Constitution and Bylaws of the University of Rhode Island Student Senate, Inc.

Article I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the “University of Rhode Island Student Senate, Inc.” hereafter referred to as the “Senate”.

Article II. PURPOSE, POWER, AND SCOPE

Section A. Purpose

We, the undergraduate students of the University of Rhode Island, in order to provide an official and representative student government, to investigate student problems and take appropriate action, to provide the official voice through which student opinion may be expressed, to encourage the development of responsible student participation in the overall policy and decision making process of the university community, to foster an awareness of the students’ role in the academic community, to enhance the quality and scope of education at the University, to participate in University and Faculty committees, and to provide means for responsible and effective participation in the organization of student affairs, do ordain and establish this constitution and bylaws for the Student Senate of the University of Rhode Island.

Section B. Republican Form of Government

The Senate shall be the representative student government of the University of Rhode Island, deriving its power and legitimacy from the consent of the governed. The University of Rhode Island Student Senate shall always, without exception, maintain its corporation status with the Rhode Island Secretary of State for the explicit purpose of protecting the executive members and senators of the URI Student Senate from any and all questions of liability, and also to ensure that the URI Student Senate remains a separate and distinct entity from the University of Rhode Island and all underlying affiliates.

Section C. Student Leadership

As the representative voice of the undergraduate student body of the University of Rhode Island, the Senate shall be obligated to discuss any matters brought before the senate by a member of the URI community that affect students directly or indirectly as students or as citizens. When it is deemed necessary to fulfill that obligation, the Student Senate shall pass resolutions upon them in the name of the student body, circulate petitions, distribute leaflets, and take other action respecting such matters.

Section D. Power

The Senate shall have power to establish, recognize, and promote educational, social, and
cultural activities for the enhancement of student life. The Senate shall, upon request, have the power to grant status as a recognized organization and to administer and expend the Student Activities Tax. Acts of the Senate shall take precedence over those of any other student organization, and acceptance of this provision shall be a necessary condition for obtaining recognized status.

The Senate shall have power to ensure effective student participation in the affairs and administration of the University of Rhode Island, and shall have all power necessary and proper to ensure appropriate undergraduate student representation in all university affairs.

Section E. Supremacy

The student senate bylaws shall serve as the main governing document of the senate and all student senate recognized organization, compact members, and affiliation. All other documents produced by the senate shall fall under the jurisdiction of the bylaws.

Article III. MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Composition

In addition to its officers, the Senate shall be composed of forty-five (45) popularly-elected voting representatives, distributed as follows:

The undergraduate degree-granting colleges of the University of Rhode Island, enumerated as the colleges of Arts & Sciences, Business, Educational and Professional Studies, Engineering, Environmental and Life Sciences, Health Sciences, Pharmacy, and Nursing, as well as University College, shall each be represented by one (1) representative elected by and from the student population of the corresponding college, and shall be referred to as College Representatives for the purposes of enumerated duties, and as Senators for all other purposes. Non-matriculating students paying the Student Activities Tax shall be considered to be a member of the University College constituency for all purposes.

Twenty (20) seats shall be distributed proportionally according to population between the Commuter Resident Group and Campus Resident Group, to be elected by and from the student population of each group, and members elected shall be referred to as Housing Representatives for the purposes of enumerated duties, and as Senators for all other purposes. The Campus Resident Group shall be defined as those students who live, in any capacity, on the URI Kingston campus, including but not limited to residence halls, on-campus apartments, Greek houses, and special academic program housing. All other students are defined as being members of the Commuter Residence Group.

Five (5) seats shall be reserved to be elected in the annual Fall election by and from students of Freshman standing. Members elected shall be referred to as Senators for all purposes.

Eleven (11) seats shall be elected by and from students at-large in the general undergraduate
student population. Members elected shall be referred to as Senators for all purposes. Any full-time or part-time undergraduate student who pays the Student Activities Tax shall be considered a constituent of the Student Body at-large for all purposes.

Section B. Rights, Privileges and Obligations

Each person who is an officer or representative in the Senate, excluding the President, Vice-President, and Executive Officers appointed by the President of the Senate, shall for the purposes of this section be termed a ‘Senator.’ Senators shall have the right and the obligation to be present for the duration of all the general meetings of the Senate, to serve as a member of at least one (1) standing committee by attending and participating for the duration of all its general meetings, and to post and maintain at least one (1) office hour per week unless a higher minimum is indicated under the section regarding specific duties of that particular member.

Senators shall have the right to engage in commentary, debate, make and second motions, and vote, in the general body as well as appointed committee, in conformance with the general form and structure of the rules of order the Senate has adopted (see Article XI) as adjudicated by the moderator. The person occupying the moderator shall, regardless of other position or contrary language, not enjoy the ability to engage in commentary, debate, make and second motions, nor vote.

Senators shall not be restrained nor fear retribution from expressing themselves according to the dictates of their conscience, in speech or print, so long as their utterances are in accord with state and federal law; any legislation which would seek to remove privileges from a member in response to such an utterance is void. This section shall not be construed so as to grant the President’s exclusive power to represent the duly established positions of the Senate to any other member without the President’s prior expressed consent.

Each member who is termed a College Representative shall, in addition to the right, privileges, and obligations enumerated above for Senators, be required and empowered to act as the formal liaison to the college to which they belong, second in priority only to the President of the Senate, and shall be charged with informing the general Senate regarding issues and concerns particular to the constituents of their college, and shall additionally work directly with the Dean of the corresponding college and his/her subordinates in pursuit of the fulfillment of that duty. (Article V, Section D, Part 1, subpart a).

Section C. Attendance

Each person who is an officer or representative in the Senate, except officers listed specifically herein, shall have a duty to attend each general meeting of the Senate. Attendance shall be defined as being present at both roll calls. Presence at only one roll-call in a given meeting shall constitute a half-absence and shall accrue in the same manner as full absences. A request to be excused from a meeting must be presented to the Vice President before noon on the day of the meeting. Each senator will be allowed two excused and one unexcused absence. The criteria for
excused absences are as follows:

1. An exam scheduled during a general Senate meeting.
2. A religious holiday.
3. A serious illness and/or death in a family.

Upon exhausting the three attendance excuses, senators will be required to present their additional excuses to the Rules and Ethics Committee, or where there is a conflict of interest to the Executive Committee, whereupon the committee will issue a decision of the validity of the excuse. If no excuses are presented, the Rules and Ethics Committee shall remove the person from Senate.

With regard to the missing of meetings of standing committees, the penalty shall be written warning from the chairperson of the committee upon the first offense, and written warning upon the second offense, and removal from Senate upon the third offense. At this time, the person shall be given one week to appeal this to the Rules and Ethics Committee.

The Rules and Ethics Committee in accordance with their procedures shall handle the removal of any member of the Senate.

Section D. Eligibility

No person other than a full or part-time undergraduate student of the University of Rhode Island who pays the Student Activities Tax may be a representative or officer in the Senate. In order to be eligible to serve as either a Student Senator or a Student Senate Executive Officer, the candidate shall be required, upon request, to furnish written proof that he or she has not been in poor academic standing (below a 2.0/4.0 cumulative G.P.A) for greater than two consecutive semesters to the Vice President of the Senate. A letter from the Office of the Registrar will serve this purpose. No other eligibility requirement shall be imposed which requires examination or release of academic, disciplinary, or other private records protected under the law.

Section E. Leave of Absence

In the event that an officer of the Senate finds him or herself in a circumstances where they may not fulfill one or more basic job requirements, but has a reasonable belief that the circumstance is temporary may, instead of resigning, request an extended leave of absence according to the following procedure:

The officer submits a written petition of a leave of absence to the Rules and Ethics Committee, including at minimum of the following information:

1. The reason the officer cannot fulfill his/her basic job requirements.
2. The basis for the officer’s belief that the reason can be resolved in a short period.
3. The expected period of absence, which in no case may be more than four (4) weeks.
4. Their recommendation as to a qualified member who will serve as their interim replacement during their leave of absence.

Rules & Ethics Committee deliberates on the legitimacy of the request and, by majority vote, either grants or declines it. There is no appeal.

If approved, the request is forwarded to the Executive Committee, who appoints by majority vote a member to serve in the vacated position. This person shall be termed an ‘interim officer’ and shall enjoy all rights, privileges, duties, obligations, and restrictions as are indicated by the position vacated.

At the conclusion of the term of absence, the officer on leave immediately and automatically reclaims all rights, privileges, duties, obligations, and restrictions of the position vacated. The interim officer abdicates the position and resumes their normal duties. It is incumbent upon the interim officer to prepare a report for the officer on leave detailing the activities of the committee during their absence.

Under no circumstances shall the provisions of this section apply to the offices of the President or Vice President of the Student Body.

Article IV. MEETINGS

Section A. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Senate shall be held in the Senate Chambers of the University of Rhode Island Memorial Union at 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday on which classes are held from September to May; inclusive, unless otherwise ordered in an exceptional situation by the Senate or by the Executive Committee. The following is to be considered an exceptional situation: The URI Student Senate will not meet on the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving.

Section B. Annual Meeting

The last regular meeting of March shall be known as the Annual Meeting and shall be for the purpose of swearing in newly elected representatives, the newly elected President and Vice President, the submission of the presidential executive committee nominations to the Senate, and for any other business that may arise.

Section C. Summer Senate

The President, Vice President, Finance Chair, and two Senators elected by the Senate at the final meeting of the academic year, shall have all power necessary and proper to dutifully conduct the business of Senate during the summer recess, except for amendments to the constitution and bylaws. The members conducting the business of Senate during summer recess shall meet at
least one time a month. These meetings will begin after the conclusion of the Spring Semester and continue until the first Student Senate meeting of the fall semester. They should also foster open communication with all Senators and student organizations. This communication shall be maintained through the emailing of meeting minutes to the general senate after every meeting. Any time the members of the Summer Recess Senate wish to vote on a bill of over $1,000.00 they shall have to notify the general senate and wait a minimum of 72 hours from the notification to conduct the vote. In the event of an emergency, defined as, an incident, to be an emergency, conforms to one or more of the following, if it: Poses an immediate threat to life, health, property, or environment, has already caused loss of life, health detriments, property damage, or environmental damage, has a high probability of escalating to cause immediate danger to life, health property, or environment, the Senate may vote on a bill over $1000 without waiting a minimum of 72 hours. In the event that any required member cannot serve, the Senate shall nominate replacements. If no officer with signatory power remains one shall be appointed by the president. Quorum for the summer recess is three/fourths.

