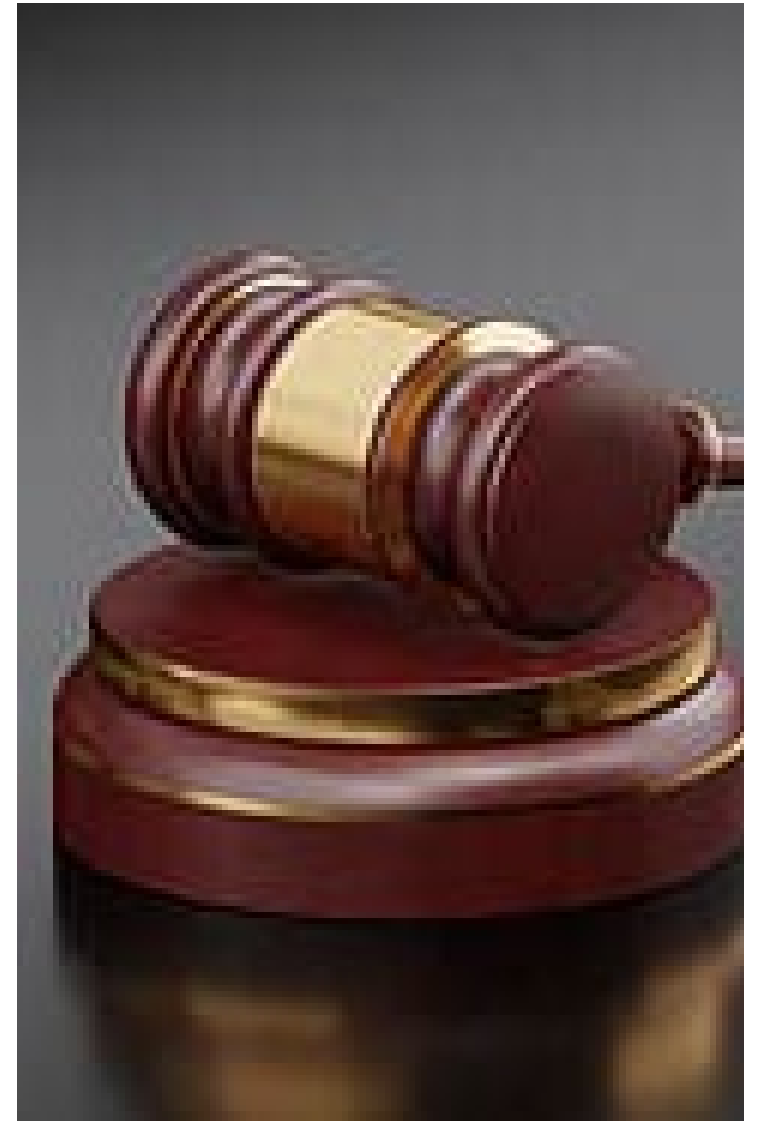


# Constitution and Bylaws

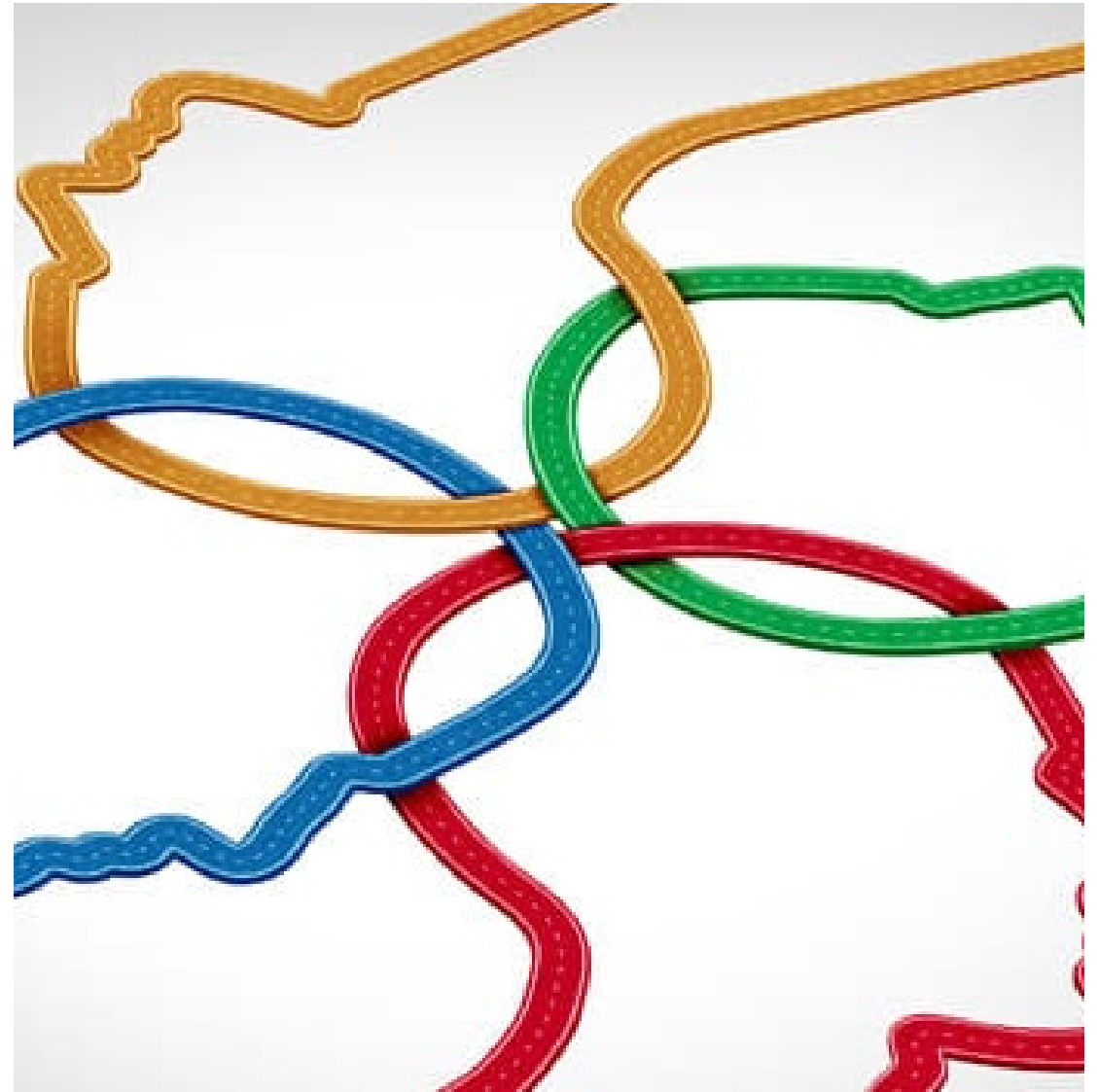
## Student Senate of Keuka College

**Dave Kelly**  
America's Student Leadership Trainer<sup>sm</sup>



# What are Student Governments?

Student governments (SGA) are the organizations on college campuses that **represent** students, serve as their voice, and exists to enhance the educational experience for everyone that attends their college or university.



# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the Student Senate shall be to coordinate social activities that meet needs of the student body, manage and distribute funds from the student activities fee, participate in long range planning and decisions in the interest of Keuka College, investigate problems and concerns of the Keuka College student body, and be the official voice for the expression of student opinions and concerns.

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

What does this mean to you?

Which part do you consider to be the most important?

Are these responsibilities relevant to how the Student Senate actually functions?

How can you share the Purpose of the Constitution with others on campus?



# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III – Members

Executive Officers –  
President, Vice-President,  
Secretary, Treasurer

### 19 Senators:

- 1. Academic Class Senators (5)
  - a. Freshman Class
  - b. Sophomore Class
  - c. Junior Class
  - d. Senior Class
  - e. Graduate Students
- 2. Residential Senators (8)
  - a. Ball Hall
  - b. Blyley Hall
  - c. Davis Hall
  - d. Harrington Hall
  - e. Saunders Hall
  - f. Space Hall
  - g. Strong Hall and Keuka Park Apartments
  - h. Commuter Students
- 3. Affinity Group Senators (4)
  - a. International Students
  - b. Multicultural Students
  - c. LGBTQ+ Students
  - d. Athletes
- 4. Senators-at-Large (2)

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

Is this a good structure for  
the Student Senate?

Does it work in practice?

Is it difficult to fill seats?



# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section Two, Part C: Elections

Timing. Academic Class and At-Large Senator elections shall be held annually during the second week in April. Residential and **Identity-based Senator** elections shall be held annually during the third week of the fall semester. The student body shall elect, by either written or electronic ballot, the senators of the Student Senate. **A plurality vote shall elect to each office.**

Two conflicts that I note:

- 1) Article III, Section 2, Part A, Item 3 refers to “Affinity Group Senators”, conflicts with wording in red above.
- 2) Item 4, is in conflict with the last line above in orange:

Acclamation. If there is only one candidate for office, the office may be filled by acclamation.

Also, what is the process for a vote of Acclamation? Senate meeting? Executive Board meeting? Declaration by Elections Committee?

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section 2, Part E, Item 1: Resignation

Resignation. A Senator may resign by submitting a request in writing to the Student Senate Secretary or Student Senate Advisor. A resignation is effective upon receiving a majority of the legal votes cast in a regular meeting of the Student Senate at which the request is considered.

## Article III, Section 6, Part A: Resignation

**Resignation.** An Officer may resign by submitting a request in writing to the Student Senate Secretary or Student Senate Advisor. A resignation is effective upon receiving a majority of the legal votes cast in a regular meeting of the Student Senate at which the request is considered.

What happens if a majority of the Student Senate does not approve the resignation?

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section 2, Item 6: Qualifications to Hold Office

6. In order to run for an open President position, each candidate must have prior Senate experience, *or be able to articulate their leadership experience and how it can translate to the Senate President position.*

Who determines if the candidate has adequately articulated their leadership experience and if that makes them eligible to run?

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section 5, Part D, Item 6: Secretary

6. Oversee the Club Point System further outlined in the Club Manual

This was a point of discussion in our original meeting. My suggestion would be to delete this clause and put the responsibility in the Club Manual. You could state it as such, “In the event that a Club Point System is adopted, the Secretary of the Student Senate will be responsible for overseeing it.” The Club Manual could be interpreted as a policy manual which can hold additional responsibilities not enumerated in the constitution or bylaws.

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section 7: Vacancies

A vacancy in office shall be filled at the discretion of the President either by an appointment, or by a special election, except the office of Student Senate President, which shall be filled by the Student Senate Vice President. The special election shall be held within 14 days of the vacancy being recorded at a Student Senate meeting.

What happens in the event that the Vice President position is vacant at the same time? I suggest a formal line of succession through the entire Executive Board. The Senate Bylaws in Article 3, Section C, Item 2 has a line of succession for a temporary situation of Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer.

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article V, Section Three, Quorum:

The quorum for regular and special meetings of the Student Senate shall be a majority (i.e., more than half) of its members. Once a semester a Student Senator can designate an elected Senator to carry ~~his/her~~ **their** proxy in the event ~~he/she is~~ **they are** unable to attend one of the weekly senate meetings.

I suggest using gender neutral terms such as their, they, them, instead of he/she. It is less clunky and also accounts for students who identify as non-binary or other gender. I also recommend changing “chairperson” to “chair” as it is more in keeping with typical meeting norms.

What is the proxy and how is it used during a meeting?

# Robert's Rules on Proxy Voting

“A “proxy” is a means by which a member who expects to be absent from a meeting authorizes someone else to act in his or her place at the meeting. Proxy voting is not permitted in ordinary deliberative assemblies unless federal, state, or other laws applicable to the society require it, or the bylaws of the organization authorize it, since proxy voting is incompatible with the essential characteristics of a deliberative assembly. As a consequence, the answers to any questions concerning the correct use of proxies, the extent of the power conferred by a proxy, the duration, revocability, or transferability of proxies, and so forth, must be found in the provisions of the law or bylaws which require or authorize their use. [RONR (12<sup>th</sup> ed.) 45:70–71.]” **If you wish to keep this ability, I suggest defining it more clearly.**

# Constitution of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article VII, Section One, Part 4, Item 4: Composition

4. Financial Committee shall make recommendations to the Student Senate on funding for recognized clubs and organizations, including the Student Senate, as well as the rules and policies for distribution of those funds. The committee shall consist of five (5) members including the chairperson. The Student Senate Treasurer shall serve as the chairperson of the committee. **The number of members is in conflict with:**

## Article VII, Section Two, Part C, Item 1: Membership

Standing Committees of the Student Senate shall be composed solely of members of the Student Senate, except for the Financial Committee which will consist of (3) senators, (1) CAB Member, and (2) students. **This item excludes the Student Senate Treasurer as a member of the Financial Committee as shown above.**

**Should the number of members be 5, 6, or 7?**

# Q&A/ Comments



# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article 1, Part C, Item 1: Meeting Rescheduling

If the Senate fails to hear all items on the agenda, then the meeting shall be adjourned by a majority vote until the following meeting, or at a later date and/or time to be scheduled by a majority vote, in the Senate office.

