. Gathering and communicating the concerns and ideas of the various social, ethnic and cultural groups on campus;
  2. Scheduling a meeting at least once a semester with multicultural organizational groups informing of actions being taken by Student Government Association;
  3. Planning and executing, in conjunction with the office of Multicultural Affairs and the Center of Global Studies, the University of Tennessee at Martin's Diversity Week. Diversity Week shall be held during the month of November.
  4. Planning and executing at least 1 cultural awareness activity for the campus per semester.
  5. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Student Body President, a liaison with the Assistant Director of Multicultural Affairs

## **Procedures Committee**

### **Section 5.** Procedures Committee

- A. The Procedures Committee shall be responsible for the following:
  1. Screening and reporting to the Senate on those appointments of the President and Vice President which require constitutional approval of the Senate if deemed necessary by the chairperson;



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2. Screening and recommending to the Senate, students to fill positions which require Senate appointment in collaboration with the President if deemed necessary by the chairperson;
  3. Hearing and investigating cases involving violations of the SGA Code of Conduct;
  4. Preparing for approval the Senate Rules of Order. These rules should be approved no later than the 2nd meeting of the Fall Semester;
  5. Making recommendations as needed to the Judicial Branch on any Senate legislation or member actions that require constitution review or action by the Student Court;
- B. The Chairperson of the Procedures Committee shall have the following enumerated duties in addition to their duties as committee Chairperson:
1. Preside over the Senate in the absence of, or at the discretion of the Vice President;
  2. Preside over SGA Code of Conduct violation hearings
  3. In conjunction with the Student Court, advise on questions concerning this Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules of Order;
  4. Act as an advisor to Standing Committees as deemed necessary;
  5. Advise Senators on how to make proper motions when on the Senate Floor;
  6. In conjunction with the Speaker of the Senate, work to ensure that all representatives of the Student Government Association are aware of actions taking place on the Senate Floor;
  7. Conduct a Parliamentary Procedure workshop and Senate legislation writing workshop by the 4th Fall meeting of the Senate for all members of the SGA regardless of branch or specific duty;

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## **Student Affairs Committee**

### **Section 6. Student Affairs Committee**

- A. The Student Affairs Committee shall be responsible for the following:
1. Promoting student involvement throughout the University;
  2. Acting as a liaison between student organizations, Greek Life, faculty, and administration in all matters of student life;
  3. Hearing student grievances pertaining to life on campus, student activities, and any other concerns related therein;
  4. Initiating or assisting any students in an appropriate investigation of all grievances through the proper channels of university administration and protocol;
  5. Making recommendations pertaining to student matters and policies to various faculty and administrative committees, and organizations registered in the Office of Student Life;
  6. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Student Government Association President, a liaison with the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Student Life Coordinator, Director of Housing, Director of Student Recreation, and Manager of Dining Services to expedite such matters to Student Affairs;
  7. Conduct a student survey once a semester of the student body's perception of Student Government and other issues deemed worthy of student opinion.;
  8. Shall be responsible for planning and executing a tent at Quad City;

## **ARTICLE V: OPEN MINUTES ACT**

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**Section 1.** Open Meetings Act (Sunshine Law)

- A. Any official meeting of the Student Government Association Executive or Legislative Branches, or any committee thereof, shall be open to the public under a Sunshine Law.
- B. Any official meeting of the Judicial Branch shall be open to the public as deemed appropriate by the Chief Justice. This provision shall not apply to cases of informal and/or private meetings or conversations of the President or Executive Council Members where executive privilege is applied in certain circumstances.
- C. Minutes from all official meetings should be made available to the public by the Secretary General 48 hours after every SGA meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS AND RATIFICATION**

### **Amendments**

**Section 1.** Any specific amendment to the SGA Bylaws must be proposed by a Senator. The proposed amendment shall lie on the table for a period of at least 2 weeks and must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Senate before going into effect.

