

Bylaws of the Madonna University Student Senate



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Mission

The Madonna University Student Senate's mission is to represent the interests of our student body through diverse representatives and open involvement of students; giving a voice to all and supplying the opportunity for individual and community improvement.

Bylaws of the Madonna University Student Senate

Article I

Structure of the Senate

The Student Senate shall be composed of twenty four (24) students who represent many groups and promote diversity. Senators shall be elected at the end of winter semester and take office the first meeting of the fall semester. The term of office shall extend from that point until the end of the following winter semester.

Section 1

Executive Officials

Of the twenty-four (24) students, six (6) will hold executive positions. Of the remaining eighteen (18) students, five (5) shall hold secretary positions (See Article II, Section 2). The remaining thirteen (13) students shall hold senate seats. The highest vote-getting senator of these thirteen (13) shall be the Speaker of the Senate. The Speaker of the Senate now holds an executive position, and their elected seat is not vacant. All positions will be elected at the end of the winter semester. (See Article III, Section 2)

Section 2

Advisor

The faculty or staff advisor of the Madonna University Student Senate shall be aware of all meetings and be submitted a report of the minutes. The advisor shall not be granted the power to vote, but shall serve the following purposes:

- A. See that continuity of the organization is preserved from year to year.
- B. Consult on programming ideas and student concerns.
- C. Attend as many organization meetings and events as possible.
- D. Articulate campus policies/procedures when possible (i.e., establishing an account).
- E. Be supportive of the officers and members.
- F. Act as a facilitator among officers and members.

- G. Be familiar with campus-wide and, if applicable, national structures and services.
- H. Assist officers in understanding their duties, including administering/planning programs.

Section 3

Legislation

- A. Any legislation that deals with the allocation of funds shall be labeled a bill.
- B. Any other legislation shall be termed a resolution.
- C. Legislation must receive at least a 2/3 (67%) vote in favor in order to be taken to the floor.

Article II

Election of Senators

Section 1

Requirements/Qualifications

- A. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale.
- B. Students must maintain full-time academic status, unless otherwise noted (e.g. transfer students, post-traditional students, and graduation credit requirements ⁽¹⁾)
- C. Students are expected to act appropriately and professionally on all forms of social media.
- D. Students who are on University probation of any kind will not be allowed to serve on the senate until the probation has been lifted. (See Article XII, Section 2)
- E. Senators shall represent the following groups:
 - One (1) resident student
 - i. Must be a resident student.
 - One (1) commuter students
 - ii. Must be a commuter student.
 - One (1) from Colleges: Business, Education and Human Development, Arts and Sciences, Nursing and Health, and Graduate School.
 - iii. Must have a declared major within the college or school.
 - One (1) transfer student
 - iv. Must be a transfer student.
 - One (1) post traditional student
 - v. Must be a student who is 23 years of age or older. The full-time academic status does not apply to this Senator. Must be registered for a minimum of 6 credits (half-time academic status) for each semester.
 - Two (2) First-Year students
 - vi. Must be a First-Year student directly from high school or homeschool.
 - One (1) international students
 - vii. Must be an international student.

- One (1) at-large seat
- viii. Must be a student who ran for a specific Senate seat and did not receive it or students who petition for an open at-large Senate seat.

Section 2

Appointed Senators and Executives

- A. The term of office for the Senate shall be three (3) semesters in length – Summer, Fall, and Winter.
- B. The term of office for those senators who hold executive positions shall be three (3) semesters in length.
- C. Senators are required to be a member of a Student Senate Committee (See Article X, Section 3)
- D. Secretaries shall be elected to the one of the five seats representing the following groups:
 - Athletics - Male
 - Athletics - Female
 - School Spirit
 - Communications
 - Religion
- E. Vacancy in a secretarial or other executive position (i.e. Treasurer, Secretary) during non-election season shall be remedied by appointment of a Senator or non-Senate member to the position by the President and Vice President. A majority vote of the Senate must take place for the appointed individual to be elected.