Section D. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Senate may be called by the President or by the written request of seven (7) senators, which shall be submitted to the Vice President. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call, and no business may be transacted except that mentioned in the call. If the special meeting is requested while school is in session for a day when classes meet, then at least two (2) days notice shall be given. If school is not in session then at least ten (10) days notice shall be given. Quorum must be confirmed before binding business can be conducted. Scheduled class attendance shall be considered an excuse for absence at a special meeting in addition to the excuses listed as acceptable under Article III, Section C.

If at any time, the offices of Student Body President and Vice President are vacant simultaneously, a special meeting of the Senate shall be called to internally elect a new President. The internal election shall be held in accordance with policies regarding the internal election of officers mentioned later in this document.

Section E. Quorum

A majority of the persons eligible to participate in the proceedings of the Senate as voting senators shall constitute a quorum.

Section F. Closed Meetings

Any standing committee of the Senate as a whole may hold a meeting closed to the public upon an affirmative vote of the majority of its members, if the business transacted meets one of the following conditions:

Any discussion of job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person or persons, provided that such person or persons affected are notified prior to the action and may require that the discussion be held at an open meeting.
Any investigation proceedings regarding allegations of misconduct, either civil or criminal. Any matter related to the question of the investment of public funds, where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest.

The minutes of a closed meeting shall be made available to committee or Senate members at the next regularly scheduled meeting unless the body votes to keep the minutes closed. If the minutes remain closed, only members of the body that closed the meeting who were present when the meeting was closed may access them.

All Rules & Ethics Committee members are required to excuse themselves from any closed meeting except if they are managing a complaint, bill, impeachment proceedings, or in the case of a discussion of public funds.

If any of the proceedings four conditions are not met, the meeting shall be considered “open,” and the minutes of that meeting shall be accessible to the public.

If the meeting is to be closed, those making such accusations must be present before any business may be conducted.

Article V. OFFICERS

Section A. Popularly Elected Executive Officers

The popularly elected officers of the Senate shall be President of the Student Body and Vice President of the Student Body. All popularly elected officers shall be elected as prescribed to serve for one year term, or until their successor takes office. They shall post and maintain a minimum of 5 office hours a week. Their term of office shall normally begin at the annual meeting each year and shall end at the Annual Meeting of the legislative term in which they presided.

Part 1. President of the Student Body

Subpart a. Responsibilities and Powers

The President of the Student Body shall generally provide leadership to the Senate and shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Approve or veto legislation.
   a) After a bill is passed by the senate, the President shall have 48 hours from the time a bill is passed to determine whether to sign or veto the bill. If the bill is signed it goes into effect immediately.
   b) If a bill is vetoed, it is automatically referred back to its sponsor(s). If the bill is reintroduced, it must be introduced in its original form and requires a 2/3 vote in favor to pass. A reintroduced bill may not be vetoed.
c) If the President fails to either sign or veto a bill and 48 hours have passed, the bill immediately goes into effect at the conclusion of the 48 hour period.

2. Serve *ex officio* as chairperson of the Executive Committee.
3. Appoint students to university boards, committees, and agencies, unless objected upon by the Executive committee.
4. Hold signatory power jointly with the Treasurer of the Senate over the internal accounts of the Senate.
5. Hold signatory power jointly with the Finance Chairperson of the Student Body over all Student Activities Tax revenues and such other accounts as are necessary for the management of the Student Activities Tax
6. Temporarily withhold stipends, through a formal rules and ethics complaint, until the rules and ethics committee can consider such a decision.
7. Act as the official representative of the Senate in executing its acts and instructions.
8. Serve *ex officio* as the Chief Executive Officer of the Student Body.
9. Facilitate an open line of communication between the Administration of the University and the Student Senate.
10. Nominate the appointed members of the Executive Committee according to the following procedure:
   a) At the annual meeting of each year, the newly elected President shall make one nomination of a member of the student body for each of the following executive positions: Treasurer, Director of Communications, and Chief Information Officer.
   b) The position shall be opened to an internal election by the full senate, to be held following the guidelines governing internal elections of officers.
   c) Nominations and internal election of these positions shall only take place at regular meetings of the Senate.
   d) Upon the vacancy of any of the aforementioned positions, the President shall, as soon as possible, nominate a member of the Student Body to fill the vacant position following the nomination procedure outlined above in items a-c. The position shall be opened to an internal election by the full Senate, to be held following the guidelines governing internal election of officers.

**Subpart b. Eligibility**

The office of the President of the Student Body may not be held concurrently with any other office or representative seat, neither within the Senate nor with any other executive position on any other Student Senate recognized organization.

**Subpart c. Vacancy**
In the event that the office of the President of the Student Body becomes vacant as a result of death, resignation, or other cause, the Vice President of the Student Body shall succeed to the office for the remainder of the term.

At that time, the new President shall nominate another member of the student body to serve the remainder of the term as Vice President. Before that nominee can take office, the Senate shall confirm his/her nomination by secret ballot with a simple majority vote. Should a nominee fail to receive confirmation from the Senate, the President shall nominate another member of the student body whose nomination shall also be subject to Senate confirmation. This process continues until a new Vice President is chosen.

Part 2. Vice President of the Student Body

Subpart a. Responsibilities and Powers

The Vice President of the Student Body shall assist the President of the Student Body and shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Participate in the proceedings of the Senate, as the moderator of the general Senate meetings.
3. Serve ex officio as a voting member of the Executive Committee.
4. Act as President of the Student Body in the temporary absence of that officer. The moderator of the meeting shall be appointed by the Executive Committee during the absence.
5. Speak on behalf of the President in his/her absence.
6. Serve as the organizer of the committee for the selection of the Student Senior Commencement Speaker.
7. Serve as the organizer of the committee for the selection of the Student Senate Scholarship, including the Zompa Scholarship.
8. Develop and conduct Senate Orientation, Recruitment, Retreats and Social events.
9. Appoint and remove members of the standing committees, except the chairpersons of those committees. This power does not extend over the Executive Committee, nor over the Rules and Ethics Committee.
10. Mandate the Senate’s compliance with the bylaws.
11. Advise the Senate on when elections are supposed to be held.
12. Maintain internal group dynamics and mediate informal internal disputes.
13. Hold individual progression meetings with each member of Senate. This meeting will be used to assess if the individual is meeting the obligations of the Senate as well as if the Senate is meeting the expectations of the members.

Subpart b. Eligibility
The offices of the Vice President of the Student Body may not be held concurrently with any other office or representative seat within the Senate, nor with any other executive position on any other Student Senate recognized organization.

**Subpart c. Vacancy**

In the event that the office of Vice President of the Student Body becomes vacant as a result of death, resignation, succession to the office of President of the Student Body, or other cause, the President shall nominate another member of the student body to serve the remainder of the term as Vice President. Before that nominee can take office, the Senate shall confirm his/her nomination with a simple majority vote. Should nominee fail to receive confirmation from the Senate, the President shall nominate another member of the student body whose nomination shall also be subject to Senate confirmation. This process shall continue until a new Vice President is chosen.

**Section B. Internally Elected Executive Officers**

The internally elected officers of the Senate shall be: Director of Communications, Chief Information Officer, Treasurer, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, the External Affairs Committee, the Campus Affairs Committee, the Cultural Affairs Committee, and the Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee (herein referred to as SOARC). All internally elected officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Senate through secret ballot.

**Part 1. General Responsibilities and Powers**

**Subpart a. Term**

The term of the chairpersons of standing committees will begin at the meeting following the annual meeting, upon confirmation by the full Senate, and continue until the forthcoming annual meeting or until confirmation of a successor.

**Subpart b. Responsibility & Powers**

The chairperson of each standing committee shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Chair, call, and conduct all meetings of the committee.
2. Oversee all activities of the committee.
3. Ordinarily act as reporting member of the committee on the Senate floor.
4. Act as the official representative of the committee in discharging its responsibilities.
5. Participate in the proceedings of the Senate as a voting member.
6. Serve ex officio as a voting member of the Executive Committee.
7. Participate as a voting member of their committee.
8. Maintain accurate attendance records of the senators seated on their committees.
9. Upon the election of a new President, present to the new president, in writing, a recommendation for a successor.
10. Shall post and maintain a minimum of three (3) office hours per week in the senate office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. weekdays with the exception of the Finance Chair and SOARC Chair.
11. Nominate a vice chair, which shall be confirmed by the Executive Committee.

Subpart c. Eligibility

The office of chairperson of a standing committee, other than the Executive Committee, may not be held concurrently with any other representative seat. The Chairperson of the Finance committee may not be held concurrently with any position within the Student Senate Accounts Office.

Subpart d. Vacancy

In the case of vacancy resulting from causes other than a leave of absence, the Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chairperson until the Senate elects a new Chairperson, per Article VII, Section B.

Part 2. Special Responsibilities and Powers

Subpart a. The Chairperson of the Finance Committee

The term of the Chairperson of the Finance Committee will begin at the final meeting of the academic year and shall be for one year.

