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Memorial Student Union, Room: 201 | 50 Lower College Road,  
Kingston, Rhode Island 02881  
Telephone: (401) 874-2261  
Email: [info@rhodysenate.org](mailto:info@rhodysenate.org)

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**University of Rhode Island Student Senate**  
April 2nd, 2025 General Assembly Agenda

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*Recording Secretary: Lynn Sawyer*

*Meeting Start Time:*

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. ROLL CALL**

**C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**D. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**E. PUBLIC FORUM**

*Catherine Calise and Danielle Madden ~ URI Counseling Center*

**F. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

- Student Organizations Committee
- Academic Affairs Committee
- External Affairs Committee
- Cultural Affairs Committee
- Campus Affairs Committee

**G. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH/CABINET**

- Speaker of the Assembly
- Student Body President
- Student Body Vice President
- Director of the Treasury
- Director of Communications

**H. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

*Elections Committee*

*Constitutional Review Committee*

**I. REPORT OF THE COURT**

**J. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**K. SPECIAL ORDERS**

**L. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## **M. NEW BUSINESS**

### **SS-24/25-45 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “RHODY ROUNDUP LINE DANCING” AS A SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION**

Whereas, the “Rhody Roundup Line Dancing” mission statement is, “To cultivate an environment where students can learn to line dance, make connections, and have fun”, and

Whereas, Rhody Roundup Line Dancing meets the requirements to be a senate-recognized student organization, and

Whereas, it is custom for the senate to do so, therefore be it

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate acknowledges Rhody Roundup Line Dancing as a recognized organization, and be it

Resolved, that Rhody Roundup Line Dancing is provided with the first-year financial benefits package of \$50 which is to be paid out over the course of the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

SPONSOR:	Student Organizations Committee
BILL HANDLER:	Chairman Milner
DATE:	Wednesday, April 2nd 2025
RECOMMENDATION:	(5-0-0)
EXPIRATION:	Valid Until Next Re-Recognition
ACTION:	Vote Tonight

### **SS-24/25-46 – Bill Amending Bylaws Outline Eight New Constituency Seats**

Whereas, Many significant student perspectives are missing from the student senate this creates blindspots in decision making, these roles need to be added from the large student body and not appointed as liaisons internally

Whereas, The Student Senate of the University of Rhode Island benefits from diverse representation from underrepresented student groups, using these perspectives to make more informed decisions benefiting the student body

Whereas, Adding constituency specific roles selects for motivated and qualified senators to represent both the needs of their constituents, but also to serve in full capacity as voting members

Whereas, Adding constituency specific roles advertises need for underrepresented student groups in the senate, and makes their inclusion feel intentional and wanted

Whereas, Replacing existing liaison roles with elected positions will improve follow through for necessary roles, and provide written expectations for accountability, and provide the ability to remove non-participating members if they do not reach their expectations

