

# Standing Rules of the Assembly



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# Standing Rules of the Assembly

## RULE I

### GENERAL PROVISIONS

**A. Title.** These Standing Rules of the Assembly, enacted pursuant to Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of the Student Body of the Ann Arbor Campus of the University of Michigan, describe the rules, procedures, and internal structures of the Assembly.

**B. Definitions.** As referenced in this Compiled Code, the following terms shall have meaning as defined in this section.

1. "Constitution" shall mean the Constitution of the Student Body of the Ann Arbor Campus of the University of Michigan.

2. "Michigan Student Assembly" or "MSA" shall mean the central student government of the University of Michigan established by the Constitution.

3. "University" shall mean the University of Michigan.

4. "Campus" shall mean the Ann Arbor campus of the University.

5. "Student organization" shall mean a student organization explicitly recognized by MSA.

6. "Assembly" shall mean the Student Assembly defined in Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution.

7. "Central Student Judiciary" or "CSJ" shall mean the student judicial body of the University established by the Constitution.

8. "Compiled Code" or "Code" shall mean the Compiled Code of the Michigan Student Assembly.

9. "Standing Rules" or "Rules" shall mean this document.

10. "Student" shall mean a person enrolled at the University, or a person enrolled in the University during the previous full term who is eligible to be enrolled in the subsequent full term.

11. "Assembly member" shall mean a student duly elected or appointed to represent a degree-granting unit on the Assembly.

**C. Parliamentary Authority.** The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the Assembly in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution, the Compiled Code, or the Standing Rules of the Michigan Student Assembly.

**D. Quorum.** Pursuant to Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution, a simple majority of the members duly elected or appointed to serve in the Assembly shall constitute a quorum to do business.

**E. Parliamentary Rights.** Parliamentary rights on the Assembly shall be granted as follows:

1. Assembly members shall be granted full parliamentary rights on the Assembly.

2. All other officers elected or confirmed by the students or the Assembly shall be granted all parliamentary rights on the Assembly except for the right to vote. Members of CSJ, the Election Director and Election Board, appointees to University committees, and regular MSA committee, commission, or select committee members shall not be considered officers of MSA.

3. Individuals not accounted for above shall not be considered members of MSA and shall not be granted parliamentary rights on the Assembly, though they shall be permitted to speak during the time reserved for community concerns or when yielded to by an MSA member.

## RULE II OFFICERS

**A. Officers.** The officers of the Assembly shall consist of a Speaker and a Vice Speaker.

1. **Speaker.** Pursuant to Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution, the Speaker shall chair general sessions of the Assembly and serve on the Executive Committee. The Speaker and other Assembly officers shall be responsible for accepting items for the Assembly's Agenda and docket. The Speaker shall sign all legislation passed by the Assembly.

2. **Vice Speaker.** The Vice Speaker shall assist the Speaker in fulfilling his/her duties and shall perform the duties of the Speaker in his/her absence. Upon removal or incapacitation of the Speaker, the Vice Speaker shall assume the duties of the Speaker.

**B. Elections.** The officers of the Assembly shall be elected at the first regular Assembly meeting of the Fall and Winter semesters. Pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution, the Chief Justice of the Central Student Judiciary shall preside over the Assembly at these meetings until a Speaker is elected. The officers of the Assembly shall be elected by secret ballot.

## RULE III ORDER AND PRIORITY OF BUSINESS

**A. Agenda.** The agenda for Assembly meetings shall have the following form:

I. Call to Order

II. Opening Roll Call

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Previous Minutes

V. Guest Speakers

VI. Community Concerns

VII. Announcements

VIII. Executive Officers' Reports

IX. Committee Reports

X. Representative Reports

68 XI. Election and Recall of Members

69 XII. Old Business

70 XIII. New Business

71 XIV. Matters Arising

72 XV. Closing Roll Call

73 XVI. Adjourn

74 **B. Community Concerns.** Any person may ask to address the Assembly during Community Con-  
75 cerns, but at the discretion of the chair, preference shall be given to currently enrolled students,  
76 alumni of the University, and current faculty and staff of the University.

