

# Bylaws for the Student Government Association of Emerson College

Bylaws are a set of operating procedures meant to supplement an organization's existing administrative structures, like a constitution. Bylaws are a more flexible set of rules that can, and should, change. SGA's bylaws should be updated annually and should allow for changes to be made whenever necessary.

## Article One: Meeting Frequency

**Section 1.** The General Assembly will meet weekly on Friday at 12 pm Eastern Time, on Zoom and/or in person as designated by the Executive President. At any meeting, the General Assembly may vote to cancel the following meeting. In the event of an emergency, a meeting may be canceled by the president with at least one hour of notice, unless three voting members submit a written objection to the Executive Secretary and Chief Justice. If the meeting has not adjourned by 2pm, a quorum call will be ordered.

**Section 2.** SGA Boards, Committees, and Senates will meet as specified in their bylaws.

## Article Two: Attendance Policy

**Section 1.** Unless otherwise specified, SGA meetings—including General Assembly—require a quorum of the voting members present. Members are expected to attend all meetings as outlined in the constitution. If members are unable to fulfill their constitutional attendance obligations, they may collaborate with leadership to find a position to better suit their needs.

**Section 2.** Missing any two General Assembly meetings without notifying the Executive Secretary of an expected absence will result in a written warning from the Executive Board.

**Section 3.** If a member anticipates missing a meeting, they should inform the Executive Secretary as early as possible. Non-emergency absences should be communicated at least 24 hours before the meeting. After the meeting, members should review the minutes and contact the Executive Secretary with questions.

**Section 4.** If a member is absent three times in a row, or four times in a single semester, the Chief Justice shall initiate a conversation with that member about the issues they face in participating, and whether this position is the right fit. The Secretary should inform and involve Internal affairs in this conversation.

**Section 5.** A voting member who cannot attend general assembly for an extended period, beyond the limits in Section 4, must:

- (a) Ensure that a deputy or other substitute is appointed to attend in their place;
- (b) Meet at least once every two weeks with an Executive Board member to ensure adequate progress on an interest project; and
- (c) Have a written notice of nonattendance on file with the office of the executive secretary, in the form provided by that office, describing the reasons for nonattendance and planned work to be done in lieu of attendance.

**Section 6.** If a member is unsure of which meetings they should be attending, they should contact the Executive Board for confirmation.

**Section 7.** Members of the public may attend General Assembly meetings by invitation of the Executive President and meetings of other bodies as determined by the presiding officers and bylaws of those bodies.

**Section 8.** Emerson Faculty and Staff Members may attend meetings of the General Assembly, provided they inform the President by 5:00 PM on the preceding day or upon invitation by the President.

### **Article Three: The Executive Branch**

**Section 1.** The head of the Executive Branch is the Executive President. The members of the Executive Branch are the President and the Internal Affairs members.

**Section 2.** The Executive President has the power to appoint members of SGA to various external administrative positions, including a Board of Trustees Representative, a Student Organization Affiliation Process Representative, and any other committees that seek student representation.

**Section 3.** The approved list of Committees, Boards, and non-voting positions established by the President and authorized by the General Assembly—along with their charges—shall be as follows. All appointed memberships and positions under this section shall be for terms expiring at the end of the academic year unless otherwise specified.

- (a) An Advisory Board composed of former participants in SGA shall advise SGA on precedents, college resources, and actions under consideration. Board members may attend meetings of the General Assembly and address the assembly when recognized. Terms shall be for life or until removal by the Executive President.
- (b) A Conduct Policy Committee composed of five members appointed by the Executive President and shall elect from that membership a chair. The committee shall be tasked with reviewing the college's current policies and practices regarding discipline for academic, housing, and any other violations. The Committee shall report to SGA on the status of these policies as well as any issues arising under those policies. The committee should seek out student perspectives on the efficacy and impact of these

practices and may propose recommendations for SGA to bring to administrators based on their findings.

