

The Student Senate

Texas A&M University

S.B. 64-84

The Student Senate
64th Session
Texas A&M University

Introduced By: Rules and Regulations Chair Scott A. Bowen, Engineering
Speaker Pro-Temp Amanda Hatheway, Mays School of Business
Constituency Affairs Chair Jody Harris, COALS

Sponsored By: Cole Young, College of Engineering
Chris Robertson, Corps of Cadets
Steven Brown, Corps of Cadets

Action Taken

PASSED
March 21, 2012

Certified By:

Handwritten signature of Tanner Wilson in black ink.

Tanner Wilson
Speaker of the Senate

Senate By-Laws Constitutional Compliance Audit Bill
Special Designation: Senate By-Law Bill

"A bill to optimize the by-laws for maximum meeting efficiency and ease of use, and to ensure compliance with the newly amended SGA Constitution."

Whereas(1): On February 20, 2012, the SGA Constitution was changed in several significant ways by the SGA Constitution Modernization Amendment; and,

Whereas(2): The last By-Laws Audit, undertaken two years ago, reorganized and simplified the By-Laws but did not make many substantive changes to the rules themselves; and,

Whereas(3): The necessity of changing the By-Laws to fit the new Constitution provides an opportunity for a thorough examination of all the rules and the ways they could be made shorter, clearer, and more effective.

Therefore
Let it be

Enacted(1): That the following sections of the Senate By-Laws shall be amended as follows, with sections renumbered as needed. These changes shall take effect immediately after passage:

I. GRADE POLICY AND VETO OVERRIDE PROCEDURES



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Article IV, Section I: Scholastic and Conduct Policy

- (a) No member of the Student Senate shall be on scholastic or conduct probation with the University. All members must comply with the academic standards as set forth in the University Rules and Regulations, as well as have at least a ~~[2.25]~~ 2.0 cumulative and term grade point ratio for undergraduate students and at least a 3.00 cumulative and term grade point ratio for graduate students at the time of their election or appointment. All members shall maintain these grade point ratios ~~[Senators, Senate Officers, Senate Ex-Officio Officers, and Ad-hoc Committee Chairs shall maintain a 2.25 cumulative grade point ratio and a 2.00 term grade point ratio for undergraduate students, and a 3.00 cumulative and term grade point ratio for graduate students]~~ for every semester (spring, summer, and fall) while in office.
- (1) Members who do not meet grade requirements shall be automatically removed from the organization. If a senator does not meet the grade requirements ~~[and the Senator has an academic appeal filed with their professor to change the grade in a class, [then] that Senator may ask for his or her seat to be held in reserve and not be declared vacant for a period of up to fourteen (14) days [to be placed on probation]. [The Senator must submit documentation of the appeal to the Speaker Pro Tempore. The appeal must be resolved by the fourth week of the fall semester if the grade deficiency occurred in the spring or summer semesters or by the fourth week of the spring semester if the grade deficiency occurred in the fall semester.]~~ If the Senator's grades are still deficient after this time, ~~[if the appeal was denied],~~ or if ~~[the]~~ any change in grade was not sufficient to bring the Senator's grades out of deficiency, then that ~~[Senator will be removed from the Senate and the]~~ Senator's seat shall be immediately declared vacant and that Senator must go through the vacancy process in order to return as a Senator.
- (b) ~~[Cumulative grade point average requirements shall apply for all semesters at Texas A&M including the summer sessions regardless of the number of hours attempted; Senators shall be responsible for achieving a minimum 2.0 grade point ratio for each semester they are in office.]~~

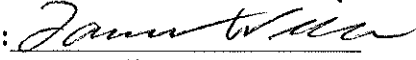
Add Section II to Article VIII: Meeting Procedure



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SECTION II. Veto Override Procedures

- (a) All legislation vetoed by the Student Body President shall be presented by the bill authors as normal legislation at the general assembly or special session meeting immediately following the veto. Vetoed legislation may not be postponed, tabled, or referred to committee and must be voted on at that meeting.
- (a) VETO PRESENTATION: The Student Body President shall be granted speaking privileges for a ten (10) minute presentation followed by a five (5) minute period of question and answer immediately prior to the consideration of the legislation above. This period of presentation and question and answer may be extended or shortened by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate, but the presentation may not be shortened to less than five (5) minutes.

