Student Association Senate Bylaws

(Amended by BB1314-023 and BB1314-027)

Article I. Name, Term and Session

Section 1.01 Name

(a) The name of a Senate Term shall be "(election year) – (following year) Senate".

Section 1.02 Term

(a) The Senate Term shall last from May 1st of the election year through April 31st of the following year.

Section 1.03 Session

(a) A Senate session shall be defined as one meeting of the Senate during a term where quorum is met, beginning with a call to order and ending with adjournment.

(b) Senate sessions shall be numbered in numerical order beginning with the first session of a new Senate term.

Article II. Sessions

Section 2.01 Session Rules

(a) The Senate shall adhere to the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised in all places where they do not conflict with these bylaws.

(b) The Senate and all committees of the Senate shall adhere to Wisconsin Open Meeting and Public Records Laws.

Section 2.02 Session Order/Roll Call
(a) The President shall call sessions to order and the Secretary shall take roll. If the President is not present, the next in line of succession shall preside over the session. If the Secretary is not present then the Senate shall appoint an individual to temporarily take minutes.

(b) Quorum for a Senate session shall be 50% plus 1 of currently filled Senate seats, not including members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2.03 Session Agendas

(a) The Executive Committee shall set the agenda for Senate sessions based on: previous business, all submitted legislation, and other requested special orders or reports.

(b) Special Orders shall constitute the following items: removal proceedings, veto override sessions, approval of nominees for appointed positions, election of officers, and election of vacant Senate seats.

(c) The Student Association President, Student Association Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Student Association Professional Staff (hereafter SAPS), the Chair of the Oversight and Appeals Commission (hereafter OAC), chairs of Senate committees, and the Dean of Students, or their designees, shall all be allowed to speak and have time for questions under Comments and Questions.

(d) All members of the Executive Committee shall have speaking rights during Senate Session.

(e) Prior to the commencement of any Senate Business, and after the Roll Call, the Student Association Senate shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Members may choose to participate.

(f) Open forum shall be available for all members of the public.

Section 2.04 Commencement of the Term

(a) The President of the Student Association shall call the first session of the term by 6:00pm on the second Sunday of May, with at least seven days prior notice.

Section 2.05 Summer Sessions

(a) The summer session months shall be June, July and August.

(b) Quorum shall consist of 10 Senators.

(c) No Senator shall be penalized for absences during summer sessions.

(d) Summer session meetings shall only be held in cases of emergency, where business cannot wait until the fall semester.
(e) Every effort must be made by the President to schedule summer session meetings at a time when most Senators can attend.

(f) There shall be no bylaw changes during any summer session.

Section 2.06 State of the Students Address

(a) Once per year the Senate shall convene in a special session for the sole purpose of the Student Association President delivering the State of the Students address.

(b) This session will be scheduled at a time to be determined by the Student Association President.

(c) The Student Association President shall deliver the address.

(d) A regular or special session of the Senate for regular Senate business may be scheduled and called to order following the State of the Students Address.

Section 2.07 Emergency Senate Session

(a) The Executive Committee may call the Senate into an Emergency Senate Session.

(b) Senators may be excused from an Emergency Senate Session at the discretion of the President, no less than 6 hours in advance.

(c) There must be at least 48 hours between the time the session is called and the session itself.

(d) At the beginning of an Emergency Senate Session, the Senate must vote to approve the discussion of business by a majority of senators present.

Section 2.08 Closed Session

(a) The Senate may enter closed session in accordance with Wisconsin State Statute 19.85.

Article III. Vacancies

Section 3.01 Senate Vacancies

(a) Public notices of any vacant Senate seat must be made by the President within one week of the vacancy occurring.

(b) Any eligible student wishing to fill a vacant Senate seat must fill out a nomination application and collect the following number of signatures from their constituents:
(i) At-Large — 50 validated signatures from any enrolled student

(ii) School of Information Studies — 10 validated signatures from students in the corresponding school

(iii) All other Schools and Colleges — 25 validated signatures from students in the corresponding school

(iv) Advocacy seats — 50 validated signatures from any enrolled student

(v) Freshman — 25 validated signatures from any enrolled student

c) Eligible candidates must fill out an electronic nomination form that shall be made available on the Student Association website.

d) A candidate must receive a 2/3rd vote of approval by the Senate to fill a vacant Senate seat.

e) This section shall be in compliance with the Independent Election Commission (hereafter IEC) Bylaws.

Section 3.02 Freshman Senators

(a) The Freshman Senators shall be elected from and by Freshman students during an election held by the end of the first week in October. In order to be eligible to fill a Freshman Senator seat, the student must be in freshman standing or in their first undergraduate year at UWM.

(b) Freshman Senator Seat vacancies can only be filled by the Senate after the date of Freshman Elections has passed.

