



UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

STUDENT ENGINEERING COUNCIL

Constitution and Bylaws

Constitution:

Ratified - May 4, 2009

Bylaws:

Ratified - May 4, 2009

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the undergraduate students of the Cockrell School of Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin, in order to build a more involved and active student body that affects positive change, hereby name and reestablish this organization as the Student Engineering Council. The Student Engineering Council is purposed with uniting engineering students and their organizations, serving as the students' representative within the Cockrell School of Engineering, offering committee and leadership experience to its members, and providing resources to students for their initiatives.

Article I. Membership

All undergraduate engineering students retain membership within the Student Engineering Council. The Student Engineering Council is led by the Officer Group consisting of a President, Vice President of Financial Affairs, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Corporate Affairs, and Vice President of Special Events. The voting body consists of the elected Officer Group, selected Members-At-Large, representatives from admitted student engineering organizations, an elected representative to the University of Texas at Austin Senate of College Councils and representatives from the University of Texas at Austin Student Government.

Article II. Operation

The structure and functions of the Student Engineering Council, as outlined by this Constitution, are governed by the attached Bylaws and *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Article III. Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any voting member of the Student Engineering Council. A three-quarters majority vote is required to amend this Constitution according to *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Article IV. Ratification

The ratification of this Constitution by two-thirds majority of voting members of the existing Student Engineering Council shall be sufficient for the reestablishment of the Student Engineering Council and for the installation of this Constitution and its supporting documents as its governing documents.

BYLAWS

Article I. Membership

Section I. Organizational Structure

- A. Associate Members
- B. Student Government Representatives
- C. Senate Representative
- D. Members-At-Large
- E. Society Representatives
- F. Member Societies
- G. Officer Group
- H. Executive Advisors

Section II. Associate Members

- A. Every student in the Cockrell School of Engineering is classified as an Associate Member of the Student Engineering Council (hereafter referred to as SEC or the Council).
- B. Associate Members are invited and encouraged to attend all general SEC meetings and to serve on a committee or as a committee chair within the Council.
- C. Associate Members do not have the power to vote in the Council.

Section III. Student Government Representatives

- A. Student Government Representatives are elected by the general engineering student body, in accordance with the University of Texas at Austin Student Government Election Code, to serve as representatives of the engineering student body to Student Government and also serve as Student Government's representatives to SEC.
- B. Each Student Government Representative serves for one academic year and has one vote in the Council.
- C. Duties of a Student Government Representative:
 - i. Must attend all general SEC meetings and all Student Government meetings. If unable to attend a general SEC meeting, the Student Government Representative must notify a member of the Officer Group beforehand and, in the case of a vote during a general meeting, designate a proxy vote in writing or by email to a member of the Officer Group before the meeting.
 - ii. Must actively participate on at least one committee per long semester. Approval for meeting this requirement is at the discretion of the Officer Group and the respective committee chair(s).
 - iii. Must be available in the SEC office for an hour per week to address any Student Government-related questions during the long semesters.
 - iv. Must serve as a liaison between the Council and Student Government and keep the Council informed of pertinent Student Government business as well as any upcoming events or issues that may be of interest to engineering students.

- v. Should attend Member-At-Large meetings and are invited and encouraged to do so.
- vi. Must fulfill all other duties according to the Student Government Constitution and its supporting documents.

Section IV. Senate Representative

- A. The Senate Representative is elected by the Council to serve as the Council's representative to the Senate of College Councils.
- B. The Senate Representative serves for one academic year and has one vote in the Council. Only one individual may hold this office at any given time in the Council.
- C. Duties of the Senate Representative:
 - i. Must attend all general SEC meetings, all Senate of College Councils meetings, and all Senate of College Councils Senate Representative meetings. If unable to attend a general SEC meeting, the Senate Representative must notify a member of the Officer Group beforehand and, in the case of a vote during a general meeting, designate a proxy vote in writing or by email to a member of the Officer Group before the meeting.
 - ii. Must actively participate on at least one committee per long semester. Approval for meeting this requirement is at the discretion of the Officer Group and the respective committee chair(s).
 - iii. Must be available in the SEC office for an hour per week to address any Senate-related questions during the long semesters.
 - iv. Must serve as a liaison to the Senate and keep the Council informed of pertinent Senate business as well as any upcoming events or issues that may be of interest to engineering students.
 - v. Should attend Member-At-Large meetings and are invited and encouraged to do so.
 - vi. Must fulfill all other duties according to the Senate of College Councils Constitution and its supporting documents.

