Information for Steinhardt Students Seeking Positions as Student Senator

The following information has been complied in order to ensure that students with a serious interest in making legitimate contributions to the NYU governance system are aware of the enormous responsibility and time commitment involved in being a Student Senator.

OVERVIEW – NYU LEVEL

The Student Senators Council (SSC) is the representative body for all students at New York University, and it is the advocate for the protection and promotion of the interests, rights and responsibilities of students in all aspects of life at the University. The SSC is also a deliberative body for the discussion of University-wide policies and proposed changes in University policies and structure affecting student life at the University. The SSC is a constituent body of the University Senate (Senate), the chief deliberative body of the University for discussion of all matters of University policy and practice. Any resolutions or votes that occur in the Senate must, however, be approved by the highest power of the University, which is the Board of Trustees. The University Senate is currently made up of the following:

- Executive Committee (President, Secretary, Council Chairs – 6 Members)
- Administrative Management Council (5 Members)
- Deans Council (15 Members)
- Faculty Senators Council (36 Members)
- Student Senators Council (23 Members)

Through its committees and subcommittees, the SSC takes special responsibility for bringing to the attention of the Senate all matters concerning student life at the University.

The most notable SSC committee is the University Committee on Student Life (UCSL), which, as the broadest-based student group on campus, oversees the general quality of student life and transmits policy recommendations to the SSC. It is the responsibility of the SSC to see that the UCSL is active and productive. The membership of the UCSL consists of the entire Student Senators Council, as well as designated representatives of various other student governance groups, most notably the presidents of all school councils. The UCSL works through its own committees and subcommittees to govern and coordinate student activities on campus.

OVERVIEW – STEINHARDT LEVEL

The student senator elected to serve the graduate student body of the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development will sit as an executive
board member to the Steinhardt Graduate Student Organization (GSO). The GSO consists of nine members:

- President
- Vice President
- Senator
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Event Coordinators (2)
- Publicity Chairs (2)

The senator is responsible for relaying the interests of Steinhardt graduate students to the executive board, where possible initiatives and ideas begin to flow in an effort to help the student body. From the GSO, the senator will sit on the Steinhardt School Senate, which consists of the Steinhardt deans, department senators and one student from the Undergraduate Student Government (USG). Together this body works to ensure that the Steinhardt school is working effectively and that student, staff and faculty needs are being addressed, and if not, what can be done to help them. Steinhardt governance calls for standing committees, which are:

- Academic Affairs Committee (One GSO Representative)
- Faculty Meetings (GSO President)
- School Planning Committee (One GSO Representative)
- Student Affairs Committee (One GSO Representative)

Whichever committee (except faculty meetings) on which the senator chooses to sit, he/she must bring updates to present to the Executive Board at their subsequent meeting.

In addition to the aforementioned committees, Steinhardt has committees that are for the improvement of the school and for the selection of distinguished faculty, for example. If a GSO representative is needed to serve on one of these ad hoc committees, the senator has every right to sit on it, however considering the huge time commitment they are already enduring, it might not be in their best interest to sit on another committee. Examples of these committees include:

- Steinhardt Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC)
  - Steinhardt Implementation Committee (stemming from SPSC)
- Distinguished Teaching Award Committee
- Committees of the Graduate Student Organization
  - M.L.K. Jr. Oratorical Contest Committee
  - Scholarship Day Selection Committee
  - Star Awards Selection Committee
MEMBERSHIP – NYU LEVEL

The Student Senators Council is composed of 23 members that the students of the various schools and colleges of the University elect 16 as school senators:

- College of Arts & Science
- College of Dentistry
- Gallatin School of Individualized Study
- Graduate School of Arts & Science
- Leonard N. Stern School of Business
  - One undergraduate & one graduate
- Liberal Studies
- Robert F. Wagner School of Public Policy
- School of Continuing and Professional Studies
- School of Law
- School of Medicine*
- Silver School of Social Work
- Steinhardt School of Culture, Education & Human Development
  - One undergraduate & one graduate
- Tisch School of the Arts
  - One undergraduate & one graduate

Seven Student Senators are appointed At-Large by the Executive Committee of the Senate with the advice and consent of the elected Student Senators. These At-Large Senators are selected for the purpose of providing continuity within the membership of the SSC from one year to the next or to represent special student interests not otherwise represented by the elected Senators (such as those who represent commuter students, international students or any combination of special interests).

All Student Senators are eligible for membership on any available Senate, SSC, or UCSL committee.

As specified in the Senate Rules of Procedure, each student body authorized to name a Senator is authorized to name two Alternate Senators.

MEMBERSHIP – STEINHARDT LEVEL

The membership of the Steinhardt Graduate Student Organization consists of any graduate student (masters or doctoral) who is in good standing and is expected to graduate in May. Members of the GSO can come from any of the eleven departments of Steinhardt.

