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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
SEC. A. PURPOSE
We, the undergraduate students of the University of Rhode Island, do ordain and establish this Constitution and Bylaws for the University of Rhode Island Student Senate. The Senate shall serve to enhance the quality and scope of life and education at the University of Rhode Island by providing an official representative government for the student body through the investigation of student issues, providing action when necessary, fostering an awareness of students’ role in the academic community, providing the official representative voice of the student body; through which student opinion may be expressed, and encouraging the development of responsible student participation in the organization of student affairs and in the overall policy and decision making process of the University of Rhode Island.

SEC. 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 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 Senate from any and all questions of liability, and also to ensure that the Senate remains a separate and distinct entity from the University of Rhode Island and all underlying affiliates.

SEC. 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 Senate shall pass resolutions upon them in the name of the student body, circulate petitions, distribute leaflets, and take other action respecting such matters.

SEC. 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 all power necessary and proper to ensure effective undergraduate student participation and representation in the affairs and administration of the University of Rhode Island.
SECTION E. SUPREMACY
The Senate’s bylaws shall serve as the main governing document of the Senate and all of its recognized organizations, and affiliations. All other documents produced by the Senate shall fall under the jurisdiction of these bylaws.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERS
SECTION A. REPRESENTATIVES
In addition to its officers, the Senate shall be composed of forty-five (45) popularly elected representatives.

Each representative shall be elected by and from the members of the constituency that they will represent, a constituency being defined as a group of undergraduate students sharing a common residency status, grade, or college, who shall be represented by one or more representative seats on the Senate. Only undergraduate students who pay the Student Activities Tax may be a member of a Senate constituency.

Each person who is a representative on the Senate shall interact and engage regularly with, and advocate for, their constituents in a manner deemed appropriate by the Vice President.

PART 1. COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES
One (1) representative shall be elected by and from University College, and one (1) by and from each of the eight (8) undergraduate, degree-granting colleges of the University of Rhode Island, enumerated as the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Educational and Professional Studies, Engineering, Environmental and Life Sciences, Health Sciences, Pharmacy, and Nursing. Each of those nine (9) colleges shall be its own constituency consisting of all its undergraduate members. 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, expanded upon in Article V Section C Part 1 of these bylaws.

PART 2. HOUSING REPRESENTATIVES
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. These constituencies shall collectively elect twenty (20) representatives. 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.
PART 3. FRESHMAN REPRESENTATIVES
Five (5) representatives shall be elected by and from the Freshman constituency, which shall consist of all undergraduate students who had thirty (30) or fewer credits at the beginning of the academic year, during the annual Fall Election.

PART 4. AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVES
Eleven (11) representatives shall be elected by and from the At-Large constituency, which shall consist of all undergraduates who pay the Student Activities Tax.

SECTION B. ELIGIBILITY
No person other than a full-time or part-time undergraduate student at the University of Rhode Island who pays the Student Activities Tax may be a member of the Senate. In order to serve as a representative or officer on the Senate, a candidate shall be required, upon request, to furnish written proof that he or she has not been in poor academic standing, defined as having a GPA of 2.00/4.00 or lower, 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 C. RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES, OBLIGATIONS
PART 1. MEMBERS OF THE SENATE
Each person who is a member of the Senate, except those members whose specific section of these bylaws state otherwise, shall have the right and obligation to be present for the duration of all of general meetings of the Senate. They shall enjoy the right to engage in commentary and debate on the Senate floor, and to make or second motions in, and vote on questions put before, committees of which they are a member.

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

The term of each member of the Senate shall end upon the swearing in of their successor.

PART 2. SENATORS
Each person who is an elected representative or is the chairperson of a standing committee of the Senate, excluding the President, shall be considered a Senator.
Senators shall be eligible to all of the rights, privileges, and obligations conferred to members of the Senate in Article III Section C Part 1 of these bylaws. Furthermore, they shall have the right and obligation 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 the specific duties of that member. Senators shall enjoy the right to make and second motions and to vote on the Senate floor.

SECTION D. ATTENDANCE
Each person who is an officer or representative in the Senate 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 shall constitute a half-attendance, and shall accrue in the same manner as full absences. Each member of the Senate will be allowed three absences, two of which must be excused. A request to be excused from a meeting must be presented to the Vice President of the Senate before noon on the day of the meeting. Valid excuses for absence are an exam scheduled during a general Senate meeting, a religious holiday, or a death or serious illness in a family.

