

# By-Laws for the Liberty University Senate

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## Article I. Operational By-Laws

**Section 01** Senate Connect shall last no longer than 2 hours. In order to respect the time of Student Representatives (Student Reps), only a maximum of three(2) pieces of legislation may be brought up for a vote per Connect. The Senate shall have the option to call up more legislation by a 2/3 voice vote of those present (1).

**Section 02** Senate Connect shall operate under a simplified version of Robert's Rules of Order, provided by the Oversight Committee.

**Section 03** If, at a given time, the integrity of the Senate, due to a situation that causes the body to be unable to perform daily operations, or circumstances not listed in these By-Laws, "Consultation" shall be called by the Sgt. at Arms and approved by a simple majority the full text of Robert Rules of Order shall be implemented until the issue is resolved.

**Section 04** Class Dress shall be required as per the Liberty Way (1).

**Section 05** If Joint Session is called, the Student Body Vice-President shall chair that meeting. If the Vice-President is not present, the Chairman shall (1) chair the meeting.

**Section 06** Amendments to the By-Laws shall be motioned by a Senator and seconded. The Chairman must call this motion. There will be a time before the main business of the day where Amendments shall take place, after which, Amendments to this document must wait until after the Legislation at hand (1). The Amendment will then enter into the "Legislative By-Laws" in Article IV of this document. The Vote to enact changes to the By-Laws must be  $\frac{3}{4}$  in the affirmative.

**Section 07** If the agenda is completed, and time is left over, The Senate shall (1) move into Afternoon Business. Each Senator may have up to **three** minutes to present a speech on a topic of their desire. They also may bring in a guest speaker, with the permission of the Senate Chairman. No vote or motions, except for adjournment (2), will be entertained after such time. This time will also only last until the scheduled ending time.

**Section 08** As per the Constitution, in Article III Section 5, quorum shall be 1/3 of the body on record (7).

**Section 09** At any time, if changes are made to the Constitution, changes that effect this document will be implemented immediately. The Committee on Oversight shall have up to one week to make the needed changes to this document. Senate shall approve these changes upon the next Senate Connect.

**Section 10** No legislation shall be on the floor more than **forty-five minutes**.

**Section 11** All comments and questions shall be directed to the presiding officer of the Senate.

**Section 12** All Committees can send a paragraph summary of the Document from their discussions on the Legislation they present to Senate, in Committee (1).

**Section 13** The Minutes shall be approved as “Old Business” before any legislation shall be discussed. The Minutes will be sent out the Sunday before Senate Connect; changes will be made, if need be, during this time (1).

**Section 14** If an Amendment to the Constitution is brought forward to this body, the Senate shall read the changes to the Constitution and then debate the Amendment. Each Senator will be given one minute to state what they believe about the amendment and may have thirty seconds of response to another Senator if needed. The Author of the Amendment may grant friendly amendments, which, are changes to the Amendment that the Author approves. If the Author does not approve of a change, the body then must motion, second, and vote for a Change to the Amendment. A simple majority of approval will carry such a change. – Once debate is finished, the body will vote on the Amendment through Roll Call. The Amendment must reach 2/3 of affirmation to move on to the House or Student Body President for approval (3).

**Section 15** As per the Constitution, in Article III Section 3, Clause 1, Senatorial positions are appointed by the Deans of their respective school or college. Therefore, it is the duty and responsibility of each Senator to work towards the betterment of the school or college in which they are appointed to represent. This is, in all cases, the primary priority and privilege of each member of this body (7).

## Article II. Recognized Bodies

**Section 1** The Following Committees Shall be recognized by the Senate:

- A. Committee on Student Affairs
  - ~~(i) The Committee shall have a Chairman voted into that position by the Senate during the first Senate Connect. (1)~~
- B. Joint Committee on Appropriations (6)
- C. Joint Committee on Clubs
- D. Oversight Committee – Chaired by the Senate President

## Article III. Offices of the Senate

**Section 1** Senate President

- A. Pursuant to Article III, Section 3 of the Constitution the Senate shall elect a Senate President who shall also chair the Committee on Oversight.
  - (i) Nominees for the office of Senate President shall, prior to nomination, obtain conformation from their respective school or college reauthorizing their senatorial position throughout the upcoming term (5).
  - (ii) Nominees for the office of Senate President shall express their full faith and intent to dutifully perform the upcoming senatorial term in its entirety (5).
  - (iii) Elections for the office of Senate President shall transpire at the concluding Senate Connect of each Spring session (5).
  - (iv) The Senate President-elect shall assume all duties and responsibilities of said office upon the outset of the forthcoming senatorial term (5).
- B. The Senate President shall have the right to appoint a Secretary of the Senate and Sergeant at Arms to help discharge their duties in overseeing the administration and organization of the Senate.
- C. The Senate President shall moderate each Connect but at times has the right to appoint a member of the Senate to moderate Connects in their absence.

