

Norfolk State University
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the students of Norfolk State University, in order to foster greater unity and cooperation between the Administration, Board of Visitors, and the community at large, maintain an atmosphere conducive to high scholastic achievement, prepare ourselves to face the challenges of the future and provide beneficial activities, we do hereby establish this Constitution for the Student Government Association.

Article I: Name and Organization

Section 1.

The name of the governing organization of the student body shall be the Norfolk State University Student Government Association, hereafter, referenced as the Student Government Association or the SGA.

Section 2.

The branches of the SGA shall be: (1) The Executive Branch, (2) The Legislative Branch, and (3) The Judicial Branch

Section 3.

All enrolled full-time students of Norfolk State University not only make up the student body but are eligible to vote for their student representatives during the general election. All students meeting the qualifications stated in the constitution and its accompanying by-laws are eligible to represent the students as elected officials in the SGA.

Section 4.

The qualifications for participating within the Student Government Association shall be based solely on academia and personal conduct. No student shall be denied the right to participate within the Student Government Association because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity or beliefs.

Article II: Authority

The Norfolk State University Student Government Association derives its authority from three sources.

- A. The Board of Visitors
 - B. The President of the University
 - C. The NSU Student Body
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- 1. All enrolled full-time students of NSU are eligible to vote for their student representatives during general election.
 - 2. All enrolled students meeting the qualifications stated in this constitution and its accompanying by-laws are eligible to represent the students as elected officials in the SGA.

Article III: Executive Branch

The Executive Branch shall consist of SGA officers, class presidents, Mr. and Miss NSU.

Section 1. Officers

- A. Officers shall be elected by currently registered students within the student body during the general elections as stipulated as by the elections commission.
- B. Officers may also be appointed to their offices in accordance with the provision of the by-laws of this constitution.
- C. The term of office for officers shall be from the day after spring commencement until the day of the following spring commencement.
- D. There shall be two (2) elected officers for the student body and two (2) elected officers for each class: the president and vice president.
- E. There shall be an executive administrative, business manager, and a parliamentarian who will serve as unelected officials appointed by the student body President.

Section 2. The Student Body President Shall

- A. Be responsible for the general supervision of all SGA activities and make certain that the actions of the SGA are for the general welfare of the student body.
- B. Serve as a non-voting member of the NSU Board of Visitors.
- C. Represent the student body at University events, programs and meetings, etc.
- D. Preside at meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee.
- E. Have the power to convene the senate at any time he/she deems necessary, with due notice given to all members.
- F. Have the power to appoint ad hoc committees and create standing committees.
- G. Be an ex-officio member of all senate committees.
- H. Have the power to veto an action of the Senate or Executive Committee within three (3) school days of the action by giving formal written notification to the body whose action is being vetoed. (The President's veto may be overturned by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate at the next meeting.)
- I. Uphold the Constitution and by-laws of the Norfolk State University Student Government Association.
- J. Appoint students to University committees on advisement.
- K. Attend as many Executive Committee meetings as possible.
- L. Ensure the proper execution of the duties of the Vice President.
- M. Designate, where appropriate and permissible, a suitable replacement to attend meeting which the student body President cannot attend.
- N. Appoint immediately upon winning election, an Executive Administrator, Business Manager, and a Parliamentarian.

Section 3. The Vice President Shall

- A. Assume the duties of the President in his/her absence
- B. Preside over meetings if the President chooses to yield.
- C. Preside over senate meetings as President of the Senate.
- D. Manage the prompt and proper execution of Student Senate actions as they relate to the University community.
- E. Assist the student body President.
- F. Serve as a Liaison to the Faculty Senate.
- G. Chair standing committees.
- H. Perform other duties as assigned by the student body President.
- I. Perform other duties as stipulated in the by-laws.
- J. Uphold the Constitution and by-laws of the Norfolk State University Student Government Association.