77 **C. Representative Reports.** Representative Reports shall exist for the purpose of providing a fo-  
78 rum for MSA Representatives to report on their MSA projects and activities. Each representative  
79 shall be required to give a report at least every three weeks. The reporting schedule will be deter-  
80 mined by the Vice Speaker. The Vice Speaker must give representatives at least 72 hours advance  
81 notice. Reports must be submitted in writing or be presented orally at an Assembly meeting. The Vice  
82 Speaker shall publish Reports on the MSA website and within the Assembly Journal within one week  
83 of receipt.

84 **D. Amendment of the Agenda.** Business may be placed on the agenda by being presented to the  
85 Speaker, or by a majority vote of the Assembly at any Assembly meeting. Such a motion shall not be  
86 in order if made after the approval of the agenda by the Assembly.

87 **E. Time Limits.**

88 1. **Guest Speakers.** Guest speakers to the Assembly shall have no longer than thirty minutes to  
89 speak.

90 2. **Community Concerns.** Community concerns is limited to three minutes per speaker and to a  
91 total of thirty minutes. Community concerns time may not be reduced. Community concerns time is  
92 exhausted when all persons who desired to address the Assembly have done so even if thirty minutes  
93 has not passed.

94 3. **Executive Officer Reports.** Executive officer reports shall be no longer than ten minutes for  
95 each report.

96 4. **Committee Reports.** Committee reports will be given in the order determined by the chair.  
97 Reports from committees shall be no longer than five minutes for each report.

98 5. **Representative Reports.** Oral representative reports shall be no longer than five minutes for  
99 each report.

100 6. **Matters Arising.** Matters Arising, a time for anyone with parliamentary rights to speak about  
101 issues that have come up during the Assembly meeting, may not last for more than thirty minutes  
102 total unless time is extended, and it can only be extended once and no person shall speak for more  
103 than two minutes at once.

104       **7. Modification of Time Limits.** Any time limit may be extended by a motion, second, and  
105 majority vote of the Assembly. Any time limit, with the exception of community concerns time, may  
106 be reduced by a motion, second, and two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly.

## 107                               RULE IV 108                               CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

109       **A. Reading of Resolutions.** All resolutions for the Assembly shall be read twice. At the first  
110 reading, the sponsors of the resolution shall offer a description of the resolution. At the second reading,  
111 the resolution shall be debated and voted upon.

112       **B. New and Old Business.** Old Business shall consist of all business postponed from previous  
113 meetings and all resolutions being read a second time by the Assembly. New Business shall consist of  
114 all business being read a first time by the Assembly.

115       **C. Expediting Business.** New business may be moved to old business upon a motion, second, and  
116 two-thirds majority vote to suspend the rules for the purpose of the motion, followed by a motion,  
117 second, and two-thirds majority vote to move the item from old to new business.

118       **1. Business That Cannot Be Expedited.** Amendments to the Constitution or Compiled Code,  
119 the MSA budget and amendments to the budget, and proposals to place questions on the ballot in  
120 an election may not be moved from old to new business, and must be read twice by the Assembly.  
121 Amendments to the MSA Constitution and proposals to place questions on the ballot in an election  
122 must return to first-reads should they be amended during second reads.

123       **D. Objection with Amendment.** Assembly members may object to motions while simultaneously  
124 offering an amendment to the motion. If the amendment to the motion is defeated, the objection shall  
125 be considered automatically withdrawn unless renewed by the objecting member.

126       **E. Friendly Amendments.** The sponsors of a motion may accept amendments as "friendly" before  
127 or during debate on a motion, and such amendments shall be adopted without debate or vote by the  
128 Assembly. When more than one member has sponsored a motion, every sponsor of the motion must  
129 accept an amendment for it to be considered "friendly".

130       **F. Compliance with the Constitution and Code.** All business proposed to the Assembly shall  
131 be ruled out of order by the Speaker if not in compliance with the Constitution or Compiled Code.

### 132       **G. Additional Requirements for MSA Resolutions.**

133       **1. Sponsor.** MSA resolutions shall be out of order if it is not sponsored by at least one member  
134 of MSA. Students at large, committees, commissions, select committees, student governments, and  
135 student organizations may all be sponsors, but are not members of MSA.

