

**TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**  
**House of Representatives Bylaws**

(Revised by the House of Representatives, March 2011)

**Purpose:**

The House of Representatives was formed to allow recognized organizations a greater voice on the Tarleton campus. The House of Representatives will be responsible for creating, discussing and voting on legislation as well as approving organizational funding requests.

The House of Representatives is governed by the Student Government Association Constitution and the By-Laws created therein.

**Membership:**

Each University recognized organization shall be entitled to two (2) voting members in the House. An organization may send only one voting member, if they wish. A student may only represent one organization at a time in any given year. Each recognized organization will internally select their two (2) representatives to serve in the House.

**Duties:**

1. Speaker of the House
  - a. Conduct and manage meetings of the Student House of Representatives.
  - b. Work with the Executive Council to set the agenda for every meeting.
  - c. In the event of a tie vote in the Student House, the Speaker of the house shall cast the tie-breaking vote.
  - d. Enforce the House By-laws.
2. Secretary
  - a. Aid the Speaker of the House when needed.
  - b. Keep the minutes of every meeting, to be submitted and approved by the Student House the following meeting.
  - c. Vote for the organization that s/he represents.
  - d. Check attendance and mark absent organizations.
  - e. Keep track of and announce the House Budget.
  - f. Keep track of and announce organizations no longer available for funding.
3. House Representatives
  - a. Vote and enact legislation beneficial to the general welfare of the student body.
  - b. Vote on funding requests.
  - c. Represent the concerns and requests of their constituents.
  - d. In case of an emergency in which the Student Senate cannot meet, may pass legislation with a two-thirds (2/3) vote and presidential signature.
  - e. All duties outlined in the House By-laws.

**Legislation:**

The House and the Senate both shall create, discuss, and vote upon legislation. Legislation is passed with majority or 2/3 vote in the House and the Senate, and then it is forwarded to the President of Student Government Association for approval.

**Funding:**

The House will be responsible for allocating funding to recognized student organizations.

All organizations are eligible to vote on funding requests. The House will provide a list of

organizations eligible for funding at the beginning of each semester.

Funding requests are available online at [www.tarleton.edu/sga](http://www.tarleton.edu/sga)

Funding requests will only be heard during Formal Meetings.

At the beginning of each academic year, the Student Body President and Speaker of the House shall appoint members to a House of Representatives Funding Review Committee. Any funding requests before the Student House of Representatives must first be approved by this committee. The committee make-up shall be as follows: the Speaker of the House, the Student Body Vice President, and three (3) House Representatives. The Student Body President shall serve as ex-officio, but has no voting privileges.

### **Membership**

Attendance at **ALL** House of Representative meetings is vital to the operation of the organizations; therefore, the following attendance policy will be enforced.

1. The House of Representatives will meet each Wednesday at 5:15 p.m. in the Science building room 102. Meetings will rotate between business and forum discussion.
2. Organizations who will be participating as active members will be established at the second meeting of the fall semester. Established organizations will be able to join the House at any time; however, to be eligible for funding an organization must attend the second meeting of the fall semester and all meetings that follow.
3. Newly recognized organizations will be allowed to join the House at anytime; however, to be eligible for funding, the organization must have been a recognized student organization on the Tarleton campus for at least 2 semesters. Once the 2-semester quota is reached, the organization is eligible for funding.
4. An established organization who wants to apply for funding and who has missed the second meeting of the fall semester must petition the Speaker of the House to waive the funding suspension. A representative of the group will plead the case before the House of Representatives Funding Committee.
5. Representatives are allowed one vote per member.
6. An organization must be represented at **ALL** regularly scheduled formal and committee meetings. If an organization misses a meeting, that organization **WILL NOT** be eligible to be funded for the rest of the year, unless the absence is excused by the House of Representatives Funding Committee. Excused absences consist of family emergencies, e.g., a family member hospitalized for an emergency reason, the representative being hospitalized for an emergency reason, or a death.
7. If an organization that has been funded money misses a meeting, a representative must contact the Speaker of the House. The representative must submit, in writing, the reason for missing the meeting. The Executive Council will determine if the absence is excused (no money will be repaid) or the Executive Council will refer the representative to the House for a decision. If the group does not submit the written excuse to the Executive Council, the group must automatically repay half of the total amount funded. The organization must contact the Executive Council before the next scheduled House meeting. After that time, the petition will not be considered.
8. Any organization inactive for more than three (3) years is considered a new organization by the House of Representatives, and will have to follow rules established for new organizations before being eligible for funding.

### Funding Guidelines

Funding for an event is approved through the following mandatory guidelines. These guidelines will serve to assist organizations in planning their funding requests and to assist House members in voting on the request.

