



TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT COUNCILS

RESOURCE GUIDE

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WHAT IS A STUDENT COUNCIL?

A Student Council is a group of elected and volunteer students working together with an adult advisor within the framework of a constitution or bylaws to provide a means for student expression and assistance in school affairs and activities, give opportunities for student experience in leadership and encourage student/faculty/community relations.

THROUGH PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES, STUDENT COUNCILS WORK TO:

PROMOTE CITIZENSHIP

- By supporting and further developing democracy as a way of life
- By involving students in meaningful, purpose-oriented activities
- By helping each student develop a sincere regard for law and order appropriate to this democratic society
- By leading each individual in developing a sense of personal responsibility and earned self respect
- By example through teaching the processes and procedures of a democracy
- By encouraging desirable attitudes and the continuous upward development of valued patterns of good citizenship
- By providing a forum for student opinions, interests and desires so these may be understood by the entire student body, faculty, administration and community
- By honestly reflecting and interpreting the student viewpoint

PROMOTE SCHOLARSHIP

- By contributing to the total educational growth of all students in the school
- By encouraging highest standards of scholarship and positive student involvement in learning and thinking
- By providing experience in genuine problem-solving procedures
- By providing training and experiences in the skills and techniques of good citizenship and leadership to prepare articulate citizens and leaders for a progressing society

PROMOTE LEADERSHIP

- By providing young people with the power and right to speak and, especially, the power, right and privilege of being heard by those in authority
- By avoiding the commercial or cultural exploitation of students
- By providing coordination of school-sponsored student activities with constant evaluation in terms of the selected purposes

- By promoting opportunities for leadership among student body members
- By utilizing the ideas and support of students in solving relevant school problems

PROMOTE HUMAN RELATIONS

- By helping create harmonious relationships among faculty, administration, student body and the community
- By providing organized services to the school in the interest of the general welfare
- By communicating purposes, activities and the other positive elements of school life through mass media to the entire community
- By helping young people further realize the genius and dignity of each individual

PROMOTE CULTURAL VALUES

- By sparking school loyalty, pride, patriotism and individual student development
- By providing real experiences in group development and human understandings
- By helping students earn and protect individual rights and responsibilities
- By selecting projects and activities which seek to achieve purposes which are significant in the life of the school community
- By giving young people deeper reasons for attending school and the stimulus for developing commitments to worthy goals
- By helping each student reach maximum educational growth and development

A student council is a group of student leaders who work with an adult advisor to collaborate with others to impact their school community, which impacts their city or town, which impacts our state, which impacts our country, which changes the world.

Definition created by 2008-09 TASC State Officers and District Presidents

OBJECTIVES OF STUDENT COUNCILS

- 1) To initiate, implement, and complete projects and activities which will be of help to the school, the students, the faculty, the administration, the Board of Trustees and the community.
- 2) To develop and provide opportunities for leadership and service in the local school and in the community.
- 3) To encourage personal growth of leaders through participation in district, state and national meetings and organizations.
- 4) To provide a living workshop of democratic processes, through such activities as elections, participation in a constitutional representative assembly, etc.
- 5) To contribute to the educational experiences of students by providing them with a positive involvement in the school, with widened areas of responsibilities and with more direct participation in organizing and implementing activities.
- 6) To promote respect for law and order and general welfare of the school and community.
- 7) To promote an awareness of human relations, of power structures and how one effectively operates within them. These objectives are realistically approached through increasing avenues of cooperation among the administration, faculty and students.
- 8) To provide a viable means for student expression and an increasing amount of self-direction.
- 9) To improve understanding between and within groups through interaction and communications.
- 10) To develop student potential and encourage to make a well-informed, honest, interested and active citizenship.
- 11) To develop not only leadership abilities within the youth of today, but also leadership for the community, state and nation of tomorrow. In this process, it is also the objective to develop an awareness of good leadership qualities, hopefully, for a more informed, concerned and active citizenry of tomorrow.
- 12) To increase student involvement and school pride.

The projects in which the Student Council participates should be those which promote harmony among all groups with which the Student Council works. All projects should be submitted for approval to the principal who has final veto power on any activity.

