Article 0.5. Transitional Bylaws

Section 1. Authority

1.01 If articles are not stated within this document, then the Senate will rely on the most recent copy of that article from the previous Spring 2019 bylaws until the Bylaws Committee completes its charge and reworks it.

1.02 The following laws take precedence over any other bylaws in use.

1.03 Any discrepancies or problems that should arise because of Article 0.5 shall be handled by the Court.

Section 2. Judicial Transition

2.01 In order to elect a Court, the most recent members of Rules and Ethics shall serve as de facto Jurists during the Court Elections.

2.02 Members of Rules and Ethics are only given the power to vote in Court Elections, and do not hold any other Judicial jurisdiction. They remain members of the Assembly.

2.03 If the newly elected Court contains no members of the previous Rules and Ethics Committee, there will be a two (2) week grace period where members of Rules and Ethics will act as mentors to the new Jurists by attending all Court meetings. Former
members of Rules and Ethics are bound to the same expectations of discretion and confidentiality as Jurists regarding those two weeks.

Section 3. Temporary Law

3.01 Transitional Bylaws are to be removed as soon as the charge stated is completed or when the Bylaws Committee delivers its final report.

Article 1. Members

0.01 In order to be elected as a member in any branch of the Senate, a candidate shall be required, upon request, to furnish written proof that they have not been in poor academic standing, defined as having a GPA of 2.00/4.00 or lower, for greater than two (2) consecutive semesters. A letter from the Office of the Registrar will serve this purpose. This duty will be given to the Coordinator of the Senate, or to the Advisor should there be no Coordinator. No other eligibility requirement shall be imposed which requires examination or release of academic, disciplinary, or other private records protected under the law.

Section 1. Legislative Branch

Representatives
1.01 Each representative shall be responsible for interacting with, advocating for, and engaging regularly with the members of their constituency. Such engagements can include but are not limited to; sponsoring a bill or resolution on the Senate floor that directly affects their constituency, organizing meet ups with constituents, discussing Senate affairs with constituents, and/or engaging constituents in the elections process.

1.02 Non-matriculating students who pay the Student Activities Tax are considered members of University College for all purposes. College Representatives shall serve ex officio as the formal liaison to the college which they are elected to represent, and to this end shall work directly with the Dean of the corresponding college and with the Dean’s subordinates. They shall meet with the Dean of their college at least once a month.

1.03 The on-campus constituency shall consist of all undergraduate students who live in any capacity on any property under the jurisdiction of the URI Campus Police, and all other students shall be members of the off-campus constituency. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Elections to determine the number of representatives to which each constituency is mathematically entitled such that the distribution of seats is proportional to the number of students in each constituency.
1.04 First year seats will be eligible to any undergraduate student who is spending their first year at the University of Rhode Island. The first year is determined by their first Fall semester and their first Spring semester, regardless of order.

1.05 At Large seats will draw their constituency from all undergraduate students who pay the Student Activities Tax.

**Officers**

1.06 The Moderator of the Assembly will appoint a Recording Secretary of the Assembly, who will record minutes at meetings of the Assembly.

1.07 The Moderator of the Assembly will compile and distribute agendas for meetings of the Assembly.

**Section 2. Executive Branch**

2.01 The President serves ex officio as the President of the Student Body.

2.02 The Vice President serves ex officio as the Vice President of the Student Body.

2.03 The Director of Treasury serves ex officio as the Treasurer of the Student Body and has fiduciary responsibility to the Student Body.

2.04 The Director of Operations serves ex officio as the Treasurer of the Senate and has fiduciary responsibility to the Senate.
2.05 The offices of the President and Vice President may not be held simultaneously with any officership of any recognized student organization.

2.06 The Officers serve as a liaison between the standing committees and the Assembly

Section 3. Judicial Branch

3.01 The Court will appoint a Recording Secretary, who will take minutes of all Court meetings, and are a non-voting member of the Court.

Section 4. Liaisons

4.01 Each branch of the Senate shall be allowed to appoint liaisons to various people and organizations with the assumption that each liaison position serves to help further the work of the branch that appointed them. Liaison positions do not grant voting power.

