

THE CONSTITUTION OF SGA



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MISSION STATEMENT

Student Government serves as the blueprint of Detroit Mercy, committed to fostering an open forum for dialogue among students, faculty, and administration. We strive to provide transparent and empowering advocacy by representing the student body through communication, research, and proposals. We aim to accomplish this by analyzing the student experience, promoting and organizing campus events, and offering a safe space open for discussion among all at UDM.

ARTICLE I NAME & OFFICE

- A. The Association's name under this Constitution shall be the University of Detroit Mercy Student Government Association, hereafter called SGA.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE & CONSTITUENTS

- A. SGA shall:
 - a. Conduct open meetings for all students to attend unless stated specifically otherwise by the Executive Board and Senate.
 - b. Act as the official student's voice on all appropriate matters concerning the students as part of the University community.
 - c. Facilitate student participation in all appropriate decision-making processes within the University.
 - d. To propose and support initiatives beneficial to the education, welfare, and growth of the students and the University community.
- B. Constituents
 - a. As determined by the Office of the Registrar. Each enrolled student at the University of Detroit Mercy's McNichols Campus shall be considered a constituent of the SGA, and possess all respective rights granted herein.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP & POSITIONS

- A. Members Eligibility:
 - a. A general body member shall be defined as any enrolled student who consistently shows commitment by attending meetings and is active during general and/or committee meetings.
 - b. Senate membership shall be defined as any person elected or appointed to a position within the SGA.
 - c. Senate membership within SGA shall be open to any constituent of SGA in good standing with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.

- d. E-board membership within SGA shall be open to any appointed or elected Senate member in good standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- B. The Executive Board:
 - a. The Executive Board shall consist of the following seats:
 - i. President
 - 1. Serves as a liaison between the SGA and the University administration, faculty, and staff.
 - 2. Presides over Senate meetings.
 - 3. Issues statements on behalf of the SGA/Student Body.
 - 4. Oversee SGA E-board, Senate, and Committees.
 - 5. Clarify expectations and goals for SGA/Student Body.
 - 6. Delegate assignments as necessary.
 - 7. Hold individuals and members accountable for completing responsibilities.
 - 8. Manage a select committee.
 - ii. Vice President
 - 1. Serves as a liaison between SGA and its Executive Board.
 - 2. Organizes collaborative efforts between institutional departments and SGA.
 - 3. Represents the President in the event of their absence.
 - 4. Manage a select committee.
 - iii. Secretary
 - 1. Communicates SGA meetings, events, reminders, and other information.
 - 2. Creates meeting agendas, calls for reports, and other documents as necessary.
 - 3. Records meeting attendance, meeting minutes, and manages the SGA roster.
 - 4. Maintains SGA Blackboard and Microsoft Teams with current information.
 - 5. Manage a select committee.
 - iv. Treasurer
 - 1. Communicates SGA Grant policy and procedures to student organizations.
 - 2. Reviews Grant applications with SGA organization moderator.
 - 3. Brings potential Grants to SGA Executive Board members and communicates decisions to student organizations.
 - 4. Educates students on availability of and appropriate use of SGA Grants.

5. Maintains SGA 800-account & budget
6. Manage a select committee (typically Finance committee)
- v. Chief of Communications
 1. Maintains social media pages/platforms for SGA.
 2. Reposts and promotes campus wide events/opportunities.
 3. Creates, oversees, and distributes SGA newsletter and campus meeting reports to the student body.
 4. Creates and distributes flyers and on-campus promotional materials.
 5. Maintains an accurate and updated list of administrators and student organizations to connect Senators with during their term.
 6. Manage a select committee (typically Communications committee).

C. The Senate:

- a. The Senate shall consist of the following seats at maximum:
 - i. (2) Architecture
 - ii. (2) Athletics
 - iii. (2) Business Administration
 - iv. (2) Campus Activity Board (CAB)
 - v. (2) Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS)
 - vi. (2) Commuter Students
 - vii. (2) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEI)
 - viii. (2) Dining Services
 - ix. (2) Engineering and Science (E&S)
 - x. (2) Sorority and Fraternity
 - xi. (2) Health Professions
 - xii. (2) Honors College
 - xiii. (2) International Students
 - xiv. (2) Ministry
 - xv. (2) Residence Life
 - xvi. (2) Sustainability
- b. Each College/School is eligible for up to two (2) undergraduate academic Senators and one (1) graduate Senator.
 - i. Non-college specified Senate positions are still eligible for one (1) graduate position.
 - ii. Students can be either part-time or full-time students.
 - iii. Senators must be in good standing with the University.
- c. Adjustment of the Senate:
 - i. Removal of Senate positions due to the elimination of a University, college, school, or organization shall take effect immediately after passage.