The Chairperson of the Finance Committee shall have the additional powers necessary and proper to:

1. Serve ex officio as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Student Body and be functionally responsible for investing and managing Student Activities Tax Revenues.
2. Serve ex officio as a voting member of the Student Senate.
3. Hold signatory power jointly with the President of the Student Body over all Student Activities Tax revenues and such other accounts as necessary for the management of the Student Activities Tax. Furthermore, shall have the power to freeze funds and/or accounts that are in violation of established financial policies and procedures on a temporary basis.
4. Attend the monthly organizations meeting.
5. Shall post and maintain a minimum of 5 office hours a week.
6. Oversee the budgeting process of the Student Activities Tax, and to call and
conduct special meetings of the Finance Committee for that purpose, and to put
the budget on the floor three weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

7. Develop, maintain, publish and construe the Finance Handbook and review the
Finance Handbook at least on an annual basis. The Finance Handbook shall
contain, at a minimum, the policies, restrictions and limitations of the Student
Senate finance and account system. The Finance Handbook shall be binding upon
all recognized student organizations, provided that all changes shall require the
formal advice and consent of the Senate. Consent shall consist of approval of a
majority of the Senate.

8. The office of Chairperson of the Finance Committee may not be held concurrently
with any other representative seat, nor be an executive member of any other
Senate recognized organization.

Subpart b. The Chairperson of the SOARC

The term of the Chairperson of SOARC will begin at the final meeting of the
academic year and shall be for one year.

The Chairperson of SOARC shall have the additional powers necessary and proper to:

1. Act as an impartial arbiter of conflicts that result involving student organizations.
2. Serve ex officio as a voting member of the Senate.
3. Act as or designate a moderator for the monthly organizations meeting.
4. Shall post and maintain a minimum of five (5) office hours a week.
5. Oversee the recognition process of new student organization and annual re-
recognition process.
6. Develop, maintain, and publish the Model Constitution, which shall be binding
upon all recognized student organizations, provided that all changes to the Model
Constitution shall require the formal advice and consent of the Senate.
7. Oversee and manage the annual stipend review process.
8. The office of Chairperson of SOARC may not be held concurrently with any
other representative seat, nor may be an executive member of any other Senate
recognized organization.

Part 3. Executive Officers within the Cabinet of the President

The Chief Information Officer, Treasurer, and Director of Communications shall be
nominated by the President of the Student Body as outlined in Article V, Section A, Part I,
Subpart a, Subpart b, and Subpart c. Executive officers so nominated, in view of their
non-representative nature, shall neither vote in the Senate nor be counted in the quorum of
the Senate. These officers shall not participate as a voting member of the Finance Committee
or SOARC unless specifically mentioned in their descriptions or by specific legislative
exception in the case of special committees created by the Senate. Notwithstanding specific
provisions to the contrary, it is the duty of each person holding a presidentially cabinet
position to attend full Senate meetings; presidential cabinet executive officers are bound by
the same attendance policy as general Senators.

**Subpart a. Treasurer of the Senate**

The term of the Treasurer of the Senate shall begin upon the swearing in after his or her internal election by the Senate. In the case of a mid-year vacancy, the term shall begin upon swearing in after internal election.

The Treasurer of the Senate shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Have responsibility for, administer and record the internal accounts of the Senate
2. Annually prepare and present the internal budget of the Senate
3. Hold signatory power jointly with the President of the Student Body over the internal accounts of the Senate
4. Shall be excluded from serving as a member of the Finance Committee
5. Serve *ex officio* as a voting member of the Executive Committee
6. Eligibility
7. The office of Treasurer of the Senate may not be held concurrently with any representative seat, nor with any other officer of the Student Senate.

**Subpart b. Director of Communications**

The term of the Director of Communications of the Senate shall begin upon the swearing in after his or her internal election by the Senate. In the case of a mid-year vacancy, the term shall begin upon swearing in after internal election.

The Director of Communications (DOC) of the Senate shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Serve as an *ex officio* voting member of the Executive Committee.
2. Shall have the responsibility to oversee the dissemination of information regarding the functions and activities of the Senate to the campus community and all relevant external parties, with the goal of informing the university community about recently completed, current, and future projects of the Senate.
3. Shall report to the full Senate on any and all matters related to its pending decisions.
4. Shall report to the Senate on its status in the media.
5. Promote and communicate events and programs put on by Senate and recognized organizations
6. Manage dissemination of information and activities of Senate to the campus with a focus of distributing through social media on a daily basis and news letters on a monthly basis.
7. Maintain Senate’s advertising space up to date with relevant and pertinent information posted
8. Keep open communication with URI groups and organizations and the SEA office
to notify self of updates and events and programs.

9. The office of Director of Communications may not be held concurrently with any representative seat, or with any other office of the Student Senate.

**Subpart c. Chief Information Officer**

The term of the Chief Information Officer of the Senate shall begin upon the swearing in after his or her internal election by the Senate. In the case of a mid-year vacancy, the term shall begin upon swearing in after internal election.”

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the Senate shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Serve as an *ex officio* voting member of the Executive Committee.
2. Have responsibility for, administer, and record the Senate’s institutional memory.
3. Shall be responsible for ensuring the integrity of the Senate’s records.
4. Shall compile, maintain, and update transitional records for the general Senate and its committees.
5. Receive and act upon specific request for institutional information from any from any member of the Senate.
6. Maintain an up to date Student Senate Alumni Network.
7. Shall be responsible for maintaining a permanent record of liaison reports.
8. Shall be responsible for the recording of minutes at the general meetings of the Senate, which shall be published by the third business day following the meeting.
9. Shall be responsible for the management of the weekly meeting agendas for the general Senate.
10. The office of Chief Information Officer may not be held concurrently with any representative seat, nor with any other office of the Student Senate.

**Section C. General Officers**

General officerships, conferred through processes outlined in this section, may be held concurrently with any representative seat of the Senate except those seats who are *ex officio* voting members of the Executive Committee, though this should not be understood as a prerequisite of the officership unless otherwise explicitly indicated.

If the officership is held simultaneously with any representative seat, the status of general officer shall not interfere with any of the rights, privileges and obligations conferred by Article III, Section B.

If the officership is not held simultaneously with any representative seat, the officer, in view of their non- representative status, shall neither vote in the Senate nor be counted in the quorum of the Senate. These officers shall not participate as a voting member of the Finance committees or SOARC, unless specifically mentioned in their descriptions or by specific legislative exception in the case of special committees created by the Senate.
Part 1. Liaisons

Appointed Liaisons serve as the primary mode of communication between their assigned group or body and the Senate. To this end, Liaisons shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Act to refer messages from their assigned group or body to the Senate.

2. Act, with the permission of the President, to confer messages to their assigned group or body regarding the positions and acts of the Senate.

3. Produce a written report and transition materials regarding the general status of and specific concerns pertinent to the group or body to which they are assigned, to be submitted to the President, respective standing committee and CIO, once on the last general meeting of the Fall semester and once again prior to the annual meeting of Senate.

4. As needed, report to any standing committee and the Senate as a whole to act as an information resource regarding their assigned group or body and to indicate to the appropriate legislative committee when issues in that group or body require the committee’s attention. The Senate may, by legislation, directly confer instructions to a specific liaison concerning any of their duties. Instructions so conferred shall have priority over all other instructions.

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Subpart a. College Liaisons

College Representatives are, ex officio, the Liaison to the office of the Dean of the college under which they were elected, as well as the Liaison to that college’s constituency generally. These two roles shall be jointly considered and indivisible, and shall for all purposes be considered one officership, which shall be hereafter referred to as the College Liaison. College Liaisons shall normally serve from the Annual Meeting in which they were confirmed until the following Annual Meeting. In cases of vacancy, where it would be impossible or impractical to immediately hold an internal election to replace the College Representative, a College Liaison may be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, following the
general procedures outlined in Article V, Section A, Part 1, Subpart a. Any such appointee must be a member of the college to which they would act as Liaison, and shall serve only until the corresponding College Representative seat is filled. It shall be the responsibility of all college liaisons to submit a formal report to the CIO and academic chairperson.

The report will detail meetings with the dean of the college, or a pre approved individual by the Academic Affairs Chairperson. These reports are due on the last general senate meeting of the month and will outline pertinent discussions. In addition to the general powers listed under Article V, Section D. Part 1, special liaisons shall additionally have the power to:

1. Observe the legislative and executive actions of their appointed governmental body and advise that body regarding the Student Body’s interests generally.

2. Negotiate on behalf of the Student Body with their appointed governmental body on matters affecting the Student Body’s interests generally, within the confines of the collective. Acts of the Senate and the express instructions of the President of the Student Body. In addition to the qualifications and restrictions listed under Article V, Section D for general officers, a special liaison must not be a constituent of the body to which they are appointed. In such cases where, during the course of service, a special liaison becomes such a constituent, he/she is required to immediately resign as liaison and the President shall appoint a replacement following the general procedures outlined in Article V, Section A, Part 1, Subpart a.

3. Produce a written report and transition materials regarding the general status of and specific concerns pertinent to the college which they are assigned, to be submitted to the President, Academic Affairs Committee and CIO prior to the annual meeting of Senate.

4. Report to the Academic Affairs Chairperson or Academic Affairs Committee member at least once a month to report and to indicate to the committee what issues in that group or body require the committee’s attention.

**Article VI. STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Section A. Standing Committees**

The standing committees of the Senate shall be the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, the Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee, the Committee on Campus Affairs,
the Committee on Academic Affairs, the Committee on External Affairs, and the Committee on Cultural Affairs. Each standing committee shall consider and propose legislation relevant to the charge of the committee, and shall report all such legislation to the Senate together with recommendations for passage, failure, or amendment. The Senate shall supervise its committees, and no action by a committee with power shall conflict with the acts and instructions of the Senate. No standing committee may meet while the Senate is meeting. A majority of the voting members of each standing committee shall constitute its quorum.

Part 1. General Committee Information

Subpart a. Voting Privileges

Members will gain voting privileges at the second meeting they attend, at the first meeting of the semester, or the first meeting after being elected.

Subpart b. Vice Chairperson Charge and Powers

1. Shall be appointed by the chair of the committee and approved by the Executive Committee.
2. Shall run meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
3. Shall provide the Secretary with meeting minutes within three business days.
4. Shall maintain a portfolio of the committees past and present work to be provided to the Chief Information Officer

Subpart c. Procedures

1. Quorum is needed to make a binding decision.
2. The chair may be overruled on any matter with a three-fourths (¾) vote of the committee.
3. A recommendation for action upon legislation shall be determined by a majority vote of the committee.
4. Each standing committee shall meet at least once each week during which the Senate holds a regular meeting.