- D. The Vice-President at times may address Senate Connects, for no more than fifteen minutes, but must give the Senate President notice at least twenty-four hours prior to Connect. This provision shall not be subject to any forthcoming Amendments to this document (6).
- E. The Senate shall meet every other week or as many times as the Chairman deems necessary. The Chairman and all the Committee Chairs in the Senate shall meet every other week or as many times as the Chairman deems necessary to go over upcoming legislation and any other pertinent information regarding Committees and their leadership (6).
- F. The Senate President shall Chair the Committee on Oversight, which shall determine the agenda and rules for the Senate.
- G. The Senate President may appoint up to two Legislative Advisors to his/her staff.

## **Section 2** Secretary

- A. The Secretary of the Senate will be responsible for maintaining the records for the Senate including but not limited to;
  - (i) The Secretary of the Senate shall also be in charge of sending out a weekly email to update the Senate on information regarding legislation, upcoming events and important reminders.
  - (ii) The Secretary of the Senate shall have the right to appoint a Deputy Secretary of the Senate and Assistants to help in discharging their duties.
    - a) The Official Senate Roster
    - b) Voting Records
    - c) Attendance Records
    - d) Minutes

## **Section 3** Sergeant at Arms

- B. The Sergeant at Arms will be responsible for;
  - (i) Maintaining the integrity of the Senate.
  - (ii) Maintaining order in Senate Connects and other meetings.
  - (iii) Enforce rules prescribed by the Senate as they are outlined in the Senate Bylaws.
- C. The Sergeant at Arms shall have the right to appoint a Deputy Sergeant at Arms and Assistants to help in discharging their duties.

## Article IV. Legislative By-Laws

**Section 1** The Senate shall follow this format for voting on legislation:

A. Presentation

- (i) The Chairman (7), or Author(s) will read the bill after recognizing the legislations Author(s) in its entirety. The author may designate any individual to read the document on his/her behalf.

B. Discussion

- (i) The Author(s) may assign up to two speakers to present the document with no outstanding objections. This shall last no longer than **five minutes**.

C. Question and Answer

- (i) Following discussion, the Senate will move into a time of Q&A. Student Reps may ask the author of the bill or resolution questions regarding content, authorial intent and practicality. Questions regarding grammar, spelling, and motions for amendment will not be entertained. (**fifteen minutes**)

- a. Exemption: Art. IV, Sec. G.

D. Affirmation or Negation

- (i) After Q&A, Senators, if so moved, may speak for **forty-five seconds** in affirmation or negation for the bill/resolution. This, regardless of the situation, will last no longer than **five minutes**.

E. Amending

- (i) There shall be time, if Senators are so moved, may motion for Amendments to the legislation. An allotment of up to **fifteen minutes** shall be given to form no more than two amendments to the document.
- (ii) Only two amendments to the previous will be entertained.
- (iii) Only two sub-amendments (3) to the previous will be entertained.
  - a. Debate on these changes shall follow Roberts Rules of Order.
  - b. If a sub-amendment is made to the previous and the Author deems it friendly, it shall not count as one of the two allotted sub-amendments (3).

F. Affirmation or Negation

- (i) After Q&A, Senators, if so moved, may speak for **forty-five seconds** in affirmation or negation for the bill/resolution. This, regardless of the situation, will last no longer than **seven minutes**.

~~a.~~ The Chairman (7) shall have the privilege to allow an extra **thirty seconds**.

- G. If at any time, it is the view of the Senate, that a Senator is “stalling” the document at hand on purpose, trying to change the legislation, or disrupt discussion, by a 2/3 vote, the Senate vote to Censure such an individual for the remainder of the discussion on the document.

**Section 2**      Voting

- A. Student Reps will vote via the Secretary through Roll-Call or a vote by a raise of hand.
- B. After introducing a piece of legislation, by a 2/3 majority in affirmation, the Senate can skip directly to a vote on the document at hand only after reading the documents description. This may happen at any time while the document at hand is under the prescribed format in Article 4, Section 1. (2)

**Section 3**      Outcome

- A. The Chairman (7) will inform The Body of the outcome immediately following the Vote.
- B. If the legislation passes, it shall move up to the next level of the legislative process.
- C. If the legislation is denied by the Senate, it shall be sent back to its originating committee for reconsideration. The Committee shall have the opportunity to make changes and re-submit the document to the Senate. If not, the legislation shall sit on the Table of the Committee that which it was received until the academic year runs out, after which, the document officially dies.