Section V. Members-At-Large

- A. Members-at-Large represent the general engineering student body and are selected through an application and interview process determined by the Officer Group.
- B. Each Member-At-Large serves for one academic year and has one vote in the Council. Only 35 individuals may hold this office at any given time in the Council.
- C. Duties of a Member-At-Large:
 - i. Must attend all general SEC meetings and all Member-At-Large meetings. If unable to attend, the Member-At-Large must notify the Vice President of Internal Affairs beforehand and, in the case of a vote during a general meeting, designate a proxy vote in writing or by email before the meeting to a member of the Officer Group.
 - ii. Must actively participate on at least one committee per long semester. Approval for meeting this requirement is at the discretion of the Officer Group and the respective committee chair(s).
 - iii. Should inform the Council of upcoming events or issues that may be of interest to engineering students.
 - iv. Must fulfill all other duties according to the Member-at-Large Responsibilities and Information Form.

D. Removal of a Member-At-Large

- i. Based on excessive absences or lack of execution of duties, a Member-At-Large may be removed by the consensus of the Officer Group.

E. Appeal of Removal

- i. Removed Members-At-Large may move to appeal their removal before the Council during a general meeting. If the motion receives a second, a vote on the question to consider restoring the Member-At-Large status of the appealing individual will take place. A simple majority is required in order to pass the motion.
- ii. If the motion passes, the Member-At-Large is immediately given three minutes to address the Council followed by a two-minute Q&A session to address any questions from the audience.
- iii. At the conclusion of the appealing individual's Q&A session, the Officer Group is immediately given three minutes to address the Council followed by a two-minute Q&A to address any questions from the audience.
- iv. The Council must then vote by ballot on the question of restoring the Member-At-Large status of the appealing individual. If the vote passes by two-thirds majority, the appealing individual is immediately restored to Member-At-Large status.

Section VI. Society Representatives

- A. Society Representatives are chosen by their respective Member Society to serve as a representative to the Council.
- B. Each Society Representative has one vote in the Council.
- C. Duties of a Society Representative:
 - i. Must attend all general SEC meetings. If unable to attend, the Society Representative must notify the Vice President of External Affairs beforehand and, in the case of a vote during a general meeting, designate a proxy vote in writing or by email before the meeting to a member of the Officer Group.
 - ii. Must actively participate on at least one committee per long semester. Approval for meeting this requirement is at the discretion of the Officer Group and the respective committee chair(s).
 - iii. Should inform the Council of upcoming events or issues that may be of interest to engineering students.
 - iv. Should report back to their organization on a regular basis and encourage active participation in SEC-sponsored and college-wide events.
 - v. Must inform the Vice President of External Affairs of their replacement when leaving office.
 - vi. Must fulfill all other duties according to the Society Representative Responsibilities and Information Form.

Section VII. Member Societies

- A. Member Societies are engineering organizations admitted into the Council to provide services and activities with a focus on engineering students.
- B. Responsibilities of a Member Society:

- i. Must designate a minimum of one, but no more than three, Society Representatives to sit on the Council. If a Member Society has three Society Representatives, one of these Society Representatives must either be classified a freshman by hours or be a first-year student at the University of Texas at Austin.
- ii. Must be registered with the Office of Student Activities and Leadership Development.
- iii. Must be registered with the Office of Student Life in the Cockrell School of Engineering.
- iv. Must submit a minimum of one quality article per long semester to the *Vector* between 250-500 words. Approval for meeting this requirement is at the discretion of the *Vector* editors.

