



## **Constitution of the Georgia State University Student Government Association**

### **PREAMBLE**

We, the student body of Georgia State University, believe that we have the right and collective authority of self-governance and to an enhanced education. In order to preserve and further these aims; to promote understanding and involvement among all the members of the University community; to represent advocate and legislate the interest of the student body; to serve as partners in the administrative processes of the University; to protect our right to govern ourselves and accept responsibility for the quality of student life; to be the official voice of students in academic, institutional and campus affairs; we do hereby establish this Constitution for the Georgia State University Student Government Association.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### Section 1                      Membership

All currently enrolled students at Georgia State University, hereinafter referred to as the University, shall automatically be members of the SGA, and subject to this Constitution, its Amendments, and Bylaws, and the Student Code of Conduct and Policies as it appears in the On-Campus publication.

#### Section 2                      Officers

All members of the SGA who are elected or appointed to positions provided for in this Constitution, its Amendments and Bylaws shall be considered officers of the SGA. These officers must be in good academic standing with the University and meet any other qualifications specified in this Constitution of the SGA, its Amendments, and Bylaws, and the Student Code of Conduct.

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**ARTICLE II BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT**

Section 1 The SGA shall be organized in three branches: Executive, Legislative and Judicial.

Section 2 Executive Branch

The authority of the executive branch of the SGA shall be vested in the Executive Committee.

Section 3 Legislative Branch

The authority of the legislative branch of the SGA shall be vested in the SGA Senate, hereinafter referred to as the Senate.

Section 4 Judicial Branch

The authority of the judicial branch of the SGA shall be vested in the Student Judicial Board, hereinafter referred to as the SJB.

**ARTICLE III EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Section 1 Composition

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the President, Executive Vice President, and the Vice Presidents of the SGA standing Committees as outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2 Terms of Office

A. The President, Executive Vice President and Vice Presidents of the SGA standing Committees shall be elected by the members of the SGA and shall serve one year terms.

B. The President pro tempore of the Senate shall be elected from the Senate by the Senate members present and voting. The election will take place by the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Senate meeting. The President pro tempore shall take office only in the absence of the President of the Senate, and shall preside over the Senate, having all the powers of that position, until the return of the President of the Senate.

Section 3 Succession and Vacancies

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- A. In the case of the removal of the President from office by death, resignation, impeachment, or inability to discharge powers and duties, the President's office shall devolve on the Executive Vice President.
- B. All Executive Committee vacancies, except for the office of President, shall be filled by nomination from: A. the President, B. the Executive Committee, if the President fails to nominate a student for the position during the time allotted. The nomination requires a two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Senate members present and voting for the student to take office.

### Section 4

#### Authority and Responsibilities

The Executive Committee shall:

- A. Be the central coordinating committee for the Senate and SGA Committees.
- B. Perform any additional duties and reasonable functions to continue the essential business of the SGA as may be specified in this Constitution, its Amendments and Bylaws.
- C. Shall submit to the Senate for approval nominations for vacancies on the Executive Committee and Senate in the event the president fails to make nominations during the time allotted.
- D. Shall submit to the Senate for approval nominations for the University Senate, University Senate Committees, and SGA Committees in the event the president fails to make nominations during the time allotted.

### Section 5

#### President's Authority and Responsibilities

The President shall:

- A. Be the official representative of the Student body in University matters affecting its student life, services and interests with delegator rights.
- B. Oversees the Executive Vice President's duties.
- C. Chair the Executive Committee, and vote only in case of a tie.
- D. Set Executive Committee meetings at least twice a month.

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- E. Call meetings of the Standing Committees when needed.
- F. Give the Senate information concerning the state of the University and recommend for their consideration such measures, as the President shall deem necessary and expedient.
- G. Call special meetings of the Senate when necessary.
- H. Be the SGA's voting delegate, or designate an officer to the Student Advisory Council to the Board of Regents to the University System of Georgia.
- I. Shall submit to the Senate for approval nominations for the vacancies of the Executive Committee and Senate.
- J. Serve as the student representative on the Committee of the University Senate as outlined in the University Statutes and Bylaws and report to the SGA Senate and Executive Committee.
- K. Have the executive authority of spending in accordance with the SGA Bylaws.
- L. Inform the University Committee and work to implement with the relevant persons legislation passed by the Senate.
- M. Assign additional duties as necessary and proper to the members of the Executive Committee.
- N. Perform any additional duties in accordance with this Constitution, its amendments and the Bylaws of the SGA.