- (c) The Executive President shall appoint a Chief of Staff to serve as the primary advisor to the Student Government President, providing strategic counsel and feedback on ongoing matters. The Chief of Staff shall assist in managing the internal operations of student government and ensuring the President's priorities are effectively executed.
- (d) The Executive President shall appoint a Graphic Designer to assist in the work of the office of the Director of Communication. The Graphic Designer may serve within Internal Affairs and shall report to the Director of Communication. The Executive President may remove the Graphic Designer at any time without stating a reason.
- (e) The Legislative Cabinet shall be a committee of the Executive Board, the chairs of committees established under this section, and additional members described below. This committee will not meet unless called by the Executive President, and shall exist to coordinate legislative and executive efforts. The cabinet shall include
  - (i) A minister for recruitment and retention, appointed by the Executive President and confirmed by the General Assembly who shall advise the cabinet on issues relating to ensuring that members are well utilized and that needed positions are filled in a timely manner, across academic years.

## **Article Four: The Legislative Branch**

**Section 1.** The members of the Legislative Branch are the Executive President, Executive Vice President, the Academic Senators, the Student Experience Senators, the Executive Treasurer, Executive Deputy Treasurer, and any other internal affairs members with a legislative role. Additional Legislative Branch positions may be created by outlined in the bylaws of the Academic Senate, Student Experience Senate, or through a constitutional amendment for general Legislative Branch positions.

**Section 2.** Legislation may be introduced by any member of the Emerson community. All legislation is subject to a one-week waiting period before it can be voted on—except for when the legislation deals with a time-sensitive matter as determined by an appealable ruling of the Executive President—to allow for debate, amendments, and consideration from the voting members of SGA as well as public input. Legislation is submitted to the office of the Executive Secretary. Upon receiving a resolution, the Office of the Executive Secretary shall issue it a number in the form “S. B. X” with a unique numeric value in place of “X”;

**Section 3.** If members of the SGA wish to present legislation in a week when the SGA does not meet, they may do so via Slack or Email so the legislation can be voted on at the General Assembly meeting the following week.

**Section 4.** Anyone looking to bring legislation to SGA may make use of the Legislative Review Board, abbreviated to LRB. LRB is a volunteer group of SGA members, that includes the SGA Advisor, who convene when necessary to guide an individual or group through the process of writing and introducing legislation. They may help with formulating an idea, aligning proposed legislation with the realistic powers of SGA, wording, editing, and anything else that relates to the process.

**Section 5.** Once the legislation has gone through the waiting period, it may be put up for a vote during a General Assembly meeting. For the legislation to pass, it must receive a yes vote from a majority of the members voting.

**Section 6.** Treasury policy can be found in the treasury handbook—which must be approved by SGA at the start of every school year. FAB may recommend changes to the handbook at any time. Such amendments must be approved by the General Assembly. The General Assembly may not amend the handbook in any way other than adopting a FAB recommendation.

**Section 7.** The annual budget process shall consist of a resolution or resolutions introduced by the Executive Treasurer on behalf of the FAB. Each resolution making appropriations for the fiscal year ending in 2027 shall be introduced and presented at the meeting preceding any vote on final passage—except on suspension of the rules. All appropriations of funds shall be reviewed by FAB.

**Section 8.** General Assembly will be conducted under Robert's Rules, with any additional rules being noted in this section. In addition to the provisions of Robert's Rules:

- (a) The office of the Executive Secretary shall issue an agenda at least 24 hours in advance of each meeting of the General Assembly;
- (b) Debate on any item shall be limited by default to two minutes or two questions per speaker;
- (c) The Presiding officer shall ensure that speakers are recognized in the order in which they requested to speak, or preferencing voting members and/or internal affairs;
- (d) Changes to the order of business may be made at the discretion of the chair;
- (e) Agendas shall include such items dictated by the presiding officer of the body;
  - (i) Any item submitted to the office of the Executive Secretary with the signatures of a majority of voting members of the General Assembly shall be included in the next agenda issued;
- (f) Additions to an agenda that has been issued must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote;
- (g) Motions to add an item to the agenda may be made immediately after a meeting is called to order, or accepted at the discretion of the chair at any other time;
- (h) Resolutions may be filed by any voting member of the General Assembly with the Office of the Executive Secretary, and must be consistent with the format set by the Executive Secretary;
- (i) Upon receiving a resolution, the Office of the Executive Secretary shall issue it a number in the form "S. Res. X" with a unique numeric value in place of "X";

