

# CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

## Trine University

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## **PREAMBLE**

We, the students of Trine University, in order to appropriately represent ourselves as a student body, to provide a voice to the needs of our peers, to provide a venue for the organization of campus activities, and to serve the campus community, do hereby establish this Constitution for the Student Government of Trine University.

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government of Trine University (hereafter referred to as the Student Government).

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Student Government is to work actively to represent the school body, to promote school spirit, to promote and coordinate social activities for the campus community, to coordinate and assist in the funding of the Government and student organizations, to foster an active and engaged membership within the campus and local communities, and to support the mission of the University.

## **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: General conditions of membership**

- A. Membership shall not be denied on the basis of race, age, ethnicity, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability status.
- B. Members have the freedom to discontinue membership at any time.

### **Section 2: Classes of membership**

- A. Regular members: Membership shall be considered of an individual that is in good judicial standing as well as meeting all requirements for an undergraduate student organization by the Bylaws of the Student Government.
- B. Advisor: The advisor(s) shall be assigned to the Student Government by the Office of Student Services. The advisor shall be a non-voting member and attend regular Senate meetings. The advisor shall work with Officers and Senators to ensure a properly functioning Student Government.

### **Section 3: Removal and resignation**

- A. A member in good standing may resign in good standing by sending a letter of resignation via email to [studentgovernment@trine.edu](mailto:studentgovernment@trine.edu).
- B. Members absent for more than two (2) consecutive semesters shall be automatically dropped from membership in the Student Government.

## ARTICLE IV: BODIES OF GOVERNMENT

The Student Government of Trine University will be comprised of the Student Senate, House of Representatives, Executive Board, Committees and Correspondents. All positions shall perform all duties as outlined in the Bylaws of the Student Government.

### Section 1: Student Senate

The Student Senate shall consist of two representatives from the Freshman class, the Sophomore class, the Junior class, the Senior class, the Jannen School of Arts and Sciences, the Ketner School of Business, the School of Health Sciences, the Allen School of Engineering and Technology, the Franks School of Education, the International Community, Greek Life, and Commuters.

### Section 2: House of Representatives

The House of Representatives shall consist of the Speaker of the House, all Correspondents, and additional representatives from the Senate.

### Section 3: Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Chief of Staff, a Treasurer, a Secretary, a Publicity Director, and a Speaker of the House.

### Section 4: Committees

The committees shall consist of an Oversight Committee, a Finance Committee, an Outreach Committee, a Campus Activities Board, and a Binder Committee.

- A. The oversight committee shall be chaired by the Vice President and only have appointed Senators on the committee.
- B. The finance committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer and be open to Senators, members, and Correspondents.
- C. The outreach committee shall be chaired by the Secretary and be open to Senators, members, and Correspondents.
- D. The campus activity board shall be chaired by the Publicity Director and be open to Senators, members, and Correspondents.
- E. The Binder Committee shall be chaired by the President and be open to Senators only.
- F. Special committees may be created by the Student Senate and by the Executive Board, as necessary.

### Section 5: Correspondents

A Student Government Correspondent shall work directly with Committees to help complete committee responsibilities. A correspondent may voice opinions on an issue but may not vote. Correspondents receive recognition for being a part of Student Government.

## ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

The elected Officers of the Student Senate shall include the Executive Board and the Student Senators.

### Section 1: Duties

- A. The President is charged to:
- a. Call and preside over Student Senate meetings, following Robert's Rules of Order.
  - b. Oversee Senate elections.
  - c. Be ex-officio member of all committees.
  - d. Market the improvements made by Student Government.
  - e. Serve as liaison between the students and administration of Trine University.
  - f. Serve as a member of the University Disciplinary Review Board, as necessary.
  - g. Perform other duties within the realm of the presidency when necessary.
- B. The Vice President is charged to:
- a. Assume responsibilities of the President when they are unable to be present.
  - b. Chair the Oversight Committee.
  - c. Run Student Government Elections in accordance with the Election Process, unless participating in a Presidential Slate.
  - d. Review the Bylaws of the Student Government once a year.
  - e. Maintain Robert's Rules of Order.
  - f. Perform other duties as assigned by the President or Senate.
- C. The Chief of Staff is charged to:
- a. Work closely with the Office of the President and Advisor
  - b. Enforce and ensure deadlines are met among the executive offices and senate committees.
  - c. Distribute written communication and other information from the Executive Offices to the Senate Offices
  - d. Meet with the 6 Executive Offices at least once a month.
  - e. Carry out the duties of preparing for the general election held in the Spring semester.
- D. The Treasurer is charged to:
- a. Maintain the Student Government budget.
  - b. Chair the Finance Committee.
  - c. Enforce the Budget Guidelines of the Student Government.
  - d. Perform other duties as assigned by the President or Senate.
- E. The Secretary is charged to:
- a. Maintain all official records of the Student Government.
  - b. Maintain appropriate records for Student Government, including attendance of Senators.
  - c. Take minutes of all Student Senate and Executive Board meetings and distribute to the Bodies of Government.
  - d. Chair the Outreach Committee.