C. Privileges of a Member Society:

- i. Receive society appropriations, end-of-semester bonuses, and any additional funding from SEC activities.
- ii. Apply for and receive society grants.
- iii. Apply for and receive additional funding through SEC from the Senate of College Councils.

D. Admission of a New Society

- i. The members of the petitioning organization must submit a proposal to the Officer Group for membership in the Council. This proposal must include:
 - a. Proof of registration with the Office of Student Activities and Leadership Development
 - b. Proof of registration with the Office of Student Life in the Cockrell School of Engineering
 - c. Contact information for the organization
 - d. A description of the purpose and vision of the organization
 - e. A plan of future involvement with the Council
- ii. The petitioning organization's representatives must meet with the Officer Group to review the proposal before they wish to address the Council.
- iii. The Council must be given at least one general SEC meeting's (or two weeks') notice before voting to admit an organization as a new Member Society. "Fast-track" voting or any other similar method is not permitted.
- iv. At a regularly scheduled general meeting, the petitioning organization will be required to make a five-minute presentation to the general assembly, followed by a three-minute Q&A session. During the same meeting, the Council must ratify the petition by ballot and the vote must pass with a two-thirds majority.

E. Probation Status

- i. The purpose of the probation status is to encourage active participation from Member Societies.
- ii. A Member Society is on probation, for any of the following, if it:
 - a. Fails to attend an event designated mandatory by the Vice President of External Affairs without their expressed approval.
 - b. Fails to have officially designated Society Representatives at three consecutive general meetings or 50% of the meetings in a long semester.

- c. Fails to have officially designated Society Representatives actively participate on a committee during the current long semester. Approval for meeting this requirement is at the discretion of the Officer Group and the respective committee chair(s).
 - d. Fails to submit a quality article to the *Vector* as deemed so by the *Vector* editors during the previous semester.
 - iii. Consequences of Probation
 - a. A Member Society on probation is ineligible to receive society grants, society appropriations, end-of-semester bonuses, or any additional funding from SEC.
 - iv. Redemption from Probation:
 - a. Must attend 75% of the general meetings in a long semester and may not miss two consecutive general meetings during that semester.
 - b. Must fulfill all the aforementioned responsibilities of a Member Society for a long semester.
 - c. Must meet with the Officer Group to discuss why their organization was put on probation and how it plans to maintain and improve future involvement in the Council.
- F. Inactive Status
 - i. The purpose of the inactive status is to ensure that all SEC-related actions reflect the consensus of an active organization.
 - ii. A society is inactive, for any of the following, if it:
 - a. Fails to have officially designated Society Representatives at three consecutive general meetings after being placed on probation and contacted by the Officer Group.
 - b. Fails to have officially designated Society Representatives at 50% or more of the general meetings in a school year or 75% of the general meetings in a given long semester.
 - c. Fails to submit a quality article to the *Vector* as deemed by the *Vector* editors for consecutive long semesters.
 - iii. Consequences of Inaction
 - a. A Member Society deemed inactive will immediately lose all privileges within the Council and will no longer be a Member Society within the Council.
 - iv. Redemption from Inaction:
 - a. Must petition as a new Member Society in order to regain active status.

Section VIII. Officer Group

- A. The Officer Group is comprised of the President, Vice President of Financial Affairs, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Corporate Affairs, and the Vice President of Special Events.
- B. Officers are elected by the Council two general meetings prior to the week of Spring Break. The current Officer Group will transition to the newly elected Officer Group and carry on as Executive Advisors at the first regularly scheduled general SEC meeting following Spring Break of that calendar year.
- C. Each officer serves for one academic year and has one vote in the Council.
- D. If for any reason an officer position is vacated, the remaining members of the Officer Group must immediately appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of that term.