Part 2. Executive Committee

Subpart a. Charge and Powers

The Executive Committee shall act as a steering committee for the Senate, assisting the President of the Student Body in the administration of student government, and shall have all power necessary and proper to:

1. Refer legislation to the appropriate standing committee.
2. Propose legislation in regards to the constitution and bylaws.
3. No member of the Rules and Ethics Committee may serve on the Executive
Subpart b. Composition

The officers of the Senate, (President, Vice President, Treasurer, DOC and CIO) and all other standing committee chairs shall constitute the Executive Committee. Each person who is an officer shall have one (1) vote in the Executive Committee. The President of the Student Body shall serve ex-officio as chairperson of the Executive Committee.

Subpart c. Conflict of Interest

Members of the Executive Committee may serve on the Finance Committee and SOARC provided they follow all rules with regard to conflicts of interest, specific restrictions otherwise listed herein and in addition, the Executive Committee members must constitute less than a majority of those committees’ members.

Part 3. Finance Committee

Subpart a. Charge and Powers

The Finance Committee shall propose and review all legislation of a financial nature, including annual budgets and other requests for allocations from the Student Activities Tax, and shall have all power necessary and proper to:

1. Establish, audit, and control the finances and accounting procedures of all recognized student organizations and Senate.
2. By three-fourths (¾) majority vote overturn the decision of the finance committee chairperson to freeze accounts of groups that are in violation of established financial policies and procedures.
3. By three-fourths (3/4) majority vote freeze accounts that are in violation of established financial policies and procedures on a temporary basis until it can be reviewed by the Executive committee.
4. Maintain the inventory records and oversee the contracts between Student Organization Presidents and the Senate to ensure proper purchasing and disposal of inventory.

Subpart b. Membership

Only Senators may serve on the Finance Committee. During summer recess, the Finance Committee shall consist of the Finance Committee Chairperson and two additional member of the summer recess unless other members are duly appointed. Before obtaining voting rights on the Finance Committee, a senator must attend one meeting of the committee as a nonvoting member.[2]

Part 4. Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee (SOARC)
Subpart a. Charge and Powers

The Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Construe and enforce the instruments of all recognized student organizations.
2. Review each organization applying for recognition in order to recommend to the Senate whether the organization meets the applicable criteria for recognition and, if eligible for recognition, whether the organization meets the applicable criteria for eligibility for funding.
3. Review each recognized student organization at least annually in order to recommend to the Senate whether the organization meets the applicable criteria for recognition and, if eligible for recognition, whether the organization meets the applicable criteria for eligibility for funding.
4. Organize the review of each stipended position at least annually in order to confirm that the positions still meet the criteria of a stipended position.
5. Oversee the operations and integrity of and arbitrate disputes involving recognized student organizations.
6. Continually examine and advise all student organizations to ensure they are operating within their purpose.
7. Organize and attend the monthly organization meeting.
8. Represent the interests of student organizations in all matters related to Senate and the University.

Subpart b. Membership

Only Senators may serve on SOARC.

Part 5. Committee on Campus Affairs

The Committee on Campus Affairs shall be concerned with student life of a non-academic nature, including but not limited to student rights, campus security and parking, student services, financial aid, student employment, auxiliary fees, living conditions, dining services, health and safety, and intercollegiate varsity athletics. The chairperson of the Campus Affairs committee shall serve as the Campus Housing Liaison, and shall be required and empowered to act as the formal liaison to the Office of Housing the Residential Life, second in priority only to the President of the Senate. They shall be charged with informing the general Senate regarding issues particular to their residential constituents, and shall work directly with the Director of Housing and Residential Life.

Part 6. Committee on Academic Affairs

The Committee on Academic Affairs shall be concerned with student life of an academic nature, including but not limited to educational standards and requirements, academic rights, course
availability, registration procedures, library services, grading, examinations, tuition, and faculty evaluation. The Academic Affairs committee shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Will recommend senators and non-senators students for faculty and university wide committees related to academic issues to the President. The Committee and the CIO will help foster communication between faculty senate liaisons, general senate and the student body.
2. Act as a liaison for Student Senate to Faculty Senate. This will involve attending monthly Faculty Senate meetings and serve on various Faculty Senate committees.
3. If a complaint or problem arises in an Academic College or academic services the committee has the duty to communicate the grievances and course of action with the ombudsman office, college’s liaison, university committee and/or the relevant staff to maintain communication and distribution pertinent to the complaint.
4. The committee will review submitted College Liaison reports for occurrences pertinent to concur's of an academic nature, and notify the liaison if further inquiry is required. This communication takes place between the College Liaison and a representative of their college. The Committee will coordinate with the CIO to help foster this communication by offering college liaisons meeting templates, suggestions/questions for discussion, contact information, etc.

**Part 7. Committee on External Affairs**

The Committee on External Affairs shall be concerned with persons or entities outside the university, including but not limited to local, state, or national governmental issues, other colleges and universities, admissions and recruitment, alumni relations, and budgetary concerns. The chairperson of the External Affairs Committee shall act as the Commuter Housing Liaison. They shall be required and empowered to serve as the formal liaison to the Commuter Housing Office, second in priority only to the President of the Senate, and shall be charged with informing the general Senate regarding issues particular to the off campus constituents. Additionally they shall work directly with the Vice President of Student Affairs and his/her subordinates in pursuit of that duty. The chairperson shall make efforts to develop a working relationship with the Narragansett Town Council, Narragansett Police Department, and other external areas concerning students to remain knowledgeable about off campus issues and student rentals.

**Part 8. Committee on Cultural Affairs**

The Committee on Cultural Affairs shall be concerned with cultural issues, including but not limited to building and maintaining a unified and inclusive campus community, creating university traditions, promoting multiculturalism, and ensuring equal opportunity. The chairperson shall be in communication with the liaison related to the pertinent topics of Cultural Affairs Committee. The chairperson shall organization and execute one program
during their term.

Section B. Special Committees

Part 1. Committee on Rules and Ethics Subpart

Subpart a. Charge and Powers

This non-policy making committee shall have the sole responsibility over and all powers necessary to:

1. Construe, and upon request, make rulings regarding the existing instruments (constitution and bylaws) of the Student Senate, with the understanding that it should be the duty of each Senator to have a working knowledge of the bylaws and further this power should be utilized solely to resolve conflicts.
2. Conduct a preliminary inquiry and render a recommendation in regards to any properly constituted letter of complaint, and manage bills resulting from such a recommendation on the floor of the Senate. A properly constituted letter of complaint must state the charge, the applicable section of bylaws or law, requested course of action, signed by no fewer than one student and the Vice President. In the event of an unavoidable conflict of interest, one member of the executive committee of the Student Senate shall suffice.
3. Procedures for the impeachment process, general complaints or concerns regarding performance are as follows:
   a) Receive a properly constituted letter of complaints from any persons associate with The University of Rhode Island that is signed by two current members of the Senate.
   b) Upon receipt, the Rules and Ethics Committee will meet to determine validity of complaint, and investigate the charge or complaint submitted.
   c) Rules and Ethics Committee will hold separate meetings with both the complainant and defendant and this meeting will be followed by a joint meeting with both parties.
   d) Rules and Ethics Committee will make a final recommendation and, in the case that the requested course of action was impeachment, the charge will go to the full Senate floor for a trial regardless of the final recommendation. In all other cases, the Rules & Ethics Committee’s final legislative recommendation shall control whether the charge will go to the full Senate floor for a trial.
4. Make non-binding recommendations to any member of the Senate or to the Senate as a whole regarding questions of bylaws interpretation.
5. Receive and rule upon official requests for bylaws interpretation using the following procedure:
   a) The official request (the petition) must be in a written form and signed by a student, who will be referred to hereafter as the petitioner.
   b) The request must include the particular questions the petitioner wants answered, the bylaws section(s) in question, and any other information the
petitioner feels is pertinent. The Rules and Ethics Committee is bound to rule only upon the stated questions set in the petition.

c) An open meeting is called within two (2) weeks of the petitioner’s request, wherein the petitioner may explain the rationale for the request and the Committee may seek testimony of other relevant parties.

d) The Committee shall then, by majority vote, make a ruling. The ruling is binding upon the Senate. If a senator wishes to challenge the ruling, the challenge must be in bill form and signed by five (5) senators. The bill is submitted under New Business. The threshold for passage of such a bill is majority.

6. Review and rule upon petitions for leaves of absence from the Senate.

Subpart b. Composition

This committee will be comprised of five (5) Senators, all of whom shall be elected internally by the Senate immediately following the formation of the new Executive Committee. Members of this committee will be prohibited from serving concurrently as a member of the Executive Committee. The Rules and Ethics Committee shall elect their own Speaker who will report to the full Senate. The speaker shall check the complaints box for filings no less than once per week.

Part 2. Committee on Elections

Subpart a. Charge

The Committee on Elections shall be formed at the last meeting of the academic year for the Freshman Elections, at the first meeting in December for the Spring Elections, or for special elections to conduct, supervise, and tabulate the results of all popular elections and referenda. When the results of a particular series of elections, for which the committee may have been formed are accepted by Senate, the committee shall be discharged. The Committee on Elections shall have the power to:

1. Propose legislation to call elections, certify results and report these results to the Senate with a recommendation regarding validation.
2. Reapportion Representative seats annually with the consent of the Senate.
3. Interpret and enforce the election rules.
4. Disqualify candidates who have violated the election rules (appeals shall be directed to the Rules and Ethics Committee and follow the procedures outlined in Article VII).

