

UNIVERSITY STUDENT FACULTY COMMITTEE BYLAWS

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Last amended and approved January 29, 2016

Preamble

The University Senate, believing that student participation, responsibly carried out, enhances the education process, which is the principal function of the University, establishes, under and in conformity with the rules and regulations of the American University of Beirut, a University Student Faculty Committee whose guiding principles shall be to act in the interest of the student body and of the University as a whole.

Article I - Name

The name of this body shall be the University Student Faculty Committee of the American University of Beirut. It shall be referred to hereafter as the USFC.

Article II - Responsibilities of the USFC

1. To study problems of university-wide student interests and submit recommendations for their solutions to the proper university authorities.
2. To defend the right of all students to have freedom of speech and an opportunity to express their opinions responsibly and within the bounds of the American University of Beirut's Code of Conduct.
3. To communicate to the student body information on university issues within the competence of the USFC.
4. To initiate and promote student activities in coordination with the University.
5. To use allocated funds generated through the student activity fee to support student activities in accordance with existing USFC-approved funding procedures and University policies.
6. To establish sub-committees to study various issues in accordance with the USFC Bylaws.

Article III – Composition

Article III Composition will be effective as of the first day of the fall semester of the academic year 2016-2017.

1. Faculty membership shall consist of six faculty members, one from each of the five faculties of the University and one from the School of Business, elected by secret ballot by their respective faculties/school.
2. Student membership shall be represented from the five Faculties and the School of Business elected by secret ballot.
3. The distribution of USFC student members for each faculty is established as follows:
 - a. 0 to 1000 students eligible to vote per faculty: 2 USFC seats
 - b. 1001 to 1500 students eligible to vote per faculty: 3 USFC seats
 - c. 1501 to 2000 students eligible to vote per faculty: 4 USFC seats
 - d. 2001 students and above eligible to vote per faculty: 5 USFC seats
4. Student and faculty members, as outlined in Article III no. 1 and 2, shall constitute the voting members of the USFC body.
5. The President, the Dean of Student Affairs and/or his/her representative chair the meeting. The Chairperson's vote is used to break a tie.

Article IV - Terms of Office

1. Student members of the USFC shall hold office from the time of their election until the time of elections of the following academic year.
2. Faculty members of the USFC shall hold office for two consecutive years; at the end of each term, faculty members must be re-elected within their faculties to renew their term in the USFC.

Article V - Eligibility to Run for Office

1. All full-time students of the University who are in good standing, not placed on probation, dropped, suspended, dismissed, issued a written dean's warning, or expelled by the University, who are not in their last semester during the time of their candidacy are eligible to run for USFC membership according to the terms of Article III.
 - a. Undergraduate student candidates must be registered for at least 12-credit hours.
 - b. Graduate students must be registered for at least 6-credit hours, thesis, or project.
2. The question of the eligibility of students shall arise at the time students submit their candidacy for election and shall be decided by the Dean of Student Affairs in consultation with the respective dean of the faculty/school, in accordance with the above conditions.
3. All full time faculty members are eligible to be elected to the USFC by their faculty or school in accordance with Article IV, item 2, of these bylaws.

Article VI – Elections

All elections, including USFC elections, USFC cabinet and committee representatives, and student representatives on the University Senate committees, are to be held within 6 to 8 weeks of the start of the Fall semester of each academic year.

