

Associated Students of Portland State University

Senate Bylaws

2025-2026

ARTICLE I - DEFINITIONS

1.1 Abstention: An instance of declining to vote for or against a proposal or motion. An abstention does not count toward the vote total and does not factor into the calculation of a majority unless the majority of the total Voting Membership of the Senate or a majority of members present is required. An abstention should only be used when a member has a conflict of interest with the vote being taken or the member has missed a significant portion of the discussion on the motion.

1.2 Conflict of Interest: A situation in which a Senator is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in the Senator's official capacity.

1.3 Ex-Officio Members: Ex-Officio (non-voting) members of the Student Senate retain the same speaking rights as Voting Members, but cannot introduce, second, or vote on motions. Ex-officio members of the Student Senate include the President, the Vice President, the Senate Speaker, the Campus Coordinator, the Chief of Staff, the two (2) Committee Chairs, the Operations Coordinator, the Publicity & Communications Coordinator, four (4) members of the Judicial Review Board, the Chief Justice of the Judicial Review Board, and the Student Trustees of the PSU Board of Trustees.

1.4 Majority: Unless otherwise stated in the latest *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* ("RONR"), these bylaws, or any other superior document (e.g. the ASPSU Constitution), a majority is to be defined as any number greater than half of the total sum of present Voting Members, excluding any abstentions from the calculation of the total.

1.5 Quorum: Quorum consists of fifty percent (50%) plus one of the total voting seats, according to the ASPSU Constitution.

1.6 Referendum: A vote by the student body on a question posed by the Senate.

1.7 Resolutions: Any formal decision, determination, or expression of opinion of the Senate, but does not include Senate expenditures, revisions of the Senate Bylaws, and confirmation decisions.

1.8 Voting Members: Voting Members of the Student Senate may introduce, second, debate, and vote on motions. The Voting Members of the Student Senate are the Senate Speaker (in the case a tie-breaker vote is needed), the Student Fee Committee Chair, the Student Fee Committee Vice Chair and all other Student Fee Committee Members, and the ten (10) Senators.

ARTICLE II – PARTICIPATION

2.1 Unless otherwise enumerated in these Senate Bylaws or in Article 7.7 of the ASPSU Constitution, the Senate shall be composed of four (4) Standing Committees - which contain the Operations Board, the Student Fee Committee, and the two (2) Chair-Led Committees.

2.2 Participation requirements for all Voting Members of the Student Senate shall include:

2.2.1 Accruing no more than two (2) unexcused absences per term for all Committee and Senate meetings required as an ASPSU Official.

2.2.2 Showing up past roll-call to order will be considered tardy and marked on the record. Instances of tardiness shall be communicated to the President or Vice President and Senate Speaker prior to the meeting.

2.2.3 Leaving the meeting prior to adjournment will be marked on the record.

Instances of leaving early shall be communicated to the Leadership Core prior to the meeting.

2.2.4 Attending no less than seventy-five percent (75%) of total Senate and Committee meetings, monitored every academic term.

2.2.5 Participation in conducting Senate business, including voting in the affirmative or the negative on a motion, with the exception of a circumstance where an abstention is appropriate.

2.2.6 Specifically for Senators, in accordance with Article 7.14 of the ASPSU Constitution, Senators are required to maintain membership on an All University Committee (AUC).

2.3 Excused absences shall be determined by the President, Vice President, and Senate Speaker in accordance with the ASPSU Internal Attendance Policy.

2.4 Senate meetings may take place in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format as is decided by a vote of the ASPSU Operations Board prior to each term. If a meeting is scheduled to be held in person, all ASPSU Members are allowed to attend electronically or in a hybrid format only by arranging forty-eight (48) hours in advance with the ASPSU President, ASPSU Vice President, or Senate Speaker and complying with the attendance requirements.

2.4.1 Special considerations will be made jointly by the ASPSU President, Vice President, and Senator Speaker. These considerations may include any extenuating circumstances wherein electronic participation would be a reasonable and necessary accommodation. Special considerations will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

2.4.2 As long as all participation requirements defined in Articles 2.1.4 and 2.1.5 are met, participating electronically for a full meeting is considered attendance at the respective meeting only if members have communicated forty-eight (48) hours in advance and have a valid reason to not be in person. The validity of a member's given reason will be defined within ASPSU's internal attendance policy and/or through permission granted by the ASPSU President and ASPSU Vice President.

