

Policy Handbook

Student Senate



California University of
Pennsylvania

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Introduction

Congratulations!

You have been identified as a student-leader on California University of PA's campus. You are probably thinking "Now what?" This policy booklet should be able to answer the basic questions regarding your position and what is generally expected of students who are viewed as leaders. Specific questions should be referred to your advisor or the senate executive board.

What are the expectations?

The California University of PA community expects our student leaders to always set a good example, both on and off campus. This means that even though you may not be involved with your assigned duties - you are still viewed as a leader, and a representative of the University.

Be aware that others are looking to you - so always behave in an appropriate manner. This means obeying all laws and the student code of conduct, of course, but it goes further than that. You are expected to be a person of integrity, and you are expected to treat everyone with respect.

Senators must follow all policies and guidelines as listed throughout the policy handbook. Violations of the Senate Policy

Book subjects Senators to possible impeachment from the Student Senate.

Student Senate Dictionary

Here in Student Senate we have our own lingo to explain or discuss things that you may not understand at first! Below are some of the most common terms we use and what they mean:

Minutes – Think of them as notes! Minutes are a written documentation that explain the highlights, events, and main points of discussion in a meeting

Quorum – Quorum is the minimum number of people that must be in attendance in order for us to vote in a senate meeting. Quorum for us is half of the current roster plus one, so if we have 30 senators we need at least 16 present in a meeting to constitute as quorum

Sabbatical - A sabbatical is what a senator will take if he or she is unable to attend the meetings all semester. Sabbaticals excuse a senator from meetings only! Attendance at mandatory events and the completion of 10 senator hours is still expected. You can apply for one of these using the Sabbatical form on OrgSync and will be approved or denied through the executive board and a senate vote.

Motion and Second - When the Senate must vote on something, we make a "motion." The "second" then opens the motion up for discussion. Please note, that if you second a motion, you do not necessarily have to agree with what the motion is, you are just agreeing to discuss it. Once discussion is complete, we call it to a vote. If you

have a personal relation to the voting item such as you are in the club we are discussing, you must abstain. An abstention does not mean a yes or a no, it simply means you cannot vote. Still confused? Don't worry, there is a more detailed explanation in the section "Senate Guidelines and Policies"

Senator Hours - All senators must complete 10 senator hours each semester to remain an active senator. You can earn these hours by doing various tasks such as selling t-shirts, volunteering at events, completing work in the office, etc. If you have the most hours you could win Senator of the Month! For full details on Senator Hours see the section "Senate Guidelines and Policies"

Allocation- Allocation is the money that clubs receive as funding. Allocation money comes from the student activity fee that all on campus full-time students pay. It is Student Cabinet's responsibility to distribute allocation to clubs each academic year.

Student Government Structure

The Student Government Association is broken up into three branches, each of which holds different responsibilities. The three branches are the House of Representatives, Student Cabinet, and Student Senate. In accordance with the Student Government constitution the purpose and membership for each branch is as follows:

Student Senate

You are officially a member of the Student Senate! The Senate meets every Monday at 4:15 in Natali 206-207.

Purpose

The Student Senate serves to advise the president of the university and other members of the administration of student needs, preferences, and opinions. Senators also are responsible for reviewing and approving potential new clubs and organizations and special allocation requests.

Membership

The Senate may have up to 48 voting members. The two non-voting members are the President of the Senate and the graduate student. The graduate student is permitted to vote if they pay the SAI fee. The president may vote in the case of a tie.

The executive board for the Senate is comprised of five members. The President presides over all senate meetings, the Vice President who acts as the President in his/her absence, the Financial Secretary who serves as the Chair of the Student Cabinet and is responsible for the organizations budget and finance, the Corresponding Secretary, who serves as the liaison between the Senate and House of Representatives, and the Recording Secretary who is responsible for taking minutes of all Senate meetings.

For detailed descriptions as to the purpose, membership, and roles of the Student Senate please see the Student Government constitution.

House of Representatives

House of Representatives meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month within the academic term.

Purpose

The purpose of the House of Representatives is to serve as a communication medium between university recognized clubs and organizations and their executive boards. Furthermore, the House of Representatives also serve to make recommendations to the

Senate regarding policies involving student interests or club and organization financial policies.

