

Oakland University Student Congress Constitution

We, the students of Oakland University, in order to provide a central student government responsive to the needs of the students, bring forth to the Board of Trustees of Oakland University, the following Oakland University Student Congress Constitution. The University Student Congress, in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in this Constitution and the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Oakland University, shall maintain the integrity and individuality of students, advocate policies which shall best serve students, protect and defend the rights of students, and provide an official vote and voice for all Oakland University students.

Article I. Congressional Elections and Eligibility

- A. Any enrolled student with good academic and disciplinary standing shall be eligible to seek and maintain membership or position in the Legislative or Executive Branches. To maintain such membership or position a student need not be enrolled during Spring or Summer semesters.
- B. Elections for the student-elected positions within the Legislative and Executive Branches of University Student Congress shall be held every Winter semester.
- C. Each student enrolled at the time of any election shall have the right to cast one vote for a Presidential/Vice Presidential ticket and twenty-five votes for Legislators.
- D. The term of office for University Student Congress shall begin with the second legislative body meeting prior to the end of Winter semester. The new Congress must hold two (2) meetings before the end of Winter semester.

Article II. Executive Branch

- A. Composition
 - 1. The Executive Branch of University Student Congress shall consist of:
 - a. One Student Body President and one Student Body Vice President, elected as a ticket by a plurality vote of the students voting in the election.
 - b. An Executive Board, appointed by the Student Body President, consisting of:
 - i. Administrative Assistant.
 - ii. Student Activities Funding Board Chairperson.
 - iii. Student Program Board Chairperson.
 - iv. Financial Affairs Director.
 - v. Student Services Director.
 - vi. One other position that the President shall so designate, as outlined in the Bylaws.
 - 2. Individuals appointed to an Executive Board position must be approved by the Legislative branch.
 - 3. Executive Board members are to be appointed pursuant to the procedures outlined in the University Student Congress Bylaws. An Executive Board member must be an enrolled student with good academic and disciplinary standing. The duties of Executive Board members are defined in the University Student Congress Bylaws and each Executive Board member is required to comply with the duties of his or her position.
- B. Elected officers
 - 1. Student Body President.
 - a. Shall serve as the chief spokesperson of the student body of Oakland University.
 - b. Shall carry out the policies and measures of the University Student Congress in accordance with the Constitution, the Bylaws and Oath of Office.
 - c. Shall make recommendations to the Legislative Branch of the University Student Congress.
 - d. May break tie votes in the Student Congress Legislative Body meetings.
 - e. May veto any Congressional legislation. Vetoes must be presented in writing to the Steering Chairperson within one week of the Congress' approval of the legislation.
 - f. Shall select individuals to fill all Executive Board positions and submit them to the University Student Congress Legislature for approval.
 - g. Retain non-voting status on all Congressional committees.
 - h. Oversee and report on the fiscal solvency of the University Student Congress.
 - i. Represent the University Student Congress and the student body at all appropriate forums and functions, including, but not limited to, all Board of Trustees meetings.
 - 2. Student Body Vice President.
 - a. Assist the President in carrying out policies and measures of the University Student Congress.

- b. Assume the office of University Student Body President in the event that the position of President becomes vacant.
 - c. Serve as chairperson of all University Student Congress meetings.
 - d. Represent University Student Congress at the university, local, state, and national levels in conjunction with the President.
 - e. Represent the President in his or her absence.
- C. Impeachment of Executive Branch members
 - 1. Any Executive Branch member may be impeached based on charges of violation of this Constitution or its Bylaws.
 - 2. In cases of Executive impeachment, the Disciplinary Committee shall appoint two Executive Board members as voting members of the committee until a decision is reached on the issue; the Executive Board member being charged may not be the person appointed to the committee.

