

# Carnegie Mellon University

## Student Senate Bylaws

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### Article 1. Purpose and Scope.

- A. The purpose of these bylaws is to establish the structures and operating procedures of Student Senate, which is the undergraduate legislative branch of Carnegie Mellon University student government, created in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*.
- 5     1. The general purpose of Student Senate is to represent the voice of the Carnegie Mellon University undergraduate student body, to work toward enhancing the overall undergraduate student experience on campus, and to oversee the allocation of the portion of the Activities Fee under the direct control of Student Senate.
- 10    B. Where there is a contradiction between these bylaws and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* or the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Government Fiscal Policy*, those documents shall supersede these bylaws.
- C. When there is a contradiction between these bylaws and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Senate Fiscal Policy*, these bylaws shall supersede that policy.

### Article II. Terms and Definitions.

- 15    A. The *Activities Board* refers to the standing committee of Student Government, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, to coordinate events to entertain, educate, and enrich the lives of the entire campus community.
- B. The *Activities Fee* refers to the funds that are collected and placed under the control of Student Government by the Carnegie Mellon University Board of Trustees.

- 20 C. The *Committee on Student Organizations* refers to the standing committee of Student Government, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, to oversee the process of granting and revoking the status of *Student Government Recognition* to student organizations.
- D. The undergraduate student body is divided into the following *constituencies*:
  - 25 1. Carnegie Institute of Technology
  2. College of Fine Arts;
  3. College of Humanities and Social Sciences;
  4. Mellon College of Science;
  5. School of Computer Science;
  - 30 6. Tepper School of Business;
  7. Bachelor of Humanities and Arts, Bachelor of Sciences and Arts, Sciences and Humanities Scholars Program, Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts, and Miscellaneous Students.
- E. Every member of the undergraduate student body is classified as a constituent in their home college at Carnegie Mellon University, as specified by the Carnegie Mellon University Registrar.
  - 35 (a) Any member of the undergraduate student body who does not fall under the auspices of the constituencies listed shall be classified as a Miscellaneous Student.
- F. The Elections Board refers to the standing committee of Student Government, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, to oversee the annual Student Government Executive and Student Senate elections.
- 40 G. Financial Probation is a form of probation for Student Government Recognized organizations, and is established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and *Student Government Fiscal Policy*
- H. A full session of Student Senate shall extend from the first regular meeting of Student Senate following the ratification of the Student Senate Election results until the adjournment of the meeting at which the following year's Student Senate Election results are successfully ratified.
- 45 I. The Graduate Student Assembly is the graduate legislative branch of Carnegie Mellon University student government, created in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*.
- J. There are two *half sessions* of Student Senate. The first begins at the first regular meeting of the full session and ends at the last regular meeting of the Fall semester. The second half session begins at the last regular meeting of the Fall semester and ends at the last regular meeting of the full session.
- 50 K. The *Joint Funding Committee* refers to the standing committee of Student Government, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* to oversee the funding of student organizations.
- 55 L. A *joint meeting* of Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly is a meeting of Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly at which a majority of the members of Student Senate and a majority of the members of the Graduate Student Assembly are present.
- M. A *meeting* of Student Senate is any gathering of a majority of the voting members of Student Senate, provided all such members have been notified of that gathering at least one (1) week in advance of the gathering.
- 60 N. *Notification* of a group of students shall be satisfied by either an e-mail sent to all individuals in that group, or a verbal announcement at a regular meeting of that group, provided minutes of that meeting are recorded and distributed.
- O. The *President's Cabinet* refers to the standing committee of Student Government, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, to assist the Student Body President with the running of the Executive Branch of Student Government.
- 65 P. *Recognition Probation* is a form of probation for Student Government Recognized organizations, and is established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and *Student Government Fiscal Policy*
- 70 Q. A regular meeting of Student Senate is a meeting among those scheduled by Student Senate

for the purpose of conducting their routine business.

