BYLAWS OF THE REPRESENTATIVE BRANCH

ARTICLE I – LEGISLATION

Section 1. Bills

A. Bills shall have, as their object, the enactment, amendment, or repeal of a statute, and are the sole means by which a law may be promulgated. Bills establish policy for the Association;

B. Any member of the Representative Branch or Executive Board may introduce Bills. Bills are to be considered a main motion, requiring a second to be brought to the floor;

C. Drafts of Bills shall be filed with the Clerk of the Association not later than close of business two (2) days prior to the meeting at which it is to be introduced. The signature and district of their introducer shall accompany all Bills;

1. Bills shall be prepared in a uniform manner and shall be numbered for the purposes of identification and reference. The Clerk of the Association shall administer this process;

2. Bills shall be prefaced by the enactment clause: “The Student Government Association of the State University of New York at Potsdam, as represented in the Assembly and the Senate, does hereby enact as follows:”

D. Upon the introduction of a Bill, it shall be discussed and may be referred to an appropriate committee for review. The Representative Branch shall not call any Bill to question upon its first reading except in extraordinary circumstances;

1. The committee to which a Bill has been referred shall make such inquiries as may be necessary to ascertain the facts and circumstances that bear upon the Bill’s propriety. A report, which may or may not include a recommendation from the committee or branch to which a Bill has been referred, shall be required in order for the Bill to be voted upon. Once a report has been made, the Assembly, and the Senate reserve the right to vote on the bill, table it, or refer it back to committee for further investigation;

2. All bills presented in Senate must be brought back to each club to determine the Senator’s vote;
3. Votes shall be by show of hands, by roll call, or yea/nay as provided for in Robert’s Rules of Order, 10th Edition Newly Revised (or subsequent document). All votes shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting at which it was taken;

4. All Monetary Bills involving the assessment, allocation, or disbursement of funds shall be subject to the agreement of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Representative Branch, in their respective branches, present and voting. All other Bills shall require a simple majority for passage;

5. Under extraordinary circumstances and only by the discretion of the Vice President and Treasurer, a bill may be labelled “Immediate Attention”, thus permitting the Representative Branch to suspend the normal tabling procedures and vote on the measure at its first reading;

   a. The Vice President and Treasurer must state their reasons for labelling a Bill Immediate Attention.

   b. Objections to Immediate Attention are in order, and must be upheld by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members present and voting.

   1. If such a motion is sustained, the bill shall be considered under Article I, Sec. 1.D.1.

   c. If a member of Representative Branch moves to label a Bill Immediate Attention, a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the branch in which the motion was made is necessary for passage;

6. Bills involving the expenditure of funds to be taken from Supplemental, Contingency, or Equipment Replacement Fund lines may be introduced by the Treasurer, and shall include the following information:

   a. Total amount of money requested, itemized where possible;

   b. Rationale for request;

   c. Any relevant additional information

E. The Clerk of the Association shall record the vote on each Bill, along with the date of passage or failure. The bill shall be presented to the Vice
President and Treasurer, who shall in turn sign the Bill, certifying its accuracy. Once the bill has passed in both the Assembly and the Senate, the Clerk of the Association shall then submit the Bill to the President of the Association, who shall either accept or reject the Bill in accordance with the Constitution.

1. A veto may be overturned by a motion agreed to by two-thirds (2/3) of the Assembly and Senate present at their next respective meetings.

F. If the Funding Request has been granted, the representative of the bill must make an appointment with the Student Government Association Treasurer within two weeks, so the necessary arrangements are made for the dispersal of funds.

Section 2. Resolutions

A. Resolutions shall have as their object the expression of the intent or opinion of the Assembly and the Senate;

B. Only members of the Assembly and the Senate may introduce a Resolution. It is highly recommended, the proposer meet with the Executive Board in which they shall offer advice in regards to the Resolution and shall have no authority in accepting nor rejecting the document. All Resolutions must be labelled with the date of introduction, have at least two (2) sponsors, and are to be considered main motions, requiring a second to be brought to the floor;

C. Resolutions shall be filed in accordance with those procedures used for Bills;

D. Resolutions shall be debated and voted upon in the same manner as a Bill, with the exclusion of the right to be labelled “Immediate Attention.”