- e. Perform other duties as assigned by the President or Senate.
- F. The Publicity Director is charged to:
  - a. Maintain and distribute weekly Campus Activities Board updates.
  - b. Chair the Campus Activities Board.
  - c. Act as service liaison between the Campus Activities Board and the Senate Executive Board.
  - d. Perform other duties as assigned by the President or Senate.
- G. The Speaker of the House is charged to:
  - a. Run the House of Representatives according to Robert's Rules of Order.
  - b. Report to the Student Government Executive Board and the Senate on the happenings of the House of Representatives.
  - c. Bring proposals from the House to the Senate for further review.
  - d. Perform other duties as assigned by the President or Senate.
- H. The Student Senators are charged to:
  - a. Attend all regular body meetings unless excused.
  - b. Represent school body by working with administration to address student suggestions.
  - c. Promote school spirit.
  - d. Promote and coordinate social activities for the campus community.
  - e. Foster an active and engaged membership within the campus and local communities.
  - f. Support the mission of the University.
  - g. Meet with a predetermined number of students, as determined by the President, to survey students in determining the suggestions on campus.
  - h. Serve on pre-assigned committees as well as other committees that may require their participation.

## Section 2: Qualifications for the Election of Officers

Anyone applying for or holding a Student Government position must be in good judicial standing (anything less than 26 judicial points). Anyone holding a Student Government position must be in good academic standing (a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better). Anyone applying for a Student Government position must satisfy the initial cumulative GPA requirement. "Must have held and completed a term of (position) in another organization..." means that any similar positions held elsewhere must have been within a collegiate organization. Applicable to transfer students.

- A. **President** – Must have held and completed a term of Presidency in another organization or have held a Student Government executive board or senator position for two semesters; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.75 or greater.
- B. **Vice President** – Will run slated with the President. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the nominated President to choose who their Vice President will be; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or greater.
- C. **Chief of Staff** – Will be chosen by the President and Vice President elect. This will take place after elections and can be a member inside Student Government or not; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or greater.

- D. **Secretary** – Must have held and completed at least one executive board position in a student organization or have held a senator position for two semesters; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or greater.
- E. **Treasurer** – Must have held and completed a term as Treasurer of a student organization or have been a member of the Finance Committee for two semesters; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or greater.
- F. **Publicity Director** – Must have held and completed at least one executive board position in a student organization or have held a senator position for two semesters; communication majors will be held in high regard over other candidates; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or greater.
- G. **Speaker of the House** – Must have held and completed at least one executive board position in a student organization or have held a senator position for two semesters; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.75 or greater.
- H. **Senator Positions** – Open to all Students; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or greater.
- I. **Correspondent Positions** – Open to all Students; need to have and maintain a GPA of 2.0 or greater.

### **Section 3: Elections**

Student Government elections shall follow the timing and all steps of the Election Process.

### **Section 4: Vacancy**

- A. If a senator position is vacant after elections are complete, or during the term of office, the following are steps to fill the vacancy:
  - a. Vice President will open up the position for applications.
  - b. Applications will be brought to the Executive Board for approval.
  - c. Once approved, the applicant will come to a Student Government Senate meeting to give a short speech on why they want to position.
  - d. The Student Senate will vote on the applicants.
- B. If an Executive Board member graduates, transfers, resigns, or otherwise vacates a position, the following are the steps to fill the position:
  - a. The sitting President shall conduct individual interviews with those senators or correspondents who are interested in the vacant position.
  - b. The sitting President shall appoint one of those individuals who they deem appropriate, based on their interview, to fill the vacancy.
  - c. The individual will then present a 1–2-minute speech to the Senate detailing their plans for the position, to which the Senate will proceed to vote on their confirmation.

## ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

### Section 1: Oversight Committee:

The Oversight Committee will ensure that the rules and regulations of Student Government are followed and organize the nomination/selection process for the Golden Gavel Award.

### Section 2: Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee oversees appropriating funds for approved campus activities put on by recognized student organizations.

### Section 3: Campus Activities Board:

The Campus Activities Board shall plan and coordinate campus-wide activities in conjunction with the Director of Student Activities.

