



# The Student Senate

Texas A&M University

S.B. 64-44

The Student Senate  
64<sup>th</sup> Session  
Texas A&M University

Introduced By: Cody T. Vasut

Action Taken Passed  
November 16, 2011

Certified By:

Tanner Wilson  
Tanner Wilson  
Speaker of the Senate

Duly Approved:

Jeffrey Pickering '12  
Jeffrey Pickering 11-23-11  
Student Body President

## The Senate Finance Committee Bill *Special Designation: Senate By-Law Bill*

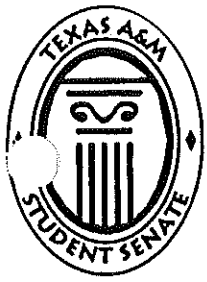
*"A bill establishing the Senate Finance Committee to study, monitor, and consider legislation on the rates and appropriations of tuition and student fees at Texas A&M University and donations to the Student Government Association."*

**Whereas(1):** The Student Senate currently has two special committees devoted to appropriations year-round and student fees in the fall semester; and,

**Whereas(2):** The Student Senate currently has no legislative committee devoted to studying tuition or donations to the Student Government Association or devoted to studying student fees year-round; and,

**Whereas(3):** The creation of a single standing legislative committee to appropriate funds and study tuition and fees is both more efficient and necessary to ensure that student fee policies are carefully scrutinized year-round; and,

**Whereas(4):** The Constituency Affairs Committee ought to be restructured to provide for more flexibility in its membership, freeing up Senators to serve on the new Senate Finance Committee and eliminating multiple pages from the Senate By-Laws.



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Further Certified By: *Tanner Wilson*

Tanner Wilson  
Speaker of the Senate

Therefore

Let it be

**Enacted(1):** That this bill shall take effect January 1st, 2012. Changes to the by-laws are indicated by underlines (for additions) and bracketed strike-throughs (for deletions). Should any change remove or add any Section, Sub-Section, or lower Sub-Division, the preceding and following Sections, Sub-Sections, and lower Sub-Divisions shall be automatically re-numbered accordingly. Appropriations Chair Rachel Thornburg shall automatically assume the office of Senate Finance Chair effective January 1st, 2012. The membership of the Finance Committee shall then be determined according to the Senate By-Laws' provisions governing the appointment of Finance Committee members; and,

Let it be

Further

**Enacted(2):** That Article III Section III ("Caucus Leaders") of the Student Senate By-Laws is deleted and all later Sections are renumbered accordingly; and,

Let it be

Further

**Enacted(3):** That Article III Section IV ("Officers of the Senate") of the Student Senate By-Laws, which was renumbered as Section III pursuant to Enaction Clause (2) of this bill, is amended to read as follows; and,

**SECTION III. Officers of the Senate**

(a) The Officers of the Senate shall consist of the Speaker of the Senate, the Speaker Pro-Tempore, the Senate Chair for Academic Affairs, the Senate Chair for Community Relations, the Senate Chair for Legislative Affairs, the Senate Chair for Rules and Regulations, the Senate Chair for Student Services, the Senate Chair for Finance, and the Senate Chair for Constituency Affairs. In addition to their senatorial responsibilities of representing their constituents, officers will be responsible for the following:

\* \* \*

- (3) Rules & Regulations Chair
  - (x) Sit on the Senate [~~Appropriations~~] Finance Committee as a non-voting member for budget hearings

\* \* \*

- (7) Student Services Chair

\* \* \*

- (vii) [~~Appoint and oversee the Student Service Fee Advisory Board Liaison, the Recreational Sports Fee Liaison, the Student Health and Medical Services Fee Liaison, and the Student Center Complex Fee Liaison]~~

\* \* \*

- (9) Finance Chair  
The Finance Chair shall:



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Tanner Wilson  
Speaker of the Senate

