

Arab Open University

AOU Student Council Bylaws

Article 1: Nomenclature

This document is named “AOU Student Council Bylaws”.

Article (2): Definitions:

The following words and expressions, wherever used herein, shall bear the meanings assigned thereto unless the context indicates otherwise:

University	The Arab Open University (AOU)
Branch	An AOU branch
Rector	Rector of an AOU branch
Student	A student of the Arab Open University in a branch, equally treated whether males or females.
General Assembly	It consists of all enrolled students continuing their study at a Branch.
Student Council	It is an elected student body representing all branch students. Its location is at the branch, and the General Assembly elects its members as decreed hereunder.
Administrative Board	The student groups elected by the members of the General Assembly as stated herein.

First: Student Council

Article 3: Student Council Definition

- A- A Student Council is established in every University branch. It shoulders the task of achieving the objectives stated herein. It shall conform to all rules, regulations and bylaws meeting the requirements of the Ministry of Higher Education and the competent authority of the private education in the host country.
- B- The term of office for the “Student Council” is one academic year and it is deemed representative of all Branch students.

Article 4: Objectives and Duties of the Student Council

The Student Council shall aim to achieve the following:

- Represent the students before the AOU management in the respective branch; serve them, and express their point of view.
- Strengthen the spirit of participation and cooperation among students, AOU management, and faculty members.
- Develop students’ awareness of moral values.
- Inspire the students’ spirit of leadership and responsibility.
- Exercise freedom of speech.
- Enrich the quality of scientific, intellectual and social life, as well as sportive, artistic and cultural activities on campus, in addition to contributing to supervise them.
- Make the most of various student potentials in serving the community.
- Organize and coordinate students’ individual and group activities.
- Partake in the efforts exerted to achieve maximum benefit from available student capabilities.
- Members of the Student Council shall comply with the effective bylaws of the University and the regulations and laws in force in the country hosting the branch, and they shall encourage the students to comply with such rules and bylaws as well as motivate them to perform academically well and respect others.
- Strengthen good relations with the branch students, as well as with students of other AOU branches.

Two: Student Council Membership

Article 5: Student Council Nomination Conditions

All AOU students are entitled to nominate themselves for membership of the Student Council in accordance with the following conditions:

- 1- The candidate must be enrolled in the AOU branch and attend in a regular fashion.
- 2- He/she should have completed not less than 32 credit hours.
- 3- The GPA of the student must not be less than 2.50 at the time of nomination.
- 4- He/she should not be expected to graduate during the semester in which the election is held.
- 5- He/she must not have any disciplinary penalty since he/she joined the University.
- 6- He/she must not have had any punitive ruling for committing a breach of honour and trust. The nominated student undertakes to present his/her criminal record that supports the aforementioned condition.
- 7- He/she must not be an AOU employee.

These conditions shall remain in force throughout the term of membership.

Article 6: End/Drop of Student Council Membership:

A: Membership of the Student Council shall end in the following cases:

- 1- Graduation
- 2- Final dismissal or withdrawal
- 3- Suspension of enrolment for more than one semester.
- 4- Suspension of enrolment because of a disciplinary or academic penalty.

B: Membership shall be dropped in the following cases:

1. Submitting resignation to the Chairman of the Student Council
2. Losing one or more Student Council nomination conditions.
3. Violating any article or provision of the bylaws of the Student Council.
4. Issuance of a final disciplinary decision of conviction against the student.
5. Breaching the AOU Student Behaviour Bylaws in force.

6. A decision by the by a two-thirds majority of Student Council to drop membership.
- C- The member whose membership is dropped shall be replaced by a candidate who obtained less than him/her in the number of votes in their election.

Third: Student Council Formation

Article 7: Electoral Area

Each academic program shall be an independent electoral area for nominating the representatives of the program in the Student Council.

Article 8: Student Council Formation:

- A- At the beginning of each academic year, the number of members of the Branch student Council is determined as one member for every one hundred students from the General Assembly, provided that it does not exceed 50 members.
- B- The Regional Centre shall be treated as a University Branch in terms of Student Council Formation if its student numbers are over 1500. Nevertheless, if a Regional Centre has less than the said number, the students of this Centre shall be listed in the electoral areas of the Branch, and they have the right to nominate themselves in the respective electoral area of the branch.
- C- The number of representatives for each electoral area in the Student Council is determined by the percentage of the student numbers in the academic program to the total number of students of the General Assembly, if this percentage is rounded.

