



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN  
**STUDENT PARLIAMENT**

## Student Parliament Standing Rules

Approved at the extraordinary sitting on the 18 May 2017

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## Definitions and Abbreviations

- (1) "Absolute majority" means a vote by two-thirds majority of the full house.
- (2) "Council" means the Council of the University of Cape Town (UCT).
- (3) "Extraordinary meeting" is a meeting called to discuss urgent matters.
- (4) "House" refers to the deliberative forum that is Student Parliament that is made up of members from various student governance structures.
- (5) "Observer" is any registered student who is not a member of the Student Parliament who attends a sitting of the Student Parliament
- (6) "Simple majority" means a majority (50%+1) of the members present and voting, excluding those who abstain.
- (7) "Ordinary meeting" is a sitting of Student Parliament that must be held at least once in every academic term.
- (8) "Student governance structure" is a body recognised in terms of Articles 7 to 17 of the SRC constitution
- (9) "Students Representative Council" (SRC) is the highest decision making structure of student governance at the University.
- (10) "University Student Affairs Committee" (USAC) means the Council committee responsible for advising Council on policy in the area of student development and services.

## Part 1: Roles and responsibilities of the Student Parliament

- 1.1. Student Parliament:
  - 1.1.1. Is independent of the other student governance structures and subject to the SRC Constitution and these Student Parliament standing rules;
  - 1.1.2. Is the collective voice of the UCT student community;
  - 1.1.3. Holds the SRC and its sub structures accountable and plays an oversight role in the interest of students
  - 1.1.4. Is the forum of debate and discussion on issues affecting students and makes recommendations and/or decisions that bind the SRC, in pursuit of its mandate to serve students with integrity.
- 1.2. All roles and responsibilities of the Student Parliament are defined in the SRC Constitution.
- 1.3. A resolution taken by absolute majority of the full membership of the house shall be binding on the SRC.
- 1.4. Resolutions taken by simple majority but less than absolute majority will not bind the SRC and will be regarded as recommendations of the House to the SRC.
- 1.5. The SRC must provide progress reports to Student Parliament on recommendations made to it and/or the implementation of binding decisions of Student Parliament.
- 1.6. The Student Parliament may require any office bearer of the SRC, any SRC sub-council, any development agency of the SRC, any university student society, club or sports code, or any student organization to make submissions before the House or any subcommittee of the House.

- 1.7. An SRC decision may be reviewed by or appealed to Student Parliament.
- 1.8. Student Parliament is responsible for appointing members of the Student Governance court and the Constitutional committee, which appointment must take place in the third term of the year in which its terms commences.

## **Part 2: Composition of the Student Parliament**

### **2. The Full House**

- 2.1. The respective sub-council and the International Students Forum shall nominate members of the Student Parliament.
- 2.2. All sub-councils and the International Students Forum shall ensure that they maintain their full membership in the Student Parliament and, should a vacancy occur in any constituency, it is the responsibility of that structure to fill the vacancy and inform the Convener of the Student Parliament.
- 2.3. The Student Parliament shall be composed of:
  - 2.3.1. Fifteen (15) members of the SRC;
  - 2.3.2. Six (6) members appointed by the Postgraduate Academic Sub-Council;
  - 2.3.3. Twelve (12) members appointed by the Undergraduate Academic Sub-Council;
  - 2.3.4. Ten (10) members appointed by the Residence Sub-council;
  - 2.3.5. Twenty (20) members appointed by the Societies and Day Houses Sub-Council;
  - 2.3.6. Eight (8) members appointed by the Sports Sub-Council;
  - 2.3.7. Six (6) members that constitute the Development

- Agencies Sub-Council;
- 2.3.8. Three (3) members appointed by the International Students Forum and
- 2.3.9. The three (3) elected members of the Student Parliament Management Committee (SPMC).

### **3. Term of Office**

The Student Parliament holds office from 1 November until 31 October in the following year.

### **4. Subcommittees of Student Parliament**

- 4.1. The Student Parliament may have as many subcommittees as it deems necessary.
- 4.2. A subcommittee may be created by the SPMC or by resolution of the House.
- 4.3. Individuals appointed as members of a subcommittee need not be members of the House.

### **5. Eligibility for Student Parliament Membership**

- 5.1. Students are eligible for membership of Student Parliament if:
  - 5.1.1. They are currently registered as a student at the University;
  - 5.1.2. They are not already a member of the House, meaning that a member may not hold multiple seats.

### **6. Alternates**

- 6.1. An alternate nominated in terms of the standing rules of that member's sub-council or the International Students' Forum may

represent a member during a sitting.