- 1 At the beginning of the fall semester, the total funding budget will be split in half. One half of the money will be allocated during the fall semester, the other half during the spring semester. Any money remaining from the fall semester can be moved into the spring allotment.
- 2 Events that occur during the fall semester will be funded out of the fall money allotment. Events that occur during the spring semester will be allotted out of the spring money. This will happen regardless of the semester in which it is approved.
- 3 A completed and signed Activity Permit **must** be submitted to the Office of Student Activities **at least** 10 days prior to the event or when the funding request is submitted, whichever is first. The Activity Permit is signed and approved by the Director of Student Activities and Thompson Student Center indicating the event is approved as an official function of the University with all applicable rights and responsibilities.
- 4 A Request for Funding form must be submitted to the Office of Judicial Affairs the Friday **prior** to the next scheduled meeting to be eligible to appear on the agenda. Appropriate signatures and attachments should be submitted with the Request for Funding. Any request received after Friday **will be** held until the following meeting.
- 5 The Speaker of the House and the Executive Council will determine how many funding requests will be considered at each meeting.
- 6 No funding request will be considered if received after the event has taken place.
- 7 The secretary will give a current account balance at each meeting. He/she will also report on any organizations that have been absent. Minutes will be read at every formal meeting.
- 8 After the funding request is introduced to the House, the representative will provide a brief presentation about the event and give justification for the request. An open discussion will follow the justification. Organizational representatives should be prepared to answer questions about their activity or event. If an organization's representative is not in attendance, the funding request will be removed from the agenda. The time limit allowed to process each funding request is at the discretion of the president.
9. The amount to be funded can be amended by the members present as long as it doesn't exceed **\$500.00**.
10. After the discussion and presentation, a vote will be taken with a simple majority vote necessary to approve or reject a funding request. A quorum shall be set at the first meeting of each Fall semester. A quorum must be present (50% + 1) to vote on a funding request.
11. Upon approval, the organization is responsible for arranging appropriate methods of fund disbursement with the Office of Judicial Affairs. Resolution of the expenses (present receipts) for any event must take place within 1 week following the event/activity.
12. In the event the funds are not approved, the organization has five (5) school days to appeal the House decision. The appeal must be in writing with grounds specified, to be reviewed by the Assistant Dean of Students. This decision will be final.
13. Once a funding request has been heard by the House (approved or denied) that funding request is

dead. The organization can't request additional funds for the same event. This includes funds that have been returned to the forum or money that is yet to be allocated.

14. An organization can request funds two times a year, but can only be funded one time a semester.

15. The House will not subsidize 100% of any organizational event or activity. Student organizations should provide a substantial portion of their own income by collecting dues and scheduling fund raising activities. The maximum percentage that can be approved per event will be 50% of the amount that is eligible for funding up to **\$500.00**.

16. Criteria for evaluating fund requests should be as follows:

- Regular attendance at House of Representative meetings
- Benefit to students and University
- Well-planned event
- Financial analysis (mileage to be calculated out on the website provided with the Office of Judicial Affairs)
- Organizations subsidy
- Income potential
- Cost-to-benefit relationship

17. Any funds allocated that are unused **must** be returned to the House within one week of the completion of the funded activity.

18. An organization has 10 working days from the day of notification to pick up their check. Any check not obtained within the 10 days will automatically convert back to the House account.

**House funds MAY be used for:**

- Presentation of a program unique to the organization's interest or University concerns.
- Presentation of a workshop or seminar unique to the organization's interest or University concerns.
- Conference or seminar fees including: travel, food, lodging, & registration fees.  
(Based on state rates)

**House funds MAY NOT be used for:**

- The purchase of food to be served as refreshments at regular organizational meetings.
- The purchase of supplies including copies required for the normal operation of the organization.
- The promotion or recruiting of organizational members.

**Disbursement Guidelines**

With the approval of funding by the House of Representatives and the Assistant Dean of Students the organization must contact the Office of Judicial Affairs within 1 week of the approval. If an organization fails to make arrangements within the 1 week period, the funding is rescinded and the money reverts back to the Forum.

**Requirements for Disbursement**

Checks to reimburse a student organization will be made to the organization. The name, tax EIN number, and address of the organization along with all appropriate receipts and vouchers will be required in order for a check to be cut.

*Remember, an average of 10 days is necessary to process a University check.*

### **Important Points to Remember**

- 1 All funds allocated by the House must be expended according to University rules and regulations. Due to the various paperwork required to distribute funds, all paperwork should be prepared with the aid of the Office of Judicial Affairs.
- 2 Contact the Office of Judicial Affairs after receiving funding to discuss procedures regarding use of funds.
- 3 Only active, recognized organizations are eligible to request funds.

**House of Representatives Funding Committee** shall consist of the President as an ex-officio, the Speaker of the House, and three members of the house selected by the House of Representatives. Duties shall include:

1. Ensuring the funding requested is completed correctly with all supporting documents
2. Ensuring the student organization is eligible for funding
3. Informing the student organization of their ineligible status
4. Deciding upon whether to give an excused absence to any student organization who petitions the House for Representatives based on extenuating circumstances (See Policy 6 in the Membership section)

**Revised and adopted by the Tarleton State University Student Government Association House of Representatives on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2011.**

*Official House of Representatives By-Laws are kept on file in the office of Student Government Association Advisor*