Section 3

Secretary Responsibilities

Athletics - Male:

- A. Shall be required to maintain contact with the Athletic Director, in order to best serve the athletic department & male athletes.
- B. Shall work to ensure that all Madonna University male athletic teams remain satisfied with facilities and general male athletic needs.
- C. Shall aim to increase involvement at all athletic events on and near campus in any way the Secretary sees fit.

Athletics - Female:

- A. Shall be required to maintain contact with the Athletic Director, in order to best serve the athletic department & female athletes.
- B. Shall work to ensure that all Madonna University female athletic teams remain satisfied with facilities and general female athletic needs.
- C. Shall aim to increase involvement at all athletic events on and near campus in any way the Secretary sees fit.

School Spirit:

- A. Shall be required to incorporate student involvement at University functions.
- B. Shall be responsible for coordinating and planning all Student Senate run/sponsored events.
- C. Shall contact the Student Life Coordinator in case of guidance.

Communications:

- A. Shall be in charge of running the Student Senate social media pages.
- B. Shall be required to advertise all Student Senate Events.
- C. Increase the efficiency of the Student Senate through technological means.
- D. Be assigned technological projects from the Advisor of the Student Senate
- E. Shall maintain contact with Information Services, Web Services, Network Services, Technology Learning Services, and voice the concerns of students to each department.

Religion:

- A. Shall work to ensure that all Campus Ministry groups are represented on campus.
- B. Shall work to incorporate the Franciscan Value system into all facets of the Student Senate.
- C. Shall be required to maintain contact with the Director of Campus Ministry.

Article III

Election of Executive Officers

Section 1

Election Eligibility

- A. Election shall be by ballot and shall be decided by the votes of student members of the Madonna community.
- B. Candidates can be nominated by fellow senators, the student body, and can nominate themselves.
- C. If nominated by fellow senators or the student body, the candidate is not required to run for office – he or she is reserved the right to decide to run for office.
- D. If the decision is made to run for office, the individual must announce this to the faculty advisor and go through the application process.

Section 2

Filing to Run for Election

- A. Senatorial candidates must file to run for Senate by the first Friday of March.
- B. Candidates for the executive office must file by the first Friday of March.
- C. If an individual wishes to run for the Senate seat and an executive seat, he or she must file once for each.

Section 3

Election Season

- A. Nominations and announcements of running for office shall take place in the month of February, unless planned otherwise.

- B. Following nomination, all candidates must fill out an application detailing their eligibility to run (See Article II, Section 1).
- C. In the case of a successful application process, the candidates for the Presidential and Vice-Presidential ticket must together receive one-hundred (100) signatures from Madonna University students backing their campaign.
 - a. The requirement of 100 signatures is able to be revoked in the case of special circumstances. In this case, the current Senate President shall decide if the signatures are necessary.
- D. Verbal campaigning shall begin no sooner than the announcement of running for office has been made.
- E. Electronic campaigning shall begin no sooner than the first Monday of February.
- F. Print campaigning (i.e. flyers) shall begin no sooner than the first Monday of March.
- G. All campaigning shall be performed in accordance with the specific guidelines set by the committee assigned to this process.
- H. Voting will proceed in the first week of April as decided by the senate. The student body will have the sole decision of voting candidates into office.
- I. Each Madonna University student may only submit one ballot.
- J. Elected Senators shall assume office on May 1st and hold their chair until April 30th the following year, or as decided by the Election Committee.

Section 4

Campaigning

- A. Candidates cannot further advertise their campaign after March 31st, or as decided by the Election Committee.
- B. Any advertising, such as flyers, may be left up past the March 31st deadline. However, further advertising past this date is prohibited.

Section 5

Election Rules and Regulations

- A. Candidates are not allowed to advertise their campaign outside of the scheduled election season, or they shall be disqualified.
- B. Candidates cannot directly collect votes using any means of balloting (i.e. holding a ballot station and rewarding individuals for voting for them)
- C. Candidates cannot campaign within twenty (20) feet of a voting station.
- D. Negative campaigning shall not be permitted.