- ii. Any Senator who holds a position that is eliminated has a right to select a vacant Senate seat to continue their service.

D. Committees

- i. Communication Committee
 - 1. Responsible for SGA's internal and external communication
 - 2. Assists Chief of Communications with marketing and media accounts
- ii. Elections Committee
 - 1. Oversees and coordinates all election-related activities
 - 2. Communications election expectations with SGA candidates
- iii. Events Committee
 - 1. Plan and coordinate SGA specific and/or collaborative events for student engagement
 - 2. Collaborates with other committees/student organizations to create student-led events and increase student engagement
- iv. Finance Committee
 - 1. Oversees SGA finances
 - 2. Assists Treasurer in reviewing SGA grant proposals, event proposals, and other proposals that require SGA finances
- v. Research Committee
 - 1. Guides research proposals and projects presented to/by the Senate
 - 2. Analyze, organize, and draft research proposals to present to the Senate
- vi. Service Committee
 - 1. Assists all other committees when necessary
 - 2. Organizes volunteering opportunities and other opportunities that help support the community
- b. Committees can be added or removed as communicated by the Senate.
- c. Active Committees must meet with members bi-weekly on the off-weeks of general body meetings.
 - i. In the case where any meeting is called during an off-week, Committee members are still obligated to meet.
 - ii. The only exception to this is if the meeting is called during a Committee meeting's scheduled time.

E. Adjustment to the Members of SGA

- a. Any change to the Executive Board, the Senate, or Committee representative positions listed shall require an amendment to the Constitution and take effect immediately after passage.
- b. The removal of any positions will not require the removal of the individual in the seat before their term of office expires, unless otherwise stated.

ARTICLE IV POWERS & DUTIES

A. The Executive Board

- a. The Executive Board shall have the power:
 - i. To work with the University of Detroit Mercy to communicate the execution of legislation passed by SGA.
 - ii. To facilitate the daily operations of SGA.
 - iii. Coordinating any standing Committees and their work.
- b. Duties of the Executive board shall be:
 - i. To serve Senators, Administrators, constituents, and student-led organizations.
 - ii. To hold E-board members and Senators accountable for responsibilities and duties.
 - iii. To stay up to date with requests and trends of the student body.

B. The Senate

- a. The Senate shall have the power:
 - i. To propose resolutions and bills that concern the welfare of the Detroit Mercy student community.
- b. Duties of the Senate shall be:
 - i. To act as the student's voice on all matters of student interest.
 - ii. To review any current, changing, or new policies of the university as it pertains to the student body.
 - iii. Communicate and collect data on the student(s) and administrator(s) in their respective areas.
 - 1. These findings/reports must be submitted to the Executive Board the day before their meetings.
 - iv. To actively serve on their respective committee(s).
 - v. To stay up to date with requests and trends of the student body.

C. Committee Chairs

- a. The Committee Chairs shall have the power:
 - i. To oversee and facilitate committee meetings.
 - ii. To represent during general body meetings on behalf of the Committee.
- b. Duties of the Committee Chairs shall be:
 - i. To hold Committee meetings outside of general body meetings.
 - ii. File and send bi-weekly Committee reports to their respective E-board members.
 - iii. Facilitate student engagement and delegate tasks among committee members.
 - iv. Collaborate with the Executive Board and relevant departments to advance committee initiatives.

D. General Body Members/Constituents

- a. General Body Members and Constituents shall have the power:
 - i. To represent themselves alongside Senators.

- ii. To act as a representative in the absence of Senators.
- iii. To join and represent themselves in at least one Committee.
 - 1. A general body member or constituent can only join a committee if they actively attend general body and/or Committee meetings.
- iv. Assist SGA members in events, communication, research, and other duties.
 - 1. General body members and constituents have the power to carry out these duties but are not required to.