II. INTERNAL AFFAIRS, COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION, JOB DESCRIPTION UPDATES

Article III, Section III (a) (3): The Rules and Regulations Chair shall:

- (x) [~~Sit on the Senate Finance Committee as a non-voting member for budget hearings~~]
- (xi) [~~Chair the Chief Justice of the Judicial Court Selection Committee as outlined in the SGA Constitution~~]

Article III, Section III (a) (8): The Constituency Affairs Chair shall:

- (vi) [~~Appoint and oversee the International Student Liaison, and the Greek Liaison~~]
- (viii) [~~Maintain and oversee the Stack Exchange Program~~]

Article III, Section III (a) (9): The Finance Chair shall:

- (i) [~~Select, in consultation with the Speaker and the Student Body President, the six or eight (6 or 8) members of the Senate Finance Committee who shall be confirmed by the Student Senate~~]

Article III, Section IV (a):



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- (4): Share~~[, along with Senate officers,]~~ the exclusive right to sponsor legislation, speak on the Senate floor, and vote.

Article III, Section V:

- (c) ~~[Liaisons]~~ Additional Positions
- (1) The Speaker has the power to create and appoint ~~[liaison]~~ positions not provided for in these By-Laws.
 - (2) All ~~[liaison]~~ such positions will be open to any student of Texas A&M University, not excluding Student Senators.
 - (3) All ~~[liaisons]~~ nominees for said positions must [will] be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.
 - (4) ~~[All liaisons have the ability to recruit or assemble a team to work along with them with the approval of the Speaker.]~~
 - (5) ~~[Serve as a non-voting member of the Constituency Affairs Committee]~~
 - (6) ~~[Maintain constant communication between the Student Senate and the organization with which they represent]~~
 - (7) ~~[Will draft a short monthly report which will be presented to the Constituency Affairs Chair and an appropriate officer in the organization that they represent.]~~
- (d) Liaisons
- (1) Student organizations outside of the Senate may designate liaisons to the Student Senate.
 - (2) The Constituency Affairs Chair may nominate a student as a liaison to a student organization after they have been approved by that organization in accordance with that organization's by-laws or standard operating procedures. All nominees for liaison positions must be confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.
 - (3) If liaisons are not Senators, they shall serve as delegates on the Constituency Affairs Committee, and shall be held responsible for following the delegate attendance policy.
- (e) Committee Delegates
- (1) Chairs of legislative committees in the Senate shall have the power to nominate delegates to their committees.
 - (2) Delegate positions shall be open to all students except for Student Senators.



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- (3) Delegates shall have the ability to make motions in the committee to which they are assigned as regular Senators would, but shall not have the ability to vote. These privileges do not extend to general assembly meetings.
- (4) All delegates must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate before serving in their positions.
- (5) Delegates shall be responsible for attending all meetings of the committee to which they are assigned. If a delegate receives three (3) unexcused absences total, he or she shall be automatically be removed from the committee and lose his or her status as a delegate. It is the responsibility of each committee chair to enforce this absence policy.

(d f) All ex-officio positions will be open to any Texas A&M student, not excluding Student Senators~~], and will also follow the attendance procedures as stated in Article IV, Section II.~~ ~~[The only required ex-officio positions are those listed above.]~~ All ex officio officers~~], excluding liaisons,~~ shall be appointed by the ~~[Speaker Pro Tempore]~~ officer indicated above and confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Senate.

III. LIMIT TO NUMBER OF AUTHORS AND SPONSORS ON LEGISLATION

Add subsection (c) under Article VI, Section I. Legislation:

- (c) The total number of Authors and Sponsors on any piece of legislation shall not exceed fifteen (15). If desired, a petition including names, signatures, titles, and demographic information of additional supporters who are students may be attached to any piece of legislation.