After a member of the Senate has accumulated three or more absences, they shall be required to submit 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 on the validity of the excuse. If no additional excuses are presented, the Rules and Ethics Committee shall remove the person from Senate.

If a member of the Senate misses a meeting of a standing committee to which they are appointed, the penalty for the first and second offenses shall be a written warning from the chairperson, who shall also inform the Vice President, and removal from Senate upon the third offense.

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

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 Senate shall not meet on the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving.

SECTION B. ANNUAL MEETING
The first regular meeting of April 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 opening of internal elections for the Executive Officers, and for any other business that may arise.

SECTION C. SUMMER SENATE

PART 1. MEETINGS AND MEMBERS
The President, Vice President, Finance Chair, and two Senators elected by the Senate at the final meeting of the academic year, shall conduct the business of Senate during the summer recess, and shall meet at least one time a month. In the event that any required member cannot serve, the Senate shall elect replacements. At the first meeting of the Summer Senate, one of the two Senators shall be appointed to serve as the Secretary, and shall be required to take the minutes of meetings of the Summer Senate, and submit them to the Vice President within three (3) business days. If no officer with signatory power remains, one shall be appointed by the President.

These meetings will begin after the conclusion of the Spring Semester and continue until the first Student Senate meeting of the fall semester. Quorum for the Summer Senate is three fourths.

PART 2. COMMUNICATION
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 general Senate.

PART 3. RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS
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. In the event of an emergency, the Senate may vote on a bill worth over $1000 without waiting a minimum of 72 hours. An emergency shall be defined as an incident which has caused or is likely to cause immediate threat to life, health, property, or environment. The Summer Senate may not make changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Senate.

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 D.

Chairpersons and Speakers may call special meetings of their committees following the above guidelines, except that they must provide one (1) day’s notice and cannot call special meetings while school is not in session.

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 by the Executive Committee to internally elect a new
SECTION E. CLOSED MEETINGS
Any committee of the Senate or the Senate as a whole may hold a meeting closed to the public upon the affirmative vote of the majority of its members, if the meeting consists of the following conditions:

1. Discussion of job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person or persons, provided that such persons have been notified in advance. Such persons can require that the discussion be held at an open meeting.
2. Any investigation proceedings regarding allegations of misconduct, either civil or criminal.
3. Any matter, including the investment of public funds, whereupon the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest.

If any of these conditions are not met, the meeting shall be held open to the public, and the minutes of that meeting shall also be accessible to the public. The reason for closing a meeting, as well as the results of any vote taken during the meeting shall be made available to the public at the next general meeting of the body unless disclosure of such information would adversely affect the public interest.

All members of the Rules & Ethics Committee are required to recuse themselves from any closed meetings except in cases where they are managing a complaint or bill, where there are impeachment proceedings, or in the case of a discussion of public funds.

The minutes of a closed meeting shall be stored under the supervision of the Rules & Ethics Committee, and they shall be accessible only to those members of the body who were present for the entirety of the meeting until those minutes are approved for public disclosure.

Minutes of a closed meeting shall be open to the public upon an affirmative vote of the majority of the Rules & Ethics committee who shall review such minutes only upon receipt of a written request. No minutes shall be so reviewed more than once per academic year.

SECTION F. QUORUM
A majority of the persons eligible to participate in the proceedings of the Senate as voting members shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION G. NOTIFICATION
The Senate shall foster open communication. Official notifications and communications from the Senate, its committees, or its members must have written record.
Article VII Section A, and such an officership cannot be held concurrently with any other officership or representative seat within the Senate or Senate recognized organization. The term of a popularly elected executive officer shall begin upon their swearing in, which shall normally occur at the Annual Meeting. Popularly elected executive officers shall serve ex officio as voting members of the Executive Committee, and shall post and maintain a minimum of five (5) office hours per week.

PART 1. PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENT BODY

SUBPART A. RESPONSIBILITY 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. Serve ex officio as the Chief Executive Officer of the Student Body.
2. Act as the official representative of the Senate in executing its acts and instructions.
3. Facilitate an open line of communication between the Senate and the administration of the University.
4. Serve ex officio as the chairperson of the Executive Committee
5. 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.
6. Make one (1) nomination for each internally elected executive officership within the Cabinet of the President at the Annual Meeting, as well as whenever a vacancy occurs.
7. Appoint students to general officerships within the Senate, unless the Executive Committee requires that the seat be opened to internal election.
8. Appoint students to University boards, committees, and agencies, unless objected upon by the Executive Committee.
9. 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.
10. Hold signatory power jointly with the Treasurer of the Senate over the internal accounts of the Senate.
11. Temporarily withhold stipends, through a formal Rules and Ethics Complaint, until the Rules and Ethics Committee can consider such a decision.