- (i) Select, in consultation with the Speaker and the Student Body President, the six or eight (6 or 8) other members of the Senate Finance Committee who shall be confirmed by the Student Senate
- (ii) Preside over the Finance Committee. The Finance Chair is responsible for overseeing the rates and allocations of tuition and student fees at Texas A&M University, donations made to any entity of the Student Government Association, and any other funds sought by or provided to any entity of the Student Government Association. The Finance Chair is also responsible for overseeing the allocation of Student Government funds and the formulation of the annual Student Government Association budget
- (iii) Disseminate all necessary information to members of their committee and to all Senators
- (iv) Hold regular meetings with members of committee
- (v) Stay in constant communication with the Speaker of the Senate, the Student Body President or his or her cabinet member in charge of the budget, SGA Advisor(s), the SGA Committee Chairs and Finance Chairs, the SGA Commissioners, and the SGA Business Coordinator
- (vi) Enforce the committee absence policy
- (vii) Appoint and oversee the Student Service Fee Advisory Board Liaison, the Recreational Sports Fee Liaison, the Student Health and Medical Services Fee Liaison, the Student Center Complex Fee Liaison, and such other liaisons to other Texas A&M University departments as are necessary and proper to facilitate communication with the Senate Finance Committee about tuition and student fees
- (viii) Call such public budget hearings as are necessary to formulate the budget and further allocate funds with at least twenty-four (24) hours notice to the committee

Let it be  
Further

**Enacted(4):** That Article III Section V (“Appropriations Committee Chair”) of the Student Senate By-Laws is deleted and all later Sections are renumbered accordingly; and,

Let it be  
Further

**Enacted(5):** That Article III Section VI (“Senator”) of the Student Senate By-Laws, which was renumbered as Section IV pursuant to Enaction Clauses (2) and (4) of this bill, is amended to read as follows; and,

#### SECTION IV. Senator

(a) Each Senator shall:

- (1) Represent their constituents on all issues
- (2) Attend Senate meetings, mandatory retreats, and development days
- (3) Join exactly one of the ~~four~~ seven legislative Senate Committees and attend the meetings as scheduled by the Committee Chairs



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- (i) The Speaker of the Senate[;] and the Speaker Pro-Tempore[~~the Constituency Affairs Chair and the Caucus Leaders~~] are not required to join one of the [four] seven legislative Senate Committees; however, each of these officers [and ~~Caucus Leaders~~] can choose to be an official member of a committee and are then subject to all the rules regarding the committee process.
- (4) Share, along with the Senate officers, the exclusive right to sponsor legislation, speak on the Senate floor, and vote

**Let it be  
Further**

**Enacted(6):** That Article III Section VII (“Ex-Officio Officers”) of the Student Senate By-Laws, which was renumbered as Section V pursuant to Enaction Clauses (2) and (4) of this bill, is amended to read as follows; and,

**SECTION V.**

Ex-Officio Officers:

\* \* \*

- (c) Liaisons

\* \* \*

- (5) Serve as a non-voting member of the Constituency Affairs Committee

\* \* \*

**Let it be  
Further**

**Enacted(7):** That Article III Section VIII (“Caucus Leaders”) of the Student Senate By-Laws, which was renumbered as Section VI pursuant to Enaction Clauses (2) and (4) of this bill, is deleted and all following Sections are renumbered accordingly; and,

**Let it be  
Further**

**Enacted(8):** That Article IV Section II of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows:

**SECTION II.**

Attendance Policy

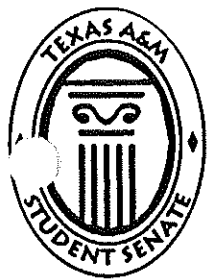
- (a) If a Senator, Senate Officer, Ex-Officio Officer, or Ad-Hoc Committee Chair accumulates three (3) unexcused absences during one full term of the Senate, they are automatically removed from their position following the fourth unexcused absence regardless of the reason.

\* \* \*

- (3) Absence forgiveness can also be received by attendance at [~~Constituency Affairs,~~] Operations committee meetings [~~Appropriation, Fee Committee,~~] and any Ad-Hoc committee meetings approved by Internal Affairs. Members of these committees will receive (1/4) of an absence forgiven per meeting attended.

