

**Bylaws**  
*Student Government Association*  
Tulane University School of Social Work

**Authority**

As noted in Article IX of the Constitution of the Tulane University School of Social Work's (TSSW) Student Government Association (SGA), the following bylaws have been adopted to further define and outline the roles of the SGA Board and its Senior Leadership Team.

The TSSW SGA Constitution supersedes all bylaws. Bylaws can be ratified by a majority of the SGA Board.

Any instance not specified or provided in the Constitution or these Bylaws will be decided on by the Board on an individual basis. Documentation for specific instances shall be noted in meeting minutes and may require revisions to the Bylaws.

**Section I: Membership**

As noted in the SGA Constitution, all students enrolled in a degree-seeking course of study in the TSSW are automatically considered members of the SGA and are encouraged to participate in meetings and events. It is the responsibility of the SGA Board (Secretary and/or Communications Representative) to notify and promote meetings, events, and other forums sponsored fully, or in part, by the SGA to all students, faculty, and staff of the TSSW.

**Section II: Meetings**

The SGA Board shall meet once per month at a minimum. The SGA shall also convene a public meeting of each cohort at least once per fall and spring semester. A summer semester meeting is optional. Agendas and minutes for these meetings shall be maintained by the Secretary and made available on the TSSW SGA OrgSync website, available publically for the TSSW community and to promote and ensure transparency of the Board to the TSSW community. Agendas shall be posted within 12 hours of a meeting and minutes posted within one (1) week of the meeting's date.

While all meetings are considered public, meetings may be deemed private and closed at the request of the SGA Board. The need for a meeting to be closed to anyone outside a select audience should be discussed and approved by a majority of the Senior Leadership Team prior to the announcement of the meeting taking place. Items discussed and approved by the Board should be documented in Minutes made available only to the Board while the remaining documentation should be made available publically to the TSSW community.

Board members are expected to communicate with the SGA President at least one (1) hour prior to the start of a meeting if they are unable to attend a meeting. Absent members are expected to review the meeting minutes after the meeting along with any duties assigned during their absence.

For any meetings requiring a vote, a minimum of two-thirds of the SGA Board must be present

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in order to vote. Any Board member that has a known conflict of interest on any item to be voted upon by the Board shall make that conflict known as early as possible and abstain from any vote on said item.

A Board member must be present for at least three-quarters of a meeting to be considered present for the meeting. The SGA Secretary is responsible for ensuring that a quorum is maintained for Board meetings and notify the Board at any time during a meeting if the Quorum is lost or a vote tally needs to be changed.

### **Section III: Leadership**

As noted in the SGA Constitution, the Board of the SGA shall consist of the necessary positions required to complete the duties and assignments required of the SGA. The make up of positions needed for the SGA can be adjusted by the Board without requiring a full review or amendment to the Constitution.

In addition to the Board, the SGA shall have a Senior Leadership Team of select members from the Board. These positions include the President, Vice President of Social Work, Vice President of Disaster Resilience Leadership, Vice President of Finance, and the Secretary.

It is the expectation that Board members will attend all required meetings of the SGA or Board unless other arrangements have been made with communication having taken place in advance of scheduled meeting(s). Board members are allowed one (1) absence per semester of Board meetings; however, notification of absence should be made to the SGA President and be provided in advance as much as possible. Failure to attend meetings without notice may be grounds for Dismissal as noted in Section VI. Special circumstances may be presented to the Senior Leadership Team for review.

### **Section IV: Fiscal Operations**

As noted in the SGA Constitution, the Finance Vice President, along with the President, have ultimate responsible and authority for financial expenditures and fiscal solvency. The Finance Vice President shall maintain all appropriate and necessary documentation for financial operations as well as policies and procedures related to said financial operations. This manual shall be maintained and accessible to all members of the SGA Board and upon request to any member of the TSSW community.

Funding requests of the SGA shall be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team as defined in Article IV of the TSSW SGA Constitution. Funding requests are capped annually by any individual or organization at \$1200 per Tulane fiscal year. Requests should be submitted jointly to the President and Finance Vice President.

For approval requests that are equal to or do not exceed \$750, the Senior Leadership Team shall vote and inform said requester in a timely manner (within 14 days of submitted request) as well

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as the Board at the next scheduled board meeting. For approval requests that are in excess of \$750, the Board shall vote and inform said requester in a timely manner (within 21 days of submitted request). Votes may be suspended in request for additional documentation for the use of funds. Failure for requesting body to submit additional documentation will cancel request for funding after 21 days unless an extension is requested. Additional timelines should be decided on a case-by-case basis from the Senior Leadership Team.