IV. CLARIFICATION ON READING OF LEGISLATION AND COMMITTEE PROCESS

Article VI, Section I. Legislation:

- (f) Legislation must be read in its entirety to the Senate before consideration unless by unanimous consent the Senate agrees to consider the bill as read. A bill presentation shall count as a reading in order to satisfy this requirement, but any Senator may still request that a bill be read in its entirety.
- (2) Renewed Bills: a renewed bill is exactly the same as a standard enacted bill. To create one, any Senator or Senators who wish to renew a bill must inform the Speaker of their intention by the same



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deadline at which new legislation to be read at the following meeting is due. The motion to renew will be placed on the agenda for that meeting and treated as the second reading of that bill. The main motion to be considered at that time will be a bill exactly the same as the old bill except as follows: the authors will remain the same; the sponsors will be replaced by the Senators who ask for the bill to be renewed; the bill will have a subtitle of "Special Designation: Renewed Bill" ; and the bill number will be that of the original bill followed by an "RX", where X is the number of the session in which the bill is being renewed. This new bill may only be amended formally by a majority vote of those present at the meeting. The bill requires a majority vote to pass. A renewed bill may not itself be renewed, nor may a renewed bill be sent to committee.

Add Sub-Section (c) to Article VI, Section II: Emergency Legislation:

- (c) No bill that would amend the Student Government Association Code may be considered as emergency legislation. All such bills must be read at two separate, regularly scheduled general assembly meetings before passage.

Remove Sub-Section (d) from Article VII, Section I: Legislative Committees:

- (d) [~~Multiple Committee Assignments A bill may be assigned to more than one legislative committee. In such a case it must be released by each committee it was assigned to before returning to the floor of the Senate unless a motion to take from committee is approved by the Senate Body.~~]

Article VII, Section II (a): Consideration of Legislation:

- (4) [~~If any amendment is made to a bill in committee, that amendment may not be removed or changed from the bill by the authors without the consent of the committee chair and the maker of the amendment.~~]
- (7) [~~The Committee Chair shall record the results of each vote and submit them to the Speaker Pro Tempore with each meeting's attendance records. These votes should be made public record by the Speaker Pro Tempore.~~]
- (9) Only Committee Members and the Committee Chair may vote in their respective committee.

V. CHANGES TO RULES OF DEBATE



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Article VIII, Section I: Rules of Debate:

- (a) Unless provided for elsewhere in the bylaws, all main motions will be considered according to the provisions in this section. All members of the body, including the bill authors, shall be bound to the rules of debate.
 - (1) Ten (10) minutes will be allotted for a presentation of the motion.
 - (2) Five (5) minutes will be allotted for a period of question and answer.
 - (3) Fifteen (15) minutes will be allotted for debate of the motion.
 - (i) Debate recognition will alternate between those arguing for and against the question. The first recognition will be a member debating ~~[for]~~ against the motion, if such a member avails him or herself to the chair at that time.
 - (ii) Recognitions will be limited to two and a half (2.5) minutes.
 - (iii) A member may yield the remainder of his or her recognition time to another member.
 - (iv) A motion to previous question will be out of order until two recognitions for debate have been made.
 - (v) If after any recognition for debate the chair can find no member to speak for the opposing side, debate will be considered one sided and shall be closed by the chair
- (b) The provisions provided in this section may be temporarily suspended or amended at any time by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.

Article VIII, Section VII. Speaking Privileges:


- (a) No person may address the Senate unless specifically provided for in the Student Government Association Constitution or the Senate By-Laws.
- (b) Limited speaking privileges may be granted to any other person with two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Senate membership present and voting [at any time during a meeting] when no other motion is currently being considered by the Senate. These speaking privileges shall not extend, for any reason, to periods of debate.
- (c) ~~[Persons giving a report scheduled on the agenda shall have the power to yield the floor to anyone for the duration of their report.]~~
- (d) ~~A[s mentioned in Article III Section VI Subsection (i), a]~~ Ex-Officio members shall have limited speaking privileges at Student Senate General Assembly meetings restricted to periods of question and answer only. These limited speaking privileges shall not extend, for any reason, to periods of debate. The Student Body President and Chief Justice of the



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Judicial court shall be considered ex-officio members only for the purpose of the aforementioned limited speaking privileges.

