MCGOVERN MEDICAL SCHOOL STUDENT SENATE BYLAWS

Thank you for reading the McGovern Medical School Student Senate Bylaws. The purpose of these Bylaws is to establish a representative body to act as a student government and to represent the student body as a whole to members of the faculty, administration, and staff of McGovern Medical School and any other party seeking interaction with the student body. It will be the duty of each member of the student government and the student body as a whole to continuously uphold the ethics of the medical profession. The Senate will operate by the rules and regulations of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) and McGovern Medical School, and the Senate bylaws will not supersede said regulations.

Student Senate Definition

▪ The student government will be called the McGovern Medical School Student Senate.
▪ Membership of the Senate will consist of five (5) elected officers from each class: Class President and four (4) Senators.
▪ Executive officers of the Senate will include Senate President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
▪ The Student Senate will have the power to pass its own bylaws by which business meetings will be governed.
▪ The Bylaws of the Student Senate may be amended in either of two procedures:
  o An amendment may be proposed for approval by a member of the Senate and approved if three-fourths (¾) of the voting members vote in favor of the amendment.
  o An amendment may be proposed by a majority of the Senate or a petition bearing the signature of 10% of the student body and will be approved if more than half (½) of the student body votes in favor of the proposal by simple majority. The proposed amendment must be presented in writing to each class at least four (4) class days before voting.
▪ The Student Senate shall not discriminate on the basis of age, color, ethnicity, gender, identity or expression, national origin, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

Preamble

▪ The Student Senate will act as a representative body of the students in all matters pertaining to the affairs of students at McGovern Medical School.

Class Officer Elections

Each class will elect five (5) class officers to represent their class on the Student Senate.

▪ Class Officer Positions
  o Class President – The Class President is responsible for serving as the primary liaison between his/her class and the faculty, staff, and administration. The Class President also oversees the class list serve and is responsible for sending out regular emails to the class.
He/She assists with planning class functions throughout the year and serves as the chief student leader in planning the annual Henry Strobel Freshman Retreat. The Class President also holds a card for the class bank account, the other being held by the Finance Senator.

- Class Senators – There are four (4) positions to be chosen and to serve according to the following guidelines.
  - Senate candidates will run separately for their desired positions.
  - The candidate with the most votes in each category (Service, Social, Academic, and Finance) will serve as that respective Class Senator.

- The following are the descriptions of the respective Senator responsibilities.
  - Academic Senator – The Academic Senator is responsible for building relationships and working with the faculty and administrators to address the academic concerns of the student body. Specific roles include selecting course representatives and guiding Curriculum Committee representatives to help adequately address students’ concerns. In addition, the Academic Senator takes an active role in the proceedings of the Medical School Curriculum Committee.
  - Social Senator – The Social Senator is responsible for creating opportunities to help build class unity. This includes planning parties after examinations (“block parties”) and other social events throughout the year. He/She also serves as the chief student leader when planning the annual Welcome Weekend for incoming medical students, the end of MSII class party, and the MSIV Banquet.
  - Service Senator – The Service Senator encourages and helps develop an attitude of service and humility within the class. He/She plans various service-oriented events for the class throughout the year and heads MS1 and MS2 charity projects.
  - Finance Senator – The Finance Senator is in charge of all class accounts and holds a card for the class bank account. He/She is responsible for collecting class dues, managing class accounts (including charity accounts), and dispensing monies for events and donations as needed. The Finance Senator works closely with the Class President, Social Senator, and Service Senator to arrange and finance social and service projects including Retreat.

- First-year Candidate Eligibility
  - Candidates must pass all of their first round of examinations and be in good academic and professional standing.

- Election Procedures for Year 1
  - All elections will be conducted by the class officers of the year above.
  - Class elections will be held within two (2) weeks of the MSI Block 1 summative exam.
  - Any student may run for the office of President, one of the four (4) Senator positions, one of the two (2) Curriculum Committee members, or OSR representative of his/her respective class if they meet the requirement of good academic and professional standing.