Developed by Dr. Earl Reum

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE OPERATION OF A STUDENT COUNCIL

These standards were developed and endorsed by a joint effort between the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals and the Texas Association of Student Councils. These standards are written with the understanding that conditions in schools vary, making it necessary for student councils to function differently from school to school.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- A. Local Constitution on file that recognizes Student Council activities are subject to the approval of the principal
- B. Faculty advisor designated or approved by the principal
- C. Systematic election of representatives - Student Council Representatives should represent the total student body. High grade standards should not be a requirement for membership, although UIL standards should be met.

II. OPERATIONS

- A. Meetings
 - 1. Executive Board (Officers & Committee Chairpersons)
 - 2. General Council Meetings (no less than once a month)
 - 3. Committee Meetings
- B. Written agenda for each meeting
- C. Minutes
 - 1. Dated and signed with permanent record maintained
 - 2. Copy to advisor and principal (and Superintendent, if requested)
- D. Annual evaluation and report of achievements submitted to the Principal. (Consider using Outstanding Student Council Report)

III. FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

- A. Annual budget itemizing projected income and expenditures
- B. TASC Dues (which include TASC District Dues) paid by school
- C. NASC dues paid by school
- D. Summer Workshop for officers subsidized by Student Council projects or school
- E. State Conference registration fee subsidized by council or school. Other costs paid by students or council
- F. Advisor Workshop subsidized by school or student council projects

IV. COMMITTEES

- A. Required
 - 1. Executive Committee - Composed of Student Council officers
 - 2. Election Committee - Plans and organizes the schoolwide elections
 - 3. State Project Committees - (Drugs, Alcohol, Safety, Health; Energy & Environment, Pride & Patriotism, Community Service)
- B. Others as determined by school need

V. ACTIVITIES

- A. School Activities
 - 1. Promote school spirit/pride
 - 2. Sponsor school social activities
 - 3. Supervise school elections
 - 4. Sponsor at least one activity on citizenship
 - 5. Staff Appreciation activities
 - 6. New student orientation
 - 7. Support club activities
 - 8. Involved in formulation/review of Handbook
 - 9. Assist with school assemblies
 - 10. Assist with Open House
 - 11. Alcohol, drug, safety, health education
 - 12. Provide energy and environment activities
 - 13. Sponsor homecoming activities
 - 14. Keep a record of council activities
- B. Community Activities
 - 1. Public relations with community
 - 2. Sponsor Community Service projects
- C. TASC State/District Activities
 - 1. Attend TASC District meetings
 - 2. Complete/submit Outstanding Student Council Report Form
 - 3. Complete/submit other TASC report forms (DASH, E&E, P&P, CS)
 - 4. Participate in TASC State Service project(s)
 - 5. Receive training at one or more TASC workshop (Advisor, Summer)
 - 6. Attend TASC State Conference (HS or ML)

AREAS OF STUDENT COUNCIL AUTHORITY

A breakdown of communications between the principal and the student council may result when the council fails to understand its areas of authority. Council must recognize the levels in which it may operate, and this information must come from the principal of the individual school. Nevertheless, council has only delegated powers, and the principal retains the veto power over every action of the council. Cooperation, understanding, and advance planning will usually result in relatively few veto actions.

Essentially there are three levels of student participation in school government: the area in which the students have no authority at all, the area of nearly complete authority (*subject to advisor and principal), and the areas shared with the administration and faculty. This latter category is generally the largest. Sample areas of authority are listed below:

NO AUTHORITY	SHARED AUTHORITY	NEARLY COMPLETE AUTHORITY*
1. Grades and scholarships	1. Homecoming	1. Assigned council projects
2. Homework	2. Dances and social events	2. Staff appreciation
3. School maintenance	3. Organization and chartering of new clubs	3. Publicity responsibilities
4. School equipment purchase	4. School morale and pride	4. Council meetings
5. Hiring and firing of personnel	5. General welfare of student and faculty	5. Evaluation of projects
6. Hall passes	6. Schedule of activities and meetings	6. Evaluation of student council constitution
7. Discipline and punishment	7. Code of dress and conduct	7. Elections, general school
8. Cafeteria personnel, cost	8. Charity drives	8. Annual report to Board/Education
9. Length of vacations and school day	9. Promote citizenship, scholarship, leadership	9. Student attitude and involvement
10. Teacher pay	10. Fund raising	10. Committee recommendations
11. Counseling, administrative procedures	11. Safety Education	11. Committee set-up and follow-through
12. Student enrollment	12. Student-faculty-student council relations and communications	12. Council fund raising
13. Academic Credits	13. Freshmen orientation	13. Spirit week
14. National Honor Society selection	14. School policy: reactions and revisions	
15. Teaching procedures and curriculum	15. Assemblies	
16. School Board policies		

GETTING ALONG . . .