VI. OPEN FORUM TIME LIMITS

Article VII, Section III. Agenda:

- (e) An open period of no longer than one hour must be left at the beginning of every Senate Meeting to allow constituents a time to address the Senate. Open forum rules may be temporarily amended or extended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate, but the total time of Open Forum may not be decreased.
- (1) Individuals speaking in open forum shall be limited to two and a half (2.5) minutes apiece. Current Texas A&M students shall be given priority for speaking in open forum. If more than twenty-four (24) students are present, the sixty (60) minutes shall be divided evenly among all students who wish to speak prior to any recognitions. All individuals speaking in open forum may remain immediately after their speaking period to answer up to three (3) questions from the body; time for question and answer shall not be counted in any time limits.
 - (2) Individuals recognized to speak in open forum may not yield their time except to the floor.
 - (3) Students or groups of students representing recognized student organizations shall be counted as, and given the time and questions of, two individuals as allotted above. However, no individuals who participate in the presentation from that organization may speak in open forum.
 - (4) All individuals speaking in open forum must sign in immediately prior to the meeting and provide their names, and if applicable, class years and residency and academic caucus information to be read to the body before they are recognized. Additionally, contact information may be provided.
 - (5) Individuals speaking in open forum may not speak on behalf of, or against, candidates or nominees in officer elections or confirmations taking place during that meeting. The Speaker must automatically end the recognition of individuals who attempt to do so.
- (f) ~~[Each meeting shall include no less than ten (10) minutes of presentation time for student organizations not affiliated with the Student Government Association. Each organization shall have a minimum of 5 minutes to~~



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~~present. If only one such organization is speaking, that organization may be limited to no less than a five (5) minute presentation.]~~

- (g) ~~[Each meeting shall include not less than ten (10) minutes of presentation time for student organizations affiliated with the Student Government Association, and each organization shall have a minimum of 5 minutes to present. If only one such organization is speaking, that organization may be limited to no less than a 5 minute presentation.]~~

VII. MAINTAINING MEETING ORDER AND DECORUM

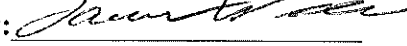
Add Sub-Section (f) to Article IV, Section I: Scholastic and Conduct Policy:

- (f) The “seating area” of the room in which a general assembly meeting is held shall be defined as the area of and immediately behind all rows of chairs or benches on which Student Senators are assigned to sit, as well as any aisles leading to those areas. The “floor” of the room shall be defined as the area between the Speaker and the body assembled on which individuals are allowed to speak and present.
- (1) No individuals who are not Senators shall be allowed to sit in the seating area without permission from the Speaker or a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
 - (2) During periods of debate, no individuals who have not been recognized may be present on the floor of the Senate meeting room. During other periods, only those individuals who have speaking privileges may be present on the floor of the Senate.
 - (3) Prior to each meeting, the Speaker Pro Tempore shall assign seats to each individual Senator. The Speaker Pro Tempore shall make every effort to accommodate Senators’ needs and preferences, and to keep caucuses as close together as possible. After opening roll is taken, Senators may move into seats that belong to Senators who were not present for opening roll.
 - (4) Individuals who do not have speaking privileges may be ordered to leave the room by the Speaker if they make excessive noise or are disruptive during the meeting.
 - (5) Rules about seating and presence on the floor shall not apply to members of the Operations Committee.
 - (6) All Senators are expected to behave respectfully and in accordance with University policies while attending Senate events and meetings. All Senators should encourage politeness and proper citizenship within the organization.