R. The *student body* refers to the collection of students enrolled in undergraduate or graduate academic programs at Carnegie Mellon University's Pittsburgh campus.

75 S. The *student government executive committee* refers to the committee, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, consisting of the Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Student Body Vice President for Finance, Student Body Vice President for Organizations, Student Senate Chair, and Graduate Student Assembly President.

T. A *student organization* is any grouping of members of the student body.

1. Neither Student Senate nor the Graduate Student Assembly is a student organization.

80 U. The *undergraduate student body* refers to all members of the student body who are enrolled in undergraduate academic programs at Carnegie Mellon University's Pittsburgh campus.

### Article III. Duties and Powers of Student Senate.

A. General Duties of Student Senate:

85 1. Hold regular meetings, at least twice during each complete month of the academic year;  
2. Enact and enforce legislation aimed at accomplishing the objectives of the undergraduate student body;

3. Act as representatives of the undergraduate student body to staff, faculty and administration of Carnegie Mellon University;

90 4. Appropriate and approve the expenditures of all funds under direct control of Student Senate, as prescribed in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Senate Fiscal Policy*, these bylaws, and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Senate Fiscal Policy*;

5. Break a tie, in any undergraduate student body election of Student Senators, by way of a majority vote at a meeting of Student Senate.

95 B. **Constitutionally Assigned Duties of Student Senate:** The following are responsibilities required of Student Senate by the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Government Fiscal Policy*. Student Senate is required to fulfill these duties, as described in that constitution and fiscal policy, until such time as they are removed from that constitution and fiscal policy.

100 1. Appoint a representative of Student Senate to sit on the Committee on Student Organizations;

2. Appoint a representative of Student Senate to sit on the Elections Board;

3. Approve or reject nominations of undergraduate students to the Joint Funding Committee, as presented by the Student Body Vice President for Finance;

105 4. Approve or reject nominations of undergraduate students to the Committee on Student Organizations, as presented by the Student Body Vice President for Organizations;

5. Discuss and vote on amendments proposed to the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and its associated documents and policies;

110 6. Discuss and vote on requests, presented by the Student Body Vice President for Finance, to increase the Student Activities Fee for undergraduate students by up to five (5) percent;

7. Meet with the Graduate Student Assembly to review and vote on the proposed Joint Funding Committee budget;

115 8. Vote on recommendations, from the Student Body Vice President for Finance, regarding the Student Government Recognition status of a student organization that has been placed on Financial Probation by the Student Body Vice President for Finance;

9. Fulfill the duties and assume the powers assigned to Student Senate when Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly enter binding arbitration.

- 120 C. **Constitutionally Assigned Powers of Student Senate:** The following are powers conferred upon Student Senate by the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and its associated documents. Student Senate holds these powers, as described in that constitution and its associated documents, until such time as they are removed from that constitution and its associated documents.
1. Override a Presidential Veto of Student Senate legislation;
  - 125 2. Overturn a decision of the Committee on Student Organizations regarding a student organization's Student Government Recognition status, and/or its status of Recognition Probation;
  3. Request the impeachment of the Student Body President, Vice President for Finance, and/or Vice President for Organizations;
  - 130 4. Overrule the decision(s) of the Student Senate Chair and the Graduate Student Assembly President regarding the assignment of duties and/or powers normally belonging to a particular officer of Student Government, when an impeachment request has been made for that officer;
  5. Overrule the appointment of a member of the student body as an Interim Student Body President, Vice President for Finance, and/or Vice President for Organizations;
  - 135 6. Install, in coordination with the Graduate Student Assembly, a member of the student body into a vacant Student Body President, Vice President for Finance, and/or Vice President for Organizations office;
  7. Overrule the appointment of a Student Body Vice President;
  8. Overrule the appointment of an Assistant to the Student Body Vice President for Finance;
  - 140 9. Confirm or reject the nomination of undergraduate students to the Joint Funding Committee and the Committee on Student Organizations;
  10. Approve or reject aberrations in the make-up of the Joint Funding Committee;
  11. Overrule the removal of any undergraduate student from the Joint Funding Committee and/or the Committee on Student Organizations;
  - 145 12. Remove a member of the student body from the Elections Board;
  13. Overrule the appointment of any member of the President's Cabinet;
  14. Remove the Activities Board Executive Chair from office;
  15. Overrule, in coordination with the Graduate Student Assembly, a freeze placed on the budget of a student organization;
  - 150 16. Vote to enter binding arbitration with the Graduate Student Assembly;
  17. Vote, in coordination with the Graduate Student Assembly, to override the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Government Fiscal Policy*, *Joint Funding Committee Bylaws*, *Committee on Student Organization Bylaws*, and *Student Government Election Rules*.

