



الجامعة العربية المفتوحة
Arab Open University

Student Council Bylaws at the Arab Open University

Approved by University Council No. 63

July 11, 2018

Contents

Article 1: Title	4
Article 2: Definitions	4
Article 3: Student Council Definition	4
Article 4: Student Council Objectives and Duties	4
Article 5: Student Council Nomination Conditions	5
Article 6: Student Council Membership Cancellation	6
Article 7: Electoral Area	6
Article 8: Student Council Formation	6
Article 9: Student Council Meetings	7
Article 10: Meetings Legality and Quorum	7
Article 11: Meeting Topics	7
Article 12: Student Council Decisions	8
Article 13: Student Council Rights	8
Article 14: Expression of Opinions During Meetings	8
Article 15: Order Committee	9
Article 16: Order Committee Duties	9
Article 17: Penalties During Meetings	9
Article 18: Definition of Administrative Board	10
Article 19: Administrative Board Nomination Conditions	10
Article 20: Organizing the Administrative Board Election	10
Article 21: Administrative Board Formation	10
Article 22: Duties of the Administrative Board and Its Members	10
Article 23: Administrative Board Meetings	11
Article 24: Formation of Committees	12
Article 25: Legality of Administrative Board Meetings and their Quorum	12
Article 26: Administrative Board Membership End/Drop	12

Article 27: Resignation of the Administrative Board	12
Article 28: Voters	13
Article 29: Candidates	13
Article 30: Student Lists	13
Article 31: Nomination Announcement	13
Article 32: Student Council Nomination Procedures	13
Article 33: Temporary Election Committee Roles and Tasks	14
Article 34: Nomination Withdrawal	14
Article 35: Branch Polling Committee (BPC)	14
Article 36: Voting Process	15
Article 37: Voting Duration	15
Article 38: Votes Counting	15
Article 39: Votes Cancellation	15
Article 40: Vote Counting Committee Minutes	16
Article 41: Voting Results Announcement	16
Article 42: Selection, If Tied	16
Article 43: Student Council Passing	16
Article 44: Council Revenues	17
Article 45: Financial Monitor	17
Article 46: Petty Cash	17
Article 47: Coordination Committee Formation and Duties	18
Article 48: Student Council Dissolution Reasons	18
Article 49: Conduct during Student Council Dissolution	18
Article 50: General Provisions	18

Article 1: Title

The present bylaws shall be named: “Student Council Bylaws at the Arab Open University.”

Article 2: Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings specified hereunder:

University	The Arab Open University
Director/Rector	The Director/Rector of an Arab Open University branch or campus
Branch	An Arab Open University branch or campus
Student	A student of AOU in a branch
General Assembly	An assembly that consists of all enrolled students continuing their study at a branch
Student Council	An elected 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 group elected by the general assembly members as stated herein

First: Student Council

Article 3: Student Council Definition

- A) Established in every branch, the student council shoulders the task of achieving the objectives stated herein. In addition, it shall conform to all laws, regulations and bylaws by the Ministry of Higher Education and the competent authority of private higher education in the branch country.
- B) The student council represents all students in its branch, and is active for one academic year.

Article 4: Student Council Objectives and Duties

The student council shall aim to achieve the following:

- Represent students, serve them and express their points of view before AOU’s management in the respective branch.
- Strengthen the spirit of participation and cooperation among students, management and faculty members.
- Develop students’ awareness to moral and professional values.
- Inspire the spirit of leadership and responsibility in students.
- Exercise freedom of speech.
- Enrich and oversee the scientific, social, cultural, intellectual, sportive, and artistic activities in campus.
- Utilize and direct students’ diverse energies toward community service and social activities.
- Organize and coordinate students’ individual and group activities.
- Partake in achieving the maximum benefit from the available University capabilities and resources.
- Student council members shall comply with the effective University bylaws as well as the regulations and laws in force in the branch country. They shall encourage students to comply as well, and motivate them to have good conduct, respect others, and care for good education.
- Strengthen relations amongst branch students, and with other branches.