\* \* \*

- (e) Each Senator must serve on exactly one (1) of the Legislative Committees (Rules and Regulations Committee, Student Services Committee, Academic Affairs Committee, Community Relations



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Tanner Wilson  
Speaker of the Senate

Committee, Constituency Affairs Committee, Finance Committee, and Legislative Affairs Committee). Committee Chairmen shall be responsible for holding a meeting between each Senate meeting. In the event that a Committee Chairman considers meeting unnecessary, he or she shall report such to the Speaker and announce the cancellation at the prior week's Senate meeting.

\*\*\*

Let it be  
Further

**Enacted(9):** That Article V Section IV of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows:

**SECTION IV.** Vote of No Confidence

- (a) **GROUND FOR A VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE.** The Senate may remove any Officer of the Senate[; ~~the Appropriations Chair;~~] or any ad hoc committee chair, from his or her officer position, but not his Student Senate seat, for failure to uphold the duties and honor of his office, improper conduct, or any other grounds for impeachment.

\*\*\*

Let it be  
Further

**Enacted(10):** That Article VII Section I of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows:

**SECTION I.** Legislative Committees

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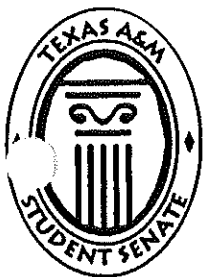
- (c) The Legislative Committees. The Legislative Committees of the Texas A&M Student Senate shall be assigned by the Speaker to consider legislation as outlined in this Subsection, and may retain or release such legislation to the floor as they so determine, as outlined in Subsection (d) of this Section. The Legislative Committees and their duties are outlined herein:

- (1) **The Rules and Regulations Committee:** The Rules and Regulations Committee shall be chaired by the Senate Rules and Regulations Chair. This committee shall be assigned to consider all legislation pertaining to the operations of the Texas A&M Student Government Association and the Student Senate, including but not limited to proposed amendments and additions to the SGA Constitution and the Senate Bylaws, Statues not reasonably related to any other legislative committee, and standing Rules of Order, as well as any other legislation that might affect the rules, regulations, or procedures of the SGA and its affiliates or subcommittees.

\*\*\*

- (6) The Constituency Affairs Committee. The Constituency Affairs Committee shall be chaired by the Senate Constituency Affairs Chair. This committee shall be assigned to consider all legislation pertaining to the relations between the Student Senate and the various student organizations at Texas A&M University.

- (7) The Finance Committee: The Finance Committee shall be chaired by the Senate Finance Chair. This committee shall be assigned to consider all legislation pertaining to tuition and student fees at Texas A&M University, donations made to any entity of the Student Government Association, and any other funds sought by or provided to any entity of the Student Government Association. This committee shall also be assigned to consider all



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Speaker of the Senate

legislation pertaining to the allocation of Student Government funds to any entity of the Student Government Association, spending of any funds allocated to any entity of the Student Government Association as well as the establishment of the fiscal budget of the Student Government Association.

\* \* \*

Let it be  
Further

Enacted(11): That Article IX Section I (“Internal Affairs”) of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows:

SECTION I. Internal Affairs

\* \* \*

(b) The Internal Affairs Committee shall:

\* \* \*

(3) Intervene when deemed appropriate in matters of the [~~Constituency Affairs Committee~~ and] Operations Committee.

Let it be  
Further

Enacted(12): That Article IX Section II (“Senate Vacancy Procedures”) of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows:

SECTION II. Senate Vacancy Procedures

\* \* \*

(f) In the event the vacancies appointment committee is unable to review the applications in a timely manner compliant with the By-Laws, the Senate Officers will act to both select those who receive interviews and interview them, with [~~the Caucus Leader~~] a Senator of the pertinent caucus.

Let it be  
Further

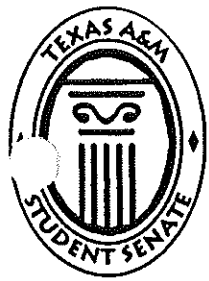
Enacted(13): That Article IX Section VI (“Fiscal Policy of the Senate”) of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows:

SECTION VI. [~~Fiscal Policy of the Senate~~] The Student Senate Budget and the Student Government Association Budget

(a) THE STUDENT SENATE PRELIMINARY BUDGET. The Speaker Pro Tempore, in consultation with the Student Body President or his or her cabinet member in charge of the Student Government Association Budget [~~Financial Officer of the Executive Branch~~], shall be responsible for formulating the annual Student Senate Budget, and overseeing spending.

