



OFFICIAL OPINION
OF
THE SUPREME COURT

March 12th, 2026

THE OPINION ON VOTING LANGUAGE PERTAINING TO THE
CONSTITUTION

CASE NO. 3

2025 – 2026 SCOSGA

CASE NO. 3

MAJORITY OPINION OF THE COURT

NOTICE: The following document represents an Opinion of the Supreme Court of the Student Government Association of Tennessee Tech University and constitutes a binding and final decision on all parties concerned within the decision of the Court.

STUDENT SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE TECH UNIVERSITY

Decided March 12th, 2026

Recommendations decided March 12th, 2026

Majority, Concurring, and Dissenting Opinions issued March 12th, 2026

By 7 - 0 Decision

Facts

Secretary Autumn Cecil asked the following queries to the Supreme Court on the February 12th meeting.

1. Does the phrase 'a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting membership of the SGA Senate' in Article X, Section 7 require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all Senators holding voting rights, regardless of attendance, or two-thirds of those Senators present and voting at a duly constituted meeting at which a quorum is present?

The following sections of the constitution, as posted on the SGA website as of November 14th, 2023, were used in issuing the Opinion listed below:

1. X.7. : A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting membership of the SGA Senate may amend this Constitution.
2. II.2.B. : The Speaker of the Senate shall be the Vice President, but they shall have no vote except as a tiebreaker if the Senate is equally divided on a motion.
3. III.1.G. : The Speaker Pro Tempore shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of all Senate standing committees and commissions.
4. II.2.D. : The Senate shall appoint a Chief Clerk, a Parliamentarian, and a Sergeant-at Arms, who need not be members of the Senate, who may be members of the Executive Cabinet, or who may not be affiliated with SGA.
5. VI.5 : No person shall be convicted on an article of impeachment without the concurrence of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Members of the Senate present.
6. II.5 :
 - a. The Senate may apply additional regulations to its proceedings or censure or otherwise punish its members for disorderly or unethical behavior upon the consent of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the chamber.
 - b. A majority of Senators present shall constitute a quorum to do business. The Senate shall be permitted to punish absent Senators under any penalties prescribed within its standing rules.

Opinion

In the matter concerning Query No. 1, it is hereby stated that in regards to the definition of “voting membership” when referring to duly constituted Senate meetings it shall be interpreted as two-thirds (2/3) of the senators present and voting at said meeting in which quorum has been achieved. This decision is being made due to the one (1) other instance of “voting membership” within the Constitution (IV.5.E) stating, “Executive Cabinet appointments shall be subject to the consent of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting membership of the Senate.” Within the same Section, (IV.5.C) it states, “Meetings of the Executive Cabinet may be called by any member of the Executive Council, the Chief of Staff, or by two-thirds (2/3) of the membership of the Executive Cabinet.” Given the usage of

“membership” within Subsection C, the Court hereby affirms that the qualifier “voting” in the term “voting membership” refers to those members at a meeting who have been counted as present during roll call.

Recommendations

Seeing as there are no specifications on the definition of “voting membership” in the Constitution in regard to Senate meetings, the Court recommends that the Constitution be amended to provide clear and concise specification in regard to the term “voting membership” within Article X, Section 7. The Constitution should also be amended in the same manner in Article IV, Section 5, Subsection E.

Decision

Chief Justice Cailey Martin delivered the Opinion of the court, in which Associate Chief Justice Lela Gracy, Justice Abbey Hoover, Justice Aaron Sullivan, Justice Emma Parson, Justice Claire Myers, and Justice Sanuji Mandanayake Arachchilage joined.

This is the Opinion of the Court. It is so ordered that the Secretary of the Supreme Court distribute this Opinion to the entirety of the Student Government Association.

Cailey Martin

Hon. Cailey Martin, Chief Justice

Lela Gracy

Hon. Lela Gracy, Associate Chief Justice

Claire Myers

Hon. Claire Myers, Associate Justice

Emma Parson

Hon. Emma Parson, Associate Justice

Abbey Hoover

Hon. Abbey Hoover, Associate Justice

Aaron Sullivan

Hon. Aaron Sullivan, Associate Justice

Sanuji Mandanayake Archilage

Hon. Sanuji Mandanayake Archilage, Associate Justice