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University of Rhode Island Student Senate
April 16th, 2025-2026 General Assembly Agenda

Recording Secretary: Lynn Sawyer

Meeting Start Time: 8:12

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Abbott, Acharya, Bremer, Capraro, Connolly, Curry, D'Aiello, Dickson, Dionne, Ebrahimpour, Gonzalez, Hudson, Njende, Keomany, Macrae, Martin, McConville, Milner, Neighbors, Niro, Paulino, Ramos, Rinne, Roach, Sawyer, Singh, Stover, Torres, Troxell, Waddell, Wentworth, Williamson, Yehle.

Absent: Conte, Ranieri, McTernan, Volek, Zelano.

Executive: Hailu, Reyes

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to amend the agenda made by chair milner and seconded by senator gonzalez
Change the bill handler to senator Milner

D. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes made by senator singh and seconded by senator MacCree

E. PUBLIC FORUM

F. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

G. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH/CABINET

- Student Body President

President Reyes: We will be taking nominations for committees: cultural, campus, external, academic, and SOC.

- Academic: Student Rights, conflicts, ETC, oversee college reps
- Cultural: works with campus leaders,
- external: off campus living and greek life
- SOC: Student lead organizations
- Campus: Dining services and housing

- Student Body Vice President

VP hailu:

- Nomination starts today and goes on till next week wednesday until elections

starts, if you are nominated today and you are the only one who is standing for that committee everyone will be getting sworn in next week

H. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

I. REPORT OF THE COURT

J. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lucas Dewitt:

I am the coordinator downstairs in the office of student involvement and the advisor for Student Senate. Truly wonderful to see the table full, it is really cool to see you all as impassioned student leaders looking to make a change. I am very excited for this upcoming academic year and what you will be doing in those positions. I will be working with the new president and vice president. Look forward to an exciting and fun year

Chair Milner:

I just wanted to take a second to talk about an endorsement that I would like to make for the speaker position: cole Rinne. HE would do a FANTASTIC job. I would like to personally endorse senator Rinne.

- Everyone Introduced themselves

K. SPECIAL ORDERS

Swearing in of Newly Elected Senators

Nominations for all Standing Committee Chairs (Student Organizations, Academic Affairs, Cultural Affairs, External Affairs, Campus Affairs)

SOC:

Nominated by Senator Dickson and seconded singh: Senator Milner

Nomination by senator Rinne and seconded by senator Capara: Senator Wentworth
Cultural Affairs Committee: Senator Gonzalez nominated by senator hudson and seconded by senator Ebrahimpour

Senator Neighbors nominated by senator Sawyer and seconded by senator singh

External: Senator Singh nominated by senator Niro and seconded by senator Gonzalez

Campus affairs: Senator hudson nominated by senator macrae and seconded by senator Dionne

Senator Martin nominated by senator Abbott, and seconded by senator Milner

Nominations for Speaker of the Assembly

Senator Rinne Nominated by senator wentworth and nominated by senator Milner

Senator Ebrahimpour nominated by senator Gonzalez and seconded by senator Roach

L. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

M. NEW BUSINESS

SS-25/26-01 – BILL AMENDING THE STUDENT SENATE CONSTITUTION

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

time now, and

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

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

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

ARTICLE I NAME

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

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

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

ARTICLE III POWER AND SCOPE

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

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

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

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

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

Degree-seeking undergraduate students who are enrolled part time in at least six credits, who have paid a pro-rated Student Activities Tax, may serve as representatives from that at-large

and college constituencies, or in any office of the cabinet or court provided that they meet all other eligibility requirements outlined in this document.

ARTICLE V EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Section A. Authority

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

Section B. President

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

Section C. Vice President

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

Section D. Cabinet

Part 1. Director of Communications

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

Part 2. Director of Treasury

The Director of Treasury maintains and is a signatory of monies and assets controlled by the Senate, as well as its internal accounts, and ensures the enforcement of the Senate's financial policy. The Treasurer shall also work in collaboration with the Senate Accounting Office. *Part 3. Speaker of the Assembly*

The Speaker of the Assembly chairs all meetings and may speak on behalf of the Assembly. The Speaker also appoints and removes the members of the Assembly's standing committees; removals are subject to the approval of the committee's chair. The Speaker of the Assembly is nominated and elected by and from the Assembly. Any officials duly appointed by The Speaker will serve as ex-officio non-voting members of the Assembly. The Speaker shall clearly communicate the instructions of the Assembly to the Cabinet. The Speaker shall appoint a Speaker Pro Tempore from any voting member of the Assembly to assist the Speaker with their

duties and act in their place if they are temporarily unable to do so. In the event that the position of Speaker becomes vacant, the Speaker Pro Tempore shall fulfill the role until the Assembly internally elects a permanent replacement.

Part 4. Absences and Vacancies

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

Part 5. Meetings

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

ARTICLE VI LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section A. Authority

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

Section B. Membership

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

Section C. Meetings

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

Section D. Committees

Part 1. Delegation

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

Part 2. Standing Committees

- Subpart a. Academic Affairs

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

- Subpart b. Campus Affairs

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

- Subpart c. Cultural Affairs

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

- Subpart d. External Affairs

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

property.

- Subpart e. Student Organizations

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

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

Section E. Officers

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

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

ARTICLE VII JUDICIAL BRANCH

Section A. Formation

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

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

Section C. Membership

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

ARTICLE VIII ELECTIONS

Section A. Constituencies

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

ARTICLE IX FUNDS

Section A. Taxation

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

Section B. Distribution

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

Section C. Restrictions

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

ARTICLE X IMPEACHMENTS AND DISCIPLINE

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

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

ARTICLE XI INSTRUMENTS

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

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

ARTICLE XII AMENDMENT

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

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

All amendments shall be outlined below the constitution.

SPONSOR:	Constitutional Revision Committee
BILL HANDLER:	Chair Cayer
DATE:	Wednesday, April 2nd, 2025
RECOMMENDATION:	(5-0-0)
EXPIRATION:	Valid Until Review
ACTION:	Vote Next Week (4 Week Floor Bill)

Floor given to constituent Matthew Cayer, he goes to explain the Constitutional Committee's bill and asks if there is any questions

Andrew Ebrahimpour asks where senators can find the bill (we didn't receive it)

N. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM

New Senator Orientation ~ President Reyes and Vice-President Hailu

Be on the lookout for an email Campus public safety has three policies that they are drafting and creating they want to get the student senate feedback. Bring your question and ask all your questions.

O. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Time End: 9:02