

By-Laws of the Liberty University Senate

Article I. Operational By-Laws

Section 01 | General Senate Sessions (meetings) shall be herein referred to as “Senate General Session.” Senate General Session shall be scheduled for the designated length of 1 hour and will last no longer than 2 hours. There shall be no numerical limit on the amount of legislation that can be discussed within a Senate General Session. Upon reaching the end of the 1 hour scheduled period, a formal vote shall be conducted on whether to continue the meeting and shall require a two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote. Should the vote to continue be affirmed, Senate General Session will be considered in “overtime session” and will last only up until the aforementioned 2-hour time limit. Should the vote to continue fail, all remaining items on the agenda shall be postponed until the next Senate General Session.

Section 02 | Senate General Session shall operate under a simplified version of Robert’s Rules of Order, provided by the Oversight Committee, which shall be presented to the Senate body by the President of the Senate at the first Senate General Session of the semester.

Section 03 | If, at a time so determined by the President of the Senate, a situation arises that renders the Senate body as unable to perform daily operations, or circumstances arise as unaddressed within these By-Laws, “Consultation” may be called by the President of the Senate, and shall be approved by a simple majority vote, to implement the full text of Robert Rules of Order until the issue is resolved. Upon resolution of the arisen issue, a motion will be made by the President of the Senate to reconvene under normal operations which shall be approved by a simple majority vote.

Section 04 | Class Dress shall be required for attendance to all Senate General Sessions in accordance with the Liberty Way.

Section 05 | If a Joint Session is called, the Student Body Vice-President shall chair that meeting. If the Vice-President is not present, the Senate President shall chair the meeting.

Section 06 | If all items on the agenda are completed and scheduled time is left over, the Senate shall move into a period of “New Business.” Each Senator who wishes to speak shall be granted up to three (3) 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 President. No vote or motions, except for adjournment, will be entertained after such time. This time will only last up until the scheduled ending time.

Section 07 | As per the Constitution, in Article III Section 5, a quorum shall consist of 1/3 of the body on record.

Section 08 | At any time, if changes are made to the Constitution, changes that affect 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 General Session.

Section 9 | No legislation shall be on the floor more than forty-five (45) minutes.

Section 10 | All comments and questions shall be directed to the President of the Senate.

Section 11 | All Committees may send a paragraph summary of Legislation from their discussions to be presented to Senate.

Section 12 | The Minutes shall be approved as “Old Business” before any legislation shall be discussed. The Minutes will be sent out the Sunday before Senate General Session; changes will be made, as necessary, during this time.

Section 13 | 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, should the Author approve. 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 a two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote of affirmation to move on to the House or Student Body President for approval.

Section 14 | As per the Constitution, in Article III Section 3, Clause 1, Senate 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.

Article II. Recognized Bodies

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

- A.** Committee on Student Affairs
- B.** Oversight Committee – Chaired by the Senate President
- C.** Joint Committee on Appropriations
- D.** Joint Committee on Clubs

Article III. Offices of the Senate

Section 1 | President of the Senate

- A.** Pursuant to Article III, Section 3 of the Constitution the Senate shall elect a President of the Senate who shall also chair the Committee on Oversight. This position may be referred to as “President of the Senate” or “Senate President” interchangeably.
- (i) Nominees for the office of Senate President shall, prior to nomination, obtain confirmation from their respective school or college reauthorizing their senatorial position throughout the upcoming term.
 - (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.
 - (iii) Elections for the office of Senate President shall transpire at the concluding Senate General Session of each Spring session.
 - (iv) The Senate President-elect shall assume all duties and responsibilities of said office upon the outset of the forthcoming senatorial term.
- B.** The Senate President shall have the right to appoint a Clerk of the Senate and a Sergeant at Arms to help discharge their duties in overseeing the administration and organization of the Senate. At no point shall the positions of Clerk of the Senate and Sergeant of Arms be considered necessary functions of the Senate.
- C.** The Senate President shall preside over each Senate General Session, but at times, has the right to appoint a member of the Senate to preside over Senate General Sessions in their absence as Senate President “Pro-Tempore.” The Senate President Pro-Tempore shall reserve all rights and privileges herein granted to the Senate President and will retain these rights until the end of a specified period by the Senate President.
- (i) If a sitting Senator is designated Senate President Pro-Tempore, they will forfeit all rights to vote on legislation unless required via tie-breaker vote. All operations by the Senate President Pro-Tempore must remain impartial and unbiased throughout the entire period while holding this title.