- ...WITH THE PRINCIPAL
- ...WITH THE FACULTY
- ...WITH THE STAFF

Student councils have to “get along” to be effective. All the great ideas for projects, activities, happenings, and events must have the support of the principal, faculty, and staff to be considered potential successes. An effective student council will consider various approaches to insure the support of these crucial people.

GETTING ALONG WITH THE PRINCIPAL

The administration is a group of people who are legally responsible for the school program. If mistakes are made, the administration—and, more specifically, the principal—must bear the brunt of the criticism. Because of the principal’s authority, the council-principal relationship is crucial.

The principal cannot delegate any of his or her responsibility, but he or she can delegate authority. It is proper for the principal to delegate certain powers to the student council. The student council has no power unless the principal delegates it. When a student council fails to understand its areas of authority, a breakdown of communications between the principal and the student council may result. A student council needs to know the levels in which it may operate. This information must come from the principal of the individual school.

The student council must keep the principal informed at all times about its actions, because the principal maintains the final approval and authority for all projects.

Ideas to gain administrative support and to better relations with the principal and administration include:

1. Hold periodic meetings with the administrative team, particularly the principal, to inform them of the student council’s activities, to discuss student council business and administrative policies. These meetings could be held at lunch to encourage informality.
2. Distribute minutes of student council meetings to all members of the administrative team.
3. Invite administrators to all business meetings and give them opportunities to discuss programs they administer with the student council.
4. Recognize the principal as a resource person, who has a wide perspective on education and knowledge of the particular school.
5. Do not be afraid to take a stand and speak for something. The principal has final authority; presenting sound reasons may influence the final decision.
6. Try asking a principal, “What can we do for you?” instead of “Can we do this?” (See article on “How Student Councils can help Principals” on TASC website.)

GETTING ALONG...

GETTING ALONG WITH THE FACULTY

The faculty is a very important support group for a student council. A strong working relationship with the faculty is a definite advantage. Student council members must continuously strive through their consideration and their activities to emphasize a student council's place in the school and to ensure faculty support.

Ideas to encourage faculty support:

1. Issue an open invitation to all teachers for student council meetings.
2. Conduct a teacher appreciation day.
3. Start a Teacher Pal project. Have each student council member choose one or two teachers as their pals. On holidays, during finals week, or for just a regular school day, each student council member gives their secret pals something—a cake, a red grading pen, a little candy, a birthday or greeting card, or just a small personal note. The teachers are not told who their teacher pals are until the end of the year when there is some sort of get-together to reveal the teacher pals.
4. Issue a sincere welcome back to all teachers at the beginning faculty meeting before school opens. Perhaps some sort of welcome back gift package could be arranged.
5. Request five or ten minutes at monthly faculty meetings. Ask the teachers if they have any suggestions or ideas. Be prepared to answer questions about council activities.
6. Provide student aides for teachers a few days before school begins.
7. Invite teachers (by special, personal invitation) to all activities sponsored by the student council (dances, Homecoming, other special events).
8. Help with moving in and out at the beginning and end of the year.

GETTING ALONG WITH THE STAFF

The support personnel in the school are often affected by the activities of the student council. Their help and cooperation enables projects and activities sponsored by the council to run more smoothly and efficiently. Dances, special activities after school hours, and Saturday functions such as district conventions require the aid of custodial and cafeteria personnel. Student council members should treat them with the same respect that they would accord anyone who helps and cooperates to make a project or activity a success.

Ideas for positive relations with support personnel:

1. Always give prior notice of any activities requiring their services.
2. Write thank you notes to all support personnel who helped at the conclusion of projects or after an activity.
3. Have a morning brunch (pastries and coffee) prepared for them before school or special desserts for lunch.
4. Do not leave all cleaning up to the custodians. See that after an activity, student council members help clean up. If any special decorations were put up, these should be taken down by council members themselves.
5. Plan staff appreciation projects (not just teacher appreciation).

ADVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Student council is as successful as the advisor wishes it to be. It takes someone with a great deal of patience, enthusiasm and love of young people to advise, coach, inspire, communicate and, in general, to keep the council moving successfully forward. It takes training to be successful in this role.

