



MEC Student Advisory Council

(For the students, from the students, and by the students)

(Handbook)

Preface:

The Student Council Committee is a committee of Student Councils in Higher Education Institutions. It is headed by the Undersecretary of MoHE and is responsible for the supervision of all the Student Advisory Councils across the Sultanate. The handbook is prepared in accordance with the regulatory guide (ministerial decision no 71/2014) for Student Advisory Councils in Higher Education Institutions, provided by the Student Council Committee.

The handbook provides the details of the structure, membership, composition, role and responsibility of the Student Advisory Council at MEC. The Dean of Middle East College (MEC) is responsible for executing the regulations provided in the handbook or addressing any issues/implications generated while applying the regulations and may make appropriate decisions. The Board of Trustees may address any issue not referred to in the handbook and may make appropriate decisions after consulting the Student Advisory Council. Any decisions made must be reported to the Student Councils' Committee.

1. Objectives of the Student Council:

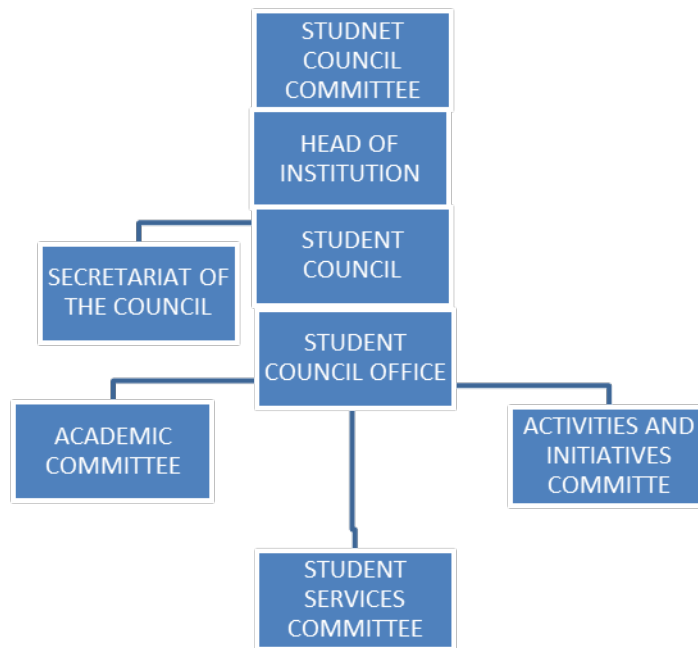
1. Representing the student community.
2. Participating in enhancing student experience, in terms of student learning, student research activity and student services.
3. Fostering effective communication skills and ethics; i.e., working with transparency, giving constructive feedback, not being self-opinionated, being responsible and being committed to make polite effective conversations at all times.
4. Developing student awareness of their surrounding community; i.e., encouraging them to practice social responsibility.
5. Developing patriotism and spiritual and ethical values.
6. Equipping students with the essential knowledge/awareness to building personality, enhancing sense of team work, practicing critical thinking, self-expression, openness to others and communication skills.
7. Representing and following up with all student community issues, needs, achievements.
8. Enhancing student activities in all fields; cultural, social, sport, art and others.
9. Strengthening values of volunteerism, thus supporting charity organizations and enterprises.
10. Helping excellent students to achieve more in studies, research and other related issues.
11. Bridging communication channels between the students and the working team of the institution (administration, faculty, and staff).

2. Responsibilities of the Student Council:

1. Preparing the Council's annual plan, and proposing it to the Dean for approval. After approval, the annual plan is forwarded to Student Councils' Committee.
2. Discussing the budget of the Council that is proposed by the Student Council Office and forwarding it to the Dean for approval.
3. Making appropriate decisions and recommendations in harmony with the rules, regulations and instructions of the institution.
4. Representing students and the institution in external activities assigned by the Dean.
5. Discussing and approving the financial and administrative reports proposed by the Student Council Office.

6. Terminating the membership of any member of the council after approval of Dean who has been found guilty of committing a prohibited or offensive act/violation
7. Recommending whatever appropriate to enable the Council, itself, to practice its specialties and roles.

