

# How to be a Student Government Senator: For Dummies

Congrats! You are now a member of the esteemed Student Government Association at Georgia College and State University. This will be your guide during your tenure here.

## What is SGA? What do we do?

- We represent and advocate for all students at all levels of the university
- We influence university policy to create positive change for all students

## ● The whos who:

### ○ **Executive Branch**

- President
  - Liaison between the students and the University Administration. Oversees the operations of SGA. Approves bills and resolutions.
- Vice President
  - Presides over senate meetings. Ensures proper procedures are taken for operations. Declares results of elections.
- Secretary
  - Takes meeting minutes and liaises with members and nonmembers of SGA. Reviews slated bills and resolutions.
- Treasurer
  - Documents all transactions and manages the budget. Oversees the Student Travel Fund.
- Attorney General
  - Leads judicial team
- Chief of Staff
  - Leads cabinet
- President Pro Tempore
  - Elected spokesperson for the senators

### ○ **Legislative Branch**

- 25 senators voted in by the student body or appointed by the Senate.
  - 5 Freshman, 5 Sophomores, 5 Juniors, 5 Seniors, and 5 at large.

### ○ **Judicial Branch**

- The Judicial Leadership Team shall consist of the Attorney General, Assistant Attorney General and Chief Justices with assistance from the advisors.

### ○ **Cabinet**

## Duties

- Attend Senate on Fridays at 2pm.
  - If unable to attend, inform the Secretary for your excused absence before senate. Email is preferred, with a few hour forewarning. [sga.secretary@gcsu.edu](mailto:sga.secretary@gcsu.edu)
  - If aware of absence, the senator is responsible for informing committee members of any necessary information for reports.
  - **Three unexcused absences will result in an evaluation and potential removal from office.**
- Committees.
  - Work with the president to submit your preferences for committees you'd like to serve on. Each tackle various aspects of SGA and issues on campus. You will be on one Standing Committee and one Ad Hoc Committee.
  - Within the committees there is the Chair (head of the committee, gives reports at Senate), the Vice Chair (assists chair, gives reports to senate in Chair's absence), and the Secretary (Takes notes on meetings and submits them to a form on GC Connect). These are elected within the committee at the beginning of their term.
  - Here are the committees and their general focuses (which can be shaped and directed at the will of the chair)
    - Standing (no not change from year to year):
      - Appropriations
        - deals with the bills referred to the Senate. They consider, review and recommend allocations to be approved for a vote of the full Senate.
      - Diversity and Inclusion
        - Committed to representing all students on campus and promoting an inclusive environment.
      - Senate Rules and Oversight
        - Oversees the inner workings of SGA, and assists in public relations and elections. Oversees the approval of RSO Constitutions.
      - Student Travel Fund
        - Provides limited financial support to students who are traveling to academic conferences or workshops.
      - University Student Affairs
        - Revolve around university business – dining facilities, academics, parking, and other student concerns.
    - Ad Hoc (Determined by the Senate at the beginning of the term)
      - In the past have typically been topics such as: Retention committee, Public Safety & Wellness committee, Student Emergency Fund committee, Sustainability & Infrastructure committee.

- Liaise with RSO's
  - The PPT will assign each senator a few RSO's to regularly reach out to. This is to make them aware of the services SGA offers them, and to answer any questions they may have.

## Dress code for Senate

As elected representatives of the student body, Senators should present themselves in an appropriate and dignified manner at all times; especially in public settings and at functions associated with the University.

Specific events require specific attire; Senators will be expected to dress appropriately for such events. Senators will be informed of the attire expected for each event.

### ❖ Casual/ PJ

- Occasionally (typically the last senates of the semester), the VP will direct the senate to be a casual or pajama senate.
- When that happens, senators can wear whatever they'd like.

### ❖ Business

- This is the typical dress code for Senate, unless specified otherwise.
- Think of outfits you'd wear to an interview— you have some leeway here, just as long as you look respectable.
- For ladies: Blouses, skirts, pantsuits, rompers, dresses.
- For gentlemen: Collared shirts, polos, khakis, pants, blazer, etc.
- No tennis shoes or flip flops or shorts.

### ❖ Formal

- This would be applicable for special Senates. For instance, the day where we attend the State of the University in February or at the SGA End of the Year Banquet.
- For ladies: Modest dresses (no spaghetti straps, at least knee length). Close-toed dress shoes for the ladies, heels preferred. Tasteful jewelry.
- For gentlemen: Button-down dress shirt, dark suit, tie. Dress shoes.