- (j) Resolutions must be submitted to and numbered by the Office of the Executive Secretary to be acted upon by the General Assembly;
- (k) Each meeting shall begin with a call of the roll to establish quorum, and no business may be taken up before a successful quorum call;
- (l) The quorum required for all meetings shall be a majority of voting members, where voting members may be represented by their deputy;
- (m) All motions that would allocate funds or approve a budget must be voted on with a recorded vote by a call of the roll; and
- (n) All votes requiring more than a simple majority shall be taken by roll call unless unanimous.

**Section 9.** The list of Student Experience Senate Positions authorized by these bylaws pursuant to Article IV §2.d.ii of the Constitution shall be as follows.

- (a) Spiritual Life Senator
- (b) Transfer Senator
- (c) Cultural Engagement Senator
- (d) Boston Intercollegiate Government Senator
- (e) Community Service Senator
- (f) LGBTQIA+ Senator
- (g) Athletics Senator
- (h) First Gen Low Income Senator
- (i) FSL Senator
- (j) Sustainability Senator
- (k) Student Accessibility Senator
- (l) Non-Traditional Senator

**Section 10.** At any time, the Executive President may submit to the Executive Secretary an ordered list of persons to preside over the General Assembly when the Executive President is absent or unable to fill that role. They may amend, replace, or withdraw that list at any time. The first person listed shall be the Executive Vice President unless that role has a permanent vacancy. If the Executive President is not present or is otherwise unable to serve as presiding officer during a meeting of the General Assembly, the first person listed who is present and able to serve as presiding officer shall assume that role until they are no longer present and able or a person listed prior to them becomes present and able. For purposes of this section, a person on the list who has a direct financial interest in a measure considered shall not be considered able to serve as presiding officer.

**Section 11.** At any time, the Executive Secretary may submit to the Chief Justice and Executive President an ordered list of persons to act as recording secretary of the General Assembly when the Executive Secretary is absent or unable to fill that role. They may amend, replace, or withdraw that list at any time. The first person listed shall be the Executive Vice President unless that role has a permanent vacancy. If the Executive Secretary is not present or is otherwise unable to serve as recording secretary during a meeting of the General Assembly, the first

person listed who is present and able to serve as recording secretary shall assume that role until they are no longer present and able or a person listed prior to them becomes present and able. For purposes of this section, a person on the list who is serving as the presiding officer shall not be considered able to serve as recording secretary.

## **Article Five: Judicial Branch**

**Section 1.** The head of the Judicial Branch is the Chief Justice. The members of the Judicial Branch are the Chief Justice and the Deputy Justice. Additional Judicial Branch positions may be created through a constitutional amendment for general Judicial Branch positions.

**Section 2.** Before the fall and spring elections, the Chief Justice will be responsible for the drafting and release of an election packet outlining:

- (a) Position vacancies, including appointed positions and those up for reelection;
- (b) Important dates and deadlines for Candidate Intent forms, campaigning, and elections; and
- (c) Policies for campaign conduct.

**Section 3.** The Chief Justice shall preside over removal proceedings. Should any officer of SGA evade their responsibilities as laid out in the Constitution and bylaws, the Chief Justice should provide a written warning to the officer in question. If the behavior does not cease, the Chief Justice should initiate removal proceedings. Removal proceedings may also be initiated by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote. Removal proceedings shall occur as follows:

- (a) The Chief Justice will inform in writing the General Assembly, including the officer in question, two days before the proceeding General Assembly;
- (b) The officer in question will abstain from all votes regarding their removal. The officer may request removal proceedings be a closed meeting;
- (c) Upon review of the complaint, the General Assembly will vote to proceed with removal. Removal requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority to continue;
- (d) If the motion carries, removal proceedings will be tabled and considered the first order of Old Business to be reviewed at the following meeting. If the motion carries, the Chief Justice will provide written notification of the officer's right to appear in front of the General Assembly within 48 hours of the motion's passing;
- (e) At the following General Assembly, a motion must be made and seconded to review the complaint;
- (f) The officer in question shall be given an opportunity to speak in their own defense and present evidence if they so choose; and
- (g) Following full discussion, the motion will be voted on. The officer may be removed with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote.