3. The organizational structure of the Student Council:



4. The Student Council Office

1. The Council forms a Student Council Office with the presidency of the Council's President, and the membership of:
 - Vice-President of the Council (also vice-president of the Student Council Office).
 - Head of Academic Committee.
 - Head of Student Services Committee.
 - Head of Activities and Initiatives Committee.
 - Council Secretary.
2. The Student Council Office is to meet on a regular basis upon a call from President of Council once every month or whenever needed. Meetings are chaired by President

or Vice-President of the Council with the presence of, at least, two members of the Office. Note that the very first meeting of the Office is called for after one week from its formation.

3. The Council Office takes decisions based on majority. If votes appear to be equal, then it is the side for which the chair of the meeting votes that is favored.
4. Secretary of the Council is to report the Office's decisions to the President within 10 working days from the date of meeting.
5. The Student Council Office carries out the following responsibilities:
 - a. Preparing a plan for the activities of the Council and the sub-committees, with the assistance of the Secretariat of the Council.
 - b. Implementing the decisions made by the Council and its general plan/agenda, and making appropriate decisions to execute all activities/events.
 - c. Preparing the Council's budget plan and proposing it to the Council, then forwarding it to the President to continue procedures of approval.
 - d. Supervising and monitoring the performance of the Council's sub-committees.
 - e. Preparing a plan for each semester of the programmes organized by the Council and proposing it to the Council to be discussed and approved. Then, recommendations are to be forwarded to the President for final approval within (15) actual working days.
 - f. Discussing and solving student-related issues in coordination with the concerned in the institution as per that institution's rules and regulations.
 - g. Preparing the annual administrative and financial reports on the Council's programmes/activities and forwarding them to the Council.
 - h. Organizing lists of members in the 'permanent sub-committees' in the Council with consideration to balancing between the number of members in each committee.

5. President and Vice President of the Student Council

1. Both must fulfill the following conditions:
 - a. They must be Omanis.
 - b. They should have successfully completed:
 - 180 credit points of the 240 credit points for Diploma.
 - 240 credit points of the 480 credit points for Bachelors.
 - 60 credit points of the 180 credit points for Master's.
 - c. Any student, taking position of President/Vice-President, is to run the council in that position one time only.

d. They must not take part in any administrative position in any student club.

2. President of Council has the following responsibilities:

- a. Chairing the meetings of the Council and the Student Council Office.
- b. Signing on recommendations and official correspondences issued by the Council and the Office.
- c. Signing on all expenses/spending after being approved by the Student Council Office and the Secretary.
- d. Representing the Council on-campus and off-campus.
- e. Calling for the meetings of the Council and the Student Council Office.
- f. Calling the sub-committees, formed as per regulations of this guide, for meetings whenever needed.
- g. Forwarding the Council's recommendations to the Dean.

3. Vice-President of Council has the following responsibilities:

- a. Acting on behalf of the President if President is absent or not available.
- b. Performing all duties as assigned, in written form, by the Council.

6. Membership criteria, size and tenure

1. A member of the Council must fulfill the following **criteria**:

- a. Have, at least, successfully completed one semester with a work load not less than the minimum requirement;
- b. CGPA is not below (2.0) out of (4) points for Diploma and Bachelor students (in CU and ARM programs)
OAM is not below 54 % for Diploma and Bachelor students (in UoW programs)
OAM is not below 54 % for the students of Masters
- c. Have not exceeded the required term (study period) in the respective programme.
- d. Is registered, at least, with the minimum required work load during period of membership, except for Summer Semester and last semester of study in the respective programme.
- c. Have not faced a disciplinary penalty, or been condemned for any violation under disciplinary procedures

2. **Size:** The total number of members in the Student Council is 17 including the President and Vice-president.

3. **Tenure:** The term for Student Council membership is one academic year starting from the date of announcing election results. In case it was not possible to organize the elections within the given period for some compelling circumstances considered by Head of Institution, the current Council may continue performing duties until those circumstances are overcome. The current Council must not exceed one full semester in such a case.