E. Responsibilities of the Officer Group:

- i. Must attend all general SEC meetings, Member-At-Large meetings, and weekly Officer Group meetings. If unable to attend, the Officer Group member must notify another member of the Officer Group and, in the case of a vote during a general meeting, designate a proxy vote in writing or by email to another member of the Officer Group before the meeting.
- ii. Must prepare a report at the end of their term, including a review of key events and recommendations for future Officer Group members.
- iii. Must evaluate Member-At-Large applications and conduct interviews for the selection of Members-At-Large.
- iv. Should promote ethical leadership, growth, and progress within Council.
- v. Should oversee the daily operations of the organization.

F. Powers of the Officer Group:

- i. Approve the annual budget, oversee expenditures, and review society appropriations.
- ii. Select committee chairs, excluding the *Vector* and EXPO chairs, with the input of the previous chair(s) as necessary.
- iii. Create and dissolve committees and events as necessary.

G. President

i. Duties of the President:

- a. Preside over all Officer Group meetings and all general SEC meetings, prepare an agenda for each respective meeting, and prepare meeting presentation slides for general assembly meetings.
- b. Coordinate officers' responsibilities and activities in accordance with the University of Texas at Austin SEC Constitution and Bylaws.
- c. Act as the official spokesperson of the Council to the Cockrell School of Engineering, Senate of College Councils, and the University of Texas at Austin.
- d. Represent the Council to the National Association of Engineering Student Councils.
- e. Attend and lead all Presidents' Meetings with the assistance of the Office of Student Life in the Cockrell School of Engineering.
- f. Sit on the Senate of College Councils, as part of the Presidents Committee, and vote on SEC's behalf.

H. Vice President of Financial Affairs

i. Duties of the Vice President of Financial Affairs:

- a. Collect funding requests from committee chairs and generate a proposed budget for the approval of the Officer Group.
- b. Maintain accurate records of all Council financial accounts.
- c. Prepare the annual budget and financial statement for SEC to the Student Affairs Office.
- d. Deposit funds invoiced by the Vice President of Corporate Affairs.
- e. Administer operating funds of the Council.
- f. Establish a reimbursement policy.
- g. Establish a society appropriations disbursement policy and allocate funds accordingly.

- h. Administer any other society awards, including end-of-semester bonuses and society grants.
- i. Sit on the Senate of College Councils, as part of the Financial Committee, and vote on SEC's behalf.

I. Vice President of Internal Affairs

- i. Duties of the Vice President of Internal Affairs:
 - a. Manage communication with and the activities of the Members-At-Large.
 - b. Prepare for and preside over Member-At-Large meetings.
 - c. Manage all food responsibilities for general SEC meetings and Member-at-Large meetings.
 - d. Prepare the Member-At-Large Responsibilities and Information Form.
 - e. Organize the Member-At-Large dinner and new Member-At-Large orientation.
 - f. Reserve rooms, as necessary, and maintain Office of Student Activities and Leadership Development registration.
 - g. Maintain attendance records at all general SEC and Member-At-Large meetings for Members-At-Large.
 - h. Manage the SEC membership database.

J. Vice President of External Affairs

- i. Duties of the Vice President of External Affairs:
 - a. Manage relations with other student organizations, including, but not limited to: Student Government, Senate of College Councils, Graduate Engineering Council, external councils, and non-engineering organizations.
 - b. Act as point-of-contact for all engineering-related societies.
 - c. Encourage societies to actively participate in SEC programs and initiatives.
 - d. Work with new, probationary, and inactive societies to become more involved in the Council.
 - e. Manage the communication with and the activities of Society Representatives.
 - f. Organize and conduct Society Representative Orientation meetings each long semester.
 - g. Prepare the Society Representative Responsibilities and Information Form.
 - h. Manage the University of Texas at Austin listserv of Society Representatives.
 - i. Manage the recording of minutes at all Officer Group meetings, all Member-at-Large meetings, and all general SEC meetings and distribute minutes to the appropriate groups and individuals.

K. Vice President of Corporate Affairs

- i. Duties of the Vice President of Corporate Affairs:
 - a. Act as the primary point of contact between the Council and industry.
 - b. Create new corporate relationships, maintain existing company involvement with the Council, and be responsible for any required corporate thank-you notes.
 - c. Coordinate with the Vice President of Financial Affairs to invoice funds.
 - d. Coordinate with the EXPO chairs for the success of the annual SEC Fall EXPO.
 - e. Coordinate solicitation activities with the Cockrell School of Engineering.