The advisor develops leadership in the student council members through the delegation of duties and responsibilities.

The advisor walks a delicate line between representing students and representing administration. Keeping one's balance depends upon using common sense, communicating with those concerned and maintaining a knowledge of the policies governing the student council.

AS A STUDENT COUNCIL ADVISOR:

1. Ask for and assist in developing a job description for the position. This will help you and others to look at the role, objectives, and expectations of the advisor and the activity.
2. Ensure your principal has both approved and has a copy of your Constitution and By-Laws.
3. Establish communication lines and methods to be as inclusive as possible - the more information that is commonly available, the less hassle when decision-making time occurs.
4. Provide orientation for officers and members.
 - A. Workshop, planning session to develop methods of operation and skills training.
 - B. Set goals and activities for the year.
 - C. Become involved in state sponsored activities.
5. Establish a periodic evaluation.
6. Maintain your public relations link with the staff and administration.
7. Evaluate what you have done at the end of the year and put it into written form for next year's Council.
8. Continually seek training opportunities to further your skills.

Being an ADVISOR means being a resource person, a leader, a good example, a unique representative of students to faculty and administration. It is advising and coordinating all phases of the council program while making it a learning experience for those involved and an integral part in the school program. ADVISORSHIP is one of the toughest challenges in the school program today. If successful, it can be one of the most beneficial and personally rewarding experiences.

MEMO TO ADVISORS

1972

A hundred years from now
It will not matter
What your bank account was,
The sort of house you lived in,
Or the kind of car you drove,
But the world may be
A little different because
You were important in
The life of someone young . . .

TIPS FOR ADVISORS

STUDENT COUNCIL PROCEDURES:

- Have a working constitution (*)
- Have an agenda for every contact with kids
- Take notes or minutes
- Use forms-project planning/evaluations/reports (*)
- Outline roles of members/officers (*)
- Use committees (*)
- Directory
- Calendar
- Member handbook
- Support opportunities for membership other than only elections
- Communication System
- Online storage of project plans, report forms, and evaluations
- Provide leadership training

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT:

- Train students in procedures/process/leadership skills (*)
- Manage stress level
- Lead by example
- Networking (*)
- Have fun
- Provide office space
- Have supportive/understanding personal relationships

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

- Administration: school board, superintendent, principal, staff leadership
- Community: media, civic involvement
- Student Body: paper, announcements, press releases, etc.
- Parents: election letter, thank you notes, newsletters
- Staff: bulletin, staff appreciation

(*) Areas where TASC can provide direct assistance.

WRITING A CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

A student council constitution is a written document that sets forth the fundamental governing principles under which the council is organized and operates. To many people, the word “constitution” implies formality and intimidating rules and regulations. A constitution is simply a written set of rules for a group. The constitution defines the limits of authority of the organization and gives a sense of both order and purpose for conducting business. A student council’s constitution should be stated in simple, easily understood language and should include only essential items. The student council constitution should be developed in cooperation with school staff and the student body. Amendments should be simple and direct.

Bylaws are rules adopted by a group for its own meetings or affairs. Bylaws cover such areas as the number of members needed to constitute a quorum (enough members to vote on an issue or proposal); procedure for filling an office that has been vacated during the year; procedure of impeachment of delinquent members and officers.

The constitution/bylaws should be designed to help the council accomplish its goals. It must not be so difficult to follow that it hinders the effective functioning of the council. The constitution must be studied regularly and changed to stay vital and meaningful.

WRITING THE CONSTITUTION

Creating a constitution can be a difficult, time-consuming process. The following steps can take some of the hassle out of the process and ensure that your group develops a constitution that is an accurate reflection of its mission.