Fourth: Student Council Meetings

Article (9): Student Council Meetings

- A- The Student Council shall be called to a normal meeting at least twice per semester, except during the summer semester, upon the invitation of the Chairman of its Administrative Board, and following coordination with the AOU Branch Management.

- B- The invitation shall be directed to all the members through the billboards available on the campus, electronic means, and University forums at least 10 days earlier. The agenda shall be attached to the invitation.
- C- The Chairman of the Administrative Board or his/her deputy shall preside over the Student Council.
- D- The Student Council shall convene an extraordinary meeting upon the request of the Administrative board or a third of its members, in coordination with the AOU management. The purpose of the meeting ought to be noted. The invitation for an extraordinary meeting shall be sent at least three days before its due date. However, if the Administrative Board does not respond to the request within 7 days, the said members may directly call for the meeting after they obtain approval of the AOU management.

Article 10: Meetings Legality and Quorum

- A- Quorum of Student Council meetings is reached if the majority of its members (Half of the number of the members plus one) attend. In cases where quorum is not reached, the meeting shall be postponed for one hour after which it will be legal regardless of the number of attendees.
- B- In holding its meetings, the Council shall take into account the local regulations and norms of the bodies of higher education in the relevant branch country.
- C- The withdrawal of any number of members during a Student Council meeting shall not affect the quorum of its continuation, if the meeting begins in order. The Council may postpone a session to reconvene at a time and place specified by the meeting chairperson following the approval of the branch management, regardless of the quorum and without changing its agenda.

Article 11: Meeting Topics

- A- During its regular meetings, the Student Council shall consider the following topics:
 - Approving the agenda of the meeting.

- Making decisions and recommendations within the frame of the Student Council's objectives.
- Discussing the administrative and financial report submitted by the Administrative Board for approving it.
- Discussing the annual budget presented by the Administrative Board for approval.
- Censuring the Administrative Board if there is a justification and a need.
- Allowing to discuss any relevant topics under the item "Other Matters."

B- The Student Council shall discuss only matters stated in the agenda. If any member asks to add a new topic to the agenda, it shall not be considered except after completing the discussion of the agenda. Then, the Student Council shall decide to add it under "AOB".

Article 12: Student Council Decisions

Student Council Decisions are considered valid if the majority of its members are present (half number of members plus one) except in the following matters that require the approval of two thirds of attending members:

A: Censuring the Administrative Board.

B: Modifications of the Student Council Bylaws.

C: Dropping the membership of a member of the Student Council after submitting the necessary evidence.

Article 13: Rights of Student Council Members

A- Members of the Student Council shall have the right to

1. Hold the Administrative Board accountable.
2. Ask for information from the Administrative Board
3. Ask to provide information in writing
4. Present suggestions.
5. Request a point of order in writing and the matter shall be left to the Chairman of the Administrative Board to suspend the decision.

- B- The present members shall be entitled to vote on any presented suggestion by approving, rejecting, or abstaining. This right is exercised in accordance with the means determined by the meeting chairperson.
- C- All Student Council members are obligated not to address members without the permission of the meeting chairperson.

Article 14: Expression of Opinions during meetings

- 1- Priority of speaking (turn taking):
 - When the turn of a member is due, he/she shall be given the right to speak, and he/she shall not be interrupted except by the Chairman, only when he/she talks about a different topic or disturb the order.
 - When a member ends his/her speech, the chairperson may comment if he/she wishes, or allow any other member to comment on the speaker.
 - The same member may comment only once, and the chairperson of the meeting is entitled to comment on his/her remarks.
- 2- Submitting Proposals:
 - If any proposal is submitted in the presence of its proponent, it shall be read to the Student Council.
 - The turn shall be given to two supporters of the proposal and to two of opponents of the proposal.
 - Then, it shall be put to the vote.
 - The proponent may withdraw or modify the proposal before putting it to the vote.
 - In the case of a modification, it shall be put to the vote following a new discussion. The Chairperson may clarify some necessary issues resulting from the proposal before voting.

Article 15: Order Committee

The Order Committee is formed following a decision made by the Administrative Board to assist the chairperson in maintaining order inside the meeting hall. The decision to form this committee shall include appointing a chairperson, a deputy chairperson, and committee members.

Article 16: Duties of Order Committee

The Order Committee shall

1. organize the entry, exist and re-entry of Student Council members to the meeting hall;
2. receive the requests of entitled rights of the members and submit them as soon as possible to the chairman;
3. count the voting results (yes, no, abstention);
4. announce them to the Student Council;
5. maintain order and prevent any person who is not allowed to enter the meeting place. The members of the Committee shall wear the relevant committee badge.