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Let it be
Further

Enacted(2): That the following sections of the Senate By-Laws shall be amended as follows, with sections renumbered as needed. These changes shall only be in operation during the 65th Session, and subsequent sessions:

I. ATTENDANCE POLICY OVERHAUL

Article IV, Section II: Attendance Policy

- (a) If a Senator [~~Senate Officer, Ex Officio Officer, or Ad Hoc Committee Chair~~] accumulates [~~three (3)~~] six (6) unexcused absences during one full term of the Senate, they are automatically removed from their position following the [~~fourth~~] sixth unexcused absence regardless of the reason.
- (1) [~~Four unexcused absences may be made up through speaking at constituency meetings, participating in Senate service projects, speaking with administrators, and other activities and projects. All must be approved by the Internal Affairs Committee.~~] Every time a Senator attends his or her assigned committee meeting and is present for both roll calls at the following general assembly meeting, a single absence shall be removed from his or her record. This type of absence forgiveness shall not be used to make up for absences not yet received.
 - (2) [~~These projects, meetings, and activities will count for (1/4) of an absence, unless Internal Affairs approves otherwise.~~]
 - (3) [~~Absence forgiveness can also be received by attendance at Operations committee meetings 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.~~]
- (b) [~~Excused absences will be limited to two (2) per term. Once the two excused absences have been granted then all subsequent absences will be considered unexcused.~~] An excused absence shall be defined as:
- (1) An excused university absence as defined in [~~Section 15 of~~] the University Regulations
 - (2) An absence due to a departmentally scheduled exam
 - (3) An absence that the Officers of the Senate deem of merit. All such excused absences must be approved by a majority vote of the Internal Affairs Committee.



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- (c) All absences are to be considered conditionally unexcused. For an excused absence to be granted, the Senator must show reasonable cause for the absence. The Senator must present his/her case to the ~~[Officers of the Senate]~~ Speaker Pro Tempore within forty-eight (48) hours for a determination of the status of the absence in question. If this absence is not reviewed before the next Senate meeting, the absence will automatically be considered an unexcused absence regardless of the reason.
- (d) Two roll calls will be taken during the General Assembly meetings of the Student Senate, after calling the meeting to order and prior to adjournment. If a motion to adjourn is approved by the body, the second roll call will take place immediately after the motion to adjourn but before the body is declared adjourned. ~~[Missing both roll calls constitute as one (1) absence.]~~ Missing one (1) roll call will result in one ~~[-half]~~ (1[~~/2~~]) absence.
- (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 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. Senators shall be held responsible for attendance at committee meetings that are not officially cancelled in the above manner.
- (1) Excused and unexcused absences must be reported to the Speaker Pro-Tempore three days following the meeting missed.
 - (2) Members of these committees who miss a meeting without excuse will receive ~~[a]~~ one ~~[-half]~~ (1[~~/2~~]) unexcused absence.
 - (4) If a committee chair does not turn in an attendance sheet for a committee meeting before the following general assembly meeting, all members of the committee, including the committee chair, shall receive one (1) unexcused absence.
 - (5) A Senator who expects to be absent for a committee meeting for any reason may inform that committee's Chair and the Speaker Pro Tempore ahead of time that he or she has already, or plans to, attend the meeting of a different committee during the same period between



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general assembly meetings. If that Senator attends that meeting, they shall receive one excused absence for the committee meeting missed.

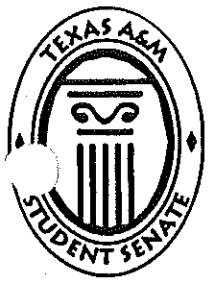
- (f) [~~Members of any non-legislative committee will receive a one-half (1/2) unexcused absence per unexcused absence from a meeting.~~]
- (g) [~~Any member of a non-legislative committee who receives two (2) consecutive unexcused absences from that committee's meetings can be removed from that committee as the discretion of the chair of the committee.~~]
- (h) [~~An unexcused absence of the Internal Affairs Committee by one of its members shall constitute a one-half (1/2) absence for the member.~~]
- (i) [~~An unexcused absence of Governance Council by a Senate Officer shall constitute a one-half (1/2) absence for the officer. If an officer will have an excused absence to Governance Council then they are to inform the Speaker Pro-tempore of the situation and send another member of Senate in their place.~~]
- (j) All absences shall remain permanently attached to Senators through the entire Senate Session, regardless if he/she is to change positions within the Senate.
- (k) [~~Failure to meet the minimum requirement at the Student Opinion Booths will account for one-fourth (1/4) unexcused absence for each hour missed and one-eighth (1/8) absence forgiveness for each hour served above the minimum.~~]