**Whereas,** The student body is growing, and warrants an increase in size of student representative body

- Resolved,** Add the following sections to Section 1. Legislative Branch “1.6 The Sorority Representative shall be a full-time member of any social sorority recognized by the Panhellenic Association. They shall represent the interests of women in sorority life and act as a communication bridge between the Student Senate and the Panhellenic Association. They shall be responsible for attending a Panhellenic Association meeting or meeting with a Panhellenic Association member three times per semester and giving a formal report of the meeting to the On-Campus and External Affairs Chairs.
- 1.7 The Fraternity Representative shall be a full-time member of any social fraternity recognized by the Interfraternity Council. They shall represent the interests of men in fraternities and act as a communication bridge between the Student Senate and the Interfraternity Council. They shall be responsible for attending an IFC meeting or meeting with an IFC member three times per semester and submitting a written report of the meeting to the On-Campus and External Affairs Chairs.
- 1.8 The Veteran Representative shall be a military veteran or a member of any ROTC program affiliated with URI – even one hosted at another college. They shall represent the interests of students in ROTC. This role shall adopt all responsibilities of the Military Liaison.
- 1.9 The Student Athlete Representative shall be an active member of any NCAA team, regardless of gender. They shall represent the interests of student-athletes.
- 1.10 The Club Sports Representative shall be a member of any of the 17 URI club sports, regardless of gender, and shall represent the interests of club sports organizations. They shall be responsible for attending Club Sports and Intramural Council (CSIC) meetings twice per semester and submitting a formal report of these meetings and club sports news to both the Director of Treasury and the SOC Chair.
- 1.11 The First-Generation Representative shall be the first in their family to pursue higher education. They shall represent the needs and voice the challenges of first-generation college students.
- 1.12 The Transfer Student Representative shall have begun their undergraduate career at another institution. They shall represent the interests of transfer students.
- 1.13 The International Student Representative shall be a student whose admission into the University was handled by the OISS and is considered an international student. They shall represent the needs of international students and meet with a representative from the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) twice per semester. Acceptable OISS contacts include the Director, Advisor, or Coordinator. A report shall be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee Chair and the Cultural Affairs Committee Chair.”

SPONSOR:  
BILL HANDLER:  
DATE:  
RECOMMENDATION:  
EXPIRATION:  
ACTION:

Academic Affairs Committee  
Cole Rinne  
Wednesday, April 2nd, 2025  
(5-0-0)  
Valid Until Review  
Vote Next Week

## **SS-24/25-47 – Bill Amending Constitution To Add Eight New Constituency Seats**

**Whereas,** Many significant student perspectives are missing from the student senate this creates blindspots in decision making, these roles need to be added from the large student body and not appointed as liaisons internally

**Whereas,** The Student Senate of the University of Rhode Island benefits from diverse representation from underrepresented student groups, using these perspectives to make more informed decisions benefiting the student body

**Whereas,** Adding constituency specific roles selects for motivated and qualified senators to represent both the needs of their constituents, but also to serve in full capacity as voting members

**Whereas,** Adding constituency specific roles advertises need for underrepresented student groups in the senate, and makes their inclusion feel intentional and wanted

**Whereas,** Replacing existing liaison roles with elected positions will improve follow through for necessary roles, and provide written expectations for accountability, and provide the ability to remove non-participating members if they do not reach their expectations

**Whereas,** The student body is growing, and warrants an increase in size of student representative body

**Whereas,** Article VIII Section B Part 2: Apportionment, and Article VI Section B: Membership respectively currently reads :

*“Each college constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the First-Year constituency will be apportioned five (5) seats, and the At-Large constituency will be apportioned eleven (11) seats; the remaining seats will be split between the On-Campus and the Off-Campus constituencies in proportion to the number of students in each. Any First-Year seat that cannot be filled will be reapportioned to an At-Large seat up for internal election by the Assembly.”*

And

*“The Assembly is composed of forty-five (45) representatives, who advocate for their constituents and serve on at least one standing committee. Representatives are elected by and from the constituencies that they are to represent and serve a term expiring on the Annual Meeting of the Assembly.”*

**Resolved,** Article VIII Section B Part 2: Apportionment, and Article VI Section B: Membership respectively be rewritten to:

*“Each college constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the First-Year constituency will be apportioned five (5) seats, the club sports constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the student athlete constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the sorority constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the fraternity constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the veteran/ROTC constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the transfer student constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the first generation student constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, the international student constituency will be apportioned one (1) seat, and the At-Large constituency will be apportioned eleven (11) seats; the remaining seats will be split between the On-Campus and the Off-Campus constituencies in proportion to the number of students in each. Any First-Year seat that cannot be filled will be reapportioned to an At-Large*

*seat up for internal election by the Assembly.”*

And

“The Assembly is composed of fifty-three (53) representatives, who advocate for their constituents and serve on at least one standing committee. Representatives are elected by and from the constituencies that they are to represent and serve a term expiring on the Annual Meeting of the Assembly.”