136       **2. Action.** MSA resolutions shall be deemed out of order by the Speaker if it is purely symbolic or  
137 does not specify an action to be taken by MSA.

138       **3. Truthful Statements.** An MSA resolution shall be out of order if it contains untrue or unveri-  
139 fiable statements of fact.

**4. Financial Specificity.** MSA resolutions authorizing expenditure or transfer of MSA money for events may do so only from MSA Committee Discretionary or MSA Sponsored Activities accounts. Resolutions shall be out of order if it does not specify the MSA account(s) to be debited, the recipient(s) of the funds, the purpose(s) of the expenditure(s), and the exact amount(s) to be spent. Resolutions authorizing expenditure or transfer of MSA money from MSA Sponsored Activities must be in accordance with the Code.

5. **Informative Requirement.** An MSA resolution shall be out of order if it is so vague that it does not provide enough information to the Assembly to make an informed decision.

6. **Line Numbers.** All MSA resolutions must have line numbers (at least every five lines). If lines are not numbered, the resolution shall be ruled out of order by the Speaker.

**H. Obligation to Execute MSA Legislation.** No committee, commission, select committee, or member of MSA may take any action in its or her capacity as an MSA affiliate which contradicts any article of MSA legislation.

## **I. Duration of MSA Legislation.**

1. MSA legislation excluding funding requests shall remain effective until repealed.

2. Funding requests shall remain effective until the last day of classes of the Winter Semester of the academic year they were passed.

## RULE V

### DEBATE

### A. Time Limits.

1. **Total Debate.** Debate on each item of business on the agenda shall be no longer than thirty minutes, and shall include time used to debate amendments to business.

2. **Speakers.** During a debate on an item of business, each speaker shall have two minutes.

### B. Yielding Time During Debate

1. Any Assembly member may yield her time to any individual. The time yielded may not exceed the time which was allocated to the Assembly member. Individuals without parliamentary rights may not yield time to other individuals without parliamentary rights.

2. Any Assembly member may yield time to any other Assembly member for the purpose of asking a question germane to the debate. The Assembly member may chose whom, when, and for how long they wish to yield to another member. No member of the Assembly may yield more time than they were allocated. Any member may reclaim the time they have yielded at any time. Questions shall be considered points of information, and they shall not count as debate. If the member who has been yielded time for a question fails to ask a question germane to the item in a timely manner, the Speaker shall issue a warning, and then revert the yielded time back to the original member.

**C. Quorum Call.** A call for quorum shall be in order once during the time limit for debate on any motion. Members not present during a quorum call shall not be able to vote until the next motion is debated.



**D. Motions to Close Debate.**

1. A motion to close debate on a main motion shall not be in order until at least two members have spoken in favor of the motion and two members have spoken against the motion.

2. A motion to close debate on an amendment to a main motion shall not be in order until at least one member has spoken in favor of the motion, and one member has spoken against the motion.

3. No more members may speak for or against any motion than have spoken for the opposite view.

4. If there are no objections to a motion to call the question, the Assembly shall proceed immediately to a vote. If any member objects to a motion to call the question, the Assembly shall vote only upon a motion, second, and two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly.

**RULE VI  
VOTING**

**A. Roll Call Voting.** In the absence of unanimous consent, individual votes shall be recorded at all times for MSA legislation. The votes of individual members shall be published in the Assembly Register. This shall only apply to votes on the actual legislation itself and shall not apply to votes taken on any other motion made while said legislation is under consideration. A roll call vote may be taken on any motion at the request of any member if that request is supported by at least one-fifth of a quorum.

**B. Chair Voting.** The Chair shall vote only to break a tie vote by the Assembly, but may abstain from voting in that instance. The Chair shall not vote, even in the event of a tie, when the vote in question is by secret ballot.

**C. Proxy Voting Forbidden.** Assembly members may not proxy votes to other Assembly members.

**RULE VII  
COMMITTEES**

**A. Composition.** Members of Assembly committees must be currently-enrolled students at the Ann Arbor campus of the University of Michigan.

**B. Leadership.** Each committee shall have a single chair and a single vice-chair, both of whom must be voting Assembly representatives.

**C. Scope.** No MSA committee shall take or consider action falling outside of its responsibilities as described herein, unless authorized by the Assembly.

**D. Standing Committees.** The Assembly shall have the following standing committees.

1. The Finance Committee shall make recommendations for the semesterly budget and for reallocation of funds among accounts.

2. The Rules Committee shall

- 210 a. make recommendations for changes as needed to the Constitution and Compiled Code.
- 211 b. record the attendance of MSA members and seek their removal when necessary
- 212 c. seek appointments to maintain a full Assembly;
- 213 3. The Resolutions Committee shall consider all resolutions that do not fall within the responsi-
- 214 bilities of one of the other committees.

#### 215 **E. Select Committees.**

- 216 1. **Formation.** The Assembly may, upon two reads and a majority vote, establish one or more se-
- 217 lect committees. A motion to form a select committee shall require a second and a written description
- 218 of the responsibilities of the select committee.
- 219 2. **Duration.** Select committees shall expire upon
- 220 3. A date specified in the written description of the committee approved by the Assembly;
- 221 4. The end of the Winter Term; or
- 222 5. Two reads and a majority vote by the Assembly.
- 223 6. **Leadership and Composition.** The leadership and composition of a select committee shall be
- 224 analogous to that of an MSA commission.

#### 225 **F. Investigative Committees.**

- 226 1. **Formation.** The Assembly may, upon two reads and a majority vote, establish one or more
- 227 investigative committees to investigate the conduct of any MSA member(s), committee(s), or commis-
- 228 sion(s). The procedure for the formation of an investigative committee shall be analogous to that of a
- 229 select committee.
- 230 2. **Duration.** The duration of an investigative committee shall be analogous to that of a select
- 231 committee.
- 232 3. **Leadership and Composition.**
- 233 a. An investigative committee shall consist of four members, all of whom must be voting
- 234 representatives on the Assembly.
- 235 b. The Chief Justice of CSJ shall chair the investigative committee. If the conduct of the Chief
- 236 Justice is under investigation, the chair of the committee shall be chosen by a majority vote of the
- 237 Assembly.
- 238 c. The four members of the investigative committee will be chosen by lot from the voting
- 239 representatives of the Assembly, excluding those whose conduct is under investigation and those who
- 240 serve as members of any committee(s) and/or commission(s) whose conduct is under investigation.
- 241 d. Any member of any investigative committee who misses two meetings of the committee
- 242 shall be discharged from the committee, and a replacement shall be selected by the Assembly.
- 243 4. **Investigative Committee Procedure.**
- 244 a. The quorum of an investigative committee meeting shall be three members. No meeting of
- 245 the committee shall be convened without the chair.

b. The chair of an investigative committee shall vote only to break a tie among the members of the committee.

c. Investigative committee meetings shall be open to the public.

d. MSA member(s), committee(s), or commission(s) under investigation shall have the right to attend meetings of the investigative committee, and shall have the right to submit responses to any findings of the committee.

e. At all stages of an investigation, an investigative committee shall presume that the alleged misconduct did not occur. Any misconduct must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

f. Upon a finding of misconduct by an investigative committee, the committee may recommend, but its recommendations shall not exceed, the censure or removal of any offending MSA member or officer from his or her chair position, officer position, or MSA membership.

g. The findings and recommendations of an investigative committee shall be submitted in writing to the Assembly. The findings of the committee shall be accepted automatically by the Assembly, and may be rejected by the Assembly upon a motion to reject the findings, a second to the motion, and a two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly.

h. The findings and recommendations of an investigative committee may be appealed to the Central Student Judiciary.

### **G. Committee Chair Elections.**

1. **Order of Elections.** The Assembly shall elect the chairs of its committees each term, electing the committee chairs before electing the committee vice-chairs. The chair elections shall proceed in order of the appearance of the committees in the Rules.