A two-thirds majority must be received by the appropriate body in order to approve a funding request.

Any budget reserve for the SGA shall not fall below 25% of the current fiscal year's operating budget. The Vice President of Finance shall ensure that both the current operating budget and any reserve remain at healthy balances throughout the fiscal year in accordance with any and all policies of TSSW, Tulane University, the Office of Student Affairs, Student Organizations Office, and the Graduate and Professional Student Association.

The Vice President of Finance and President shall present to the Board as well as the TSSW Faculty Liaison, Assistant Dean and/or Director of Student Services, and any others deemed necessary the proposed budget for the next fiscal year as well as an overview of current year funding. This should happen no less than once per fiscal year and no less than 45 days before the end of the Tulane University fiscal year. (The Tulane University fiscal year is July 1 – June 30.) The final approved operating budget shall be posted to the OrgSync website within 30 days of the new fiscal year.

## **Section V: Elections**

All positions of the Board are elected to their positions for their respective terms as defined in Appendix A of this Constitution. Elected positions begin on November 1 of each year and end on October 31 of the following year for fall semester elections. Spring semester positions elected begin on April 1 and end on March 31 of the following year. No summer elections occur unless the need for a special election arises.

As TSSW is a diverse community with multiple degree programs, Board members will be elected as follows:

### *Section A – Nominations*

- The outgoing Board will facilitate a meeting with each degree-seeking program and cohort prior to the start of nominations to explain the nominations and election process as well as to answer any questions that may arise. The outgoing Board shall develop a timeline for the election process that ensures notification of the upcoming election as well as any meetings needed or required with appropriate candidates or cohorts within 45 days of the end of the outgoing Board's term (September 15 for fall elections; February 15 for spring elections).
- Individuals wishing to run for a position should self-nominate and send their nomination to

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the outgoing SGA president. The nomination may include a brief statement not to exceed 1,500 characters as to why the individual feels they would be the best candidate for the position. The statement should include the individual's name, degree program, optional picture, and full- or part-time status.

- Individuals may only run for one (1) office.
- No nominations will be accepted after the deadline.
- The nominations and any submitted statements will be compiled by the SGA President and disseminated across all TSSW programs no less than one (1) week prior to elections.
- Questions regarding nominations should be submitted in writing to the SGA President prior to the close of nominations.
- (\*\*Note: In the event that no nominations are received for a position, it is the responsibility of newly elected Board to facilitate a second election at a later date. Should there be no nominated candidates in the second election or if the position term is less than six (6) months from ending, the Board may nominate and vote in a member to fill the remaining term. This individual must receive three-quarters approval from the entire Board in order to be appointed to this position.)

*Section B – Elections*

- All elections should be completed with winners announced no less than ten (10) days prior to the start of their respective terms. The SGA President will develop and facilitate a timeline for fall and spring elections that meets this requirement.
- Elections will begin no more than one (1) week after the closing of nominations and the nominations having been distributed across all TSSW degree-seeking student programs and cohorts.
- Elections will take place via OrgSync and individuals will only be allowed to vote once.
- The winner for each office will be the individual who receives a simple majority of the votes cast.
- Should a run-off election be required, the run off election will take place no more than five (5) days after the preceding election. The run-off will consist of the two candidates that received the most votes in the preceding election. The two candidates' s nomination statements will be re-distributed across all TSSW degree-seeking student programs and cohorts. No changes to the original statements will be allowed.
- Final results will be confirmed by the SGA President and verified by the SGA Faculty Liaison and/or Assistant Dean.
- Any candidate attempting to influence an election by vote tampering, improper balloting, or any other interference in the casting or recording of ballots or votes shall, upon proof of such improper influence, be dismissed from running for a position on the Board. The President is responsible for assuring the campaign and election comply with the Constitution.
- Upon assuming the duties of the newly elected position, the previous position holder will serve as "Past-position" and act as a consultant to the newly elected Board member for thirty (30) days.
- In the event a position becomes vacant during the term, the SGA President will facilitate a

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special election. If the position has less than six (6) months remaining on its term, the SGA Senior Leadership Team may appoint an individual to serve out the remaining term of that position. The individual must receive three-quarters approval vote from the entire SGA Board.

- Any individual who assumes a vacant position will begin their role immediately.