## Article IV. Members of Student Senate.

- 155 A. Student Senate shall consist of the following types of members:
1. Student Senators;
  2. Members-at-Large;
  3. Non-voting *ex officio* members.
- B. Student Senators:
- 160 1. Student Senators shall be elected as representatives of their constituency.
- a. Each constituency shall be represented by either one (1) Student Senator, or one (1) Student Senator for every one hundred forty (140) constituents (or majority fraction thereof) – whichever is greater.
  - b. Constituents entering an integrated or accelerated graduate program at Carnegie

- 165 Mellon University may represent their undergraduate constituency during their time  
in that program provided they are not also serving as a Graduate Student Assem-  
bly Representative or as a member of the Graduate Student Assembly Executive  
Committee.
- 170 c. Student Senators shall normally be elected in accord with the procedure set out in  
the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Government Election Rules*.  
(i) Vacant Student Senate seats shall be filled according to the procedure for filling  
vacancies set out in these bylaws.  
(ii) Ties in the election of Student Senators shall be broken by a majority vote at a  
meeting of Student Senate.
- 175 d. If a Student Senator changes constituencies after s/he isthey are elected, s/hetthey shall  
serve the remainder of the current full session as a representative of the constituency  
from which s/he wasthey were elected.
2. Term of Service:
- 180 a. For a Student Senator elected by the undergraduate student body, their term of  
service begins at the beginning of the full session for which s/he wasthey were elected  
to serve.  
b. For a Student Senator elected by Student Senate to fill a vacant Student Senate seat,  
their term of service begins at the end of the meeting during which s/he isthey are  
elected.
- 185 c. The term of service for all Student Senators ends at the end of the full session for  
which s/he wasthey were elected to serve.
3. Duties of Student Senators:
- a. Attend regular and special meetings of Student Senate;  
b. Attend joint meetings of Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly;  
190 c. Sit on one (1) Student Senate standing committee, and attend all meetings of that  
standing committee;  
d. Attend at least one (1) New Member Caucus during their first half-session as a  
Senator;  
(i) A Student Senator is only required to attend one (1) meeting of the New Member  
195 Caucus during their term.  
(ii) If a Student Senator is elected but has previously served a term on Student Senate,  
attendance is no longer required.  
(iii) If a Student Senator is elected but has previously attended a New Member Caucus  
as a Member-at-large, attendance is no longer required.
- 200 e. Earn three (3) Engagement Hours during every half-session of Student Senate;  
(i) Engagement Hours shall be earned by engagement with the student body through  
tabling for Student Senate and attending university events pertaining to current  
issues, as deemed appropriate by the Chair of Student Senate.  
(ii) Senators will only be required to earn all three (3) hours if elected by the date of  
205 the mid-semester break during that half-session.
- f. Designate a proxy to attend Student Senate meetings when unable to attend those  
meetings themselves;  
(i) A Student Senator's proxy must be a member of the constituency that the Student  
Senator represents.  
210 (ii) A proxy may not be a Student Senator or a member of the Executive Branch of  
Student Senate.  
(iii) A Student Senator's proxy assumes the duties and powers of that Student Senator  
for the duration of the meeting during which s/he isthey are serving as that  
Student Senator's proxy.  
215 (iv) To designate a proxy a Student Senator must notify the Chair of Student Senate,

via e-mail, of the name of that proxy.