## RSO Information

- What is an RSO?
  - A Registered Student Organization (RSO) must complete an application for approval by Campus Life. The RSO must be approved by the SGA President Pro Tempore and the Senate Rules and Oversight Committee, as well as the SGA President.
  - RSO status will be granted only to those organizations whose purpose is clearly related to the goals and mission of the University.

- What are the types?
  - Institutional Organizations: Serve to promote the Georgia College mission and goals.
  - Traditional Organizations: Student groups with at least seven members who come together for a common cause. Any group of students that meet the minimum requirements and receive approval can form a traditional organization.
  - Honor and Professional Organizations: Based on an academic or career mission. Groups such as departmental honor societies and professional fraternities are examples of honor and professional organizations.
  - Sports Clubs: Designated by Intramurals and Outdoor Education Programs. These organizations are formed by the individuals motivated by a common interest and desire to participate in particular sports activities.
  - Greek Organizations: Must be a member of the Georgia College Interfraternity Council or National Panhellenic Council.

## Resolutions and Bills:

- The way senators make change on campus are through resolutions and bills
  - Bills
    - A bill is legislation that is a request for funding from the SGA by an RSO.
    - The process for passing a bill:
      - Submitted to the secretary for approval at least a full 24 hours in advance, and placed on the agenda → The header is read to the senate by the secretary → Passed to appropriations committee who may approve/ deny/ further investigate → If approved by appropriations, read in its entirety to the senate upon the next meeting → If approved by senate, passed along to Treasurer who sees it approved by the administration and the funds issued.
  - Resolutions
    - Any non- bill legislation is considered a resolution. They can be about anything the senator would like. They are essentially a 'call-to-action' for the administration about problem areas or successful initiatives on campus.
    - Senators must note that any passed resolution is discussed by the President of the SGA to the President of the University and is only a recommendation. No further action is guaranteed on behalf of the university.
    - The process for a resolution:
      - Submitted to the secretary for approval at least a full 24 hours in advance, and placed on the agenda → The resolution is read out to the senate → Questions regarding the resolution are presented → Debate/ discussion regarding the resolution → Vote is taken →

If majority approves, legislation is passed onto the president to approve and sign.

- **Constitutional amendments**

- Senators can propose a change to the constitution or bylaws. Any amendment must be passed twice (over at least two senates) by a two-third majority of the senate.

# How to Resolution

Must always write the header. Copy and paste! Ensure that the years are correct!

Georgia College & State University  
Student Government Association  
2023-2024 Session

Then add in: S.R.2324(years). \*insert the number\*, if not, the Secretary can go in and correct if you are unsure where you are in the order. Example: S.R.2324.15.

After that write your name (you authored it!). If anyone endorsed you, put that in the line below and say "Endored by:" You can add as many or as few as you want. Ensure you are using appropriate titles. Example:

Senator Cox

Endorsed By: Senator Bobcat, Senator Thunder

Below:

## A RESOLUTION

Then write the topic, in a formal manner. Something basic, that introduces what the meat of your resolution will be about. Example:

To Ensure that the Student Government Association Portrays Their Patriotism and Opposition to Communism by  
Displaying an American Flag.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE  
UNIVERSITY

"WHEREAS", clauses are the meat of your resolution. This is where you flesh out your reasonings. You can technically have as many or as few as you want, but we recommend at least two of them. Examples:

WHEREAS, The American Flag is important because we love the government.

WHEREAS, communism is bad, ugly and dumb.

WHEREAS, we love the two-party system.

WHEREAS, nothing screams freedom like the American flag.

WHEREAS, the colors of both political parties are red and blue.

WHEREAS, these colors don't run.

WHEREAS, \*Eagle screech\*, \*caw caw\*, etcetera.

Follow it by a neat conclusion:

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, that an American flag will be displayed in the corner of the Senate Chamber.

And now, you is done. Con-grat-U-lations.

