SGA LEGISLATION GUIDE 2021-2022

Introduction

Welcome to the Student Government Association (SGA) Legislation Guide. This document was created to help guide you through the process of creating legislation in SGA. Please note: You do not have to be in SGA to create legislation for the school, so we encourage all students at Elon University to consider how they want to make a change on Elon's campus.

We understand this process can be confusing, and you may still have questions. Please feel free to reach out to the Executive Vice President, Chloe Yoon (cyoon@elon.edu), or the Speaker Pro Tempore, Trevor Molin (tmolin@elon.edu) for any further concerns. Legislation is at the core of both our job descriptions, and we would be happy to help at any stage of the legislation process.

In addition, the members of our executive team and our advisor would be happy to help with any ideas you may have as well. Their contact information is listed below

- Jack Corby, Student Body President (jcorby@elon.edu)
- Hailey Jurgens, Executive Secretary (hjurgens@elon.edu)
- Caroline Penfield, Executive Treasurer (cpenfield@elon.edu)
- Jana Lynn Patterson, SGA Advisor (patters@elon.edu)

Thank you in advance for your effort in making Elon a better place for all students. Your work with legislation will undoubtedly have a meaningful impact on future generations of students. Good luck!

The Legislation Timeline

The process of creating legislation often requires much planning in advance and patience. Authors must be thorough in collecting all necessary information, reaching out to relevant points of contact, and getting as much feedback as possible. This section of the guide walks you through when and how you should be conducting all of this. Please pay careful attention to all details, as any missed steps could cause a delay in your intended timeline of the legislation.

Where to Start?

If you have any idea about what area of campus you want to make change in and how to do it, we would encourage you to meet briefly with the Speaker Pro Tempore or the Executive Vice President as soon as possible to discuss the feasibility of the idea and potential next steps. The Speaker Pro Tempore and Vice President, in addition to other members of our Executive Team, would be more than happy to help make ideas turn into action plans. We recommend previewing previous passed legislation to get an idea of what SGA has done in the past. It is most helpful for us to assist when you have an idea of what specific action steps you want to take; however, if you only have a concern about Elon's campus, we can discuss options of how to best address the concerns.

Important Steps
- Step 1: Reach out to the Speaker Pro Tempore, a member of our Executive Team, or our advisor to run by your idea. It's great to get your idea on our radar in advance.
- Step 2: Collect research and data about your proposed idea for legislation. Find any qualitative or quantitative data that supports why this legislation would be important for our campus. Reach out to any experts in the field of your legislation topic to get recommendations relevant to your idea (**See section: Who to Reach Out to**).
- Step 3: Reach out to SGA members who support your idea and start writing the legislation. While you do not have to be a member of SGA to write legislation, you *do* need an SGA senator to sign off as a sponsor/ second on your legislation. Include senators in the process of writing and editing your proposed legislation- and include the Speaker Pro Temp when necessary (they can sign off as a sponsor or second as well!)
- Step 4: Reach out to the Speaker Pro Tempore if you have not yet. The Speaker Pro Tempore should review any legislation for basic editing before being sent to the Vice President. Again, **the earlier you reach out, the better.**
- Step 5: **Send your proposed piece of legislation to the Executive Vice President no later than one week before the Business Meeting* at 7:30 pm**. *If your legislation is requesting high amounts of funding, the legislation should be sent before this deadline.*

This legislation should be finalized, and **no edits to the legislation will be accepted by the authors unless approved by the Vice President**.

- Step 6: The Vice President will set up a meeting with the author, sponsor, and second of the proposed legislation before the Tuesday of the week of the Business Meeting. We will work to the best of our ability to get the legislation on the agenda of the Business Meeting. During the meeting, be prepared to discuss any necessary edits and answer questions relevant to your legislation. In the instance that the Executive Team determines the legislation is not ready to be voted on, we may delay the timeline or make further suggestions to ensure the legislation is feasible which is why earlier is always better.
- Step 7: Prepare your presentation for the Business Meeting with the Senate. Your legislation will need to be voted on and receive over 50% of Senate votes. Your presentation should be compelling and convincing- including all relevant research and expert testimony that you've collected in the past. Feel free to invite experts to speak directly to the Senate in support of the legislation during our Open Forum time at the beginning of our Business Meeting. **Make sure to address why your piece of legislation would be a good use of SGA funds and resources**.
- Step 8: The Senate will vote on your legislation. If passed, don't forget to sign your piece of legislation, as well as your second and sponsor. Any necessary next steps can be discussed with the Vice President.

