

Constitution of the Student Government Association: Freshman Council

Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro Tennessee

Preamble

We, the students of Middle Tennessee State University, in order to promote the welfare of each freshman attending this institution, to train ourselves in the general principles of democratic government, to prepare ourselves to assume the privileges and responsibilities of citizens in the State of Tennessee and of the United States of America, and in order to strive for the expansion and protection of student rights on the Middle Tennessee State University campus, do ordain and establish this Freshman Council of the Middle Tennessee State University Student Government Association.

Article I

Definition of Existence

Section 1: The name of the organization shall be the **Freshman Council of Middle Tennessee State University Student Government Association.**

Section 2: The purpose of the Freshman Council of Middle Tennessee State University is to provide a formal process for incoming freshman input into the governance of the institution, to control all matters which are delegated to the Freshman Council by the administration of Middle Tennessee State University, to work cooperatively in the administration in all matters affecting the welfare of the freshman body, and to promote the best possible understanding between faculty, administration, and freshman students. In all endeavors, the Freshman Council shall strive to represent the best interests of the freshman body as a whole and to reflect favorably upon Middle Tennessee State University.

Section 3: Any Middle Tennessee State University student who has completed fewer than two semesters of post-high school university education shall be entitled to all the rights and benefits under this constitution.

Section 4: The powers of the Freshman Council of Middle Tennessee State University shall be divided into two distinct branches; those powers which are legislative shall be given to the council, those which are executive to the President of Freshman Council, Vice President of Freshman Council, Secretary of Freshman Council, Delegate of Freshman Council, Chair of Public Relations, Chair of Special Events, and Chair of Internal Affairs.

Article II

Statement of Governing Principle

In all matters, members of the Freshman Council of Middle Tennessee State University Student Government Association shall conduct themselves in a manner deserving of the highest level of trust that the freshman body places in their leadership. Furthermore, members should strive at all times to promote the following principles:

Section 1: Honesty

All members of the Freshman Council shall uphold the most stringent level of honesty with their colleagues and the administration of Middle Tennessee State University, whose welfare they are pledged.

Section 2: Recognition of basic human rights. All people are deserving of equal treatment and equal service. Neither the freshman council, nor any representative thereof, shall violate these rights on the basis of race, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and expression.

Section 3: Academic Integrity. The members of the Freshman Council are representatives of the freshman body, and shall therefore pledge not to commit to infractions of rules prohibiting academic misconduct. All members of the Freshman Council of Middle Tennessee State University will strive to achieve and maintain the highest standards of academic achievement.

Article III

The Executive Branch

Section 1: Generally

- A. The Executive Branch shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Freshman Council, for the development of policy and the implementation of legislation. It shall be composed of the President of Freshman Council, the SGA Vice President, the Vice President of Freshman Council, the Secretary of Freshman Council, the Delegate of Freshman Council, and the Chair of Public Relations, the Chair of Special Events, and the Chair of Internal Affairs.
- B. The members of the Executive Branch shall annually review the operations and responsibilities of the Executive Branch and its committees.

Section 2: Terms of Office

- A. The Executive Board is composed of the President of Freshman Council, the SGA Vice President, the Vice President of Freshman Council, the Secretary of Freshman Council, and the Delegate of Freshman Council.
- B. The Executive Board shall be elected via the process described in Article III Section 3, specifically Point B.
- C. No member of the Executive Board shall be eligible to serve concurrently in any office within the Freshman Council.
- D. The Executive Board will forfeit their right to propose legislation and vote on legislation during Freshman Council meetings upon their election into office. (As Committee Chairs are only part of the Executive Branch and not the Executive Board, they will retain their right to propose legislation and vote during Freshman Council meetings).

Section 3: Election of Officers

- A. All persons who meet the standard set forth in Article 1, Section 2 and have been properly appointed by the SGA Vice President of the Student Government to a current seat within the Freshman Council shall be entitled to vote in any election of an Executive Officer or Committee Chairman that is conducted within the Freshman Council, provided that no student shall retain voting rights and eligibility upon the loss of their respective seat. The right to revoke voting eligibility of any member of the Freshman Council shall be placed upon the joint consensus of the current SGA Vice President, the acting Executive Board, and the Committee of Internal Affairs.

- B. Voting in elections regarding positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Delegate of Freshman Council shall be carried out by a secret ballot. Executive elections shall involve all Freshman Council members present at the time of the vote. To dispel any doubt in the results of said elections, the tallying of the votes shall be done by the Vice President of SGA and another member of the Executive Board who is independent of the entity of Freshman Council.

