**Student Government Association Senate**

**Northern Illinois University**

**2:00 p.m. – Friday, *March 29th, 2024***

**Holmes Student Center Sky Room**

**Public Streaming:** [**http://go.niu.edu/SGASenateLive**](https://niu-edu.zoom.us/j/82215987778?pwd=SlBtaEFiaG0xWmp0SWs4b0VZZVhpZz09)

***Members of the public wishing to give public comment, please submit an*** [***Intent to Speak***](https://cglink.me/2sZ/s54) ***form, no later than 11:59 pm, March 28th, 2024.***

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Verification of Quorum
3. Public Comments
4. Approval of Minutes
5. From March 22nd, 2024

*Minutes are distributed electronically to the Senate.*

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Speaker’s Report
3. Special Report
4. Office of the Speaker Report(s)
5. Committee Report(s)
6. Executive Branch Report(s)
7. Cabinet Report(s)
8. Old Business
9. SR55043: A resolution to amend the SGA Bylaws to consolidate the HR Policy
10. New Business
11. SB55024: To clarify what is considered as a campaign violation
12. SB55025: To add the Supreme Court Code of Procedure to the SGA Bylaws
13. SR55045: A resolution to confirm a Senator
14. SR55046 A resolution to confirm a Supreme Court Justice
15. SR55047: A resolution to confirm a Supreme Court Justice
16. SB55026: Changes the way Election Commissioner decisions are reported to Board of Elections
17. Announcements
18. Adjournment

Please be advised that public comments will be limited to five (5) minutes per person, and that any one

topic may not be discussed for more than 15 minutes.

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami,

Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations.

**­­Old Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item:**  A  1 March 2024

**Author:** Clerk Corpuz, Speaker Hensley

**Sponsor:** Clerk Corpuz, Speaker Hensley

**ENROLLED SENATE RESOLUTION 55043**

**Fifty-Fifth Session**

**Summary**: A resolution to amend the SGA Bylaws to consolidate the HR Policy

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, the current SGA Bylaws does not clarify the details for meeting of a verbal warning;

WHEREAS, the current SGA Bylaws does not clarify an exact deadline for a verbal warning to be given;

WHEREAS, a verbal warning shall have a deadline to follow so that action is taken and not delayed longer than necessary;

WHEREAS, a verbal warning should have a certain amount of criteria that needs to be neglected in order to escalate it into a written warning;

WHEREAS, a written warning shall have a similar deadline requirement as a verbal warning;

WHEREAS, deadlines hold SGA officers accountable on either side and requires them to fulfill their duties and receive the proper corrective actions respectively;

WHEREAS, an SGA officer who receives a verbal/written warning can be given multiple opportunities to receive a verbal warning before escalating to written warnings and/or suspensions;

WHEREAS, Article IV, §1.B of the Student Government Association Constitution states that, “The Senate

shall have the power to create and amend the SGA Bylaws”;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate enact following changes be added to the Student Government Association Constitution:

**Section 3**

**Corrective Action Procedures**

1. The Student Government Association shall conduct itself in accordance with university policies and procedures related to human resources and employee management insofar as they do not conflict with the policies detailed below or in other governing documents of the SGA. In addition to compliance with these policies, failure to uphold the duties and responsibilities set forth in this and other SGA governing documents shall result in corrective action focused on accountability, cooperation, and personal growth in leadership. Officers of SGA should conduct themselves appropriately and with the understanding that they are representatives of the NIU student body.
2. Corrective action may only be taken towards supervisees by supervisors. No retaliatory or discriminatory corrective action may be taken under any circumstances.
   1. Verbal warnings shall be issued verbally upon confirmation of a minor violation of SGA policies. Minor violations are those that do not significantly interfere with the function of the SGA, and might consist of missing staff reports, failure to report to the Senate, failure to attend required meetings, or any number of other infractions. The issuing supervisor shall collect a signature at the time of the warning. Refusal to sign or failure to attend a meeting about the verbal warning shall automatically escalate the verbal warning to a written warning.
      1. Mandatory meetings are to be scheduled with the supervisor(s) within three (3) business days
      2. Mandatory meetings for verbal warnings are to be held within five (5) business days of receiving a formal notice for a verbal warning.
      3. If the supervisor has conflicting schedules with the officer within the five (5) business days, a three (3) day extension shall be given, with a notice sent to all other supervisors as to the reason of the extension (i.e. Speaker, President, Chief Justice, and Student Advisor)
   2. Written warnings shall be issued in writing upon confirmation of a more serious violation, or if the SGA officer fails to modify their behavior after a verbal warning and violates the same policy again after a minimum of 5 business days. Serious violations might include, but are not limited to, improper office conduct, missing or late agendas or minutes, irresponsible or unethical use of SGA position, or violation of the NIU Student Code of Conduct. The officer shall return a signed copy of the warning to the supervisor within ~~two (2) weeks~~ ten (10) business days of receipt. Refusal to sign a written warning ~~shall result in a~~ ~~second written warning~~ shall automatically escalate the written warning to a suspension.
      1. Non-required meetings for written warnings may occur anytime during the ten (10) business day window
   3. Suspension shall be a temporary removal from one’s position and duties (typically five (5) or ten (10) business days), issued in writing, without pay if applicable. The length of suspension shall be determined at the discretion of the supervisor in coordination with the SGA Advisor. Suspension shall include an action plan, created by the supervisor, SGA Advisor, and SGA officer, detailing practical steps to improvement and a timeline. Matters that may necessitate suspension include, but are not limited to, repeated offenses following a written warning after a minimum of five (5) business days, violations of SGA election policy, abuse of the privileges of office, time clock fraud, or major violations of the SGA Code of Conduct. Accumulation of three or more written warnings for unrelated policy violations shall result in an automatic suspension upon any further violations. All duties and responsibilities, as well as pay, shall resume at the conclusion of the suspension period.
   4. Termination shall be a last-resort action resulting in removal from one’s SGA position, delivered in writing, taken by a supervisor upon confirmation of continued violation of SGA policies, failure to uphold the steps of an action plan according to its timeline, or a violation so serious that no corrective action is possible, such as intentional mismanagement of SGA funds. Termination by a supervisor shall result in a loss of pay, when applicable. All terminations must include an exit meeting between the supervisor, SGA officer, and SGA advisor. Supervisors shall author a piece of legislation to be presented to the Senate for a vote of removal from office. Should this legislation fail, the officer may choose to continue working without pay. Officers who receive stipends shall be paid a prorated amount proportional to their time worked.

***This act is ordered to take immediate effect.***

**­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item:**  A  29 March 2024

**Author:** Seargent at arms Bereolos

**Sponsor:** Seargent at arms Bereolos

**ENROLLED SENATE BILL 55024**

**Fifty-Fifth Session**

**Summary:   To clarify what is considered as a campaign violation**

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, This bill will allow for what is allowed to use for campaigning

WHEREAS,  This bill helps clarify what could be seen as a campaign violation.

WHEREAS, Article IV, §1.B of the Student Government Association Constitution states that, “The Senate

shall have the power to create and amend the SGA Bylaws”

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate enact that the Bylaws be amended to the following.

Article IV

Section 2

Physical and Written Campaign Materials

1. Physical and written campaign materials shall be defined as any written or tangible materials to be disseminated among voters that display support or opposition for a candidate or ticket.
2. All physical and written campaign materials must be filed with the Board of Elections and cannot be distributed without the prior approval of the Board of Elections. Printed campaign materials must be visibly signed by the candidate, stamped by the Student Involvement office, and Approved by the Board of Elections before any material is posted or distributed.
3. In the case of yard signs or similar objects, the office of Student Involvement must approve of the content, and the University Grounds Department must approve the location of the posting when applicable. A color - 33 - photograph of the sign to be posted may be filed with the Board of Elections in lieu of a physical copy.
4. All posted materials must abide by the Student Involvement Poster Policy/Chalk Policy.
5. No campaign material shall be allowed where it may physically deface or destroy property, such as posted materials, stickers or any other form of self-adhesive materials, buttons, and any other material deemed potentially destructive by the Board of Elections. Adhesives must be approved by the Board of Elections prior to use. In questions of defacement or removability, a candidate or designee's successive demonstrations of removability in all instances shall be sufficient.
6. Any damages sustained by property, University or otherwise, shall be the sole responsibility of the candidate(s). Damages may include excessive litter of campaign materials as determined by the Board of Elections, and the individuals in violation shall be held liable for any damages caused which require professional repair.
7. Campaigning may not take place in university classrooms on weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., including, but not limited to, posting, or passing out campaign materials.
8. No campaigning is allowed in any of the libraries, except for posting materials on public bulletin boards.
9. No Campaigns shall give out items outside of the items approved by the Election Commissioner and Board of Elections. This shall include water bottles, candy, soda, or any physical item not approved by the Election Commissioner or Board of Elections.