7. Nomination and Election:

1. Every student has the right to cast a vote.
2. Election takes the course of one day.
3. Dean decides the internal mechanism and date.
4. Elections require the participation of absolute majority of the total number of students in the institution and if this condition is not fulfilled, then elections are extended for two consecutive hours. Upon fulfilling the former procedure, elections are acknowledged (legal) regardless of number of voters.
5. If nominees receive equal number of votes, one person is selected (by draw) unless one of them gives up the position to the other.
6. Commencement of nomination in the Council is announced by Head of Institution in the first week of the first semester. Nominations take the course of three working days in the agreed timings and dates.
7. Dean is to announce names of nominees in the second week after the end of nominations.
8. Election campaigns start, at least, (72) hours before and end (24) hours prior to the commencement of the actual elections.
9. The following rules must be observed to regulate election campaigns, voting and sorting of votes:
 - a. Any nominee has the right to organize a campaign to endorse his/her votes. Such campaigns start from the date of announcing names of nominees for the different positions and up until the last day before day of election on which any form of election campaigns is not allowed.
 - b. It is prohibited for a nominee to conduct the campaign activity off campus.
 - c. Posters exhibited on regular or electronic Notice Board across campus (size of poster is not bigger than (50 X 80cm)) can be used for campaigning. A nominee can also gather with the voters in some venue in the institution after getting approval from Election Committee, and is allowed to deliver speeches provided that he/she commits to positive and polite aspects of communication and conversation skills.
 - d. The Election Box should have lock and an opening space allowing, only, voting forms to be entered.

- e. Electronic voting or sorting of votes, or both done electronically, may be implemented after approval from the Student Council Committee.
 - f. Nominees may appeal against Election Committee or results of elections to the Dean. Appeals are addressed within seven working days from the date of appealing. The decision made by the Dean is final and compelling.
10. A student may withdraw from nominations in written form application submitted to Election Committee before, at least, three working days from the actual date of elections.
 11. If it was proved by the Election Committee that a nominee has manipulated the process of elections, he/she receives a written warning, his/her nomination and votes are called null in the current round, and he/she is banned from nomination in the next round of Student Council elections. If such violation is discovered to having been repeated for the second time, he/she receives a written warning, his/her nomination and votes are called null, and is utterly banned from nomination for any position in any of the coming elections.
 12. Council's office and any Council deposits are claimed by the Dean two weeks prior to next election dates. Former members must evacuate the office and take their personal belongings.
 13. Final results are announced before the end of the third week, and final list is submitted to Student Council Committee in the fourth week for final approval.
 14. A procedural meeting is held to elect (from among the 17 elected members) president, vice-president and heads of the committees by secret ballot within a week from the date of announcing election results. The meeting is chaired by the eldest elected person. It is publicly announced and it becomes legal only if the absolute majority of its members attend it and, hence, decisions are made by the voting of the majority.

8. Election Committee:

The Election Committee is formed by the Dean to run the election process. Decisions of the committee are made with the voting of the absolute majority. Committee's Head is to be one of the deputies of the Head of Institution. Members are:

- a. Head of Student Affairs Dept.
- b. (2) Academic faculty members.
- c. (2) Staff members from Student Affairs Dept.
- d. (4) Students chosen by Head of Institution provided that they are currently non-nominees.

Election Committee is responsible for performing the following duties:

- a. Facilitating election process by preparing the necessary requirements; i.e., equipment, venue booking, of elections.
- b. Observing the implementation of general instructions/regulations of election process, including election campaigns, voting and sorting of votes.
- c. Considering any appeals raised by nominees regarding Election Committee's decision and addressing them within a week from date of appealing.
- d. Extending election period if number of voters is less than the required minimum rate.
- e. Addressing any emerging issues in the elections that are, as well, not addressed in this guide.
- f. Approving names of nominees.
- g. Preparing election proceedings, voting and sorting of votes, and signing them by all members of the committee.
- h. Election Committee in any institution determines the election mechanism as per the needs of each institution.

8. Student Council Membership Characteristics

A member must not abuse his/her position in the Council as to gain personal benefit/favors and must refrain from raising issues related to a personal interest before the Council but he/she must target the public interest when performing tasks and duties.

A member must be committed to attending the meetings of the Council, the Student Council Office and the sub-committees of the Council, and in case a member had to be absent for some reason, he/she must report, in written form, to the President or the respective committee.

If a member expresses his/her personal opinion in public and is outside Council, he/she must be committed, at all times, to define that his/her opinion does not represent the opinion of the Student Council and that it is a personal viewpoint.