Section 4: Duties of the President of Freshman Council

- A. The President of Freshman Council shall oversee the Freshman Council and serve as the middle party between the other members of the Freshman Council and the SGA Vice President.
- B. The President is responsible for communicating with the members of Freshman Council and the SGA Vice President to inform them about Freshman Council meetings, Senate meetings, Executive Council meetings, events, etc.
- C. The President shall call all Freshman Council meetings to order and adjourn all Freshman Council meetings.
- D. The President shall ensure that the Freshman Council meets the needs of the Freshman Class.
- E. The President shall have a working knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure according to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised Edition.
- F. And the President of Freshman Council is one of the Freshman Council Delegates for Senate and therefore, has the right and duty to attend Senate meetings, propose legislation at Senate meetings, speak during Senate meetings, and vote at Senate meetings. Refer to Article III Section 9 for more specifications of the duty of the President of Freshman Council as a Delegate.

Section 5: Duties of the Vice President of Freshman Council

- A. The Vice President of Freshman Council shall take over the responsibilities of the President if the President cannot fulfill their responsibilities for any reason.
- B. The Vice President of Freshman Council will be in charge of overseeing various aspects of Freshman Council events and is responsible for assisting the President in any of the Freshman Council related projects.
 - a. The various aspects of Freshman Council events include, but are not limited to, advertising, planning, and running the events.
 - b. The Vice President will work closely with both the Public Relations and Special Events committees to achieve these.
- C. The Vice President shall create and maintain all social media sites related to Freshman Council.
- D. And upon the occurrence of an impeachment hearing, the Vice President of Freshman Council will preside. If charges are brought against the Vice President of Freshman Council, the President of Freshman Council will preside.

Section 6: Duties of the Secretary of Freshman Council

- A. The Secretary of Freshman Council shall record the minutes of each meeting and keep a file of them.
- B. The Secretary of Freshman Council shall also be in charge of calling and recording the roll.
- C. The Secretary must also keep track of Council Hours required by each Freshman Council member.
- D. And the Freshman Council Secretary is the righthand of the SGA Vice President who assists the SGA Vice President with their duties.
 - a. Specifically, the duties of the SGA Vice President to record attendance and track Service Hours.
 - b. However, these are not the sole duties of the SGA Vice President that the Freshman Council Secretary may assist them with.

Section 7: Duties of the SGA Vice President Pertaining to Freshman Council

- A. The SGA Vice President shall be in charge of keeping up with attendance, the Freshman Council budget, Council Hours, etc.
- B. The SGA Vice President must host one Freshman Council retreat.
- C. As well as one weekly meeting with the Freshman Council Executive Board.
- D. The SGA Vice President has the power to preside over Freshman Council weekly meetings if necessary.
- E. Council Hours can be given at the SGA Vice President's discretion.

Section 8: Duties of the Delegate of Freshman Council

- A. Freshmen will have a voice in the Student Government Association (SGA) Senate in the form of two seats. One shall be occupied by the Delegate of Freshman Council and the other by the President of Freshman Council.
- B. The Delegate of Freshman Council is a Freshman Councilor who has been elected into office following the process described in Article III Section 3, Point B.
- C. The Delegate of Freshman Council will attend Senate meetings and will present Freshman Council legislation and vote in the Senate.

Section 9: Duties of the Delegates of Freshman Council

- A. As mentioned in Article III. Section 9, Point A, there are two Freshman Council Delegates- the Freshman Council Sente Delegate and the Freshman Council President.
- B. Both Freshman Council Delegates shall fully participate in the meetings of the Senate. Both shall have the equal voting power of a Senator in all matters before the Senate and Senate committees.

- C. The Freshman Council will have the power to write and present legislation through the Delegates they elect. Legislation passed by Freshman Council is to be presented to the Senate by either Delegate at the following Senate caucus meeting for consideration.
- D. Neither Delegate will be able to present any legislation other than that which is passed by the Freshman Council.
- E. The Delegates' votes are bound in favor of any legislation first passed through the Freshman Council. Votes on any other legislation or issues shall be left to the discretion of the Delegates.
- F. The Delegates shall be required to follow the Senate attendance policy stated in Article V, Section 2, Subsection F of the SGA Senate Constitution and shall be subject to removal from the Senate as stated in Article X of the Senate Constitution.
- G. The Delegate and President are the only members of the Executive Board who retain their right to vote, though that right only applies within Senate Meetings.
- H. Before the Delegate and the President are allowed to vote in the Senate, they must go through the same orientation of the SGA President that all SGA Senators are required to go through.

