

The Minnesota State Student Association

Senate Operating Policies

Article I

Office Policy and Procedures

Section 1: The MSSA Office

Subsection A: The MSSA Office is to be treated as a professional place for business, and a reasonable level of professionalism is to be expected when in the MSSA Office. It is required to clean up after yourself. If you utilize the fridge, coffee makers, or microwave take care of them. If something runs out such as the water, paper, or kitchenette supplies let the Office Manager know so it can be remedied.

Subsection B: Senators, Coordinators and Officers are required to do weekly office hours in accordance with the MSSA Bylaws. During these office hours MSSA representatives are encouraged to wear in plain sight their MSSA name tags. Additionally, the MSSA name tags are to be worn at all official MSSA functions (examples being: Senate Meetings, University Committee Meetings, MSSA Sponsored Events, MSUSA Sponsored Events, and while tabling for MSSA. Office Hours of Senators, Coordinators and Officers should be recorded in a way that is deemed appropriate to the Speaker.

Subsection C: MSSA representatives are issued a Senate Binder and Mail Box to help organize the materials they will accrue in execution of their job. However, the Senate Binders are to be returned when and if you leave the Senate, additionally make sure to clean out your Mail Box.

Subsection D: If a student, faculty or administrator enters the office with questions help them. Additionally, if the telephone rings during business hours then answer it. The Office Manager keeps Post-It notes nearby so you can take a message.

Subsection E: Card Access for the Office is given to by default to the President, Vice President, Speaker, Academic Coordinator, Student Affairs Coordinator and Office Manager. Others may be given card access at the discretion of the President; however it is a privilege to have card access to the office and it is not meant to be used to hold meetings for organizations not related to the work of the MSSA.

Subsection F: Shared access to the MSSA Digital Drive and administrative status on any Digital Platform used by MSSA is given to the President, Vice President, Speaker, Academic Coordinator, Student Affairs Coordinator and Office Manager. Others may be given access at the discretion of the President; however it is a privilege to have access to the MSSA Digital Drive. Examples of Digital Platforms which have been historically used for this purpose by the MSSA Senate are: OrgSync (MavSync) and Facebook.

Section 2: The Press

There may be a time when you are approached by the press to comment on an issue. You can comment so long as you express that your comments are not necessarily the beliefs or views of the MSSA. Only the MSSA President (or their designee) may comment on behalf of the MSSA and if that

occurs they must notify the Senate of the action within two (2) business days or at the next scheduled MSSA meeting whichever is sooner. The Senate will then approve or disapprove of the President's actions.

Section 3: Public Access of Minutes

The meeting minutes of the MSSA will be posted online and kept within the office to allow for public access. The Speaker will oversee the handling of this section.

Section 4: MSSA Parking/Student Attorney Parking

The MSSA maintains a permanent parking space for its use in Lot 11a. Priority use for this parking space will be granted to the Student Attorney. When the Student Attorney is not occupying the space then the President, Vice President and Speaker shall be able to utilize said parking stall with a special permit acquired from the MSSA Office Manager. The use of this parking stall by the previous mentioned officers shall be prioritized to assist with fulfilling the obligations of their respective offices. There may arise a time where a Senator may need to request use of a parking pass to assist with fulfilling their responsibilities as a Senator, however priority shall be placed on the officers above. Use of this parking space is a privilege, do not abuse it.

Article II

Meeting Procedures

Section 1: Meeting Attendance

Roll call attendance shall be taken at the beginning and end of every MSSA Senate meeting. This roll call attendance shall count for the purposes of attendance as implied by Article I Section 1 of the MSSA Bylaws. The Speaker may at their discretion grant excused absences to a Senator due to extenuating circumstances such as family emergencies, or academic conferences. If the Speaker grants an excused absence, it shall be reflected in the minutes for that meeting. However, this should not dissuade a Senator from procuring a proxy in the event of an absence.

Section 2: Meeting Seating

The President, Vice President, Speaker and MSSA Staff Members shall sit at the "head" of the any meeting table utilized for a MSSA Senate Meeting. It is not required, but strongly encouraged for Senators jointly representing a constituency to sit next to each other in the event of a need to quietly caucus amongst themselves in effort to best support their constituency.

Section 3: Use of Electronics

The Speaker shall reserve the right to allow the use of electronic devices such as computers, tablets, and cell phones during meeting. These devices will be treated with privilege and abuse of them can be seen as distracting to the purpose of the meeting. Cell phone ringers and alarms should be turned off before the commencement of the meeting.

Section 4: Removal from Meeting

The Speaker shall reserve the right to dismiss a person from the room should they become unruly and reprehensible to the purpose of the meeting. That person will be notified of their dismissal and shall then vacate the meeting room for the duration of the Senate meeting. The Speaker will have the minutes annotated to reflect the dismissal. If this occurrence is a first time offense, the Speaker will schedule a one on one meeting with the individual to discuss why the dismissal was necessary. For subsequent offenses, the Speaker will file a Summons for person in question to appear before the Commission on Ethics and Standards for possible punitive measures.