Liaisons to the Assembly

4.02 Any liaisons appointed by the Assembly gain all the rights of any representative except the right to vote. Liaisons to the Assembly are created by a majority vote of any committee, and are appointed by the Chairperson of that committee. Liaisons are expected to attend all meetings of the committee to which they were appointed if
summoned by the Chair, and are expected to deliver a report of their work bi-weekly to
the Chairperson of their appointing committee.

Liaisons to the Cabinet

4.03 Any liaisons appointed by the Cabinet gain all the rights of any Cabinet member except
the right to vote. Liaisons to the Cabinet are created and appointed by the President.

Liaisons are expected to attend Cabinet meetings, and are expected to deliver a report of
their work bi-weekly to the President.

Inter-Senate Liaisons

4.04 In order to maintain healthy communication between the Senate and its members,
positions of some members also serve as acting liaisons to other branches. The Moderator
serves as the Legislative Liaison to the Cabinet and the Court. The President serves as the
Executive Liaison to the Assembly and the Court. The Head Jurist may appoint a Judicial
Liaison to serve between the Assembly and the Cabinet. These positions are for reporting
purposes, and do not come with any additional powers.

Section 5. Rights, Privileges, Obligations

Assembly
5.01 Each person who is a representative of the Assembly shall have the right and obligation to be present for the duration of all general meetings of the Assembly. They shall enjoy the right to engage in commentary and debate on the Assembly floor, and to make or second motions in, and vote on questions put before committees of which they are a member.

Cabinet

5.02 Each person who is a member of the Cabinet, the Vice President, and the President shall have the right and obligation to be present for the duration of all Cabinet meetings. They shall enjoy all the same rights on the floor of a Cabinet meeting as representatives have on the Assembly floor.

Court

5.03 Each Jurist shall have the right and obligation to be present for the duration of all meetings of the Court. They shall enjoy all the same rights during any meeting of the Court as a representative would have on the Assembly floor.

Conflict

5.04 The right to miss part or all of a meeting due to an educational conflict (class time, exam, etc;) can be given by the meeting’s presiding officer.
Article 2. Legislative Branch

Section 1. Office Hours

1.01 Each member of the Legislative branch must spend at least two (2) hour every week in the Senate’s office so that they may better communicate with their peers, conduct their projects, and be available to their constituents.

1.02 Any member of the Executive or Legislative branches may substitute a single office hour weekly attending either a Senate-run event or a student organization meeting of which the person is not a member. Members of the Executive must make it publicly known that they’re missing their office hours.

Section 2. Relief

2.01 Any member of the Assembly may be temporarily excused from their duties for reasons including, but not limited to, a personal illness or injury, death or serious illness or injury in the family, an exam, or a religious holiday.

2.02 The Chair should be informed as soon as practicable of an absence or need for relief.

2.03 Unless a temporary replacement has been duly appointed or elected, it is the responsibility of the excused representative to ensure that their office is faithfully conducted during their absence.
2.04 If no temporary replacement is duly appointed or elected, the member is allowed to send a proxy to any meetings of a body within the Assembly of which they are a member. The proxy will generally carry out the absentee’s position during the meeting, but will not be allowed to make motions or vote. A body must be notified of the appointment of a proxy, and such notification must come from the absentee. The absentee is responsible for the actions of the proxy.

Section 3. Parliamentary Procedure

Standing Rules

3.01 Any branch of the Senate may internally adopt such standing rules as it may deem necessary.

Legislation

3.02 Legislation (resolutions which bind the Senate to act) must be typed and submitted to the Moderator of the Assembly to be put on the agenda. Legislation may not be considered by the Assembly until at least a week has passed since its appearance on an agenda except by the consent of three-fourths (¾) of the Assembly. No legislation may be considered until a committee or any group of five (5) or more representatives has provided recommendations for passage, failure, or amendments.
Debate

3.03 No person may speak for longer than five (5) minutes consecutively on a single question without permission from the Assembly by majority vote.

3.04 There shall be no limit 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 Assembly.

3.05 No member may yield to another person after using the floor to argue.

Voting

3.06 Each duly elected representative may cast one (1) vote on each question put before the Assembly, but may not cast their vote except in person. It is the right of any representative to demand that a vote be taken by roll, in which case the vote of every member will be recorded in the minutes, or by secret ballot. A call for vote by secret ballot takes precedence over a call for vote by roll.

Section 4. Reports and Records

4.01 All written committee reports and other documents dealing with Assembly business must be filed with the Director of Information. Such information, together with the minutes of
all meetings of the Assembly, will be available at all times for examination by members of the Senate. Confidential materials will be placed in a confidential file.

Section 5. Oath of Office

5.01 The oath of office for all members of the Assembly will 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 6. Standing Committees

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

6.02 It will be the responsibility of each vice chair to provide the Director of Information with meeting minutes within three (3) business days and to maintain a portfolio of the committees past and present work to be provided to the DOI.

6.03 Committees are expected to follow the following procedures:

6.31 The chair may be overruled on any matter with a three-fourths (¾) vote of the committee.
6.32 A recommendation for action upon legislation shall be determined by a majority vote of the committee.

6.33 Each standing committee shall meet at least once during each week that the Assembly holds a regular meeting, but may not meet while the Assembly is called to order.

Part 1. Student Organization Committee

6.40 The Student Organization Committee provides the Assembly recommendations on legislation concerning the recognition or funding of student organizations and affiliates, assists them in carrying out their missions, and proposes the Senate’s annual budget in the Spring semester for the following fiscal year. They may freeze accounts that are in violation of established financial policy by a three-fourths (¾) vote. They can apportion and review stipends by a majority vote.

6.41 The Student Organization Committee, in conjunction with the Instruments Committee, will create and maintain a Finance Handbook to codify financial policies and practices for student organizations organized and proposed for Assembly approval.

6.42 In the case where there is a dispute between student organizations, the Student Organizations Committee have all powers necessary and proper to mediate and settle these problems. Upon receiving a complaint, the Chair must reach out to both organizations and schedule a meeting between them and the Committee if they deem it
necessary to fix the issue. If a final decision needs to be made between the organizations, the Committee will vote by majority as to the course of action that needs to be taken.

**Part 2. Campus Affairs Committee**

6.50 The chairperson of the Campus Affairs committee will appoint the Campus Housing Liaison, who will be required and empowered to act as the formal liaison to the Office of Housing the Residential Life. 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 3. Academic Affairs Committee**

6.60 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:

6.61 Recommend students for faculty and university wide committees related to academic issues to the President.
6.62 Act as a liaison between Student Senate and Faculty Senate. This will involve attending monthly Faculty Senate meetings and serve on various Faculty Senate committees.

6.63 Communicate any grievances if a complaint or problem arises in an Academic College or academic services and will recommend a 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.

6.64 Review submitted College Liaison reports for occurrences pertinent to concurs 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 Reference Officer to help foster this communication by offering college liaisons meeting templates, suggestions/questions for discussion, contact information, etc.

Part 4. External Affairs Committee

6.70 The chairperson of the External Affairs Committee shall appoint the Commuter Housing Liaison, who is required and empowered to serve as the formal liaison to the Commuter Housing Office. The External Committee will work in areas concerning students to remain knowledgeable about off campus issues and student rentals.
Part 5. Cultural Affairs Committee

6.80  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 organize and execute at least one program during their term.

Part 6. Instruments Committee

6.90  The Instruments Committee oversees the governing documents and articles of the Student Senate and promotes literacy regarding them.

Article 3. Judicial Branch

Section A. Authority

1.10  The Court may overturn any act of the Executive or the Assembly if it is not in compliance with the Senate’s instruments of organization.

1.20  The Court may only rule on questions submitted with the signature approval of two undergraduate students of the University of Rhode Island.
1.30 The Court may only rule on questions after attempting to hear all relevant arguments.

1.40 The Court may enforce its own rulings or require the Executive to enforce rulings.

1.50 Decisions of the Court may not be appealed.

Section B. Proceedings

2.10 Proceedings involving the Court must take place at meetings which are open to the public unless proceedings concern possible disciplinary action such as a trial.

2.20 If the Court challenges an act of the Legislative or Executive because it may not be in compliance with the Senate’s instruments of organization, the Court by unanimous vote may temporarily suspend all of the effects of any measure until a final ruling is made.

Section C. Meetings

3.10 The Court will meet as necessary at the call of the Head Jurist or any two jurists.

3.20 The reason for the meeting must be stated in the call.

3.30 Reasonable notice must be given.

Section D. Records

4.10 The Court will store independent records of its meetings and acts in a secure location.

4.20 No person other than a Jurist or the Recording Secretary may access the Court records without approval.
Section E. Reversal

5.10 Court decisions may only be overturned by unanimous vote of the Court.

5.20 Only the Court may ask itself to reverse decisions.

Article 4. Rules for Trial and Discipline

Section A. Definitions

1.10 **Prosecution**: the party which brings a case before the Assembly for a trial; typically the Court, possibly a Special Committee (see 2.03 below).

