**Student Government Association Senate**

**Northern Illinois University**

**Friday March 7th, 2025 – 4:00 PM**

**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 6th, 2025.*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Verification of Quorum
3. Public Comments
4. Approval of Minutes
   1. Minutes from February 28th, 2025
5. Approval of Agenda
6. Speaker’s Report
7. Special Report
   1. *Chief Justice Report*
8. Office of the Speaker Report(s)
9. Committee Report(s)
10. Executive Branch Report(s)
    1. *Treasurer Report*
11. Cabinet Report(s)
12. Old Business
    1. SB56022: A bill to update the bylaws to prevent removed senators from being appointed as a Senator for the next session.
13. New Business
    1. SB56023: A bill to update the Constitution to provide further definition of the Code of Procedure
    2. SB56024: A bill to update the responsibilities and duties of the Chief Justice
    3. SB56025: A bill to ensure that there is clear precedent and archiving standards for the SGA Supreme Court.
    4. SR56039: A resolution to elect a new member of the Board of Elections
14. Good of the Order
15. Announcements
16. 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.

**­­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item: A**   **February 28th, 2025**

**Author:** Speaker Corpuz

**Sponsor:** Speaker Corpuz

**ENROLLED SENATE BILL 56022**

**Fifty–Sixth Session**

**Summary:** A bill to update the bylaws to prevent removed senators from being appointed as a Senator for the next session.

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, Senators who are removed from office are not eligible to be appointed again in the current session; and

WHEREAS, Senators who are removed from office are eligible to be appointed into office for the next session; and

WHEREAS, Senators should not be eligible to be appointed for the next session if they were removed in the current session; and

WHEREAS, Senators can rely on running again in the Spring Elections for the next session if they were removed from the current session; and

WHEREAS, removal of a Senator should only be used in the case that it is the only course of action of discipline for the Senator; and

WHEREAS, the justifiable cause of removal is required to write legislation to remove a Senator; and

WHEREAS, the Senator is required a two-thirds (2/3) vote to be removed from office during the Senate meeting; and

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

SGA bylaws be changed to the following:

**Section 5**

**Senate Vacancies**

1. Until all Senate seats have been filled as described in the Student Government Association Bylaws Part II Article III, §1.A the Speaker shall accept applications for all vacancies on the Senate, including vacancies for the next session that were not filled during the Spring Election. Vacancies shall include all seats in which a Senator has resigned or been removed, or the seat was not originally filled during the election. As each vacancy is announced, the Speaker shall present the name of the first applicant who has registered with a completed application for consideration for an open seat.Applications will not be taken from graduating students when less than six (6) meetings remain in the session or from returning students when less than four (4) meetings remain in the session. No person who is on the applicant list may be skipped, except for the following:
   1. The applicant asks to be skipped.
   2. The applicant cannot attend the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting.
   3. The applicant’s packet of information is not complete; such applicants will be moved to the bottom of the applicant list for later consideration.
   4. The applicant has not attended at least one Senate meeting in its entirety.
   5. The applicant has already been denied by the Senate in any given Senate session.
2. The Senate will interview each applicant in order ofeach open seat. The Senate Speaker will introduce all applicants who meet the current Senate seat replacement criteria to the Senate.
3. The Senate Seat Replacement Criteria and procedures are as follows:
   1. Candidates for all Student Government Association offices shall be NIU students in good academic standing.
   2. All candidates for the Student Government Association office must sign a waiver releasing their name and student identification number, allowing them to determine if the student is in good academic standing through the Office of Registration and Records.
   3. Re-entering students shall be eligible for candidacy for Student Government Association posts.
   4. All candidates for Senate seat replacement positions must have attended at least one full Student Government Association Senate meeting prior to candidacy for Senate. (To ascertain attendance, potential candidates must check in with the Senate Clerk within five minutes of roll being called and be present when their name is called at the final roll call at the adjournment of the meeting.)
   5. Applicants must give their presentation to the Senate within four (4) Senate meetings of their attendance as a member of the public. This time limit may be waived at the Speaker’s discretion should any extenuating circumstances apply.
   6. All candidates must obtain fifty (50) signatures from their constituents prior to submitting the application to the Speaker. The signatures must include the students’ full name, signature, Z-ID number, and a local phone number.
   7. Candidates must have turned in an application for the Senate seat replacement position to the SGA Senate Speaker at least 48 hours prior to the Senate meeting in which applications are first presented. If the candidate is applying for a seat for the next session of the Senate, the candidate must indicate that they are applying for the next session.
   8. All candidates are required to provide proof of residence hall contracts, college affiliation, or resource center affiliation depending on the seat for which they are running. Regarding college seats, ‘proof’ shall be an official document or email received from the school; in the case of university-At-Large, an official document or email from the University. Proof for underrepresented seats shall be an email or letter from the resource center (If there is no resource center for an underrepresented group, then an official email or letter from a student organization representing the group will suffice.) University housing shall provide an official letter or email from the Housing Department/Hall Director/Graduate Hall Director or official housing contract.
   9. At the meeting in which they are presented, the applicants will be given the opportunity to give a speech, no longer than five minutes, to address the Senate on their reasons for becoming a Senator.
   10. The order in which applicants will be allowed to speak will be the same order in which the applications were turned into the Senate Speaker. However, each applicant will be considered separately for each open seat. No applicant can be considered before an applicant who is qualified and turns in a completed application first.
   11. After the candidate’s speech, the Senate floor will be open for the Senate to ask the candidate questions. Each Senator will have five (5) minutes to ask questions and receive answers. Following all candidates’ speeches, the candidates will wait outside the Senate chambers as the Senate discusses the candidates.
   12. After the Senate closes discussion, each candidate will be voted on individually in the order in which they spoke. Any candidate who has completed the process outlined above but was not selected to join the Senate will be required to attend an entire additional meeting before being considered again.
   13. All SGA officials involved in the Senate vacancy approval process must make all decisions in a viewpoint-neutral fashion. All candidates shall be judged objectively on their personal merit and character and not on the views of the group(s) or organization(s) with which they are affiliated.
   14. The applicants must be approved by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.
   15. The newly approved Senators will take office after the voting has taken place on all candidates at that meeting.
   16. If a Senator is removed from the Senate for any reason other than resignation, military service, or medical emergency, the Senator shall not be eligible to apply for or be appointed to the Senate again in the current session. ~~They may, however, be elected into the Senate in the fall election.~~ The removed Senator shall not be eligible to apply or be appointed to the Senate for future sessions unless the removed Senator files an appeal with the Supreme Court to gain the ability to run in the next session. The appeal cannot reinstate the removed senator for the current session and must strictly be for the ability to be appointed in the next session. No person who has been removed from office in the Student Government Association by the Senate under the Constitution shall be eligible to apply or be appointed to the Senate.
   17. If a Senator is removed from Senate by legislation, the senator must vacate their seat immediately and their vote will not be counted for future vote counts from that point in the meeting. The total number of Senators will decrease accordingly and the amount for quorum will be adjusted to reflect the new amount of Senators that are currently seated.
       1. If the senator’s removal causes a loss of quorum, the Senate meeting shall be ended due to lack of quorum and any legislation that occurs after the senator’s removal will be sent to Old Business in the following Senate meeting.

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

**­­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item: A**  March 7th, 2025

**Author:** Speaker Corpuz

**Sponsor:** Speaker Corpuz

**ENROLLED SENATE BILL 56023**

**Fifty–Sixth Session**

**Summary:** A bill to update the Constitution to provide further definition of the Code of Procedure

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, the Code of Procedure is one of the most essential documents for SGA and the Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, the most current Code of Procedure has not been updated and passed in recent sessions; and

WHEREAS, the Code of Procedure should be reviewed every two (2) years by the Supreme Court and given to the Senate for approval upon review; and

WHEREAS, a copy of the Code of Procedure should be given to both the Legislative Branch and the Executive Branch in the event that the Chief Justice is not currently elected and transitional materials were not properly passed to the next Chief Justice; and

WHEREAS, The Code of Procedure is required for the Supreme Court to operate more efficiently and having a safety for the Code of Procedure prevents any loss of history for the document itself; and

WHEREAS, Article IV, §1.B of the Student Government Association Constitution states that, To solely amend the SGA Constitution as provided for herein.”;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate enact that the

SGA Constitution be changed to the following:

**Section 2.  Code of Procedure**

1. The Code of Procedure is the governing document of the SGA Supreme Court. It shall be upheld and amended solely by the Supreme Court, with the approval of the Senate. Upon approval by the Senate, a copy of the Code of Procedure shall be provided to both the Speaker and the President.
2. The Code of Procedure shall be reviewed at least every two (2) calendar years by the Supreme Court. If no amendments are needed to be made in that time, the Supreme Court shall still submit a copy of the Code of Procedures to the Senate for approval.
3. The Code of Procedure shall mainly be held by the Supreme Court Chief Justice and shall be passed to the next elected Chief Justice within the transitional materials. In the case that there is no current Chief Justice, the most updated Code of Procedure shall be sent to both the President and the Speaker to be passed in their transitional materials until a new Chief Justice is elected by the Supreme Court.
4. The rules of the Supreme Court shall be outlined in the Code of Procedure of the Supreme Court.  All judicial action must be conducted in accordance with the Code of Procedure.  ~~All amendments to the Code of Procedure shall be approved by the Senate and the Supreme Court before going into effect.~~

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

**­­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item: B**  March 7th, 2025

**Author:** Speaker Corpuz

**Sponsor:** Speaker Corpuz

**ENROLLED SENATE BILL 56024**

**Fifty–Sixth Session**

**Summary:** A bill to update the responsibilities and duties of the Chief Justice

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS the Chief Justice is the highest seat of the Judicial Branch of SGA; and

WHEREAS the Chief Justice shall be responsible for ensuring that the Judicial Branch is efficiently operating every year that they sit in their position; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Justice should be responsible for ensuring that documents like the Code of Procedure, SGA Bylaws, and SGA Constitution be properly updated and reviewed by the Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, there is no transitional method for the Code of Procedure and has caused problems in previous sessions about what exactly is the Code of Procedure; and

WHEREAS, there should be a written documentation and record of the Code of Procedure that can be passed on to the future sessions of SGA; and

WHEREAS, Article IV, §1.B of the Student Government Association Constitution states that, To solely amend the SGA Constitution as provided for herein.”;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate enact that the

SGA Constitution be changed to the following:

**Section 4.  The Chief Justice**

1. The Chief Justice shall be a voting member.  The Chief Justice shall officiate at all court sessions, call the various people who will testify, count the votes and announce decisions to all concerned.  The Chief Justice will be responsible for conducting all court sessions according to the Code of Procedure.  The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall serve as the Judicial Branch’s administrative officer and shall be responsible for requesting such funds as are deemed necessary for all court proceedings.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief Justice to notify all students of charges brought against them, to inform them of their rights according to this Constitution and to ensure that the proper procedure is used in making such a charge.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief Justice to maintain the Code of Procedure that is used by the Supreme Court. It shall also be the responsibility of the Chief Justice to call upon the Supreme Court to review the Code of Procedure and send any amendments to the Senate for approval.
4. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief Justice to call upon the Supreme Court to review the SGA Bylaws and Constitution. Any changes that they deem necessary shall be brought before the Senate by the Chief Justice as recommendations which will be still voted by the Senate for approval, in accordance with the current procedure for amendments to the SGA Bylaws and Constitution.
5. The Chief Justice shall hold the most current and updated version of the Code of Procedure. The Chief Justice shall send the updated copy, pending approval from the Senate, of the Code of Procedure to the Speaker and the President. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief Justice to pass the responsibility of the Code of Procedure to the Clerk of the Court or the longest sitting Justice in the event that the Chief Justice steps down from their position, regardless of the reason for vacating their seat as Chief Justice.

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

**New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item: C** March 7th, 2025

**Author:** DeputySpeaker Gonzalez

**Sponsor:** DeputySpeakerGonzalez

**ENROLLED SENATE BILL 56025**

**Fifty–Sixth Session**

**Summary:** A bill to ensure that there is clear precedent and archiving standards for the SGA Supreme Court.

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, the lack of informational materials such the Court of Procedures during the 56th Session highlights the lack of clear records the Student Government Association Supreme Court has or in the SGA overall possession; and

WHEREAS, if the court does not have records of past cases, they cannot rule based on precedent and the wording of the SGA Constitution or SGA Bylaws that are under consideration.