SPONSOR:

Academic Affairs Committee

BILL HANDLER:

Cole Rinne

DATE:

Wednesday, April 2nd,

2025

RECOMMENDATION:

(5-0-0)

EXPIRATION:

Valid Until Review

ACTION:

Vote Next Week

## **SS-24/25-48 – BILL AMENDING THE STUDENT SENATE CONSTITUTION**

Whereas, the Student Senate Constitution has required a large amount of updates for long time now, and

Whereas, all of the previous amendments made to the Constitution focused on specific articles and sections, and

Whereas, the Constitutional Revision Committee was put in place to revise the whole Constitution and present any changes that the committee deems necessary to the Assembly, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Constitutional Revision Committee offers up the following draft to amend the Constitution:

### **ARTICLE I NAME**

This organization shall be named the “University of Rhode Island Student Senate, Inc.,” hereafter referred to as the “Senate.”

### **ARTICLE II PURPOSE**

The Senate shall serve to improve and enhance the quality and scope of education and life at the University of Rhode Island. The Senate (collectively and holistically its Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches) will accomplish this by providing an official, representative government through which the undergraduate student voice may be expressed and ensuring the effective representation of its constituents in University affairs and administration.

### **ARTICLE III POWER AND SCOPE**

The Senate derives its power and legitimacy from the consent of the governed and must discuss matters brought before it by a constituent that affect its constituents as students or as citizens.

The Senate may establish, recognize, and promote activities for the enhancement of student

life, recognize student organizations, and otherwise govern and advocate for its constituents. Student organizations may claim association with the University of Rhode Island only if recognized by the Senate. No organization will be denied recognition on a basis of political, religious, or philosophical viewpoint.

The Senate maintains its 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation status with the Rhode Island Secretary of State for the explicit purpose of protecting its members from questions of liability and ensuring that the Senate remains a distinct and separate entity from the University of Rhode Island and underlying affiliates thereof.

#### **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**

Only undergraduate students of the University of Rhode Island who have paid the Student Activities Tax may serve as members. Members may express themselves as they wish so long as their actions and utterances are in accordance with state and federal law. No person may hold positions simultaneously in multiple branches of the Senate, nor may they hold multiple ranking positions in a single branch.

Degree-seeking undergraduate students who are enrolled part time in at least six credits, who have paid a pro-rated Student Activities Tax, may serve as representatives from that at-large and college constituencies, or in any office of the cabinet or court provided that they meet all other eligibility requirements outlined in this document.

#### **ARTICLE V EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

##### Section A. Authority

The executive power of the Senate is granted to the President, who is assisted by the Vice President and advised by the Cabinet. The Cabinet carries out the instructions of the Senate in detail. Each executive officer has all power necessary and proper to fulfill their responsibilities pursuant to policies and guidelines established by the University of Rhode Island and the state of Rhode Island, including the power to establish and appoint such officials as may be necessary to ensure the completion of their duties. The appointing officer retains all the responsibility of their office. Executive officers serve a term expiring on the Annual Meeting of the Assembly (as defined in Article VI. Legislative Branch).

##### Section B. President

The President provides leadership to the Senate, represents its interests and decisions, and makes at least one (1) nomination to each office of the Cabinet, except the Speaker of the Assembly. All Presidential nominations to the Court and the Cabinet must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Assembly. The President may also dismiss officers of the Cabinet with the exception of the Vice President and the Speaker of the Assembly, with the requirement of a 2/3rds majority confirmation vote by the General Assembly. They may veto acts of the Assembly and refer matters to committees. The President is a signatory of all Student Activities Tax revenue and all monies that are either in the Senate Accounting System or are otherwise controlled by the Senate.

##### Section C. Vice President

The Vice President may speak and act on behalf of the President in that officer's temporary absence and succeeds to the Presidency in the event of a permanent vacancy. Should the Vice Presidency become vacant, the President shall appoint a member of the Assembly to fill the role until the Assembly can elect a replacement. Only the President can make nominations for a

permanent replacement, but is subject to approval by the Assembly by simple majority.