- f. Coordinate with all committee chairs to ensure that sponsorship is met professionally for each event.

L. Vice President of Special Events

- i. Duties of the Vice President of Special Events:
 - a. Create and run events for the Cockrell School of Engineering in order to build a more involved and active student body.
 - b. Act as a resource of information for all committee chairs.
 - c. Advise and communicate with committee chairs as designated appropriate by the President.
 - d. Solicit and track the finances of each committee and report them to the Vice President of Financial Affairs.
 - e. Plan and coordinate any SEC-related travel.

Section IX. Executive Advisors

- A. Executive Advisors are comprised of the two previous Officer Groups of the Council.
- B. Executive Advisors serve their term until the end of their undergraduate career and do not have the power to vote in the Council.
- C. Duties of an Executive Advisor:
 - i. Should be available to meet with the Officer Group as necessary.
 - ii. Should continue to attend all general SEC meetings and MAL meetings.

Article II. Committees

Section I. Committee Creation and Dissolution

- A. Committees may be created or dissolved by the Officer Group as necessary.

Section II. Chairperson Selection

- A. All committee chairs, including EXPO and *Vector* chairs, must be enrolled in the Cockrell School of Engineering.
- B. All committee chairs, excluding EXPO and *Vector* chairs, will be chosen by the consensus of the Officer Group through an application process or another method deemed appropriate by the Officer Group.
 - i. EXPO and *Vector* chairs will be chosen by the consensus of the Officer Group and the previous year's respective chairs through an application and interview process, if deemed necessary by the Officer Group.

Section III. Duties of Chairpersons:

- A. Establish and lead a committee to plan, organize, control, and implement all activities.
- B. Submit a prospective budget and a regularly updated list of their committee members to the Vice President of Special Events.

- C. Determine whether their committee members are fulfilling their responsibilities and inform the Vice President of Internal Affairs or the Vice President of External Affairs, as appropriate.
- D. Write an end-of-term report including, but not limited to:
 - i. Timelines
 - ii. Old and suggested budgets
 - iii. Contact information for all relevant parties
 - iv. Suggestions and comments for next year.
- E. Publish the end-of-term report on the SEC server.
- F. Advise and assist the succeeding committee chairs.

Article III. Elections & Voting

Section I. Election and Voting Procedures

- A. Elections and votes, in general, require quorum and shall follow the procedures outlined in Article III of the University of Texas at Austin SEC Bylaws and *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. Any other necessary elections may follow a separate procedure deemed appropriate by the Officer Group. This procedure must be announced and made available in written and electronic form at least one general SEC meeting (or two weeks) prior to elections.
 - i. In order for a quorum to be reached, two-thirds of the voting membership must be present.
- B. Elected members include the President, Vice President of Financial Affairs, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Corporate Affairs, Vice President of Special Events, and Senate Representative.
- C. During any discussion, negative or slanderous comments will not be tolerated. Therefore, any negative aspects of a particular candidate must be addressed during that candidate's Q&A session. The presiding officer runs the discussion and it is their responsibility to control negative or slanderous discussion as necessary.

Section II. Nomination Meeting Procedures

- A. Nominations for all positions in the Officer Group will be accepted starting with the nomination meeting scheduled before elections and will continue to be accepted up until the time the election process for that office begins.
- B. During the nomination meeting, the President will call for nominations. Candidates are permitted to nominate themselves; however, all nominations must receive a second.
- C. Elections are to be held during the next general meeting.

Section III. Election Meeting Procedures

- A. Officer Nominations
 - i. During the election meeting, the President will call for any additional nominations before each office's election process begins. The order of election will allow trickle-down for candidates.