Section 6

Election Procedures

- A. The candidates for President and Vice President shall run together on a single ticket and shall announce which candidates from among those running for the senate will serve as Treasurer and Secretary if elected.
- B. The candidates for President and Vice President must have been elected or appointed members of the Senate for at least one semester to be eligible for office. All other positions can be filled regardless of previous involvement.
- C. All other senators, with the exception of First Year, shall run individually.
- D. The President and Vice President positions shall be filled by the candidates with the highest votes in their respective race.
- E. The Chief of Staff position shall be appointed from among or outside the senator pool by the President and Vice President and then approved by the Senate.
- F. Other than the Chief of Staff position, the twenty-one (21) individuals who received the most votes in the senatorial ballot shall fill the remaining Secretary and Senate seats.
- G. The Speaker of the Senate shall be the highest vote-getting senator of the remaining candidates. This senator reserves the right to decline the role, in which case it would be offered to the next highest vote-getting senator.
- H. For the inclusion of all students and in the pursuit of justice for all, there shall be a Special Request Form, whereby any student can make an appeal to Student Senate, concerning the Election Procedures, to be reviewed anonymously by the Election Committee. All decisions made by the Election Committee are final and binding.

Section 7

Reelection

- A. All senators shall be permitted to run for reelection as many as four times.
- B. Executive officials may only hold office for one term.

Section 8

Voting

- A. Voting shall be made available to all members of the Madonna University student body.
- B. Each individual may only fill out one ballot.

Article IV

Senator Responsibilities

Section 1

President

- A. The primary responsibility of the president is to preside over Senate meetings.
- B. If the President is not present, his/her responsibilities are to be upheld by the Vice President.

- C. The President shall not participate in voting unless his/her vote is one that will be the deciding factor on whether or not a vote passes.
- D. The President shall act as the spokesperson of the group.
- E. The President is required to deliver a “State of Senate” address in early January. This address shall focus on the accomplishments of the program during the previous semester and the outlook for the current semester.
- F. Must create a final report detailing what the Senate accomplished during the semester, once in early December and the other in mid April.
- G. Delegate tasks to the remaining executives when he/she feels it is necessary.

Section 2

Vice President

- A. Assist the President in his/her duties.
- B. Shall oversee the House of Representatives and the activities of student organizations.
- C. Overlook the activities of the Senate and other executive officers.
- D. Shall recommend secretaries from among the senators (See Article II, Section 2).
- E. Shall be the official Student Senate representative to the Faculty Standing Committee on Curriculum, Educational Policy, and Assessment.

Section 3

Treasurer

- A. Shall keep track of all financial information and report to the President and Vice President.
- B. The Treasurer is required to submit a report of the state of finances once every month, or as necessary according to the needs of the Senate.
- C. Shall present monthly budget updates to the Senate at the first General Assembly meeting of the month.
- D. Oversee and coordinate fundraising activity as appointed by the Student Senate. (See Article VIII, Section 2)
- E. The Treasurer shall be specifically appointed to oversee the Appropriations Committee.

Section 4

Secretary

- A. Shall be responsible for keeping the minutes at each meeting and for reporting said minutes at the beginning of each following meeting.
- B. Provide a copy of each meeting’s minutes to the President and open each meeting by going over the previous meeting’s minutes with the Senate.
- C. Run the Madonna University Student Senate’s email.

Section 5

Speaker of the Senate

- A. Shall be the highest vote-getting senator.
- B. Member of the senate who oversees all legal proceedings.
- C. Required to know the bylaws of the Madonna University Student Senate in order to maintain the order of the senate and answer questions regarding rules, sanctions, and regulations.
- D. Must be fluent in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th Edition*.
- E. Shall have the task of reviewing proposals in order to verify their legitimacy.
- F. Shall be required to keep attendance of the General Assembly meetings.
- G. Shall be the chair of the Rules and Ethics Committee.