### Section 6

#### Executive Vice President's Authority and Responsibilities

The Executive Vice President shall:

- A. Assume all the duties of the President in his/her extended absence, incapacitation, resignation, or removal from office.
- B. Be the presiding officer of the Senate and a voting member of the Executive Committee.
- C. Administer and coordinate the Vice President's duties.
- D. Set the calendar of Senate meetings.

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- E. Call special meetings of the Senate when necessary.
- F. Call meetings of the Standing Committees when needed.
- G. Publish copies of minutes of Senate meetings (hereinafter known as the Senate Journal) at the end of each semester to be located in the following places: (1) Office of the SGA, (2) Office of Student Life and Leadership
- H. Report to and assist the President.
- I. Collect reports from Senators serving on University Senate Committees.
- J. Perform any additional duties, included but not limited to those assigned by the President in accordance with this Constitution, its Amendments and the Bylaws of the SGA.

### Section 7

#### The Vice President's Authority and Responsibilities

In addition to the duties and responsibilities of a Senator, each Vice President shall:

- A. Sign a code of ethics policy upon being sworn into office.
- B. Be a voting member of the Senate and Executive Committee.
- C. Make oral and written reports on the activities of their Committees at regular Senate meetings.
- D. Reports to and assist the Executive Vice President.
- E. Set the calendar of their respective Committee meetings each semester.
- F. Call unscheduled meetings of their Committees when needed.
- G. In cooperation with the Executive Committee, be responsible for establishing goals and a budget for their respective Committees.
- H. Have the authority to spend in accordance with the SGA Bylaws without going through the Budget and Finance Committee.

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- I. Be responsible for the development and follow up of the legislation pertinent to their Committee.
- J. Perform any additional duties including but not limited to those assigned by the President and Executive Vice President.

### ARTICLE IV

### LEGISLATIVE

#### Section 1

#### Composition

- A. The Executive Vice President shall act as President of the Senate.
- B. The President of the Senate shall be the presiding officer of the Senate and may vote only in case of a tie.
- C. The Senate shall be composed of the following elected seats:  
One senator for each one-thousand (1,000) students within each of the following colleges and schools with a minimum of two senators per college or school;
  - College of Arts and Sciences,
  - J. Mack Robinson College of Business,
  - College of Education,
  - College of Health and Human Sciences,
  - College of Law,
  - Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
- D. The number of Senate seats should be based on the previous fall semester enrollment. The number of enrolled students shall be rounded to the nearest thousand.

#### Section 2

#### Vacancies

Senatorial vacancies shall be filled by nomination from: A. the President, or B. the Executive Committee, if the President fails to nominate a student for the position during the time allotted. Approval of the nomination requires a simple majority of the Senate members present and voting.

#### Section 3

#### Senate's Authority and Responsibilities

The Senate shall have general powers including the following:

- A. To seek student feedback and to recommend solutions, formal or informal, to student problems.

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- B. To provide a voice for the student body in the academic and institutional affairs of the University.
- C. To approve the establishment of ad hoc Committees as needed to perform the functions of this organization.
- D. To establish its own rules and Bylaws for internal operation.
- E. To propose legislation on behalf of the Student Body of the University. No *ex post facto* legislation shall be enacted.
- F. To advocate for student rights.
- G. To remove SGA Officers:
  - a. Any officer can bring charges of Impeachment for malfeasance and/or nonfeasance against any SGA Officer by submitting a written statement describing the charges and a petition signed by 1/3 of the Senators to the Senate, Chief Justice, and the President of SGA.
  - b. The Chief Justice shall call and preside over an impeachment hearing of the Senate no earlier than 10 business days and no later than 25 business days from the date of receipt of statement and petition by the Chief Justice.
  - c. The Senate shall have the power to expel from office, on the ground of nonfeasance and/or malfeasance any officer of the SGA. This expulsion will be by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Senate members present and voting.
- H. To provide appropriate services and programs for students.
- I. To approve all appointments of the SGA by a simple majority vote of Senators present.
- J. To approve all policies for operation of any office, committee or branch within the SGA.
- K. To call when necessary a special meeting of the Senate upon written petition signed by at least fifty percent (50%) of the members of the Senate.
- L. To review the expenditures and balance sheet of the SGA.