SUBPART B. VACANCY

In the event that the office of the President of the Student Body becomes vacant, the Vice President of the Student Body shall succeed to the office for the remainder of the term.

PART 2. VICE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENT BODY

SUBPART A. RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS
The Vice President of the Student Body shall assist the President 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.
2. Act and speak on behalf of the President of the Student Body in the temporary absence of that officer. The moderator of General meetings shall be appointed by the Executive Committee during such absences.
3. Mandate the Senate's compliance with the bylaws
4. Advise the Senate on when elections are to be held.
5. Appoint and remove members of standing committees, except the chairpersons of those committees. This power does not extend over the Executive Committee.
6. Develop and conduct Senate orientation, recruitment, retreats, and social events, as well as hold individual progression meetings with each member of the Senate.
7. Maintain internal group dynamics and mediate informal internal disputes.
8. Serve as the organizer of the committee for the selection of the Student Senior Commencement Speaker.
9. Serve as the organizer of the committee for the selection of the Student Senate Scholarship and the Zompa Scholarship.

**SUBPART B. VACANCY**

In the event that the office of Vice President of the Student Body becomes vacant, the Executive Committee shall appoint another member of the student body to serve as the interim Vice President until the Senate elects a new Vice President, following the procedure outlined in Article VII, Section B for internally elected officers. The President must make one nomination, which must be seconded.

**SECTION B. INTERNALLY ELECTED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Internally elected executive officers shall be elected in accordance with those rules set forth by Article VII, Section B, and such officerships cannot be held concurrently with any other executive officership or representative seat within the Senate. The term of an internally elected executive officer shall begin upon their swearing in, which shall normally occur immediately upon their election by the Senate. Internally elected executive officers shall serve ex officio as voting members of the Executive Committee, and shall post and maintain a minimum of three (3) office hours per week.

**PART 1. CHAIRPERSONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**SUBPART A. 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 spokesperson of the committee in discharging its responsibilities.
5. Participate as a voting member of their committee
6. Maintain accurate attendance records of the senators seated on their committees.
7. Upon the election of a new President, present to the new president, in writing, a recommendation for a successor.
8. Nominate a vice chair.
9. Collect and consolidate relevant liaison reports to be sent to the Reference Officer no later than the Annual Meeting.

**SUBPART B. 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. CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**
The term of the Chairperson of the Finance Committee will begin at the final meeting of the academic 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. 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.
3. Attend the monthly Presidents’ meetings.
4. Shall post and maintain a minimum of 5 office hours a week.
5. Develop, maintain, publish, and construe the Finance Handbook, provided that all changes must be approved by legislation. The Finance Handbook shall be binding upon all recognized student organizations, and shall contain, at a minimum, the policies, restrictions and limitations of the Student Senate finance and account system.
6. The office of Chairperson of the Finance Committee may not be held concurrently with any executive position of any other Senate recognized organization or with any position within the Student Senate Accounts Office.

**SUBPART B. CHAIRPERSON OF THE SOARC**
The term of the Chairperson of SOARC will begin at the final meeting of the academic year.

The Chairperson of SOARC shall have the additional powers necessary and proper to:
1. Act as an impartial arbiter of conflicts involving student organizations.
2. Act as or designate a moderator for the monthly organizations meeting.
3. Shall post and maintain a minimum of five (5) office hours a week.
4. Develop, maintain, and publish the Model Constitution, provided that all changes to the Model Constitution must be approved by legislation. The Model Constitution shall be binding upon all Senate recognized organizations.
5. The office of Chairperson of SOARC may not be held concurrently with any other
executive position of any other Senate recognized organization.

PART 3. OFFICERS WITHIN THE CABINET OF THE PRESIDENT

SUBPART A. TREASURER OF THE SENATE
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. Hold signatory power jointly with the President of the Student Body over the internal accounts of the Senate.
3. Annually prepare and present the internal budget of the Senate.
4. The office of Treasurer of the Senate may not be held concurrently with any position within the Senate Accounts Office.