Membership

The House of Representatives shall be composed of the following: a member of the elected or appointed executive board or officer from each allocated club or organization as listed on the SAI Club and Organization form. If one of the officers fails to attend the meeting, or if the SAI Club and Organization Form is incorrect, the club will be subject to a penalty.

The House of Representatives has three executive board positions: the Speaker of the House, the presiding officer for all meetings, the Lieutenant Speaker of the House, the presiding officer for meetings in which the Speaker of the House is absent, and the Recording Secretary, who is responsible for taking minutes of all House of Representatives meetings.

For detailed descriptions as to the purpose, membership, and roles of the House of Representatives, please see the Student Government constitution.

Student Cabinet

Student Cabinet meetings are held every Wednesday at 4:20 pm.

Purpose

The purpose of Student Cabinet is to review and supervise university club and organizations in order to prepare and submit a final budget for the Student Association, Inc. to the Student Senate. This budget outlines the amount of money each university club and organization will receive for the next year also known as their “allocation.” This is often referred to as the budget process. The Senate and House of Representatives must approve the budget submitted by Cabinet before it is confirmed.

Student Cabinet is also responsible for approving potential new clubs and organizations as well as approving special allocation for clubs and organizations. Special allocation is an awarded sum of money to a club or organization in the case a special occasion should arise for a club and organization that does not have the funds itself.

Membership

Student Cabinet has a total of 19 members. Five of those members are the Student Senate executive board. Three of the Student Cabinet members are the House of Representatives executive board. One member is the President of the Student Association Inc, Board of Directors. Eight of the Student Cabinet members are

elected senators and two of the Student Cabinet members are elected members of the House of Representatives. This is a total of 19 members.

The Student Cabinet executive board is comprised of the Chair, who presides over cabinet meetings, the Vice Chair, who presides over cabinet meetings in the absence of the chair, and the Secretary, who is responsible for keeping minutes of all cabinet meetings.

For detailed descriptions as to the purpose, membership, and roles of the Student Cabinet please see the Student Government constitution.

Senate Guidelines & Policies

As a Student Senator, there are some requirements that every senator must meet. Any breach of these requirements puts the senator at risk for impeachment and removal from office.

Policy #1: Attendance

A. Each senator is expected to attend all Student Senate meetings on time (before roll call). Each senator shall be given three (3) excused absences and two (2) unexcused absences per semester. After the second unexcused absence is accrued, the senator shall be referred to Student Cabinet for impeachment proceedings.

1. *Requesting An Excused Absence:* Senators who are unable to attend a meeting shall contact the Recording Secretary prior to the meeting via email no later than one (1) hour prior to the start of the meeting. The Recording Secretary shall reply to the senator with an approval or denial of the excused absence request. Excused absences shall include but are not limited to work conflicts, class conflicts, and vacations.

2. *Requesting An Excused Late Arrival Due To A Repeated Class Conflict:* Senators who are unable to arrive at a meeting prior to roll call due to a class conflict shall contact the Recording Secretary before the third meeting of the semester. The Recording Secretary shall reply to the Senator with an approval or denial of

the excused late arrival request. The request, if approved, shall be in effect for the entire semester of the request. The Recording Secretary, at his or her sole discretion with advisor approval, may approve additional late arrivals outside of class conflicts.

Policy #2: Senator Hours

A. Senators are required to log via OrgSync at least 10 Senator hours per semester. Senator hours show record that a senator is fulfilling his/her obligations as a senator outside of meetings.

1. *Eligible Senator Hours:* Events and activities that promote or assist the California University of Pennsylvania and the California community will be considered a senator hour. The executive board will notify the Senate of any opportunities that constitute a senator hour. Senators that have completed said action or activity are responsible for logging the activity and length of time spent on the activity or event on OrgSync where the Corresponding Secretary will approve or deny the senator hour.
2. *How to Log Senator Hours in OrgSync:* For a tutorial on HOW to log hours onto OrgSync watch this video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SV_f3ZYWWgE
3. Senators that do not to participate in committees, activities, volunteer opportunities, or fail to complete required senator

hours within the course of a semester, will be subject to a five week probationary period at the beginning of the following semester. During probation, senators are required to complete any uncompleted hours from the previous semester, as well as those required for the current semester. If hours are not completed during probation, the senator will face impeachment.