- 1. Gather ideas and information from group members, faculty members, administrators, and constitutions from other organizations.** At this stage, use a constitutions survey to gather ideas from your organization’s members.
- 2. Review the gathered information.** It can be tedious for a group of 25 members to pour over the information, so a smaller committee is recommended. You might want to have a constitution committee or a group of officers compile all of the information.
- 3. Decide the basics of your constitution.** Decide what your constitution will consist of. Think of broad, general topics at this point rather than specific rules and regulations. For example, you may decide that your constitution will outline the duties of officers, attendance policies, etc.
- 4. Decide the basics for each part of the constitution.** You don’t necessarily have to use complete sentences and ornate language. Rather, concentrate on putting down in writing of what each topic will consist. For example, list the duties of each officer.
- 5. Edit the constitution.** Smooth out the rough edges and write everything out in complete sentences. Use a dictionary and thesaurus to help select the right wording.
- 6. Seek feedback.** To make sure the constitution is clear and easy to understand, get the feedback of the entire organization. You might also seek feedback from the advisor, principal, English or journalism teacher (for clarity of writing), or other students who are not involved in the organization to get a fresh perspective.
- 7. Ratify (vote to adopt) your constitution.** Vote on each part of the constitution separately so members will know which parts they agree on so they can be adopted as is. The group will also know which parts need to be discussed further. If necessary, continue to edit the constitution until ratification is completed.
- 8. Distribute copies of your constitution to all members, your advisor, faculty members, administrators, and any other interested students.**

SUGGESTED ELEMENTS OF A STUDENT COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

WRITING A CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Most student council constitutions do not have a preamble. The document contains the basic principles under which the council is organized and operated. Most constitution/by-laws follow a generally accepted form. First, most have articles. These articles follow a logical sequence and each discusses one broad area. Generally, the following topics are articles:

- Article I Statement of the name of the organization
- Article II The general purpose(s) of the group
- Article III Powers vested in the organization; the right of veto by the principal
- Article IV Definition of membership for the group; qualifications of membership; duties of membership
- Article V Establishment of the time, methods, and procedures for nomination and election of members, officers, and advisors
- Article VI Frequency of meetings and provisions for special sessions (may be omitted in the body of the constitution if included in the by-laws)
- Article VII The duties and responsibilities of the organization, the officers, the members, and the advisor
- Article VIII Method and procedure for ratification of the constitution
- Article IX Provisions for amending the constitution

When it becomes necessary to discuss more than one topic in any one article, it is proper to number these and refer to them as sections. Each section also has a title for quick reference.

Example:

Article VII The duties and responsibilities of the organization, the officers, the members, and the advisor

Section 1: Organization Responsibilities

- A. Conduct school elections
- B. Organize homecoming activities
- C. Etc.

Section 2: Officer Responsibilities

- A. President
 - 1. Preside at all meetings
 - 2. Etc.

SUGGESTED ELEMENTS OF STUDENT COUNCIL BY-LAWS

- Article I Number of members needed to constitute a quorum (enough people to legally vote)
- Article II Description of standing committees and provisions for the formation of special committees as the need arises
- Article III Rules for conducting elections (if not included in the constitution body)
- Article IV Procedure for filling an office that has been vacated
- Article V Procedure for amending the by-laws
- Article VI Parliamentary authority; definition of the parliamentary rules of order for conducting business

All constitutions should include the date of adoption/revision.

WHAT IS MY JOB?

The exact duties and responsibilities of officers will vary according to local council constitutions.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

DUTIES OF OFFICERS, MEMBERS AND COMMITTEES

The person responsible for the job must know what that job is! Each officer has specific work to achieve and functions to perform. However, even the job description is subject to personal perceptions of what constitutes that job, and co-workers, constituents, and political rivals have other ideas.

Obligations and responsibilities of officers, members and committees should be written, analyzed and evaluated annually. Obligations of office should be listed along with purposes, opportunities and the channels of procedure.

Duties of office should include relationship with others in Council, the procedures and the objectives. There should be a recognition of available resources and equipment for achieving Council goals.

Group and member roles played and status requirement fulfilled by individuals are vital ideas. Both officers and members must be informed about the Council, its committees, its leadership and its progress in reaching objectives. Obligations to the community should be listed as well.

STUDENT BODY/COUNCIL OFFICERS (THESE OFFICES ARE SUGGESTIONS, NOT REQUIREMENTS)

I. Student Body President

- A. Represent the student body at school district and civic events and other meetings.
- B. Be responsible for coordinating the interviewing, selection and functioning of committee chairpersons and task forces.
- C. Supervise the functioning of the elected student body officers.
- D. Develop the agenda for and preside over the meetings of Student Council.

II. Student Body Vice-President

- A. Represent the student body at school district, civic events, and other meetings as requested by the president.
- B. Coordinate the work of committees.
- C. Preside over Student Council meetings in the absence of the president.