#### Section D. Cabinet

##### *Part 1. Director of Communications*

The Director of Communications facilitates open communication and dialogue between the Senate and its constituents and ensures transparency of the Senate's instruments of organization and records.

##### *Part 2. Director of Treasury*

The Director of Treasury maintains and is a signatory of monies and assets controlled by the Senate, as well as its internal accounts, and ensures the enforcement of the Senate's financial policy. The Treasurer shall also work in collaboration with the Senate Accounting Office.

##### *Part 3. Speaker of the Assembly*

The Speaker of the Assembly chairs all meetings and may speak on behalf of the Assembly. The Speaker also appoints and removes the members of the Assembly's standing committees; removals are subject to the approval of the committee's chair. The Speaker of the Assembly is nominated and elected by and from the Assembly. Any officials duly appointed by The Speaker will serve as ex-officio non-voting members of the Assembly. The Speaker shall clearly communicate the instructions of the Assembly to the Cabinet. The Speaker shall appoint a Speaker Pro Tempore from any voting member of the Assembly to assist the Speaker with their duties and act in their place if they are temporarily unable to do so. In the event that the position of Speaker becomes vacant, the Speaker Pro Tempore shall fulfill the role until the Assembly internally elects a permanent replacement.

##### *Part 4. Absences and Vacancies*

In the event of the temporary absence of an officer of the Cabinet or the vacancy of such an office, with the exception of Speaker of the Assembly, the President will appoint a constituent of the Senate (as defined in Article VIII. Election, Section A Constituencies) to assume the duties of the office until the officer returns or until a successor is duly nominated and confirmed.

##### *Part 5. Meetings*

The Cabinet meets during each week that the Assembly holds a regular meeting. Such meetings are chaired by the President and attended by the Vice President. Chairs of Standing and Special Committees of the Legislative Branch may attend Cabinet upon request of the Speaker of the Assembly.

### **ARTICLE VI LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

#### Section A. Authority

The legislative power of the Senate is granted to the Assembly, which proposes, debates, and considers resolutions establishing and commanding action upon the Senate's policies. The Assembly may overturn a Presidential veto by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

#### Section B. Membership

The Assembly is composed of forty-five (45) representatives, who advocate for their constituents and serve on at least one standing committee. Representatives are elected by and from the constituencies that they are to represent and serve a term expiring on the Annual Meeting of the Assembly.

#### Section C. Meetings

The Assembly meets every week during which classes are held during the spring and fall academic terms, except when otherwise ordered by a majority of Chairs of standing committees. The second meeting of April shall be the Annual Meeting.

## Section D. Committees

### *Part 1. Delegation*

Committees deliberate on, propose, and, when necessary, ensure action upon resolutions relevant to their areas of concern. Standing committees have areas of concern that are permanent in nature, while special committees deal with temporary issues. *Part 2. Standing Committees*

- Subpart a. Academic Affairs

The Academic Affairs Committee is concerned with matters of an academic nature and the rights of constituents as students.

- Subpart b. Campus Affairs

The Campus Affairs Committee is concerned with matters occurring on University property.

- Subpart c. Cultural Affairs

The Cultural Affairs Committee is concerned with matters of campus climate and the rights of constituents as citizens.

- Subpart d. External Affairs

The External Affairs Committee is concerned with matters occurring off of University property.

- Subpart e. Student Organizations

The Student Organizations Committee is concerned with the recognition and maintenance of student organizations and affiliates, and with the Student Activities Tax. *Part 3. Special Committees*

The Assembly may establish any committee the area of concern of which is both temporary and not in conflict with the charge of a standing committee.