Article III. Legislative Branch

- A. Composition
 - 1. The Legislative Branch of University Student Congress shall be composed of voting members as follows:
 - a. Twenty-three members elected at-large by the student body.
 - b. All members must maintain good academic and disciplinary standing.
 - c. The President of Residence Halls Council or his/her designee shall serve as an ex-officio member.
 - d. The President of Commuter Council or his/her designee shall serve as an ex-officio member.
 - 2. The University President or his/her designee shall serve as an ex-officio and non-voting member of University Student Congress.
- B. The rights and responsibilities of the Legislative Branch shall be to:
 - 1. Initiate proposals or make recommendations to the University President, University agencies, and the student body at large on all matters relevant to the general welfare of the student body and University.
 - 2. Recommend University policy in areas of concern to students as well as disseminate and communicate information regarding University policies to students.
 - 3. Share with the University Senate the responsibility for consideration of University policy in areas which involve both academic and student life concerns.
 - 4. Have the right to take formal notice of any action taken by the University or any representative thereof, and by resolution, to comment on any such action.
 - 5. Appoint, select or otherwise elect student members to every University governance body and standing ad-hoc committee which provides for student representation as needed.
 - 6. Have the right to override a presidential veto by a two-thirds affirmative vote of those members present and voting. This vote must take place at the next Congress meeting following the exercise of that veto.
 - 7. Establish and maintain policies and procedures for the effective operation of all aspects of the University Student Congress.
 - 8. Advise the University President on all issues, matters and/or concerns he/she wishes to bring before the University Student Congress.
 - 9. Conduct business in accordance with the regulations, procedures, and duties outlined in this Constitution, the University Student Congress Bylaws, and Oath of Office.
- C. Termination of office.
 - 1. Removal due to absence.
 - a. Any Legislator who accumulates three (3) unexcused absences from meetings of University Student Congress during either Fall semester or Winter semester shall automatically be brought before the Legislature for removal.
 - 2. Impeachment.
 - a. Any Legislator may be impeached based on charges of violation of this Constitution or its Bylaws. The charges must be presented to the Disciplinary Committee, which will proceed according to its own guidelines as outlined in the Bylaws.
 - 3. To remove any member of the Legislature shall require a two-thirds vote of the total voting membership. Legislators being charged shall not receive a vote on their removal decision.
 - 4. Resignations.

- a. Any resignation written by a member of University Student Congress shall take effect immediately, unless otherwise stipulated by the resignation letter.

Article IV. Appointed Agents

- A. The Student Body President may appoint any number of “appointed agents,” who shall hold Executive Board-level positions, but are not considered members of the Legislative or Executive Branches. The University Student Congress Bylaws shall name appointed agent positions and their subsequent duties.
- B. Must be in good academic and disciplinary standing.

Article V. University Senate

- A. The University Student Congress shall be responsible for appointing students, who may or may not be University Student Congress legislators, to fill seats on the University Senate and its committees that are reserved for student representation. The University Student Congress Bylaws shall name the procedures that will be followed to determine these appointments.

Article VI. Committees

- A. Standing Committees.
 - 1. Student Activities Funding Board (SAFB).
 - 2. Student Program Board (SPB).
 - 3. Student Services Committee (SSC).
 - 4. Legislative Affairs Committee (LAC).
 - 5. Elections Commission (EC).
 - 6. Steering Committee.
 - 7. Disciplinary Committee.
 - 8. Research and Review Committee.
 - 9. Scholarship Committee.
- B. Composition and duties of standing committees.
 - 1. The SAFB, SPB, SSC, LAC, and EC shall be chaired by a member of the Executive Board and need not be exclusively composed of members of the Legislature.
 - 2. The Legislature shall elect Steering, Disciplinary, Research and Review, and Scholarship Chairpersons. The chairpersons must be members of the Legislative Branch of University Student Congress and shall be non-voting members of their respective committees. The committees shall be exclusively composed of up to five (5) Legislators.
 - 3. The duties of the committee members are defined in the Bylaws of the University Student Congress and each committee member is required to comply with the duties of his or her position.
- C. Non-Legislative Body committee chairpersons may introduce legislation or make motions which:
 - 1. Add members to their committees.
 - 2. Amend the operating guidelines to which the committee adheres.
- D. Additional committees under University Student Congress jurisdiction may be formed in accordance with the University Student Congress Bylaws.

