An Act to Remove and Replace Chapter 306, 700, 701, 702, and 703 of the Student Government Association Code-of-Laws

May be referenced as: “The Financial Reform Bill”

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Preamble:
WHEREAS, the University of South Alabama Student Government Association seeks to modernize its operating structure by updating its Code of Laws.
WHEREAS, the current Appropriations Process is inefficient.
WHEREAS, reform of the Appropriations Committee will result in increased efficiency in the committee’s service to the student body.
WHEREAS, the Supplemental Travel Grant Process is not clearly defined.
WHEREAS, the Co-Sponsorship Process needs revision in regards to requirements.

Section 1: Chapter 306 shall be removed from the University of South Alabama Student Government Association Code-of-Laws.

Section 2: Chapter 700, Chapter 701, Chapter 702, and Chapter 703 shall be removed from the University of South Alabama Student Government Association Code-of-Laws.

Section 3: Chapter 306 shall be created to read:

Chapter 306. Appropriations Committee

306.1 The Appropriations Committee shall consist of seven (7) senators: one chair and six members.
306.1.1 The six members shall be elected by majority vote of the Senate of the candidates nominated by their senatorial peers.

306.1.2 The Appropriations Committee Chair shall be elected by majority vote of the Senate from the candidates nominated by the Student Government Association Treasurer.

306.2 The Appropriations Committee shall have the responsibility to receive appropriations, supplemental travel grant, and co-sponsorship requests through SouthSync from registered/official university student organizations; or departments in regards to supplemental travel grants.

306.2.1 The Appropriations Committee shall conduct hearings from student organization representatives in order to clarify, request more information for, etc. of the organization’s request packet.

306.2.1.1 Non-Appropriations Committee members shall not have voting powers on the organizations’ initial request packets. However, Senators may attend the Appropriations Committee hearings if they believe they will have valid input on the organizations’ request packets.

306.3 The Appropriations Committee Chair shall establish a meeting time of the Appropriations Committee and establish a hearing time for all non-mass approval financial request packets.

306.3.1 The Appropriations Committee Chair shall serve as the presiding officer of the Appropriations Committee.

306.3.2 The Appropriations Committee Chair shall prepare all financial request bills in accordance with Chapter 302.

306.3.3 The Appropriations Committee Chair shall maintain a journal of attendance for all Appropriations Committee members.

306.4 Any member of the Appropriations Committee, to include the Chair, having more than two unexcused absences in one semester from either Appropriations Committee meetings or hearings shall be expelled from the Appropriations Committee.

306.4.1 Absences that are automatically excused are illness (verified by a doctor’s excuse) and deaths in the family. All other absences are subject to the review of the Rules Committee.

Section 4: Chapter 700 shall be created to read:

Chapter 700. Financial Rules

700.1 Definitions

*Appropriations Committee* - a standing Senate committee charged with the
review and approval of all financial requests and creation of Financial Bills.

**Financial Request** - A formal written request asking for Student Government Association funds to be utilized in a manner stipulated in the request. This includes both internal and external requests.

**Fiscal Year** - The financial year starting in June and running into the end of May of the next calendar year; Summer, Fall, and Spring semesters.

**Allocation** - An external Financial Request from a non-Student Government Association entity.

**Appropriation** - A type of allocation to a student organization. Must adhere to appropriation rules, as well as allocation and financial request rules.

**Co-sponsorship** - A type of allocation to a student organization or University of South Alabama entity. Must adhere to co-sponsorship rules, as well as allocation and financial request rules.

**Supplemental Travel Grant (STG)** - A type of allocation to a student organization or University of South Alabama department. Must adhere to STG rules, as well as allocation and financial request rules.

**Mass Approval Request** - A financial request that does not require a hearing with the Appropriations Committee.

**Non-Mass Approval Request** - A financial request that requires a hearing with the Appropriations Committee.

700.2 No amount of the Student Government Association’s funds may be spent before the forming of a senate approved budget; this is to exclude the purchase of necessary office supplies.

700.2.1 Necessary office supplies shall be defined as: supplies needed for the minimal operation of the Student Government Association office; such as but not limited to, copy paper, pens, pencils, tape, highlighters, permanent markers, etc.

700.3 All funding done by the Student Government Association shall be in the form of reimbursement.

700.3.1 The form of reimbursement shall be a valid receipt, invoice, etc. The recommendation of such reimbursement shall be up to the Student Government Association Treasurer.
700.3.2 The decision if reimbursement is valid shall be made by five-sevenths approval of the Appropriations Committee when necessary and can be overridden by two-thirds approval of the Senate.