E. All Resolutions shall include the enactment clause: “We, the Assembly and the Senate of the Student Government Association of the State University of New York at Potsdam do hereby resolve:”

F. Resolutions are not subject to veto by the President of the Association;

ARTICLE II – SGA COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committees
A. All committees, with the exception of Budget shall be open to all of the SUNY Potsdam student body;

B. The Vice President shall serve as initial chair of all SGA Committees, yet may appoint a Chair from within the committee by the third regular meeting of said committee, with the exceptions of:
   a. Budget, which shall be co-chaired by the Treasurer and the Comptroller;
   b. Public Relations, which shall be chaired by the Comptroller;
   c. And Election, which shall be chaired by the Vice President;
      i. In the event the Vice-President intends to run for office, is nominated and accepts, they shall appoint a chair from the Representative Branch.

C. The Vice President shall have the right to review the performance of all elected appointed chairs, and remove chairs not performing their duties to the Vice Presidents’ expectations. Appeals are to be made in writing to the President of the Association. Removal may be overturned by a majority vote of the Assembly and the Senate, respectively.

Section 2. SGA Committee Descriptions

A. Budget Committee:

1. Shall consist of six (6) Assembly Representatives. This committee is charged with preparing an annual budget for the following academic year each Spring, verifying the accuracy and propriety of Summer expenditures if any are made by the Executive board, and recommending guidelines for the budget process to the Treasurer;

B. Constitution Committee:

1. Advises the Association concerning matters of constitutional interpretation and policy. In addition, this committee is responsible for the review of organizational constitutions as per Association policy;
2. If a constitution being reviewed is an active club, and no changes were made from the club and Constitution Committee,
then the Committee can vote on the constitution instead of having the constitution go to the Representative Branches.
   i. Vote must be ¾ in order for it to pass;
   ii. The constitution at hand, will be filed like a Bill.

C. Voices Committee:

   1. Responsible for issues involving the quality of student life, both social and academic;

D. Public Relations Committee:

   1. Responsible for the comprehensive distribution of information to the campus community regarding the accomplishments, activities, and debates occurring within SGA;
   2. Responsible for organizing SGA-sponsored events/activities;

E. Election Committee:

   1. Established in the beginning of the Spring semester, and shall consist of no less than four (4) members of the Representative Branch. Coordinates, administers, interprets, and enforces all aspects of the election of Executive Board officers.

F. Ad-Hoc Committees:

   1. Ad-Hoc committees formed by the Vice President to investigate specific issues, Bills, Resolutions, and proposals.

ARTICLE III – REPRESENTATIVE BRANCH PROCEDURE

Section 1. The presiding officer shall prepare an agenda for each Representative Branch meeting, respectively. With the omission of District Reports for the Senate meetings, and the omission of Organizational Reports for the Assembly meetings, this agenda shall be ordered in the following manner:

   Call to order and roll call
   Approval of minutes from previous session
   Nominations
   Guest Speakers
   Immediate Attention Bills
   Officers’ Reports
   Committee Reports
   Organizational Reports / District Reports
   Vetoed Bills
   Unfinished Business
   New Business
A. A motion to Adjust the Agenda may be entertained with a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote.


Section 3. All Resolutions and Bills involving the assessment, allocation, or disbursement of funds shall be subject to the agreement of two-thirds (2/3) of the respective Representative Branch members present;

A. All other Bills shall require a simple majority for passage in the respective Representative Branch.

Section 4. The Assembly and the Senate shall, by secret ballot plurality vote, elect a President Pro Tempore and a Sergeant-at-Arms no later than the second regularly scheduled meeting of the Fall Semester. These officers shall perform those duties assigned to their respective positions in Robert’s Rules of Order 10th Edition, Newly Revised (or subsequent document).

Section 5. Members shall, at all times, address their remarks to the presiding officer;

A. Questions pertaining to a specific committee may be directed to a student member of said committee and be discussed freely, at the discretion of the presiding officer.

Section 6. The presiding officer shall, in all but extraordinary circumstances, give floor privileges to members of the respective Representative Branch before spectators, special guests, or other individuals;

A. Members of the Representative Branch reserve the right to recognize spectators, special guests, or other individuals in their respective meetings.