1. Student members of the USFC shall be elected directly by students.
 - a) Elections take place through a secret ballot at the time of student elections.
 - b) Elections are carried out on the basis of lists and campaigns.
 - c) Elections shall not take into consideration the distribution of seats among grades/years/classes within a faculty. This indicates that candidates, lists and elected members within a faculty/school can be from any grade/year/class and in any distribution.
 - d) A list can be composed of one candidate or more, up to the number of open seats per faculty as defined in Article III, item 3, of these bylaws.
 - e) Candidates must run in lists. Candidates cannot run in more than one list.
 - f) Elections must adopt a proportional representation of lists within each faculty as detailed in this Article items 2 and 3.
 - g) Eligible voters can only vote for a single list and have a single optional choice of preferential vote to a candidate within this list.
 - h) A threshold percentage is set in every faculty as, one-hundred times the reciprocal of (number of available seats plus one), per seat.
2. Seats for every list are secured by the following procedure:
 - a) Choose the list with the highest secured votes percentage even if below the threshold defined, secure a seat for this list, and deduct the threshold from this percentage.
 - b) Repeat until no seats are available to be secured.
 - i. In case of a tie between lists with the highest remaining votes percentages, if the number of remaining seats is more than or equal to the number of lists at the tie, each list gets a seat and the procedure continues.
 - ii. In case of a tie between lists with highest remaining votes percentages and the remaining seats are less than the number of the lists at a tie, re-election takes place between the lists at a tie. Securing the remaining seats is then done according to the same procedure with the new threshold percentage being as one-hundred times the reciprocal of (number of remaining seats plus one) per seat.

- iii. Re-election takes place without preferential voting and the original preferential voting results are applied.
 - iv. Preferential votes within a list are revealed after all elections and re-elections take place.
3. Seats acquired by each list are won by its candidates who obtained the highest number of preferential votes.
 - a) In case of a tie between candidates within the same list, a draft is used as a tiebreaker by the Dean of Student affairs, in the presence of the candidates at a tie and 2 newly elected USFC members.
4. Student candidates to the USFC shall submit an online platform before Election Day, to be uploaded to the AUB website, which shall be kept online throughout their whole term should they succeed.
5. Faculty members of the USFC shall be elected by their respective faculties/schools by secret ballot.
6. The Vice-President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of the USFC shall be elected from the student members of the USFC by a plurality vote of the voting members of the USFC during the first official USFC meeting after elections. The Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall constitute the Cabinet of the USFC.
7. The outgoing USFC “cabinet” shall hold a common meeting with the newly elected USFC body, within the first month of the new cabinet’s office, in order to ensure continuity in the committee and smooth transition of affairs.
8. The voting members of the USFC shall elect, during the first official meeting after elections, a student representative to each of the University Admissions, Disciplinary, Academic Development, Library, and Student Affairs Committees. The student representatives shall serve as regular voting members of these university committees.

Article VII - Conditions of Holding Office

1. Members who wish to resign must provide 2 weeks written notice to the Dean of Student Affairs for resignation to take effect. Faculty members must also inform the dean of their respective faculties.
2. Members who, if for some reason, should become unable to adequately serve on the USFC, are strongly encouraged to resign.
3. Student members of the USFC shall no longer be entitled to hold office should they be placed on probation, dropped, suspended, dismissed, issued a written dean's warning, or expelled by the University after their election.
4. Both student and faculty members who amass a cumulative of 3 unexcused absences for official meetings shall lose their USFC seat. Excused absences are defined as absences due to illness/injury, conflict with an exam or class at the time of the official meeting, or other extenuating circumstances, with provided valid proof and approved by both the Dean of Student Affairs and the Vice-President. After a second unexcused absence, the Secretary of the USFC will give a warning to the absentee member via email, copying both the Dean of Student Affairs and the Vice-President.
5. Graduation of student members, or transfers by student and faculty members from one faculty or school to another, will result in the loss of their USFC membership.

Article VIII - Replacement Procedures

1. If the membership of any student or faculty member of the USFC ceases for any of the aforementioned reasons during fall or spring semesters, elections shall take place within a period of 2 weeks to fill the vacant seat or seats according to Article VI. If any official USFC meeting shall take place within this period, the SRC President of the respective faculty/school shall be allowed to fill the empty student seat.
2. Upon the commencement of the summer session, the resulting number of student members shall be considered the full student voting membership of the USFC until the end of the committee's term of office.

