

Constitution of the Student Activities Council

University of Pennsylvania

Last Amended: December 8, 2022

Preamble

We, the members of the Student Activities Council (SAC) of the University of Pennsylvania, affirming our responsibility to the student body and realizing our common challenges unique within the campus community, hereby establish these bylaws for recognizing, supervising, and funding undergraduate activities and to provide for greater communication and cooperation both among activities and between activities and the University of Pennsylvania administration.

Article I: Membership

1. The General Body will be composed of one primary representative from each SAC-recognized organization. Treasurers are recommended to serve in this capacity.

Article II: Recognition of Activities

2. SAC recognition entitles a group to membership on the General Body, eligibility for funding by SAC, and all other advantages granted to SAC-recognized student groups.

3. For a group to be eligible for recognition, it must meet four criteria. First, the group's primary mission must meet a documented need present within the undergraduate community not already met by an existing SAC-recognized group. Second, the group's primary mission and requisite funding needs must meet the criteria of a SAC category, as defined by the Office of Student Affairs. Third, the officers of the group and the majority of its members must all be enrolled full-time (delete registered) undergraduate students at the University of Pennsylvania, with the exception of part-time undergraduates in the final semester of their studies. Fourth, groups must be currently registered with the Office of Student Affairs(OSA). Club registration is managed through the PennClubs database. To be eligible to apply for SAC recognition, groups must be registered by December 1 of the calendar year immediately prior to the year in which the group is planning to apply for SAC recognition.

4. Any group applying for SAC recognition will submit all required documentation to the Executive Board during the annual New Group Recognition period in the fall semester. The Executive Board will approve a group by a majority vote of those members of the Executive Board present. Minutes of recognition meetings can be obtained by request to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will conduct interviews with each eligible group to review its recognition request. Eligible groups that fail to attend the recognition hearing to which the group and the Executive Board have mutually agreed upon lose all rights to appeal the recommendation of the Executive Board.

5. At the last meeting of the fall semester, the Executive Board will present the applications of all groups recommended for SAC recognition. The Executive Board will present its recommendations for approval as a single motion requiring a two-thirds vote of the General Body. New group applicants that were interviewed but are not being recommended for SAC recognition may appeal the Executive Board's decision at this meeting as a separate motion requiring a two-thirds vote of the General Body to overturn the board's recommendation.

6. Any group changing its statement of purpose or membership criteria will report the change to the Executive Board prior to finalizing any changes. The Executive Board will then consider if the group's recognition status requires reevaluation. If reevaluation is necessary, the Executive Board will schedule the group for an interview at the next meeting of the Executive Board.

7. All SAC groups are required to register with OSA by no later than the end of September to maintain its status as a SAC-recognized group. The annual club registration process opens in early August for the upcoming school year and is managed through the PennClubs database.

Article III: De-Recognition of Activities

8. Any member of a SAC-recognized group may challenge the recognition of any group at any time. Notice of intent to challenge the recognition of the group must be submitted to the Executive Board at least one week prior to the scheduled General Body Meeting at which the member will present the challenge. In this event, a two-thirds vote of the General Body will remove the group's recognition.

9. If a SAC-recognized group registers two absences at General Body Meetings in an academic year, the group will lose recognition. To be re-recognized, the group must follow the procedures for recognition. If the group is re-recognized, it will sustain a 10% reduction of its SAC funding for that academic year.

Article IV: Composition and Powers of the Executive Board

10. The Executive Board will be composed of nine full-voting members. Eight of those members must be or have previously been officers of a SAC-recognized group. The ninth member shall be the Treasurer of the Undergraduate Assembly.

11. If the UA Treasurer is unable for any reason to fulfill the duties of the position, then the SAC Chair may request an alternate representative from the UA be appointed to the Executive Board.

12. No member of the Executive Board may concurrently serve as a group's SAC representative. No member of the Executive Board may vote at General Body Meetings, except for the Chair of the Executive Board, who may vote in the event of a tie.

13. The Executive Board will be responsible for the management of the Student Activities Council. The Executive Board will have the power to make recommendations to the General Body regarding group recognition, group funding requests, and the allocation of the annual budget for student groups to its members. The Executive Board will also have the power to recommend removal of recognition or removal of funds for groups it has found to have violated the SAC Constitution or a University policy

14. The Executive Board will have the power to call General Body Meetings, to prepare and publish meeting agendas and minutes, and to mediate conflicts between groups.

15. The Chair of the Executive Board will preside over all meetings of both the Executive Board and the General Body.

Article V: Elections to the Executive Board

16. To be eligible for election to the Executive Board, a candidate must meet three criteria. First, the candidate must be an officer or formerly an officer of a SAC-recognized group at the time of election. (Note: Officers of constituent groups within the Sports Club Council or the Department of Music Performance Ensembles are eligible to run for the SAC Executive Board.) Second, the candidate must have been an undergraduate at Penn for one full semester prior to election. Third, the candidate must not be scheduled to graduate or study abroad in the calendar year beginning from the date of the election unless their term ends at the first General Body Meeting following their departure.