*While the schedule is subject to change, our SGA Business Meetings typically run on the second and fourth Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm. Please reach out to a member of our Executive Team for more information on when the meetings will occur that month.

<u>Who to Reach Out to</u>
It is safest to confirm with the Speaker Pro Temp, a member of our Executive Team, or the SGA advisor on who to reach out to regarding your proposed idea. There are instances where there are many individuals who may be relevant resources to your idea; however, we can best assist you on who would be the most appropriate contact for you. Senior staff and administration should not be contacted unless recommended by a member of the Executive Team or our advisor.

Types of Legislation

There are different types of legislation SGA can pass, depending on your intended goal and outcome of the legislation. Please also see our 'Example Templates for Legislation' section for a visual of the proper formatting of each respective legislation.

Bills

This kind of legislation is when the Senate takes action on a specific matter. Bills are typically created when Reserve Funds are needed towards different programs or initiatives (like in the cases of S.B. 21-5.1 and S.B 21-5.2, bills regarding the renewal of the Menstrual Product Pilot program and the Moseley Art Exhibition respectively). Though bills are commonly seen with the allocation of funding, that is not the only use of bills in Student Government. For example, in S.B. 17-10.3, the bill renamed the Organization Awards and Induction Ceremony to the Leo Lambert Awards as we know it now.

- Pilot programs: Oftentimes with the funding of new initiatives, a **pilot program** is created. For example, S.B. 19-3.1, which originally created the menstrual product program, and S.B. 20-2.1, which created a pilot program partnering with Uber are both examples of pilot programs. These programs are used as a way to collect data that can be used in the future to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs. Future senates can then decide if they should be renewed or even recommended to Elon's Administration to be funded outside of SGA. Pilot programs also assist in better understanding aspects such as a more accurate funding amount or if any other general changes need to be made to the program moving forward.

Resolutions

This type of legislation is used to express the will of the senate, but no action is taken. These can be used for a number of different scenarios. Some examples include: expressing condolences for the passing of a student, faculty, or staff member (S.R. 20-3.2, S.R. 21-2.1, S.R. 18-2.1), voicing the Senate's stance on current events Elon students feel passionately about, both related and unrelated to Elon's campus, (S.R. 19-3.1, S.R. 20-9.1, S.R. 16-1, S.R. 21-5.1, S.R. 17-10.4,) or issuing more general statements (S.R. 20-10.15, S.R. 18-3.1). Resolutions also may call for action to be taken in the future, seen in S.R. 20-10.15, a resolution regarding Black Lives Matter, calls for SGA to work towards advancing DEI in both the Senate and in the wider campus.

Proclamations

As defined in the Constitution, proclamations "shall highlight or recognize events that are deemed to be important for the Senate to address through recognition, but in which no formal

action is taken." Proclamations are the least common form of legislation, and distinguishing between proclamations and resolutions can be challenging. If there ever is a question of which should be used, Dean Patterson is always a good resource, but in the more recent past, resolutions have been used for things that may seem to fit the definition of a proclamation (S.R. 17-10.4).

Funding for Legislation

<u>What Can Be Funded</u>

All legislation must adhere to University guidelines and policies as stated in the <u>Treasurer's Manual</u>. We recommend viewing past legislation, as they can give you an idea of what has been appropriately funded in prior years. Some examples include equipment, educational programming, and other services accessible to all students. Restrictions on funding include:
- Anything purchased prior to authorization by the Finance Board
- Expenses for personal or private use
- Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products
- Direct contributions to charities or other non-profit organizations
- Fundraisers or any items that would generate revenue
- Late fees/charges/penalties
- Loans, scholarships, or tuition assistance for students including study abroad

<u>How to Get Funding</u>

Funding requests are reviewed by the Executive Treasurer and Finance Board. While it is not required for requests under $1,500, it is recommended that the individual(s) requesting funding present at the Finance Board meeting when the budget is being voted on to ensure that their proposed budget can be supported by any necessary explanations or further information. A general breakdown of the requested funding amount is required. The Executive Treasurer makes a recommendation to the Senate based on the Finance Board's discussion.