(b) THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE. The [~~Student~~] Senate [~~Appropriations~~] Finance Committee will consist of the [~~Appropriations~~] Finance [~~e~~]Chair and the [~~eight~~] six or eight (~~{8}~~6 or 8) senators selected by the [~~Appropriations~~] Finance [~~e~~]Chair and confirmed by the senate.

(1) The Student Body President or his or her cabinet member in charge of the Student Government Association Budget [~~Financial Officer of the Executive Branch~~], the Rules



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and Regulations chair of the Senate, the Student Government Association Advisor(s), and the Student Government Association Business Coordinator [will] may serve as non-voting members of the committee to advise and assist the Appropriations Committee. ~~[These non-voting members will have limited speaking privileges restricted to answering questions.]~~

(c) ~~APPROPRIATION HEARINGS. [Student Government Association committees will be required to present their budget request]~~ The Finance Committee shall conduct hearings to consider any funding request, the Student Government Association budget, or appropriations bills or statutes referred to the Finance Committee at a time scheduled by the ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance Chair ~~[and agreed to by the Appropriations committee]~~.

(1) Quorum for a ~~[n appropriation]~~ Finance ~~[e]~~ Committee hearing shall be five (5) members, one of whom must be the ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance Chair.

(i) ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance ~~[e]~~ Committee members that fail to attend more than one-half (1/2) of the total number of ~~[budget request]~~ hearings during any one-month (1) period shall be automatically removed from the committee. The Finance Chair shall select a replacement in accordance with these By-Laws.

(2) ~~[Budget request]~~ ~~[h]~~ Hearings will be open to the public, however, only the members of the ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance committee will have speaking privileges.

(3) All hearings regarding requests for the annual Student Government Association budget must be conducted during the fall academic semester and must be completed before the second ~~[Senate]~~ general assembly meeting ~~[in]~~ of the fall semester. Hearings for funding requests outside of the annual Student Government Association Budget, or for additional funding beyond the annual Student Government Association budget may be conducted at any time during the fall and spring academic semesters.

(d) All ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance committee meetings will be ~~[closed]~~ open.

(e) ~~STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION BUDGET FORMULATION.~~ The Student Senate ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance Committee shall be responsible for the formulation of the annual Student Government Association Budget through a bill or statute and by a majority vote of the committee that will be presented to the Student Senate for passage.

(1) The Senate ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance Chair will present the Student Government Association Budget bill or statute at the second meeting of the fall semester. This presentation will be accompanied by a period of question and answer.

(2) Appeals may be sent to the Senate ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance Committee after this presentation. Appeals sent by Senators, Executive Council members, Judicial Court member and Student Government Committee Chairs or Commissioners must be formally considered by the ~~[Appropriations]~~ Finance Committee.

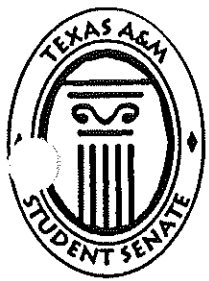
(3) At the following Senate meeting, the Appropriations Chair will again present the budget and any changes made after the initial presentation. The presentation will be accompanied by a period of question and answer followed by a period of debate.

(4) During debate, the Senate may present amendments with a one-sixth (1/6) second subject to a vote by two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting

(i) The Senate shall not allocate a budget or rule in order any amendment to such effect as to cause the total budget to exceed the amount allocated to the Student Government Association for the purpose of the budget.

(5) The budget will be approved by a majority of those present and voting.