700.4 Informational meetings for students and organizations regarding the Appropriation, Co-sponsorship, and Supplemental Travel Grant process, and requirements, shall be held each semester before the Student Government Association Budget Meeting and shall be hosted by the Student Government Association Treasurer.

700.5 All Financial requests submitted to the Appropriations Committee and/or the Student Government Association Treasurer must be received by the Treasurer at least seven (7) working days prior to the time the allocation is needed. This rule may be waived with five-seventh approval of the Appropriations Committee.

700.5.1 Upon review the Appropriations Committee shall then present a Financial Bill to the Senate during a scheduled Student Government Association meeting. Passage of the Financial Bill shall follow the proper procedures listed in Chapter 302 and may be voted on by Line Vote as required.

700.5.2 The meeting at which the Financial Bill is presented at will be considered the official date of a Budget Meeting.

700.6 The Student Government Association Senate shall have the full authority to approve or deny any and all Financial requests; even if such request follows all proper rules and guidelines.

700.7 Any and all allocations must be spent as stipulated by the Student Government Association if such stipulation is applicable.

700.8 Any organization which uses any part of its allocated funds from the Student Government Association for private or commercial gain and/or not in accordance with 700.7 shall have the remainder of its allocation cut off and shall not receive any Student Government Association allocation for the minimum of three semesters to follow.

700.9 In order for an organization to receive an allocation from the Student Government Association, it must be an authorized and registered organization through the Office of Student Activities and have been registered for three consecutive semesters (Fall, Spring, Summer; Spring,
Summer, Fall; Summer, Fall, Spring) immediately preceding the Financial request.
700.9.1 In order for an organization to receive an allocation from the Student Government Association, the organization must have a representative present at any required hearings stipulated by the Appropriations Committee.
700.9.2 The organization will be notified 72 hours in advance by the Appropriations Committee of a required hearing.
700.10 The Student Government Association shall conduct one (1) Budget Meeting in the Summer semester, two (2) Budget Meetings in the Fall semester, and two (2) Budget Meetings in the Spring semester during which a Financial Bill will be presented by the Appropriations Committee to the Senate.
700.10.1 For the Summer semester, the Budget Meeting shall take place at the fifth Senate meeting of the semester.
700.10.2 For the Fall semester, the Budget Meetings shall take place at the fifth Senate meeting of the semester and the tenth Senate meeting of the semester.
700.10.3 For the Spring semester, the Budget Meetings shall take place at the fifth Senate meeting of the semester and the tenth Senate meeting of the semester.
700.11 Requirements for the Financial Request Packet (FRP) are as follows and will be included in the template provided by the Student Government Association Treasurer:
   a. Itemized and numbered list of items requesting payment for.
   b. Proof of cost for all items.
   c. Items requiring Jag Numbers and Names must be included within an itemized and numbered list so they can be easily counted.
   d. Name of submitter
   e. Name of Advisor and proof of Advisor Approval
   f. Contact information (including e-mail and phone number)
g. Explanation of all parts
h. All information contained in one Word, PDF, or similar document.

700.12 All advertising for an activity and/or item that is fully or partially funded by the Student Government Association must effectively recognize the Student Government Association’s support. All publications that are funded by the Student Government Association (which includes t-shirts, flyers, banners, etc.) must contain the Student Government Association Logo.

700.13 The Student Government Association will not pay for promotional items for events unless the event is sponsored by the Student Government Association, and, therefore, falls under 700.12. These items must be approved by the Appropriations Committee.

700.14 The Student Government Association shall not pay for office supplies. Examples are, but not limited to, stationary, pens, paper, envelopes, film, stamps, invitations, paper clips, etc.

700.15 The Student Government Association shall not reimburse expenditures for awards, gifts, giveaways, or plaques.

700.16 The Rules Committee shall be the sole authority in the review and auditing of financial requests in reference to 700.7.

Section 5: Chapter 701 shall be created to read:

Chapter 701: Appropriations

701.1 Appropriations shall only be approved through the Student Government Association Senate during a scheduled Budget Meeting in proper Bill format and shall pass in accordance with Chapter 302.

701.1.1 The Financial Bill must first pass through the Appropriations Committee by a majority vote by the committee before entering the Senate.

701.1.2 The Financial Bill Draft must be available for senatorial review at least ten days before the scheduled Budget Meeting.

701.1.3 Changes to the Financial Bill shall be done within the ten days prior to the scheduled Budget Meeting or in accordance with Chapter 302.
701.2 Mass approvals will be included within the same Financial Bill as non-mass approvals.

701.2.1 Mass approval can only be authorized by majority vote of the Appropriations Committee and does not require a hearing; however, the organization may request a hearing.