ARTICLE V ELECTION RULES

- A. Nominations for Executive Board Officers
 - a. Senators may nominate other members of the Senate or submit a self-nomination during the designated election discussion.
 - i. The nomination motion must be seconded and voted upon per the voting rules outlined in this document.
 - ii. The nomination can be accepted or declined by the nominee.
 - iii. If a nominee decides to reflect on or review their nomination, their decision must be submitted before a determined deadline decided by the Elections Committee.
- B. Requirements for Executive Board Officers
 - a. No more than one (1) unexcused absence or two (2) excused absences per semester.
 - b. Must follow University Guidelines, etc. (during SGA functions, meetings, events, etc.).
- C. Requirements for Senators
 - a. Senators must be an active member of the represented school, college, or organization.
 - i. Active means consistent engagement with Senator duties and responsibilities.
 - b. No more than six (6) tardies, three (3) unexcused absences, or six (6) excused absences per semester.
- D. Timeline of Election Process
 - a. Elections Committee plans detailed timeline for Elections starting at latest in Early January of that year.
 - b. Nominations start the meeting prior to Spring Break.
 - c. The announcement of candidates will be at the meeting after Spring Break.
 - d. Campaigning occurs the full week prior to voting.
 - e. Polls open in early April as determined by the academic calendar.
- E. After Election Process
 - a. The new President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications will be transitioned into their new roles by the respective Executive Board member and assistant director of student life prior to the final meeting of the academic calendar.

- b. E-board elect should meet with previous E-board and assistant director of student life prior to assuming their roles.
- c. The elected E-board will be sworn in via Oath of Office by the previous E-board representative or organization moderator.
- d. During the last meeting of the Winter semester, the new E-board will officially take on their position.

ARTICLE VI ELECTION CODE

A. Voter and Candidate Eligibility

- a. Voter Eligibility: All members of the Association, which is any currently registered student enrolled in the Detroit Mercy McNichols Campus, are entitled to vote in all elections. The records of the Office of Registrar shall determine the eligibility status of all voters.
- b. Candidate Eligibility: All candidates must be enrolled Detroit Mercy students and must be in good academic and social standing as defined by the University's Student Handbook. All candidates must have completed at least one (1) full semester serving as a Senator. No person shall be a candidate for more than one (1) office in any one election. Eligibility will be determined and verified by the Board of Elections Advisor.
 - i. Executive: Candidates for Association President must have completed three (3) semesters at the University. Candidates for Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer must have completed two (2) semesters at the University. Candidates for Chief of Communications must have completed one (1) semester at the University. Candidates must have a minimum 3.0 GPA to run for the Executive Board positions.

B. Requirements for Candidacy

- a. Requirements: To be eligible for candidacy, the following requirements must be met. All documents and forms are included as addendums to this Article.
- b. *Executive Requirements:*
 - i. Informational Meetings: All candidates must schedule and attend a meeting with the Elections Committee between the nomination meeting and campaigning period.
 - ii. Candidate Application: All candidates must submit a Candidate Application.
 - iii. Candidate Questionnaire and Photo: All candidates must complete the Candidate Questionnaire and submit a recent Candidate Photo. These will be posted for all students during polling times.
 - iv. Nominating Petition: All candidates must complete a Nominating Petition with the names and signatures of at least 75 eligible voters.
 - v. Candidate:
 - 1. Hosted event proposal: Each candidate will have the opportunity to plan and execute one (1) two-hour campaign event, which must be submitted prior to the election campaign and must be

approved by the Elections Committee by completing the Candidate-Hosted Event Proposal. This is not a requirement, but if the candidate chooses to host an event, one must submit the proposal.

2. Candidate application, questionnaire, photo, petition, and event proposals are due to the Elections Committee by the Friday prior to campaigning period.