Subpart b. Composition

This committee will be comprised of five (5) Senators, all of whom shall be elected internally by the Senate. The committee members at the first elections meeting shall elect their own chairperson. No person who is a declared candidate or a member of Rules and Ethics Committee may serve as a member of the Committee on Elections for that specific
Subpart c. Conflict of Interest

In the event of a conflict of interest involving any person otherwise elected to serve as a member of the Committee on Elections, the person shall be excused from serving, and the Senate shall elect a replacement senator. Members of the elections committee shall remain neutral during the election process and will refrain from publicly supporting candidates.

Part 3. Additional Special Committees

The Senate may, through legislation, create any special committees which it deems necessary or advantageous, provided that no special committee shall be created whose charge interferes with that of any other Senate committee. Such legislation must specify the charge and term of the committee, and may specify the members of the committee and the manner in which it will be discharged or the manner in which members are to be chosen, provided that the Executive Committee shall appoint the members unless another method is explicitly stated in the legislation. One representative from each special committee must sit on the Executive Committee, as a non-voting member, for the duration of the committee’s existence.

Article VII. ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA

Section A. Popular Election

Part 1. Time of Elections

Subpart a. Representatives

The annual election for academic college representatives shall be held within the first three weeks of the second semester, and the annual election for residence group representatives shall be held at least two weeks later but shall be completed by no later than the Friday prior to Spring Break. The annual election for Freshman Representatives shall be held as early as practical each autumn.

Subpart b. Populyarly Elected Officers

The annual election for popularly elected officers shall be held at the same time as the annual election for residence group representatives. If there are more than two candidates or tickets for any popularly elected office, a primary election shall be held at the same time as the annual election for academic college representatives, and the two candidates or tickets receiving the largest number of votes in this primary election shall appear on the ballot in the annual election for the office, regardless of the number of votes received in the primary election. A primary shall not be presumed to fill two vacancies, and each
voter may cast only one vote for each office. Elections for the President and Vice President must be completed by the Spring Break of the academic year.

Subpart c. Special Elections

The Senate may by legislation call a special election at any time for the filling of any vacant representative seat or the placing of any referendum question. Internal elections to fill vacant representative seats shall be opened in the fall, at five (5) weeks after the freshmen elections. The only exception to this is if the total number of senators falls below 40, in which case special elections will be opened when advertising requirements are filled.

Subpart d. Extenuating Circumstances

In the case where the elections cannot be held upon the designated day, the election shall be held the day immediately following the next full class day. If the gap between election dates created by this change is larger than two days, then that set of elections shall be voided and a new election must be called.

Part 2. System of Voting

Subpart a. Procedures

All popular elections and referenda shall be by secret ballot. Voters must either appear in person at the polls and satisfy the election officers of their identity and eligibility or use their username and password to vote online. The Committee on Elections shall designate members of senate to work at the polls and on the voting website, and it shall be the duty of each senator who is not a candidate or a member of a candidate's active campaign staff to work at least one hour at each election. It shall be said member’s responsibility to ensure that the voting area is in compliance with all election standards. In the event that the voting area has been compromised, the situation must be documented and reported to the Committee on Elections, who shall deliberate if the violation had any affected on the election. No person who is a candidate shall be permitted to work at the polls or on the voting website.

The polls shall be open on, at minimum, two consecutive class days from at least 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. Online voting shall be available from 9:00 a.m. on the first day until 5:00 p.m. on the second day. The Chairperson of the Elections Committee or the Elections Committee may, in an emergency situation, appoint the Administrative Coordinator and / or Secretary worker of the Student Senate and / or any member of a Senate Standing Committee to work at the polls or on the voting website.

Subpart b. Numerical Procedures

Regardless of the number of declared candidates, each voter may cast as many votes as
the number of vacancies for any position, but not more. No voter may cast more than one vote for a single candidate. Write-in votes shall be provided for all elections, and shall be deemed valid if the intention to vote for a specific candidate for a specific position is clear. Popular elections shall be decided by plurality. In the event of a tie vote between candidates, the Senate shall internally elect persons to fill these vacancies from among the candidates involved in the tie.

Part 3. Qualifications of Voters

Each undergraduate student of the University of Rhode Island who is required to pay the Student Activities Tax shall have the right to vote in all elections of popularly elected officers and referenda. Such students shall have the right to vote for representatives from the academic college which administers the program of the student and from the residence group where the student is listed with the registrar. Double major or double degree students in programs administered by different academic colleges may vote for a representative from only one, but may choose which, and such choice shall not be a binding precedent for any later election.

Part 4. Qualifications for Candidacy

Each undergraduate student shall be eligible for any office or representative seat for which the student is a qualified voter, provided that student is a member of the academic college or resident grouping which the student wants to represent by or on the day of sign-up. The penalty for running under a false constituency shall result in a voided candidacy. No candidate may appear on more than one ballot in the same election. There shall be no limit to the number of times a person may be elected to any position.

Part 5. Declaration

Each candidate seeking to be listed on the ballot must declare in writing the full name, address, and telephone number of the candidate, the form of the name to appear on the ballot, the position sought, that the candidate expects to remain a student for the full term for which election is sought, and that the candidate has read and agrees to adhere to the provisions of the Senate Bylaws. The rules of the Senate shall be equally binding upon all persons participating in its elections, regardless of whether they may have formally declared.

Part 7. Withdrawal

Any declared candidate or ticket may withdraw as a matter of right until the deadline for declaration of candidacy, and thereafter only with the consent of the Committee on Elections, which shall consider whether enough time remains for modification of any ballots already prepared or for reprogramming of the machines. If a candidate or ticket receives a sufficient number of votes for election and then declines to be sworn in or is disqualified, the un-elected candidate with the next greatest amount of votes shall fill whatever vacancy has been created.
Part 8. Tickets

No party mark or designation shall appear on the ballots for Senate elections, provided that candidates for President of the Student Body and Vice President of the Student Body shall run on an indivisible ticket as if a single candidate. In the event that one of the persons on such a ticket withdraws or is disqualified after the deadline for declarations of candidacy has passed, the ticket itself must withdraw or be disqualified.

Part 9. Campaigning

There shall be no limit to what amount a candidate may spend on campaigning. No Student Activities Tax funds may be used to attempt to influence the results of an election, provided that the Committee on Elections may offer, equally to all persons, office supplies and the like, at cost, for use in campaigning. No person may campaign in the building where the polls are located while the polls are open. No person may post notices or advertisements within 50 feet of said building(s). No discussion of issues or candidates shall be allowed at the polls.

Part 10. Platforms

The Committee on Elections shall provide, equally to all candidates for each position, an opportunity to publish, free of charge, a short, unedited platform which shall be sent to the media for reprinting and shall be maintained for inspection at the polls and on the voting website. Presidential/Vice Presidential tickets shall be allowed 125 words and all other candidates shall be allowed 75 words. The responsibility for the content of such platforms shall rest entirely with their authors.

Part 11. Certification

Subpart a. Public Notice of Unofficial Results

The Committee on Elections shall publish the numerical results of all elections and referenda as soon as possible after the close of the polls, marking this report “Unofficial: Subject to Challenge.”

Subpart b. Method of Challenge

Challenges may be filed within three (3) business days after the unofficial results are published to the Committee on Elections for initial interpretation and action. Any appeals to such interpretations must be filed within three (3) business days to the Rules and Ethics Committee, which shall review the challenge and make a recommendation to the full Senate. Any provision to the contrary notwithstanding, the Senate shall be the final judge of its own elections.
Subpart c. Certification of Results

At the regular meeting following the conclusion of the challenge period, the Committee on Elections shall write legislation presenting the final election results to the Senate. Certification of the election results shall require passage by simple majority vote. The bill shall not be immediately considered and must be presented at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting. Certified results shall be published as “Official Results” by the next business day.

Part 12. Referendum

The Senate may, by legislation, place referenda on any issue before the voters at any election. In the event that the winning side carries more than five percent (5%) of the eligible voters, the result shall be binding upon the Senate.

Section B. Internal Election

Part 1. Time

The outgoing Senate, at the last meeting before the annual meeting, shall internally elect the Chairpersons of the Finance Committee, Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee, Chief Information Officer, Director of Communication, Treasurer, as well as the, Academic Affairs Committee, External Affairs Committee, Cultural Affairs Committee, and Campus Affairs Committee shall be internally elected starting with nominations at the first meeting of the new senate. Internal elections shall also be held as may be necessary to fill vacancies or resolve ties in popular elections.

Part 2. Nominations

Except in cases where the procedure of internal election is used to resolve a tie vote in a popular election, nominations shall be opened at the Senate meeting immediately preceding the meeting where the election is to be held, and must be made and seconded by members of the Senate, provided that no election may be held unless nominations have been made at least one week. In the case of elections to fill vacant representative seats, nominations may not be opened unless the vacancies have been advertised to the student body at least two days in advance. In the case of elections to fill vacant representative seats, nominations may not be opened unless the vacancies have been advertised to the student body at least two days in advance. If no candidate has been nominated by the time of the election, nominations shall be held open until the next meeting, when an election shall be scheduled.

Part 3. Deliberation

At the election, all candidates for a position may speak and answer questions on the Senate floor in the order in which they were nominated. The members having made and seconded the nominations may then speak on the Senate floor in the order in which the nominations
were made and seconded. The Senate floor shall then be open to debate on the election. All deliberations shall be open in a public session, and no person may be excluded.

Part 4. Election

At the conclusion of debate, the Senate shall vote by secret ballots, each member having one (1) vote, and the count shall be announced to be tallied by an executive member of the President’s cabinet, the cabinet members are the Chief Information Officer, Treasurer, and Director of Communications. If no candidate receives a majority, debate shall be reopened and additional ballots taken until some candidate receives a majority.

Section C. Apportionment

Part 1. Classification

Senate seats shall be annually reapportioned in accordance with campus demography. The official source for information on the total number of students enrolled at the university and in each academic program shall be the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The official source for information on the number of students in the Greek Housing residence group shall be the Office of Student Life. The official source for information on the number of students in the dormitory residence group shall be the Office of Residential Life. Any person enrolled at the university who is neither in the Greek Housing nor dormitory residence group shall be defined to be in the commuter residence group.

