

**Judicial Branch Bylaws**  
As Revised March 19, 2024

**1. Composition**

- 1.1 The University of Iowa Judicial Branch shall consist of the Student Judicial Court (SJC) and the Student Elections Commissioner (SEC).
- 1.2 The SJC is a branch of the Undergraduate Student Government (USG).
- 1.3 The SEC and two Assistant SECs shall be selected from the undergraduate membership of SJC by the sitting SJC justices. The SEC shall continue to serve as an SJC justice throughout the duration of this appointment. One of the assistant SECs shall serve as the future SEC through appointment by the SEC.

**2. Student Judicial Court (SJC)**

**2.1 Membership**

- 2.1.1 The SJC shall comprise of nine Justices. The Justices shall serve one-year terms as outlined in section 2.2 with the exception of the Assistant SEC, who shall serve a 2-year term. Justices may be re-appointed for any number of terms.
- 2.1.2 The available positions on the SJC must be filled by undergraduate students. Members of the USG Executive Branch, GPSG, or USG Senate are not eligible to serve on the SJC.
- 2.1.3 Appointment of Justices shall be delegated to the power of the incoming and outgoing Presidents of the USG in accordance with the USG Constitution.
  - 2.1.2.1 Interviewing candidates for justice positions shall be within the by-laws of the Student Judicial Court, with outgoing Justices serving in an advisory capacity.

**2.2 Terms**

- 2.2.1 Justices shall serve one-year terms comprising of nine undergraduate students. The Assistant SEC is the only Justice to maintain two years.
  - 2.2.2 Should any Justice resign or be removed from their position by impeachment, the remaining Justices shall work with USG leadership to find an Interim Justice for the remainder of the aforementioned Justice's term. This Interim Justice will have all the rights and privileges of a Justice but will not be afforded a one-year term from when they join. They will instead only finish out the remainder of the previous term.
    - 2.2.2.1 Should any Justice resign or be removed from their position by impeachment during the second half of the current SJC term, the current sitting President shall have the authority to leave the

position vacant for the remainder of the current SJC term.

- 2.2.3 In the event of a vacancy in the Student Judicial Court, starting with the current sitting President and proceeding consecutively, vacancies shall be filled by waitlist applicants. In the case of multiple vacancies occurring within a single term, these vacancies shall be alternately filled by waitlist applicants.
- 2.2.4 If no waitlist applicants are willing to accept the vacant position, an ad hoc committee shall be established. This committee shall consist of the President, Chief Justice, and the Student Elections Commissioner (SEC), with the responsibility to fill the vacant seat.

## 2.3 Qualifications

- 2.3.1 Current and potential SJC Justices must meet the following conditions to qualify for their position.
  - 2.3.1.1 Justices shall be undergraduates in good academic standing and enrolled as a full-time student in the fall and spring semesters in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.
  - 2.3.1.2 Justices shall be in good non-academic standing with the Office of the Dean of Students.
    - 2.3.1.3 Justices shall read and understand the USG Constitution and the USG and SJC bylaws.
    - 2.3.1.4 Justices shall examine all pertinent materials related to a trial and submit a vote.
    - 2.3.1.5 Justices shall engage in all Court hearings and discussions.
    - 2.3.1.6 Justices shall be present at all Court training sessions.
    - 2.3.1.7 Justices shall follow the Chief Justice's lead regarding communication and inquiries.
    - 2.3.1.8 Justices shall voluntarily abstain from cases involving a conflict of interest, with the risk of removal as a consequence.
    - 2.3.1.9 Justices shall uphold the anti-discrimination and harassment policy illustrated in the SJC Code of Conduct and USG Constitution.
  - 2.3.2.0 Eligibility shall be confirmed during the nominations process.