4. Powers of Student Senators:

- a. Student Senators assume all parliamentary powers afforded them in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. These powers are in effect during all Student Senate meetings and during all meetings of Student Senate committees of which they are members;
- b. Propose legislation to Student Senate;
- c. Nominate members of the undergraduate student body to serve as Members-at-Large.

C. Members-at-Large:

1. Members-at-Large may be elected as representatives of the undergraduate student body.

- a. Any Student Senator may nominate a member of the undergraduate student body as a Member-at-Large during any regular Student Senate meeting.
- b. To be elected, a nominee must receive a majority vote of approval at the meeting where s/he isthey are nominated as a Member-at-Large.
- c. There is no limit to the number of Members-at-Large that may be elected.
- d. There is no limit to the number of times an individual may be nominated as a Member-at-Large, but a single individual may only be nominated once during a single meeting of Student Senate.

2. The term of service for a Member-at-Large begins at the end of the meeting during which s/he isthey are elected, and ends at the end of the full session for which s/he wasthey were elected to serve.

3. Duties of Members-at-Large:

- a. Attend regular and special meetings of Student Senate;
- b. Attend joint meetings of Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly;
- c. Attend at least one (1) New Member Caucus during their first half-session as a Member-at-Large:
  - (i) A Member-at-Large must only attend one (1) meeting of the New Member Caucus during their term.
  - (ii) If a Member-at-Large is elected but has previously served a term on Student Senate, attendance is no longer required.
  - (iii) If a Member-at-Large is elected but has previously attended a New Member Caucus as a Student Senator, attendance is no longer required.

4. Powers of Members-at-Large:

- a. Members-at-Large are non-voting members of Student Senate and possess the following rights during meetings of Student Senate:
  - (i) calling for orders of the day;
  - (ii) raising points of order, points of personal privilege, points of information, and points of parliamentary inquiry;
  - (iii) speaking during meetings.
- b. Members-at-Large may propose legislation to Student Senate.

D. Non-voting ex officio members of Student Senate:

1. The following shall be non-voting ex officio members of Student Senate:

- a. the Student Body President;
- b. the Student Body Vice President;
- c. the Student Body Vice President for Finance;
- d. the Student Body Vice President for Organizations;
- e. the Graduate Student Assembly President;
- f. all members of the President's Cabinet;
- g. the Chair of each Student Government standing committee that is established in the Carnegie Mellon University Student Body Constitution;
- h. the Student Dormitory Council President;
- i. the Inter-Fraternity Council President;