WHEREAS, Article I, §1.S of the Student Government Association Bylaws states that the Parliamentarians duties include, “Shall act as a liaison between the Judicial and Legislative branches alongside the Clerk of the Court in reviewing and archiving court opinions and documents”; and

WHEREAS, the Parliamentarian should ensure that the court should be informed of past precedents in order to properly cite legal standings and become more transparent to the Northern Illinois University body; and

WHEREAS, the codification of these procedures in the Constitution of Student Government Association for the Supreme Court ensures that the Parliamentarian can function effectively without questions of their authority; and

WHEREAS, such codification sends a message to the student body that all branches of Student Government Association is striving to be as transparent, appropriate, and approachable as possible; and

WHEREAS, this legislation ensures that the Parliamentarian cannot voice nor debate in Supreme Court hearings that would give the Legislative Branch, or Executive Branch, an unfair advantage or influence in any judicial proceedings of the court; and

WHEREAS, ensuring that any incoming Chief Justice appoints a Clerk of the Seante ensures that activities of the Court are public knowledge, the Parliamentarian has a contact to work with, and ensures there is a smooth transition in the case of absence, removal, or conflict of interest stemming from the Chief Justice; and

WHEREAS, Article IV, §1.B of the Student Government Association Constitution states that, To solely amend the SGA Constitution as provided for herein.”;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate resolve that Constitution & Bylaws be amended to the following:

**ARTICLE V. THE JUDICIAL BRANCH**

**Section 5.  The Clerk of the Court**

A.  The Chief Justice of the Court ~~shall~~ must appoint an Associate Justice to serve as the Clerk of the Court, with the approval of the Court.  In the absence of the Chief Justice or their inability to hear a case, the Clerk of Court shall act as Chief Justice until a replacement can be appointed or the return of the Chief Justice.

B.  The duties of the Clerk shall be the following: to ensure the minutes of the Court are kept, to record all court cases on audio or video equipment, to schedule all cases at the direction of the Chief Justice and to notify all persons deemed necessary of the date, time, location, names, and charges against those individuals to be tried.  The Clerk of Court shall be a voting member of the Court.  All records of the Court shall ~~be maintained in the SGA main office and~~ delivered to the Parliamentarian or Clerk of the Senate for preservation.

C. The Clerk of the Court shall work with the Parliamentarian to archive and review past court precedents, so the Supreme Court has all available information possible. The Parliamentarian cannot vote nor voice in debate at any Supreme Court hearing, unless the case pertains to them.

***This legislation is ordered to take effect immediately.***

**­­­New Business First Reading**

**Agenda Item: D**   **March 7th, 2025**

**Author:** Speaker Corpuz

**Sponsor:** Speaker Corpuz

**ENROLLED SENATE RESOLUTION 56039**

**Fifty–Sixth Session**

**Summary:** A resolution to elect a new member of the Board of Elections

**Legislation:**

WHEREAS, Part II, Article I, §5 of the Student Government Association Bylaws states that “Nominations for the Board of Elections shall take place no later than the second-to-last regularly scheduled Senate meeting of November. The Board of Elections shall also be appointed at the next consecutive meeting.”; and

WHEREAS, the bylaws stipulate that the five (5) persons receiving the most votes shall become members of the Board; and

WHEREAS, the bylaws also stipulate that “The two (2) people receiving the sixth (6th) and seventh (7th) highest number of votes shall be designated as alternate members of the Board of Elections, to become full members if other members are removed or resign during the election process.”; and

WHEREAS, “The two individuals that the Senate decides to be the alternates for the Board of Elections must be listed in the order in which they will assume the seats if a vacancy occurs. This order should be that the person receiving the 6th highest vote should be given first preference, the person receiving the 7th highest vote should be given second preference.”; and

WHEREAS, “If there is not an Election Commissioner appointed, the Senate shall vote a second time to choose one of the members of the Board and shall designate that person as Chairperson of the Board of Elections. The Senate shall vote, with each Senator having one vote. The person with the most votes shall become Election Commissioner.”; and

WHEREAS, Vice President Innis has stepped down from their position as a Board of Elections Member; and

WHEREAS, the current alternate member, Senator Udoh, has taken a temporary leave of absence from SGA; and

WHEREAS, Treasurer Ethan Pesavento has expressed interest in serving as a member of Board of Elections for the Spring 2025 elections and expressed it to the Office of the Speaker; and

WHEREAS, the current Board of Elections has the five (5) members with one (1) alternate member; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Elections has one (1) open seat as an alternate member of the Board of Elections;

THEREFORE, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate resolve that Treasurer Ethan Pesavento be confirmed as the second alternate of the Student Government Association Board of Elections for the Spring 2025 Elections.

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