Chief of Staff

- A. Shall be appointed by the President and Vice President of Senate.
- B. Shall act as an advisor for the President and Vice President
- C. Aid in Senator's knowledge of each specific role.
- D. Aid in creation and completion of various documents used by Senate (i.e. ballots, logistics for travel, forms for communication, etc.)
- E. Make schedule of meeting days, times, and locations for easy access by Senators.
- F. Aid the Advisor of Student Senate in tasks as he/she sees fit.

Section 6

Senators

- A. Shall be involved in voting for all legislation brought forward at the general assembly meetings.
- B. Are required to be a member of a Student Senate committee, of which they may or may not be the chair.

Article V

House of Representatives

Section 1

Attendance

- A. A house of representatives composed of a student leader from each student organization shall exist.
- B. Each member of the house is required to attend two (2) mandatory Student Senate meetings per semester.

- C. In the case of a representative failing to attend at the minimum of two (2) General Assembly Meetings, and not replaced by a substitute or having an excused absence, the corresponding student organization shall be placed on probation.
- D. The Senate has the sole power to vote and remove a student organization from probation.
- E. A member of the senate cannot also hold a seat in the House of Representatives; another leader from the student organization must serve in the House of Representatives.

Section 2

Responsibilities

- A. Members of the house serve to promote events, represent their student organizations, and interact with other leaders to better serve the student body.
- B. Members of the house are also permitted to apply for funds to be rewarded by the student senate.

Article VI

Voting

Section 1

Voting Requirements

- A. Quorum to pass a vote shall be 2/3 (67%).
- B. Decisions may only be passed if they receive 2/3 (67%) of the total votes.

Section 2

Process of Events Following a Passing Vote

- A. Members of the senate to whom it applies must then work to research and write up a proposal to fix the issue.
- B. The proposal shall then be presented to the entire Senate and undergo a vote.
- C. In the case of a passing vote, the proposal shall be passed along to the appropriate Madonna University committee that will then address the concern.

Section 3

Process of Events Following Non-passing Vote

- A. In the case of a non-passing vote, revisions to the proposal are required to be made accordingly before the proposal can be voted on a second time.
- B. When a vote on a revised proposal has been passed with at least 3/4 (75%) approval from the Student Senate, members of the senate to whom it applies must then work to research

and write up a proposal to fix the issue. The proposal shall then be presented to the senate just as in section 2.

- C. If then this proposal also does not pass a vote in the Senate, the issue will be dropped from the Senate discussion.

Article VII

Attendance Responsibilities

- A. Senators must indicate that they are present at roll call by the Speaker.
- B. Student senators, including those holding executive positions, are only permitted two (2) unexcused absences per semester. (See Article XI)
- C. In the event that a senator must be absent, he/she must notify the Speaker of the Senate a minimum of two (2) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- D. All senators are required to attend at least one (1) volunteer activity each semester. (See Article VIII, Section 1)
- E. All senators are required to attend at least one (1) fundraising event each semester. (See Article VIII, Section 2)
- F. Each senator is expected to sufficiently research issues and events occurring at the University, as provided by the President and Vice President, prior to the scheduled meeting date and time.
- G. Senators must attend Madonna University Student Senate sponsored events whenever possible.

Article VIII

Volunteering and Fundraising

Section 1

Volunteering

- A. Senators are required to serve at least six (6) hours of volunteer work each semester (on-campus or otherwise) or attend a Student Senate hosted volunteer activity.
- B. The Student Senate will host a minimum of one (1) volunteer event every semester.
- C. The goal of volunteer opportunities is to enrich the Madonna community through active service and benefit the general members of the student body who are supported within this community.

Section 2

Fundraising

- A. Senators shall participate in all fundraising activities hosted by the Student Senate at Madonna University.

- B. The purpose of fundraising is to gain funds to support student organizations and student senate activities.
- C. Funds shall not be used for the sole benefit of any one registered student organization.

Section 3

Office Hours

- A. The President and Vice President shall be required to serve a minimum of two (2) office hours per week.
- B. During office hours, the President and Vice President must be available to answer questions/complaints and organize student requests.

Article IX

Budget

Section 1

Budget Requests

- A. Budget request forms will be made available by the Student Senate to those organizations involved in the budgeting process. Organizations wishing to request funds must have a representative attend an informative meeting about the appropriation process.
- B. Budget request forms will be completed and given to the chair of the Appropriations Committee.
 - 1. Organizations will supply the Appropriations Committee with an itemized budget request.
 - 2. This itemized budget will list the specific uses of the requested money.

Section 2

Budget Hearings

- A. The Appropriations Committee will be the Student Senate Committee responsible for reviewing budget requests and making recommendations to the Student Senate General Assembly.
- B. The president of Student Senate will act as an ex-officio member.
- C. Budget hearings will be held under *Robert's Rules or Order Newly Revised*
- D. Once all budget request forms have been submitted, the Student Senate will review requests and make recommendations to the Student Senate General Assembly.
- E. The organization will be informed of the Senate's recommendation within a week of the decision.
- F. Those who desire to dispute the amount will indicate times when they will be available to make their appeal to Student Senate's General Assembly.
- G. These organizations will be informed of their scheduled times to dispute the

recommendation. Failure to appear for a scheduled appointment could result in the forfeiture of Student Senate funding for that year at the discretion of the Appropriations Committee.

Article 3

Student Organizations Receiving Funds

- A. Must be a recognized student organization through the student organization recognition process.

Article 4

Special Appropriations

- A. At any time, if an organization needs more funds for a new project, notice shall be given to the Student Senate, and the same procedure shall be followed as in the initial budgetary process.
- B. Special appropriations can only be made for projects that could not, by the judgment of the Appropriations Committee, have been foreseen at the initial budget request.
- C. Special appropriations must benefit Madonna University as a whole and not only the organization's members.
- D. Organizations receiving University recognition for the first time will be eligible to receive up to \$100 from Student Senate if they are approved after the regular annual budget appropriations in accordance with the Budget Appropriations Guidelines. In special cases, more than \$100 may be awarded at the discretion of the Appropriations Committee. The appropriated amount will be determined by the Appropriations Committee and approved by General Assembly.

Article X

Process of Meetings

Section 1

Advertising Meetings

- A. The Secretary of Communication must post notice of each meeting with the date, time, and location, prior to the day of the meeting.

Section 2

Meetings

- A. General Assembly meetings of the Madonna University Student Senate shall be open to all members of the University community.

Section 3

Committees

- A. Student Senate committees shall be focused on the following five (5) important areas of University life and student engagement:
 1. Community Cultural Development Committee
 2. Diversity, Inclusion, and Religious Affairs Committee
 3. Appropriations Committee
 4. Rules and Ethics Committee
 5. Special Events Committee
- B. A member of the Senate shall chair each committee.
- C. Chairs shall be appointed from among the senators by the president.
- D. The committees shall meet at appointed times outside of the General Assembly.
- E. Student Senate committees shall be responsible to address any and all legislation referred to them by the Vice President.
- F. Multiple committees may be assigned to the same legislation.
- G. All committees are required to keep minutes of their meetings. The minutes shall be uploaded to the shared drive after each committee meeting for easy access of Senators.
- H. All committees are required to give a report at the General Assembly.

Section 4

Committee Descriptions

- A. Community Cultural Development
 - May be chaired by either a senator or secretary.
 - Shall monitor the suggestions.
 - Shall deal with any and all safety concerns on campus.
 - Shall be in charge of addressing residence hall issues.
 - Shall maintain contact with Student Life and ensure that students are given opportunities for involvement.
 - Shall monitor student concerns related to academics.
 - Shall monitor satisfaction in all facets of the University.
 - Shall be charged with monitoring student health and well-being in all facets of the university including, but not limited to, food, living arrangements, Title IX, and psychological services.
- B. Diversity, Inclusion, and Religious Affairs Committee
 - Shall be chaired by the Secretary of Religion
 - Shall support the development of equitable and fair policies and procedures.
 - Shall focus on the representation of students of all faiths, backgrounds, and sexual orientations.