2.4.3 Emergency circumstances are defined in the ASPSU Internal Attendance Policy.

2.4.4 Article **7.11** of the ASPSU Constitution describes the expected occurrences of scheduled Senate meetings.

2.4.5 Voting members are allowed to attend electronically (from outside of the physical meeting location) no more than two (2) meetings per term without special consideration from the ASPSU senate. Except in emergency circumstances, members are to give notice of participating electronically no later than 24 hours in advance of the meeting in which the proposed electronic participation will be taking place.

2.5 A Senator must sit on and participate in one (1) of two (2) Chair-Led Committees. Senators will be assigned by ASPSU Leadership Core to their respective committees no later than two (2) weeks after the time of their appointment. Senator Committee assignments are subject to change throughout the academic year.

2.6 All Senators are expected to assist the Chair of their respective committees in fulfilling the purposes of the Committee.

2.7 Senators will serve on Liaison Groups assigned by Chairs of Chair-Led Committees. Definitions and requirements of Liaison Groups are defined in the ASPSU Senate Liaison Groups Policy.

2.8 One (1) Senator will be assigned by the Campus Coordinator to each college department on campus and serve as a designated advocate for those students. These committee assignments are subject to change throughout the year. Senators may also be doubled up on all university committees.

1. ARTICLE III – RESOLUTIONS

3.1 All resolutions of the ASPSU Student Senate shall come from a Standing or Ad-hoc committee and must receive an affirmative majority of votes from the originating committee prior to referral of the resolution to the Senate.

3.2 Once a resolution has been passed from its originating committee and forwarded to the Senate, its first reading shall be scheduled on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting as a “New Business” item.

3.2.1 The primary sponsor of the resolution, or designee, will provide the first reading of the proposed resolution.

3.3 After a resolution has been read and presented to the full Senate, discussion may occur on the resolution.

3.4 After the first reading of the resolution, the Senate may take no action or may refer the resolution to a Committee for the purpose of further review and/or revision. The resolution cannot be approved at the first reading. If the Senate takes no action, the resolution shall appear on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting under “Old Business” for a final reading and vote. The vote will occur through a simple majority vote.

3.4.1 If the Senate refers the resolution to a Committee for revision:

3.4.2 The second reading of the resolution as amended shall be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting as an “Old Business” item unless an alternate date is specified by the Senate.

3.4.3 The amended resolution may not be referred back to a Committee. The amended resolution shall appear on the agenda of the following regularly scheduled Senate meeting under “Old Business” for a final reading and a vote.

3.5 The Chair of the Committee to which a resolution is referred, or designee, will provide the second reading of an amended resolution.

3.6 The primary sponsor of the resolution, the Chair of the Committee, or designee, will provide the final reading of the resolution prior to a vote on a motion to adopt the resolution.

3.7 A simple majority vote in the affirmative shall be required for approval of the resolution unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

3.8 Any member of the student body may submit an attention request to the ASPSU Judicial

Review Board to determine whether a resolution passed by the Senate, with the exception of referenda (Article VI), is in compliance with the ASPSU Constitution and other governing documents of ASPSU. The Judicial Review Board has the authority to rule on the ASPSU constitutionality of all resolutions passed by the Student Senate, with the exception of referenda (Article VI).

3.9 In the case of the ASPSU senate wishing to propose a resolution in a more timely manner which requires it to be read and voted upon within one meeting (suspending the requirement of a second reading during a second meeting), a special majority vote in the affirmative will be required to forgo a second reading and proceed with a vote on the resolution itself.

ARTICLE IV - SENATE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

4.1 The Senate shall conduct all business through a coordinated committee structure outlined within the Chair-Led Committee Bylaws.

4.2 Membership, procedures, and annual goals of each Chair-Led Committee shall be defined in the Chair-Led Committee Bylaws.

4.3 The process for assigning ASPSU Senators to the Chair-Led Committees will be as follows:

4.3.1 The ASPSU President, Vice President, and Senate Speaker will develop a process for assigning Senators to the Committees.

4.3.2 The ASPSU Leadership Core must present the Committee assignments to the Senate by the first Senate meeting after June 1st.