Second: Student Council Membership

Article 5: Student Council Nomination Conditions

All branch students are entitled to nominate themselves for student council membership, bearing the following conditions:

- 1) The candidate must be enrolled in the branch and attends regularly.
- 2) The candidate should have completed not less than 32 credit hours.
- 3) The candidate’s GPA must not be less than 2.5 at the time of nomination.
- 4) The candidate should not be expected to graduate during the election semester.
- 5) The candidate must not have any disciplinary penalty since joining the University.
- 6) The candidate must not have had any punitive ruling for committing a breach of honor and trust. The nominated student undertakes to present their criminal record in support of the aforementioned condition.
- 7) The candidate must not be an AOU employee.

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

Article 6: Student Council Membership Cancellation

- A) Membership shall end in the following cases:
- 1) Graduation from the University.
 - 2) Final dismissal or withdrawal from the University.
 - 3) Suspension of enrollment for more than one semester.
 - 4) Suspension of enrollment because of a disciplinary or academic penalty.
- B) Membership shall be dropped in the following cases:
- 1) Submitting resignation letter to the student council chairman or whoever is in his/her place.
 - 2) Losing any nomination condition.
 - 3) Violating any student council bylaws article or provision.
 - 4) Receiving a conviction from a final disciplinary decision.
 - 5) Breaching the AOU student behavior bylaws in force.
 - 6) Dropping membership due to a two-thirds majority decision by the student council.
- C) In the election, the candidate whom was right behind the dropped member in votes shall replace him/her.

Third: Student Council Formation

Article 7: Electoral Area

Each academic program shall be an independent electoral area for nominating the programme representatives in the student council.

Article 8: Student Council Formation

- A) At the beginning of each academic year, one member for every 100 students from the General Assembly becomes a student council member, provided that it does not exceed 50 members.
- B) Every branch regional centre shall be treated the same as a University Branch in terms of student council formation if the number of students exceeded 1,500. If the number of students was lower, the regional center students will count as branch students in the electoral areas, and they will have the right to nominate themselves.
- 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, provided that this percentage is rounded.

Fourth: Student Council Meetings

Article 9: Student Council Meetings

- A) The student council shall be called to a regular meeting twice per semester, except during the summer semester, and that is upon the administrative board chairman invitation following coordination with the branch management.
- B) The invitation shall be directed to all members through on-campus billboards, electronic means and University forums at least 10 days in advance. The agenda shall be attached to the invitation.
- C) The administrative board chairman 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 branch 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, members may directly call for the meeting after they obtain approval from the branch management.

Article 10: Meetings Legality and Quorum

- A) Quorum of student council meetings is reached if the majority of its members (half the registered members + 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 meeting shall not affect the quorum for its continuation if the meeting began correctly. 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 ordinary 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 by the administrative board; approving or rejecting it.
 - Discussing the annual budget presented by the administrative board for approval.

- Ensuring trust in the administrative board.
 - 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 the registered members + one) except in the following matters that require the approval of two-thirds of attending members:

- A) Censuring the administrative board.
- B) Modifying the student council bylaws.
- C) Dropping a membership after submitting the necessary evidence.

Article 13: Student Council Rights

- A) Members of the student council shall have the right to:
 - 1) Question the administrative board.
 - 2) Request information from the administrative board.
 - 3) Request information in writing.
 - 4) Present suggestions.
 - 5) Request a point of order in writing, leaving the matter to the administrative board chairman.
- 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 chosen by the meeting chairperson.
- C) All student council members are obligated not to address other members without the permission of the meeting chairperson.

Article 14: Expression of Opinions During Meetings

- 1) Priority of Speaking (taking turns):
 - When a member’s turn is due, he/she shall be given the right to speak and shall not be interrupted except by the Chairman, and only when gone off-topic or disturbed the order.
 - When a member's turn ends, the chairperson may comment or allow another member to comment on the speaker.
 - The same member may comment only once, and the chairperson of the meeting is entitled to comment on the said remark.

