SS2021-B7 – Student Senate Committees By-Law Amendment

WHEREAS, Student Senate Committees help the Senate fulfill the mission of promoting the interests and opinions of the Student Body.

WHEREAS, There is no clear separation between standing Student Senate Committees and Ad Hoc Committees.

WHEREAS, Committee reform is required to accurately and specifically define what the roles and responsibilities are of Senators and Senate Officers.

LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the following section be struck from the UNT SGA Bylaws:

Article I: Rules of the Senate

Section 3: Student Senate Committees

A. Within each session, the Student Senate will determine a list of Senate committees that shall endeavor to fulfill the mission of the Student Senate.
   a. The Student Senate shall be empowered to create ad hoc committees to consider specific issues and/or pieces of legislation. Ad hoc committees may be created by a simple majority (50% + 1) vote by the Student Senate.
      i. Ad hoc committees may exist to serve the purpose they were created for until the committee members vote by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote to dissolve the committee. ii. Ad hoc committees will otherwise follow the same rules and procedures as normal Student Senate committees.

B. After determining which committees will be established, the Student Senate shall vote to approve or deny the formation of each committee by a simple majority (50% + 1) vote.

C. Following the approval of committees, the Student Senate shall choose and elect
   a. a minimum of three (3) senators (so long as it is an odd number of committee members) through a simple majority (50% + 1) vote to serve on each committee until the end of each session. Senators may serve on more than one (1) committee, but senators are not required to serve on any.

D. Should any Student Senate committee lose enough members to drop below the required number of committee members, the Student Senate shall elect replacement Senators by a simple majority (50% + 1) vote during the following Student Senate meeting.

E. Each Student Senate committee shall elect a member within the committee to serve as chairperson for the duration of the session or until the chairperson resigns, in which case a new chairperson will be selected and voted upon by the committee.
F. Should any Student Senate committee member not fulfill their duties as a member of their committee, the committee chairperson may call for that member to be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Student Senate committee (excluding the vote of the person being voted on).

G. Each committee shall have a committee secretary charged to take committee meeting minutes. The chairperson of each committee shall either designate a committee member as secretary or act as the secretary. Student Senate committees are to keep record of all business, in the form of minutes, to be reported to the Speaker of the Senate, as well as the Senate Secretary:
   a. Meeting minutes for each committee will be approved by a majority (50% + 1) vote of the committee before being sent to the Speaker of the Senate and Senate Secretary.
   b. Once approved by the committee and the Speaker of the Senate, meeting minutes for each committee meeting will be available by request to the public.

H. Student Senate committees must meet as often as is necessary to effectively conduct business, and the chairperson will have the authority to call committee meetings provided that notice is given at least five (5) business days in advance.

I. If the chairperson is unable to attend a committee meeting they shall be responsible for appointing another member of the committee as a temporary chairperson before the meeting. The chairperson is also in charge of recording and reporting attendance to the Senate Secretary within two (2) business days after each Committee Meeting.

J. The majority (50%+1) of any committee’s membership constitutes a quorum, which is needed to take any voting action as a committee.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following changes be made to the UNT SGA Bylaws, Article I, Section 3:

Article I: Rules of the Senate
Section 3: Student Senate Committees

A. Senators shall be required to sit on at least one standing committee of the Student Senate. Senators are not required to sit on Ad-Hoc committees.
   a. There shall be no limit on the number of committees a Senator may join.
   b. No Senator shall serve as the Chair of more than one Standing committee at a time.

B. All committees shall adhere to the Senate Code of Conduct.

C. Legislation may be referred to a committee for further review by a simple majority (50%+1) vote of the Senate.

D. All committee meetings shall have typed minutes that shall be made available to the Secretary of the Senate and the Speaker of the Senate for dissemination to the Student Body within five (5) business days after approval.
   a. Committee minutes must be approved by a simple majority (50%+1) of the committee members in the subsequent committee meeting, before transmittal to the Speaker of the Senate and the Secretary of the Senate.
   b. Attendance at committee meetings shall be reported with the minutes.
E. Committees shall regularly meet on days and times mutually agreed upon by an absolute majority (50%+1) of the total membership of each committee. This can be determined outside of the official business of a committee, but such a decision must be verifiable.

F. Quorum for conducting business in regular meetings of all committees shall be no less than 50% + 1 of the total membership of the committee.

G. Committees may not conduct business with less than three (3) total members.
   a. If an Ad-Hoc committee has less than three (3) total members, the Speaker will provide notice that the Ad-Hoc committee is under membership requirements and at risk of being dissolved.
      i. This notice will be provided at least two (2) business days before any action is taken.
      ii. At the next Senate meeting which allows appropriate time for notice, the Speaker will solicit for members for the committee, who may be added to committee’s membership through the normal process. If, after the adjournment of this meeting, the Ad-Hoc committee in question still has less than three (3) total members, the Ad-Hoc committee is dissolved.
   b. If a Standing committee has less than three (3) total members, the Senate must, during its next meeting, appoint more members to the committee in the normal process, or these bylaws must be amended to dissolve the committee.