Article 17: Penalties During Meetings

During the meeting, the Chairman may use the following penalties against any member who violates the provisions hereof, taking into account its gradual application.

A- notice

B- verbal warning

C- expulsion from the meeting.

The Chairman may deprive any member who misuses “the point of order” after warning him/her.

Fifth: Student Council Administrative Board

Article 18: Definition of Administrative Board

The Administrative Board shall comprise nine members elected through a free and direct secret voting in accordance with the provisions stated herein.

Article 19: Conditions of Administrative Board Nomination

Any member of the Student Council may nominate for membership of Administrative Board.

Article 20: Organizing Administrative Board Election

The election of the Administrative Board shall be held after the approval of the University Management in writing and under its supervision, and in accordance with the rules and procedures stated herein.

Article 21: Formation of Administrative Board

- A. The Administrative Board shall meet after the completion of the election process not later than seven days and elect from its members the following posts:
 - Chairman
 - Vice Chairman
 - Secretary.
 - Treasurer.
 - The rest of the members' duties shall be determined hereunder.

- B. The Administrative Board may create new positions.

Article 22: Duties of Administrative Board and Its Members

A- Duties of Administrative Board:

The Administrative Board shall be responsible for managing the affairs of the Student Council hereunder, in particular:

1. Implementation of General Assembly Resolutions.
2. Defining income and expenses.
3. Submitting an administrative and financial report to the Assembly.
4. Carrying out the work and organization of activities leading to the achievement of the Council's objectives

B- Duties of Administrative Board Chairman:

The Chairman shall carry out the following functions:

1. Representing the Student Council before the University management.
2. Presiding over the meetings of the Administrative Board and the Student Council.

3. Signing correspondence and documents issued by the Administrative Board.
4. Any other tasks within the competence of the Student Council.

C- Duties of the Vice President of the Administrative Board:

1. Chairing student committees.
2. Representing the student committees before the Administrative Board.
3. Submitting a periodic report on the student committees.
4. Carrying out the duties delegated by the Chairman of the Administrative Board.
5. Acting on behalf of the Chairman of the Administrative Board in the case of his/her absence.

D- Duties of the Secretary:

1. Calling for meetings of the Administrative Board.
2. Following up the implementation of the decisions of the Administrative Board.
3. Supervising the preparation of correspondence issued by the Administrative Board.
4. Keeping all documents and documents of the Student Council and its seal.
5. Taking action to convene Student Council meetings and preparing their agendas.
6. Supervising the recording of meeting minutes.

E- Duties of the Treasurer:

1. Collect the revenues of the Student Council through receipt vouchers sealed by the Student Council's stamp.
2. Disburse the funds subject to approval by Administrative Board Chairman.
3. Prepare the financial reports for the Student Council.

Article 23: Administrative Board Meetings

- A. The meeting of the Administrative Board shall be held upon the invitation of its Chairman for four meetings per academic semester or as required. The Board may hold an extraordinary meeting at the request of one-third of its members to discuss any further matters.
- B. If the Chairman is absent, his Deputy shall act on his/her behalf and enjoy the same powers.
- C. Any member of the Administrative Board may request at the beginning of the meeting to include any matter on the agenda following the consent of the Administrative Board.
- D. The extraordinary meeting topics shall be limited to matters for which the meeting is held. If the meeting ends for any reason without completing the agenda, the incomplete matters shall have priority on the following agenda, subject to the approval of the Administrative Board.

Article 24: Formation of Committees

The Administrative Board is entitled to form permanent and temporary committees from its members or from Student Council members.

Article 25: Legality of Administrative Board Meetings and their Quorum

- A. The regular or extraordinary meetings of the Administrative Board shall reach quorum if the majority of the members attend.
- B. Decisions shall be made by the majority of the Board members, and if the voting is equal, the chairperson, or, in his absence, his/her Deputy, shall be the casting vote.
- C. The meetings of the Administrative Board shall begin with adopting its agenda. Each member shall have the right to discuss any matter on the agenda and may make his/her own proposals.

Article 26: End or Drop of Administrative Board Membership

- A. The membership of the Administrative Board ends in the following cases:
 - 1- Resignation submitted to the Student Council Chairman or his/her Delegate.
 - 2- Absence from meetings for four consecutive times

- 3- Absence from the Administrative Board meetings for seven intermittent times without an acceptable excuse.
- B. The member whose membership is dropped shall be replaced by the next candidate in the number of votes obtained in the elections.