(6) All funds not allocated by the Senate for the purposes of the Student Government Association Budget shall be retained for future allocation at the discretion of ~~[the Senate Appropriations Committee, subject to approval by]~~ the Student Senate in a standard



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Speaker of the Senate

- appropriations [bill presented by the Appropriations Chair] statute introduced by a sponsor who is a Student Senator.
- (f) ~~[Removal Procedures]~~ REMOVAL PROCEDURES
- ~~[(1) — Between regularly scheduled Senate meetings, the appropriations committee may end deliberations to bring a motion of impeachment of the Appropriations chair before the full body by a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the appropriations committee.~~
- ~~(i) — The motion to impeach will be added to the agenda to be considered by the Senate at the next regularly scheduled senate meeting.~~
- ~~(ii) — This motion to impeach will remove the senator from the position of Appropriations chair but will not remove them from their position as a Student Senator.~~
- ~~(iii) — The motion will be considered according to the impeachment procedures outlined in the bylaws.]~~
- ~~[(2)1] [Appropriations] Finance [e]Committee members may be removed by a vote of no confidence pursuant to these By-Laws. Any committee member removed by a vote of no confidence from the Finance Committee shall be re-assigned by the Internal Affairs Committee to another legislative committee pursuant to any other limitations in these By-Laws. [two-thirds (2/3) vote by both the Appropriations committee and the Internal Affairs committee]~~

Let it be  
Further

**Enacted(14):** That Article IX Section VII (“Senate Development Days”) Sub-Section (b) Number (1) Roman Numeral (i) of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows:

- (i) The order of responsibility for conducting this new Senator development day is as follows: the Rules and Regulations Chair, the Speaker Pro Tempore, the Speaker of the Senate, the Constituency Affairs Chair, the Academic Affairs Chair, the Community Relations Chair, the Legislative Affairs Chair, [and] the Student Services Chair, and the Finance Chair.

Let it be  
Further

**Enacted(15):** That Article IX Section XII (“Student Opinion Booths”) is amended to read as follows:

**SECTION XII. Student Opinion Booths**

\* \* \*

- (c) Reporting
- (1) Information and opinions obtained from the Student Opinion Booths pertinent to upcoming legislation shall be collected by the Constituency Affairs Chair, with the help of the ~~[Caucus Leaders]~~ Constituency Affairs Committee, summarized, and made available at the Senate desk within forty-eight (48) hours. The Constituency Affairs Chair shall then disseminate the information to the appropriate Legislative Committee Chair, Bill Author(s), and Sponsor(s).





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Further Certified By: *Tanner Wilson*

Tanner Wilson  
Speaker of the Senate

- (2) The Constituency Affairs Chair shall report the fulfillment of the minimum hours to the Speaker Pro Tempore within forty-eight (48) hours after the operation of each Student Opinion Booth.

Let it be  
Further

Enacted(16): That Article X Section II (“Other Elections”) of the Student Senate By-Laws is deleted and all following Sections are renumbered accordingly; and,

Let it be  
Further

Enacted(17): That Article XI Section II (“SGA Fee Review Committee”) of the Student Senate By-Laws is amended to read as follows; and,

### SECTION II.

- [SGA Fee Review] Tuition and Student Fees: The Senate Finance Committee
- (a) The Student Senate will review and legislate on the rates and allocations of tuition and all student fees assessed to the student body. [all fee increase requests over 3%. The fees that will be reviewed are all fees assessed to all students.]  
[(1) — The Student Senate reserves the right to review any fee increase assessed to any student.]  
[(2)1] All legislation pertaining to student fees and tuition may be passed only by roll-call or ballot vote.
- (b) [The Texas A&M Student Senate will have a standing SGA Fee Review Committee to review all proposed fee increases.] The Senate Finance Committee shall review the rates and allocations of tuition and all student fees assessed to the student body.
- (1) The [Texas A&M SGA Fee Review] Senate Finance Committee shall [be selected by the members of the Student Senate Internal Affairs Committee.] consist of the Senate Finance Chair and the six to eight (6 to 8) senators selected by the Finance Chair and confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Senate present and voting.
- (i) — The committee will be made up of seven (7) students; at least four (4) of whom must be sitting Student Senators.
- (ii) — The Chair of the committee will be chosen by the Student Senate Internal Affairs Committee no later than the second Senate meeting of the fall semester.
- (iii) — Following the selection of the Chair, the other members will be appointed in consultation with the Chair by the Student Senate Internal Affairs Committee. All members must be confirmed by the Student Senate by two-thirds (2/3) majority.]
- (2) The Finance Committee shall [with] [create] draft a [SGA] Fee statute [Report] that summarizes the rates and allocations of student fees charged to a majority of the student body, takes a position on current and proposed fee rates and allocations with justifications, and such other information the committee deems relevant to the Student Senate and the student body. [proposed fee increases which fall above 3% on an individual basis in an all-inclusive report, with justification for such positions.]
- (i) [Any entity requesting a fee increase must give a full presentation to Senate prior to the first meeting in November in a special session.] The Student Senate shall host a special session after October 15th but before the first general assembly meeting in November that allows all departments at Texas A&M University receiving student fees to present any requests for fee increases, new



