



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

# Statute Revision or Addition

## 31st Congress of Graduate Students

**Bill #:** 35

**Sponsored by:** Rowan

**Date:** 11/06/2023

**Purpose & Description:** A Bill to Reform the Law School Council.

**Be it enacted by the Thirty-First Congress of Graduate Students:**

**Section 1:** This bill may be referred to as "The Law School Governance Reform Act of 2023".

**Section 2:** Chapter 300 of the COGS Code is hereby amended to read:

- 300.1 The Law School Council (LSC) shall be organized and administered by COGS<sub>1</sub> and housed under the Student Bar Association as a funding board within its jurisdiction in accordance with the Florida State University Student Body Statutes.
- 300.2 The purpose of LSC is to represent Law School RSOs before all budgetary committees of SGA and COGS, to sub-allocate funds to Law School RSOs, and to monitor and coordinate the budget activities of the various Law School RSOs.
- 300.3 Composition of the Law School Council:
- A) LSC shall be composed of ~~seven (7)~~ law students ~~elected as Members-at-Large by the Law School Student Body~~ with the following composition:
- 1) Three (3) members being elected from the membership of the Student Bar Association through procedures set by the Student Bar Association, provided that the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the SBA shall not serve as a member of the LSC and that the elections occur no later than the final day of February in each year.
  - 2) The COGS Representatives for the College of Law, serving as ex officio members.

- 3) Five (5) members being students elected at-large from the student body of the College of Law, and
  - 4) A chair elected by the student body of the College of Law.
- B) At-Large Elections shall take place in February of each academic calendar year the Spring SBA Elections, shall be non-partisan, and shall take place under the same procedures used by SBA to elect their executive board.
- 1) Applicants to the LSC will submit an application and resume to the LSC Chair. Candidates for the at-large positions shall declare their candidacy by the candidate declaration deadline, in accordance with SBA procedures.
  - 2) Applicants will be interviewed by the LSC Selections Commission. The at-large members shall be the five candidates who receive the most votes.
  - 3) At the conclusion of the interviews, the LSC Selection Commission will select the 7 board members who will serve on the next LSC
  - 4) LSC board members shall train the Members Elect. At-Large Members' terms will end at the conclusion of the final board meeting of March the fiscal year, at which time At-Large Members Elect and the SBA representatives shall take office.
- C) A rising 2L or 3L who currently serves as an at-Large Member on the LSC Board and wishes to remain on the board for the upcoming fiscal year will be permitted to submit a statement of continued interest. Those statements will be reviewed by the outgoing Chair to determine if the member is for to remain on the board for future service. In the event that the current Chair seeks to remain on the board, the statement of continued interest will be submitted to the LSC Selections Commission for review. The Chair shall be elected in the same manner as the at-large members, with the candidate receiving the most votes being the winner. Candidates must have previously served on the LSC in some capacity prior to declaring their candidacy for Chair, unless no candidates with such service have declared.
- D) An administrative or faculty representative shall serve as an advisor to the LSC Board. This representative shall assist the Board in ensuring that LSC is compliant with the COGS Code, the Florida State University Student Body Statutes, Law School Policy, and Florida State University Policies and Procedures.
- E) The LSC Selections Commission will be composed of the COGS Speaker, the Law School Administration Representative to LSC, the Deputy Speaker of Finance, the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee, and the outgoing LSC chair, unless they seek reelection.

~~1) In the event that the LSC Chair seeks reelection, a 3L appointed by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, or an incumbent of the LSC may serve on the commission in their place.~~

~~FE) Vacancies of the LSC Board shall be filled by appointment by the LSC Selections Commission. Vacancies in the at-large positions shall be filled through two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining LSC members after a publicly noticed application and interview period. Vacancies in the seats representing the SBA shall be filled by the procedures set by SBA.~~

~~F) Should the Chair become permanently vacant, the Vice Chair shall become the Chair. If there is no Vice Chair when the Chair becomes permanently vacant, the Treasurer shall become Chair. If there is no Vice Chair and no Treasurer when the Chair becomes permanently Vacant, the LSC shall elect a Chair for the remainder of their term from the remaining at-large members by majority vote of the LSC members. Vacancies in the Vice Chair or Treasurer shall be filled by the Chair appointing an at-large member to said position, subject to the confirmation of a majority of the LSC members.~~

#### 300.4 The Executive Officers

~~A) Prior to the installation of the new board members, the outgoing LSC Chair shall invite Members Elect to submit a statement of interest to serve on the LSC Board as Chairperson, Treasurer, or Secretary. The at-large candidate who receives the most votes at the Spring election shall become the Vice Chair of the LSC. The at-large candidate who receives the second-most votes at the Spring election shall become the Treasurer of the LSC.~~

~~B) The outgoing LSC Chair shall appoint the Chair. Upon appointment, the outgoing LSC Chair shall consult with the new Chair to appoint the new Treasurer and Secretary.~~

~~1) In the event that the outgoing Chair seeks re-appointment, they will announce their intent to serve in that capacity to the members elect. Should a Member Elect seek the appointment of Chair, the position of Chair will go to a vote with the members elect and the person who receives the majority will be appointed Chair.~~

~~C) Should a vacancy occur in an Executive Office, the LSC Chair shall appoint a replacement from its Board for the remainder of the term.~~

#### 300.5 Duties of the Executive Officers

A) The Chair Shall:

- 1) Preside over all LSC meetings.
- 2) Represent LSC in all official business and budget matters before COGS or the Student Senate.
- 3) Have the authority to call special meetings of LSC.