III. Student Body Secretary

- A. Maintain the student body files.
- B. Prepare agendas for meetings.
- C. Take and distribute minutes of meetings.
- D. Represent the student body at school district, civic functions, and other meetings as requested by the president.
- E. Type material for student body officers and committee chairpersons as needed.
- G. Sign all purchase orders.

WHAT IS MY JOB?

(Continued)

IV. Student Body Treasurer

- A. Coordinate the preparation of the annual budget.
- B. Present the proposed budget to Student Council for adoption.
- C. Maintain financial records of the student body.
- D. Prepare financial reports for meetings of Student Council.
- E. Assist the bookkeeper with sales as necessary.
- F. Coordinate fund raising projects for the student body.
- G. Sign all purchase orders.

V. Student Body Historian

- A. Gather materials in preparation for the Student Council Scrapbook.
- B. Be responsible for the completion of the scrapbook.
- C. Maintain a file of materials about activities of the school.
- D. Make sure pictures are taken of all activities.
- E. Coordinate work on other historical presentations (i.e., slide shows, video).

VI. Student Body Parliamentarian

- A. Provide advice on questions of parliamentary procedure.
- B. Make the Council members aware of good parliamentary practices.

VII. Student Body Reporter

- A. Write, edit, and submit stories about the Council to the school paper and local media.
- B. Organize publicity for Student Council meetings and events.

VIII. Committee Chairperson

- A. Recruit members of the committee.
- B. Call and preside over meetings of the committee.
- C. Inform officers of progress and problems which arise.
- D. Delegate tasks of committee and follow up with members to be sure plans are completed.

IX. The Council Member

- A. Communicate ideas from the student body to the Council.
- B. Report to the class the results of Council action.
- C. Serve on or chair committees.
- D. Volunteer as needed.

AS A MEMBER...

- Leave your personal problems outside the meeting
- Treat everyone with respect
- Be punctual
- Let those in charge control the meeting
- Pay close attention
- Participate in the discussion
- Look for ways to HELP!

TIPS FOR ORGANIZING ELECTIONS

Any election procedure should teach use of the democratic process to students. Elections should be a significant learning experience in citizenship. The democratic process includes procedures for candidates to announce their intention to run a campaign which acquaints voters with candidates, and voting which teaches young people the value of citizen's participation.

- A. Schedule with the master calendar
 - 1. Avoid conflicts
 - 2. Include dates of assemblies.
 - a. Check with building committee for any regulations which affect conflicts in dates.
 - b. Avoid assemblies during the last week of a marking period.
- B. Schedule use of voting machines with the Election Commission if applicable
- C. Publish dates of all elections including:
 - 1. Voter registration, if required.
 - 2. Petitions for all school officers.
 - 3. Candidates' meeting.
 - 4. Primary assembly or speak-out.
 - 5. Primary elections.
 - 6. Final assembly or speak-out.
 - 7. Final election.
 - 8. Petitions for class officers.
 - 9. Assembly.
 - 10. Primary election.
 - 11. Final election.
 - 12. Petitions for Student Council representatives.
 - 13. Assembly.
 - 14. Primary elections.
 - 15. Final election.
- D. Registration
 - 1. Arguments for and against.
 - a. When a student registers for school, he/she is automatically registered to vote.
 - b. Registration is educational and it is required for adult citizens (not automatic).
 - 2. Procedures
 - a. Forms can be used resembling legal registration forms.
 - 1) Are compiled into a registration book.
 - 2) Election committee checks for errors.
 - b. Alphabetical lists of students in the school are available from most principals' offices.
 - 1) Are available by class or school as a whole.
 - 2) Registration can be accomplished by signing next to students name.
 - c. Takes a large campaign to get students to register.
- E. Petitions - One process requires a certain number of signatures before a name is put on the ballot
 - 1. Petitions force a commitment from the candidate.
 - 2. Petitions force candidates to seek support from fellow students.
 - 3. Contents of petition:
 - a. Name of candidate.
 - b. Office sought.
 - c. Blanks for predetermined number of students.
 - d. Approval of two teachers.
 - e. Counselor's approval.
 - f. Office approval.
 - g. Parents' approval.
 - 4. Establish source of petitions.
 - a. Election committee table.
 - b. Student Council advisor.
 - 5. Adhere to deadline.
 - 6. Check petitions for accuracy.
 - 7. List of candidates compiled.
 - a. Qualifications checked.
 - b. If required, grade point averages verified.
- F. Meeting of candidates
 - 1. Election rules are clearly understood.
 - 2. Rules should contain:
 - a. Rules stated by the constitution.
 - b. Assembly restrictions.
 - c. Restrictions on campaign material
 - 1) Total cost.
 - 2) Number, size, placement of posters.
 - 3) Handbills.
 - 4) Skits.
 - d. Length of campaigning
 - 1) Removal of campaign material.
 - 2) Consequences of non-adherence to rules.
 - 3) Election assembly planned.
- G. Primary election
 - 1. Voting machines.
 - a. List of candidates, verified by advisor, submitted to Election Commission at least 4 days before elections.
 - b. Election Commission prints ballot.
 - c. Election Commission sets voting machines and instructs students in:
 - 1) Method of operations.
 - 2) Method of reading results.
 - d. Consider electronic voting.