## 2.5 Impeachment

- 2.5.1 Any member of the SJC may be impeached and removed from office if that member fails to perform their duties. Grounds for removal shall be limited to malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of duties.
  - 2.5.1.1 Malfeasance, defined as intentional conduct that is wrongful or unlawful, or
  - 2.5.1.2 Misfeasance, defined as the incorrect, improper, or wrongful performance of a lawful act, or

- 2.5.1.3 Nonfeasance, defined as the failure to act when a duty to act existed.
- 2.5.2 If the impeachment is sought by members of the Student Judicial Court then the proceedings of 2.5.2.1 shall be followed. If the impeachment is sought otherwise, the proceedings of 2.5.2.2-5 shall be followed.
  - 2.5.2.1 Calls for impeachment shall be brought forward by no fewer than two and no more than three Justices of the Student Judicial Court and referred to the USG President, Vice President, and Cabinet Director.
  - 2.5.2.2 An argument for impeachment presented by an outside party shall be presented to no fewer than two and no more than three Justices, including at least one Justice in a leadership position.
  - 2.5.2.3 The party bringing forward an argument for impeachment shall have discretion over whom they will present their argument to within the procedure of 2.5.2.2.
  - 2.5.2.4 Following the outside party's argument for the impeachment of a Justice, at least two Justices present for the outside party's argument must call for the impeachment of the Justice and refer to the USG President, Vice President, and Cabinet Director.
  - 2.5.2.5 No Justice present at the argument for impeachment may vote in the impeachment trial.
- 2.5.3 Once the impeachment process has been initiated, an impeachment trial will be held. The USG President, Vice President, Cabinet Director, and USG advisors reserve the right to be in attendance. All Justices will be in attendance.
- 2.5.4 The Justices responsible for initiating the process will present their case for removal against the impeached. The impeached Justice will then present their defense. Outside counsel may be present according to the rules of the Manual of Procedure.
  - 2.5.4.1 The trial proceedings will be led by the first of the following Justices who are neither impeached nor presenting the case for removal of the impeached: Chief Justice, Vice Chief Justice, SEC, Assistant SEC.
  - 2.5.4.2 The case for the removal of the impeached Justice and the defense presented by the impeached Justice may be comprised of evidence according to the rules in the Manual of Procedure.
- 2.5.5 All Justices who are not impeached nor have presented a case for impeachment nor led the proceedings of the trial will then vote by simple majority rule as to whether the impeached will be removed from the Student Judicial Court. Once voted out of Student Judicial Court, an individual may not be reappointed.

## 2.6 Jurisdiction

- 2.6.1 The SJC shall have original jurisdiction over:
  - 2.6.1.1 Interpretation of the USG Constitution, its Bylaws, and any amendments hereto.
  - 2.6.1.2. Interpretation of the Constitutions or Bylaws of the governing bodies of USG, all other Associations, Commissions, Student Organizations, and Committees.
  - 2.6.1.3 Interpretation and constitutionality of the actions of the governing bodies of USG relating to Commissions, Student Organizations, and Committees.
- 2.6.2 The SJC shall have appellate jurisdiction over:
  - 2.6.2.1 Disputes heard by the SEC and any other adjudicating legislative body.
  - 2.6.2.2 Disputes heard by other student judicial bodies.
  - 2.6.2.3 Appeals submitted by undergraduate and graduate students to the University of Iowa Parking & Transportation regarding parking violations.
- 2.6.3 The SJC shall render advisory opinions upon the request of the President and leadership of USG, members of the USG Executive Board, or any USG Senator.
- 2.6.4 The SJC shall render advisory opinions upon the request of any recognized student organization's president and/or its elected student leadership.
- 2.6.5 The SJC may hear and decide any case concerning students provided that the parties agree in writing to submit the case to the court and abide by its decision.

## 2.7 Rules and Procedures

- 2.7.1 The SJC shall maintain rules and procedures for the conduct of fair and expeditious hearings at all times of the year. These rules and procedures shall include the following:
  - 2.7.1.1 Any member of the USG may bring a case to the SJC, subject to the provisions above.
  - 2.7.1.2 Any party to a case before the SJC may be assisted or represented by counsel at that party's expense.
- 2.7.2 In cases involving the Executive Branch, USG Associations, Commissions, Student Organizations, or committees, the SJC shall have the power to request that the involved group represent itself in court.
- 2.7.3 When the SJC holds a hearing, the Court shall use the rules created by the Manual of Procedure.