Section 7. The presiding officer reserves the right to limit the number of spectators in the chamber at any time. The right to move into an Executive Session is reserved with a majority vote of the Representative Branch in question;

A. An Executive Session consists solely of the Executive Board, Parliamentarian and the respective Representative Branch.
Section 8. Should a member, for any reason, plan to miss a scheduled meeting, that member must communicate to the Clerk of the Association and the President of the perspective house prior to the meeting a notice, accepted by the Clerk of the Association (ie: hand-written notice, email, etc…), containing an explanation for the absence. Failure to do so shall result in the member being credited with one unexcused absence;

A. The Vice President must deem all absences as excused or unexcused;
   a. In extenuating circumstances, any unexcused absences may be reconsidered to be deemed excused;

B. In the event that a Senate member has four (4) unexcused absences, the budget of a Senate Representative’s organization shall be affected as outlined in the Financial Policies and Procedures

C. In the event that an Assembly member has three (3) unexcused absences in one academic semester they will lose their speaking rights; after five (5) unexcused absences they will no longer retain voting rights.

Section 9. Suspension of Rules

A. Suspending the rules requires a second, is neither debatable, nor amendable, requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority, and may not be reconsidered. This is a motion to suspend Robert’s Rules of Order 10th Edition, Newly Revised (or subsequent document) or any standing rules or customs;

B. The Bylaws may not be suspended; they must be amended;

C. Although not debatable, the maker of the motion may offer a short explanation as to why the rules should be suspended or what action may be taken once the rules are suspended;

D. If a motion to suspend the rules for a particular purpose is unsuccessful, it may not be renewed without unanimous consent;

E. After the item for which suspension occurs is carried out, the rules are automatically reinstated.

ARTICLE IV – ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Admittance
A. To be considered for a seat in the Assembly, an interest sheet shall be made available at the SGA office. The interest sheet shall act as an intermediary contract which shall reserve a seat in the house upon return to the SGA office within the first two (2) weeks of the academic year.
   a. Interest sheets shall be made available at the SGA office during the first day of classes;
   b. All interested members shall be contacted by the Vice-President confirming their interest and shall be notified of information regarding the Assembly;
B. During the first scheduled meeting of the Assembly, all representatives shall be expected to fill out a “Representative Agreement form” in which states the responsibilities and consequences of the Assembly Branch as listed in this document.
C. Any persons wishing to join the Assembly after the first scheduled meeting must sit in as a spectator for at least two (2) consecutive meetings. After which they shall be appointed to the Assembly by the President of the Association, pending a majority vote of the membership.
   a. New members of the Assembly shall be expected to complete a “Representative Agreement Form” in which states the responsibilities and consequences of the Assembly Branch as listed in this document.
   b. In the event of an absence during the speciation period, with approval of the President of the Assembly, the attendance at a committee meeting may count towards overall membership to the house.

Section 2. Responsibilities
A. Attendance at all meetings of the Assembly Branch;
   a. Meetings of the Assembly Branch also includes special meetings such as: emergency meetings and joint meetings of the Representative Branches.
B. Have authorities vested in them as defined by Robert’s Rules of Order 10th edition newly revised (or subsequent documents).

Section 3. Consequences
A. Failure to attend a meeting of the Representative Branch shall result in the following:
   a. After a total of three (3) unexcused absences in an academic semester, the member in question shall no longer retain speaking rights.
   b. After a total of five (5) unexcused absences in an academic semester, the member in question shall no longer retain voting rights.
c. After a total of seven (7) unexcused absences in an academic year, if a majority of active Assembly Representatives vote to dismiss the member in question, the member shall no longer be a member of the Assembly Representative Branch.

B. Excused absences shall be considered by the Clerk of Assembly through completion of the Assembly Absence Form, which are located in the SGA office, as well as, on the SGA website, within twenty-four (24) hours prior to the scheduled meeting.
   a. The President of the Assembly shall have final consideration over any absence form submitted after the scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these By-Laws shall require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Assembly, and a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senate.

ARTICLE VI – RATIFICATION

These By-Laws shall become effective upon a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Representative Branch. The enactment of this document results in the repeal of the BYLAWS OF ASSEMBLY or any preceding documents of similar purpose.