  - Each class will elect a President, four (4) Senators, two (2) Curriculum Committee members, and an OSR representative to serve a term of one (1) academic year.
Announcement of intent to run for an aforementioned position will be filed with the Class President from the year above at least two (2) days prior to the election.

A candidate may choose to run for multiple positions among the Senate, Curriculum Committee, and OSR but may not hold multiple positions following the election. If the candidate wins multiple positions, they may choose between/among them. The candidate with the next-highest votes in the other position(s) will win the election.

A list of candidates will be announced to the class and posted the week of elections.

- Social media/email campaigning is prohibited.
- No written campaign materials are allowed.
- If a candidate does not follow the campaign rules, the Senate may disqualify the individual by a simple majority vote.

On election day, Class President candidates will receive two-and-a-half (2.5) minutes, and Class Senator candidates will each receive one-and-a-half (1.5) minutes to address the class. OSR candidates will receive one-and-a-half (1.5) minutes to address the class while Curriculum Committee candidates will receive one (1) minute to address the class.

The election will be held by secret ballot overseen by the Office of Student Affairs.

Each class member may submit one (1) vote for President, each Senate position, and OSR representative as well as two (2) votes for Curriculum Committee members.

The Presidential candidate, four (4) Senate candidates, OSR candidate, and two (2) Curriculum Committee candidates receiving the most votes in their respective categories will win the election.

In the event of a tie for President, any Senate position, OSR representative, or Curriculum Committee members, a run-off election will be held within one (1) week. Run-off elections will not include speeches.

In the event that no candidates run for a certain position and a vacancy remains, the position will be filled at the discretion of the Senate by subsequent elections or an application process.

If at any point an elected MS1 Senator, SIC representative, or Curriculum Committee member is found to be no longer fit or capable of fulfilling the duties of their office based on academic or professional expectations, that person will be subject to removal only by three-fourths (¾) vote of the current voting members with exception of the class officer(s) in question at a mandatory Senate meeting as outlined in “Election Procedures for Years 2 through 4” below.

- Refer to the OSR bylaws for the corresponding process for elected OSR representatives.

### Election Procedures for Years 2 through 4

- Any election that takes place during years 2 through 4 will henceforth be referred to as a “special election.”

- A special election may be held for a class officer, or Curriculum Committee position in accordance with the following circumstances:
  - At the beginning of each academic year, members of each class who remain in good academic and professional standing will have the opportunity to challenge the position of any incumbent class officer, or Curriculum Committee member. Challenges will be solicited by the Class President of the year above or the
Senate President and must be made aware to the Office of Student Affairs and the Student Senate within two (2) weeks of the official start date of that class’ academic year. This process should not take more than two (2) weeks in total unless the Senate votes to postpone a challenge by three-fourths (¾) vote. If no such challenge is made, it will be assumed that the incumbent officer will retain their original elected role.

- Class officers and Curriculum Committee members may also choose to resign from their position at any time. Officers desiring resignation should submit their requests to the President or most senior officer of their respective organization, that being the Academic Senator in regards to Curriculum Committee members. The President or most senior officer will alert the Senate of a vacancy for which the Senate will solicit nominations according to the election procedures outlined below. In the event that a fellow officer runs for the vacant position, their current office will not be considered vacated unless they win the election. Subsequent elections will continue until all vacancies are filled.
  - Refer to the OSR bylaws for the corresponding process for elected OSR representatives. A resulting special election for OSR representatives will be conducted by the Student Senate.