## 2.8 Appeals

- 2.8.1 Decisions of the SJC may be appealed to designated representatives

of university offices or the President of the University if necessary.

2.8.2 The Student Judicial Court shall hear any forms of appeals that deal with the SEC and elections in accordance of SJC appeals and hearings processes.

2.8.2.1 If an appeal of an SEC decision comes before the SJC court, the SEC and the Assistant SECs shall present all evidence previously presented before the Elections Complaint Board.

2.8.2.2 The Elections Complaint Board for each hearing shall not partake the vote.

## 2.9 Meetings

2.9.1 A regular weekly meeting time will be agreed upon by the Justices. The Senate Liaison and the Chief Justice of SJC are required to attend USG Senate meetings. The Chief Justice is required to attend cabinet meetings. Additional SJC meetings will be at the discretion of the Chief Justice.

2.9.2 Dress code for any formal function of the Court will be determined by the Chief Justice.

2.9.3 All SJC members are required to attend all official meetings of the Court. Members who miss two meetings in a semester without appropriate notification of and excusal by the Chief Justice will forfeit their membership on Student Judicial Court. After the first unexcused absence the member shall have a conduct meeting with the SJC Leadership.

2.9.4 No required meetings or events for SJC shall fall upon religious holidays or culturally significant days. If a Justice has a conflict with a reoccurring meeting, the Justice will receive an excused absence for such.

## 2.10 Student Parking Appeals

2.10.1 SJC shall be charged with addressing parking ticket appeals of all University of Iowa Students in a manner that seeks to reduce reoccurring parking ticket issues.

2.10.2 This committee shall work with the University's Parking and Transportation Department and meet when docket requires it to address written parking ticket appeals and, if requested by appellant, live parking ticket appeals.

2.10.3 Quorum of parking appeals review shall be set at a minimum of two members at least consisting of one SJC Justice to address parking ticket appeals.

2.10.4 In the summertime, the SJC will continue its duty to hear parking appeals with quorum set at two members. If no Justices are available, the Justice in charge of parking appeals will appoint at least one interim representative to perform this duty. This appointment will continue until any presiding Justice returns.

- 2.10.5 If a decision cannot be made on a particular parking appeal due to the instance of a tie, the ticket will be forwarded to the Parking and Transportation Supervisor.
- 2.10.6 Justices serving on this committee shall act as fair and impartial evaluator to uphold the integrity of the appeals process.
- 2.10.7 At the beginning of each term this committee shall review any and all appeal guidelines to ensure they are relevant to current social and legal expectations.

### **3. SJC Roles**

#### **3.1 Chief Justice**

##### **3.1.1 Membership**

3.1.1.1 The Chief Justice shall be selected by the SJC from among its undergraduate members during the first Student Judicial Court meeting of the term through an election for the Chief Justice. Justices can self-nominate or be nominated by another Justice and will be chosen by a simple majority. The selected individual shall act as chair and administrative officer of the SJC.

3.1.1.2 The Chief Justice shall serve for a one-year election cycle. The sitting SJC justices may reappoint a Chief Justice for consecutive years.

3.1.1.3 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the Chief Justice.

##### **3.1.2 Qualifications**

3.1.2.1 The Chief Justice must be a member of the SJC in good standing.

3.1.2.2 The Chief Justice must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.

3.1.2.3 The Chief Justice will maintain regular contact with the Office of Student Life to ensure open communication with the USG advisor(s).

##### **3.1.3 Jurisdiction**

3.1.3.1 Overseeing all cases and subsequent deliberations within the Student Judicial Court.

3.1.3.2 Acting as the official representative of the Court, responsible for sharing case-related information, addressing procedural inquiries related to the Constitution and Bylaws, and rendering case verdicts.