Policy #3: Committees

A. All Senators must be a member of a standing student senate committee and will be assigned one when they join Student Senate.

The current standing Senate committees are:

1. *Social Committee*: This committee shall plan group activities for members of Student Senate, including but not limited to trips, Vulcan Theater movie nights, and activities during Senate meetings.

2. *Fundraising Committee*: This committee will facilitate fundraisers in order to contribute to scholarships on campus and for Student Senate spending.

3. *Membership and Outreach Committee*: This committee will reach out to the campus community to fill open seats in the Senate, including seats for designated special interest groups. Also this

committee will work to get more students from different areas of the University to join Student Government.

4. Rules and Internal Affairs Committee: This committee will review any proposed changes to the Student Government Association Constitution, student senate policy book, and other matters of internal operations as directed by the Student Senate Executive Board and/or the Senate floor.

5. Food Service Committee: This committee is responsible for continuously reviewing all matters relating to university food and drink provided, making appropriate recommendations to management, as well as addressing any student concerns regarding food.

B. Additional committees that are optional for senators who are interested are:

1. Toys 4 Tots Committee: Who assist in the planning and execution of the Toys 4 Tots event. Toys 4 Tots is the Christmas service project that occurs during the fall semester and is chaired by the Financial Secretary. Duties include securing monetary and gift donations, purchasing presents, and travelling to the Stuff a Bus event in Pittsburgh where all collected toys are put onto a bus to be taken to children in need.

2. Big Event Committee: Assist in the planning and execution of the Big Event. The Big Event is the community service project that occurs every spring semester. The committee is headed by the Vice President. Duties include reaching out to residents and students to register them for event, purchasing the supplies necessary for the community service, and supervising service teams.

C. Each committee will meet at least once every two weeks to work towards fulfilling committee requirements. Committee members are required to attend those meetings as a part of their membership.

1. Committee Meeting Senator Hours: Each committee meeting will count as one half (.5) of a senator hour

D. Each committee will have a chairperson designated by the Senate Vice President and voted on by the 2/3 senate body. The chairperson will be responsible for managing their committee, ensuring their committee is fulfilling its standards, and holding meetings for their committee at least once every two weeks.

1. Removal of a committee chair: Committee chairs may be removed from their chair position for reasons such as neglect of office, incompetence, misdemeanor, or mismanagement of funds. Chairs found liable for such violations are eligible for

impeachment from office through a recommendation by the Vice President and a 2/3 vote from the Senate body.

Policy #4: Senator Seats

A. In addition to holding membership in a senate committee, each Senator shall also be responsible for holding a Senate Seat.

1. Duties: Each senator shall be responsible for keeping in contact with the constituents of their seat as well as bringing any concerns of the constituents to the senate so it may be addressed.

2. Seat Assignments: The executive board will establish seats by the second meeting of each school year and distribute new seat assignments for new senators as they join.

Policy #5: Senate Attire

A. Every other student senate meeting shall be a formal meeting requiring appropriate formal dress.

B. The first meeting of the semester will be the first meeting that requires formal meeting attire.

1. Formal meeting attire: Formal meeting attire is business casual unless uniforms are provided. Senators may use discretion when deciding what is acceptable to wear.

Policy #6: Impeachment Proceedings

A. In accordance with the Student Government Constitution, Article 19 Section 6, Senators are eligible for impeachment if they do not abide by the rules outlined for them in the Senate Policy Book.

B. Article 19 of the Student Government Constitution also outlines the impeachment process for senators. If a senator is eligible for impeachment the following must occur for the senator to be properly impeached:

1. *Officer removal*: shall be accomplished by a two thirds (2/3) vote of Cabinet, serving as a trial board, and by a two thirds (2/3) vote of Senate. Student Senate's vote must be held at the meeting immediately following Student Cabinet's vote.

