

SSCCC Caucus Policy and Process

Definition and Purpose

The Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) caucuses are intended to serve as groups of independently organized students to meet, network, and deliberate collegially in order to form a collective voice on issues of common concern that caucus members feel are of vital importance to students and improve student access, promote student success, engage and empower local student leaders, and enrich the collegiate experience for all California community college. The Board of Directors shall establish written policies, procedures, and guidelines for caucuses in policies. (SSCCC Bylaws, Article VI, Sec. 2)

Caucuses should exist for the following purpose:

- A. Make the SSCCC more welcoming and more relevant to California community college students who identify with the purpose of the Caucus.
- B. Create and sponsor resolutions as may be necessary to carry out the SSCCC goals and objectives.
 - 1. No Caucus may take independent positions on such matters which are contrary to the positions of the SSCCC provided, however, that nothing herein shall prevent the caucuses from calling on the SSCCC to take any action to change the adopted position by following the current resolution process.
- C. Encourage participation, within the Caucus' community of interest, in the outreach programs of the SSCCC, including such things as voter engagement and Get-Out-the-Vote (GOTV) activities.

In order to ensure caucuses adhere to the Bylaws of the SSCCC, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and any other relevant policies and procedures, and are effectively representing the interests of California community college students, this policy shall be enforced.

Organization

- A. Caucuses shall be recognized by the Student Senate for California Community Colleges' Board of Directors. Caucuses shall be overseen administratively by the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee of the SSCCC Equitable Practices Committee.
- B. Caucuses shall not be duplicative of the work of standing SSCCC committees, existing caucuses, or other representative student groups but may be complementary in the work with such groups.
- C. Caucuses shall operate in a lawful manner. Caucuses shall not promote hate, violence, or any other offensive action against any person(s).
- D. Caucus members shall not be charged a fee or dues to participate in the caucus nor can a caucus fundraise on behalf of the SSCCC nor use the SSCCC's non-profit designation without the consent of the Board.

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- E. Caucuses shall not act on behalf of the SSSCC and shall not present themselves as acting for or representing the SSSCC or its interests in any manner or media.
- F. In every caucus, there shall exist an Executive Board consisting of caucus officers. There shall be a minimum of a chair, vice chair, and secretary. This Executive Board of the caucus shall be the administrative body presiding over the caucus membership. The Caucus Oversight Subcommittee Chair shall maintain an accurate list of each caucus' Executive Board.
- G. The Caucus Chair must submit a monthly report to the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee on their and/or the caucus' activities.
- H. Caucuses that create their own policies and procedures must contain the following statement of authority within those policies and procedures:
 - 1. **Statement of Authority:** No [Caucus Name] action shall conflict with the governing documents or policies of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges.

Recognition of a Caucus

In order to be formally recognized by the SSSCC's Board of Directors, the following criteria must be met:

- A. Individuals interested in forming a caucus will identify at least twelve members (based on 10% of the number of colleges in the California Community Colleges) from at least four different colleges and at least two districts, with common goals and/or interests.
- B. At any time during the year, the interested members of the proposed caucus may send an email to the Equitable Practices Chair (equitablepractices@studentsenateccc.org) and the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee Chair, on their request for caucus recognition. This email shall include the caucus' name, statement of purpose, and list of members.
- C. After the caucus application is reviewed by the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee and approved by the Equitable Practices Committee, the Equitable Practices Chair will forward the proposal to the SSSCC Board of Directors for final consideration.
- D. If approved by the Board of Directors, the Equitable Practices Chair or their designee will forward to the requester, official notification that the caucus is recognized by the SSSCC Board of Directors.
- E. Once the caucus is recognized and official, it may begin operations.
- F. Each first week of May, the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee will contact the caucus on their intent to remain active. If the caucus wishes to remain active, a current list of members will be requested by the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee.
- G. If a caucus fails to alert the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee on their intent to stay active by the first week of June, the caucus shall be deemed inactive and a new letter of intent will need to be submitted to re-activate the caucus.

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Membership

- A. Caucus membership must be voluntary to all California community college students.
 - 1. The voting membership of the caucus shall be regulated by the caucus Executive Board in accordance with the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee.
- B. Caucus members may affiliate with one or more caucuses.
- C. Members of the SSCCC's Caucus Oversight Subcommittee may not be on the Executive Board of any caucus but can still retain membership.
- D. The chair or secretary of the caucus must maintain an accurate record of its membership and its voting members and must provide that information to the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee at its request.

Caucus Meetings

- A. Caucuses should meet at least once per month or regularly as determined by the caucus members.
- B. The caucus secretary must take minutes of every meeting of the Executive Board and the caucus meetings and keep an updated record of all caucus activities.
- C. Caucuses shall provide open public access to its meetings.

Caucus Elections

- A. Caucus leadership must notify the chair of the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee three days before an election.
 - 1. If there is no leadership, the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee will oversee the election process.
- B. A candidate for a caucus leadership position must be a California community college student.
- C. Caucuses may operate elections in whichever manner they wish to do so that is within their caucus policies and procedures. The policies and procedures must be reviewed by the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee to ensure they are not inconsistent with the SSCCC Policies and Procedures.

Suspension and Termination

- A. Any caucus actions that subject the SSCCC to potential harm, liability, or fraud will result in immediate suspension of the caucus.
- B. The SSCCC Board of Directors reserves the right to suspend or withdraw its recognition of an active caucus in consultation with the caucus leadership if the SSCCC Board of Directors determines that the caucus has violated any of the procedures or guidelines established for caucuses or if the caucus wishes to dissolve itself.

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- C. Any member of the SSSCC Board of Directors may bring forward an agenda item to withdraw recognition of an active caucus if the caucus is believed to have violated the established Student Senate procedures and guidelines. A simple majority vote of the SSSCC Board of Directors is required to withdraw recognition from a caucus.

Procedural Guidelines

- A. It is recommended that caucuses follow the Ralph M. Brown Act and Robert's Rules of Order.
- B. Caucuses shall provide agendas and minutes of their meetings to the SSSCC Caucus Oversight Subcommittee.
- C. Caucuses should be formed around broad issues of ongoing concern rather than single or short-term issues. In particular, there should be a clear connection to student-related concerns as established in the SSSCC mission, purpose, priorities, and its resolutions. Caucuses should be formed to focus on issues across the entire California community college system, not just the specific needs or desires of a particular college or district.
- D. There should be an opportunity for discussion on agenda items but action should only be taken in the case of an election.
 - 1. For these guidelines, "election" may be defined as the election of the caucus Executive Board, sponsorship of resolutions, and adoption of Caucus procedures, norms, and anything pertaining to the recognition of the caucus.
 - 2. Elections for the caucus Executive Board may be held in collaboration with the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee.

Process for Caucus Oversight Subcommittee

When a caucus application is received, the Chair shall include the application on the next agenda. A request to become a caucus can occur at any time during the year.

- A. The Committee will verify that the caucus' goals and purpose are related to the mission and goals of the SSSCC.
- B. The Equitable Practices Chair or their designee will submit a notification to the body through normal communication channels on whether the Board of Directors has approved or rejected the caucus recognition.
- C. If the Chair of the Caucus Oversight Subcommittee is unable to act in their capacity or the position is vacant, the Equitable Practices Chair will assume the duties of the position or appoint a designee until one can be confirmed by the Committee.

Approved: Board of Directors June 12, 2020

Approved by the Board of Directors December 12, 2020