3.1.3.3 Informing the President, Vice President, and USG Advisors when the Student Judicial Court receives a petition.

3.1.3.4 Working closely with the USG Advisor to assist in the training and integration of new Justices.

#### **3.2 Vice Chief Justice**

##### **3.2.1 Membership**

3.2.1.1 The Vice Chief Justice shall be selected by the SJC from among its

undergraduate members.

3.2.1.2 The Vice Chief Justice serves for a one-year election cycle. The sitting SJC justices may reappoint a Vice Chief Justice for consecutive years.

3.2.1.3 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the Vice Chief Justice.

### 3.2.2 Qualifications

3.2.2.1 The Vice Chief Justice must be a member of the SJC in good standing.

3.2.2.2 The Vice Chief Justice must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.

### 3.2.3 Jurisdiction

3.2.3.1 The Vice Chief Justice shall have jurisdiction over the following.

3.2.3.1.1 Stepping into the role of Chief Justice in cases of their absences or incapacity and compiles minutes for the routine sessions of SJC,

3.2.3.1.2 Maintaining a comprehensive understanding and channels of accessibility for prior cases,

3.2.3.1.3 Drafting official decisions, and

3.2.3.1.4 Ensuring the orderly functioning of the courtroom.

## 3.3 Student Elections Commissioner (SEC)

### 3.3.1 Membership

3.3.1.1 The SEC position is established as a promotion from the Assistant SEC.

3.3.1.2 The SEC serves for a total of two election years which includes one year as Assistant SEC. An SEC may only serve one term as the SEC, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

3.3.1.3 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the SEC.

### 3.3.2 Qualifications

3.3.2.1 The SEC must be a member of the SJC in good standing.

3.3.2.2 The SEC must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.

### 3.3.3 Jurisdiction

3.3.3.1 The SEC shall have jurisdiction over the following:

3.3.3.1.1 The conduct, certification, and announcement of the results of undergraduate student referenda.

3.3.3.1.2 The conduct, certification, and announcement of the results of any elections authorized by USG in accordance with that body's respective bylaws.

3.3.3.1.3 Infractions of election rules or procedures.

3.3.3.1.4 Review of contested ballots. Further appeals then go to the rest of SJC.

- 3.3.1.1.5 Development of rules and procedures to ensure fair equitable and accessible elections, including the ability of independent candidates to vie effectively with a group of candidates.
- 3.3.1.1.6 The SEC shall maintain an Election Code for conducting fair and equitable elections. The Code must be reviewed and updated every year prior to the election cycle.

### 3.4 Assistant Student Elections Commissioners (Assistant SECs)

#### 4.1 Membership

- 4.1.1 The Assistant SECs shall be selected by the SJC from among its undergraduate members.
- 4.1.2 The two Assistant SECs shall be further divided into the roles of Campaign and Voter Education and Elections Logistics.
- 4.1.2 The Assistant SECs serve for a one-year election cycle. The sitting SJC justices may reappoint an ASEC for consecutive years.
- 4.1.3. One Assistant SEC will be appointed for the following year's election cycle to serve as the Student Elections Commissioner through a vote made by the sitting SJC justices.
- 4.1.4 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the SEC.

#### 4.2 Qualifications

- 4.2.1 The Assistant SECs must be a member of the SJC in good standing.
- 4.2.2 The Assistant SECs must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.
- 4.2.3 The Assistant SECs must work closely and regularly with the SECs.

#### 4.3 Jurisdiction

- 4.3.1 The Assistant SECs shall have jurisdiction over the following.
  - 3.3.1.1.1 The conduct, certification, and announcement of the results of undergraduate student referenda.
  - 3.3.1.1.2 The conduct, certification, and announcement of the results of any elections authorized by USG in accordance with that body's respective bylaws.
  - 3.3.1.1.3 Infractions of election rules or procedures.
  - 3.3.1.1.4 Review of contested ballots. Further appeals then go to the rest of SJC.
  - 3.3.1.1.5 Development of rules and procedures to ensure fair equitable and accessible elections, including the ability of independent candidates to vie effectively with a group of candidates.

### 3.5 Student Organization Liaison

#### 4.1 Membership

- 4.1.1 The SOL shall be selected by the SJC from among its undergraduate members.