2. *Senator removal*: shall be accomplished by a simple majority vote of Student Cabinet, serving as a trial board, and by a 2/3 majority vote of Senate at the meeting immediately following Cabinet's vote. Senators removed by impeachment may not submit a senator petition for fifteen (15) weeks.

Robert's Rules of Order

What is it?

Robert's Rules of Order is a type of parliamentary procedure that we use to guide our meetings efficiently and fairly so we may hear all student concerns and perspectives and address them in an effectual time frame. The Robert's Rules of Order provides an outline for our senate meetings so that they are constructive and democratic.

What do I need to know?

Robert's Rules of Order is a very large book full of many intricacies and methods, many even take courses to understand Roberts Rules in it's entirety! Here is what you need to know have a solid understanding of Robert's Rules of Order and fully participate in our senate meetings.

1. *Agenda:* Our Senate meeting agenda's are outlined according to Robert's Rules of Order guidelines. Typical agendas are as follows:
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - i. Quorum must be met to conduct official senate business
 - c. Approval of Minutes
 - i. The minutes from the last meeting must be approved by a 2/3 senate vote
 - d. Officer reports

- e. Committee reports
- f. Unfinished business
 - i. Anything left unfinished from previous meetings
- g. New business
 - i. Any new topics of discussion that need brought up
 - ii. Where most voting should occur
- h. Announcements
- i. Adjournment

2. *Motions:* A motion is used to propose or introduce items for consideration that may affect the entirety of the organization. Typical motions involve the approval of minutes, situations dealing with money, or any matter in which a member feels the need to express themselves.

- a. *How to make a motion:*
 - i. Wait until the last speaker has finished
 - ii. Make your motion “I move that we.....” or “I would like to entertain a motion to...”
 - iii. Wait for someone to second your motion
 - 1. To second a motion, say “SECOND!”
 - iv. The motion will then be restated
 - v. Expand on your motion and discussion
 - 1. Explain the reasoning for your motion
 - 2. Others may contribute to the conversation at this time

- b. *How to vote on a motion:* Once a motion has been moved and seconded, the President will call the motion to a vote. There are several ways in which we vote on things in senate, most common are:
- i. By Voice -- The Chairman asks those in favor to say, "aye", those opposed to say "no". Any member may move for an exact count.
 - ii. By Roll Call -- Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
 - iii. By General Consent -- When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman says, "if there is no objection ..." The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
 - iv. By Ballot -- Members write their vote on a slip of paper, this method is used when secrecy is desired.

Words of Wisdom

You are now prepared to fully participate as a Student Senator for California University of Pennsylvania! We know you will do a tremendous job, make incredible friends, create lifelong memories, and grow as a leader! Looking for more tips and advice? Here are some words of wisdom from some successful student senators, past and present!

“What is the difference between a boss and a leader? The leader leads, and the boss drives.”

- *Brendan Garay '16, Former Student Government President*

“You never know where your path is going to lead, don't be afraid of the unknowns ahead. The unknowns can lead you to find yourself.”

- *Justin DiPerna '16, Former Student Government Vice President*

“The easy vote may not always be the best vote.”

- *Sarah Youngdahl '16, Former Senator*

Appendix

Examples of Motions:

Purpose:	You Say:	Interrupt?	2nd?	Debate?	Amend?	Vote?
Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Take break	I move to recess for...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table....	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Close debate	I move the previous question ...	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Kill main motion	I move the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Bring business before assemble (a main motion)	I move that (or to) ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Varies	Varies	No	Majority
Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	No	No	No	2/3
Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	No	No	Yes	Majority
Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote	Yes	No	No	No	None
Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
Request for information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No	None
Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Cancel previous action	I move to rescind	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

Senator Seats

Class Year	College of Liberal Arts
Freshman	Eberly College of Science and Technology
Sophomore	
Junior	College of Education and Human Services
Senior	Graduate Student
Areas of Interest	Fraternity
Residence Hall B	Sorority
Guesman Hall	Athletics
Residence Hall E	Club Sports
Johnson Hall	Multi-Cultural Affairs
Smith Hall	Media Suite
Carter Hall	International Affairs
Vulcan Village	Ex-Officio Member
Commuter/Off-Campus	Honors
At-Large	
Military Service Member	