701.2.2 If one or more senators wishes to discuss an appropriation request, or feel it should not be mass approved, they may request a hearing on the packet one week before the Budget Meeting. If the senator fails to request the hearing in time, that packet is subject for mass approval.

701.2.3 A senator may request a hearing by contacting the Appropriations Committee Chair or the Student Government Association Treasurer.

701.2.4 The Appropriations Chair has the right to reject a hearing on the basis of five - seventh vote of the Appropriation Committee to not hold a hearing on the said packet.

701.2.5 If changes are made within the Financial Bill prior to the Budget Meeting during the ten day review period, the Senate must be notified.

701.3 All Appropriations requests must be completed through SouthSync in proper format no later than fourteen (14) days prior to one of the two scheduled Budget Meetings in which it will be included in the Financial Bill.

701.4 An organization shall only receive a maximum of $2,000.00 per fiscal year in appropriation allocations.

701.4.1 An organization may only request and receive up to $500.00 per person for travel, lodging, and/or registration expenses per fiscal year out of their appropriation allocation budget.

701.4.2 Student Government Association funds may not be allocated to student organizations for travel, lodging, and/or registration expenses for conferences or conventions unless the organization requesting funds demonstrates with documentation the educational benefit of the event and the necessity of their attendance because they are:

a. participating in competition on behalf of the university at the event (this does not include delegation of the year, chapter of the year, spirit awards or equivalents thereof), or
b. hosting the convention within one year of the date that the appropriation is approved by the Senate, or
c. attending for the sole purpose of receiving information on further education, academic, or professional opportunities.
701.4.3 The Student Government Association, per University of South Alabama policy, cannot provide funds for conferences, conventions, or other trips whose primary purpose could be reasonably classified as leisure or recreational.

701.4.3.1 Trips that result in little to no academic or professional development for those attending are considered leisure or recreational.

701.4.4 The organization requesting funds for travel to a conference or event must include in their financial request packet an itemized, numbered expense list.

701.4.4.1 The itemized, numbered expense list shall include a list of the people planning to attend the event, their Jag Numbers, proof of registration (such as an e-mail, receipt, etc.), travel itinerary, proof of lodging cost (if applicable), proof of conference fees (if applicable).

701.4.4.2 The Student Government Association will not pay for opting-in to meals or food at a conference or event. Only meals included in the registration fee will be reimbursed.

701.4.4.3 The Student Government Association shall reimburse for gas mileage, per University policy, allowing for the Federal minimum for travel reimbursements.

701.4.4.3.1 The Student Government Association shall reimburse mileage for one vehicle for every four students attending the conference and/or event (i.e. 1 vehicle: 1 - 4 people; 2 vehicles: 5 - 8 people, etc.).

701.4.4.3.2 Estimated mileage must be calculated using the main campus as the starting point.

701.5 An organization may receive funding for uniforms.

701.5.1 An organization requesting uniforms is not required to provide Jag Numbers and Names of the students receiving the uniforms until the organization turns in the reimbursement form.

701.5.2 An organization requesting uniforms will only be reimbursed for the number of valid Jag Numbers and Names and will only receive up to the amount per uniform listed in the required quote.

701.5.3 Uniforms are defined as torso and leg garments and only such garments will be approved. However, this may be overruled by a two-thirds majority vote of a Senate meeting that meets quorum.

701.5.4 An organization may receive up to $30.00 per person for uniform(s) for each fiscal year.
701.6 The Student Government Association shall not pay for equipment such as, but not limited to, any type of media equipment, audio equipment, digital cameras, computers, printers, videos, books, hardware, tools, recreational equipment, individual sports safety equipment, or intramural equipment.

701.6.1 There shall be one exception to 701.6 and it shall be in regards to equipment not reasonably available on campus and that is vital for the organization to function.

701.6.2 Chapter 701.6 may be suspended with five-seventh approval of the Appropriation Committee or two-thirds approval of the Senate.

701.6.3 If equipment is accepted as not reasonably available on campus and is vital to the organization to function, the equipment must be stored on campus and proof of storage must be brought to the Student Government Association Treasurer.

701.7 The Student Government Association shall not pay for an organization’s fees such as, but not limited to, website fees, chapter fees, and intramural fees.

701.8 The Student Government Association shall not pay for food or drink requests from any organization.

Section 6: Chapter 702 shall be created to read:

Chapter 702: Co-Sponsorships

702.1 Co-sponsorships are approved at the discretion of the Appropriations Committee based on the current Student Government Association’s vision for the campus community at the University of South Alabama.

702.2 All requests for co-sponsorships must be received at least two regularly scheduled Student Government Association meetings prior to the event.