This is not necessarily wrong to have, but my questions are:

- 1) Why would this happen?
- 2) Do your Student Senate meetings have a time limit?

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III: Legislative Board

What is this? It is not mentioned anywhere else and it appears to just detail roles and responsibilities of Executive Board.

Suggest changing the section name to Executive Board to avoid confusion. Current reading makes it sound like an additional body withing the Student Senate.

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section C, Item 4:

If the Vice President/Chair of the Elections Committee is running, then they shall set elections up, and then yield responsibility to a third party member the day before campaigning begins.

How is the third-party member selected or appointed? Is this someone already on the committee?

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section D. Item 6:

Senate members shall be dressed appropriately in Senate uniform and name tag at every open meeting. **This is fine.**

## Article III, Section D. Item 7:

~~Each Senate member shall be dressed appropriately in Senate uniform and name tag at every Open Senate meeting.~~ **No sweatpants or ripped jeans shall be worn at Open Senate meetings.** **Cross through is redundant with Item 6. Sentence in red is better listed in Rules of the Senate or Policy Code. Also, what about shorts, t-shirts, pajamas, etc.?**

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section E, Item 3: Committees

The Vice President shall appoint Senators to committees.

This is in conflict with Constitution Article V, Section A, Item 4: Duties – President

Appoint members to Student Senate committees unless otherwise specified in this constitution.

The constitution supercedes bylaws, but this should still be addressed to avoid confusion.

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section 4, Items a and b: Conflicts of Interest

- a. No Senate member shall vote on any business pertaining to a student group of which they are an active member.
- b. Senate members shall be relegated to the role of witnesses and shall not act as Club/Org advocates OR Senate members while deliberation regarding a student group of which they are active members takes place.

These clauses are OK. However, I want you to be aware that Robert's Rules does allow for members of a body to debate and vote on items affecting groups they may belong to or proposals they have a personal interest in. It is acceptable for your governing documents to be more restrictive than Robert's Rules.

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article III, Section 7, Item a: Charging Admission for Fee-Funded Events

In the event that a student group is charging for an event, a charge may be advertised as long as it is explicit in all advertisements, including but not limited to fliers, ~~Facebook~~ **social media** advertisements, bulletins, posters, etc.,. Further, all advertisements must disclose the organization and follow other poster guidelines as found in the Poster Guidelines document. **I recommend being more generic so as to not open up a loophole for other forms of social media.**

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article IV, Section A, Part 2: Elections

If any member of the Elections Committee is running in an election, they will not have access to the vote results.

According to the constitution Article III, Section V, Part B, Item 4:

Conduct the Student Senate elections process, provided they are not running for office

Why are other members of the Election Committee allowed to continue to serve on the committee when the Vice President is not allowed to?

Also see, bylaws Article III, Section C, Item 4

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article V, Section A:

### Impeachment/Removal From Office

Impeachment/removal of office proceedings can only take place after three documented constitution or bylaw violations, three written & signed recommendations from Senators, and a disciplinary procedure hearing

May be a conflict with Constitution Article III, Section B, Item 4: Qualifications to Hold Office.

Student Senators shall:

4. Miss no more than two (2) Student Senate meetings per semester.

Does two absences constitute an automatic removal? That is only one violation of the constitution or bylaws.

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article IV, Section B: Impeachment/Removal from Office

The vote to impeach/remove from office requires a 3/4ths vote by the Executive Board.

According to this, only the Executive Board gets to vote on impeachment/removal from office – even for Senators.

# Bylaws of Student Senate of Keuka College

## Article IV, Section D: Impeachment/Removal from Office

An ~~alleged~~ **accused** Executive Board member ~~is~~  
~~automatically~~ **must** abstained from voting in their own  
disciplinary procedure/impeachment/removal from office  
hearing.

Suggest changes as noted. Current reading is a little  
awkward.

**Any other  
issues,  
concerns,  
ideas, or  
things you  
think should  
be in the  
governing  
documents?**



# Q&A/ Comments





Thank you!

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