Section 10: Duties of the Chair of Internal Affairs

- A. The Chair of Internal Affairs is the head of the Internal Affairs committee.
- B. The committee will vote on excuses for missed meetings and on the impeachments of Freshman Council Members.
- C. The Chair of Internal Affairs must meet with the Internal Affairs committee bi-weekly during Freshman Council caucus meetings.
- D. The Chair of Internal Affairs will report on that meeting during the Freshman Council meeting that occurs directly after the committee meets.
- E. The Chair of Internal Affairs is the voice of the Internal Affairs committee during Freshman Council meetings.

Section 11: Duties of the Chair of Special Events

- A. The Chair of Special Events is the head of the Special Events committee.
- B. The Chair of Special Events will help plan and organize event(s) with the committee.
- C. The committee will implement the ideas of the Freshman Council and will contact different departments, as needed.
- D. The Chair of Special Events must meet with the Special Events committee bi-weekly during Freshman Council caucus meetings.
- E. The Chair of Special Events will report on that meeting during the Freshman Council meeting that occurs directly after the committee meets.

F. The Chair of Special Events is the voice of the Special Events committee during Freshman Council meetings.

Section 12: Duties of the Chair of Public Relations

- A. The Chair of Public Relations is the head of the Public Relations committee.
- B. The Chair of Public Relations will implement the marketing of Freshman Council with their committee.
- C. The committee will conduct surveys to reach out to constituents and will work with the Vice President of Freshman Council on running Freshman Council social media sites and documenting Freshman Council activities.
- D. And they will help the SGA Vice President of Marketing with campus campaigns that target freshmen.
- E. The Chair of Public Relations must meet with the Public Relations committee bi-weekly during Freshman Council caucus meetings.
- F. The Chair of Public Relations will report on that meeting during the Freshman Council meeting that occurs directly after the committee meets.
- G. The Chair of Public Relations is the voice of the Public Relations committee during Freshman Council meetings.

Article IV

Appointment

Section 1: Composition of the Freshman Council

- A. The SGA Vice President shall be the presiding officer of the Freshman Council until the election of a Freshman Council President.
 - a. The SGA Vice President may continue presiding over the Freshman Council if they are willing, and with the consent of the Freshman Council President.
- B. The Freshman Council shall be composed of a minimum of 25 members and a maximum of 40 members.
- C. The Freshman Council will be appointed in the Fall semester of the academic year.
 - a. In the case that a current member is no longer affiliated with Freshman Council there will be provisions made for a replacement.
- D. The SGA Vice President shall have final authority on the appointment of all Freshman Council members. The SGA Vice President may bring in advisors from the SGA Executive Branch and/or the SGA Senate to assist in the appointment of Freshman Council members.

Section 2: Eligibility

- A. Any full time student, as defined by Middle Tennessee State University, who has completed fewer than two semesters of post-high school university education shall be eligible to be appointed to the Freshman Council.

- B. Members of the Freshman Council shall have and maintain a 2.50 cumulative grade point average in the Spring Semester following their appointment to retain their membership in the Freshman Council
- C. The SGA Vice President may override the GPA requirement under special, case-by-case, circumstances.

Section 3: Release of Grades

All members of the Freshman Council shall be required, as a condition of office, to sign a waiver allowing the release of that portion of their academic record relevant to determining that they meet minimum academic standards. Grades will be released only to the SGA administrative advisor, their designee and/or the Vice President of Campus Relations. It shall be the responsibility of the Student Government Association administrative advisor to monitor these records each grading period.

Section 4: Session

The Freshman Council shall meet at least weekly, beginning at the earliest convenience after the SGA Vice President has finished determining the membership of the Freshman Council, and continuing until May 1. The Freshman Council shall be required to attend a Joint Meeting with Senate monthly.

- A. The Freshman Council shall meet at least weekly, beginning at the earliest convenience after the Vice President has finished determining the membership of the Freshman Council, and continuing until May 1.
- B. The Freshman Council shall be required to attend a Joint Meeting with Senate once a semester- once during the Fall semester and once during the Spring semester.
 - a. A Joint Meeting only counts as an official Joint Meeting if a quorum of Freshman Councilors are present. Meaning that attendance of a Joint Meeting is subject to the same attendance policy as all other Freshman Council meetings.
 - b. To help ensure that a quorum is reached, all Joint Meetings must be announced at least two weeks before each Joint Meeting.