- 4) Be responsible for all official correspondence of LSC.
- 5) Perform any other duties as assigned by LSC or this code.
- 6) Act as liaison between law school student organizations and SGA Accounting.
- 7) Not vote on any matter before the LSC, except to break a tie vote.

B) The Treasurer shall:

- 1) Assume all duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.
- 2) Keep an accurate and up-to-date budget.
- 3) Perform any other duties as assigned by the LSC Chair or this code.
- 4) Attend any budgetary meetings as an LSC representative in the event that the LSC Chair is unable to attend.
- 5) Work with the Deputy Speaker of Finance in order to perform any requested external audits in compliance with this Code.

C) The ~~Secretary~~ Vice Chair shall:

- 1) Keep accurate minutes of all LSC meetings
- 2) Email the minutes to the Chair at the conclusion of each LSC meeting.
- 3) Keep apprised of any changes in SGA Statutes and COGS Code that may affect the bylaws of the LSC and recommend changes to the Council if needed to comply with SGA Statutes and COGS Code.
- 4) Serve as presiding officer of the LSC in the absence of the Chair, during which time the Vice Chair shall not vote, except as to break tie votes.
- 35) Perform any other duties as assigned by the LSC Chair or this Code.

300.6

Appropriation

- A) LSC shall allocate those funds granted to it by COGS to the Recognized Student Organizations at the Law School in a fiscally responsible manner, keeping in mind the purpose of the allocation, which is to provide activities and services for the benefit of the maximum number of students.
- B) LSC shall submit a draft budget on behalf of all Law School RSOs to COGS in compliance with all requirements of the Annual Budget process. COGS shall make all budget allocations to the LSC in the Expense category.
- C) All LSC allocations and transfers made outside of the semesterly budget, whether original allocations, or after the fact amendments to the budget,

shall require the signature of either the Speaker of COGS, or the Deputy Speaker for Finance. The Speaker or Deputy Speaker may deny any allocation or amendment deemed excessive or irresponsible. If an allocation is denied, the LSC Chair may, within seventy-two (72) hours of being notified of the denial, appeal the denial to the Congress, where it shall be debated and voted on during the "Funding Requests" agenda item. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of COGS members present and voting is required to approve the allocation, notwithstanding the Speaker or Deputy Speaker's denial.

- D) LSC shall sub-allocate its ordained funds to its member RSOs consistent with the Florida State University Student Body Constitution, Statutes, and A&S Fee Guidelines, as well as this code and any other applicable rules and regulations. Within twenty days of the COGS Annual Budget being signed by the Vice President of Student Affairs, the LSC Chair shall convene the LSC to begin the process of budgeting the yearly making allocations to member RSOs for the upcoming Fall semester. The process for making allocations for the Spring semester of a fiscal year
- 1) The LSC Chair and Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring that members and member RSOs are properly informed about the budgetary process, its timelines, and the total budget allocated to the LSC by COGS.
  - 2) The LSC Chair, at the above-mentioned meeting and through email to the members and member RSOs, shall announce the dates that:
    - a) The Budget Request Form opens,
    - b) The Budget Request Form closes,
    - c) The LSC will hold hearings on budget requests,
    - d) The LSC will deliberate on the final LSC budget.
  - 3) The Budget Request Form shall be created by the Treasurer, in consultation with the Chair, the LSC, and SG&A Accounting. If at all possible, the Form need not be overhauled every year.
  - 4) The procedures for budgetary hearings and deliberations shall be determined under the LSC bylaws.
  - 5) Any member representing the SBA who sits on their executive board shall abstain from voting or debating on the SBA line item, as required by Student Body Statutes. Likewise, any LSC member who sits on an RSO executive board shall abstain from voting or debating on their RSO's line item.
    - a) The LSC Chair may also determine whether a member has a conflict of interest and may bar them from voting or debating on the conflicted line item.