C. Executive Election Guidelines

- a. Election Schedule: There will be one election (1) Executive Election to elect the Association President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Communications between the Tuesday and Thursday of the final week of March/first week of April. The election schedule will be determined by the Elections Committee on a year-to-year basis.
- b. Announcement of Candidacy: Any candidate may personally announce their candidacy at any time but will not be considered an official candidate by the Elections Committee until all eligibility requirements are met. Senators can personally announce candidates but shall not officially announce candidates until campaigning period. Announcements of candidacy are limited to private conversations until the beginning of the campaign period.
- c. Campaigning: Public campaigning will begin on the Sunday of the week prior to the election and may include two (2) SGA sponsored events and/or two (2) days of campus-wide campaigning. Campaign material must be appropriate, not violate copyright law, and cannot be posted until the campaign period begins. Campaign materials are the responsibility of the candidate and should not be found littering, vandalizing, or destroying campus.
 - i. SGA Sponsored Events:
 1. May include, but not limited to, debates, friendly competitions, and social events.
 - a. Friendly competition is defined as good and fair sportsmanship between candidates during campaigning. This includes but is not limited to debates, games, and other hosted events outside of events planned by the Elections Committee.
 2. All sponsored events must be appropriate and follow all ethical campaigning guidelines.
 - ii. Campus-wide Campaigning: There will be two (2) days designed by the Elections Committee for campus-wide campaigning; one at the beginning of the campaign period and one on the Wednesday of the election.
 - iii. Social Media and Websites:
 1. Updates may be made outside of stated campaign hours, but only after campaigning has started.
 2. All updates outside of campaign hours must be appropriate and must not violate campaigning guidelines.

- iv. Indoor Signs (residence halls and academic buildings only)
 - 1. Window signs are not permitted.
 - 2. Signs must be approved by the Residence Life Office or Student Life Office.
- v. Outdoor Signs:
 - 1. Signs must be approved by the Student Life Office.
- vi. Flyers, Handouts, and Giveaways:
 - 1. May include paper handouts, t-shirts, candy, buttons, stickers, etc.
 - 2. These items must be submitted to and approved by the Elections Committee prior to handing them out.
 - 3. These items must not exceed a total amount of \$50 total.

D. Voting

- a. Voting: All eligible voters will vote on the Detroit Mercy App Rafter. Voters may vote for as many candidates as the election will allow and should vote for each candidate only once per ballot. Ballots may be accessed from 8:00 a.m. on the first day of voting until 4:00 p.m. on the final day of voting. If ballots open prior to or after listed time, the deadline will change accordingly. All voters must only vote once per election, and no person may vote on behalf of another person.

E. Election Procedures

- a. Official Ballots: The ballot will be under the Detroit Mercy App with instructions during the designated voting period. Names will appear in alphabetical order based on the candidate's last name. Names will be hyperlinked to the Candidate Questionnaire and accompanying headshot. All confirmed ballots are final and will be added to the total vote count.
- b. Promotions: The Elections Committee is responsible for promoting Informational Meetings and all elections.
 - i. These informational meetings are open to all eligible voters.

F. Promotional material will include pertinent dates, times, locations, and any additional information, as necessary.

G. Posting Guidelines: Promotional material must be posted at least four (4) days before the promotional event starts, and all University guidelines must be followed. Additional promotions may be posted at the discretion of the Elections Committee.

- a. SGA Sponsored Events: The Election Committee is responsible for hosting up to two (2) events during the Executive Election campaign period. These events may include debates, friendly competition, and social events.
- b. Designated Polling Stations: The Elections Committee will designate polling stations in the Detroit Mercy Library, key residence halls (Shiple, Quad Commons, Holden), academic buildings (Briggs, Health Professions, Commerce and Finance, Chemistry, Life Sciences, Engineering), the Detroit Mercy Student Union, and the Titan Dining Room. Each polling station must be active for at least two (2) hours per election, have devices with Detroit Mercy Rafter access, and remain impartial.
- c. Determining the Winner(s): In elections with multiple candidates, the candidate

who receives the simple majority vote will be elected until all vacant positions are filled. Election results will be confirmed by the Elections Committee and the Advisor before the results are posted.