- j. the Panhellenic Council President;
  - k. the Multi-Cultural Greek Council President;
  - l. the Faculty Senate Chair.
- 270 2. Powers of non-voting ex officio members of Student Senate:
- a. Ex officio members hold the same parliamentary privileges as Members-at-Large;
    - (i) This does not include the right to propose legislation to Student Senate.
  - b. Upon approval by the Chair of Student Senate, an ex officio member of Student Senate may address Student Senate during a meeting of Student Senate.
- 275 E. Attendance Requirements for Student Senators and Members-at-Large:
- 1. A Student Senator may accrue two (2) absences from regular meetings of Student Senate per half session.
  - 2. A Member-at-Large may accrue three (3) absences from regular meetings of Student Senate per half session.
  - 280 3. A meeting at which a Student Senator (or their designated proxy) or a Member-at-Large is not present for a scheduled roll call during a regular Student Senate meeting shall count as one-half (1/2) absence for that Student Senator or Member-at-Large.
  - 4. There may not be more than two (2) scheduled roll calls during a regular Student Senate meeting.
  - 285 5. A Student Senator may accrue two (2) absences from regular meetings of the Student Senate standing committee of which s/he isthey are a member.
  - 6. A Student Senator may send a proxy to a regular meeting of Student Senate no more than two (2) times per half session..
  - 290 7. A Student Senator may have absences removed from his or hertheir record upon completion of their Engagement Hour requirements. Thereafter, one-half (1/2) absence will be removed for every additional completion of one (1) Engagement Hour. Absences may also be removed by other participation in the activities of Student Senate as deemed appropriate by the Chair of Student Senate. This participation must occur within thirty (30) days of the recorded one-half (1/2) absence.
- 295 F. Removal of Student Senators for Attendance Violations:
- 1. Three (3) absences from regular meetings of Student Senate or three (3) absences from regular meetings of a Student Senator's standing committee, during a single half session of Student Senate, count as grounds for the removal of that Student Senator from Student Senate.
  - 300 a. Should a Student Senator's standing committee assignment change during a given half session, his or hertheir attendance record shall follow him or herthem to his or hertheir new committee.
  - b. If a Student Senator accrues two (2) absences from regular meetings of Student Senate, or two (2) absences from the standing committee to which s/he isthey are assigned, 305 during a single half session of Student Senate, then the Chair of Student Senate must notify that Student Senator that if s/hetthey accrues another absence during that semester, s/hetthey will be removed from office.
  - 2. When a Student Senator has exceeded his or hertheir permitted absence allotment, the Chair of Student Senate is responsible for notifying that individual, via e-mail, of his 310 or hertheir removal from office. Upon notification, the relevant Student Senate seat is immediately declared vacant.
- G. Removal of Members-at-Large:
- 1. Four (4) absences from regular meetings of Student during a single half session of Student Senate count as grounds for the removal of that Member-at-Large from Student Senate.
  - 315 a. Should a Member-at-Large become a Student Senator during a given half session, his or hertheir attendance record shall follow him or herthem to his or hertheir new position. (seriously, its so clumsy with the his/her dichotomy anyways...)

- 320           b. If a Member-at-Large accrues three (3) absences from regular meetings of Student Senate during a single half session of Student Senate, then the Chair of Student Senate must notify that Member-at-Large that if s/hetthey accrues another absence during that semester, s/hetthey will be removed from office.
2. When a Member-at-Large has exceeded his or hertheir permitted absence allotment, the Chair of Student Senate is responsible for notifying that individual, via e-mail, of his or hertheir removal from office. The removal is immediate, upon notification.
- 325           3. A Member-at-Large may also be removed from office by way of a majority vote at a regular meeting of Student Senate.
- H. Impeachment of a Student Senator:
1. A request for the impeachment of a Student Senator may be made to the Student Senate Chair by way of either:
- 330           a. a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Student Senate;
- b. a petition – validated by the Student Senate Executive Committee – containing the printed names, signatures, and AndrewIDs of one-fourth (1/4) of the relevant Student Senator’s constituency.
- 335           2. Upon receiving a request for impeachment, the Chair of Student Senate must announce the impeachment request, along with the reasons for the impeachment request, no later than the first regular meeting of Student Senate that occurs at least one (1) week after receipt of the impeachment request.
3. Impeachment hearings shall take place at the first regular meeting following the announcement of the request for impeachment at which three-fourths (3/4) of the seated Student Senators are present.
- 340           4. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Student Senators present at the impeachment hearing shall be sufficient to remove the Student Senator from office.
5. If an impeachment request names the Chair of Student Senate, the preceding procedure shall be followed, but the Student Body President shall carry out the duties assigned to the Student Senate Chair in the process.
- 345           6. An impeached Student Senator is not eligible to hold any Student Government position for the remainder of the full session during which they are impeached, unless they are elected to that position by the student body.
- I. Resignation:
- 350           1. A Student Senator or Member-at-Large may resign from their position by submitting notice of their resignation, via e-mail, to the Chair of Student Senate. Upon notification, the relevant seat becomes vacant.
- a. Should the Chair of Student Senate wish to resign, s/hetthey must submit notice of his or hertheir resignation to all members of the Student Senate Executive Committee.
- 355           J. Vacant Student Senate Seats:
1. Should a Student Senate seat become vacant, the Chair of Student Senate shall announce this vacancy, along with the deadline for receipt of petitions to fill the seat, at the first regular Student Senate meeting after which the seat becomes vacant.
2. To become a candidate to fill a vacant seat, a member of the undergraduate student body must:
- 360           a. Be an Activities Fee paying member of the constituency represented by the vacant seat;
- b. Submit a valid petition by the announced petition deadline.
- (i) A valid petition shall contain the printed names, signatures, and Carnegie Mellon AndrewIDs of twenty-five (25) members of the relevant constituency.
- 365           (ii) The Student Senate Executive Committee is responsible for validating any petitions received by the petition deadline within five (5) business days of its submission. If at least two (2) members of the Student Senate Executive Committee agree