(c) The IEC shall reserve the right to hold a special election for all vacant senate seats during the Freshman elections.

Article IV. Legislation

Section 4.01 Definition

(a) Legislation shall be any bill, act or resolution that: appropriates money, changes rules, takes stances on issues and/or, calls for a specific action.

(b) Resolutions passed by the Student Association Senate shall be considered the official stance of UWM students on the respective issue.

(c) Legislation shall not expire at any time unless stated in the bill itself or unless the terms or stance are changed by subsequent legislation.
Section 4.02 Submission

(a) All sponsored legislation shall be submitted in writing to the President to be placed on the agenda prior to the start of a Senate session.

Section 4.03 Numbering

(a) All legislation from Senate committees shall be assigned a number which will be determined by the Secretary.

(b) All legislation shall be coded as followed:

(i) *SB (Senate Bill)*

(ii) *Year of Senate Term* (e.g. 1415)

(iii) *Chronological order of legislation* (e.g. 001 for the first, 002 for the second).

Section 4.04 Sponsoring

(a) Apart from the Student Association Budget, all legislation must be sponsored by at least one senator before it can be heard on the Senate floor.

(b) The Student Association Treasurer shall sponsor the Student Association Budget.

(c) In the case of a vacancy in the Treasurer position, the Executive Committee shall have the responsibility to sponsor the SA Budget.

Section 4.05 Amendments

(a) The Senate may amend any legislation brought to the Senate floor.

(b) The Senate shall be allowed to make amendments to any previously passed legislation through the creation of new legislation.

Section 4.06 Passage

(a) Bills, resolutions, and amendments to bills or resolutions shall be passed by a majority vote of the Senate.

(b) Budget approvals, budget adjustments, appointments, removal referrals, bylaws, and amendments to the above mentioned shall be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

Article V. SA Budget

Section 5.01 Name
(a) The Name of the SA budget shall be the Student Association Budget.

Section 5.02 Sections

(a) The SA Budget shall be divided into three distinct sections representing the three distinct branches of the SA.

(b) The budget for the Independent Election Commission shall be under the Legislative Branch budget.

(c) The Senate shall be responsible for the approval and amendment of all aspects of the SA budget.

Section 5.03 Proposal

(a) The Executive Committee of the SA shall have the responsibility to recommend the SA Executive Branch Budget and the Senate budget, and present recommendations for the Senate’s approval.

(b) The Oversight and Appeals Commission (OAC) shall have the responsibility to recommend the SA OAC Budget, and present recommendations for the Senate’s approval at the first Senate session of the fall semester.

(c) The Executive Committee and OAC may not allocate funds from outside of their respective branches.

(d) The Executive Committee and OAC may recommend a summer budget.

Section 5.04 Restrictions

(a) All SA budgets shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

(b) The Student Association may not incur a deficit.

(c) Any requests for additional funds, or changes to the Budget including spending money from Reserves, shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

(d) Unallocated funds within the budget shall be moved to a specific line item with approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate in order to be spent.

(e) All individual expenditures by members of the Executive Branch must be approved in advance by the Treasurer and the President. All individual expenditures by members of the Legislative Branch must be approved by the Treasurer and the President. All individual expenditures by members of the OAC must be approved by the Treasurer and the Chair of the OAC.

Section 5.05 Unused Funds
At the end of each term, all prior fiscal year roll-over funds not expended in the OAC and Executive budget shall be transferred to the Senate.

Article VI. Responsibilities and Duties

Section 6.01 Senators

(a) Senators shall be required to attend all Senate sessions.

(b) Senators shall actively reach out to their constituents.

(c) Senators shall sit on at least one (1) committee or work group, senators shall not sit on more than four (4) committees or work groups at any one time.

(d) Senators who cannot attend a Senate session shall notify the President at least 6 hours prior to that Senate session.

Section 6.02 Academic Senators

(a) Senators shall, under the direction of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, coordinate the advertisement and elections of their respective school or college’s Program Representatives.

(b) Senators shall meet at least twice a semester with the Dean of their respective college or school.

(c) Senators shall also hold a collective meeting of the Program Representatives from their respective school or college at least once a semester.

Section 6.03 Advocacy Senators

(a) Senators that represent a specific issue shall meet monthly with the director or designee of their respective resource center or department.

(b) Senators shall hold outreach events for students that belong to the constituency they represent at least once a semester.

Section 6.04 President

(a) The President shall be required to chair the Senate Session.

(b) The President shall give a report at Senate sessions.

(c) The President shall work directly with the At-large and Freshmen Senators.

Section 6.05 Secretary of the Senate

(a) The Secretary shall be required to attend and take minutes at Senate sessions.
(b) The Secretary shall write up minutes for all Senate sessions and post them for public viewing once they are approved by the full SA Senate by majority vote.