SUBPART B. DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
The Director of Communications (DOC) of the Senate shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. 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.
2. Promote and communicate activities, events, and programs put on by the Senate and its recognized organizations with a focus on distributing through social media.
3. Develop and distribute the monthly Senate newsletter.
4. Maintain the Senate’s advertising space.
5. Keep open communication with the Senate’s recognized student organizations and the Student Event Advising Office.
6. Report to the Senate on its status in the media

SUBPART C. REFERENCE OFFICER
The Reference Officer of the Senate shall have all powers necessary and proper to:

1. Record the minutes at the general meetings of the Senate, which shall be published by the third business day following the meeting.
2. Organize the weekly meeting agendas for the general Senate, which shall be published at least ten (10) hours before the meeting.
3. Have responsibility for, administer, and record the Senate’s institutional knowledge.
4. Ensure the integrity of the Senate’s records.
5. Compile, maintain, and update transitional records for the Senate and its officers.
6. Act upon requests for institutional information from any member of the URI community.
7. Maintain a permanent record of Liaison reports.
8. Maintain and update a permanent record of the minutes of weekly committee meetings.
9. Organize and present a comprehensive report to the Senate, which shall include at minimum the status of work and record keeping by the Reference Officer, to be published annually two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the Senate.
10. Ensure that all members of the Senate have a working knowledge of its existing instruments.
11. Maintain an up to date Student Senate Alumni Network.

SECTION C. GENERAL OFFICERSHIPS
General officerships may be held concurrently with any other representative seat or officership within the Senate, in no case interfering with the rights, privileges, and obligations conferred by Article III Members, Section C Rights, Privileges, and Obligations.

PART 1. LIAISONS
Liaisons serve as a primary mode of communication between the Senate, its committees, and their assigned group or body. Liaisons shall have all power necessary and proper to:

1. Act to refer messages between the Senate and their assigned group or body,
2. Act, with permission from the President, to advise their assigned group or body on the positions and acts of the Senate,
3. Act in accordance with instructions conferred to them by the Senate through legislation, such instructions having priority over all others,
4. Act as an informational resource to the Senate and any committee regarding their assigned group or body, and indicate to the appropriate committee when issues in that body or group require the committee’s attention, and
5. Produce a written report and transition materials regarding the general status of, and specific concerns pertinent to, their assigned group or body. Such reports shall be submitted to the committee that created their seat, as well as any committee or member of the Senate who requests them.

SUBPART A. CREATION OF LIAISONS
Any committee may, by majority vote, create any liaison seat necessary for the advancement of that committee’s purpose. The chair or speaker of that committee shall be responsible for submitting recommendations of people to fill the seat to the President in a timely manner.

Liaisons shall be appointed by the President, provided that the Executive Committee may, by majority vote, call for the internal election of any unfilled liaison seat.

SUBPART B. COLLEGE LIAISONS
College Liaisons shall serve both as the liaison to the dean of their college and the liaison to that college constituency.

PART 2. VICE-CHAIRPERSONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES
The chairperson of each standing committee shall nominate one (1) member of that committee to be its vice-chair, to be confirmed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The vice-chair shall be responsible for ensuring that the minutes of their committee’s meetings are sent to the Reference Officer within three (3) business days, and shall run committee meetings in the event of the chairperson’s temporary absence.

**PART 3. SPEAKERS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Each special committee established by the Senate shall select a speaker from among its members at the first meeting. The speaker of a special committee shall ordinarily act as that committee’s reporting member on the Senate floor, and shall serve as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

**SECTION D. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

In the event that an officer of the Senate finds themself in a circumstance where they cannot fulfill one or more basic job requirements, but has a reasonable belief that the circumstance can be resolved within four (4) weeks, they may, instead of resigning, request an extended leave of absence according to the following procedure:

The officer must submit a written petition for a leave of absence to the Rules and Ethics Committee. The petition must include:

1. The reason the officer cannot fulfill their basic job requirements
2. The basis for the officer’s belief that the reason can be resolved quickly
3. The expected period of absence
4. A recommended qualified senator to serve as their interim replacement during their absence.

The Rules and 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 their activities during the 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 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 C. VICE CHAIRPERSON CHARGES 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 Reference 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. CHARGES 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 Committee.
SUBPART B. COMPOSITION
The officers of the Senate, (President, Vice President, Treasurer, DOC and Reference Officer) 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. CHARGES 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.
5. Propose a budget for the following fiscal year, which must be introduced as legislation no later than three (3) weeks before the Annual Meeting.