Article 27: Resignation of the Administrative Board

- A. The Administrative Board shall be deemed resigned by the resignation of the majority of its members; it shall continue to perform its duties till the election of a new Administrative Board in coordination with the University management.
- B. Failing that, the Rector is entitled to freeze the council's work and form a temporary committee to manage its affairs until the election of a new Administrative Board is held, in accordance with the rules and regulations hereof.
- C. This committee is mentioned in paragraph A of Article 32 hereof.

Section 6: Rules and procedures of Student Council Election

Article (28) Voters:

- A- Each Member of the General Assembly shall have the right to vote. A voter may not give his/her opinion more than once in a single election.
- B- There shall not be a representative or a delegate in the election.

Article (29) Candidates

- A- Any member of the General Assembly who meets the conditions set forth in Article 5 hereof shall have the right to stand for election to the Student Council within his/her electoral area to which he/she belongs. The nomination application shall be submitted along with the necessary documents from the candidate personally.
- B- The application shall be not submitted by a delegate or a representative.

Article (30) Student Lists:

The AOU branch management shall prepare lists of students who have the right to vote and these lists shall be grouped in terms of academic programs.

Article (31) Nomination Announcement

- A. The AOU branch management shall declare open the nomination period for the Student Council Membership in the first month of each new academic year.
- B. The nomination announcement shall be publicized before the date of election at least ten days (school days), and the nomination period shall not be less than five consecutive school days.

Article (32) Procedures of Student Council Nomination

A- The University Rector shall form a temporary election committee in the first week of the beginning of the academic year including. This committee shall comprise the following:

- 1- One member representing Branch Student Affairs Department.
- 2 - Two faculty members: one of whom shall be Committee Chairman.
- 3. One member representing University management.
- 4. One member from the current Student Council.
- 5. The legal adviser of the University or the branch.

B- The Temporary Election Committee shall carry out its functions in accordance with the provisions hereof.

C- The Temporary Election Committee shall form a sub-committee for each academic program as deemed appropriate and after the approval of the Rector to help in preparing and supervising the election procedures in each program.

Article 33: Roles and Tasks of Temporary Election Committee

A- The Temporary Election Committee shall be held from the decision of its formation to the end of voting in all sub-committees.

- B- The Temporary Election Committee shall determine the following:
1. Date and place of receiving nomination applications.
 2. Application form for nomination and receipt of the application.
 3. Determination of polling places and number of the polls.
 4. Receiving the names of the delegates in the polling and counting committees.
 5. Reviewing the lists of students and ensuring their validity.
 6. Coordinating with the AOU Branch management in determining places for the student groups and publishing the election printings inside the campus.
 7. Forming sub-committees of polling and counting for academic programs. In coordination with the AOU Branch management, any public welfare association or relevant origination may be invited to monitor the election process.
 8. Monitoring the voting process, as well as considering, and deciding on the complaints received from the sub-committees.

Article 34: Nomination withdrawal

The candidate may be entitled to withdraw his/her nomination in writing at least 48 hours prior to the election, provided that he/she shall submit the withdrawal request in person. Under no circumstance, no candidate shall be prevented from withdrawing from the elections.

Article 35: Branch Polling Committee (BPC)

- A- The BPC shall meet at the office of the Temporary Elections Committee at least one hour before the polling date. The ballot minutes should contain the following information:
- Place, date and time of the start of polling.
 - List of the names of those who have the right to vote.
 - Number of voters based on the list of the names of those who have the right to vote.
 - Number of voters based on the digital sequence of voting papers.
 - Names of the members of the committees present at the beginning of the polling and their signature.

- Any replacement, which occurs in the members of the committee and the times of this replacement.
 - Any interruption that occurs during the polling process plus a statement of the cause of interruption and its duration.
 - The record shall be closed immediately after polling time ends.
 - Names of the members of the committees present at the end of the ballot and their signature.
 - Any other events, if any.
- B- If there is any problem arising during the voting process, the Committee shall be contacted for deciding on it.

Article 36: Voting Process

Voting shall be secret as follows:

- 1- Checking the ID of voters. The University ID, Civil ID, Driving License, Security ID, Passport, or any other official identification document shall be approved for voting.
- 2- The Chairman of the sub-committee hands each voter a ballot paper stamped and numbered.
- 3- Ticking before the name of the voter on the name lists to avoid any repetition.

Article 37: Voting duration:

The voting period shall be one school day (from 08:00 to 04:00)

Article (38) Vote-counting

- A- The polling committees shall close the polls well after signing the minutes of polling process. The polls shall be moved with all documents to the main hall of vote counting which is determined by the Temporary Elections Committee.
- B- The Vote Counting Committees, which are formed by the Temporary Elections Committee, shall count votes in accordance with the rules stated herein.