ARTICLE V – AD-HOC COMMITTEES

5.1 All Ad-Hoc Committees shall be created by resolutions of the Senate and will follow the

resolution process in Article III of these Bylaws or can also be created at the discretion of the ASPSU President via written order.

5.2 The charge of each Ad-Hoc Committee of the Senate must be defined by the approved resolution creating the respective committee or within the ASPSU President's written order.

5.3 Ad-Hoc Committees will be required to have a minimum of three (3) Voting Members and one (1) Chair.

5.4 Ad-Hoc Committees will be required to operate under the standing set of bylaws titled "Ad-Hoc Committee Bylaws."

ARTICLE VI – REFERENDA

6.1 All proposed referenda will be created solely by resolutions of the ASPSU Senate and will follow the resolution process in Article III of these Bylaws.

6.2 A referendum will require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of the Senate to be referred to the Elections Committee to be placed on the ballot.

6.3 All referenda must be in compliance with University policy and in accordance with local, state, and federal laws.

ARTICLE VII – VACANCIES

7.1 Vacancies occur according to the guidelines outlined in Article XII of the ASPSU Constitution.

7.2 The ASPSU President will nominate a student for every vacancy that arises.

7.2.1 Article 5.6 of the ASPSU Constitution will enumerate further information on how vacancies are to be handled by the ASPSU President throughout the year.

7.3 An affirmative vote of the Senate is required to confirm nominations to all vacant positions.

7.4 Confirmed nominees will assume their respective positions immediately unless otherwise stated.

ARTICLE VIII – GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL

8.1 The ASPSU Senate will refer to Article XII of the ASPSU Constitution for information regarding Grounds for Dismissal standards and protocol.

ARTICLE IX – ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

9.1 There will be two (2) leading officials of the ASPSU Senate.

9.1.1 The two (2) pre-designated officials of the ASPSU Senate are the Chair and the Chief of Staff.

9.1.2 The Chair of the Senate is the Senate Speaker.

9.1.3 The Senate Speaker is elected by the Senate, with a majority vote for approval.

9.1.4 The candidate for Senate Speaker must be selected within the pool of eligible Senators, unless there are none eligible, where then the pool of eligible candidates follows eligible Student Fee Committee members, then if none are available, follows eligible candidates from the Non-Voting Membership.

9.1.5 The Secretary of the Senate shall be the Chief of Staff.

9.1.6 At any time when the Senate Speaker is unable to serve as Chair, the Vice President (as defined in Article 1.19 of the ASPSU Constitution) shall act as the Interim Chair (“Senate Pro Tempore”).

9.1.7 If both positions of Vice President and Senate Speaker are vacant, the role of

Senate Chair will be the Judicial Review Board Chief Justice (Chair), and if applicable, the role of Secretary is succeeded by the Communication Coordinator.

9.2 All votes of each individual and of the whole body shall be recorded in the minutes of the Student Senate.

9.3 The Senate shall use [*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*](#) ("RONR") and the [*Oregon Public Meeting Law \(OPML\)*](#) for all Parliamentary Procedure unless otherwise noted in the ASPSU Constitution or these Senate Bylaws.

9.4 If no new Internal ASPSU Policies are presented to the ASPSU Senate the internal policy will remain in effect from the previous year and can be updated at a later date by a simple majority vote as needed.

9.4.1 The new internal ASPSU policies are to be presented by the ASPSU President and Vice President for a vote by the senate by the second senate meeting of the Fall term.

9.4.2 Each Senate administration shall draft a set of Community Agreements which will be approved by the fourth Senate meeting of the Fall term by a simple majority vote and may be revisited at any point throughout the year.

9.5 The Senate shall use an individual's chosen gender pronouns in speech and documentation and may provide space for education on this concept when necessary.

9.6 At the beginning of each Senate meeting, a member of the Senate shall deliver a brief acknowledgment of the Indigenous rights to the land presently occupied by Portland State University.

9.7 A Special (also coined as "Emergency") Senate meeting, as defined by [*Oregon Public Meetings Law \(OPML\)*](#), may be called by the President, the Vice President, the Senate Speaker, a majority vote of the Judicial Review Board, or by petition of a simple majority vote of the Senate's current voting membership.