Article IV, Section III: Absence Policy Enforcement Procedures

- (a) If the Speaker Pro-Tempore is unable to contact a Senator in violation of the absence policy by phone or email within forty-eight (48) hours after the [~~fourth~~] sixth un-excused absence, this officer shall announce this Senator as having been removed from their seat and their seat announced as a vacancy.

Article V, Section V shall be added as follows:

SECTION V. No Senator who is removed for any reason from one session of the Student Senate shall be removed for that same infraction from another separate session of the Senate, unless he or she is impeached and a motion



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is passed to bar him or her completely from service in the Student Government Association for a definite or indefinite amount of time.

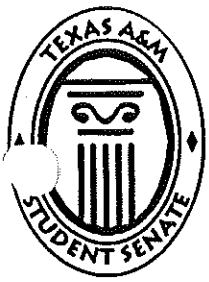
Article IX, Section VII: Senate Development Days

- (a) All Senators may be required to attend one (1) development activity per semester, subject to one ~~half~~ (1 ~~/2~~) excused absence or one (1) unexcused absence according to the absence policy in Article IV, Section II.

II. APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES EXPANSION

Article X, Section II: Approval of Appointments

- (a) If solicited, applications of ~~[executive cabinet member]~~ candidates for appointments made by the Student Body President or by a Senate officer shall be available for Senators to view at least one week prior to the meeting in which confirmation for that position will be considered.
 - (1) All applications for those positions must be provided, but applications for candidates who were not selected may be sanitized to remove personal information. All applications must have information removed that would violate University rules or FAFSA if publically released.
- (b) ~~[Executive cabinet members]~~ Appointments will be considered ~~[for appointment]~~ at ~~[the first meeting after officer elections]~~ any general assembly meeting following the first meeting of a new session.
 - (1) The Student Body President, or the officer making the appointment, and all appointees shall have speaking privileges for a period of up to five minutes per appointee in order to present the appointees for confirmation. The Student Body President, or the officer making the appointment depending on which is applicable may, at his or her discretion, combine these periods of presentation.
 - (1) ~~[Candidates]~~ Appointees must answer questions at the discretion of the Senate after the period of presentation for no less than five minutes per candidate, unless no further questions are asked.
 - (2) Confirmation of these appointments will require two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting. Confirmation votes shall not be taken for multiple appointees at the same time unless such a combination is approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.



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- (c) If an ~~[Executive cabinet member]~~ appointee is not confirmed, or the position becomes vacant, the Student Body President or Senate officer may bring candidates at subsequent meetings to be considered according to the same provisions as outlined above.
- (1) The Senate will not consider for confirmation any ~~[candidate that]~~ appointee who was rejected for confirmation ~~more than~~ twice in the current session.
 - (2) ~~[The Senate will not consider for confirmation in a subsequent semester of the session any candidate that was rejected for confirmation at least once in both the first Spring semester and Fall semester of that session.]~~

III. SUMMER SENATE REMOVAL

Article XI, Section IV shall be stricken from the by-laws in its entirety.

IV. VACANCY AVOIDANCE

Article III, Section VI shall be amended by adding:

- (b) No student shall be sworn in as a senator who has applied for graduation in the same semester in which they filed for election. If a Senator-elect is ineligible under this rule, the next eligible candidate who received the highest amount of votes in that caucus shall be sworn in instead. This rule shall not apply to those students who have been accepted to or have applied to and are awaiting a decision on additional schooling at Texas A&M University in their caucus in the following regular semester; those students must sign a statement under penalty of the Aggie Honor Code that they have applied to or been accepted to additional schooling at A&M in the following semester and have not accepted any other offers.

Let it be
Further

Enacted(3): That all instances of *italicization* in the By-Laws shall be changed to SMALL CAPS.