- i. Run-Off Elections: In the event of a tie, the Elections Committee will host a run-off election. The date of the run-off election will be set by the Elections Committee and published with the initial results. Run-off elections will follow all policies that are outlined in this Article. Should another tie occur, the process will be repeated.
 - ii. Vacancy: In the event of a vacant position, a simple majority of abstaining votes, or someone stepping down from office, this will result in a vacancy. This will be followed as stated in the Constitution. In the event where the vacancy lays in the President, the Vice President will assume position and appoint a Senator to fill their vacancy.
- d. Announcing Results: The Chairperson will compile the results and contact candidates to notify them that results are complete and will soon be posted to Detroit Mercy Rafter.
- e. Results will list those candidates elected to a position only. Candidates not listed in results have not been elected to a position. Results will also include total ballots cast, but individual vote counts will not be posted. The Chairperson will deliver certified results to the Student Senate and Association President to be included in the Association historical record.

H. Transitioning

- a. Transferring Positions: Once the results have been posted, the previous E-board will transfer the elected E-board into their positions. The previous E-board must meet with the elected member of their position, along with the advisor.

ARTICLE VII PROCEDURES

A. Selection of Committee Senators

- a. The Executive Board shall nominate a full-time or part-time student to fill all Committee chairs for a term of office.
 - i. A Committee chair shall be defined as a Committee representative who oversees the everyday duties and responsibilities of the Committee.
 - ii. A term of office shall be defined as one academic year starting at the time of nomination until the end of the winter semester of that academic year.
- b. The nominee shall be presented to the Senate via vote.
 - i. The Senate must hold a simple majority vote for a nominee to be put into a Committee chair.
- c. Each Senator will serve on at least one (1) Committee as a representative.
 - i. A Committee representative shall be defined as an individual who serves on SGA outside of Senator duties.
- d. Senators can serve on no more than two (2) Committees.
 - i. Committee placements are based on preferences and needs.
- e. General Body members can join at least one (1) Committee and no more than

two (2) Committees

- i. General body members interested in joining committees must consult with E-board and the Committee Chair(s).
- ii. General Body members cannot hold committee chair positions.

B. Impeachment

- a. Members of the Executive Board, Senate, and Committees who have violated the mission of the university, vision of the university, mission statement of SGA, or defined details of their office may be impeached by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
 - i. Active investigations must be presented to the Executive Board and/or the Associate Advisor before a call for impeachment.
 - ii. Information must be strictly confidential throughout the impeachment process.
 - iii. Violations are determined on a case-by-case basis and will be determined by the Associate Advisor before the impeachment process.
 - iv. Members must have 48 hours (about two days) written notice prior to the start of the impeachment meeting.
- b. Impeached individual(s) have the right to appeal their impeachment within 48 hours (about two days) if they feel it does not qualify under the parameters listed above.
- c. The appeal will be presented to the Senate and must be reversed with a two-thirds majority vote.

C. Vacancies

- a. In the event of a vacancy of the Executive Board, the President shall nominate a Senator member to fill any vacancy to the Executive Board until the next election cycle.
- b. The Senate shall hold a simple majority vote to approve or deny nominees.
 - i. Should a vacancy exist in the office of the President, the Vice President shall fill the vacancy.
- c. The Executive Board shall promote and review applications from full-time or part-time students to fill a vacancy within the Senate or Committee for the remainder of the academic year.
- d. All nominees shall be presented to the Senate for confirmation within two (2) weeks of the vacancy by a simple majority vote.

D. Senate Member Term of Office

- a. Senate members are chosen during the school year via an application process and interview. The Executive Board is elected during the designated election period.
- b. The elected member's term of office shall end at 11:59 PM on the last day of the academic year for which they are serving.
- c. Senators who plan to return must fill out a returning application form.
- d. These applications must be reviewed by the standing Executive Board and organization moderator at the time of application submission.