## Section E. Officers

The chair of a committee is its presiding officer and spokesperson, and calls its meetings, while the vice-chair assumes these responsibilities during the chair's absence. In the event of the vacancy of a chair, the vice-chair serves as the chair until the Assembly elects a replacement. The chair and vice-chair of each committee must also hold a representative seat. (

The Senate Officers shall consist of the Speaker of the Senate, Parliamentarian, and Committee Chairs. The Senate Officers shall be selected according to the procedure in the Student Senate By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE VII JUDICIAL BRANCH**

### Section A. Formation

The jury shall be formed of five (5) nominated members of the Assembly on the occasion that there is an internal matter that needs attending to. These members are nominated and confirmed by a simple majority vote by the assembly. Nominations may be subject to Presidential veto, which may be overturned by the Assembly as outlined in Article VI, Section A. Section B. Authority

In the event a jury is formed to handle an internal matter, they shall have the power to conduct an investigation with the parties involved. The jury shall then report their findings to the Assembly and present a recommended course of action on the matter, to which is then approved or rejected by a simple majority vote of the Assembly. Any and all matters involving the investigation must remain confidential until the investigation is concluded and the findings are reported to the Assembly.

### Section C. Membership

The Court is composed of five (5) Jurists, one of whom is named the Head Jurist by the Assembly. The Head Jurist chairs Court meetings and represents the Court's decisions to the Senate. Jurists maintain a comprehensive understanding of the Senate's instruments of organization. The jury shall be disbanded once the matter is resolved.

## **ARTICLE VIII ELECTIONS**

### Section A. Constituencies

Only undergraduate students at the University of Rhode Island who pay the Student Activities Tax may be in a constituency; all such students will be members of the At-Large Constituency. The On-Campus Constituency consists of students living on property that is owned or managed by the University of Rhode Island, while the Off-Campus Constituency consists of all other students. The First-year Constituency consists of students who were not enrolled at the University previous to the current academic year. The University College and each undergraduate, degree-granting college shall have a constituency consisting of all its enrolled students.

## **ARTICLE IX FUNDS**

### Section A. Taxation

Only the Senate administers and allocates the Student Activities Tax; changes must be approved by referendum and the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees.

### Section B. Distribution

Revenues from the Student Activities Tax may only be allocated to a budget by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Assembly and may only be spent to benefit the Senate's constituents in manners which do not discriminate based on viewpoint. Monies and assets may not be expended without the written order of two (2) of an account's signatories. The Assembly may allocate funds to any recognized student organization or affiliate.

### Section C. Restrictions

No Student Activities Tax revenue may be spent in support of political parties, as distinct from student organizations with clear party affiliation, or candidates running for political office, nor may it be spent to convert persons to a religion.

## **ARTICLE X IMPEACHMENTS AND DISCIPLINE**

Members may be impeached or penalized for failing to responsibly uphold the duties of their position or for criminal acts.

It is the purview of the Court to determine the validity and soundness of a charge, but the burden of the Assembly to determine and assign appropriate penalties. The rights, duties, or offices of a member may only be removed or abridged by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the full Assembly, and only after a fair trial.

## **ARTICLE XI INSTRUMENTS**

This Constitution has authority over all other documents produced by the Senate, which may enact and maintain policy handbooks and by-laws, and over all recognized student organizations and affiliates.

The Senate's instruments of organization are equally binding all to whom they apply.

## **ARTICLE XII AMENDMENT**

Amendments to this Constitution may be approved only by three-fourths (3/4) of the Assembly and must have been distributed to the Assembly at least two (2) weeks before they are voted on. Amendments must be ratified by referendum put before the At-Large constituency to become permanent.

Amendments which solely correct spelling, punctuation, terminology, or numerical standard, or which must be made to bring this document into compliance with Federal, State, Local, or University policy, may be made at any time by order of the President. Such amendments need not be approved by the Assembly or ratified by referendum.

All amendments shall be outlined below the constitution.

SPONSOR:

BILL HANDLER:

DATE:

RECOMMENDATION:

EXPIRATION:

ACTION:

Constitutional Revision Committee

Chair Cayer

April 2nd, 2025

(5-0-0)

Valid Until Review

Vote Next Week

## **N. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM**

## **O. ADJOURNMENT**

*Meeting End Time:*