Section 4. The Executive Administrator shall

- A. Keep the meeting of the Executive Committee and General Assembly.
- B. Perform such administrative functions as designated by the SGA President.
- C. Send all meeting request and correspondences.
- D. Keep a schedule of the SGA President's meetings and activities.
- E. Designate persons to assist in his/her duties.
- F. Keep a list and file of all standing and ad hoc committees and reports.

Section 5. The Business Manager shall

- A. Receive and maintain all financial records and transactions of the SGA.
- B. Be responsible for making the business and financial arrangements for project and functions of the SGA, along with the SGA President.
- C. Have available a financial report at each regular Executive Committee and General Assembly Meeting.
- D. Designate persons to assist in duties.
- E. Work with finance persons of each standing committee for collaboration on financial matters.

Section 6. The Parliamentarian shall

- A. Advise the student body President on proper parliamentary procedures as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order.
- B. Instruct all officials and committee on the proper procedures for conducting meetings. If no such persons may be found it is the responsibility of the student body President to become sufficiently familiar with parliamentary law to keep meetings.

Section 7. Class President shall

- A. Be responsible for the general supervision of all class activities, program and events, sponsored by their respective classes and make certain that the actions of their respective classes are for the general welfare of the student body.
- B. Represent the student body at University events, programs and meetings, etc.
- C. Uphold the Constitution and by-laws of the Norfolk State University Student Government Association.
- D. Shall appoint an executive administrator and business manager; as well as (2) two senators to serve in the student senate.

Section 8. Class Vice President

- A. Assume the duties of the President in his/her absence and preside over meetings if the President chooses to yield.
- B. Assist the class President.
- C. Perform other duties as assigned by the student body President.
- D. Perform other duties as stipulated in the by-laws.
- E. Uphold the Constitution and by-laws of the Norfolk State University Student Government Association.

Section 9. Order of Succession

A. Should the Student Government Association President, for any reason become unable to serve the completion of his/her term the order of succession shall be as follows.

1. Vice President
2. Executive Administrator
3. Business Manager
4. Senior Class President
5. Junior Class President
6. Sophomore Class President
7. Freshman Class President

B. Should the Student Government Association Vice President, for any reason become unable to serve the completion of his /her term, the order of succession shall be as follows.

1. Executive Administrator
2. Business Manager
3. Senior Class President
4. Junior Class President
5. Sophomore Class President
6. Freshman Class President

C. In the event any of the Class Presidents get promoted to the executive cabinet their class vice president shall succeed them in becoming class president.

Article IV: Legislative Branch

Section 1. Purpose

The Student Senate is organized to act as the legislative branch of the Student Government Association. It functions to serve as a forum for debate and discussion of important issues of concern to the NSU student population; to enact legislation after such debate/discussion; to make final decisions binding and take an official stance; and to act as a balance of power mechanism of the student government political structure.

Section 2. Composition

- A. Eight (8) representatives from each of the four (4) academic classes (freshman, sophomore, Junior, and Senior) to serve for one academic year.
- B. Two Senators will be appointed by each class President.
- C. Three Fourths (3/4) of the entire Senate membership must be present to vote.

- D. Senate Pro-Tempore shall be elected from the Senate Body by a majority vote of the entire Senate membership.
- E. An Executive Member from the Residence Hall Association.
- F. An Executive Member from the Commuter Student Association.

Section 3. Powers and Duties

- A. Remain in good academic and social standing.
- B. Attend all student body meetings.
- C. Legislate on matters concerning Student Affairs.
- D. Receive and act on all petitions from the student body.
- E. Propose, by 2/3 vote, amendments to this constitution.
- F. Ensure that all students are informed of all legislative acts.
- G. Override a Presidential veto when necessary, by 2/3 vote of the full Senate at a duly constituted meeting.
- H. Create ad hoc committees as deemed necessary.
- I. Petition the University administration to take such action which it considers to be in the best interest of the student body.
- J. A representative may be removed from office by the Senate Pro tempore after (3) three written warnings have been issued if, a member (s) become negligent in performing their duties as senators or unfit to serve as senators.
- K. Conduct regular senate meetings at least once a month (a full academic month) during each semester. Must meet within the first three weeks of the fall and spring.
- L. In the case of an even number of Senators present at the General Assembly meeting, the Vice President shall vote in the event of a tie.