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- M. To review reports from each Senate Committee.
- N. To overrule any decision made by a standing or ad hoc Committee with a two-third (2/3) vote of the Senate members present and voting.
- O. To hold regular meetings.

### Section 4

#### Legislative Procedure

- A. Legislation passed by the Senate shall be presented by the President of the Senate within five (5) business days to the President of the SGA.
- B. If the President of the SGA approves the legislation, he/she shall sign the legislation and it shall become an official policy or a recommendation of the SGA.
- C. If the President of the SGA vetoes the legislation, he/she will return it to the President of the Senate within five (5) business days along with written objections, which shall be entered in the Senate Journal. The Senate shall then proceed to reconsider the legislation. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds (2/3) of the Senate members present and voting shall vote to pass the legislation, it shall become official policy or recommendation of the SGA.
- D. If no action is taken by the President of the SGA within ten business days, the legislation shall automatically become official without the President's signature.
- E. The President of the SGA shall forward all official legislation to affected bodies and individuals within five (5) business days.

### Section 5

#### Senator's Authority and Responsibilities

Each senator shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. Sign a code of ethics policy upon being sworn into office.
- B. Be a voting member of the SGA Senate.
- C. Attend all SGA Senate meetings.

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- D. Is a student member of the University Senate and/or University Senate Committees as required by the statutes and Bylaws of the University.
- E. Attend all meetings of his or her respective University Senate Committee.
- F. Actively serve on no less than one (1) SGA Committee.
- G. Perform additional duties subject to this Constitution, its amendments and the Bylaws of the SGA.

### **ARTICLE V**

#### **JUDICIAL**

##### Section 1

##### Membership

- A. The Student Judicial Board shall consist of a Chief Justice and fifteen (15) members.
- B. The hearing panel shall consist of no less than three (3) justices.
- C. The SJB Executive Board shall consist of the Chief Justice, two (2) Assistant Chief Justice, and the lead advocate.

##### Section 2

##### Authority and Responsibilities

- A. The SJB shall have the responsibility of reviewing all violations of the Georgia State University Student Code of Conduct referred by the judicial affairs officer.
- B. The SJB shall also have the authority to interpret this Constitution and the Bylaws.
- C. The SJB shall recommend solution to the Dean of Students in case of disputes between student organizations.
- D. The SJB shall recommend solution to the Dean of Students in case of disputes between a student fee-funded organization and students not members of said organization.
- E. The SJB shall hear all appeals of Elections Commission decisions and to affirm or reverse such decisions.

##### Section 3

##### Organization

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- A. A selection Committee shall screen applicants who are seeking membership to the SJB. The Committee shall be composed of the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice Executive Board, and the Judicial Affairs officer.
- B. A student must have completed thirty (30) semester hours to be eligible for appointment as a Justice and once in office shall serve until he/she graduates, unless he/she resigns or is removed.
- C. No student may hold office concurrently on the SJB and any other branch of the SGA.
- D. The lead advocate shall be available to any student for consultation and referral.
- E. The Dean of Students shall serve as advisor to the SJB.
- F. The SJB shall hold regular meetings.
- G. The SJB shall adopt appropriate rules and procedures for the hearing of cases within its jurisdiction, including rules respecting pleadings, hearing procedures and rights of parties and witnesses. Such rules and procedures shall be approved by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate members present and voting. Upon approval by the Senate, the rules and procedures shall be filed in the SGA office and copies made available to students.

### Section 4

#### Chief Justice

- A. The Chief Justice shall be nominated by the SJB members and approved by the Senate, and shall serve a one year term.
- B. The Chief Justice may remain on the SJB as a justice following the expiration of his/her term as Chief Justice. A Chief Justice may serve more than one term.

### Section 5

#### Chief Justice's Authorities and Responsibilities

- A. Serve as spokesperson for the SJB.
- B. Organize regular meetings of SJB members.
- C. Organize campus wide recruiting process for new SJB members.

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- D. Preside over the impeachment hearings of the SGA Senate.
- E. Shall appoint an Executive Board.
- F. Shall serve an ex-officio member of the SGA Executive Committee.