9. Termination:

Membership in the Council and in any other related committees in the Council, itself, is terminated as in the following cases:

- a. Committing a violation that is clearly deemed to be offensive to the Council or leads to the defamation of the institution.
- b. Committing any violation leading the member to be under any disciplinary action implemented by the institution, except for giving warnings.
- c. Being condemned by the judiciary specialists for committing a felony.
- d. Not fulfilling any of the membership conditions

- e. Moving from the current institution to another, or withdrawing from the institution, itself, during the period of membership.
- f. Written resignation submitted by the member or being fired from the Council for any reason.
- g. Being absent from Council/Student Council Office's meetings for three consecutive times or five occasional times without a valid excuse.
- h. Not being committed to attend meetings for three consecutive times without a valid excuse.
- i. If member passes away.
- j. If Council is terminated.

Considering the student disciplinary system implemented by the institution, the Council has the right to set punishment upon any member committing a violation to the guidelines in the handbook, committing any act leading to the defamation of the institution or demonstrating any irresponsible behavior related to both. The Council may set any of the following actions:

- 1- Notifying the violator.
- 2- First warning.
- 3- Second warning.
- 4- Temporary suspension of membership for a period not exceeding one semester.
- 5- Firing from the Council.

Making a decision regarding punishments (4) and (5) is subject to approval from the Dean. The member who is subjected to one of these punishments must be notified in written form within a period not exceeding a week from the date of announcing decision.

A member who was subjected to any of the punishments mentioned in (3), (4), (5) may submit a written grievance to the President through the Secretary within a period not exceeding one week from the date of the decision. The Dean is to decide on the appeal within a period not exceeding a month from the date of grievance. However, there shall be no contest on the judgment passed.

If President or Vice-President resigns from the Council, the Council votes for a replacement by, maximum, two weeks.

10. Permanent Committees

The Council is to form the following permanent committees:

- a. Academic Affairs Committee

- b. Student Services Committee
- c. Activities & Initiatives Committee

1. Academic Affairs Committee:

- a. Observing students' public opinion on campus regarding the existing academic challenges, and suggesting solutions/remedies to solve those issues.
- b. Conducting studies and research papers that align with the objectives and responsibilities of the Student Council. With such research work, students may participate with those papers in different forums and workshops.
- c. Submitting a detailed monthly report highlighting student comments on (admission and registration, academic advising, Learning Resources Center, academic faculty members) to the Council.
- d. Supervising the academic/scientific/cultural content in the competitions organized by the Council in coordination with the concerned authority in the institution.
- e. Any other responsibilities assigned to the committee.

2. Student Services Committee:

- a. Observing students' public opinion on campus regarding the existing challenges related student services, and suggesting solutions/remedies to solve those issues.
- b. Monitoring the level of student services quality in the institution.
- c. Submitting a detailed monthly report highlighting student comments on (food services, sport facilities, gyms, hostels, any other services offered by the institution) to the Council.
- d. Supervising media (awareness campaigns and programmes) in the different media channels in coordination with the concerned authority in the institution.
- e. Any other responsibilities assigned to the committee.

3. Activities & Initiatives Committee:

- a. Preparing a comprehensive annual plan on the activities, events and programmes to be organized by the Council in coordination and cooperation with the Secretariat of the Council.
- b. Supporting student good initiatives on campus and suggesting methods to activate their roles positively.
- c. Supporting voluntary work and community service in the institution and the local community to preserve heritage, culture and achievements of the country.
- d. Suggesting and initiating awareness-raising forums and discussion panels that aim at strengthening positive values in student life and experience.

- e. Preparing for and executing the competitions that are to be organized for the students by the Council.
- f. Any other responsibilities assigned to the committee.