**Section 2.** Any amendments passed by the Senate should be immediately updated into the Student Government Association Constitution in its electronic form. Revised copies of the Student Government Association Constitution shall be made available every year, with the Chief Justice having responsibility for overseeing and implementing this process of updating and current accuracy.

### **Ratification**

**Section 3.** These Bylaws and/or any amendments made by the members of the Senate shall be ratified by a 2/3 vote of a seated quorum at a regularly scheduled meeting. This provision shall also extend to any provisions and/or amendments recommended bi-yearly by the Constitutional Revision Committee, whose recommendations shall be ratified in the same manner, pursuant to the guidelines outlined in this constitution.

## FRESHMEN COUNCIL BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I: MISSION

The Freshmen Council, a representative body of the Student Government Association of the University of Tennessee at Martin, has been established as a forum in which: to voice freshmen opinions, needs, and concerns; as a means to allow freshmen to participate in the Student Government Association; to inform freshmen of the operations of the Student Government Association; and to serve as an official liaison linking freshmen to the Student Government Association.

### ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1.** In order to qualify for Freshmen Council membership, a student must: A. Be a full-time freshman student at the University of Tennessee at Martin, maintaining a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.25 at the time of nomination and during his/her term of membership.

**Section 2.** Membership size should not exceed the allotted number of Senators by the Constitution for that academic year.

- A. The number of Freshmen Council Members-at-Large should not exceed 10 or 33% of the number of Freshmen Council members, whichever is greater.

**Section 3.** The Freshmen Council is an equal opportunity organization. The Council adheres to the University of Tennessee's Discrimination policy.

### ARTICLE III: APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

**Section 1.** The application process shall proceed as follows:

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- A. At the beginning of the Fall semester, the applicant must submit an application by the date designated by the SGA Vice President.
- B. Any 2 members of the Legislative Committee as appointed by the Vice President will comprise the Selection Committee
- C. Applications will be reviewed by the Selection Committee before the screening process begins.

**Section 2.** The screening process will proceed as follows:

- A. Applicants shall be screened through a series of individual and/or group interviews conducted by the Selection Committee.
- B. The Selection Committee shall decide and appoint all members to the Freshmen Council. All applicants will be informed of their standing after the conclusion of the selection process.

**ARTICLE IV: ATTENDANCE AND VOTING RIGHTS**

**Section 1.** Attendance is mandatory at all official Freshmen Council meetings and functions as well as the majority of the remaining senate meetings each semester. Any member may send an alternate to Freshmen Council meetings. An alternate shall have the same rights and privileges as a member in good standing. No member may be represented by an alternate more than 3 times.

- A. Freshmen Council Members-at-Large are required to complete 2 office hours per week. Failure to maintain the office hours specified will result in 1/4 absence per week of office hours missed.
- B. Freshmen Council Members-at-Large shall be held to the same attendance standards as Freshmen Council Members, in reference to attending senate meetings.

**Section 2.** After 3 unexcused absences, a Council member will be automatically dismissed from Freshmen Council and will be replaced by a Member-at-Large at the next Freshmen Council meeting.

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**Section 3.** Members may appeal their dismissal, within 24 hours, to the SGA Executive Council. Members may appeal the decision of Executive Council to the Student Court within 24 hours of the decision by a written notice to the Solicitor General and Chief Justice. The Student Court shall reserve the final decision in expulsions of Freshmen Council members.

**Section 4.** All members, excluding the presiding chair, shall reserve 1 vote. The presiding chair shall not vote, except in special circumstances to break a tie. The chair may not vote to create a tie.

## **ARTICLE V: POWERS AND DUTIES**

**Section 1.** Freshmen Council shall reserve the power and/or responsibility to:

- A. Take nominations for President, Vice President, and Secretary General no later than the second meeting of the Council;
- B. Nominees shall be elected by Freshmen Council members. Nominees, if they choose, may run on a party.
- C. Members, to include Members-at-Large, shall be appointed by the Student Government Association President to 1 of the 6 SGA Standing committees. These members shall bring the concerns of the Freshmen Class to the attention of their appropriate committees for consideration and action.
- D. All members of Freshmen Council shall hold a campus wide forum for their constituents each semester.
- E. Freshman council members may submit legislation during their second semester in SGA.