## **Article Six: Elections**

**Section 1.** The timeline for the election will be published in the elections packet. Fall elections will be held no later than the third Thursday in October. Spring elections will be held no later than the second Tuesday in April.

**Section 2.** Students interested in being a balloted candidate for a position must submit a form declaring their intent to run via EmConnect by the date specified in the elections packet.

**Section 3.** All candidates must be found in good academic and conduct standing with Emerson College.

**Section 4.** Candidates will be given sufficient time to campaign both in-person and digitally.

**Section 5.** Campaign posters must be stamped at the Student Affairs Suite (Walker 411) and placed only on designated bulletin boards.

**Section 6.** The candidate is responsible for removing all campaigning materials from in-person spaces once the campaign is over.

**Section 7.** Candidates should conduct their campaigns with integrity. Campaigns should be focused on platforms and issues, not personal attacks. Candidates who use their platform to bully, harass, or demean other candidates will be reported to the Office of Community Standards, Student Engagement and Leadership, or Office of Equity Opportunity.

**Section 8.** Polls will remain open for 36 hours. Should there be a problem with the polling process, polls will remain open for an extra day.

**Section 9.** If a candidate wishes to appeal the results of an election, they must submit a written complaint to the Chief Justice within 48 hours of the release of election results. The Chief Justice will consult with the SGA advisor within three working days following the deadline for appeals. If they agree that there are adequate grounds for an appeal of the election, the Chief Justice may call a new election or otherwise penalize the parties involved.

**Section 10.** The results of elections shall be posted on the Student Government Association website and on all social media platforms. Write-in candidates shall be excluded from initial results.

**Section 11.** If no balloted candidate receives a plurality of the vote, write-in candidates shall undergo academic and conduct checks. The Chief Justice shall contact all candidates to determine interest within 48 hours of receiving confirmation of their eligibility for a suggested position.

- a. Should no more than one candidate express interest in a given position, they will be confirmed under the appointment process as outlined in Article 7.
- b. Should multiple candidates express interest in a given position, the position shall be awarded to the candidate who received the most votes in the election.

- c. In the event of a tie, the Chief Justice shall arrange for each tied candidate to meet with the Internal Affairs board. The Internal Affairs board shall evaluate each candidate's credentials and select the individual best suited for a given position.
- a. The candidate receiving the plurality of "yes" votes from the Internal Affairs Constitutional Officers shall be confirmed under the appointment process as outlined in Article 7.
- b. This procedure shall not elect a candidate who received fewer votes than a balloted candidate.

**Section 12.** Failure to adhere to these and other guidelines may result in disqualification.

## **Article Seven: Appointments**

**Section 1.** Appointed officials will be introduced at a General Assembly meeting, followed by a required one-week waiting period in which Student Government officials will discuss the individual's appointment before voting the following week.

**Section 2.** The Executive President shall notify SGA Advisor(s) of their appointments at least one week before introducing them to the General Assembly so that academic and conduct checks can be conducted. Any appointment that does not clear academic and conduct checks consistent with the requirements in the Constitution shall not be presented to the General Assembly.

## **Article Eight: Treasury**

**Section 1.** For purposes of this article:

- (a) A Project Fund shall be defined as a fund with a defined purpose, managing body, and completion criteria, as outlined in Section 2 of this article, and housed within an account under the control of Emerson College. Project Funds must be managed by a body defined in the constitution of SGA, in Article 3 Section 3 of these Bylaws, or by a number of individuals described in the relevant subsection of Section 2 of this article. Should the completion criteria be met, the fund will be dissolved, and any remaining balance shall be transferred to Unallocated funds. The funds for the EVVY and ERA awards shows shall be considered project funds, but do not need to be defined in Section 2 or attributed to an Article 3 Section 3 body.
- (b) An Organization Fund shall be the annual operating account for a registered campus organization, SGA, or a class council. These funds are established through the organization recognition process and funded through the annual budget request process.

