

Student Activities Council

U N I V E R S I T Y o f P E N N S Y L V A N I A

Last amended October 31, 2016

Preamble

We, the members of the Student Activities Council of the University of Pennsylvania, affirming our responsibility to the student body, and realizing our common challenges unique within the campus community, hereby establish this Constitution for the purpose of recognizing, supervising, and funding undergraduate activities and to provide for greater communication and cooperation among and between the student groups and administration of the University.

Article I: Membership

1. The Student Activities Council (SAC) is composed of one representative from each recognized organization serving as its primary contact. SAC recommends that a treasurer serve as their organization's primary contact.

Article II: Recognition of Activities

4. Recognition entitles a group to membership on the Council, eligibility for funding by the Council, and all other advantages granted to SAC-recognized student groups.
5. In order for a group to be eligible for recognition, it must meet three criteria. First, the group's primary mission must meet a documented need present within the undergraduate community not already met by an existing SAC-recognized group. Second, the group's primary mission and requisite funding needs must meet the criteria of a SAC category, as enumerated and defined in SAC's Bylaws. Third, the officers of the group and the majority of its members must all be full-time registered undergraduate students of the University of Pennsylvania, with the exception of part-time undergraduates in the final semester of their studies.
6. Any group that desires recognition by the Council shall submit a written request and supporting documentation to the Executive Board during the annual recognition process in the fall semester. The Executive Board will interview eligible groups and recommend approval by a majority vote of those members of the Executive Board present. Minutes of recognition interviews shall be made publicly available in the Office of Student Affairs.
7. At the last meeting of the fall semester, the Executive Board shall present the applications of all eligible new groups. The Executive Board shall present its recommendations for approval as a single motion requiring two-thirds vote of the general body. Those eligible groups not receiving approval may appeal the

recommendation at this meeting, as a separate motion requiring two-thirds vote of the general body.

8. Any group changing its statement of purpose or membership criteria must report the change to the Executive Board within a week of implementation. The Executive Board will then consider if the group's recognition status requires reevaluation. If reevaluation is necessary, the Executive Board will schedule the group for an interview at the next meeting of the Executive Board.
9. Each group is required to register with the Office of Student Affairs by the end of September to maintain its status as a recognized activity. This includes submitting a list of all officers.

Article III: De-recognition of Activities

10. Any member of a SAC-recognized group may challenge the recognition of any other group at any time. Notice of intent to challenge the recognition of the activity must be transmitted to the Executive Board at least a week prior to the scheduled meeting of the Council at which the member will present the challenge. In this event, a two-thirds vote of the Council will remove the group's recognition.
11. If a SAC-recognized group registers two absences at meetings of the Council in an academic year, the group will lose recognition. In order to be re-recognized, the group must follow procedures for recognition. Should the group be re-recognized, it will sustain a 10% reduction of its SAC funding for that academic year.

Article IV: Composition and Powers of the Executive Board

12. The Executive Board will be comprised of nine full, voting members. Eight of those members shall be student representatives of Council organizations. One of these members shall be the representative from the Undergraduate Assembly (UA), ordinarily the Treasurer of the UA.
13. No member of the Executive Board may concurrently serve as a group's representative to the Council. No member of the Executive Board may vote at meetings of the Council, with the exception of the Chair of the Executive Board, who will vote only in the event of a tie.
14. The Executive Board shall be responsible for the management of the Student Activities Council. It shall meet once weekly with constituent groups and other interested parties of the University, or at a frequency pursuant to the discretion of the Chair. The Executive Board shall have the power to make recommendations to the Council regarding group recognition, group funding requests, and the allocation of the annual budget for student groups to its members. The Executive Board shall develop and publish its Guidelines and Policies for funding and recognition

considerations, which together with relevant University policies make up the Bylaws of the Council.

15. The Executive Board shall have the power to call meetings of the general body, to prepare and publish meeting agendas and minutes, and to mediate conflicts between groups recognized by the Student Activities Council.
- ~~16. The Executive Board shall have the power to establish standing committees to execute SAC's work. The Executive Board shall also be tasked with the responsibility of improving the operations of the Council when such opportunities become apparent.~~
17. The Chair of the Executive Board shall preside over all meetings of both the Executive Board and of the Council's general body.

Article V: Elections to the Executive Board

18. In order to be eligible for election to the Executive Board, a candidate must meet three criteria. At the time of the election, the candidate must be an officer in a SAC-recognized group or have previously served on the Executive Board. The candidate must also have been an undergraduate at Penn for two full semesters prior to election. The candidate must not be scheduled to graduate or study abroad for the 12-month period beginning from the date of the election.
19. Elections for the Executive Board shall be held in both October and February, with the dates of the elections clearly marked on the schedule of meetings of the Council. Four seats shall be made available at each election,.
20. The Chair, Vice-Chair, Communications Director shall be internally elected by the Executive Board immediately following each election. The Technology Director may be appointed or elected in the same manner, pursuant to the new Chair's discretion.
21. Each member of the Executive Board shall serve a term of one year.
22. Nominations for election to the Executive Board will be accepted from the general body. Elections should be conducted by the Nomination and Elections Committee.
23. In the event of a tie in the point count, tied candidates will be ranked within the point count based on the number of ballots in which each candidate was ranked first. If this fails to break a tie, the tie shall be brought to the vote of the full Council.
- ~~24. The election of the Chair of the Executive Board shall be by plurality. In the event of a tie for the top number of votes, the candidates with the highest number of votes shall enter into a runoff election to be held at the same meeting of the Council~~

25. Should any vacancy occur, such as by voluntary resignation, the position will be filled by election at the next meeting of the Council by the same procedures used to elect the Executive Board.
26. Any representative of a SAC-recognized activity may move to recall a member of the Executive Board. Notice of intent to challenge the recognition of the activity must be transmitted to the Executive Board at least a week prior to the scheduled meeting of the Council at which the member will present the challenge. In this event, a two-thirds vote of the Council's general body will remove the member from the Executive Board.