## Actual example of a resolution:

Georgia College & State University

Student Government Association

2023-2024 Session

SR.2324.30

Senator Smith

Endorsed by PPT Hall, Senator McGarvy, Senator Kimpe, Senator Wright, Senator Harbin and Senator Trask

### A RESOLUTION

To Implement Financial Workshops For Students Of All Fields Of Study

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF  
GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

WHEREAS, students crave financial literacy for their future endeavors after graduation in order to be a functioning individual in society whom can support themselves;

WHEREAS, Georgia College & State University currently has many tools to help students be successful and achieve their long term goals, however the implication of a financial literacy lecture and workshop can ensure ultimate preparation to GCSU students under all areas of study;

WHEREAS, the school of Business and Technology at GCSU is considered to be prestigious and recorded high success rates in students in the past, resulting in Georgia College business students being financially literate due to their academics;

WHEREAS, students in all areas of study shall be granted the opportunity to attend these various workshops and lectures to help with current or future financial challenges;

WHEREAS, additionally, students within the College of Business and Technology shall be given the opportunity to teach the workshop themselves after interview procedures, in order to ensure additional success by providing criteria to list on resumes as experience and accolades;

WHEREAS, different committees within GCSU's Student Government Association shall assist the development and marketing of the Financial Foundations workshop, as well as receiving support from Senators during the infancy of development and production;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Student Government Association of Georgia College & State University advocates the development of the Financial Foundations workshop series in order to provide consistent tools all students need to be successful during and after their time at GCSU, as well as benefiting students from all angles to enrich the student body in a prestigious light.

# How to Bill

Must always write the header. Copy and paste! Ensure that the years are correct!

Georgia College & State University  
Student Government Association  
2023-2024 Session

Then add in: SB.2324 (year). \*insert the number\*, if not, the Secretary can go in and correct. Example: SB.2324.3

After that write your name (you authored it!). If anyone endorsed you, put that in the line below and say "Endored by:" Ensure you are using appropriate titles. Example:

Senator Cox

Endorsed By: Senator Bobcat, Senator Thunder

## A BILL

Then write the topic, in a formal manner. This should introduce who/ what the bill is for and include the amount wanting to be given. Example:

To allocate \$300 to Georgia College Miracle's Multiple Campus Events

## SECTION I

Section 1 is your "WHEREAS" clauses and can be about whatever you think you need to include to convince the senate that this bill is worthy. This can be a sentence about the purpose of your club, what the funds have/ will be used for, and the impact. Aim for 2-5 brief sentences here.. Example:

WHEREAS, Georgia College Miracle is a dedicated movement at Georgia College & State University committed to saving children's lives through year-round efforts and fundraising;

WHEREAS, the 365 days of hard work by the Miracle family contribute to the success of making miracles happen;

WHEREAS, financial support is crucial for hosting specific events, tabling, and other activities that contribute to the overall goals;

WHEREAS, these events are integral to the success of Georgia College Miracle and lead up to the culminating 12-hour ThunderThon celebration;

WHEREAS, ThunderThon is a testament to the dedication and success of every director, committee member, and participant involved in making miracles happen;

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association recognizes the vital role played by Georgia College Miracle in saving children's lives and supports their commitment to their cause;

## SECTION II

This section is a table to show the items, costs and totals. It can be set up however it best reflects the info you want to present. Just as long as you make sure it is simple and easy to read and that they accurately reflect any receipts or costs.

Items	Cost	Total
Tabling Items, Roses, Breakfast, Car Wash Supplies, Pizza, Decorations, etc.	\$300	\$300

## SECTION III

This is basically your 'NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED' clause. Just restate what you said in the header.

THEREFORE, the following allocation is made to Georgia College Miracle: \$300.



## Actual example of a bill:

Georgia College & State University

Student Government Association

2023-2024 Session

S.B.2324.19

Senator W. Wright

### A BILL

To allocate \$44.30 to GC Aquatics for meeting expenses.

### SECTION I

WHEREAS, Georgia College Aquatics Club seeks to provide a place for those who are interested in investing back into the campus environment, providing opportunities for community service in fields related to aquatics;

WHEREAS, this event marks the first meeting of the newly formed club, and aims to provide an opportunity to allow members to socialize and meet each other;

### SECTION II

	Unit Quantity	Price
Cheese Pizza	3	\$6.49
Pepperoni Pizza	3	\$6.49
Sprite	1	\$2.68
Coke	1	\$2.68
Total		\$44.30

### SECTION III

THEREFORE, the following allocation be made to the GC Aquatics Club: \$44.30.