Part 2. Formulae

The error for each constituency shall be defined to be the absolute value of the difference between the whole number of seats apportioned and the exact fractional number of seats to which the constituency is mathematically entitled. The total error shall be defined to be the sum of the errors from all constituencies. The number of seats apportioned to each constituency shall be determined from the exact fractional number of seats in the way, which minimizes total error.

Article VIII. IMPEACHMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Section A. Definitions

For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall be used as guidelines for the determination of courses of action.

1. A ‘conflict of interest’ shall be any situation in which a member of the Senate has an external duty or interest which calls into substantial question their ability to execute their official duties in the best interests of the Student Body.
2. ‘Gross misconduct’ shall be any non-speech conduct which can be shown to have caused, or
by gross negligence created grave risk to have caused, harm to the Student Body, the Senate, its members, and/or its property or shocks the conscience to the extent that the member cannot claim to be a representative of the URI student community’s values. In any case of gross misconduct it shall be the burden of the Senate to demonstrate actual harm.

Section B. Grounds for Impeachment

The Senate for crimes, dereliction of duty, conflict of interest, or other gross misconduct may discipline each person who is a representative or officer in the Senate. In the event that evidence possibly warranting disciplinary action is obtained, such evidence shall be made available to the Rules & Ethics Committee which shall then carry out as thorough an investigation as possible. If the accused is a member of the Rules & Ethics Committee, the accused may not participate as a member of the Rules & Ethics Committee in its proceedings.

Section C. Referral of Charges

Charges may be referred against a senator only in legislation sponsored by the Executive Committee or jointly by five (5) or more senators. The accused shall then have written notice of the charges and specifications, and may continue to exercise all rights as a senator, including the right to vote, until final disposition of the charges.

Section D. Trial and Verdict

Part 1. Moderator

Subpart a. Appointment of the Moderator

The moderator shall be appointed by the Executive Committee or in the event of a conflict of interest by the members of the Rules and Ethics Committee.

Subpart b. Responsibilities

1. Handle and judge all aspects of the trial, in accordance with the bylaws and established trial procedure.
2. Set rules of evidence for the trial procedure.
3. Count the secret ballot votes

Part 2. Representation

The moderator of the trial shall request the appointment of representatives for all parties, who shall be selected by the respective parties and submitted to the moderator prior to the discussion of any further matters of the trial.

Part 3. Procedure
Subpart a. Pre-trial

The moderator, all parties, and selective representatives shall share evidence and expected witnesses to be presented at the trial, one week prior to the date of the trial or at a previously agreed upon date. At this point in time all parties may raise concerns with presented evidence to the moderator who will make decisions about eligibility of said evidence.

Subpart b. Trial

1. Each party will be given equal time, determined by the moderator, to present an opening argument to the Senate
2. Each party will be given equal time, determined by the moderator, to present witnesses and evidence pertinent to their case.
3. Each party will be given time to question witnesses of the opposite party after the witness’ initial testimony. Re-directing or re-cross examination will be granted at the discretion of the moderator.
4. Each party will be given equal time, determined by the moderator, to present closing arguments to the Senate.
5. During the trial members of the Senate shall be prohibited from any form of communication. No questions from the Senate, student body, or persons outside the represented parties will be admitted during the trial.

Subpart C. Verdict

1. At the conclusion of the trial the Senate shall vote by secret ballot on each of the charges brought forth during the trial. Charges will be presented in an aye or nay format to the Senate.
2. The moderator of the trial shall count each vote and render a verdict in accordance with the procedures previously outlined in the bylaws.

Section D. Sentence

Upon conviction, the Senate shall determine an appropriate penalty. The conviction and the penalty may be made public, but the Senate may not prohibit the convicted person from seeking reelection. Removal of any rights as a senator, including expulsion from the Senate, shall require two-thirds (2/3) vote. Censure, reprimand, and resolutions of a similar kind shall require a majority vote. The accused may not vote in determining the penalty.

Section E. Appeals

1. All appeals must be handed in, in writing, to the moderator of the Student Senate by no later than two weeks following SOARC or Finance’s decision.
2. The written statement must identify a summary of the grievance and a reason for
appealing SOARC or Finance’s decision.
3. The SOARC or Finance Chairperson will then be required to submit the written decision of SOARC or Finance to the moderator of the Student Senate 48 hours before it is to be reviewed by the executive committee.
4. The executive committee of the Student Senate must vote to determine whether or not the full Senate should hear the appeal. The Chairperson of SOARC or Finance will not vote on this issue but rather be present, along with the appealing party, to answer questions on the decision being appealed.
5. If the vote is "nay" in the majority, SOARC or Finance’s decision is upheld.
6. If the executive committee votes "aye" in the majority, a date for the hearing will be scheduled by the moderator of the Student Senate by no later than two weeks from the date of the meeting of the executive committee.
7. The appeals process shall take place under "New Business" on the Senate agenda.
8. The moderator of the Senate shall be chairman of this appeal. Each side will be allotted ten (10) minutes for discussion. Student Senators will be allowed to ask questions after each side has been heard.
9. Following the completion of questioning the Senate will deliberate. When deliberation is complete, the moderator will call for a vote.

The vote will be taken by secret ballot and a two-thirds (2/3) majority is required to overrule SOARC or Finance’s decision.

Section F. Removal of Stipends

A bill may be introduced by five (5) Senators, along with a valid rationale based on the failure to complete basic job requirements, to request the withholding of a said amount of any stipend not yet paid to a member of the Senate that receives a stipend. The president also has power to temporarily remove stipends in the form of a written Rules and Ethics Complaint. These will be submitted to the Student Senate Rules and Ethics Committee for a decision. Appeals of the decision made by the Rules and Ethics Committee must be submitted before the end of the term that the original complaint was filed. In the event of an appeal the Rules and Ethics Committee will submit their decision to the full senate in the form of a bill, passage of the bill will require a 2/3 majority vote.

Article IX. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Section A. Recognition

Part 1. Definition

The Senate shall have the sole power to recognize student organizations through legislation enacted by majority vote, and no person, group, or organization shall claim to represent or act for the undergraduate students of the University unless so recognized, provided that the
Senate itself may function as if inherently recognized. In addition to the right to claim affiliation with and use the name of the students of the university, recognized student organizations may use university facilities and services at no or reduced cost and receive mail at the Senate office. Outside affiliation shall not necessarily preclude recognition, as long as it is an open affiliation.

Part 2. Requirements

Executive Board members of Senate recognized organizations shall be elected as established by way of each organization's individual constitution. In the event of a discrepancy between the group’s individual constitution and the legally accepted rules for recognition, SOARC shall have the right to default to the appropriate section of the Model Constitution. Organizations shall hold their annual meetings before April 1 unless special permission has been granted by the SOARC Committee. In order to become an elected officer of any organization, the candidate may be requested to furnish written proof that he or she has not been in poor academic standing (below a 2.0/4.0 cumulative G.P.A.) for greater than two consecutive semesters to the Chairperson of SOARC. A letter from the Office of the Registrar will serve this purpose.

Subpart a. Basic Filings

Any organization may apply for recognition by filing with the Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee a list with at least the minimum number of required members for the intended level of recognition, with first and last names and local phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and a copy of its written purpose and model constitution as well as recent and planned activities. Each recognized student organization must apply for renewal of recognition annually on a date which falls during the first week of October by filing lists of current officers and members as described above, and a brief description of recent and planned activities, and by filing a copy of its written instruments of organization in alternate years or as may be more frequently requested. The descriptions of the categories of recognition are presented in Part 4 of Article IX.

All organizations will have a minimum membership of ten members. (See guidelines for the Model Constitution.)

If at anytime membership drops below the required level, there will be a one-month grace period to meet membership requirements. If by the second month the requirements are not met the group will be reassessed.

Part 3. Criteria

Subpart a. Undergraduate Membership
Subpart b. Non-Discrimination

No organization shall be recognized which fails to provide a specific non-discrimination clause in its written instruments of organization. No recognized student organization shall discriminate or in any way impede equal opportunity on the basis of race, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, age, marital status, nor religious affiliation nor any other non-merit factor.

Subpart c. Health, Safety and Welfare

No organization shall be recognized unless the organization can clearly demonstrate proper risk management, and that it does not present an undue risk to the health, safety and welfare of its membership.

Subpart d. Presumption

Recognition shall be granted solely on the grounds of compatibility with the revisions herein, with the Model Constitution and Bylaws, and with other applicable laws and regulations, and there shall be a presumption of compliance unless disproved. No organization may be denied recognition on the basis of political or philosophical

Part 4. SOARC Recommendation

Subpart a. Unfunded

A group which meets the basic requirements of a URI Student Senate recognized organization may be recognized as an unfunded organization, therefore it is not eligible for funding, for reasons including but not limited to: receipt of a budget from a University academic department, having a mission which is primarily philanthropic in nature, having a mission that is religious in nature, or jeopardizing Senate’s nonprofit status 501(c)(3).

Subpart b. Funded

A funded organization is an organization which shall serve the University of Rhode Island Undergraduate Student community in a unique and/or valuable way. These services can include, but are not limited to providing creative outlets, social gatherings and social events, assisting acquisition of new skills, providing necessary support to other student organizations, serving as a governmental organization and expanding cultural horizons and experiences. Funded organizations may have a mission
statement/organizational aims providing an indispensable service to the student body and/or student organizations at large, through government, or media, or entertainment. Additionally, funded organizations may have a mission statement /the services it provides require funding for a predictable amount each year. This expected cost can be used for the purposes of instruction or any other predictable costs that occurs in the operation of the organization or provision of services of by the organization to the student body. Funded organizations may also not require a budget, however, they may require contingency programming during the course of their operation or during the provision of their services to students and groups.

Subpart c. Appeals of Recommendations for Funding Status

Any Student Senate recognized organization may appeal their funding status to the SOARC committee in writing within two weeks of the decision. The committee will meet with the petitioning organization within 30 days. At such time the appeal will be reviewed by the SOARC chair and the SOARC committee and voted upon via a simple majority. The SOARC committee can decide to change their decision if a change is made a bill will be put on the floor to make said change.