<u>What is the difference between reserve funding and regular funding?</u>

SGA's budget is allocated from Student Activity Fees collected by the university. If legislation pertains to a singular event or project that will be completed within the fiscal or academic year that it is proposed and approved, then the funding will most likely come out of the annual budget. SGA has established a Reserve Fund for its overflow budget which can be used for projects spanning multiple fiscal years or projects with other specific needs. Capital expense projects and some larger funding requests may come from the Reserve Fund.

Questions can be directed to the Executive Treasurer, Caroline Penfield at <u>cpenfield@elon.edu</u> or SGA Class Treasurers.

Legislation FAQ

Q: How do I know if my idea is feasible?
A: It is always best to reach out to any members of our Executive team or our advisor, Dean Patterson. We are always great resources for any and all questions you may have regarding legislation. Beyond this, however, it is important to consider overall how your idea will benefit the whole student body. Legislation should be ideas that can be made applicable to any student on Elon's campus. In addition, legislation should be

Q: What if I don't want to write legislation, but I want my voice and concerns to be heard by Student Government?
A: We understand that many frustrations arise that you may not necessarily want to write legislation for to be heard. In this case, we would highly encourage you to reach out to your respective class officers for assistance in which they may be able to either refer you to a senator with similar concerns or suggest ideas for reform. In addition, we would also like to invite you to speak at our open forum time during our Business Meetings. This is a time allotted to community members wishing to speak to the Senate.

Q: What research should I be conducting beforehand and in my presentation?
A: There should be considerable research conducted prior to writing the legislation (See Step 2 in 'Important Steps'). It is important for the Executive team and our advisor to understand its feasibility and necessity on campus in order to approve it to be voted on by the Senate. In your presentation, you should include all relevant research and information, including any quotes from experts you may have received, and be sure to address how your idea can effectively be utilized by students. Visuals are highly encouraged, especially those that can depict any data collected (graphs, charts, etc.) If you are proposing the allocation of funds, remember to include why this is a good use of SGA funds.

Q: How do I determine how much funding something might cost?
A: We will always recommend getting as many expert perspectives as possible. If you are proposing funds that have been used for similar projects in the past, this is a great starting point. Continue to collect data by asking relevant departments what they might think an appropriate amount of funding is and break down that number to show where the money is being diverted.

Q: If I'm requesting funding for myself or an organization, do I need to create legislation?
A: No, please submit a Budget Request in Phoenix Connect or contact our treasurer, Caroline Penfield for assistance.

Example Templates for Legislation

In the Student Senate
S.R./S.B./C.A./(there is no standard for a proclamation) 21 – 4.1 (year space dash space
month period piece of legislation number that month)
April 1, 2021 (type it out)

A BILL REGARDING _____ (all caps, regarding, long title)
A RESOLUTION TO _____ (all caps, verb changes, long title)
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS TO THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

Usually want to start with more general articles and then progressively getting more specific

(there is no standard for a proclamation, but all caps, centered)

WHEREAS: Reason for legislation, and;

WHEREAS: Reason for legislation, and;

Whereas clauses should be well researched and allow readers to fully understand the motivation behind the writing of the bill

WHEREAS: Reason for legislation, therefore:

The articles should state what is being proposed. Be specific and remember to include all necessary action steps taken- this includes any funding, programs created, communication with the University, or relevant statements

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF ELON
UNIVERSITY THAT:

ARTICLE I: Method of correction.

ARTICLE II: Method of correction.

ARTICLE II: Method of correction.

Refer back to the the *Types of Legislation* section of the guide if unsure of what articles should look like (past legislation is always a good tool)

The sponsor and second on a bill must be SGA members; however, the author may be any Elon student

Author: _____

Sponsor: _____

Second By: _____

PASSED   VETOED

Speaker of the Senate: Chloe Yoon
_____

Secretary of the Senate: Hailey Jurgens
_____

Vote: Aye   Nay   Abstain
_____

SGA Treasurer: Caroline Penfield
_____

SGA President: Jack Corby