- ii. Once nominations for an office have been closed, each candidate will have the opportunity to make a presentation before the Council followed by a Q&A session to address any questions from the audience.
 - iii. If a candidate is uncontested, a voting member of the Council may motion to forego discussion and the Q&A session in order to proceed directly to voting.
- B. Time Limits
- i. It is the responsibility of the presiding officer to ensure the candidates stay within the allotted time limits.
 - ii. Candidates must keep their presentation under four minutes and their Q&A session under three minutes.
 - iii. There is no time limit for positive discussion or general discussion.
- C. Presentation
- i. Each candidate may choose to present in any manner they consider appropriate.
 - ii. Before each candidate's presentation, all other candidates for that particular office must leave the room and remain outside of the room.
 - iii. During each candidate's presentation, the Council must remain in respectful silence.
- D. Presentation
- i. Each candidate may choose to present in any manner they consider appropriate.
 - ii. Before each candidate's presentation, all other candidates for that particular office must leave the room and remain outside of the room.
 - iii. During each candidate's presentation, the Council must remain in respectful silence.
- E. Question and Answer (Q&A) Session
- i. Once a candidate's presentation is finished, that candidate then has the opportunity for a Q&A session. During the Q&A session, the candidate is responsible for acknowledging and fielding questions from the audience.
 - ii. During a Q&A session the floor is open for any member of the audience to question the candidate and all other candidates must remain outside of the room. Any negative aspects of a candidate must be addressed during the Q&A session.
 - iii. The candidate must leave the room after their Q&A session.
- F. Positive Discussion
- i. Once a candidate's Q&A session is finished, the candidate must leave the room and remain outside of the room. The Council will then resume with positive discussion *solely* regarding that candidate.
 - ii. After the candidate has left the room, the Council will resume with positive discussion regarding the respective candidate's qualifications.
 - iii. During positive discussion, any member of the audience has the opportunity to provide *solely* positive commentary regarding the respective candidate's qualifications.
- G. General Discussion
- i. After all candidates for a particular office have spoken, they must all leave the room, and the Council may engage in a general positive discussion regarding any candidate for that particular office.
 - ii. During a general discussion, any member of the audience has the opportunity to provide only positive commentary regarding the qualities of any candidate of the particular office.

H. Voting

- i. After general discussion is finished, a vote by ballot for that particular office will take place and a simple majority is required for election. In the event of no majority, preferential voting, as described in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, will be used until a winner is declared.
- ii. During any voting, the Council must remain in respectful silence.
- iii. Once a winner for a particular office has been declared, the election process for that office is officially closed and the ballots should be securely collected and destroyed.
- iv. The Election Meeting Procedures will repeat until all available Officer Group roles are fulfilled.

I. Senate Representative Nomination and Election

- i. At the conclusion of the Election Meeting, nominations for Senate Representative will be accepted and will continue to be accepted up until the time the election process for Senate Representative begins at the next general meeting.
- ii. The Senate Representative election will follow the same aforementioned election procedures (see Article III, Sect. III).

Section IV. Removal of Elected Members

- A. During open forum of a general meeting, any voting member may obtain the floor, state that he/she is proposing the removal of an elected member due to official misconduct, and present evidence as appropriate. The accusing member should then move to consider removal of the elected member and, if their motion receives a second, the Council shall immediately vote on the motion to consider removal. A simple majority is required to pass the motion.
- B. If the motion passes, discussion of removal will be made the first item of business at the next general meeting. During that meeting, the case for removal must once again be presented before the Council by the member bringing the accusation. The accused member then has the floor for rebuttal. Any member of the audience may raise a question during an appropriate time during either presentation.
- C. A general discussion takes place with the accused and the accuser out of the room. At an appropriate time during the general discussion, a motion to take a vote on the question of immediate removal of the elected member may be made by a voting member of the Council. A two-thirds majority is required to pass the motion.
- D. If the motion for a vote on immediate removal passes, a vote by ballot on the question of immediate removal of the elected member will immediately take place. If the vote passes by a three-fourths majority, the accused member is immediately removed from office.

Article IV. Amendments

Section I. Amendment Procedures

- A. A two-thirds majority is required to amend the University of Texas at Austin SEC Bylaws.