- If a class officer is deemed no longer fit or capable of fulfilling the duties of their office based on academic or professional expectations, that person will be subject to removal.
  - OSR and SIC will determine their own guidelines regarding the removal of a representative. A resulting special election for OSR or SIC representatives will be conducted by the Student Senate.
  - A class officer can be removed if a member of the Senate nominates the individual for removal. Requests for the removal of a class officer should be submitted to the Senate President or another Senate officer in the event that the Senator in question holds the office of President. Requests for removal of a Senator will be considered anonymous. The Senate President, or another Senate officer in the event that the Senator in question is the Senate President, should alert the Senator in question of their nomination for removal. The Senate President will also alert all voting members of the Student Senate regarding an impending vote.
  - Following the nomination for removal of a Senator, the Senate will convene at a mandatory meeting to vote on their removal. The time from nomination to removal should not take more than two (2) weeks. The Senator in question will be given five (5) uninterrupted minutes to address the Senate. The Senate officers can choose to conduct an independent investigation if deemed necessary. SCoPE can be consulted to advise on how to handle such situations; however, SCoPE’s investigation of any such issues will be considered separate and distinct from that of the Student Senate.
  - Senators can be removed by a three-fourths (¾) majority vote of the Senate membership with exception of the class officer(s) in question.
• The vacancy resulting from the removal of a Senator will result in a subsequent election as outlined below.

• A Curriculum Committee member can be removed if a member of the Curriculum Committee or a Senator nominates the individual for removal. Requests for the removal of a Curriculum Committee member should be made to the Academic Senator of the same class. Requests for removal of a Curriculum Committee member will be considered anonymous. The Academic Senator should alert the Curriculum Committee member in question of their nomination for removal.

• Following the nomination for removal of a Curriculum Committee member, the Senate and Curriculum Committee members from all classes will convene at a mandatory meeting to vote on their removal. The time from nomination to removal should not take more than two (2) weeks. Curriculum Committee members can be removed by a three-fourths (¾) majority vote of the Senate and Curriculum Committee members.

• The vacancy resulting from the removal of a Curriculum Committee member will result in a subsequent election as outlined below.

  o Following any event that creates the necessity for a special election, be it challenge, resignation, or removal, the process will remain the same as outlined below.
    ▪ In the case that an officer or representative is removed, the Senate reserves the right to determine if the officer or representative can run for re-election by three-fourths (¾) majority.
  
  o The Class President of the year above will send notice by email to the class below informing them of the need for a special election. This process should not take more than two (2) weeks.
    ▪ The Senate President/Student Affairs will send the email to the MSIV class.
    ▪ Oversight until completion of the special election will be maintained in similar fashion, remaining in close conjunction with Student Affairs.
  
  o Interested candidates will be asked to prepare a statement to express their intent and their qualifications for their desired position and submit it to Student Affairs/the Class President of the year above/the Senate President. The statement is not to exceed 500 words.
  
  o The announcement of the candidates along with their statements will be disseminated via email. There will be no campaign materials, posters, scheduled live campaigning or speech presentation event. Social media campaigning remains strictly prohibited. Speeches are not required in the event of a special election; however, they are not prohibited. Speeches may be arranged at the discretion of the Class President/Senate President. If speeches are scheduled, they must be arranged such that the majority of the class can reasonably attend.
  
  o Ballots will be collected via digital survey with a simple majority deciding the winner of the primary vacant position.
  
  o In the event that a current class officer acts with the intent of running for any primary vacant class officer position (i.e., Senator to President). That officer’s original position
will not be considered vacated unless the officer has won the new position for which that person is running. Explicitly, an incumbent Class officer will retain their original position if they do not win a special election that results from class officer resignation or removal.

- In such an event that a vacancy remains or a secondary vacancy is created after completion of the first special election, additional special elections will be held or applications will be solicited until all vacancies are filled.
  - In the event that no candidates run for an open position and a vacancy remains, the position will be filled at the discretion of the Senate by subsequent special elections or an application process.