17. Elections for the Executive Board will be held at the first General Body Meeting of each semester. Four seats will be available at each election.

18. The Chair, Vice Chair, and Communications Director will be internally elected by the Executive Board at the first Executive Board meeting following an election. The Technology Director may be appointed or elected, pursuant to the new Chair's discretion. In the event of a tie, the candidates with the highest number of votes will proceed to a runoff election among the Executive Board, subject to the Bylaws of the Executive Board, until an officer is able to be elected.
19. Each representative will serve a term of one year.
20. Nominations for membership on the Executive Board will be accepted from the floor. Elections to the Executive Board will be run by the Nomination and Elections Committee.
21. In the event of a tie in the point count, those candidates will be ranked within the point count based on the number of ballots in which each candidate was ranked first. If this fails to break a tie, the tie will be brought to the vote of the General Body.
22. Should any vacancy occur, such as by voluntary resignation, the position will be filled by election at the next meeting of the Council by the same procedures used to elect the Executive Board.
23. Any member of a SAC-recognized group may move to recall a member of the Executive Board. Notice of intent to recall a member of the Executive Board must be submitted to the Executive Board at least a week prior to the scheduled General Body Meeting at which the member will present the challenge. In this event, a two-thirds vote of the General Body will remove the member from the Executive Board. Conditions for recall may include, but are not limited to, violation of the attendance policy for Executive Board members established in the Bylaws of the SAC Executive Board.

Article VI: Meetings

24. A General Body Meeting may be called by the Executive Board, or by petition of 25% of the registered representatives of SAC-recognized groups. In this event, the Executive Board must schedule a meeting within five workdays of the petition's receipt. All General Body Meetings must be announced with at least 48 hours' notice to the General Body.
25. A quorum at a General Body Meeting will consist of 50% of the registered representatives of SAC-recognized activities present.
26. A voting member is defined as a representative of a SAC-recognized group who is present at the meeting and not abstaining from voting. Thus, a motion's passage or failure is tabulated based on the number of voting members.
27. Only SAC general body members and members of the Executive Board have the privilege of bringing motions onto the floor.
28. Votes with a significant majority may be tabulated at sight, either by the Chair or the collective effort of the Executive Board. Any vote too close for sight-tabulation will be conducted by roll call of representatives in the general body. All roll-call votes will be tabulated by group and retained permanently by the Executive Board.
29. A group representative arriving more than 15 minutes may be marked absent if the meeting is near adjournment.
30. Except as contained herein, all meetings will be run in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Article VII: Allocation of Funds and Group Finances

31. Every spring semester, the Executive Board will submit a call for annual budgets from every SAC-recognized group. The Executive Board will conduct hearings with each group to review its budget request. Following these hearings, the Executive Board will draft a budget that allocates the sum of its funds across all SAC-recognized groups. The Executive Board will then present to each SAC-recognized group a copy of its recommendation to the General Body.

32. The Executive Board must allocate at least 15% of SAC's funds for the contingency fund, the purpose of which will be to fund the activities of groups that are not included in their annual budgets. Half of the contingency fund must be held until the following January.

33. In the last General Body Meeting of the academic year, the General Body will act and vote upon the recommendations of the Executive Board regarding the allocation of funds.

34. The General Body will hear appeals from groups dissatisfied with recommendations of the Executive Board as a series of amendments to the main motion, each of which requires a 60% majority vote to pass. Groups will present their appeals in the alphabetical order of their name, with priority given to amendments concerning individual groups over those concerning the totality of the recommendations of the Executive Board.

35. Groups that fail to complete an annual budget or attend the budget hearing to which the group and the Executive Board have mutually agreed upon lose all rights to appeal the recommendation of the Executive Board.

36. Any SAC-recognized group that desires to draw from the contingency fund to support an unforeseen event will submit a written request and supporting documentation to the Executive Board at least 24 hours prior to the meeting of the Executive Board at which the group wishes to be interviewed for the funding of the event. The Executive Board will issue a recommendation to the General Body based on this interview. Groups may appeal the recommendation of the Executive Board, and a 60% majority vote of the General Body is needed for the appeal to pass.

37. The Executive Board will not fund events retroactively.

38. SAC-recognized groups must maintain all funds and income within the University accounting system. Deviations from this system must be approved by the Executive Board. All SAC-recognized groups will also maintain financial records subject to audit by the Executive Board.

Article VIII: Powers of SAC

39. The Executive Board is empowered to mediate intragroup disputes as well as to review and investigate any organization that it deems to be in violation of its own rules and regulations or those of SAC. A binding decision will be made by two-thirds vote of the General Body.

40. The results of failure to comply with the decision may be, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. loss of funds
- b. loss of recognition

Article IX: Amendments to the Constitution

41. An amendment to the Constitution may be proposed by the Executive Board or by a petition of 15% of the representatives of the General Body.
42. Prior notice of intent to consider an amendment must be given to the General Body at the regularly scheduled General Body Meeting prior to the regularly scheduled meeting at which the amendment is to be considered.
43. An amendment will be ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Body.