12. Meetings of the Council and it's committees

- a. The President calls for the very first meeting of the Council within a period not exceeding two weeks from the date of election. In the meeting, schedules and timings of coming meetings are defined.
- b. The Council holds a regular meeting twice a semester to discuss the subjects included in the Council agenda.
- c. An exceptional meeting may be called for in the following cases:
 - 1) Upon a request by the Student Council Office supported by reasons of calling for the meeting.
 - 2) Upon a written request from (one-third of the members) in the Council supported by reasons to call of calling for the meeting. In the case of Student Council Office, must call for that meeting within one week from the date of the written request. No issues other than those in the Council agendas are to be discussed.
- d. Student Council Office announces the schedule and venues of Council meetings at least three working days prior to the actual dates of meeting. Agenda of meetings is to be distributed by the Secretary of the Student Council Office.
- e. Meetings are chaired by the President and if President is unable to be present, Vice-President chairs the respective meeting.
- f. Meetings of the Council are deemed (legal)/acknowledged with the presence of two-thirds of its members. In case this percentage of attendees is not fulfilled, the President is to announce the date, time and venue for the next meeting within one week from the date of the under-attended meeting.
- g. The next meeting session is deemed legal if number of attendees is at least half of the total number of members.
- h. The Council makes decision upon agreement of the absolute majority of the members. In case votes for a particular decision are equal, the side on which the President stands on the issue is considered, except for the following cases:
 - 1) Making suggestions to modify this guide.
 - 2) No confidence against a member of the council
 - 3) Subjecting a member to any of the penalties stated in this guide if justified.In these cases, decisions are made with the voting of the majority of the two-thirds of its members:

i. Permanent sub-committees design a schedule for meetings. Minimum of 3 meetings are held in a regular semester, or whenever deemed necessary to meet by the head of the particular sub-committee. Note that Summer Semester is not regarded a regular semester.

j. The below regulations must be followed in all meetings of the Council and its sub-committees:

- a. A session is chaired and ended by the President of the Council, or head of the respective committee.
- b. Members are called for a meeting before at least two days before the actual date of meeting.
- c. MoMs are released and distributed after every session.

12. Secretariat of the Council

Head of Student Affairs is the Secretary of the Council and has no right to vote when making decisions.

Secretariat of the Council has the following roles and responsibilities:

- a. Direct supervision of the financial, administrative affairs and the financial resources of the Council.
- b. Inviting members of the Council and of the Student Council Office for meetings, preparing both agendas, writing and signing on MoMs and forwarding them to head of Student Council Office to be reported to the Head of Institution as well.
- c. Monitoring the execution of the decisions made by the Student Council Office.
- d. Administrating records and archives of the Council as per the archiving system of the institution.
- e. Receiving all correspondences addressing the Council and keeping records.
- f. In charge of expenditures as per decisions of the Student Council Office approved by the President and the Head of Institution collectively.
- g. Receiving revenues as per receipts sealed by the Council and making deposit in Council's bank account.
- h. Presenting a monthly account statement with all expenditures and revenues of the Council.
- i. Preparing financial reports submitted to the Council and the Student Council Office.
- j. Keeping record of all financial documents.
- k. Preparing all equipment and stationary for the Council.
- l. Any other tasks as assigned by the President of the Council.

13. Budget

The Council has an independent budget supervised by the Office and is active during the year in which the Council is active. Money is deposited in a bank account specific for the Council after approval from President. Financial resources of the Council are as follows:

- a. Annual financial budget approved by the Council.
- b. Sponsors and donations as approved by the Head of Institution as per the regulations.
- c. Revenues of the Council events and activities approved by the Head of Institution.
- d. Any other resources approved by the Head of Institution.

The Council may not receive donations or sponsors locally or from outside the Sultanate unless with alignment with the general regulations and legislations.

Expenditures are as follows:

- a. The Council Office may recommend to deposit maximum (200) OMR until all other urgent and regular costs of the Council are covered.
- b. The Council Office may recommend to deposit maximum (100) OMR until all other urgent and regular costs of the sub-committees are covered.
- c. Expenditures of the Council are processed upon a decision by the Office signed by Head of Institution, and head of Student Council Office and Secretary collectively.
- d. All financial affairs are supervised, organized and audited by the Head of Finance in the institution or anyone authorized in a written form to do so.
- e. Any amount of expenditures may not be processed to the next round of election for the next Council unless budget of the previous Council is calculated and organized by the Finance Dept. in the institution.

Amount of budget overflow is to go to budget of the institution. The Office is to pay all dues of the Council, if any, before the ending of Council. Head of Finance is to be notified of that.