H. Committee members may be removed for any legitimate reason from any committee by an absolute two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the total committee members, excluding the member in question.
   a. The removal of a committee member may be taken to the Supreme Court for an appeal.
   b. If the removal of a member results in a lack of quorum to conduct business, the meeting in which the removal occurred must conclude until quorum can be met again.

I. Each committee shall be led by a Chair elected by an absolute majority (50% + 1) of the committee’s total membership, who will serve as the presiding officer of the committee.
   a. Each committee will elect a Vice Chair by an absolute majority (50%+1), who will also serve as the Secretary, and who shall be responsible for taking the minutes of each meeting.
   b. If the Chair is unable to attend a committee meeting, then the Vice Chair shall be the temporary presiding officer of the meeting. The temporary presiding officer shall appoint a temporary Secretary to record the minutes of the meeting.
   c. If the Chair becomes vacant for any reason, the Vice Chair shall become the new Chair of the committee.
      i. If the Vice Chair is ineligible to chair this committee because they chair another committee, they may vacate the Chair of the other committee and become eligible. Notice of vacation should be sent to the Speaker Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the members of the committee in which the Chair was vacated.
      ii. If the Vice Chair is ineligible to become the Chair, they should immediately hold an election for the Chair.
      iii. The new Chair shall immediately hold another election for the Vice Chair, if the office is empty.
d. The Chair of each committee shall send the approved minutes and attendance of the meeting to the Secretary of the Senate, who shall send the compiled committee minutes and attendance to the Speaker of the Senate to be published on the SGA Website.

J. The Speaker Pro-Tempore shall be responsible for working with the Chair of each committee to ensure that committee needs are met.

K. Standing Committees may be removed or added by amending this passage.
   a. Standing committees will not expire beyond this requirement.
   b. As stated in the Constitution, the Vice President may enumerate standing committees by enumerating them here.

L. The Senate shall select, of their own number, members to serve on Standing Committees using the list-nomination method.
   a. The process below will be known as “the list-nomination method.”
      1. The Speaker of the Senate will open nominations for a particular committee.
      2. A Senator, after having obtained the floor, may nominate up to three (3) Senators for membership in the committee.
         i. Such nominations will be entered upon a nomination list for said committee, of which a Senator may see an updated version at any point in the nomination process by raising a point of information.
         ii. A Senator may withdraw a nomination for themselves at any time during the nomination process. They should obtain the floor to do so. A Senator should not be nominated for a committee against their will.
      3. After any Senators who wish to nominate committee members have done so, the updated committee member nomination list should be put to a vote.
         iii. If the nomination list is approved with a simple majority (50%+1) vote, the committee’s membership consists of those on the nomination list.
         iv. If the nomination list isn’t approved, the Speaker of the Senate shall seek Senate approval for each nominee, going down the nomination list so as to put each individual nominee to a vote. The Senate will approve a nominee with an simple majority (50%+1) vote.

M. The Senate may amend the membership list of a Standing committee to add a member by a simple majority (50%+1) vote.

Section 4: Ad Hoc Committees

A. Ad-Hoc committees may be established to fulfill a specific objective that is not best addressed by a standing committee.

B. Ad-Hoc committees shall be created by a simple majority (50%+1) vote of the Senate.
   a. Any move to create an Ad-Hoc committee must include a list of members of the committee, or provide means to choose them, such as the list-nomination method described in this Article.
   b. An Ad-Hoc committee shall have a total membership consisting of no less than three (3) Senators after the adjournment of the meeting at which it was created.
   c. Members of an Ad-Hoc committee shall be chosen immediately upon the committee’s creation.
i. The Senate may, by a simple majority (50%+1) action, provide an exception to this rule so that a Senator may join and serve on an Ad-Hoc committee after its creation.

C. Ad-Hoc committees shall expire at the end of the Senate session in which the committee was created.
   a. Ad-Hoc committees may be dissolved by a simple majority (50%+1) of the Senate if the purpose of the committee has been fulfilled or if the committee is no longer needed.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following changes be made to the UNT SGA Bylaws, Article VI, Section 1, Subsection A:

A) The Budget Finance Committee will prepare a budget proposal at the close of every fall semester that the Chief of Staff will present to the Student Service Fees Committee to request funds for the SGA.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following changes be made to the UNT SGA Bylaws, Article X, Section 1, Subsection D:

D) The Student Senate must approve any such support or use of the SGA name or logo that exceeds $1000. The Fiscal Finance Committee may vote to approve co-sponsorships referred to them that are less than $1000 by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, as long as quorum is reached, and there be an approval form attached. All decisions must be signed and approved by the SGA President upon final submission.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the numbering for the bylaws be amended as necessary.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, that this bill will take effect August 1st, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Senator Andy McDowall  
College of Engineering

Senator-Elect Rachel Lee  
College of Information

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In Witness thereof, I hereby certify the Student Senate of the University of North Texas Student Government Association has approved this document and is referred to the office of the President.
President of the Student Government Association

Vice President of Student Affairs