**­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item:**  B  29 March 2024

**Author:** Seargent at arms Bereolos, Deputy Speaker Chris English, Speaker Cole Hensley

**Sponsor:** Seargent at arms Bereolos

**ENROLLED SENATE BILL 55025**

**Fifty-Fifth Session**

**Summary:   To add the Supreme Court Code of Procedure to the SGA Bylaws**

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, This allows for all of the SGA procedures and rules to be on one document

WHEREAS, This allows for documentation on the SGA to be available in one space and updated as need be

WHEREAS, Article IV, §1.B of the Student Government Association Constitution states that, “The Senate

shall have the power to create and amend the SGA Bylaws”

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate enact that the Bylaws be amended to the following.

Part V

Appendix B

Supreme Court Code of Procedure

1. Timeline
   1. A complaint is considered filed with the Supreme Court when it is delivered to the NIU Student Government Association Office Manager or Advisor.
   2. The Student Government Association (SGA) Supreme Court must notify parties involved in the complaint within 24 hours of the complaint being filed.
      1. Notification may take place via US postal service, telephone, email, or being placed in an appropriate mailbox within the SGA Office.
   3. After being notified by the SGA Supreme Court, parties named as respondents may file a written answer to the complaint within 72 hours of being notified.
      1. A written response must be filed with the SGA Office Manager or Advisor or may be filed electronically with the Chief Justice.
      2. Responses filed after the 72-hour time frame will not be considered submitted in a timely manner and will not be considered.
   4. The Court can hold a hearing any time after the deadline to submit a response has lapsed.
      1. Hearings will take place at the discretion of the Chief Justice or with the agreement of three Justices but must have three members present to conduct business.
         1. Parties to the hearing need not be present for the hearing to take place.
   5. At any time a complaint, response, and rules or rulings of the Supreme Court must be made available and photocopied or emailed, at the expense of the SGA, to any interested party.
2. Procedure of the Hearing
   1. 1. Members of the Court
      1. At least three members of the Court must be present to conduct business.
      2. An individual(s) Justice’s objectivity may be questioned with regards to a particular case. All arguments shall be presented in writing prior to or at the beginning of the hearing. A vote of confidence of at least two of the remaining Justices is required before the Justice in question may participate in the hearing and vote on the case, unless there are fewer than two remaining Justices in which case the remaining Justice must vote confidence.
      3. The Chief Justice shall run all proceedings of the Court.
      4. If the Chief Justice and Acting Chief Justice have recused themselves from hearing a case or if their objectivity has been questioned and they are unable to hear a case, then the associate Justice with the most seniority shall assume the duties of Acting Chief Justice.
      5. In the absence of the Clerk of the Court or the Clerk’s inability to serve the Chief Justice shall appoint an acting Clerk of the Court.
         1. The acting Clerk of the Court shall fulfill the duties of the Clerk of the Court and the term shall last until the court is adjourned.
   2. 2. Order of Business
      1. The Hearing shall be conducted in the following order:
         1. Court shall be called to order by the Chief Justice.
         2. Roll Call of the Justices present.
         3. Introduction of Petitioner
            1. The Chief Justice shall ask the Petitioner to introduce themselves to the court.
            2. Petitioner may represent themselves or may have an advocate do it on their behalf.

An advocate must be a full-time fee-paying student.

* + - * 1. If petitioner or advocate is not present the Chief Justice shall state the petitioner’s name.
        2. The petitioner need not be present for the hearing to commence.
      1. iv. Introduction of Respondents
         1. The Chief Justice shall ask the Respondent to introduce themselves to the court.
         2. Respondent may represent themselves or may have an advocate do it on their behalf.

An advocate must be a full-time fee-paying student.

* + - * 1. If respondents or advocate is not present the Chief Justice shall state the respondent’s name.
        2. The respondent need not be present for the hearing to commence.
      1. v. Reading of Complaint by Chief Justice
         1. The Chief Justice will read the complaint to the court.
      2. vi. Reading of Response by Chief Justice
         1. The Chief Justice will read the response to the court.
         2. If no response was submitted in a timely manner the Chief Justice will let the Court know and it shall be reflected in the record.
      3. vii. Oral Argument by Petitioner
         1. The petitioner or their advocate shall have no more than ten (10) minutes to argue in favor of their position.

Petitioner will be timed by the Clerk of the Court.

Petitioner may reserve up to three (3) minutes of their time for rebuttal purposes.

Petitioner will be notified by the Clerk of the Court when they have three (3) minutes remaining.