Article III

Vacancy Elections

Section 1: Procedure for Vacancy Elections

- Subsection A:** Each Candidate shall be allowed a two (2) minute opening speech. After each candidate has had an opportunity to speak the floor shall be opened to questions for all candidates.
- Subsection B:** Questions must be based on qualifications for the position that they are running for and not in opposition with the Preamble of the MSSA Constitution. Furthermore any question asked of a candidate must be asked to each candidate.
- Subsection C:** In the event of multiple Candidates, they shall rotate in order in regards to answer questions so that bias is minimized and the election is as fair as possible.
- Subsection D:** After all questions have been answered each Candidate shall receive one (1) minute for a closing speech.
- Subsection E:** Each Candidate shall then be sequestered to another room.
- Subsection F:** Voting shall be conducted by the Student Senate via secret ballot. In the event that a Candidate is running unopposed the Senate may opt to vote “No Confidence” indicating their belief that the Candidate is unqualified. The Speaker shall collect the ballots cast and ensure that each Senator only votes once. A non-Senate witness shall assist the Speaker with counting the ballots and shall verify the outcome of the election. The official vote tally will be recorded in the minutes.
- Subsection G:** The Speaker will readmit the Candidate(s) and inform them of the results. In the event of an election, the Speaker shall immediately swear in the newly elected Senator(s). The new Senator(s) shall assume a seat at the table.
- Subsection H:** After the close of the meeting the Speaker will inform any newly elected Senator(s) to report to the Speaker to schedule a training session as referenced under Article VII of the MSSA Bylaws. Additionally, the new Senator(s) will speak with the Office Manager to give the proper spelling of their name(s) so that a Senate Binder can be created for the newly elected Senator(s). Lastly, the Speaker shall destroy the used ballots after the vote has been recorded in the minutes.

Article IV

Special Meeting Rules

Section 1: Special Meetings

The rules for Special Meetings of the Senate are laid out in Article I Section 3 of the MSSA Constitution.

Section 2: Budget Meeting

Annually, the MSSA is responsible for recommending the allocation of all university wide student fees paid as an additional amount in conjunction with tuition. These fees are: the Student Health Services Fee, the Student Athletics Fee, the Student Tech Fee, the Student Union Fee, and the Student Activities Fee. Towards the end of the Spring Semester, representatives seeking various fees will speak to the MSSA Student Allocations Committee (SAC) and the MSSA Senate. SAC will make a recommendation to the Senate regarding the fees. The MSSA Budget Meeting will occur after no sooner than one (1) week of the SAC recommendation to the Senate is made at a regularly scheduled Senate Meeting. The meeting in which the Senate shall deliberate over the budget recommendations will be treated as a Special Meeting of the Senate. In addition to following Article I Section 3 of the MSSA Constitution, the following additional rules have been established in order to help facilitate the MSSA Budget Meeting.

Subsection A: The Speaker will suspend Open Forum, Presentations, Officer Reports, Senator Reports, and Old Business. The New Business will be for the deliberation of the budget. Each "Fee" shall be treated individually as a main motion allowing for them to independently pass or fail.

Subsection B: The Speaker will proceed in order of Student Health Services Fee, Student Athletics Fee, Student Tech Fee, Student Union Fee and then the Student Activities Fee. As each fee is introduced the Speaker shall ask if there is an appeal from the floor. At this time any departmental representative may appeal the recommendation by the MSSA Student Allocations Committee and will be limited to ten (10) minutes to present their appeal. For appeals to fees contained within the Student Activities Fee, departmental representatives shall wait to appeal their respective fee recommendation until it is introduced by the Speaker.

Subsection C: Following any appeals the Speaker will offer the Chair of the MSSA Student Allocations Committee or their designee five (5) minutes for a rebuttal.

Subsection D: The Speaker will then open the Fee for deliberation by the Senate. For the purposes of the Student Activities Fee, each line item will be treated individually for potential appeal and rebuttal as detailed above. Deliberation of each Fee shall be initially limited to twelve (12) minutes, if that time reserved for deliberation is not sufficient, a motion to extend time up to five (5) minutes may be made by simple majority of the Senate. During this time the Speaker may entertain a motion on the article of deliberation if it is evident that discussion has ceased.

Subsection E: If time is exhausted for deliberation for each Fee and a motion on the article of deliberation has not been heard, the Speaker shall end the discussion and call upon the Senate for vote upon the SAC recommendation. If this passes then the article of deliberation shall be concluded and the process shall begin anew with the next Fee. If though a motion fails, Senators may ask the Speaker to allow any departmental representative related to the current Fee in discussion and the SAC Chair to address any clarifying questions in a period of time to not exceed five (5) minutes after which the Speaker will entertain motions on the article of deliberation.

Subsection F: After every Fee has been voted upon, the Speaker will instruct the Senate that they need to now pass the Budget as a whole and complete the task via a roll call vote.

The final approval of the MSSA Budget shall then be passed as a recommendation to the University President for final approval, disapproval or modification.

Subsection G: During discussion over an article of deliberation, a Senator may motion to the Speaker for a caucus for no longer than ten (10) minutes. The motion will be carried out by a 2/3 vote of the seated Senate. If successful the Senate chambers shall be cleared with the exception of the Senate for the length specified in the motion. During this time all nonmembers of the Senate shall be sequestered outside of the Senate chambers and will be readmitted by the Speaker after the allotted time has expired. The Senate will during the caucus speak amongst themselves in an unmediated fashion.