1.20 **Defendant**: the party against which a complaint was filed.

1.30 **Designated Authority**: member of the Prosecutor present at each trial only to ensure it is conducted properly.

1.40 **Prosecutor**: a member of the Prosecutor present to represent the Prosecutor in trial.

1.50 **Defendant Representative**: a person chosen by the Defendant to represent the Defendant in trial.

1.60 **Dated Complaint**: a complaint including the date of submission.

Section B. Complaint Procedure
2.10 When the Court receives a dated complaint against an act or behavior that could result in disciplinary action, they will inquire into the complaint and make all reasonable efforts to meet with the Defendant and any relevant parties.

2.20 After inquiring into the complaint, the Court will write a report which will include the substance of the complaint, any charge that may derive from it, the recommended course of action, and the resolutions necessary to pursue that course of action.

2.30 If the Court fails to produce a report about a complaint after fifteen (15) business days following the submission of a dated complaint or if the complaint is submitted against a member of the Court, the Assembly may form a Special Committee who are not members of the Senate to process that one complaint in the same manner as the Court.

2.40 The recommended action and resolutions must be relevant to the charge at hand.

2.50 If the Court or Committee recommends no action need be taken, then no trial will be held.

2.60 If the Court or Committee recommends action be taken, the complaint will go to trial and the Court or Committee will be the Prosecution for that trial.

Section C. Trial Preliminaries

3.10 The trial shall be held during the next regular meeting of the Assembly after two (2) business days following the day the Court or Committee recommends action.
3.20 The Prosecution must provide two (2) business days’ notice to the Defendant to appoint a Defendant Representative; the notice must include the time and place of the meeting and a copy of the charges.

3.30 The Prosecution must appoint both a Designated Authority and a Prosecutor by and from its own membership.

3.40 The Defendant will appoint a Defendant Representative.

3.50 If no Defendant Representative is present for the trial, the trial will proceed without a defense.

3.60 The trial must be the first item of business before the Assembly at its next regular meeting where a quorum is present.

Section D Trial Procedure

4.10 The Trial will be closed to all but the members of the Assembly, the Designated Authority, the Prosecutor, and the Defendant Representative.

4.20 The Designated Authority may speak only to raise questions/points of order.

4.30 The Chair will read the charges.

4.40 The Prosecutor will read their report, to which the Defendant Representative will be allowed to respond.
4.50 The Prosecutor and Defendant Representative will both be allowed to introduce witnesses and evidence as they see fit, and cross-examination and rebuttal will be allowed for each at the discretion of the Chair.

4.51 The Prosecutor and Defendant Representative will each be allowed closing remarks.

4.60 After closings remarks, the Prosecutor and Defendant Representative will leave the chamber.

4.70 The Assembly will discuss and vote on each individual resolution proposed by the Prosecution as though they had been moved and seconded by the Assembly.

4.80 All votes are to be taken by secret ballot. The Chair will appoint three members of the Senate to count the ballots which must include the Designated Authority.

4.90 No measures may be passed which are more extreme than the resolutions recommended by the Prosecution, but must be relevant to the charge at hand.

4.91 If no further resolutions are to be voted on, the Chair will re-open the meeting.

Section E. Discretion

5.10 The Prosecution, the Assembly, the Designated Authority, Prosecutor, Defendant Representative, and all involved parties must ensure to their utmost the privacy of the Defendant and various complainants and witnesses at all times; The Senate may publish that an individual has been disciplined or expelled, but may not reveal charges, evidence,
or witnesses unless the Court determines it is absolutely necessary; proceedings under the
provisions of this chapter are to take place in sessions which are closed to the public.

Article 5. Rules for Student Organizations

Part 1: Definition

1.01 The Senate may recognize student organizations whose missions and actions are unique
and serve to better the University community.

1.02 Recognition may be granted by a majority vote of the Assembly.

Part 2: Eligibility for Recognition

2.01 No student organization may be recognized which does not have at least ten (10)
members, of whom a majority are undergraduate students.