4.1.2 The SOL serves for a one-year election cycle. The sitting SJC justices may reappoint an SOL for consecutive years.

4.1.3 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the SEC.

#### 4.2 Qualifications

4.2.1 The SOL must be a member of the SJC in good standing.

4.2.2 The SOL must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.

#### 4.3 Jurisdiction

4.3.1 The SOL shall have jurisdiction over the following.

4.3.1.1 Assisting student organizations in drafting or altering their constitutions.

4.3.1.2 Management of student organization constitution submissions on the USG website.

4.3.1.3 The selected individual will act as administrative officer in assisting new student organizations in drafting their constitutions.

Additionally, the SOL is a resource for questions and concerns for student organizations during the approval process of their respective constitutions.

4.3.1.4 The SOL will be a member of the Student Organization Review Committee (SORC).

4.2.3 The SOL must work closely and regularly with CSIL.

### 3.6 Campus Judiciary Liaison

#### 4.1 Membership

4.1.1 The Campus Judiciary Liaison shall be selected by the SJC from among its undergraduate members.

4.1.2 The Campus Judiciary Liaison serves for a one-year election cycle. The sitting SJC justices may reappoint a Campus Judiciary Liaison for consecutive years.

4.1.3 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the Campus Judiciary Liaison.

#### 4.2 Qualifications

4.2.1 The Campus Judiciary Liaison must be a member of the SJC in good standing.

4.2.2 The Campus Judiciary Liaison must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.

#### 4.3 Jurisdiction

4.3.1 The Campus Judiciary Liaison shall have jurisdiction over the following.

4.3.1.1 Outreach to other judicial boards at the University of Iowa as well as other University judicial boards.

### 3.7 Senate Liaison

### 3.7.1 Membership

3.7.1.1 The Senate Liaison shall be selected by the SJC from among its undergraduate members.

3.7.1.2 The Senate Liaison serves for a one-year election cycle. The sitting SJC justices may reappoint a Senate Liaison for consecutive years.

3.7.1.3 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the Senate Liaison.

### 3.7.2 Qualifications

3.7.2.1 The Senate Liaison must be a member of SJC in good standing.

3.7.2.2 The Senate Liaison must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.

### 3.7.3 Jurisdiction

3.7.3.1 The Senate Liaison shall have jurisdiction over the following.

3.7.3.1.1 Ensuring Senate adherence to the Modern Rules,

3.7.3.1.2 Interpreting Modern Rules upon any request by Senate or upon a violation of the Modern Rules,

3.7.3.1.2 Announcing Student Judicial Court updates at weekly Senate sessions, and

3.7.3.1.3 Reporting information from Senate sessions at the Student Judicial Court sessions.

## 3.8 Parking Appeals Chair

### 3.8.1 Membership

3.8.1.1 The Parking Appeals Chair shall be selected by the SJC from among its undergraduate members.

3.8.1.2 The Parking Appeals Chair serves for a one-year election cycle. The sitting SJC justices may reappoint the Parking Appeals Chair for consecutive years if they wish to serve and are eligible.

3.8.1.3 Any person excluded from SJC membership may not serve as the Parking Appeals Chair.

### 3.8.2 Qualifications

3.8.2.1 The Parking Appeals Chair must be a member of SJC in good standing.

3.8.2.2 The Parking Appeals Chair must be a registered undergraduate student in accordance with the University of Iowa Registrar.

### 3.8.3 Jurisdiction

3.8.3.1 The Parking Appeals Chair shall have jurisdiction over the following.

3.8.3.1.1 Leading and overseeing the operations of the university parking ticket appeal committee.

3.8.3.1.2 Ensuring fair and impartial adjudication of parking ticket appeals.

3.8.3.1.3 Upholding the integrity of the appeals process, and

3.8.3.1.4 Holding consecutive meetings to go over all parking ticket

appeals from the previous month's docket.

**5. Revision**

5.1 Revision of these Bylaws can occur by a majority vote of the Justices.