- that a petition is not valid, then it is considered invalid.
- 370 3. If at least one (1) valid petition is received by the announced deadline, then Student  
Senate shall hold an election for the relevant Student Senate seat at the first regular  
meeting of Student Senate following the validation of the petition(s).
- a. At the discretion of the Chair of Student Senate, candidates may be permitted to  
address Student Senate and respond to questions from the floor.
- 375 (i) If one (1) candidate for a position is permitted to address Student Senate then all  
candidates for that position must be permitted to address Student Senate.
- b. At the discretion of the Chair of Student Senate, Student Senators may be permitted  
to discuss the candidate(s) for each position in the absence of all candidates for that  
position.
- 380 (i) No minutes of this discussion shall be recorded.
- c. Voting:
- (i) A candidate in this election is not permitted to serve as a proxy while the election  
proceedings for the relevant vacant seat is taking place. As a result, a candidate  
cannot count toward quorum during this portion of a Student Senate meeting.
- 385 However, a candidate may take on the duties of a proxy at any other point during  
the meeting, provided they are otherwise eligible to serve as a proxy.
- (ii) Absentee ballots are not permitted.
- (iii) There are three voting options during an election: a vote in favor of a particular  
candidate, an abstention, and a vote of no confidence. A vote of no confidence is  
a vote against all candidates who are in the running for the relevant vacant seat.
- 390 (iv) The voting procedure for filling vacant seats associated with different constituencies  
shall be kept separate. However, if there are no more candidates in a particular  
constituency than there are vacancies, then the meeting Chair may opt for a  
slated vote. In this case, the three voting options are to vote in favor of the slate,  
against the slate, or to abstain.
- 395 d. The candidate receiving the majority of the available votes shall be the winner of the  
election.
- (i) Abstentions shall not count toward the majority.
- (ii) If no candidate receives a majority of the available votes, and a majority of the  
available votes are not votes of no confidence, then a run-off election shall be held.
- 400 The meeting Chair shall decide which candidates' names shall stand for the run-off  
election. By way of a majority vote, Student Senate may add another candidate's  
name to the run-off ballot. The winner of the run-off vote is the candidate who  
receives the majority of available votes.
- 405 (iii) This process shall continue until either a single candidate receives a majority of  
the available votes, or a majority of the available votes are votes of no confidence.
- (iv) In the event that there is a slated vote, the vote is concluded when a majority  
of the available votes are cast in favor of the slate. If a majority of the available  
votes are opposed to the slate, or if there is a tie, the meeting Chair must then  
proceed through the vote according to the regular, non-slated procedure.
- 410 4. If no valid petitions are received by the announced deadline, the Chair of Student Senate  
shall begin the process again by announcing a new deadline for petitions.

**Article V. Student Senate Fiscal Policy.**

**Article VI. Officers.**

415 **Article VII. Meetings.**

**Article VIII. The Executive Committee of Student Senate.**

**Article IX. Standing Committees.**

**Article X. Student Body Directives.**

**Article XI. Amendment.**

420 **Appendix: Amendments to the Student Senate Bylaws**