Article 39: Cancellation of votes

The ballot paper shall be deemed invalid if :

- it includes more than the required number of candidates.
- is not stamped.
- is not numbered
- includes a reference to the voter.
- includes a mark or a scratch.

A- In case of difference of opinion regarding a ballot paper, it shall be referred to the Temporary Election Committee, which shall decide on the difference. In the case of equal votes, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

Article 40: Minutes of Vote Counting

The minutes of the vote count committee shall be recorded, and they should include the following information:

1. Place and Time of the start of vote counting
2. Names and signatures of the voting count committee members at the beginning of the minutes
3. The number of ballot papers in the polls.
4. Mentioning if there was a match or mismatch between the number of the ballot numbers match and the number of voters based on the digital series of voting papers, and mentioning the difference if present.
5. Invalid ballot papers
6. The total number of votes for each candidate
7. Assuring the integrity of vote counting.
8. Any other events.
9. Names and signatures of the voting committee members upon the closing of the minutes.

Article 41: Announcement of voting results

The results of the ballot and counting shall be announced immediately after completing the counting of votes and after the minutes are approved.

Article 42: Selection in case of tie

In the event of a tie between the candidates and none of them withdraws, the choice between them shall be according to the following criteria:

- The highest GPA.
- Toss of a tie in the previous item.

Article 43: Receipt and delivery

- A. The new Student Council shall take over the tasks of the former Student Council under the supervision of the Temporary Elections Committee within five days after the announcement of the results. These include:
 1. Student Council Office and its equipment.
 2. Student Council seals.
 3. Revenues, financial books, invoices, receipt and issue vouchers
 4. Incoming and outbound files in full.
 5. Student Council Archive.
- B. The former Student Council undertakes to hand over any custody, whether material or cash, in its possession, and it is legally liable for any loss or damage pertaining.

Section 7: Student Council Financial Affairs

Article (44): Revenues

- A. The revenues of the Student Council shall consist of:
 1. The financial support granted by the University branch depending on financial possibilities for each branch.
 2. Approved voluntary contributions and unconditional donations.
 3. Revenues agreed upon in advance in coordination with the branch management and activities of the Student Council and its committees.
 4. Any contributions or fees decided by the members of the General Assembly.
- B. The Student Council's revenue shall be deposited in its own account in the bank in which the AOU branch has accounts. The payment shall be done

through issuing vouchers signed by the Chairman and the Treasurer, and the validity of signature shall be linked to bilateral signature system.

Article (45): Financial Controller

The Student Council shall have a Financial Controller assigned by the University management, who shall audit accounts and expenditures and prepare the budget of the following year.

Article (46): Petty Cash

The Chairman of the Student Council shall be given a petty cash of no more than \$500 US dollars, or its equivalent, depending on the currency value in each branch country, from the petty cash budget and urgent expenses. The Treasurer shall keep this amount and the payment shall be based on vouchers approved by the **BPC** Chairman and the Treasurer, and signed by the receiver. The advance shall be compensated when the expenses reach 75% of the original value.

Section 8: Student Affairs Coordination Committee

Article (47): Formation of Coordination Committee and its duties

- A. "Student Affairs Coordination Committee" shall be formed at the University and shall consist of all the chairpersons of Administrative Bodies at the AOU branches.
- B. The Committee shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from its members.
- C. Upon the invitation of its chairperson, the Committee shall hold two meetings a year through electronic communication.
- D. The Committee shall be responsible for coordination and experience exchange among branches in the areas of its business and activity.
- E. The Committee shall annually select its representative in the University Council in accordance with the AOU Bylaws.

Section 9: Dissolution of Student Council

Article (48): Reasons of Student Council Dissolution

1. The Student Council shall be dissolved when the majority of its members had resigned.
2. The AOU branch management may dissolve the Student Council in case of violating any provisions of Article 4 hereof.

Article (49): Business conduct during dissolution of Student Council

- A. In case of dissolution of the Student Council, the AOU management announces a new date of election not extending two months after the date of dissolution.
- B. The dissolved Student Council shall continue to conduct business and perform its duties up to the election date.

Article (50): General Provisions:

- A. The Bylaws hereof shall enter into force as of the academic year 2018/2019.
- B. The Bylaws hereof shall cancel former ones pertaining to “the AOU Student Council”
- C. University Rectors and concerned bodies shall implement the provisions of these bylaws.