Class Representative Positions

- Organization of Student Representation (OSR) Member: The purpose of this position is to represent the student body at the meetings of the Association of American Medical College’s OSR. He/She will attend the annual OSR National Convention as a representative of McGovern Medical School. Following this convention, the representative will present a report on this meeting to the Student Senate and determine the most effective way of disseminating this information to the student body.
  - The MSI class will elect a representative at the same time as their class officers in the fall and by the same rules as the class officer elections outlined above.
  - This representative will not be challenged annually.
    - The process for the removal or resignation of an OSR representative is outlined in the OSR bylaws.
    - Any resulting special elections will be conducted by the Student Senate as described above in “Election Procedures for Years 2 through 4.”
  - A total of four (4) OSR representatives, one (1) from each class, will serve the student body.

- Student InterCouncil (SIC) Member: The purpose of this position will be to represent the student body on the SIC. Student representation on the SIC will consist of three (3) elected student members from the Medical School. Duties of the delegates are outlined by the SIC Bylaws.
  - The Student Senate will solicit applications no less than one month from the end of the academic year to ensure that McGovern Medical School maintains full representation on the SIC. This includes in the event that an SIC representative position is vacated due to a representative accepting a position as an SIC officer.
    - The three (3) representative positions can be filled by any member of the student body pending their approval by the Senate.
    - Incumbent representatives will reapply annually.
  - SIC Representatives are required to attend three-fourths (¾) of the Student Senate meetings.
  - The Student Senate may remove SIC Representatives by three-fourths (¾) majority of voting members. The Student Senate President will be responsible for contacting the SIC President in advance of said removal procedures to ensure that full McGovern Medical School representation stays intact on the SIC through the academic year.
An SIC representative can resign at any time. Their position will be filled by application solicited by the Student Senate.

An SIC representative cannot hold any other positions within the Student Senate, OSR, or Curriculum Committee.

- Two (2) Curriculum Committee Members: These representatives will serve as active voting members of the Curriculum Committee responsible for approving the content and scheduling of the courses in the medical school curriculum and to monitor the quality of the educational programs and policies established there within, make recommendations to the committee at large concerning broad areas of educational philosophy and policy, and to ensure that policies involving educational standards are fulfilled. The student Curriculum Committee will consist of two (2) students from each of the four (4) classes, in addition to the Academic Senator from each of the four (4) classes. Curriculum Committee Representative may not also hold a position in the Senate.

- Class Representative Re-elections
  - Curriculum Committee members will be held to the same process of re-election as that outlined in “Election Procedures for Years 2 through 4.”
  - OSR representatives will be governed according to the OSR bylaws.
  - SIC representatives will not be subject to re-election, as they will re-submit applications annually.

- Class Representative Elections
  - All class representative positions (OSR representative, SIC representative, and 2 Curriculum Committee members) will be filled according to the procedures outlined in “Election Procedures for Year 1” above.

**Student Senate Officer Elections**

The Senate will elect from its members a President, Secretary, and Treasurer as outlined in “Electing Senate Officers” below.

- Roles of the Senate President
  - Preside over meetings of the Senate.
  - Publicize the agenda for Senate meetings.
  - Distribute Senate documents to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and other pertinent officials.
  - Prepare a written summary of Senate activities for the term of his/her office to be approved by the Senate and subsequently submitted to the Dean.
  - Lead the discussion regarding approval and distribution of funds to officially registered UTHealth McGovern Medical School student organization.

- Roles of the Senate Secretary
  - Maintain a record of the attendance of each Senator at regular meetings.
  - Compile, publish, and preserve minutes of all Senate meetings.
  - Send minutes to the Office of Student Affairs.
    - The minutes will be available to any member of the student body upon request.

- Roles of the Senate Treasurer
Prepare an annual budget, subject to Senate approval, from which the Senate will operate.

- Report at the request of the Senate as to the state of the funds.
  - The allocation of funds will be the domain and responsibility of the Senate as a whole and will require a simple majority vote of Senators present.