(c) The Secretary shall disseminate draft minutes of each Senate session within one week following the Senate session.

Article VII. Standing Committees

Section 7.01 Constitutional Standing Committees

(a) Student Appropriations Committee

(b) Senate Finance Committee

Section 7.02 Senate Standing Committees

(a) Student Life and Interest Committee

(b) Student Voting Rights Committee

(c) Student Safety Committee

(d) Student Transportation Committee

Article VIII. Office Hours

(a) Office hours shall be hours performed in the SA office or at SA related meetings or as otherwise permitted by each branch head.

(b) Eighty percent (80%) of office hours must be held during regular business hours.

Article IX. Shared Governance

Section 9.01 Shared Governance

(a) The Senate is responsible for the approval of UWM students to serve on university committees in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 36.09(5) and relevant case law.

(b) The Student Association President shall preliminarily appoint students to university shared governance bodies subject to a review and confirmation vote of the Senate, with the exception of members of the Independent Election Commission. This duty may be delegated to another official of the Executive branch at the discretion of the President.
(c) The Senate shall confirm shared governance appointments by a simple majority vote.

(d) Appointments shall be placed on the agenda under Shared Governance Appointments.

(e) Policies and procedures may be created to provide greater guidance and transparency of the Shared Governance Process. Such policies and procedures shall be approved by the Executive Committee, but shall not conflict with any SA governing documents.

Section 9.02 Notification

(a) Once there is a vacated shared governance committee position, the President shall coordinate with the SAPS office to begin the process of filling the position, no more than three (3) days after the position is vacated or created.

Article X. Program Representatives

Section 10.01 Responsibilities

(a) The Program Representatives shall:

(i) Represent the needs of students in their respective academic department or program.

(ii) Meet regularly with their respective academic program department chairs.

(iii) Be responsible for notifying their constituencies of their availability and contact information.

(iv) Attend meetings coordinated by their respective school or college senator.

Article XI. Accountability

Section 11.01 Resignation/Dismissal

(a) Senators resigning shall send their letters of resignation to the President. The resignation is effective immediately, unless a future date is specified in the letter.

(b) Senators that miss two consecutive Senate sessions without being excused by the President shall be considered to have resigned from office effective at the adjournment of the second missed session.
(c) Senators that miss three Senate sessions in a semester without being excused by the President shall be considered to have resigned effective at the adjournment of the third missed session.

(d) Senators that miss two consecutive sessions of standing committees of which they are a member, without being excused by the Committee Chair, may be removed from the committee at the discretion of the committee Chair.

(e) Exceptions due to scheduling conflicts may be solicited and approved by the President on a case-by-case basis.

Section 11.02  Grounds for Removal

(a) Failure to fulfill the duties of office

(b) Abuse of the powers of the office

(c) Conduct unbecoming of a Student Association official

(d) Misappropriation, or intentional misuse, of student funds

(e) Failure to abide by all Senate-approved contracts, codes of conduct, and responsibilities outlined in governing documents

(f) Unsatisfactory performance that has led to a loss of confidence among the Student Association Senate

Section 11.03  Investigations

(a) The Oversight and Appeals Commission shall be responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct of SA officers and presenting their decision to the Senate.

(b) Only the Senate, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, may refer SA officials for removal.

Section 11.04  Removal from Office

(a) The Senate shall have the opportunity to appeal a removal decision of the OAC by a three-quarter (3/4) vote

Section 11.05  Whistleblower Protection
(a) No Student Association official may take (or threaten to take) retaliatory action against any SA employee, official, or applicant because of disclosure of information by that employee, official, or applicant. Officials may file complaints that they believe reasonably evidences a violation of law, rule or regulation; mismanagement; waste of funds; an abuse of authority; or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. These complaints may be reported to the Oversight and Appeals Commission, the Student Association Professional Staff Office, or the UWM Dean of Students’ Office.

(b) Disclosure of this information shall not automatically provide immunity from sanctions resultant from subsequent investigations.

(c) This provision shall not provide protection for those who violate disclosure rules associated with privacy laws or closed-session records.

(d) Violations of these provisions by any Student Association Official may constitute grounds for removal.

Article XII. Enactment

Section 12.01  Enactment

(a) This document shall supersede all previous Senate bylaws and shall become effective upon passage by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Trustees and signature of the SA Board of Trustees Chair.

Article XIII. Amendments

Section 13.01  Amendments

(a) Amendments to these bylaws shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

Nik Rettinger III
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Date  \(4/27/14\)

Unanimous \(\Box\)

AYE \(\Box\)

NAY \(\Box\)

Legislative History

March 7th, 2014: Sponsored by Vice Chair Ryan Sorenson
April 13th, 2014: Passed by the Board of Trustees
April 27th, 2014: Amended by BB1314-023 and BB1314-027 both passing by Board of Trustees.