### Section 6

#### Removal of the Chief Justice

- A. Any officer can bring charges of Impeachment for malfeasance and/or nonfeasance against the Chief Justice by submitting a written statement describing the charges and a petition signed by 1/3 of the Senators to the Senate, Chief Justice, and the President of SGA.
- B. The President of the Senate shall call and preside over an impeachment hearing of the Senate no earlier than 10 business days and no later than 25 business days from the date of receipt of statement and petition by the President of the Senate.

## ARTICLE VI

### SGA STANDING COMMITTEES

#### Section 1

##### Composition

- A. The voting members of the standing Committees of the SGA shall be members of the Senate.
- B. Each standing Committee may recruit and retain ex-officio student members from outside the SGA Senate.
- C. The President of the Senate will nominate Senators as members of the standing Committee to be approved by the Senate members present and voting.

#### Section 2

##### Budget and Finance Committee

The Budget and Finance Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. Oversee the Budgetary management of the SGA.
- B. Reports to the Senate on the expenditures and provide a balance sheet of all accounts of the SGA.
- C. Insure that the SGA follows all University financial policies. .

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- D. Approve petitions for co-sponsorship for student organizations after approval by the Student Life Committee.
- E. To approve all expenditures in accordance with the SGA Bylaws (put amounts in Bylaws).
- F. Work with the Dean of Student (DOS) Budget Office.
- G. The Vice President of Budget and Finance shall:
  - 1. Sign all University business forms that are forwarded to the DOS budget office.
  - 2. To serve as the student representative on Committees of the University Senate as outlined in the University Statutes and Bylaws and SGA Bylaws.

### Section 3

#### Academic Affairs Committee

The Academic Affairs Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. To identify and investigate University wide academic issues and draft and propose related legislation to the Senate.
- B. To maintain communication with the University Faculty and Administrators.

### Section 4

#### Student Life Committee

The Student Life Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. To identify and investigate University-wide student life issues and draft and propose related legislation to the Senate.
- B. To maintain communication with University chartered student organizations.
- C. To assist with Commencement responsibilities as requested.
- D. To review and approve proposals for co-sponsorships from chartered student organization and forward approved proposals to the Budget and Finance Committee.

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- E. To coordinate SGA activities and programs with other SGA Committees.

### **Section 5 Student Services Committee**

The Student Services Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. To identify and investigate University wide Student Services issues and draft and propose related legislation to the Senate.
- B. To maintain communication with staff and administrators.

### **Section 6 Public Relations Committee**

The Public Relations Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. To oversee all activities regarding SGA public relations.
- B. To maintain communications to all media groups on campus.
- C. To inform the student body of legislation enacted and information concerning SGA activities and programs.
- D. To promote a positive image of the SGA throughout the University community.

### **Section 7 Senate Elections Commission**

#### **A. Composition**

The Senate Elections Commission shall consist of a chairperson and at least four (4) other members, all of whom will be nominated by the Executive Committee and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate members present and voting.

#### **B. Powers and Responsibilities**

Shall supervise and regulate all SGA elections and Student body Referenda in accordance with this Constitution, its Amendments and the Bylaws of the SGA.

## **ARTICLE VII OATH OF OFFICE AND PROCEDURE**

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### Section 1

#### Oath of Office

All officers of the SGA shall be sworn in by the President of the SGA or the Chief Justice of the SJB who shall administer the following oath:

I, (name) do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the duties and responsibilities entrusted to me by virtue of office and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and enforce the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Georgia State University.

### Section 2

#### Procedure

In all matters not specifically provided for in this Constitution, its amendments or the Bylaws of the SGA, the parliamentary authority shall be the latest addition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## ARTICLE VIII

## AMENDMENTS

### Section 1

#### Proposal Procedure

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any member of the Senate and approved for discussion by a simple majority of the Senate members present and voting.

### Section 2

#### Ratification of Amendments

Approval of amendments to this Constitution will require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senate members present and voting.

### Section 3

Amendments shall become part of the Constitution when ratified by a majority of the students voting in the duly authorized Student Body referendum.

### Section 4

#### Ratification of the Constitution

This Constitution will take effect upon approval of the referendum of the student body.

### Section 5

#### Editorial Changes

Editorial Changes may be proposed by the Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senate members present and voting.