



Senate of the Student Government Association of The Johns Hopkins University

{ S. Bill. 20-21, XX }

A BILL ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR COMMITTEES
AND COUNCIL MEETINGS WITHIN SGA

INTRODUCED BY: SENATORS **CI CI ZHANG** AND **JULIA ZENG** AND CONSIDERED THIS **8TH** DAY OF **DECEMBER** IN THE YEAR **2020**

SPONSORED BY: SENATOR **SUBHA BHATTA** OF THE **2022** CLASS
SENATOR **JJ TIE** OF THE **2021** CLASS

REFERRED TO THE SENATE BY THE **COMMITTEE ON INTERNAL AFFAIRS** WHICH RECOMMENDS ITS **PASSAGE** BY A VOTE OF **5** TO **1**.

Be it enacted by the Senate of the Student Government Association of The Johns Hopkins University assembled that:

SECTION 1. TITLE.

This Act may be referred to as the “Committee and Council Meeting Standards Bill”

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS.

(a) SGA — The term “SGA” shall refer to the Student Government Association of The Johns Hopkins University.

- (b) JHU, Hopkins - The terms “JHU” and “Hopkins” shall refer to Johns Hopkins University.
- (c) GBM — The term “GBM” shall refer to General Body Meetings.

SECTION 3. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

1. FINDINGS

- a. There is no detailed precedent for the structure of council/committee meetings, thus new committee chairs and members lack established guidelines for the optimization of efficiency of meetings and the maintenance of appropriate meeting decorum.
- b. There is no established procedure to report and follow-up on excessive absences, which creates work imbalance and significantly hinders progress of committees and councils.
- c. Often, committees within SGA work on overlapping projects, but unclear meeting minutes and agendas prevent committees from understanding the current initiatives and goals of other committees.

(a) PURPOSES

- (1) By creating standardized expectations, efforts senators put forth into SGA-related happenings can be streamlined for efficiency in several ways:
 - a. Standardized expectations for meeting attendance and structure will allow committee and council meetings to more effectively utilize time, and ensure meetings end with action items to initiate and maintain progress.
 - b. Standardized agenda and minute-taking rules will further facilitate collaboration between senators.
 - i. The plans and actions of committees will be increasingly obvious to non-members— this includes senators that are not members of certain committees, as well as non-senator members of the student body, and the executive board of SGA.
 - 1. This adds a layer of accountability for SGA in addition to those that are currently present, like the legislation log and work log, which only work if the student body is aware of how to utilize them.
 - 2. Additionally, with a universal guideline to reference, committee chair(s) are provided with tangible methods for effective communication of committee happenings which in turn enables increased collaboration between Senators and ensures smoother transition of new committee members.
- (2) The SGA should serve as a model that guides the leadership of student organizations— thus, it is necessary to first establish a concrete model to follow for ourselves.

SECTION 4. STANDARDIZATION OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

The SGA councils and committees will:

- 1. Set a hierarchy of accountability for committee absences.

- a. The Executive Secretary shall go through all committees and councils attendance records and report any new absences during SGA GBM Executive Board updates.
 - i. If the Executive Secretary discovers a committee/council's attendance records are not up-to-date, they are to notify the committee chair(s) immediately.
 1. This provides for overlapping layers of accountability for chairs and presidents, since SGA Bylaws mandate that the aforementioned keep track of attendance.
 - ii. The committee chair(s) have a two-week grace period to correct the attendance records.
 - b. The committee/council chair(s) shall follow-up with the Senator(s) who fail to send absence notifications before meetings and report excessive absences to the Executive Board.
 - c. The committee chair(s) shall notify the entire committee if a member of the committee is at risk for impeachment due to excessive absences.
2. Set a standard for preparation of committee/council meetings.
 - a. The committee chair(s) shall send out agendas at least an hour prior to meetings.
 - i. Agendas shall *roughly* outline items to be addressed and time allotted for addressing each item.
 1. This will allow members to have a general idea about what to expect for each meeting, to maximize transparency and preparation.
 2. This provides committee/council chair(s) an opportunity to prepare for each meeting, to maximize efficiency.
 - ii. Agendas shall include an "action items" section at the end delineating which tasks are assigned to each committee member, if any.
 - iii. Possible agenda structure: summary of previous meeting, check-in with committee members for task completion from previous week's action items, discussion of agenda items, assignment of new action items.
 - b. All committee/council members shall read the agenda ahead of time and come to meetings with ideas prepared and action items completed.
3. Set a standard for the structure of council/committee meetings.
 - a. Committee/council meetings shall start and end on time.
 - i. With a majority 2/3 vote of the committee, the committee chair(s) shall assign a timekeeper at the start of each meeting.
 1. The timekeeper shall notify members when the length of discussion per agenda item has reached the duration previously allotted in the agenda.
 2. The timekeeper shall signal the official start and end of the meeting.
 - ii. Committees/councils should aim to finish discussion within 5 minutes of scheduled adjournment to be respectful of each committee/council member's time.
 1. If further discussion is needed, the chair(s) should work to schedule additional meetings if necessary.

- iii. For the duration of the official meeting time, conversation shall be limited to the context of the professional relationship in order to maintain efficiency and streamline discussion.
 - 1. Time can be allotted for casual conversation.
 - 2. This does not indicate tone-policing.
- b. Committee/council chair(s) shall aim to assign action items at the end of meetings and evenly distribute workload.

SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY.

Should any provision of this Act, an amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance be held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act, the amendments made by this Act, and the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

THE BILL HEREBY **PASSES** BY A VOTE OF **X** TO **X** WITH **X** ABSTENTIONS.

UPON PASSAGE, WE HAVE HEREUNTO SET OUR HANDS AND CAUSED THE SEAL OF THE SENATE TO BE AFFIXED TO THIS BILL INDICATING THE SENATE'S ASSENT AND THUS OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED THE BILL'S ADOPTION AS LAW.

Signatures of Enactment:

Sam Mollin
President of the Senate

Mehak Ali
Executive Vice President of the Johns Hopkins SGA

Breanna Soldatelli
Executive Secretary of the Johns Hopkins SGA

Addy Perlman
Executive Treasurer of the Johns Hopkins SGA

Signatures of Ceremony: