

Internal Rules of Procedure for the Graduate Student Assembly of The University of Texas at Austin

Article I Assembly Meetings

Section 1. Chair. Chair shall refer to the Vice President unless otherwise specified. In the absence of the Vice President, a Chair shall be chosen upon the recommendation of the President and the approval of the assembly. The Chair shall preside over the Assembly but may not vote unless the Assembly is equally divided.

Section 2. Roll. The roll shall be taken by either a sign-in sheet or roll call vote, at the discretion of the Membership Director. The Chair may elect to take a final roll call vote at the end of the meeting.

Section 3. Agenda. The agenda shall be set seventy-two (72) hours before each meeting and must include a call to order, roll call, opportunities to report from both regular and ex-officio officers as well as representatives and committees, consideration of old and new business, open forum, announcements, and any other business deemed necessary by the Assembly, its officers, or Sponsors. The order of business shall reflect the best use of the time of its members and may be amended by a regular motion and majority vote.

Section 4. Special Presentations

- A. Special Presentations shall not exceed twenty minutes.
- B. Any single presentation shall not exceed five minutes, subject to decision of the Chair.
- C. The Vice President shall approve or reject requests to speak in the special presentations portion of the agenda.

Section 5. Open Forum

- A. Any University of Texas at Austin student, faculty, or staff member shall be allowed to speak.
- B. No individual shall speak for more than two minutes during Open Forum.

C. Open Forum shall not exceed twenty minutes.

D. Any organization voicing concerns to the Assembly shall be allowed no more than one allotment of speaking time during Open Forum.

Section 6. Appointments

A. Formal appointment applications, if a formal application exists, for each student appearing for confirmation, shall be made available at least seventy-two hours in advance of the meeting. Representatives shall be notified of their availability if not emailed with the applications directly.

B. Approval of an appointment requires a simple majority vote of the total representatives unless otherwise specified.

C. Each appointment and the Question and Answer session related to it shall not exceed three minutes.

D. Each appointment shall be dispensed of as a separate question.

Section 7. Executive Reports

A. The President shall provide a report at his or her discretion.

B. Executive Reports shall not exceed ten minutes.

Section 8. Other Reports

A. Each of Committee Reports and Representative Reports shall not exceed twelve minutes.

B. No individual shall speak for more than three minutes during Committee Reports or Representative Reports.

Section 9. Announcements

A. No individual shall speak for more than one minute during announcements.

B. Announcements shall not exceed five minutes.

Article II

Legislation

Section 1. All legislation shall be filed with the Administrative Director via email by seventy-two (72) hours prior to introduction at an Assembly meeting.

A. Each resolution or bill shall include (1) as many factual “whereas” statements as needed; (2) “therefore be it resolved,” which shall state the Assembly's position on the issue; and (3) a series of statements, “be it further resolved,” which further lay out the Assembly's position or specify a course of action to be taken.

B. The Assembly may vote to concur with or defer to a resolution of another governing body at The University of Texas at Austin, provided that members are presented with the legislation at least one week prior to the Assembly's division of the question. This shall take the form of a resolution immediately considered old business

C. Each resolution and bill shall include a list of authors and sponsors. Sponsors must be voting members in the Assembly, and there must be at least one sponsor.

Section 2. The Administrative Director shall receive, and assign numbers to, all bills and resolutions.

A. Bills shall be numbered with the prefix G.B. Year (Semester)

B. Resolutions shall be numbered with the prefix G.R. Year (Semester)

Section 3. The Administrative Director or Vice President shall prepare and release an agenda at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the start of each Assembly meeting, as well as copies of all legislation and any minutes of the previous meeting.

Section 4. During New Business, the authors and sponsors of the legislation shall read the legislation number, title, and introduce the legislation, limited to five minutes. The authors and sponsors shall answer questions regarding wording and intent of the legislation for up to five minutes. The Chair may specify a committee assignment.

Section 5. The Assembly may overrule referral of legislation by the Chair with a simple majority vote of the voting members present. Debate is permitted.

Section 6. The legislation shall be brought up for discussion under “Old Business,” after a favorable majority vote of its assigned committee; or, if not referred to a committee, at the following meeting of the Assembly. If applicable, the committee chair shall deliver a report describing changes made to the legislation.

Section 8. Debate Rules

- A. Each member is permitted to speak three times on one topic for three (3) minutes each time.
- B. Each member is permitted to speak twice on any single amendment for one (1) minute each time.
- C. Debate shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes for a question and ten (10) minutes for an amendment
- D. Debate shall alternate between the Yea side and the Nay Side. Debate must be equal in time and number of speakers. If one side possesses more speakers than the other, that side shall be recognized in the order in which they rise to speak until the opposing side has exhausted their last speaker, then debate shall conclude.
- E. Members may yield either all or none of their speaking time to members and non-members alike during debate. Once the person to whom the floor was yielded finishes speaking, the original member may use any unfinished time.
- F. Debate may be extended or limited with a two-third (2/3) affirmative rising vote. The motion to extend or limit debate requires a second and must include the amount of time the debate shall be extended or limited.

Section 9. Voting Procedures

- A. A Hand, Ballot or Roll call applies to and must be held on the final votes of bills, resolutions, and appointments.
- B. This mandatory Hand, Ballot or Roll call vote may be suspended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Assembly.
- C. These voting records must be published electronically where constituents may access them.

Article IV Records

Section 1. Each of the following shall be made available to the public on the GSA website within one week: agendas and minutes of Assembly meetings, written committee reports, resolutions, bills, the Internal Rules, the Bylaws, and the Constitution.

Article V

Amendment of Internal Rules of Procedure

Section 1. These standing rules may be amended at any regular meeting of the Assembly by a two-thirds majority vote.

Section 2. Suspension. At a regular or special meeting, the Assembly may suspend any individual rule from the Rules of Order or Special Rules of Order as found in this document for the duration of the meeting by an affirmative two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present.