- Electing Senate Officers
  - Following the annual confirmation of years 2 through 4 class officers, the current Senate President will solicit nominations for Senate President, Secretary, and Treasurer from the current members of the Senate. The election will preferably occur at the first Senate meeting of the year.
  - Candidates will be given three (3) minutes each to address the Senate during the “Closed Forum.” Candidates will then be asked to leave the room as current officers and non-officer members of the Senate vote by paper ballot or a simple hand raise as is deemed fit by the current Senate President.
  - Candidates will be elected into Senate office by a simple majority vote.

- Replacing Senate Officers
  - A Senate officer will be held to the same standards as non-officer members of the Senate. They should remain in good academic and professional standing otherwise they are subject to removal. If at any point a newly elected Senate officer is found to be no longer fit or capable of fulfilling the duties of their office based on academic or professional expectations, that person will be subject to removal.
  - A Senate officer can be removed if another officer or non-office member of the Senate nominates the Senator for removal. Requests for the removal of a Senate officer can be submitted to any other Senate officer (i.e., requests to remove the Senate President can be submitted to the Senate Secretary or Treasurer). Requests for removal of a Senate officer will be considered anonymous. The officer to whom the request is made should alert the Senate officer in question of their nomination for removal.
  - Following the nomination for removal of a Senate officer, the Senate will convene to vote on their removal. Senate officers can be removed by a three-fourths (¾) majority vote of the Senate membership at a mandatory Senate meeting.
  - If the vote results in favor of the Senator’s dismissal from their officership, they will not forfeit their position as a non-officer member of the Senate. If the Senate sees fit, the officer can be subject to removal from the Senate according to the procedures outlined in “Election Procedures for Years 2 through 4” above.
  - The vacancy resulting from the removal of a Senate officer will result in a subsequent election as outlined in “Electing Senate Officers” above.
  - Senate officers may also choose to resign from their position at any time. Senate officers desiring resignation should submit their requests to the remaining officers. These officers will alert the Senate of a vacancy and solicit nominations. In the event that a current officer runs for the vacant position, their current office will not be considered vacated unless they win the election. Subsequent elections will continue until all vacancies are filled according to “Electing Senate Officers” above.

Senate Meetings

Revised Fall 2018
The Senate will hold a regular monthly meeting.
- Senate members may submit items for the agenda up to two (2) days prior to the meeting.
- The agenda will introduce new and old business.
- Special meetings of the Senate may be called by the President of the Senate, the Dean, or by one-fourth (¼) of the Senate members via written request to the Senate President.
  - The agenda of all special meetings will be restricted to the items of business for which the special meeting was called.
- A majority of the Senate will constitute a quorum for the transaction of its business.
- Meetings of the Senate are open to attendance by any McGovern Medical School student, faculty, or staff member during “Open Forum.”
  - “Open Forum” will be held during the first thirty (30) minutes of each Senate meeting. The Senate President may call the “Open Forum” to a close in the case that its duration extends beyond thirty (30) minutes.
  - Anyone may make an announcement and take part in the discussion during this time.
- “Closed Forum” is to follow “Open Forum,” and its purpose is to conduct official business pertaining to the Student Senate. Only class officer members of the Senate are permitted to attend and vote during the “Closed Forum.”

Student Senate Responsibilities

- Schedule and convene meetings.
- Extend invitations to members of SIC, OSR, Curriculum Committee, and SCoPE as well as the student body to the “Open Forum.”
- Make written recommendations to the Dean concerning student matters.
- Bring before a meeting of the student body recommendations and actions arising in the Senate as issues arise.
- Inform their constituents of Senate proceedings.
  - The Student Senate and its membership will not disseminate information with the purpose of furthering any particular agenda (including but not limited to those political, social, or religious) but is free to publicize the activities of registered student organizations and/or to pass along information regarding such activities to appropriate registered student organizations.
- Prepare an operating budget to govern all expenditures of the Senate.
- Prepare and distribute funds to student organizations as seen fit by a quorum of the Senate.