#### **2. Nominations.**

a. Candidates for chair and vice-chair positions shall be nominated by a motion and a second.

b. A candidate for a chair or vice-chair position may nominate herself.

c. Nominations will not be valid unless accepted by the candidate.

d. Nominations and acceptances shall be accepted by the chair if made in person. Nominations and acceptances shall be accepted by the chair via email, telephone, or letter if verified by an executive officer.

e. The floor shall be closed to nominations when no nominations remain. The floor may be re-opened to nominations by a motion, second, and majority vote of the Assembly.

#### **3. Election Procedure.**

a. Each candidate for a chair or vice-chair position shall have two minutes to address the Assembly. Candidates shall speak in the order in which they were nominated.

#### **b. Questions for candidates.**

i. After all candidates have had the opportunity to address the Assembly, Assembly members shall have an opportunity to ask questions of the candidates.

282           ii. Questions may be addressed to only one candidate, but every candidate shall have the  
283 opportunity to answer every question.

284           iii. The Assembly shall ask no more than six questions of every candidate for any one chair  
285 or vice-chair position.

286           iv. Candidates shall have thirty seconds each to answer questions from the Assembly.

287           v. Candidates shall answer questions in the reverse order in which they were nominated.  
288 The order will then iterate respectively.

289           **c. Voting by the Assembly.**

290           i. All elections for chair and vice-chair positions will be by secret ballot.

291           ii. If only one candidate has been nominated for any position, she shall be automatically  
292 elected unless any member of the Assembly objects. Upon such an objection, the election shall be by  
293 secret ballot.

294           iii. A candidate shall be elected if she receives a majority of the votes cast.

295           iv. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the candidate receiving the lowest  
296 number of votes shall be removed from the election and another vote shall be taken.

297           v. The votes shall be counted by two tellers nominated and approved by a majority of the  
298 Assembly.

299           **H. Committee Rights and Responsibilities.**

300           **1. Meetings.**

301           a. Committees shall meet at least once per week during the fall and winter terms.

302           b. The chair of each committee shall establish the time and location of each meeting, providing  
303 at least one day's notice of the time and location to the Assembly.

304           c. Committees are not required to meet on weeks where the University observes one or more  
305 holidays.

306           d. Committee chairs or their designees shall be required to attend meetings of the Assembly  
307 officers.

308           **2. Reports.**

309           a. Each committee chair shall present a budget to the Treasurer in accordance with the Code.

310           b. Each committee shall submit a weekly report of its activities to the Assembly.

311           c. Reports may be delivered in person or in writing.

312           d. A report shall include all information pertinent to the operation of the committee or com-  
313 mission, and must include an attendance report from the committee or commission meeting.

314           **3. Attendance.**

315           a. The chair of each committee shall be responsible for recording the attendance of committee  
316 meetings.

b. Committee attendance reports shall be submitted to the Vice Chair of the Rules Committee within one week of the committee meeting.

#### **I. Recall of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs**

1. The chair or vice-chair of a committee shall be automatically recalled by the Assembly upon

a. failure to hold a meeting for two consecutive weeks;

b. failure to submit attendance reports for the committee for two consecutive weeks;

c. a motion, second, and two-thirds vote of the Assembly.

#### **2. Procedure for the Removal of a Chair or Vice-Chair.**

a. Any chair or vice-chair who has been recalled by the Assembly shall have the opportunity to address the Assembly for two minutes.

b. A recalled chair or vice-chair may be reinstated upon a motion, second, and majority vote of the Assembly.

c. A recalled chair or vice-chair may not be reinstated after a new chair or vice-chair has been elected to fill the recalled position.

## **RULE VIII MEMBER OBLIGATIONS**

**A. Responsibilities of Assembly Members.** Assembly members shall be responsible for each of the following tasks:

1. **MSA Meetings.** Members shall be responsible for attending weekly MSA meetings. Members shall be responsible for checking their MSA mailbox regularly so that they are knowledgeable about the issues which will be discussed at meetings.

2. **Committees.** Each representative must be a member of and participate in at least one of the following committees.

a. MSA Internal Committees.

b. MSA Commissions.

c. MSA Select Committees.

d. **Other Committees.** The requirement to serve on an MSA committee may be waived by the Speaker if the Assembly serves on a University Committee, such as Student Legal Services Board, a Regental Committee, or a SACUA Committee, and the Speaker determines that membership on said committee takes a substantial amount of time.