- D.** The Student Body President or Vice-President at times may address Senate General Sessions, for no more than fifteen minutes, but must give the Senate President notice at least twenty-four hours prior to General Session.
- E.** The Senate shall meet every other week or as many times as the Senate President deems necessary. The Senate President 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.
- 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 serve alongside the Student Affairs Committee Chairman as official members of the Committee on Oversight. The appointments are at the discretion of the Senate President and do not require a vote of approval.
- H.** The President of the Senate shall remain impartial during Senate General Session and will not be permitted to speak on legislation in the affirmation or negation. The President of the Senate shall have no vote on motions, including votes on legislation, unless in the event of a tie.
 - (i) In the event of a tie, The President of the Senate will cast their vote on the motion at hand, coupled with a brief rational as to their decision.

Section 2 | Clerk of the Senate

- A.** The Clerk of the Senate will be responsible for maintaining the records for the Senate including but not limited to;
 - (i) The Official Senate Roster
 - (ii) Attendance Records
 - (iii) Minutes
- B.** The Clerk of the Senate may, at times, be charged by the Senate President with sending out a weekly email to update the Senate on information regarding legislation, upcoming events, and important reminders.
- C.** The Clerk of the Senate shall have the right to appoint a Deputy Clerk of the Senate to help in discharging their duties.

Section 3 | Sergeant at Arms

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

Article IV. Legislative By-Laws

Section 1 | The Senate shall follow this format for discussing and voting on legislation:

A. Initial Reading

- (i) The Senate President, upon announcing the title and number for the piece of Legislation, will ask the Clerk to read the “be it resolved” clause or other relevant action clauses therein.
- (ii) A motion may be made to temporarily suspend the rules to have the clerk read more of the legislation as necessary and shall be subject to a two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote for approval.

B. Presentation

- (i) The Senate President will ask if the author of the Legislation is present.
- (ii) If present, the author shall be given the opportunity to present and explain their legislation.
- (iii) The Author(s) reserves the right to assign up to a max of two speakers to present the document with no outstanding objections.
- (iv) During this time of presentation, the author or designated speaker will occupy the well; at no point may a motion be made while the well is occupied.
- (v) This presentation process shall last no longer than **five (5) minutes**.

C. Question and Answer

- (i) Following discussion, the Senate will move into a time of Q&A. Senators may ask the author of the legislation questions regarding content, authorial intent, and practicality. Questions regarding grammar, spelling, and motions for amendment will not be entertained.
- (ii) This period shall last no longer than **fifteen (15) minutes**.

D. Affirmation and Negation

- (i) After the Q&A period concludes and the speaker yields the well, the Senate shall be in a presumed session of Affirmation and Negation.
- (ii) Senators, if so moved during this period, may speak for **forty-five (45) seconds** in either affirmation or negation for the legislation by verbally prefacing their statement with either “Affirmation” or “Negation” respectively.
- (iii) This period will last no longer than **seven (7) minutes**.

E. Amending

- (i) If Senators are so moved, they 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.

F. Temporary Censure

- (i) If, at any time, it is the view of the Senate body that a Senator is purposefully “stalling” the discussion of the legislation at hand, trying to improperly change the legislation, or disrupt discussion, A Senator may move to Censure such an individual for the remainder of the discussion on that specific document.
- (ii) A vote for Censure shall require a two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote.

Section 2 | Voting

- A.** Senators shall vote via voice by signifying either “Aye” or “Nay” when so prompted by the Senate President for all required motions and legislative votes.
- B.** If the official vote tally is subject to error due to a clear division, a Senator may immediately audibly call “Division” directly following the Nay votes, but before the gavel falls.

- C. If Division is called before the gavel falls, the President of the Senate shall be required to tally the votes manually through method of raised hands or other such numerically verifiable methods at the sole discretion of the Senate President.

Section 3 | Outcome

- A. The Senate President will inform The Senate 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 from which it was received until the academic year runs out, after which, the document officially dies.

Amendments to the Senate Bylaws

Amendment I |

All future additions to these bylaws, unless acting as an alteration to an existing enumerated clause, shall be herein listed as formal Amendments to this document. Amendments to these By-Laws may be introduced during any Senate General Session by any sitting senator and must be presented in writing to the Senate President prior to discussion and debate. All Amendments to these By-Laws shall require a three-fourths (3/4ths) majority vote of approval.

Ratified By the Senate Body on September 28th 2021

Amendment II |

Should any Senator find themselves unable to attend a Senate General Session, they may reserve the privilege, should they so choose, to appoint a temporary proxy to serve in their place for the duration of the meeting. The appointed proxy must be actively pursuing an undergraduate degree or minor under the same school as the delegating Senator and shall retain all rights and privileges of Senator with the exception of legislative sponsorship. This privilege of proxy appointment may only be granted once per semester per Senator. All proxy appointment requests are subject to the approval of the Senate President and must be communicated to the Senate President at least 1 hour prior to the meeting at which the Senator would be otherwise absent. The Senate President reserves the right to deny proxy requests at their sole discretion with the exception of a vote to override the decision of the Senate President.

Ratified By the Senate Body on November 9th 2021