2) Submitting Proposals:

- If any proposal is submitted in the presence of its proponent, it shall be read to the student council.
- Two proposal supporters and two opponents shall argue.
- Then a vote will take place.
- The proponent may withdraw or modify the proposal before putting it to a vote.
- In the case of a modification, it shall be put to a vote following a new discussion. The Chairperson may clarify necessary issues that might result 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: Order Committee Duties

- 1) Organize the entry, exist and re-entry of student council members to the meeting hall.
- 2) Receive entitlement rights requests from members, then submit them as soon as possible to the chairman.
- 3) Count each vote's results (agreement, disagreement, abstention)
- 4) Announce voting results to the student council.
- 5) Maintain order and prevent unauthorized persons from entering the meeting hall. Order committee members shall wear the special committee badge.

Article 17: Penalties During Meetings

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

- A) Notice.
- B) Verbal warning.
- C) Expulsion from the meeting.

The Chairman may deprive any member who mis-uses “point of order” after having warned him/her.

Fifth: Student Council Administrative Board

Article 18: Definition of Administrative Board

The board shall comprise nine members, elected on the first student council meeting by a free and direct anonymous voting, in accordance with the provisions stated herein.

Article 19: Administrative Board Nomination Conditions

Any member of the student council may be nominated for membership in the board.

Article 20: Organizing the Administrative Board Election

The board election shall be held after the branch management approval in writing, and it shall be under its supervision, and in accordance with the rules and procedures stated herein.

Article 21: Administrative Board Formation

- A) The board shall meet after the election, 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 board has the right to create new positions.

Article 22: Duties of the Administrative Board and Its Members

A) Administrative Board Duties

- 1) Implementation of the student council resolutions.
- 2) Preparing the annual budget and displaying it in the student council.
- 3) Submitting an annual administrative and financial report to the student council.
- 4) Carrying out the work and organizing the activities that lead to the achievement of the student council's objectives.

B) Administrative Board Chairman Duties

- 1) Representing the student council before the branch management.
- 2) Presiding over the administrative board and student council meetings.
- 3) Signing correspondence and documents issued by the administrative board.
- 4) Performing any other tasks within the scope of the student council.

C) Vice President of the Administrative Board Duties

- 1) Presiding over student committees.
- 2) Representing student committees before the administrative board.
- 3) Submitting a periodic report on the student committees.
- 4) Carrying out delegated duties by the administrative board chairman.
- 5) Acting on behalf of the chairman in the case of his/her absence.

D) Secretary Duties

- 1) Calling for administrative board meetings.
- 2) Following-up on the implementation of administrative board decisions.
- 3) Supervising the preparation of correspondence issued by the administrative board.
- 4) Keeping and maintaining all student council documents and seals.
- 5) Convening student council meetings and preparing the agendas.
- 6) Supervising the recording of meeting minutes.

E) Treasurer Duties

- 1) Collecting student council revenues via receipts sealed by the council's stamp.
- 2) Disbursing funds via an order to pay out signed by the administrative board chairman.
- 3) Preparing financial reports for the student council.

Article 23: Administrative Board Meetings

- A) Administrative board meetings are held upon the Chairman's invitation. There are usually four meetings per semester, or more if needed. An extraordinary meeting can be held if one-third of the members request it to discuss certain matters.
- B) If the Chairman is absent, the Deputy shall act on his/her behalf and exercise the same powers.
- C) Following the consent of the board, any board member may request introducing a new item to the meeting agenda at the beginning of the meeting.
- D) Extraordinary meetings are usually limited to the matters for which they are held. If a meeting ends, for any reason, without fulfilling the agenda, the incomplete matters shall have priority in the following agenda, unless the board decides otherwise.

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) If the majority of members attend, ordinary and extraordinary board meetings shall reach quorum.
- B) Decisions are made by a majority vote. If the votes are equal, then the Chairperson or his/her Deputy if absent, shall be the casting vote.
- C) Board meetings shall begin with approving its agenda. Each member shall have the right to discuss any matter on the agenda, and may make his/her own proposals regarding it.

Article 26: Administrative Board Membership End/Drop

- A) A board membership ends in the following cases:
 - 1) Resignation submitted to the student council Chairman or his/her delegate.
 - 2) Four consecutive absences from meetings.
 - 3) Seven intermittent absences from board meetings without an acceptable excuse.
- B) In the election, the candidate whom was right behind the dropped member in votes shall replace him/her.

Article 27: Resignation of the Administrative Board

- A) The board shall be deemed resigned by the resignation of the majority of its members. However, it shall continue to perform its duties until the election of a new Administrative Board in coordination with the branch management.
- B) In case this fails, 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, in accordance with the rules and regulations hereof.
- C) This committee is the committee referred to in Article 32, Clause A herein.

Sixth: Student Council Election Rules and Procedures

Article 28: Voters

- A) Each member of the General Assembly has the right to vote. Each voter has only one cast per election.
- B) Representatives or delegates are not allowed in the election.

Article 29: Candidates

- A) Any General Assembly member, whom Article 5 conditions apply to, shall have the right to stand for election for the student council within his/her electoral area. The nomination application along with the necessary documents shall be submitted by the candidate personally.
- B) Representatives or delegates are not allowed to submit applications.

Article 30: Student Lists

The branch management shall prepare student lists whom have the right to vote, and these lists shall be grouped in terms of academic programs.

Article 31: Nomination Announcement

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

Article 32: Student Council Nomination Procedures

- A) In the first week of the academic year start, the University Rector shall form a temporary election committee. It comprises the following:
 - 1) One member representing the Student Affairs Department in the branch.
 - 2) Two faculty members, one of whom shall be Committee Chairman.
 - 3) One member representing Branch 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 duties in accordance with the provisions hereof.

- C) The temporary election committee shall form sub-committees for each academic program as deemed appropriate and with the Rector's approval. These sub-committees aim to help in preparing and supervising the election procedures in each academic program.

Article 33: Temporary Election Committee Roles and Tasks

- A) The committee shall be held along with its formation decision until voting ends in all sub-committees.
- B) The committee shall determine the following:
- 1) Date and place of receiving nomination applications.
 - 2) Nomination application form and application receipt.
 - 3) Voting locations and number of polls.
 - 4) Receiving delegates' names in the polling and counting committees.
 - 5) Reviewing student lists and ensuring their validity.
 - 6) Coordinating with the branch management in reserving student parties' bases and distributing election prints inside the campus.
 - 7) Forming academic programmes polling sub-committees and counting committees. Additionally, and in coordination with the branch management, any public welfare association or such an origination may be invited to monitor the election process.
 - 8) Monitoring the voting process, as well as looking into complaints received from the sub-committees.

Article 34: Nomination Withdrawal

The candidate may withdraw his/her nomination in writing at least 48 hours prior to the election, provided that the withdrawal request will be submitted in person. Under no circumstance is it allowed to prevent a candidate 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 BPC will initiate the ballot minutes signed by the committee head and members, and it should contain the following information:
- Place, date and time of polling start.
 - List of names of those whom have the right to vote.
 - Number of voters based on the aforementioned list of names.
 - Number of voters based on the digital sequence of voting papers.
 - Names and signatures of the present committees members at the beginning of the polling.
 - Any replacement of a committee member and when it occurred.

- Any interruption to the polling process with a statement of reason and duration of interruption.
 - The record shall be closed immediately after polling time ends.
 - Names and signatures of the present committees members at the end of the ballot.
 - Any other events, if any.
- B) If there are any problems during the voting process, the temporary elections committee shall be contacted.

Article 36: Voting Process

The voting process is 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 sub-committees Chairman hands each voter a stamped and numbered ballot paper.
- 3) To avoid repetition, ticking next to the candidate's name is how the vote is cast.

