

ARTICLE III LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 1 – Legislative Powers

1. Only the powers specifically enumerated within this Constitution shall be granted to the Legislative branch of the Student Government, which shall be comprised of the Senate and the House of Representatives.
2. By resolution, the Legislative branch shall have the power to suggest courses of action to the Administration. These resolutions shall seek improvements to student life or suggest changes to the Administration's policies. Resolutions must be passed by a simple majority of both houses and signed by the Student Body President.
3. By bill, the Legislative branch shall have the power to alter or create governing documents and policies, except this Constitution and Administration policies. The vote count to pass a bill shall be determined by a simple majority or by whatever amount the governing document being altered deems necessary.
 - a. Bills affecting only one committee shall be passed by that committee.
 - b. Bills affecting only one chamber of the Legislative Branch shall be passed by that chamber of the Legislative Branch.
 - c. Bills affecting only the two chambers of the Legislative Branch shall be passed by both chambers of the Legislative Branch.
 - d. Bills affecting another branch of the Student Government and bills regarding any elections in the Student Government shall be passed by both chambers of the Legislative Branch and signed by the Student Body President.
4. By constitutional amendment, the Legislative branch shall have the power to amend this Constitution according to Article VII of this Constitution.

Section 2 – House of Representatives

1. Members of the House of Representatives shall be called representatives. The membership of the House shall consist of residential representatives and commuter representatives.
2. Residential representatives shall represent their respective residence halls. Each residential hall may be represented by up to one representative at a time, excepting the Speaker and the chairs of committees enumerated in the House bylaws. Each fall semester, students living on each residence hall shall elect their hall representative during a campus-wide election period, which shall take place before the date which is three weeks after the first day of classes. Eligible residential students may apply to run for their hall seat through a secure form sent to all residential students. Candidates shall be placed on their hall's ballot after the Department of Student Affairs confirms their qualifications as outlined in Article II of this Constitution.
 - a. A residence hall shall be defined as the area led by one team of Resident Assistants of the same gender.

3. Commuter representatives shall represent commuter students. Commuter representative seats shall not exceed one-fourth of the total number of residence halls. Commuter representatives shall be elected to these at-large commuter seats during the aforementioned election period. Candidates shall be placed on the commuter ballot after the Department of Student Affairs confirms their qualifications as outlined in Article II of this Constitution.
4. These representative elections shall be governed by the Representative Election Rules, which may be altered by bill according to Article III Section 1 Clause 3(d) of this Constitution.
5. All representatives shall serve until the end of classes in the academic year of their term of service or their resignation. If a representative resigns during their term, the Speaker shall contact the Resident Assistants of the representative's hall to seek a nomination for the open seat.
6. The House shall elect one of its members to the office of Speaker in the last meeting of each Spring semester. Each committee enumerated in House Bylaws shall elect one of its members to the office of committee chair in the last meeting of each Spring semester. Upon their election to a leadership position, the Speaker and the chairs of committees enumerated in House Bylaws do not need to run for reelection for a hall or commuter seat, and they will not be counted as filling their hall's representative seat.
 - a. The Speaker of the House shall direct meetings and operations of the House as prescribed in this Constitution, the Code of Ethics, the Legislative bylaws, the House bylaws, and House Parliamentary Procedures. The Speaker of the House shall hold their office until the end of classes in the academic year of their term of office.
 - b. The Speaker shall have no vote unless their vote would immediately, by count, alter the passage or rejection of the matter at hand. The Speaker shall remain impartial during all legislative sessions and may not step down from the chair to speak on legislation, excepting meetings of the Committee on Rules and Ethics. Impartiality is defined as not expressing personal opinions on legislation, nominations, or other matters of consideration, as well as not misusing the authority, influence, or other privileges of the office to improperly manipulate or alter the outcome of votes.
 - c. The Speaker shall only have those powers enumerated to the position and those powers necessary and proper to the carrying out of the Speaker's enumerated powers.
7. The House shall be overseen by a Committee on Rules and Ethics, which shall only have jurisdiction over bills and amendments originating in the House. The Committee shall also have jurisdiction to determine the agenda for each House meeting by a simple majority vote. The Committee shall only consist of the duly elected chairmen of committees enumerated in the House Bylaws. The Committee shall be chaired by the Speaker, who is also a voting member of the Committee.

REPRESENTATIVE ELECTION RULES AND PROCEDURES

Election Procedures

1. It is the responsibility of the candidates to properly educate themselves on the Election Rules and Procedures. Candidates are responsible for informing agents of their campaigns of the Elections Procedures and Rules and all applicable University Policies. Candidates may be found responsible for the actions taken by agents of their campaigns that should have reasonably been under the campaign's supervision.
2. Prospective candidates shall submit their applications through a form provided by the Student Government Association by Friday of the second week of classes. No late applications will be accepted.
3. The Department of Student Affairs will confirm each candidate's housing location and qualifications as outlined in Article II of the Constitution before the candidate's name is placed on the ballot.
4. Representatives shall be elected under a plurality voting system in which the candidate with the most votes is elected.
5. Only current residential and commuter students may vote in the representative elections.
6. Any violation of the above procedures may result in disqualification. Complaints of violations of these rules shall be submitted through an online form monitored by the Election Committee. The Election Committee may vote to disqualify candidates for a violation of these rules. Candidates have the right to appeal a decision of the Election Committee against them to the Student Court.

Election Rules

1. While Election Rules are subject to change by bill, the rules for each election shall be declared final at the application deadline and will be distributed electronically via the SGA website.
2. Elections shall occur during the third week of classes from Tuesday to Thursday.
3. Candidates may not create campaign social media accounts.
4. Candidates for residential seats may not table or hang posters except on their residence halls. Candidates may only hang posters on the hall if RAs allow all candidates the same privilege.
5. Candidates for commuter seats may not table or hang posters except on Community Boards with approval from the Office of Commuter Life.
6. Campaigns are prohibited from using resources owned and supplied by departments of the university excepting Community Boards. This provision applies to resources offered by the school to campaigns as well as resources requested by campaigns.
7. Slander and libel, defined as falsely speaking or writing of a person's character and/or campaign platform, and damaging his/her reputation as a result, is strictly prohibited.

8. Negative campaigning, defined as campaigning in a way where a candidate or a candidate's agent criticizes another campaign rather than emphasizing their own redeeming qualities, is strictly prohibited.
9. Candidates must refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, verbal attacks, or explicit or implicit threats upon the character or motives of fellow candidates, students, administrators, faculty, and staff.
10. Any form of bribery or coercion is strictly prohibited.
11. All campaigns must adhere to the Liberty Way and the SGA Code of Ethics.
12. Each campaign must be forthright, honest, and fully transparent in their communication with the student body, faculty, and administration of the University.
13. Candidates must maintain respect for the University, its employees, members of SGA, the student body, and fellow candidates.
14. Concerns of rule violations must be submitted through an online form. This form must be filled out in its entirety and will be monitored by the Speaker of the House and Election Committee. If a rule violation is reported to the Speaker of the House by anyone other than a member of the Election Committee, evidence of the rule violation must be provided.