**Section 2.** The Executive Treasurer shall record and report on all balances and changes of the following funds:



- (a) Unallocated funds; containing all receipts from Student Fees, turnbacks from organizations not using their whole allocation by the end of the fiscal year, turnbacks from project funds not using their whole allocation by the completion of the project, and donations to the College earmarked for the Student Government Association, housed within the student activities fee account;
- (b) The Student Government Association Organization Fund; the annual operating fund for SGA allocated from Unallocated funds;
- (c) The Appeals Project Fund, to fund unanticipated opportunities as requested by organizations and to be managed by the Executive Treasurer, FAB, and General Assembly—allocated from Unallocated funds—and complete at the end of the Fiscal Year, housed within the student activities fee account; and
- (d) The Student Impact Project Fund, to support impactful projects affecting the Emerson Student Community to be managed as follows and complete upon the exhaustion of funds, housed within the student impact fund account.
  - (i) The Student Impact Project Fund will be managed by the General Assembly, based on recommendations from the Financial Advisory Board.
  - (ii) The Executive Treasurer—with the advice and consent of the Financial Advisory Board—shall establish a clear set of guidelines, applications, and proposals for impact fund projects.
  - (iii) Any allocation from the Student Impact Project Fund must be approved by a majority vote of the General Assembly.
- (e) The Campus Groups Transition Project Fund, to support the transition from EmConnect to Campus Groups, to be managed jointly by the SGA treasurer and advisors, is considered complete on July 1, 2028, housed within the student impact fund account, and subject to the following spending limits for the fiscal years ending in each of
  - (i) \$27,448.50 in the fiscal year ending in 2026;
  - (ii) \$4,174.00 in the fiscal year ending in 2027; and
  - (iii) \$2,087.00 in the fiscal year ending in 2028.

**Section 3.** No donor agreement, or other contract or amendment thereto, between the Student Government Association and the College shall be adopted without an affirmative vote on ratification of the final version by the General Assembly. The Director of Student Engagement And Leadership is the authorized representative of the College and Student Government Association for signing any contracts authorized by the Student Government Association or any department thereof. On contracts between the Student Government Association and the College, with the consent of the College, the Executive President of the Student Government Association may add their signature in a symbolic capacity.

## **Article Nine: Amendments**

**Section 1.** Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by any member of SGA and may be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly.

## **Article Ten: Enactment and Sunset**

**Section 1.** These Bylaws shall take effect immediately on approval by a favorable vote of two-thirds of the General Assembly, replacing any previous SGA Bylaws.

**Section 2.** Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of these bylaws shall cease in their authority on the first day of classes for the Emerson College fall semester in 2025.

**Section 3.** Articles 9, 10, and 11 of these bylaws shall cease in its authority at the adjournment of the first meeting of the General Assembly at which business is transacted in the Emerson College fall semester in 2025.

**Section 4.** Article 8 of these bylaws shall remain active until explicitly repealed or overruled by the General Assembly.

## **Article Eleven: Reorganization**

**Section 1.** The first meeting of the General Assembly in the Emerson College fall semester in 2026 shall be referred to as the Reorganization Meeting.

**Section 2.** The Reorganization Meeting shall be held at 12:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time on Friday, September 5, 2026. If no quorum is present in the location designated by the President within fifteen minutes of that time, the reorganization meeting shall instead be held on the first Friday following when such quorum is present.

**Section 3.** The Executive President shall preside and the Executive Vice President shall serve as secretary of the General Assembly at the Reorganization Meeting.

**Section 4.** The Reorganization Meeting shall take no action outside of the questions of adoption of bylaws, confirmation of appointments, except on suspension of the rules, and shall not require an agenda to be issued.

**Section 5.** Debate on each question at the Reorganization Meeting shall be limited to 15 minutes in total and 2 minutes per speaker.

**Section 6.** Votes on each question at the Reorganization Meeting shall be taken first by voice, then by call of the roll if requested by a voting member, unless the matter is financial in nature, or requires a greater quantum of vote than a simple majority, in which case a roll call will be ordered.