Article VII. Meeting Procedures

- A. Quorum and absences.
 - 1. The quorum requirement for meetings of the Legislature shall be satisfied when a simple majority of seated Legislators, inclusive of the Residence Halls Council representative and the Commuter Council representative, are present.
 - 2. If quorum is not established within thirty minutes of a scheduled meeting time, those members not present shall be charged with an absence. All members present will be counted as present and dismissed.
 - 3. If quorum is established at the roll call, Legislators shall be charged with an absence if they are not present fifteen (15) minutes after the completion of the roll call.
 - 4. Legislators shall be charged with a tardy if they arrive after the completion of the roll call, but before the fifteen minute time limit. Two (2) tardies will be considered an absence.
- B. Conduct of Congress meetings.
 - 1. Congress meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent official edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except as this Constitution or its Bylaws may provide.

2. The Student Body Vice President shall preside over all meetings of Student Congress, and be charged with interpreting and enforcing orderly parliamentary procedure. The Steering Chair shall assume the powers and duties of chairperson in the absence of the Vice President, while retaining all the duties and powers of a Legislator.
 3. Unless otherwise stipulated by this Constitution or its Bylaws, all votes of the Legislature shall require majority approval of those members present and voting.
- C. Submission and approval of business.
1. All business to be placed on the agenda must be submitted, in writing, to the Steering Chairperson prior to the approval of the agenda.
 2. All items concerning Congressional finances or the Bylaws shall have two readings, at least seven days apart, before being put up for a final vote by the Legislature.
- D. Special meetings.
1. A special meeting of the University Student Congress may be called by the Steering Committee for one stated purpose, and must be given at least two (2) days public notice.

Article VIII. Vacancies

- A. When a Legislative position becomes vacant due to resignation or removal, the Research and Review committee shall submit candidates who have applied to Student Congress to fill those vacancies. The Legislature shall approve the appointments if the candidate has fulfilled the requirements outlined in the University Student Congress Bylaws.
- B. Executive Branch vacancies shall be temporarily filled by a person selected and confirmed by the Legislature until a permanent replacement can be nominated by the Student Body President.

Article IX. Referenda

- A. University Student Congress shall hold a campus-wide referendum following authorization by the Legislature. The referendum question shall have two readings at least seven days apart before being put up for a final vote by the Legislature; a majority vote of the Legislature is needed to approve the creation of the referendum question.
- B. The student body may initiate a referendum, to be carried out by University Student Congress, by filing a petition to University Student Congress, totaling at least one-third of the number of valid ballots cast in the previous General Election.
- C. Questions submitted to referendum shall be adopted by University Student Congress if approved by a simple majority of those voting on the question.

Article X. Amendment Procedure

- A. Amendments to this Constitution may be enacted by:
 1. The University Student Congress by:
 - a. Conducting a first and second reading of the proposed amendment at publicly announced meetings of the University Student Congress at least seven days apart.
 - b. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Legislature.
 - c. A majority vote of those students voting in a student referendum.
 - d. Obtaining ratification by the Board of Trustees.
 2. The student body by:
 - a. The collection of petition signatures totaling two-thirds of the total number of votes cast in the previous presidential election.
 - b. A majority vote of those students voting in a student referendum.
 - c. Obtaining ratification by the Board of Trustees.
- B. Amendments to this Constitution's Bylaws may be enacted by:
 1. A first and second reading of the proposed Bylaws or amendment at publicly announced meetings of the University Student Congress at least seven days apart.
 2. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the University Student Congress Legislature.
 3. Legislation altering SAFB and SPB guidelines may only be introduced for Legislative approval by Legislators who are committee members or the committee's chairperson.
- C. Any amendment to the Bylaws must be written within the scope of authority set forth in this Constitution.
- D. Amendments which change or remove any position within Congress will not take effect until such time as that position becomes vacant, or the current Congressional session ends.