### Section 4: Outreach Committee:

The Outreach Committee will seek out students for information on issues with campus and community affairs, as well as seek solutions to solve said issues in conjunction with the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students.

### Section 5: Binder Committee:

The Binder Committee will review documents in Trine University Student Government Binders and determine any necessary updates a minimum of once a semester. Any changes will be presented in writing and voted on at a General Body meeting.

## ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

### Section 1: Call to Order

The President or Vice President has the authority to call meetings. Other Officers, Senators and Advisors may petition the President should they request an emergency meeting be held. Whether this meeting will be hosted is up to the discretion of the President and Vice President.

### Section 2: Notification

The Vice President will take responsibility for notifying the Oversight Committee members of any changes in the regular meeting times. The Treasurer will take responsibility for notifying the Finance Committee members of any changes in regular meeting times. The Secretary will take responsibility for notifying the Senate members and Outreach Committee members of any changes in regular meeting times. The Publicity Director will take responsibility for notifying Campus Activities Board members of any changes in regular meeting times.

### Section 3: Quorum

A quorum of 50% +1 voting members of the Student Senate shall be required in order to conduct any official business of the Senate.



#### **Section 4: Voting**

A vote of 2/3 of voting members of the Student Senate shall be required to decide any business.

#### **Section 5: Parliamentary Authority**

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for this organization, but specific procedure is to be determined by the Vice President in conjunction with the Executive Board.

- A. Any discussion occurring during a closed session of the General Body shall remain confidential from the student body.
- B. If confidentiality is breached, the individual(s) involved will be referred to the Oversight Committee, where further action may be taken.

#### **Section 6: Attendance**

All Officers of Student Government are required to attend regular meetings, any other meetings that arise during the course of the term. If an Officer is unable to attend, he/she must notify the Secretary in order to receive an excused absence. Within each semester, two unexcused meetings will result in a review of said position by the Oversight Committee. An excused absence is defined as:

- A. Class
- B. Athletic game
- C. Or as approved by the Executive Board.

Additionally, work is an excused absence within the first two weeks of each semester. After the first two weeks Officers are expected to change his/her work schedule.

### **ARTICLE VIII: BUDGET**

#### **Section 1: Responsibilities**

The Treasurer shall maintain the budget for student organization events and/or conferences according to the Budget Guidelines.

#### **Section 2: Funding**

The Finance Committee will serve as the primary agent in charge of the Student Government budget. All funding must be reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee, Treasurer, and Advisor(s). Requests for funding will be brought to Finance Committee meetings by the organization making the request. The only exception to this is philanthropic donations by the Student Government which is covered in Section 6.

#### **Section 3: Senate Conference**

\$3,500 will be reserved for the Student Senate for conference attendance and administrative costs. If additional funds are needed, the Student Senate will request additional funds from the Finance Committee.

#### **Section 4: Vice Treasurer**

The creation of a Vice Treasurer position for the finance committee will be necessary to act as a proxy for the Treasurer at Finance Committee meetings should the Treasurer not be in attendance. This position is not an Executive Board position and will be appointed by the Treasurer and should be appointed to a person who exemplifies consistent attendance and candor at Finance Committee meetings. This position will not be able to approve budget requests but will instead listen to budget request presentations and gather the information from the presentations and communicate it to the Treasurer.

#### **Section 5: Members**

The Finance Committee will be populated by at least three members other than the Treasurer. This is done to prevent the Treasurer from making any decisions without the approval of the Finance Committee. This is also done to ensure deliberation and thought put into every budget decision.

#### **Section 6: Philanthropic Donations**

Student Government reserves the right to donate to philanthropic organizations through fundraising by Student Government recognized organizations that are seeking to raise money for a given cause. This should be done by a Student Government representative (Advisor, Executive Board Member, Senator, etc.) bringing a potential donation to the Treasurer or member of Finance Committee before a meeting. The Treasurer may then bring this potential donation up to the whole Senate. The approval, in this case, will come from the entire Senate body, and not the Finance Committee exclusively. All members of the Student Organization that are raising money must abstain from voting. These donations are separate from the semesterly amount for an organization, and all checks are to be written directly to the philanthropic organization, not the one recognized by Student Government.

### **ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS**

#### **Section 1: Timing**

Amendments to the Student Government Constitution may be made through the Student Senate no more than twice a year.

#### **Section 2: Presentation**

Any amendments shall be presented in writing, or through PowerPoint, during General Body Student Government meetings.

#### **Section 3: Voting**

Passage of an amendment requires a two-thirds affirmative vote of all members present at a General Body meeting.

#### **Section 4: Effective Timing**

Amendments will become effective immediately.