# Roberts Rules for Order

## ROBERTS RULES CHEAT SHEET

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decides
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move that we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

The above listed motions and points are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Object to procedure or personal affront	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
Ask for vote by actual count to verify voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	Must be done before new motion	No	No	No	None unless someone objects
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question"	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table..."	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	Yes	Yes	Only if original motion was debatable	No	Majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

The motions, points and proposals listed above have no established order of preference; any of them may be introduced at any time except when meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed from the first chart (Motion to Adjourn, Recess or Point of Privilege).

## PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING A MAIN MOTION

NOTE: Nothing goes to discussion without a motion being on the floor.

- Obtaining and assigning the floor:
  - A member raises hand when no one else has the floor → The chair recognizes the member by name
- How the Motion is Brought Before the Assembly:
  - The member makes the motion: I move that (or "to") ... and resumes his seat.
  - Another member seconds the motion: I second the motion or I second it or second.
  - The chair states the motion: It is moved and seconded that ... Are you ready for the question?
- Consideration of the Motion
  1. Members can debate the motion.
  2. Before speaking in debate, members obtain the floor.
  3. The maker of the motion has first right to the floor if he claims it properly
  4. Debate must be confined to the merits of the motion.
  5. Debate can be closed only by order of the assembly (2/3 vote) or by the chair if no one seeks the floor for further debate.

- The chair puts the motion to a vote
  1. The chair asks: Are you ready for the question? If no one rises to claim the floor, the chair proceeds to take the vote.
  2. The chair says: The question is on the adoption of the motion that ... As many as are in favor, say 'Aye'. (Pause for response.) Those opposed, say 'Nay'. (Pause for response.) Those abstained please say 'Aye'.
- The chair announces the result of the vote.
  1. The ayes have it, the motion carries, and ... (indicating the effect of the vote) or
  2. The nays have it and the motion fails

## WHEN DEBATING YOUR MOTIONS

1. Listen to the other side
2. Focus on issues, not personalities
3. Avoid questioning motives
4. Be polite

## HOW TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WANT TO DO IN MEETINGS

- MAIN MOTION
  - You want to propose a new idea or action for the group.
    - After recognition, make a main motion.
    - Member: "Madame Chairman, I move that \_\_\_\_\_."
- AMENDING A MOTION
  - You want to change some of the wording that is being discussed.
    - After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by adding the following words \_\_\_\_\_."
    - After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words \_\_\_\_\_."
    - After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words, \_\_\_\_\_, and adding in their place the following words \_\_\_\_\_."
- REFER TO A COMMITTEE
  - You feel that an idea or proposal being discussed needs more study and investigation.
    - After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the question be referred to a committee made up of members Smith, Jones and Brown."
- POSTPONE DEFINITELY
  - You want the membership to have more time to consider the question under discussion and you want to postpone it to a definite time or day, and have it come up for further consideration.
    - After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move to postpone the question until \_\_\_\_\_."
- PREVIOUS QUESTION

- You think discussion has gone on for too long and you want to stop discussion and vote.
    - After recognition, "Madam President, I move the previous question."
- LIMIT DEBATE
  - You think discussion is getting long, but you want to give a reasonable length of time for consideration of the question.
    - After recognition, "Madam President, I move to limit discussion to two minutes per speaker."
- POSTPONE INDEFINITELY
  - You want to kill a motion that is being discussed.
    - After recognition, "Madam Moderator, I move to postpone the question indefinitely."
- POSTPONE INDEFINITELY
  - You are against a motion just proposed and want to learn who is for and who is against the motion.
    - After recognition, "Madame President, I move to postpone the motion indefinitely."
- RECESS
  - You want to take a break for a while.
    - After recognition, "Madame Moderator, I move to recess for ten minutes."
- ADJOURNMENT
  - You want the meeting to end.
    - After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move to adjourn."
- PERMISSION TO WITHDRAW A MOTION
  - You have made a motion and after discussion, are sorry you made it.
    - After recognition, "Madam President, I ask permission to withdraw my motion."
- SUSPENDING THE RULES
  - The agenda has been approved and as the meeting progressed, it became obvious that an item you are interested in will not come up before adjournment.
    - After recognition, "Madam Chairman, I move to suspend the rules and move item 5 to position 2."
- POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE
  - The noise outside the meeting has become so great that you are having trouble hearing.
    - Without recognition, "Point of personal privilege."
    - Chairman: "State your point." • Member: "There is too much noise, I can't hear."