702.2.1 A representative of the organization requesting co-sponsorship must be present at a hearing by the Appropriations Committee in which the packet is discussed.

702.3 Organizations are allowed to request financial support for food and drink in a co-sponsorship.
702.4 A Student Government Association Co-sponsorship shall entail additional support through funding, advertising, physical presence at an event, and/or by any other means deemed appropriate.

702.5 A co-sponsorship shall entail the following additional information to be presented to the Appropriation Committee, as included but not limited to:

a. Information about the project’s full scope
b. Information about additional sponsors, their support, or additional funding methods
c. A full copy of all receipts for services, materials, or items used in the project, not just receipts limited to the project portions co-sponsored by the Student Government Association
d. An after-event report of the co-sponsorship’s goals, accomplishments, and results to be presented to the Appropriations Committee
e. Any additional information requested by the Appropriations Committee or Senate.

702.6 Every organization seeking a Student Government Association co-sponsorship must be able to demonstrate that a substantial effort has been made, on the part of the organization, to fund the project on its own.

702.7 The Student Government Association will only reimburse up to a maximum of 65% of the total proved project’s cost (receipts of all actual expenditures, not just planned expenditures).

702.8 Co-sponsorship of an organizational event does not impact that organization’s annual appropriation allocation.

702.9 An organization shall not receive funding for conference expenses, travel, lodging, and registration expenses through co-sponsorships.

702.10 Any and all non-philanthropic events co-sponsored by the Student Government Association shall be free and open for the student body.

702.10.1 Co-sponsorship’s whose purpose may be deemed philanthropic by the Appropriations Committee may charge a maximum of $5.00 per student per event.

702.11 If an organization is requesting a co-sponsorship for an off campus venue, they must provide one (1) bid for an on-campus venue as well as two (2) additional off campus venue bids with an estimation of attendance for the event.

Section 7: Chapter 703 shall be created to read:
Chapter 703: Supplemental Travel Grants

703.1 STGs are for travel, lodging, and/or registration expenses for conferences only.

703.2 No STG request shall be granted until a portion of the Student Government Budget has been allotted and set aside for STGs.

703.3 STGs are not required to be voted on and approved by the Student Government Association Senate.

703.3.1 STGs may be passed by the Appropriations Committee by a five-seventh majority vote if the appropriate amount of funds remain in the STG budget.

703.3.2 If there is not enough money remaining in the STG budget, the STG must be presented to the Student Government Association Senate in bill format for passage.

703.4 STGs may be requested by academic departments and student organizations on behalf of individual students.

703.5 The maximum a student can receive through an STG is $500.00 per Student Government Association fiscal year.

703.5.1 The maximum a sponsoring organization or department may request is $1,000.00 per Student Government Association fiscal year.

703.6 STG eligibility is strictly limited to students who are actively participating in academic and/or professional conferences only.

703.6.1 Examples of actively participating in an academic and/or professional conference include, but are not limited to, presenting a paper, being an invited commentator, presenting a poster presentation, participating in an academic competition.

703.6.2 Networking, team building, or attending workshops are not actively participating in academic and/or professional conferences.

703.7 The Student Government Association, per University of South Alabama policy, cannot provide funds for conferences, conventions, or other trips whose primary purpose could be reasonably classified as leisure or recreational.

703.7.1 Trips that result in little to no academic or professional development for those attending are considered leisure or recreational.

703.7.3 The organization requesting funds for travel to a conference or event must include in their financial request packet an itemized, numbered expense list.
703.7.3.1 The itemized, numbered expense list shall include a list of the people planning to attend the event, their Jag Numbers, proof of registration (such as an e-mail, receipt, etc.), travel itinerary, proof of lodging cost (if applicable), proof of conference fees (if applicable).

703.7.3.2 The Student Government Association will not pay for opting-in to meals or food at a conference or event. Only meals included in the registration fee will be reimbursed.

703.7.4 The Student Government Association shall reimburse for gas mileage, per University policy, allowing for the Federal minimum for travel reimbursements.

703.7.4.1 The Student Government Association shall reimburse mileage for one vehicle for every four students attending the conference and/or event (i.e. 1 vehicle: 1 - 4 people; 2 vehicles: 5 - 8 people, etc.).

703.7.4.1.1 Estimated mileage must be calculated using the main campus as the starting point.

703.8 An organization shall only request a STG if the amount that the Student Government Association would provide for the STG would cause an organization to go over their annual appropriation allocation limit if it was passed as an Appropriation. Otherwise, the group is to submit a Financial Request Packet or modify an existing one.

703.9 A STG will not affect an organization’s annual appropriation allocation limit unless specifically stated in 703.8

Section 8: This act shall take effect April 28th, 2015