Other student organizations at TSSW may wish to appoint a member of their organization to attend Board meetings of the SGA. These individuals are welcome to attend and participate with the SGA Board; however, as non-SGA elected guests, they are not allowed to vote on any matters presented to the SGA Board.

## **Section VI: Resignations, Dismissals, and Sanctions**

### *Section A – Resignation*

At any time, an Board member may voluntarily resign their position on the Board with or without notice. Resignations are preferred in writing to the SGA President and prefer at least one (1) week's notice prior to stepping down from the position. The SGA President will hold a special election or appointment for the position in following with the rules established by this Constitution.

A voluntary resignation by any Board member will not affect their standing as a regular SGA member or as a student within TSSW.

### *Section B – Dismissal*

- Board members who repeatedly fail to perform their duties or abuse their office for personal ends may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Board.
- Dismissal procedures against Board members can be initiated by any member of the Board. The dismissal charge and justification for why the Board member should be dismissed shall be delivered to the SGA President. In the event of a dismissal charge against the SGA President, the charge shall be delivered to one of the Vice Presidents.
- Once a dismissal charge has been submitted and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team, the Team, in conjunction with the Faculty Advisor or Assistant Dean, will conduct an investigation of the charges within two (2) weeks.
- The presiding officer of the dismissal team will be the SGA President. In the event the charge is against the President, the presiding officer will be the Finance Vice President.
- The Board member being considered for dismissal will have an opportunity to defend him- or herself to the Board within one (1) week of the initiation of the investigation.
- An Board member must be given notice of the intended removal at least two (2) days prior to the meeting at which a vote on said removal takes place.
- The Board can affect the dismissal of an officer by a two-thirds vote of the Board, excluding the Board member being questioned.

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*Section C – Sanctions (a.k.a. formal reprimand)*

- Board members who repeatedly fail to perform their duties or abuse their office for personal ends may be sanctioned rather than removed from their office.
- Sanctions against Board members can be initiated by any member of the Board. The sanction and justification for why the Board member should be sanctioned shall be delivered to the SGA President. In the event of a sanction charge against the SGA President, the charge shall be delivered to one of the Vice Presidents.
- Once a sanction charge has been submitted and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team, the Team, in conjunction with the Faculty Advisor or Assistant Dean, will conduct an investigation of the charges within two (2) weeks.
- The presiding officer of the sanction team will be the SGA President. In the event the sanction is against the President, the presiding officer will be the Finance Vice President.
- The Board member being considered for sanction will have an opportunity to defend him- or herself to the Board within one (1) week of the initiation of the investigation.
- An Board member must be given notice of the intended sanction at least two (2) days prior to the meeting at which a vote on said sanction takes place.
- The Board can affect the sanction of an officer by majority vote of the Board, excluding the Board member being questioned.

**Section VII: Committees**

The Board may establish committees, standing or ad hoc, as deemed necessary.

Ad hoc committees shall be developed by the Board and not last more than six (6) months.

Standing committees shall be developed and defined by the Board. It is anticipated that standing committees shall last more than six (6) months and be defined in Appendix B of this Constitution. Appendix B may be modified by the Board with a simple majority approval of the Board.

Documentation of committees formed shall be maintained by the SGA Board for a period of two (2) years following the completion of the committee's work.

**Section VIII: Amendments and Revisions**

Constitutional amendments shall be proposed and approved by the SGA Board following the guidance as noted in the Constitution.

Amendments or revisions to the SGA Bylaws shall be proposed and approved by the SGA Board with a two-thirds majority approval on any Bylaws. Bylaw amendments or revisions do not need to be posted for public comment; however, it is the responsibility of the SGA to ensure that notification of changes to the Bylaws have been made and posted to the OrgSync website for the SGA to the entire TSSW community.

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The Constitution and Bylaws shall be reviewed annually (within 60 days of the beginning of the Tulane University fiscal year) to ensure compliance with any changes in rule or policy by TSSW, Tulane University, Office of Student Affairs, Student Organization Office, and/or the Graduate and Professional Student Association. The review process and any changes shall be documented and maintained for a period not less than five (5) years following the change.

**Section IX: Enactment**

The Bylaws shall supersede any previous Bylaws and shall become effective the day it is approved by the Board. When there is a conflict between the Constitution and the Bylaws, the Constitution shall supersede the Bylaws on all occasions.

Any instance not specified or provided in the Constitution or these Bylaws will be decided on by the Board on an individual basis. Documentation for specific instances shall be noted in meeting minutes and may require revisions to the Bylaws.