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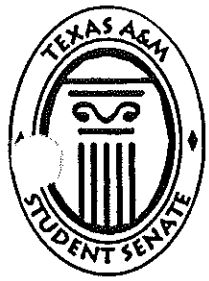
Further Certified By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tanner Wilson".

Tanner Wilson

Speaker of the Senate

- fee requests, or other presentations they deem necessary to educate the Student Senate. Entities and departments that fall under the Student Service Fee will not need to present to Senate on an individual basis. For the special session, the time limits for the presentations will be determined by the Internal Affairs committee. Any motion to extend or amend the time limits is out of order.
- (ii) At the [Senate] general assembly meeting following the special session, the Committee shall introduce a bill for a first reading recommending alterations or no alterations in the rates and allocations of student fees charged to a majority of the student body. Alterations or no alterations shall be provided for in separate enactment clauses for each individual student fee charged or proposed to be charged to a majority of the student body. [~~will give a preliminary presentation to Student Senate for feedback from the body.~~]
- (iii) At the second general assembly meeting following the special session, [the report] bill shall [will] be presented to the Student Senate for a second and final reading [in a final form]. The Student Senate may [will] then vote on the bill and pass it by a majority vote of the Student Senate present and voting. [~~each fee increase proposal on an individual basis to approve or reject the Committee's position by a majority vote.~~] The [report's] proposals embodied in the bill are debatable and may be amended by a (2/3) majority vote of the Student Senate membership present and voting. For a proposed amendment to be heard and considered on the floor, it must receive a one-sixth (1/6) second of the Student Senate membership present [by the body].
- (3) The Texas A&M Student Senate may recommend any tuition or fee increase, any tuition or fee decrease, or recommend the establishment of any new fee only under the following guidelines unless otherwise required by state law:
- (i) [~~That~~] [~~t~~]The [~~Texas A&M~~] Student Senate may approve by a majority vote all tuition or fee increase or decrease recommendations.
- (ii) For any fee increase or decrease greater than 10% with the overall impact to students being in excess of \$5.00 a semester, the Student Senate shall [will] call a referendum to garner opinion. The result of the referendum will be the position of Student Government Association.
- (iii) Any newly created fee must go to a student referendum the semester prior to proposed implementation. The result of the referendum will be the position of Student Government Association.
- (iv) That the results of all such votes be posted within twenty-four (24) hours in the Student Government Office for the duration of five (5) class days. These postings will include the fee or tuition proposal being voted upon, whether or not the proposal passed, the names of all senators, each senator's area of representation, and each senator's vote on the tuition or fee proposal.
- [(4) —]The Speaker of the Student Senate and the Student Body President shall prepare a letter of recommendation for the report. ~~These letters along with the report and any applicable legislation shall be sent to the President's Office, Office of the Provost, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, and Student Fee Review Committee as well as the applicable departments requesting fees. These letters should detail the overall recommendation by the Senate as well as significant items of debate brought forth during the debate period regarding individual components of fee increases for any fee recommendation legislation.~~



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Texas A&M University

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Tanner Wilson  
Speaker of the Senate

([5]4) That the Speaker forward the above Article [III] XI, Section [XVI]II (b) ([4]3) (iv) information to the Battalion within twenty-four (24) hours of submission to the afore[-]mentioned entities to inform the student body of the position of the Student Government Association.