- C. Appropriations committee
 - Shall be chaired by the Student Senate Treasurer.
 - Shall be in charge of the budget and all budget requests.
 - Shall collect requests from student organizations and review them prior to general assembly meetings.
- D. Rules and Ethics Committee
 - Shall be chaired by the Speaker of the Senate.
 - Shall be assigned with reviewing and proposing amendments to Constitution and bylaws.
 - Shall be assigned with handling impeachment processes.
 - Shall be assigned the proofreading of proposals but not their approval.
- E. Special Events Committee
 - May be chaired by either a senator or secretary.
 - Shall be charged with promoting positive school spirit within the university community.
 - Shall be charged with organizing and promoting all Student Senate events.

Section 5

Topics for Discussion at Meetings

- A. The President and Vice President have the right to choose any relevant topic to discuss at any given meeting.

Section 6

Voting

- A. All Senate members are required to vote.
- B. All Senate members voting shall cast their vote with their respective population in mind.
- C. Voting may be carried out by taking a simple hand count or vote of acclamation as decided by the Senate.
- D. For matters of higher importance, the method of a secret ballot shall be instituted.

Article XI

Absences

- A. Absences from the General Assembly meetings must be made aware to the Speaker of the Senate at least two (2) days prior to the meeting.
- B. Examples of excused absences include the following:
 - Sickness
 - Family issues

- Class
- Athletic Event (applies only to Madonna University athletes who will be participating as an athlete in the event)
- C. Examples of unexcused absences include:
 - Studying for a test
- D. If there is an extenuating circumstance, the Speaker of the Senate may sign off on the absence at his/her discretion.

Article XII

Sanctions and Rules

Section 1

Sanctions

- A. The Senate has the right to impose sanctions if a member is determined to be negligent of his/her responsibilities.
- B. Sanctions can only be enforced if there is at least a 2/3 (67%) vote in favor.
- C. In order for sanctions to be enforced, the accusing party must provide a report detailing the reasons for the action to the Rules and Ethics Committee.
- D. Proposal of sanctions must be presented at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 2

Senatorial Probation

- A. Senators shall be placed on probation following two unexcused absences, unless otherwise decided by the Senate.
- B. Senators shall be removed from office following five unexcused absences in a one-year term.
- C. In the case of an extreme action, other than an absence, that requires the attention of the president, the President shall decide if the action is worthy of probation.
- D. In order for probation to be lifted, the Senate must pass a vote of 2/3 (67%) in favor. Also, the senator in question must show that he or she is prepared to be an active, attentive member.

Section 3

Removal

- A. For an individual to be removed from office, the President or Vice President must submit a written notification detailing the purpose of the removal.
- B. Following written notification, the President or Vice President shall put the matter to a vote in a manner as chosen. In the case of a 2/3 (67%) or greater vote in favor of removing the individual from office, the action shall be carried out.

- C. Individuals to be removed from office must be notified through written documentation, such as email, within forty-eight (48) hours following the decision.

Article XIII

Amendments and Revisions

Amendments to these bylaws are permissible when an amendment proposal passes with a 2/3 (67%) vote in the Senate.

Article XIV

Parliamentary Procedure

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th Edition* shall govern the Madonna University Student Senate in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Student Senate may adopt.

Article XV

Current Copy of Bylaws

- A. The current copy of the bylaws of the Madonna University Student Senate shall be the copy of the document found on the organization's website.
- B. The Speaker of the Senate shall be responsible for editing and updating the Madonna University Student Senate Bylaws.
- C. All other copies of the document shall be considered null and void.
- D. The current copy of the document is to be placed on the website of the organization within a timely manner of approval of the General Assembly.