- 6.2. An alternate shall assume the voting rights of the members they are representing at a sitting.
- 6.3. The Secretary of the sub-council or International Students Forum must notify the SPMC at least 3 university days in advance when an alternate is to attend a sitting.
- 6.4. An alternate may not represent members of the SPMC and SRC.

## **7. Observers**

- 7.1. The Speaker may, at the request of any member or by a decision of the SPMC, invite any person to address the House and participate in the debate, without voting rights;
- 7.2. Observers may participate in sittings of the Student Parliament.
- 7.3. Observers may not vote or propose motions.

## **8. Termination of Membership**

- 8.1. A member of the House ceases to hold office when
  - 8.1.1. Nomination by the relevant constituent sub-council is withdrawn;
  - 8.1.2. Nomination by the International Students' Forum is withdrawn;
  - 8.1.3. A member tenders a resignation in writing and such a resignation is accepted by the constituent structure;
  - 8.1.4. The Student Governance Court or the University Student Disciplinary Tribunal terminates membership as a result of a sanction.

## **Part 3: The Student Parliament Management Committee**

### **9. The Student Parliament Management Committee (SPMC)**

- 9.1. The Student Parliament Management Committee shall have five members:
  - 9.1.1. The Speaker
  - 9.1.2. The Deputy Speaker;
  - 9.1.3. The Convenor;
  - 9.1.4. The SRC Secretary General;
  - 9.1.5. A second member of the SRC appointed by the SRC who shall serve as the Secretary.

### **10. SPMC Meetings**

- 10.1. A meeting of the Student Parliament Management Committee can be convened at any time.
- 10.2. Three members of the SPMC shall constitute a quorum.

### **11. Roles and responsibilities of the Members of the SPMC**

- 11.1. The Speaker shall:
  - 11.1.1. Have ultimate responsibility for the running of the Student Parliament;
  - 11.1.2. Together with the SRC Secretary General, prepare agendas for meetings;
  - 11.1.3. Be the official spokesperson for the Student Parliament;
  - 11.1.4. Deliver a report to the House at the end of term of office.



11.2. The Deputy Speaker shall:

- 11.2.1. Act as Speaker in the absence of the Speaker,
- 11.2.2. Be the Treasurer of the Student Parliament; and
- 11.2.3. Present the financial report on a quarterly basis to the House;

11.3. The Convener shall:

- 11.3.1. Ensure that the Student Parliament is properly constituted;
- 11.3.2. Ensure that there is an updated membership database of the Student Parliament;
- 11.3.3. Monitor attendance of members at sittings of the House;
- 11.3.4. Act as the chief liaison between the SPMC and sub-structures.

11.4. The SRC Secretary General shall:

- 11.4.1. Be the primary liaison between the SPMC and the SRC;
- 11.4.2. Together with the Speaker, prepare agendas for meetings;
- 11.4.3. Ensure that there are no clashes in the events of the Student Parliament and SRC;
- 11.4.4. Ensure that SRC and sub-structure reports and submissions to the House are submitted on time.

11.5. The Secretary shall:

- 11.5.1. Be responsible for taking minutes
- 11.5.2. Be responsible for publicizing Student Parliament events.

## **12. Election of the SPMC**

- 12.1. The election of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Convener of Student Parliament takes place in the third term of the year in which its term of office commences.
- 12.2. The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and Convener must be elected from members of the current House.
- 12.3. The outgoing SPMC shall conduct the election. Where an SPMC member stands for re-election, they must be recused from conducting the election.

## **Part 4: Rules and Procedure**

### **13. Ordinary Meetings**

- 13.1. The Student Parliament must hold at least one ordinary meeting per term.
- 13.2. Members may request an additional ordinary sitting in writing or by resolution of the House.
- 13.3. The Speaker must publish and give seven university days' notice of date, time, venue, minutes of the previous ordinary sitting and provisional agenda of such a meeting;
- 13.4. The Speaker must two weeks prior to giving notice of an ordinary meeting, call for the submission of motions or items for the agenda from members.

### **14. Extraordinary Meetings**

- 14.1. An Extraordinary Meeting must be held when:

- 14.1.1. The Speaker in consultation with the SRC calls such a meeting;
  - 14.1.2. A sub-council of the SRC submits, in writing, a request for such a meeting; or
  - 14.1.3. the House so resolves.
- 14.2. The Speaker must publish and give notice of the date, time, venue and provisional agenda of such a meeting, at least twenty-four hours before the meeting.