* For the purpose of SSC membership, the School of Medicine and the Post-Graduate Medical School are considered as one school.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT SENATORS – NYU LEVEL

It is the responsibility of each Senator to consider carefully and responsibly all matters that may come before the Senate, the SSC and the UCSL, and to act in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of each of these organizations. Each student senator has a duty to fairly and capably represent the students of his/her constituency to the best of his/her ability.

Each senator is expected to attend all duly called meetings of the Senate, the SSC and the UCSL. (Each alternate senator is expected to attend any duly called meeting of the Senate, the SSC, or the UCSL at which that person is to substitute for a designated senator.) In addition, each senator (and alternate senator) is expected to attend all duly called meetings of any Senate, SSC, or UCSL committee of which that person is a member.

The overall quality of a student senator's performance is only partially determined by the meetings s/he may attend. A Student Senator will also need to do extensive "homework" in order to understand all the issues requiring his/her attention. Much of this "homework" entails reading through the documents that the Executive Committee makes available for perusal. These documents serve as great resources to become acquainted with past procedures, policies, initiatives and struggles. In addition to apprising oneself of past issues, student senators should engage with their school's dean and associate deans, especially the school's Office of Student Affairs. This is so if at any point in the future the senator needs help reaching out to the student population of his/her school, they are familiar with those who can help best.

Aside from becoming aware of past SSC procedures and issues, the standing committees that comprise the Senate, SSC and UCSL are vital to the operation of our University.

- The Senate's committees consist of Student Senators, Faculty Senators Council, Deans Council and Administrative Management Council members – the opportunity to engage in conversation with these individuals is not one to take lightly.
- The Student Senators Council committees are the same as those that exist in the Senate – their purpose in the SSC is to help all senators become aware of the issues those committees are facing and working on.
- The University Committee on Student Life committees cater to special interests, just like what the committee itself does. Committees like Graduate Affairs, Student Services and Academic Services all exist to help those specific groups and to ensure that all student populations are being taken care of.
These committees have power to change things at our University, so while membership is sometimes voluntary, as a senator representing a large constituency, your place and representation of your school is highly valued and extremely important. **Attending your committees’ meetings on a regular basis is another expectation.**

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT SENATORS – STEINHARDT LEVEL**

It is the responsibility of the senator to consider carefully and diligently of the matters and issues that come before the GSO, the School Senate and the standing committee on which he/she chooses to sit. It is imperative that the senator follows the guidelines and rules and procedures of the GSO Constitution as well as the by-laws of the School Senate and its governance.

The senator is expected to attend all duly called meetings of the GSO, the School Senate and the standing committee of choosing. (The publicity chairs of the GSO also sit as the alternate senators to the GSO senator, so in the event that the senator is unable to attend, the alternate may be sent as the voting member for that meeting representing the GSO.)

Much in accordance with the responsibilities on the broader NYU level, the overall quality of a student senator's performance is only partially determined by the meetings s/he may attend. **A Student Senator will also need to do extensive "homework" in order to understand all the issues requiring his/her attention.** Much of this “homework” entails reading through the documents that the preceding GSO senator left available for his/her successors. **These transitioning documents can and will serve as great resources to understand the status of the School and to see how far it has come since the previous year.**

As well, after reading through these documents and becoming acquainted with the issues that occurred prior, **it is important to speak with the GSO advisor as well as the associate deans and dean of Steinhardt.** It is important to understand that as the School’s senator, **you have the right and opportunity to speak with these individuals in the capacity of senator** to ensure that you are aware of situations and procedures of Steinhardt. Becoming aware of which dean is appropriate for different types of issues and be sure to become well acquainted with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs who can help in many ways when it comes to obtaining the student voice and outreach.

**MEETING SCHEDULE – NYU LEVEL**

The University Senate generally meets on a Thursday of each month at least six times during the academic year from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

The SSC generally meets two Thursdays of each month of the academic year from 4:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. (5:30 P.M. when UCSL does not follow) – if
necessary, additional meetings may be called at other times and during the summer months.

The UCSL usually meets one Thursday of each month of the academic year from 5:00 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. These meetings usually follow one of the two SSC meetings in a given month.

Meetings of the various committees of the Senate, the SSC and the UCSL are scheduled each year by the members of each committee and therefore a definite schedule cannot be detailed.

MEETING SCHEDULE – STEINHARDT LEVEL

The Steinhardt Graduate Student Organization meets weekly on a day and time of the entire Executive Board’s approval.

The Steinhardt School Senate generally meets one Monday of each month of the academic year from 11:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. This meeting is usually the week after the standing committee meetings.

The standing committees (except faculty meetings) generally meet one Monday of each month of the entire academic year from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. This meeting is usually the week before the Steinhardt School Senate meeting.

The other various committees of Steinhardt are scheduled by the members of the committee and therefore a definite schedule cannot be detailed.