## Document History

10 / 05 / 2015 – Approved by the Committee on Oversight  
10 / 13 / 2015 – Recommitted to the Committee on Oversight  
10 / 25 / 2015 – Approved by the Committee on Oversight  
10 / 27 / 2015 – Approved by the Senate  
11 / 10 / 2015 – Approved by the Senate  
3 / 1 / 2016 – Approved by the Senate  
4 / 5 / 2016 – Approved by the Senate  
10 / 31 / 2016 – Approved by the Committee on Oversight  
4 / 10 / 2018 – Approved by the Senate  
2 / 12 / 2019 – Approved by the Senate  
1 / 21 / 2020 – Approved by the Senate

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## Amendment History

### **1 - These Changes were approved by the Committee on Oversight on 11 / 8 / 15 and the Student Senate on 11 / 10 / 15**

Full Document - “Pro-Tempore” changed to the “Chairman.” Emphasizes the Student Body Vice President is the Chairman of the Student Senate; the Pro-Tempore is the Moderator in the absence of the Vice President.

Full Document – “Shall” replaces “Can” in multiple instances – changed for consistency purposes.

Article I, Sec. 05 – This clause was amended for the purpose of protecting Article III – Legislative By-Laws.

Article I, Sec. 07, Clause A, Sub-section i, - Struck for the purpose of keeping all Committee Chairmen elected in the same manner.

Article I, Sec(s). 12 And 13 are added: 12 – For the purpose of providing more clarification on the discussions from the previous committee. 13 – For the purposes of keeping accurate Minutes.

Article II, Sec. 1, Clause A, Subsection i - changed for grammatical issues.

### **2 – These Amendments were approved by the Student Senate on 3 / 1 / 2016**

Article I, Sec. 1 – Increased from two to three pieces of legislation due to high volumes of legislation coming onto the Senate floor.

Article I, Sec. 7 – Modified for the ability to end meetings early if no “Afternoon Business” is needed.

Article IV, Sec. 2, Sub-Section B – Inserted for granting the Senate the ability to expedite the voting process.

**3 – These Changes were approved by the Student Senate on 4 / 5 / 2016**

Article I, Sec. 14 – For the purpose of having a structured debate format for Amendments to the Constitution.

Article IV, Section E, Sub-Section iii, Clause b – to allow for friendly amendments of amendments.

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**4 - These Changes were approved by the Committee on Oversight on 9 / 25 / 16 and the Student Senate on 11 / 8 / 16**

Article I, Sec. 7 – Modified to must be approved by the chairman

Article IV, Sec. 2 – Added a vote by hand.

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**5 – These Amendments were approved by the Student Senate on 4 / 10 / 2018**

Article III, Sec. 1, Sub-Section A, Clause(s) i, ii, iii And iv – Added for the purpose of providing more clarification on the parameters and prerequisites pursuant to the election of the Pro-Tempore.

**6 – These Amendments were approved by the Student Senate on 2 / 12 / 2019**

Full Document – “Pro-Tempore” changed to the “President of the Senate.” Emphasizes the President of the Senate is the Chairman of the Student Senate.

Article II, Sec. 1 – This clause was amended for the purpose of consistency with the Constitution – Article III, Sec. 4.

Article III, Sec. 1, Sub-Section C – Modified for the purpose of providing clarification and prominence pursuant to the authority of the President of the Senate.

Article III, Sec. 1, Sub-Section D – Modified for the purpose of providing clarification and permanence to the authority of addressing the Student Senate pursuant to the Student Body Vice President.

Article III, Sec. 1, Sub-Section E – Modified for the purpose of providing more clarification on the parameters and timeliness pursuant to the occurrence of Student Senate Connects.

**7 – These Amendments were approved by the Student Senate on 1 / 21 / 2020**

Full Document – “Student Senate” changed to the “Senate.” For the purpose of consistency with the Constitution.

Full Document – “President of the Senate” changed to the “Senate President.” Emphasizes the Senate President is the Chairman of the Senate.

Article I, Sec. 8 – This clause was amended for the purpose of consistency with the Constitution – Article III, Sec. 5.

Article I, Sec. 15 – Modified for the purpose of providing clarification and permanence pursuant to the mandate of the Senate as well as consistency with the Constitution – Article III, Sec. 3.