## 15. **Quorum**

- 15.1. The presence of at least fifty percent plus one of the total membership of the House shall be necessary to constitute a sitting of the Student Parliament.
- 15.2. Quorum must be maintained throughout the duration of the meeting for it to remain quorate.
- 15.3. In the case that a meeting is inquorate or loses quorum during the meeting:
- 15.3.1. Members by simple majority can decide to postpone the meeting and the Speaker shall then adjourn the sitting to a later date, or
  - 15.3.2. Members by simple majority may decide to continue the meeting. Should the meeting continue, a Speaker's Circular must be circulated to all members and sufficient time must be allowed for objections to be received to proposed decisions. Should an objection be received from a member, the matter must be discussed at the next meeting. In the absence of an objection the proposed decision is deemed approved.

## **16. Procedure in Meetings**

- 16.1. A member or observer will be restricted in speaking to the time allocated by the Speaker.
- 16.2. When a point of order is raised, the person called to order may not continue with their submission until the Speaker gives a ruling or decision on the point of order. If the point of order is sustained, the member must act upon any instruction given by Speaker. If the point of order is overruled, the member may proceed with their submission.
- 16.3. Where the Speaker cannot make an immediate ruling on a point of order she or he may defer the matter to later or the next sitting to allow for consultation; in the interim the debate on the matter before the House must be suspended pending the ruling.

## **17. Order of Proceedings in Sittings**

- 17.1. The order of business of each ordinary sitting of the House, shall be as follows:
  - 17.1.1. Opening by the Speaker
  - 17.1.2. Approval of minutes
  - 17.1.3. Reports before the House
  - 17.1.4. Motions and other matters before the House
  - 17.1.5. Closing
- 17.2. Motions shall ordinarily be addressed as follows:
  - 17.2.1. The Speaker will briefly introduce the item. Indicating who has proposed the motion.
  - 17.2.2. All motions require one mover and one seconder; if the motion is not seconded the motion falls away and the Speaker proceeds to the next item on the agenda.
  - 17.2.3. The Speaker will then invite the mover and the

seconded of the motion to provide their motivations.

- 17.2.4. The Speaker will then invite general discussion from other members and observers. Amendments can be proposed during the general discussion but before the motion is voted upon.
- 17.2.5. The Speaker will then ask the mover(s) of amendment(s) or alternative resolutions to motivate their proposals.
- 17.2.6. The Speaker must seek a reaction from the sponsor of the original motion, who may:
  - 17.2.6.1. accept such amendment(s); the original motion will then fall away and the amended motion becomes the substantive motion; or
  - 17.2.6.2. reject such amendment(s); in which case the original motion and proposed amendment will stand as separate motions that will be separately voted on.
- 17.2.7. A member may not speak more than once to any motion, alternative resolution or amendment, unless the Speaker allows them to do so.
- 17.2.8. Members moving and seconding a motion or an amendment have the right to reply to the debate before a vote is taken.
- 17.3. Where a member in charge of a motion is absent from the House:
  - 17.3.1. A member may take charge of a motion in the absence of the member in charge, provided they has been authorized to do so by the absent member and informed the Speaker of the SPMC.
  - 17.3.2. A member taking over such a motion will, to all intents

and purposes, act a sponsor of the motion.

- 17.3.3. Where a member is absent from the House without making arrangements for an alternate, their motion shall be adjourned to the next sitting.

## 18. **Voting**

- 18.1. Only members of the Student Parliament are allowed to vote.
- 18.2. All motions before the House shall be voted upon.
- 18.3. Voting will be by show of hands, unless a member requests a vote by secret ballot.
- 18.4. The number of members voting for, the number of members voting against, and the number abstaining on any proposal shall be entered in the minutes.

## 19. **Reports of the SRC President and the SRC Secretary-General**

- 19.1. The President must present the political report of the SRC at the first ordinary meeting of each term.
- 19.2. The Secretary-General must present the Organisational report of the SRC at the first ordinary meeting of each term.
- 19.3. After the reports the Speaker must open the floor for clarity seeking questions and debate on the reports.
- 19.4. The President and the Secretary-General must answer written questions that have been submitted in advance.
- 19.5. The Speaker shall determine the number of questions for oral reply that may be put to the President or Secretary-General.

**Part 5: Standing Rules**

20. These standing rules are subject to the SRC Constitution.

21. Amendments to these Standing Rules shall be made as follows:-

21.1. Student Parliament may by a two-thirds majority vote of the full membership of the House adopt, amend, or repeal these Standing Rules.

21.2. Any amendments to the Standing Rules must be submitted to the Constitutional committee for approval.

Date Approved by Constitutional Committee.....

Chairperson of the Constitutional Committee.....Signature.....