- b) Any such determination by the Chair may be appealed to the Board and overturned by majority vote.
- 6) The LSC Budget shall contain an "Unallocated" line item, which shall be used to fund requests by RSOs made outside the annual semesterly budget cycle. It shall also contain an "LSC Expense" line item, which may be drawn upon by the Chair, with the agreement of the Treasurer, in support of the mission of the LSC.
- 7) Line items ~~must be split into an allocation~~ shall only be for the Fall semester the budget is being created for ~~and the Spring semester. Monies in the Fall semester allocations not spent by December 31<sup>st</sup> shall be swept back into the LSC Unallocated budget and reallocated through a process set by LSC Bylaws.~~
- 8) The Chair shall make every effort to complete the budgetary process within one month of beginning the process ~~prior to the final board meeting of March.~~
- 9) A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the LSC is required for final passage of the budget.
- 10) Upon passage of the budget by LSC, the allocations shall be submitted to the COGS Assembly, in the form of a bill, for final approval.
- E) LSC shall only sub-allocate funds to law school organizations which have been registered, in accordance with COGS and SGA guidelines.
- F) The allocation to LSC shall not be obligated or expended until the COGS annual Budget has been approved by the COGS Speaker and the Deputy Speaker for Finance, and the Vice President for Student Affairs,
- G) To shift funding between allocation categories, LSC RSOs shall use process budget revisions and transfers on the forms prescribed by this code with all the requisite approvals prior to implementation.
- H) During the period between the creation of semesterly budgets, the LSC shall have the authority to transfer monies between organizations, funding categories within a specific organization, or from the "Unallocated" line item to a requesting organization. Requests for such transfers and new funding shall be made by a form provided by the LSC and shall be considered in accordance with the LSC Bylaws, subject to the conflict of interest rules in this Chapter and the approval of the proper COGS officials as stated in this Chapter.
- I) Notwithstanding Section 210.3, COGS Code, requests to the LSC, of \$1,000 or more may be directly presented to the LSC, provided that any suballocation of \$1,000 or more shall not be effectuated until the first COGS meeting after notification of the allocation was provided to the Speaker by the LSC Chair. At such meeting, COGS may disapprove the allocation by motion with a majority vote of the members present and voting.

300.7 The powers and duties of LSC

- A) LSC shall have the following powers and duties under this code and shall be subject to all other applicable Florida State University Student Body Statutes in the exercise of its powers and duties.
- 1) LSC shall hold budgetary hearings at which member RSOs ~~must be present to submit~~ their requests. In the event that a member of an RSO that submitted a request is unable to attend, the LSC Chair may present the RSO's request on their behalf.
  - 2) LSC shall then represent its member RSOs at all budgetary hearings and procedures of COGS.
  - 3) LSC shall report to the Internal Affairs Committee of COGS as requested by the Internal Affairs Committee, with a minimum fifteen (15) school days' notice.
  - 4) LSC may pass Resolutions on behalf of the Law School Student Body.
  - 5) LSC may remove any non-ex officio council member for nonfeasance by an affirmative, majority vote of all those board members not being considered for removal in the instant controversy.
  - 6) LSC may, by a majority vote, recommend any member for impeachment for misfeasance or malfeasance in accordance with Chapter 114 of this code.
  - 7) LSC shall adopt bylaws at the second meeting of the LSC following the annual installation of new at-large board members by a majority vote of the total membership of the LSC.

300.8 Meetings

- A) LSC shall hold open meetings, in compliance with Chapter 203, Student Body Statutes, on a twice-monthly basis and shall send copies of the minutes of such meetings to all Law School RSOs and COGS.
- B) A special meeting of LSC may be called by the LSC Chair or by petition of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Presidents of the Law School RSOs.
- C) Quorum shall be a majority of the total membership of LSC. A quorum must be present for LSC to conduct business.
- D) All LSC action must be approved by a majority vote of those LSC members present and voting.
- E) LSC shall announce and provide notice of its meetings and procedures to Law School RSOs. It shall provide notice at least five (5) school days before any forms, requests, or petitions are due for the meeting.

- F) Attendance at monthly meetings is mandatory for all LSC board members. If a member must be absent from a monthly meeting, they must provide adequate notice to the LSC Chair. If a member is absent from more than two monthly meetings, that member will be considered for removal by members of the board. All board members, except for the member at issue, will vote on the removal of the board member. A majority vote will effectively remove the member from the board. The vacancy will then be filled in accordance to the procedures outlined above.

300.9 Transition

- A) This section shall be automatically repealed on November 1, 2024.
- B) Upon the enactment of this section, the Law School Council, as presently constituted, shall remain in office. The first elections of at-large members shall take place during the Spring 2024 SBA Elections. All members under the composition set by the Law School Governance Reform Act of 2023 shall take office upon the completion of the final LSC meeting for the month of March.
- C) The LSC, as currently constituted, shall meet in December to allocate the remainder of their funding for the Spring 2024 semester in the manner laid out in COGS Code §300.6(D).
- D) Due to shifting budgetary timelines for the current academic year, the FY 2024-2025 LSC Budget shall be drafted by the new LSC no later than the last day of September 2024, but preferably prior to the end of the spring semester.

**Section 3:** This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2024.

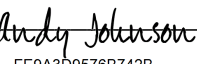
**Read:** 11/6/2023

**COGS Vote:** 21-0-0

Passed: November 6, 2023

**CERTIFIED TO THE STUDENT BODY**

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 Speaker of the Congress of Graduate Students

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 SGA Staff Official



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*Joshua Burns*

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Deputy Speaker for Finance

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*Dr. Amy Hecht*

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Vice President of Student Affairs