Article VI: Meetings

27. A meeting of the SAC general body may be called by the Executive Board, or by petition of 25% of the registered representatives of SAC-recognized groups. In the event of a petition, the Executive Board must schedule a meeting within five school days of the petition's receipt. All meetings of the general body shall be scheduled and announced at least 48 hours before they start.
28. The basic purpose of general-body meetings shall be the presentation of relevant information, announcements, funding decisions, and motions by members of the Executive Board before the general body.
29. A quorum at a meeting of the Council shall consist of 50% of the registered representatives of SAC-recognized activities present. All individual representatives present at a meeting of the Council make up its general body for the duration of that meeting.
30. A voting member shall be defined as a registered representative of a SAC-recognized group who is present at the meeting and not abstaining from the vote. An individual voting member may only have one vote. Thus, a motion's passage or failure is tabulated based on the number of voting members in the general body, which must in every case be above quorum.
31. Only voting members and members of the Executive Board have the privilege of bringing motions onto the floor.
32. Votes with a significant majority may be tabulated at sight, either by the Chair or the collective effort of the Executive Board. Any vote too close for sight-tabulation will be conducted by roll call of representatives in the general body. All roll-call votes shall be tabulated by group and retained permanently by the Executive Board.
33. ~~A group representative arriving more than 15 minutes but less than 30 minutes after the announced start time of a meeting of the Council shall be considered half-absent. A group representative arriving more than 30 minutes after the announced start time of a meeting of the Council shall be considered absent.~~

34. Except as contained herein or at the discretion of the Chair, all meetings shall be run in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Article VII: Allocation of Funds and Group Finances

35. Every spring semester, the Executive Board shall receive requests annual budgets from each SAC-recognized group. Members of the Executive Board shall meet with each SAC-recognized group to review the group's budget request. Following these meetings, the Executive Board will draft a budget that allocates not less than 45% of its total funds for the annual budgets of its constituent groups.
36. The Executive Board must, as part of their budget, allocate at least 15% of its funds for the contingency fund, the purpose of which will be to fund the activities of groups not included in their annual budgets. Half of the contingency fund must be held until the following January.
37. In the last meeting of the Council of the academic year, the Executive Board will present all annual budget recommendations as a single motion. The general body will vote upon the recommendations of the Executive Board.
38. The Council shall receive written appeals from groups dissatisfied with the Executive Board's recommendation, after which the Executive Board may elect to increase its funding recommendation for the group's annual budget. Groups still dissatisfied may appeal the Executive Board's recommendation as an amendment to the main motion, requiring a majority vote of the general body. Groups will present their appeals in the alphabetical order of their group name, with priority given to those amendments concerning individual groups over those concerning the totality of the Executive Board's recommendations.
39. Groups that fail to complete an annual budget or attend the budget hearing to which the group and the Executive Board mutually agree lose all right of appeal to the Executive Board's budget recommendation.
40. A SAC-recognized group that desires to draw from the contingency fund to support a new, newly certain, or unforeseen event shall transmit a written request and supporting documentation to the Executive Board at least 24 hours prior to the meeting of the Executive Board at which the group wishes to be interviewed for the funding of the event. The Executive Board will issue a recommendation to the Council based on this interview, to which SAC-recognized groups shall have the right to appeal.
41. The Executive Board shall not fund events retroactively.
42. SAC-recognized groups must maintain all funds and income within the University accounting system. Deviations from this system must be approved by the Executive

Board. All SAC-recognized groups must also maintain financial records subject to audit by the Executive Board.

Article VIII: Powers of SAC

43. The Executive Board is empowered to mediate intragroup disputes as well as to review and investigate any organization that it deems to be in violation of its own rules and regulations, those of the University, or the SAC Bylaws and Constitution. The Executive Board shall also have the power to recommend removal of recognition or removal of funds for groups it has found to have violated the Bylaws or Constitution of the Student Activities Council. A binding decision will be made by two-thirds vote of the general body.
44. The results of failure to comply with the decision may be, but are not limited to, loss of funds, loss of recognition by SAC, or further investigation by University administration.
45. All powers, rights, and privileges not otherwise delegated to individual groups or the Executive Board are reserved for the Council as a whole.

Article IX: Amendments to the Constitution

46. An amendment to the Constitution may be proposed by the Executive Board or by a petition of 15% of the representatives of the Council to the Executive Board.
47. Prior notice of intent to consider an amendment must be given to the general body at the regularly scheduled meeting immediately preceding the regularly scheduled meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon, within the same academic year.
48. An amendment shall be ratified by two-thirds vote of the general body.