3. **Constituent Contact.** Members must contact constituents on a regular basis. Constituent contact is meant to include things such as a mailing to constituents, an open discussion with constituents, liaison with one's school or college government, or any similar communication. An informal discussion with friends is not a form of constituent contact.

351 4. **MSA Office.** Each member shall be in the office at least one hour each week at times other  
352 than when the member is attending an MSA meeting.

353 **B. Penalties.** A member will be removed from office when s/he accumulates twelve absences. An  
354 absence will be excused by the President if and only if: the member is seriously ill, if the member  
355 had an exam at the same time as the member obligation, or if there was a death in the member's  
356 immediate family within one week of the member obligation. Exceptions to this may be granted only  
357 by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly. Each of the following shall constitute one absence:

358 1. **Attendance Roll Calls.** For each roll call which the member misses at the beginning or the  
359 end of an Assembly meeting.

360 2. **Committee Meetings.** For each committee meeting which the member misses. Each member  
361 shall have one committee for which s/he is responsible.

362 **C. Rules for Removal.**

363 1. Upon the accumulation of twelve absences by any member, the Rules & Elections Committee  
364 shall be responsible for notifying the delinquent member of her/his removal, and shall inform the  
365 delinquent member of the procedures for the excuse of absences. The notification shall not be valid  
366 unless in writing and setting forth the date and type of each absence.

367 2. A delinquent member may have her/his absence(s) excused within two weeks of the notification  
368 of removal. During this time, the delinquent member shall retain all rights of membership in MSA. If,  
369 after the expiration of this two-week period, the member is still delinquent, she/he shall be effectively  
370 removed. No Assembly confirmation shall be necessary for such a removal to be effective.

371 **D. Rules for the Excuse of Absences.**

372 1. An absence due to the member being seriously ill, the member having an exam at the same  
373 time as the member obligation, or a death in the member's immediate family within one week of the  
374 member obligation shall be excused by the Speaker.

375 2. Any absence of any member may be excused by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly upon a motion  
376 made during the Announcements portion of an Assembly meeting.

377 3. No absence of a member shall be excused after the member has been effectively removed from  
378 MSA.

379 **RULE IX**  
380 **ETHICS**

381 **A. Conflicts of Interest.**

382 1. **Conflicts of Interest with the University.**

383 a. No member of the Assembly may accept a paid position gained by virtue of her membership  
384 in MSA.

385 b. No member of the Assembly may work directly for the president, any Regent, any dean,  
386 any vice president, or any associate vice president of the University.

387       **2. Misuse of Assembly Resources.**

388           a. No member or employee of the Assembly may ask an employee of the Assembly to do work  
389 that is substantially unrelated to Assembly work.

390           b. No member or employee of the Assembly may use the financial or clerical services of the  
391 Assembly for her personal use or for the use of a student group of which that person is a member.

392       **3. Conflicts of Interest with Student Organizations.**

393           a. A member of the Assembly shall have a conflict of interest with a student organization, be it  
394 recognized or unrecognized by the Assembly, if she, or an immediate family member of hers, receives  
395 money from the organization or will receive money from the organization as a direct consequence of  
396 her membership in the Assembly. No member of the Assembly shall have a conflict of interest with a  
397 student organization if she is an unpaid member of the organization or has been reimbursed by the  
398 organization for her own expenses.

399           b. No member of the Assembly possessing a conflict of interest with a student organization  
400 may participate in debate or vote on any matter regarding the organization with which there exists a  
401 conflict of interest.

402       **4. Obligation of Disclosure.** Members of the Assembly must publicly disclose any existing or  
403 potential conflicts of interest with the University and student organizations. If the conflict of interest  
404 arises during membership in the Assembly, the member remains obligated to disclose the conflict.

405       **5. Investigation, Censure, and Removal.** Any member of the Assembly who fails to adhere  
406 to the rules and regulations regarding the existence and mitigation of conflicts of interest shall be  
407 subject to an investigation by the Assembly, the outcome of which may be censure or removal from the  
408 Assembly.