Subpart d. Changes in Filings

Each recognized student organization shall file copies of any amendments to its written instruments of organization after approval by its members, and such amendments shall take effect only upon approval by the Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee, or by the Senate.

Section B. Funds

Part 1. Taxation

Subject to applicable state and federal laws, the power to lay, collect, administer, and allocate taxes upon the undergraduate students of the university shall be reserved to the Senate, and shall not be delegated to any other person, group, or organization. In order to raise or lower the Student Activities Tax, the question must be put before the student body in the form of a binding referendum, and the consent of the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education must be given.

Part 2. Accounting

All funds held or controlled by any recognized student organization shall be deposited with the Student Accounting System. If a recognized student organization demonstrates a specific need, outside accounts may be established by a three-fourths vote in favor by the Finance Committee, or by the Senate. All Student Activities Tax receipts shall be deposited in the Tax Apportionment Account, and no funds shall be drawn from this account except through legislation enacted by two- thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate describing the categories or
purposes for the allocation.

Subpart a. Signatory Power

No check shall be written on a Student Senate, Inc. account, except on receipt of a Payment Order bearing at least two signatures. Of these two signatures, at least one must be that of the President or the Treasurer of the applicable student organization, provided that the Finance Committee Chair or Student Body President may provide the student signature in the absence of the organization President and Treasurer.

The above requirement shall not apply under the following circumstances:

1. Regularly scheduled spring and fall semester classes are not in session.
2. An emergency situation exists which requires that an immediate payment be made to avoid severe consequences, and repeated attempts to locate all students with signatory power over the relevant account have failed. Under these circumstances, the organization in question must be notified of any action taken in a timely manner.

If the above circumstances exist, the authorized administrative signatures will be the Director of Student Involvement, the Assistant Director of Student Involvement, the Assistant Director of Finance, and the Assistant Vice President for Student Life.

Part 3. Purpose of Expenditures

No student activities tax fund may be distributed to organizations to be expended for such purposes which shall include but are not limited to:

1. Worship services and/or events held in a place of worship.
2. Activities that actively attempt to convert participants to a particular religion.
3. Activities that directly support a particular candidate running for any political office, or directly support a political party.

Part 4. Grants

The Senate may by majority vote, make occasional contingency grants of Student Activities Tax funds to any funded student organization. Such grants shall be used for the providing of services or benefits to the student body, and may be accompanied by any restrictions or limitations that may be enacted.

Part 5. Eligibility for Funding by Budget

Subpart a. Definition

The Senate may, by two-thirds (2/3) vote, enact legislation granting eligibility for funding by budget to a funded organization provided that the Senate itself may function as if
inherently eligible for funding by budget. In order to be granted a budget, the Finance Committee must receive a list of names with the appropriate number of undergraduate members from groups wishing to apply for a budget, following the same guidelines as required by initial recognition. An organization granted eligibility for funding by budget may annually prepare and file a budget request for the next fiscal year, showing the total amount needed and a detailed breakdown by such categories as may be defined by the Finance Committee, and may expend allocated funds without other approval by the Senate, or where explicitly stated in the Finance Handbook.

**Subpart b. Criteria**

1. No organization may be granted eligibility for funding by annual budget, contingency or financial benefit package if it refuses membership to any undergraduate student who can meet objective and relevant requirements.
2. No organization may be granted eligibility for funding by annual budget, contingency, or financial benefit package unless its purpose is to provide a public service or benefit to the campus community or its members.
3. No organization may be granted eligibility for funding by budget if it supplements intercollegiate athletic activity. Intercollegiate athletics shall be distinguished from club sports competition against other colleges and universities by the use of professional coaches and trainers, and by the absence of student control of the program.
4. No organization may be granted eligibility for funding by budget if it is affiliated with and receives funds from an organization external to the Student Senate, and a regular flow of funds shall be itself evidence of affiliation, provided that shall not be construed to prohibit receipt of occasional donations and contributions from organizations with which there is no formal affiliation.
5. Eligibility for funding by budget shall be granted on the grounds of compatibility with the provisions herein, and with other applicable laws and regulations, but the burden shall be placed upon the organization applying to show that there is a substantial public interest and benefit associated with the organization.

**Part 6. Budget Allocation**

**Subpart a. Budget Requests**

Each organization filing a budget request shall receive an initial recommendation from the Finance Committee, which it may accept or argue before the Finance Committee at a hearing. After a hearing has been held or waived at the option of the organization, its budget request shall be reported to the Senate by the Finance Committee and shall be separately registered. No organization budget shall be combined with another for voting purposes. Budget requests may be amended, recommitted, and otherwise treated as ordinary legislation, but shall require two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate for final enactment. Budget allocation legislation may also be accompanied by additional restrictions or limitations upon the organization, except in the case of category transfers, amendment of a previously adopted budget shall require two-thirds (2/3) vote.
The Finance Committee shall determine allocations based on the following provisions:

1. Budget determination is grounded in merit factors of the organization without the Finance Committee's knowledge of overall budget restrictions for the following fiscal year.
2. When funded organizations have been given a preliminary allocation, the Finance Committee will introduce a reasonable estimate of the following year's total budget and adjust all organizations through the use of a percentage change graduated according to the following tiers:

   **Student Senate and Affiliates**
   1. Groups whose 2nd recommendation total is greater than $50,000
   2. Groups whose 2nd recommendation total is between $10,000 and $49,999
   3. Groups whose 2nd recommendation total is between $1,000 and $9,999
   4. Groups whose 2nd recommendation total is under $999

   All groups within a particular tier must be cut by the same percentage. The tiers are graduated such that the cut percentage allocated for any tier may not be higher than the cut percentage for the tier above it (e.g. the cut percentage for Student Senate and affiliates will always be larger than the cut percentage for any other group, the cut percentage for groups whose 2nd recommendation total is greater than $50,000 will always be higher than that of groups whose 2nd recommendation total is between $10,000 and $49,999, etc.). It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to calculate the relative cut percentages so as to preserve as much functionality as possible in the largest number of groups, regardless of level.

3. Costs of a group may be deemed exceptional. Exceptional costs are costs determined by the Finance Committee to be fixed due to contractual or legal obligations, or costs determined by the Senate to be critically essential for the continued existence of the group.

4. These exceptional costs will not be subject to the graduated percentage cut.

**Part 7. Category Transfers**

The Senate may by majority vote enact legislation transferring funds in the amount of $1000.01 and over, held in a category of an organization budget for the purpose of allowing flexibility in handling unforeseen or unexpected situations. The Finance Committee, by majority vote, may approve these category transfers between the amount of $250.00 and $1000.00 and the Finance Chair may approve these transfers of less than $250.00. The Finance Chair must report all category transfers that were approved by the Chair or Committee during the weekly report in front of the full Senate.

**Part 8. Stipends**
Stipends are intended to provide financial support for those students who assume positions of responsibility in Student Senate recognized organizations. Said positions typically have an inherent impact on the student life experience. Any established position which was elected in accordance with Student Senate standards, within a student organization recognized by Student Senate as a Funded Organization non-affiliate, that provides a free or unique service not currently provided by the University, and is eligible to receive a budget may, after proving need to the SOARC and the Finance Committee and gaining two/thirds approval of both committees’ consent, and two/thirds approval of the Senate, may be eligible to receive a stipend.

Need shall be defined as, but is not limited to, spending a significant amount of time required in the organizations office to complete position’s duties; maintaining an extensive collection of records open to the public; producing open programming and/or providing a free or unique service to the campus community.

Positions, student or otherwise whose payment schedule is determined by contract, per hour, or per diem; whose members do not pay the Student Activity Tax; or is recognized as unfunded; shall not be eligible for stipends.

Positions which are approved for stipends are to be stipended to compensate for time spent executing duties on the organization’s behalf. Each position so created may be paid in either of the two following schedules

1. Monthly-- The final Tuesday that classes are held during the following months: September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April.
2. Semesterly-- The final Tuesday that classes are held during the following months: November, March.

The amount of each payment and the schedule for each payment must be established with the Finance Committee during the annual budget process; it may not be changed without the Finance Committee’s two/thirds approval vote. Any dispute regarding the payment amount or schedule shall be handled by the Finance Committee in a manner consistent with any other organizational complaint.

Any student organization recognized by Student Senate as a Funded Organization non-affiliate must be recognized continuously for two calendar years; and each established elected position created shall also have existed for three semesters, and have clearly stated in that organization’s Constitution/Bylaws the duties expected of the position holder. Any failure to complete these explicit requirements are proper grounds by the group to withhold or remove any stipend not yet paid to that officer, so long as such disciplinary action is consistent with the procedures outlined in the Senate Bylaws, the organization’s Constitution/Bylaws, and the Model Constitution. At the end of each budgeting season, in order to retain the positions stipend, evidence must be provided of completion of the position’s duties as described in the organization’s Bylaws to the SOARC committee and may retain stipends through two/thirds vote.

Section C. Revocation:

In addition to the powers of the committees of the Senate in protecting the interests of the student body and the integrity of student government, the SOARC, and/or the Finance committees by a majority vote can revoke recognition and eligibility for funding by budget. The finance chair
may temporarily withhold an organizations stipend excluding Senate until finance committee by two/thirds vote can confirm the finance chairs decision.

Such action may be taken for any illegal or improper actions, such as fraud, failure to keep accurate financial records, failure to use only authorized depositories, gross mismanagement, or willful and knowing violation of the Senate Bylaws or rules, or violations of state and federal law. Such legislation must originate from the appropriate committee with jurisdiction (i.e. SOARC or Finance). This decision may be appealed pursuant to Article IX, Section E Appeals.”

Section D. Conflict of Interest

Any member of the Senate may serve in any capacity within the Senate provided they abstain from deliberating and/or voting on any issue that relates to an organization of which they are an executive member, with the exception of those regulations governing service on the Rules & Ethics Committee.