STUDENT COUNCIL POINT SYSTEM

Many student councils employ a point system for active membership/participation. For best results, point systems should be positive (not punitive) and should be designed to create successful engagement with the council. Success should be reasonably achievable and attainable, while still maintaining high standards. In most cases, students accumulate points through local participation and minimum points are required to maintain active membership. Often, advisors use points to determine student eligibility in special activities such as attending workshops/conferences, running for office or fulfilling councils “work-on” requirements. There are many variations of the actual systems used, methods for tracking and purposes of points. As with other areas, it is up to each school to determine whether or not to use a point system and the methods for implementation. Below are two samples of point systems used by TASC schools.

POINT SYSTEM SAMPLE #1

Midway High School, Waco

STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICER AND MEMBER

25 points per hour - Attending Stu-Co Monthly Meeting

25 points per hour - Community Service – non-Stuco Event

10 points per item - Donation of items for events (x multiples by discretion of advisor)

25 points per Committee - Points only accumulated if you work the meeting event

50 points per hour - Working Stu-Co initiated events

500 points per semester - required to maintain StuCo membership

Minimum of 1500 points accumulative – in order to be eligible for State Student Council Conference

POINT SYSTEM SAMPLE #2

For a member to remain in good standing or to work-on to the council, a student must earn 50 points each semester.

Students can earn points as follows:

Meetings: Attending a meeting +1 point

Committees: Attending and contributing to committee +1

Projects/Events: Participation/work on projects or events +1 point/per hour

Special Activities: points vary and are designated by the advisor. Special activities may include attending a TASC training or workshop, special leadership roles (such as district activities or serving as a TASC junior counselor)

Students are required to record and submit accumulated points to the secretary

LETTERING IN STUDENT COUNCIL

UIL does not govern how students letter in any school-sponsored or extra-curricular activity. Lettering standards are defined by the individual school or local district. Schools or districts may choose to award major awards to other groups not listed as an official UIL activity. Just because it is not a UIL sanctioned activity does not mean it is not worthy of a major award by your school.

For UIL documentation visit www.uil.utexas.edu and the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules (C&CR) Chapter 1, Subchapter O, Section 480 Limitations of Awards and the UIL & TEA Side by Side document.

UIL and TEA encourage school districts to include unsanctioned UIL teams, clubs, and organizations under UIL rules for the purpose of academic eligibility standards and extracurricular absences much like those used for cheerleading, drill team, and FFA.

The decision to include organizations in addition to those specified by UIL is left up to the local school district's board of trustees. All extracurricular activities are subject to state law, whether they are UIL or not. So these non UIL activities are required to follow state law as it applies to extracurricular activities.

Student Council Advisors are encouraged to develop lettering standards for your council. A student lettering in Student Council should be an active participant and significant contributor to your council.

See sample criteria below (from Texas High School, Texarkana):

LETTERING

1. Must have held an office for 2 years.
2. Must have been in Leadership Class for at least one year.
3. Must have a specific number of documented volunteer hours in the year receiving the letter.
4. Must have approval of the principal and advisor.

PATCH PURCHASING

1. Must have been an active member of Student Council for 2 years.
2. Must have the advisor's permission.
3. The council does not pay for the patch.

GRADUATION CORDS AND DIPLOMA SEALS

1. Local schools determine the wearing of honor cords at graduation and the placement of seals on diplomas.
2. Graduation cords and diploma seals are sold to advisors only.