Article 37: Voting Duration

The voting period shall be one school day, from 08:00 AM to 04:00 PM.

Article 38: Votes Counting

- A) Once the polling minutes is signed, the polling committees shall close the polls and move them alongside all documents to the designated hall of vote counting, determined by the temporary elections committee.
- B) Vote counting committees, formed by the temporary elections committee, shall count votes in accordance with the regulations stated herein.

Article 39: Votes Cancellation

- A) A ballot paper shall be deemed invalid if:
- It includes a vote for multiple candidates.
 - It is not stamped.
 - It is not numbered.
 - It includes a reference to the voter.
 - It includes a mark or a scratch.
- B) In case of conflict 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 candidate that had the backing of the committee chairman shall be chosen.

Article 40: Vote Counting Committee Minutes

The minutes shall be recorded, and include the following information:

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

Article 41: Voting Results Announcement

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

Article 42: Selection, If Tied

In the event of a tie between the candidates and neither of them withdraws, the choice between them shall be according to the following criteria:

- Selection based on who has the higher GPA.
- If tied again, then let luck determine who wins via lottery.

Article 43: Student Council Passing

- A) The newly elected student council shall take over the tasks of the former council under the supervision of the temporary elections committee within five days following the results announcement. These include:
 - 1) Office/base and its equipment.
 - 2) Council seals.
 - 3) Revenues, financial books, invoices, and receipt and issuance vouchers.
 - 4) All of the incoming and outbound files.
 - 5) Student council archives.
- B) The former council hands over all possessions' custody, whether material or cash, and is legally liable for any losses or damages to these possessions.

Seventh: Student Council Financial Affairs

Article 44: Council Revenues

- A) Revenues consist of:
- 1) The financial support granted by the University branch; this is dependent on each branch's financial capabilities.
 - 2) Approved voluntary contributions and unconditional donations.
 - 3) Revenues previously agreed upon in coordination with the branch management, and these are dedicated for student council (and its committees) activities.
 - 4) Any contributions or fees decided upon by the members of the General Assembly.
- B) The council's revenues shall be deposited in a private account in the same bank AOU uses for its branches accounts. Payments shall be done through issuing vouchers signed by both the administrative board Chairman and Treasurer. The validity of signatures shall be linked to the bilateral signature system.

Article 45: Financial Monitor

The council shall have a financial monitor assigned by the University management, whom shall audit accounts and expenditures, and prepare the annual budget.

Article 46: Petty Cash

The administrative board Chairman shall have petty cash of no more than US \$500 or its equivalent kept with the Treasurer. This amount is taken from the petty cash budget and urgent expenses, and the amount is dependent on the currency value in each branch country. The Treasurer authorizes these payments based on vouchers approved by the BPC Chairman and the Treasurer, and signed by the receiver of the petty cash. The advance shall be compensated when the actual expenses reach 75% of the original value.

Eighth: Student Affairs Coordination Committee

Article 47: Coordination Committee Formation and Duties

- A) The “Student Affairs Coordination Committee” shall be formed at the University, and shall consist of all administrative bodies’ Chairpersons at the AOU branches.
- B) The committee shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from its members.
- C) Upon chairperson invitation, the committee shall hold two meetings annually through electronic communication.
- D) The committee shall be responsible for coordination, and exchange of experiences among the branches in the areas of its business and activity.
- E) The committee shall annually select its representative in the University Council, in accordance with AOU Bylaws.

Ninth: Student Council Dissolution

Article 48: Student Council Dissolution Reasons

- 1) The student council shall be dissolved when the majority of its members had resigned.
- 2) The branch management may dissolve the council if any of Article 4’s provisions herein have been violated.

Article 49: Conduct during Student Council Dissolution

- A) In case of dissolution, the branch management announces a new date for student council election not exceeding two months from the date of dissolution.
- B) The dissolved student council shall continue to 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 current bylaws herein shall override any previous bylaws relating to or having the same title or subject matter.
- C) University Rectors and concerned bodies shall implement the provisions of these bylaws.