Section E. Appeals

1. All appeals must be handed in, in writing, to the moderator of the Student Senate by no later than two weeks following SOARC and Finance’s decision.
2. The written statement must identify a summary of the grievance and a reason for appealing SOARC and Finance’s decision.
3. The SOARC and Finance Chairpersons will be required to submit the written decision of SOARC and Finance to the moderator of the Student Senate.
4. The executive committee of the Student Senate must vote to determine whether or not the full Senate should hear the appeal. The Chairpersons of SOARC and Finance will not vote on this issue.
5. If the vote is "nay" in the majority, SOARC and Finance’s decision is upheld.
6. If the executive committee votes "aye" in the majority, a date for the hearing will be scheduled by the moderator of the Student Senate by no later than two weeks from the date of the meeting of the executive committee.
7. The appeals process shall take place under "New Business" on the Senate agenda.
8. The moderator of the Senate shall be chairman of this appeal. Each side will be allotted ten (10) minutes for discussion. Student Senators will be allowed to ask questions after each side has been heard.
9. Following the completion of questioning the Senate will deliberate. When deliberation is complete, the moderator will call for a vote.

The vote will be taken by secret ballot and a two-thirds (2/3) majority is required to overrule SOARC and Finance’s decision.

Section F. Organization Responsibilities

All Student Senate recognized organizations are required to abide by the following stipulations:
1. Minutes must be kept from all meetings and submitted to the SOARC chair at the monthly president’s meeting. If two consecutive months are missed the organization may forfeit recognition pending a ruling from SOARC.

2. SOARC may require all recognized student organizations to participate in periodic membership drives from time to time, provided that two weeks (fourteen days) prior notice is given to the organizations.

3. All organizations are required to attend a monthly meeting that will be held on the first Monday of each month, September through May (excluding January) at 7 p.m. In addition to attending the meeting, organizations must fill out a monthly report form. Failure to attend a meeting will result in the following:

   a. Warnings for missing two meetings; revocation of recognition upon the third missed meeting in the same academic year.
   
   b. First Absence: Written Warning
   
   c. Second Absence: Organization’s budget (if applicable) shall be frozen until the organization attends a SOARC meeting to submit an excuse for their absence. The organizations will be notified in writing that their budget has been frozen. The SOARC committee will then determine the length of time that the budget remain frozen, but in any case not to exceed (4) weeks. If the organization does not have a budget, they will receive a second written warning.
   
   d. Third Absence: Permanent revocation of recognition for no less than the remainder of the current academic year.

Article X. AFFILIATES

Section A. Definition

The Senate may when the senate deems necessary, create and/or maintain and/or fund student-run organizations whose primary function is in support of the aims and or governmental purposes and functions of the Senate. Such organizations, hereafter referred to as affiliates, may be considered recognized or a part of the Student Senate for purposes of either contingency grants and or budgeting. Such affiliates may exist in collaboration with URI administrative or academic departments only so long as control of the Affiliate remains with the undergraduate student membership of the Affiliate.

Section B. Eligibility

In keeping with the purpose of Article X. Affiliates, no student organization that has not attempted to participate in the standard Student Organization Recognition System shall be eligible to apply for affiliate status. Eligibility is to be determined by the Senate SOARC committee chair.

Section C. General Provisions
Part 1. Establishment

The Senate may establish an affiliate by a greater than two thirds or 66%+1 vote of the SOARC committee with such a decision to be reviewed by the Student Senate accepted by majority vote.

Part 2. Organization

Affiliates shall establish and maintain their own bylaws which explicitly state their purpose, membership requirements and limitations, methods of officer election, and affiliations with the University of Rhode Island and its constituent departments.

Part 3. Supremacy

Affiliates shall consider all acts of the Senate as binding upon them, and the acts of the Senate shall take precedence over all other acts. The SOARC committee shall have all powers necessary and proper for the general management of affiliates, and shall serve as the primary committee for interactions with affiliates, and shall review and hear all appeals of the Affiliates. The Executive Committee may see fit to delegate this power to any other standing committee of the Senate. Any change to the bylaws of an affiliate must be approved by majority vote of the student membership of that affiliate, and also by majority vote of the SOARC committee before they may go into effect.

Article XI. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Section A. Legislation

All legislation must be typed and submitted to the Moderator of the Senate for registration, and shall be considered to be introduced when read or placed on the agenda at any meeting for advance distribution to the members of the Senate. Legislation shall not be considered until at least one week after it has been introduced, provided that the Senate may, with the concurrence of three-fourths (¾), immediately consider any legislation except bylaws amendments or impeachments. Any individual Senator may sponsor legislation, unless sponsored by a committee. All legislation shall be introduced under New Business and referred to the appropriate committee or committees, and may not be considered until reported out of committee, provided that the Senate may discharge any matter for committee by majority vote. Either the original sponsor of the bill or the committee to which it was assigned will manage all legislation on the floor of the Senate. This is with the understanding that the original sponsor has the first option to manage the legislation on the floor.

Any five (5) senators may bring a bill to the floor of the senate independent of any committee.

All legislation submitted through the Senate with the exception of the annual budgets shall have the following form:
SS – Current School Year/Bill Number – Bill Title
All “whereas” clauses necessary to explain the cause for the bill All “resolved” clauses necessary to describe the bill action Sponsor:

Bill Handler:
Recommendation: (to include the Committee vote: Aye/Nay/Abstain)
Date Introduced:
Date Expires:
Action:

Section B. Debate

No person may speak for longer than ten (10) minutes consecutively on a single question without permission from the Senate by majority vote. There shall be no limitation on the number of times a person may speak in debate, provided that persons not having spoken on a question will be given preference in obtaining the floor over those who have spoken and over non-members of the Senate. No member may yield to another person after using the floor to argue.

Section C. Voting

All members of the Senate except the Moderator of the Senate may vote except as otherwise provided herein, and shall have one (1) vote on questions before the Senate. No member may vote except in person. Except where secret ballot is explicitly provided for herein, the Senate shall vote by roll call whenever any member eligible to vote so requests. The vote of each member during a roll call shall be recorded in the minutes. Each member shall answer the roll call by “aye” when in favor, or by “nay” when opposed, or by “present” or “abstain” when choosing to express no opinion and to have no effect on the result.

Section D. Reports and Records

All written committee reports and other documents dealing with Senate business shall be placed on file. Such information, together with Senate minutes of all meetings, shall be available at all times for examination by members of the Senate. Others may examine the Senate records in the presence of a senator. Confidential materials shall be placed in a confidential file.

Section E. Oath of Office

The oath of office for all members of the Senate shall be: “I, [name], in full realization of the duties and responsibilities of [position], assume these responsibilities in complete good faith and promise to discharge to the best of my ability these duties of [position] of the University of Rhode Island Student Senate and swear to uphold the laws of the state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations and of the United States of America.”

Section F. Meaning of an Aye/Nay Votes
Regardless of the recommendation from a committee on a bill, a vote of ‘Aye’ on any piece of legislation shall mean a vote in favor of passing that legislation. Similarly, a vote of ‘Nay’ shall mean a vote against passing that legislation.

Section G. Order of Business

Regular meetings of the Senate shall proceed according to the following order of business; provided that the Senate may deviate from it on occasion with the concurrence of two-thirds (2/3) vote. Members of the URI community wishing to address the senate during Public Forum are requested to sign up in the Senate Office by 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Persons are given ten (10) minutes to speak, unless otherwise voted by the Senate. No more than thirty (30) minutes shall be devoted to Public Forum.

A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Approval of Agenda
D. Reading and Approval of the Minutes
E. Announcements
F. Public Forum
G. Reports of Standing Committees
   - Finance
   - Student Organization Advisory and Review Committee (SOARC)
   - Academic Affairs
   - External Affairs
   - Cultural Affairs
   - Campus Affairs
   - Executive
      a. Chief Information Officer
      b. Director of Communications
      c. Secretary
      d. Treasurer
      e. Vice President
      f. President
H. Reports of Special Committees
   - Rules and Ethics
   - Elections
   - Other committees that have reports
I. Special Orders
A. Unfinished Business
A. New Business
A. General Discussion and Open Forum
A. Roll Call
A. Adjournment

Section H. Advisor
The Executive Committee, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint an Advisor to the Senate, who shall sign all checks drawn from the Senate Accounting System. This Advisor must be a faculty member or administrator of the university, shall have no vote in any Senate or committee decisions, and may be removed for refusing to sign checks that are not of a fraudulent nature.

Section I. Rules of Order

Part 1. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Senate and its committees in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with the provisions contained herein or any special rules of order that the Senate may adopt.

Part 2. Special Rules of Order

1. Nominations must be seconded to be accepted by the Moderator.
2. Amendments: A friendly amendment is an amendment which, when made on the floor, receives a majority recommendation from the committee members present. Friendly amendments are exempt from discussion and from approval; the amendment is accepted and discussion returns to the main motion as amended. An unfriendly amendment is an amendment which, when made on the floor, fails to receive a majority recommendation from the committee members present. The unfriendly amendment is then subject to the normal rules of order. An amendment made to a bill by a vote of ¾ majority of the Senate cannot be overridden via a friendly amendment, but rather can only be overridden by another ¾ majority vote by the Senate.

Section J. Presiding Officer

The President of the Student Body shall serve as presiding officer of the Senate except when the Senate is called to order in which case the Vice President shall serve as the presiding officer. In the temporary absence of the Vice President, the President shall appoint a Moderator Pro Tempore, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

Article XII. METHOD OF AMENDMENT

These Bylaws may be amended through legislation enacted by three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Senate at any regular meeting, provided that the amendment has been introduced at least once week earlier. If legislation making an amendment to these Bylaws would change the name of an Article, the page number that an Article previously existed on, the name of a Section, and/or the page number that a Section previously existed, or that would establish an additional Article and/or Section, then the Bill Handler of that legislation must include a “Resolved” section on their bill to reflect any changes, including, but not necessarily limited to, the six changes aforementioned, that they may make to the
Table of Contents since the Table of Contents is a part of these Bylaws.