- e. Returning members that completed and have been approved to return will maintain their positions immediately after approval.
 - f. A term is defined as one academic school year.
- E. Senate Meetings
- a. All general meetings of the Student Senate shall be coordinated at the start of the semester and shall be open for public viewing, except closed sessions.
 - b. The Student Senate shall meet in general session at least once every two weeks during the fall and winter terms.
 - c. If any general meeting must be rescheduled, this must be announced at least one week prior to the new meeting date.
 - d. Business casual attire is not required unless otherwise stated.
 - e. Three members of the Executive Board and representation from half of the filled seats on the Student Senate shall constitute a quorum.
 - f. The following agenda shall be followed at all general meetings: call to order, roll call, a moment of reflection, Senator reports, Committee reports, old business, new business, Grants, open floor, advisor, and adjournment.
 - g. A Senator must provide electronic or written notice to the Secretary with a valid apology for any absence. This must be submitted at least twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled meeting. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the organization moderator and Executive Board for emergencies that may arise. Valid excuses for such emergencies must be submitted to the Secretary within forty-eight hours after the absence.
 - h. Class, sports, medical excuses, poor weather, hazardous road conditions, or occupations shall constitute valid excuses.
 - i. Absences that are not submitted to the Secretary before the time period are considered unexcused absences.
 - j. All absences from general meetings without a valid excuse shall constitute an unexcused absence.
 - k. Two (2) unexcused absences during each term are grounds for a warning of removal.
 - l. Three (3) unexcused absences during each term are grounds for removal from a position.
 - m. Two (2) excused absences shall constitute one (1) unexcused absence.
 - n. Two (2) tardies shall constitute one (1) unexcused absence.
 - o. A tardy is defined as an arrival ten (10) minutes after the scheduled start time or ten (10) minutes before the end time of the meeting shall be considered tardy, unless due to the following: class, school, sports, medical, or occupations with appropriate communication to the Secretary.
 - p. All Senators shall be protected from verbal, emotional, and physical abuse among fellow Senators.
 - q. All official meeting records of the Student Senate shall be made available for public viewing.
 - r. The Student Senate shall adopt the Code of Ethics and Values, which shall include

guidelines of forms enumerated by this Constitution and rules of procedures not outlined in this Constitution before the first general meeting of the school year.

- s. Special Meetings: The President or a majority of the Executive Board may call special meetings of the Senate, provided at least one-third of the whole Senate can convene at the special meeting. However, the Senate must have a quorum to vote on legislation. These meetings shall be open to the public at the discretion of the SGA Executive Board.

F. Voting Process for Re-Application/Returners

- a. At any Senate meeting, a quorum must be held for any vote to be conducted.
 - i. The quorum shall be set at the beginning of the meeting when official business begins and shall remain the same for the duration of the meeting.
 - ii. At the beginning of the meeting, voting members may motion to lower the quorum for that meeting at the digression of the Chair.
- b. Any legislation passed by the Senate must have a majority vote to pass. If a vote ties, the motion fails.
- c. A simple majority is defined as 50% + 1 of voting members present.
- d. A vote that requires two-thirds of the Senate to pass must have at least a two-thirds majority based on the number of Senators seated, regardless of quorum at the meeting.
- e. Voting members may abstain from voting due to conflicts of interest. Their vote shall be removed from the number of Senators in the quorum that vote.
 - i. Voting members may not abstain from a two-thirds vote in the Senate.
- f. When calculating the number of votes needed to pass from the percent, the ratio for yay or nay votes needed is rounded up to the nearest whole number.

G. Qualifications for Regalia

- a. Executive Board Regalia:
 - i. To qualify for regalia, a graduating board member must have served at least one (1) semester on the board and stay an active board member in their final semester at the University.
 - ii. A Board member must be in good standing with the University and within the Association.
 - iii. Stoles for Executive Board members are not given by the organization. If a Board member would like a stole, they must purchase one individually.
 - iv. Regalia qualifications will be determined by the Association Advisor.
- b. Senator Regalia:
 - i. To qualify for regalia, a Senator must have served for at least one (1) semester and serve in their final semester.
 - ii. A Senator must be in good standing with the University and within the Association.
 - iii. Regalia qualifications will be determined by the SGA Executive Board and Association Advisor.
- c. Committee Member Regalia:

- i. Committee members that are general body members qualify for regalia if:
 - 1. They have served for at least two (2) semesters over the course of their academic career and in their final semester at the University.
 - 2. They are in good standing with the University and the Association.
- ii. Regalia qualification is chosen on a case-by-case basis and will be determined by the SGA Committee Chairs, Executive Board, and Association Advisor.

ARTICLE VIII CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROCESS

- A. The Senate may amend the Constitution by a two-thirds vote, only if it has been presented to the Senate at least one meeting prior to voting on the Amendment.
- B. Any proposal/resolution given verbally must also be given to the Senate in written format prior to the meeting where voting will take place.