* + - * 1. Any Justice can interrupt the oral argument at any point to ask a question of the presenter.
        2. If petitioner or advocate are not present at the hearing no oral argument will be heard and the decision will be made solely on the written complaint.
        3. No witnesses may be called.
      1. Oral Argument by Respondent
         1. The respondent or their advocate shall have no more than ten (10) minutes to argue in favor of their position.

Respondent will be timed by the Clerk of the Court.

Respondent is not allowed rebuttal time.

* + - * 1. Any Justice can interrupt the oral argument at any point to ask a question of the presenter.
        2. If Respondent or advocate are not present at the hearing no oral argument will be heard and the decision will be made solely on the written response.

If no written response has been submitted the Court shall rule solely on the petitioner’s written complaint and oral presentation.

* + - * 1. No witnesses may be called.
      1. ix. Rebuttal by Petitioner if Requested
         1. If requested the petitioner has no more than three (3) minutes to rebut the arguments of the respondent.
         2. Justices may ask questions at any point during the rebuttal.
      2. x. Deliberation by Justices
         1. Justices shall recess to a private room to deliberate on the outcome of the hearing.
         2. Justices can vote in favor, against, or abstain on the ruling.
         3. A majority of Justices will determine the outcome.
         4. If the voting results in a tie, the decision being appealed shall stand.
      3. xi. Announcement of the Court Ruling
         1. The Court will reconvene and announce its decision(s).
         2. A copy of the Court’s decision will be made available to all interested parties in the SGA office within one (1) business day of the hearing.
         3. The Court’s majority decision shall be recorded in writing after the decision is made. The minority opinion may also be recorded, but it is voluntary.

If a written opinion is issued it must also be available to all interested parties in the SGA office.

1. Governing Documents Review Process
   1. The Supreme Court shall review the SGA governing documents on an annual basis. This review shall be completed by October 1st of each year and may take place when school is not in session, such as during summer break. The Court shall convene at least once before this date.
   2. The Supreme Court shall review the Northern Illinois University student code of conduct every two (2) calendar years, to affirm the SGA Code of Conduct. This review shall be completed by December 1st .
   3. Procedure
      1. The Chief Justice shall collect the most up-to-date versions of the SGA Constitution, Bylaws, Senate Operating Manual, Executive Operating Manual, and Supreme Court Code of Procedures.
      2. These materials shall be sent to the Justices at least 48 hours before the Court is scheduled to convene. Justices are to carefully read each document.
      3. At least three members of the Court must be present to conduct business. Once the Court convenes, it shall be called to order by the Chief Justice. Roll Call of the Justices present shall be taken.
      4. Moderated by the Chief Justice, the Court shall discuss any discrepancies, irrelevant information, changes, or updates to each document.
      5. The Clerk of the Court shall compile suggestions for each document.
      6. The Court shall vote on the final version of the suggested changes to each document.
      7. The Chief Justice shall send all suggestions to the Speaker of the Senate to be put to a vote in the Senate. Each document shall be voted upon by the Senate and amended as laid out in the constitution and bylaws, if applicable.

**This act will go into effect immediately.**

**­­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item:** C 25 March 2024

**Author:** Speaker Hensley

**Sponsor: Speaker Hensley**

**ENROLLED SENATE RESOLUTION 55045**

**Fifty-Fifth Session**

**Summary:** A resolution to confirm a Senator

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, Nicholas Lazaric has met the requirements necessary to be appointed as a member of the Student Government Association Senate; and

WHEREAS, Paul Benson is running to represent students At-Large; and

WHEREAS, there are vacant seats within the students At-Large bloc;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate hereby appoint the following as a Senator for students At-Large:

1. Paul Benson

***This act is ordered to take immediate effect.***

**New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item:** D 29 March 2024

**Author:** Speaker Hensley

**Sponsor:** Speaker Hensley

**ENROLLED SENATE RESOLUTION 54046**

**Fifty-Fifth Session**

**Summary:** A resolution to confirm a Supreme Court Justice

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, Article V, §3 of the Student Government Association Constitution state the process for the selection and removal of justices; and

WHEREAS, “All justices shall be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Senate, as vacancies arise. After their appointment they shall not be removed, except by the Senate in accord with the removal from office procedure described in this Constitution. The Supreme Court shall be composed of five justices. Legislative Branch and Executive officers and staff shall not be eligible to serve on the Supreme Court. Members shall serve so long as they remain students in good standing at NIU”; and

WHEREAS, President Newman has decided to appoint a Justice;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate hereby confirm the appointment of Sharrell McNeal as a Justice of the Student Government Association Supreme Court.