Article IX – Officers

1. The elected officers of the USFC shall be: the Vice-President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.
2. The President of the University or his/her designee shall serve as president of the USFC.
3. The Vice-President’s responsibilities shall be as follows:
 - a. serve as spokesperson on behalf of the USFC.
 - b. call, in coordination with the Dean of Student Affairs, for official USFC meetings.
 - c. prepare the official USFC agenda for each meeting and submit it to the Dean of Student Affairs for approval.
 - d. ensure that the agenda must be distributed it at least 48 hours before the time of the scheduled meeting.
 - e. supervise, alongside the Office of Student Affairs, the operational administration of the USFC and its sub-committees.
 - f. review proposals and funding requests submitted to the USFC prior to official meeting, to screen for proposal eligibility, in coordination with the treasurer.
4. The Secretary’s responsibilities shall be to:
 - a. archive the minutes of all USFC meetings.
 - b. send copies of the meeting minutes to all members of the USFC within 1 week after an official meeting is held to be approved by the committee
 - c. keep lists of membership of USFC sub-committees and other university committees.
 - d. maintain and develop archives for the USFC (see Article XIV).
5. The Treasurer’s responsibilities shall be to:
 - a. review submitted funding requests and prepare recommendations before the USFC meeting, in coordination with the Vice-President to ensure budget availability and the eligibility of the proposal.
 - b. follow up on funding requests after they have been approved.
 - c. submit a financial report at the last meeting of each semester.
 - d. keep written records of all USFC expenditures (see Article XIV).

Article X – Standing Committees

1. All Standing Committees shall meet on a regular basis and report to the USFC at the end of the spring semester. The committees are the Information and Public Relations, Finance, and Bylaws committees.
2. The Information and Public Relations committee shall be composed of three members, including the Secretary, to be elected by the USFC. The USFC Secretary shall serve as chair of this committee in addition to the two elected members. The role of the Information/PR Committee is to:
 - a. assist the Secretary in his/her work.
 - b. delegate the responsibilities of the Secretary to one member of the PR committee in case of the former's absence in an official USFC meeting.
 - c. regularly communicate USFC news and information to the student body at large.
 - d. publish the decisions and the activities of the USFC and communicate them to students through the official USFC website within 24 hours after the minutes of said decisions have been approved.
3. The Finance committee shall be composed of three USFC members, including the Treasurer, to be elected by the USFC. The USFC Treasurer shall serve as chair of this committee. The role of the Finance Committee is to:
 - a. assist the treasurer in his/her work.
 - b. delegate the responsibilities of the treasurer to one member of the Finance committee in case the former's absence in an official USFC meeting.
 - c. resolve questions regarding funding procedures in official USFC meetings.
 - d. update the USFC every two meetings on the state of the USFC budget, and upon the request of any USFC member.
 - e. propose the budget allocation for the next fiscal year, to be approved by the USFC at the end of the spring semester.
 - f. review funding procedures guidelines and spending patterns, and make recommendations to improve said guidelines.
4. The Bylaws Committee shall be composed of four USFC members, two of whom shall be elected by the USFC, and the remaining two are the USFC Vice-President and the Dean of Student Affairs or his/her designee. The Vice-President shall serve as chair of this committee. The role of the Bylaws Committee is to:
 - a. assist the Vice-President in his/her work.
 - b. delegate the responsibilities of the Vice-President to one member of the Bylaws committee in case the former's absence in an official USFC meeting.
 - c. suggest amendments that it deems appropriate, taking into consideration the reports of previous Bylaws committees.
 - d. advise on constitutional and procedural matters in conformity with the official USFC bylaws and Robert's Rule of Order.