**Section 2.** Freshmen Council shall reserve the power of removal according to the following:

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- A. Any member of Freshmen Council may be removed for the failure to meet any of the continuing qualifications as specified in these Bylaws: for disregarding UTM rules and regulations; blatant neglect of duty; malfeasant violation of the SGA or Freshmen Council directives; willful and intentional violation of the SGA Constitution; failure to meet attendance requirements as specified in these Bylaws; and/or non-participation in activities of the Council;
  
- B. To remove a member, a request must be filed with the SGA Vice President and Freshmen Council Secretary by either the chairman of Freshmen Council or 3 Council members.
  
- C. After said request is filed, the subject shall be placed on the Council's agenda for debate and vote. A 2/3 majority vote shall dismiss the charged member.
  
- D. Dismissed members have 24 hours to appeal to the SGA Executive Council. Members may appeal the decision of Executive Council to the Student Court within 24 hours of the decision by a written notice to the Solicitor General and Chief Justice. The Student Court shall reserve the final decision in the matter.

**ARTICLE VI: FRESHMEN COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**Section 1.** The membership of the Executive Council shall consist of the President, Vice-President, and Secretary-General.

- A. No Freshmen Council Members-at-Large are allowed to be nominated for an Executive Council position.

**Freshmen Council President**

**Section 2.** The President of Freshmen Council shall have the power and/or responsibility to:

- A. Preside over meetings of the Council in the absence of the Vice President;

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- B. Call special meetings of the Council as he/she deems necessary;
- C. Act as official liaison between the Freshmen Council and all other SGA branches;
- D. Perform any additional duties subject to the SGA Constitution and its Bylaws.

### **Freshmen Council Vice President**

**Section 3.** The Vice President of Freshmen Council shall have the power and/or responsibility to:

- A. Preside over all Council meetings;
- B. Prepare and set the Council's agenda of pertinent business and legislation to be considered in cooperation with the Council's Secretary General
- C. Perform any additional duties subject to the SGA Constitution and its Bylaws.

### **Freshmen Council Secretary General**

**Section 4.** The Secretary General of Freshmen Council shall have the power and/or responsibility to:

- A. Maintain a current and accurate role of membership;
- B. Keep and publish accurate minutes of all meetings;



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- C. Keep a record of attendance for all meetings;
- D. Notify members when attendance policies have been violated;
- E. Perform any additional duties subject to the SGA Constitution and its Bylaws.
- F. Plan a Freshmen Fall Forum in conjunction with the Chief of Staff each year.

**Section 5.** The Executive Council shall have the power and/or responsibility to:

- A. Establish, adopt, and enforce the Council's agenda, so long as it does not conflict with the SGA Constitution and its Bylaws;
- B. Discuss and seek out from their freshmen constituency subjects which are deemed appropriate for future Council consideration and action;
- C. Serve with their other SGA counterparts in constituency service and all other activities in which the SGA is acting as a whole in its representative function to the student body;
- D. Along with the SGA Vice President, offer a nomination for any open Freshmen Executive Council seat in the event of a dismissal. Nominations must be approved by a 2/3 majority Council vote.
- E. Freshmen Executive Council members shall be required to attend Legislative Council meetings.

**ARTICLE VII: FRESHMEN COUNCIL ADVISOR**

**Section 1.** The Vice President of the Student Government Association shall be the regular advisor to the Freshmen Council. The Vice President may appoint the Chief of Staff, another member of the Student Government Association, or staff member to serve as a co-advisor to Freshmen Council.

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**ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

**Section 1.** Each Freshmen Council shall adopt or revise these Freshmen Council Bylaws no later than the third meeting of the Council. Furthermore, amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by any member of the Freshmen Council and shall become effective after a 2/3 approval vote by Council members on 2 consecutive readings.