***This act is ordered to take immediate effect.***

**New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item:** E 29 March 2024

**Author:** Speaker Hensley

**Sponsor:** Speaker Hensley

**ENROLLED SENATE RESOLUTION 54047**

**Fifty-Fifth Session**

**Summary:** A resolution to confirm a Supreme Court Justice

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, Article V, §3 of the Student Government Association Constitution state the process for the selection and removal of justices; and

WHEREAS, “All justices shall be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Senate, as vacancies arise. After their appointment they shall not be removed, except by the Senate in accord with the removal from office procedure described in this Constitution. The Supreme Court shall be composed of five justices. Legislative Branch and Executive officers and staff shall not be eligible to serve on the Supreme Court. Members shall serve so long as they remain students in good standing at NIU”; and

WHEREAS, President Newman has decided to appoint a Justice;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate hereby confirm the appointment of Ashanti Ford as a Justice of the Student Government Association Supreme Court.

***This act is ordered to take immediate effect.***

**­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item:**  F  29 March 2024

**Author:** Seargent at arms Bereolos

**Sponsor:** Seargent at arms Bereolos

**ENROLLED SENATE BILL 55026**

**Fifty-Fifth Session**

**Summary:   Changes the way Election Commissioner decisions are reported to Board of Elections**

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, This allows for the Board of Elections to vote on decisions made by the Commissioner sooner

WHEREAS, This allows for Rulings by the Board of Elections to be made in a more timely manner.

WHEREAS, Article IV, §1.B of the Student Government Association Constitution states that, “The Senate

shall have the power to create and amend the SGA Bylaws”

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate enact that the Bylaws be amended to the following.

Part II

Article II

  Section 2

Election Commissioner

1. To hold the office of Election Commissioner, a student must fulfill the following requirements:
   1. Must not be on academic probation or punishment for academic or criminal misconduct with the University, and the student must have and maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 for undergraduate students or 3.00 for graduate students during their tenure in office or be in their first semester at the University.
   2. Shall be paid the same hourly rate as the highest paid executive staff member for each hour worked. No person shall become Election Commissioner who already holds a paid position within the SGA.
   3. An undergraduate student must be enrolled for twelve (12) semester hours in the same semester in which they shall serve; all other students must also be enrolled for nine (9) semester hours.
2. When the Senate is in session, the Election Commissioner shall be appointed by the President for the Spring Election with the approval of the Senate. The Senate shall have oversight authority over the performance of the Election Commissioner.
3. When the Senate is not in session, the Election Commissioner shall be appointed by the President with the approval of at least three of the five members of the Board of Elections. The Election Commissioner so appointed will hold office until the Senate can convene. If the President is unable to reach an agreement with the Board as to the appointment of an Election Commissioner, then the Speaker shall appoint the Election Commissioner with the approval of at least three of the five members of the Board of Elections. - 27 –
4. The authority and duties of the Election Commissioner include
   1. The Election Commissioner shall serve as the Chairperson of the Board of Elections.
   2. The Election Commissioner will administer all NIU Student Government Association elections and referenda in accordance with the SGA Constitution, SGA Bylaws, and Elections Policy.
   3. The Election Commissioner shall have the authority to issue sanctions to candidates, their supporter(s), or any other person interfering with an election. The Election Commissioner cannot disqualify candidates.
   4. All rulings of the Election Commissioner shall be in writing and shall be posted in the Student Government Association office and available for review by any member of the SGA or the student body within twenty-four (24) hours of business.
   5. The Election Commissioner shall be responsible for holding executive candidate debate(s) in the weeks preceding the week of Spring Elections.
   6. The authority to issue sanctions and hear appeals shall be outlined in the section detailing Sanctions, Appeals, and Disqualifications.
5. The Election Commissioner shall only be removed during an election through resignation, the Supreme Court, or in accordance with the Removal Process outlined in the Student Government Association Constitution.
6. The Election Commissioner shall be ineligible to run in any general election or special election for the term in which the elections occur.
7. The Election Commissioner shall have final say on all election proceedings unless a decision is overridden by a majority vote of the Board of Elections or the SGA Supreme Court.
8. The Election Commissioner will notify the Board of Elections on any decision made within twelve hours. The Board of Elections will then vote upon the Commissioner’s decision within forty-eight hours and within twenty-four hours during the elections.
   1. If no vote is reached by the Board of Elections in 48 hours, the decision made by the Election Commissioner stands.

**This act will go into effect immediately.**