Section 5: Oath of Office

All elected members of the Freshman Council shall take and subscribe to the following affirmation: "I do solemnly affirm that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Freshman Council of Middle Tennessee State University, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the Freshman Council to the best of my ability."

Section 6: Council Hours

- A. Council Hours are defined as SGA approved service/volunteer hours.
- B. Freshman Councilors are required to complete six (6) Council Hours per semester (fall and spring); however, this amount can be changed at the discretion of the SGA Vice President and the Freshman Council Executive Board.

Article V

The Legislative Branch

Section 1: Transaction of Business

A simple majority of all members of the Freshman Council shall constitute the necessary quorum to do business. The Freshman Council shall prescribe the methods of voting in all legislative matters, but roll calls with the yays and nays entered in the journal shall be taken on any questions when at least one fifth of the members shall call for a roll call.

Section 2: Bills and Resolutions

- A. Any procedure to be considered by the legislature to affect the internal operation of the Freshman Council of the Student Government Association and/or SGA as a whole must be presented in the form of a bill.
- B. Any attempt to affect the operations of any entity exterior to the Student Government Association or Freshman Council must be presented in the form of a resolution.
- C. A bill or resolution may be passed in the following manner:
 - a. If a majority of the Freshman Council approves a bill or resolution, it shall be reviewed by the Vice President of the Student Government Association and then sent to the SGA Senate, sponsored by the Freshman Council member who authored the legislation in question or the Vice President of the Student Government Association, for final debate and approval. If any particular Freshman Council legislation relates to the university as a whole and affects students other than freshman, it must be approved by majority vote in both a caucus and formal meeting of the Senate to be; without receiving a majority vote in both Senate meetings, the proposed piece of Freshman Council legislation will fail and no longer be considered for later enactment. If any particular Freshman Council legislation impacts only freshman or Freshman Council, it must be approved by a majority vote in a meeting of the Freshman Council. The Vice President of SGA will review the legislation and approve it as a completed bill or resolution, or move the legislation for a vote in the Senate.
 - b. Remaining requirements and stipulations for the passage of Freshman Council legislation shall follow the procedures set forth in Article V Section 8 Subsection C sub-sections 2-4 of the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Middle Tennessee State University.

Article VI

Removal from Office

Section 1: Removal of Freshman Council members.

Any member may be removed from their position by the SGA Vice President. If the removal involves a position that had previously been approved by the SGA Vice President, a simple majority vote of the Freshman Council is required for removal by means of impeachment and conviction of malfeasance in office.

Section 2: Procedures to remove a Freshman Council member shall be handled as follows:

- A. If a particular member has not upheld their duties as a member of the Freshman Council, The SGA Vice President shall have final authority in the situation to remove the person from office.
- B. The Freshman Council shall have the sole power of impeachment, and possible removal from office. The Vice President shall preside over the hearing. Should charges be brought against the Vice President, the Freshman Council President shall preside over the hearing and vice versa.
- C. A bill shall be submitted to the floor of the Freshman Council by any member outlining reasons for impeachment. With a simple majority approval of the resolution, the President of the Freshman Council shall appoint a committee of 7 members for the purposes of general investigation. If the committee determines that their findings support the Articles of Impeachment. If this resolution passes by a simple majority, then the Vice President will preside over the final impeachment hearing.
- D. Freshman Council members are also able to turn in a written statement or verbal agreement of resignation to the SGA Vice President.
- E. Any member who has been removed from office pursuant to Article VI, section 1 shall not be permitted to hold any office or serve in any other capacity within the Student Government Association for the remainder of their attendance at this institution.

Section 3: Sever From SGA Vice President

- A. In the event that the SGA Vice President is no longer able to uphold their duties to the Freshman Council or if the SGA Vice President is impeached in the Senate, The SGA Vice President shall be removed as overseer of the Freshman Council by a vote of No Confidence.

Article VII

Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by the Freshman Council of Middle Tennessee State University at any two regular meetings, or by the petition of the freshman body signed by at least 50 freshmen. Any amendments proposed by petition shall be brought to immediate vote of the student body. Amendments proposed on the Freshman Council floor shall be approved only by two-thirds vote at two regular meetings.

Article VIII

Enactment

This Constitution shall go into effect 09/20/2023.