Article XI – Funding and Expenditures

1. At the beginning of each fall semester allocated funds shall be deposited in the USFC agency account generated through the student activity fee.
2. The AUB comptrollers' office is the custodian of the USFC's agency account.
3. The USFC budget of each USFC term shall be set by allocation of student activities fees of the concurrent academic and fiscal year. Use of funds other than specified by the annual budget, including funds carried over from previous years, requires a formal proposal to be voted on by the USFC (see Article XII, item 3d).
4. All funding, with the exception of petty cash and other set items (see article XI item 5 and item 6), must be formally approved by the USFC.
5. Petty cash, with a limit of \$100, will not require prior USFC approval. Petty cash will be used to cover printing services for the USFC office and snacks for USFC meetings only.
6. Money allocated to the student newspaper (Outlook), the student elections, student leadership workshops and the Yearbook shall be annually encumbered in the activities fees account and does not require USFC approval.
7. Money shall be withdrawn from the USFC account to be electronically approved by both the Dean of Student Affairs and the USFC Treasurer. All expenditures from the USFC account shall be in accordance with the approved budget.
8. The USFC shall supervise approved expenditures in accordance with the previously set funding procedure guidelines.
9. The USFC Treasurer shall have full access to all financial records of the USFC account. USFC members shall have access, through the Treasurer, to the financial records of the USFC.
10. An abbreviated financial report, prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the USFC, shall be circulated to the university at large.

Article XII - Meetings, Quorum, and Decisions

1. Meetings:
 - a. Meeting procedures will follow USFC Bylaws first, and in case of ambiguity or absence of article on the matter will resort to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
 - b. During the first official meeting of the USFC, the Vice-President and the Dean of Student Affairs shall establish and distribute a schedule of meetings for the USFC for the rest of its term. This is preferably in agreement with the majority of members.
 - c. Regular meetings shall be held every other week.
 - d. Special meetings:
 - i. may be called for by the Vice-President of the USFC, the Dean of Student Affairs, or through a signed petition by 6 USFC members.
 - ii. have the same effect as a regular official USFC meetings.
2. Quorum:
 - a. Half of the voting members of the USFC plus one shall constitute a quorum.
 - b. In case there is no quorum on an assigned date, a meeting shall be held 48 hours later at the same time. At that meeting, those present shall constitute a quorum.
3. Decisions:
 - a. Each member shall have one vote with no proxy voting allowed.
 - b. Except as provided for in Item c below, decisions taken at a meeting are considered valid if passed by a simple majority of voting members present at the meeting, provided they receive at least six affirmative votes. Abstentions will not count towards the total number of votes.
 - c. Funding decisions involving activities by students held outside of campus, must pass by a two-thirds majority of voting members present at the meeting, given a minimum of 12 voting members present.
 - d. To use money of the accumulated funds, outside the annual budget of the USFC, a proposal designated for that specific purpose will need to be approved by the USFC by two-thirds majority of its entire voting members.

Article XIII - Operating Procedures

1. The USFC shall draw up its own operating procedures which must obtain the approval of two-thirds of the entire-voting members of the USFC.
2. Operating procedures shall include:
 - a. Agenda setting (see Article IX, item 3c)
 - b. Orders of meeting (as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order).
 - c. Funding guidelines.

Article XIV - Documents

1. All USFC documents will be archived and stored in the designated USFC office.
2. All USFC documents will be accessible to all USFC members.
3. USFC documents will include:
 - a. Agendas, proposals, and meeting minutes of all USFC official meetings.
 - b. Written records and receipts of all approved expenditures, including petty cash, and official financial reports. Records will include signatures of all parties involved.
 - c. Official operating procedures.
 - d. Bylaws.
 - e. Robert's Rules of Order.
4. Access to the USFC Bylaws, operating procedures, decisions, and attendance shall be made available for access to all university students online. If any individual outside the USFC wishes to examine any other USFC documents, they will need written approval signed by the Vice-President of the USFC and the Dean of Student Affairs.

Article XV – Amendments

1. Amendments of these bylaws and/or approved operating procedures can be proposed by the designated Bylaws committee or any voting member of the USFC. Any current university member can bring forth proposed amendments to the current Bylaws committee.
2. Proposed amendments can be voted upon after two weeks of prior written notice to USFC members.
3. Amendments will need a two-thirds majority of the entire voting members in the USFC to pass. Such amendments are subject to final approval by the University Senate and the President of the University.

Article XVI - Ratification of the Bylaws

1. These bylaws become effective once approved by the University Senate and the President of the University.
2. No provision in the constitution or bylaws of any AUB student committee or organization shall contravene any provision of the bylaws of the USFC.