2.02 The Senate will maintain a Model Constitution at the advice of the Student Organizations
Committee, and no student organization may be recognized unless it has approved a
constitution containing all provisions of the Model Constitution or reasonable substitutes
therefor.

2.03 No organization may be recognized which cannot demonstrate that it does not present an
undue risk to the health, safety, and welfare of its membership or the student body.
2.04 Student organizations must meet and follow the proper election rules for officers provided by the Student Senate. They must meet regularly.

2.05 The Student Organization Committee will advise the Assembly on whether or not an organization should be recognized based solely on the provisions of the Senate’s instruments of organization.

2.06 No Organization shall be recognized unless three members of the executive board have received Bystander Awareness Training through the i-Stand Program.

2.07 Training sessions will be offered at the first and last Student Organizations Meeting of the year.

2.08 If members are not able to attend these trainings offered at the President’s Meeting, they must set up their own training through the i-Stand office within a reasonable time as deemed appropriate by the Student Organizations Committee.

2.09 Following the elections for the executive board in the Spring, clubs will have until the first President’s meeting of the following semester.

2.10 The Senate may function as though it were inherently recognized.

Part 3: Rules for Recognized Student Organizations

3.01 The President of each student organization must attend a monthly Student Organizations meeting hosted by the Student Organizations Committee either in person or by proxy to
discuss upcoming events and reflect on relevant experiences. Five (5) business days’
notice will be given for these meetings.

3.02 Organizations, once recognized, must reapply annually in order to be re-recognized.

3.03 If student organizations have a problem or dispute between them, the officers may reach
out to the Student Organizations Committee to mediate the issue. This complaint must be
made in writing or through an email.

Part 4: Non-Discrimination Clause

4.01 No organization shall be permitted to discriminate or in any way impede equal
opportunity on the basis of race, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national
origin, age, marital status, political affiliation, nor religious affiliation nor any other
non-merit factor unless discrimination is relevant and important to the mission of the
organization.

4.02 Discrimination is relevant and important to the mission of the organization if including
members whose nature or viewpoint disrupts the functioning of the organization in such a
way that the organization’s freedom to associate is compromised.

4.03 The Student Organization Committee determines whether discrimination is relevant and
important.
Part 5: Revocation of Recognition

5.01 The Senate may, at any time, cease to recognize any student organization which poses a clear and direct threat either to the Senate or the Student Body, jeopardizes the Senate’s status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, or fails to meet recognition requirements. Such an act must be done through legislation proposed by the Student Organizations Committee.

Article 6. Summer Assembly

Part 1. Membership

1.01 At the last general meeting of the Academic year, the Assembly will elect the representatives needed to form the Summer Assembly. Nominations will open at the general meeting the week before.

1.02 The President, Vice President and Director of Treasury may attend meetings of the Summer Assembly in person or electronically if they chose, but are not members themselves.

1.03 One member of the Summer Assembly will record minutes, and will send them to the Director of Information as well as the Senate.

1.04 Each standing committee of the Senate shall have one member of the Summer Assembly representing them and their interests. One representative may represent multiple committees.
Part 2. Legislative Power

2.01 Quorum for the Summer Senate is a majority.

2.02 The Summer Senate shall foster open communication with the general Senate and student organizations. This communication shall be maintained through the emailing of meeting agendas and minutes to the Senate.

2.03 If the Summer Senate wishes 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.

2.04 In the event of an emergency, the Summer Assembly may vote on a bill worth over $1000 without waiting a minimum of 72 hours.

2.05 An emergency shall be defined as an incident which has caused or is likely to cause immediate threat to life, health, property, or environment.

2.06 The Summer Senate may not make changes to the Senate’s instruments of organization or pass disciplinary measures.

Part 3. Court

3.01 The Court may not convene over the Summer except with the unanimous consent of the jurists, and may not summon others to its meetings during this time.
Article 7. 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, the name of a Section, and/or the page number of a Section, or that would establish an additional Article and/or Section, then the legislation must include appropriate changes to the Table of Contents. Amendments which solely correct spelling, punctuation, terminology, or numerical standard, or which bring this document into compliance with Federal, State, Local, or University policy, or which correct errors regarding the Table of Contents, may be made at any time by the Instruments Committee. Such amendments need not be approved by the Assembly.