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.

PART 4. STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISORY AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (SOARC)
SUBPART A. CHARGES 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 Reference Officer 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 currr'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 Reference Officer 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 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. Make non-binding recommendations to any member of the Senate or to the Senate as a whole regarding questions of bylaws interpretation.

4. 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.

5. 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 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. 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 election.

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.

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. POPULARLY 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 6. 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 7. 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 8. 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. No candidate may spread false information or intentionally slander another candidate or member of the Student Senate. No candidate may encourage others to spread false information or intentionally slander another candidate or member of the Student Senate. No candidate may conduct themselves in a manner that is intentionally inconsistent with the core values of the University of Rhode Island and the Student Senate Inc.
PART 9. 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 10. 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, Reference 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 open for 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 Reference 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. GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINE
Members may be disciplined for:
1. Crimes, which are violations of state or federal law which jeopardize the Senate or the Student Body.
2. Conflict of Interest, which is an external duty or interest which calls into substantial question a member’s ability to carry out their official duties and responsibilities in the best interest of the Student Body.
3. Dereliction of Duty, which is a failure to complete the basic obligations of a position.
4. Gross Misconduct, which is any non-speech conduct which can be shown to have caused, or by gross negligence created grave risk to have caused, substantial harm to the Student Body, the Senate or its members, or its property, or which shocks the conscience to the extent that the member cannot claim to be a representative of the University of Rhode Island student community’s values.

SECTION B. SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS
1. When a complaint which may warrant disciplinary action against a member of the Senate is received, it will be forwarded to the Rules and Ethics Committee. The party against which the complaint was submitted will be called the Defense.
2. The Rules and Ethics Committee will inquire into the matter, making all reasonable efforts to meet with the Defense and any other relevant parties, and will submit a report of their findings to the Senate.
3. The report will include the complaint, any charge that may derive from it, what measures were taken to acquire information relating to the complaint, and the committee’s recommended course of action.
4. The Rules and Ethics Committee will also propose any resolutions necessary to pursue that course of action. If the Rules and Ethics Committee determines that no action needs to be taken, then no trial will be held.

SECTION C. PRELIMINARIES AND TRIALS
PART 1. REPRESENTATION
The Defense and the Rules and Ethics Committee will each select a single person to represent them. Both representatives will be given written notice to appear before the Senate. This notice will include the time and place of the meeting, and a copy of the charges.

PART 2. PROCEEDINGS
The Chair will read the charges. The Rules and Ethics Committee will then read their report, after which the Defense may respond. Both parties will then be allowed to introduce, rebut, and cross-examine witnesses or evidence as they see fit, at the discretion of the Moderator. The Rules and Ethics Committee will be allowed closing remarks, after which the Defense will be allowed closing remarks.

PART 3. VOTING
Every person who is not a member of the Senate will be required to leave the room, upon which the Senate will discuss and vote on all resolutions proposed by the Rules and Ethics Committee. All votes are to be taken by secret ballot, and no measure may be passed which is more extreme than the course of action recommended by the Rules and Ethics Committee.
SECTION D. DISCRETION
The Rules and Ethics Committee, the Senate, and all involved parties will ensure to their utmost the privacy of the Defense and various complainants and witnesses at all times. The Senate may publish that an individual has been disciplined or expelled, but should not reveal charges, evidence, or witnesses unless it is necessary to avoid legal consequences. All proceedings occurring under the provisions of this Article are to take place in sessions that are closed to the public.

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.

A recognized 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. Recognized 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. To receive recognition, organizations must have a mission statement.

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 FILLINGS
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
No organization shall be recognized unless its voting membership is composed of at least a majority of undergraduate students, provided that the Senate may enter into an agreement with the Graduate Student Association for recognition of organizations whose voting membership is composed of at least a majority of undergraduate and graduate students combined.

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 content or viewpoint.

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. GRANTS
The Senate may by majority vote, make occasional contingency grants of Student Activities Tax funds to any recognized 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 4. 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 an 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 5. 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 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 6. 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 7. 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 an 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 not recognized; 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 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. Reference 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
J. Unfinished Business
K. New Business
L. General Discussion and Open Forum
M. Roll Call
N. 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.