

Aggravated at the state of politics in this country? You are distrustful of the chameleon politician who panders to the people while lining their own pockets and disgusted with the petty scandal-ridden politics that are making a mockery of our government, but you are feeling utterly incapable of effecting change. You must quell such feelings of uselessness for it is time to take on the mantle of civic duty, especially if you are young. There is no better way to start your journey as a conscientious citizen than participating in local politics where the machinery of government is simpler and you can make a greater and more noticeable impact on the people around you. In Stony Brook University, the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) is a microcosm of democratic government; there are three branches of the USG – judicial, legislative, and executive – like in our national government. There are elections being held for three USG senators, two College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS) senators and one Freshman Class senator, starting on Monday, October 15th at noon and ending on Friday, October 19th at noon. Voting is done through the Corq app, created by Campus Labs which is a recognized partner of Stony Brook University and also maintains SB Engaged, the website where all the official clubs and organizations on campus post events they are holding. It is important to note that only majors in the CEAS can vote for CEAS senators and only Freshmen can vote for Freshmen Class senator.



Despite the benefits discussed of being involved in the USG, you are still doubtful about how important it is to vote because you do not know what the USG, not to mention a senator, does. According to their website, the USG manages over \$3 million collected from the mandatory Student Activity Fee paid by full-time undergraduate students. Most of this money is distributed to officially recognized clubs and organizations on campus and to other activities and events such as Roth Regatta and Wolfieland Carnival. You are, in essence, paying taxes to the USG, so why would you not want to represent yourself by voting as the old slogan goes “No taxation without representation”?


About USG: The Undergraduate Student Government (USG) at Stony Brook University is a governing body that represents the interests and concerns of the undergraduate student body at Stony Brook University. USG’s most notable function is to acknowledge, fund and regulate

clubs and organizations. Additional agencies of the USG include: Elections Board, Audio/Visual Services, Events Management, Student Activities Board, and USG Media.

Undergraduate Student Government (USG)


ELECTIONS BOARD

The Elections Board is an independent agency that ensures all elections within the USG are operated properly and fairly, as according to established legislation, policy, and procedures.




LEGISLATIVE

- 22 senators (10 CAS Senators, 3 CEAS Senators, 1 Health Science Senator, 1 College of Business Senator, 1 At-Large Senator, 4 Class Senators, 1 RHA Senator, 1 CSA Senator)*
- promulgate legislation beneficial to, and in the best interest of, Stony Brook University's student population
- review the operations of the over 150 clubs and organizations acknowledged and funded by the USG
- advocate on behalf of the undergraduate student body



EXECUTIVE

- 7 members in the Executive Council (President, Executive VP, Treasurer, Treasurer, VP of Communications and Public Relations, VP of Student Life and Programming, VP of Clubs and Organizations, VP of Academic Affairs)
- promote and sponsor a range of social, cultural, educational, and service programs in the interest of the undergraduate student body
- ensure that the Student Activity Fee is properly allocated for USG programs
- oversee the SAB† which is responsible for deciding, planning, and implementing large scale campus events (e.g. Roth Regatta)
- provide a direct link between undergraduate student body and the Stony Brook University Administration



JUDICIAL

- 5 justices (1 Chief Justice, 4 Associate Justices) on the Supreme Court
- has jurisdiction over all interpretations of the Constitution, all legal issues arising from impeachment of USG members, and all matters between the Executive Council and the Senate
- has the power to review any legislation brought before it, and the Supreme Court's decision on any legislation, policy, or procedure is final.

*College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), College of Engineering & Applied Sciences (CEAS), Residence Hall Association (RHA), Commuter Student Association (CSA)
†Student Activities Board (SAB)
Source: <http://stonybrookusg.org>
Abraham Spitalny, 2018

Sources:

<https://s.hdnux.com/photos/33/04/60/7097393/5/920x920.jpg> ("I voted" sticker)

<http://stonybrookusg.org>