Article V: The Judicial Branch

Section 1. The judicial branch shall include a chief justice and eight associate justices

Section 2. Election and Appointment

- A. The Chief Justice shall be chosen by popular vote of the student body.
- B. The eight Associate Justices shall be appointed by the Chief Justice with the approval of the SGA President and shall be subject to appointment requirements.
- C. The term of office shall be one (1) academic year
- D. All justices must meet the same qualifications as SGA elected officers..

Section 3. Chief Justice Duties

- A. Serve as the chair for each hearing and ensure the prescribed guidelines are followed.

- B. Submit a written summary of testimony, finding of facts, rationale of the panel's decision, and recommended sanctions to the assistant dean of students within two business after the hearing.
- C. Assist the Dean of Students Office with planning and facilitating programs to educate the campus community of the Code of Student Conduct and other policies.
- D. Assist with the student selection of the Student Conduct Board.

Section 3. Associate Justice Duties

- A. Serve as the chair for each hearing and ensure the prescribed guidelines are followed in the absence of the Chief Justice.
- B. Serve as an advocate/advisor for students going through the conduct process.
- C. Meet with the respondent and advise them of their rights during formal resolution by the student conduct panel.
- D. Assist the respondent with submitting appeal.
- E. Assist the Dean of Students Office with planning and facilitating programs to educate the campus community of the Code of Student Conduct and other policies.
- F.

Note: Associate Justices are not eligible to serve on the student conduct panel and hear cases.

**Cases involving reports of sexual misconduct will be chaired by a University employee. Students will not be permitted to participate.*

**Student Government Association
By-Laws**

Section 1. This constitution shall be accompanied by a set of by-laws.

Section 2. The by-laws shall not supersede any article or provision in the constitution.

Section 3. The by-laws may be amended by majority vote of the Executive Committee and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the General Assembly.

Article I: The General Assembly

Section 1. The General Assembly shall be open to every full time student enrolled at the University. The SGA President shall preside over the General Assembly as a non-voting member. The executive administrator shall carry out the administrative duties of the assembly.

Section 2. The student body Vice President and Senators shall be the voting members of the General Assembly.

Section 3. The assembly shall have a student representative serve on each university wide committee. It is the responsibility of each representative to attend meetings and provide updates to the assembly.

Section 4. Special meetings of the assembly may be called by the student body President.

Article II: Standing and Ad-hoc Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

- A. The NSU SGA shall establish standing committees as deemed necessary to carry out its responsibilities.
- B. Standing Committees shall be assigned to the supervision of the SGA Business Manager
- C. The Business Manager shall hold meetings at least once a month (a full academic month) during each semester.

Section 2. Ad Hoc Committees

- A. As the need arises, ad hoc committees shall be established to handle specific, short-term assignments of significant importance.
- B. Ad hoc committees shall be established:
 - 1. Upon the request of the student body President
 - 2. Upon a 2/3 vote of the of the Executive Committee; or
 - 3. Upon a majority vote of the senate.
- C. The members and the chair of executive ad hoc committees shall be appointed by the student body President within ten (10) business days of the formation of the committee.
- D. Ad hoc committees shall be given their assignments in formal written request, i.e. email or written letter, including an expected date of completion, by the student body President of the ad hoc committee upon appointment of the chair.
- E. The Chair and Vice Chair of the ad hoc committee shall be directly responsible for holding meetings and ensuring the prompt, proper, and complete execution of the task to which the committee was assigned. Ad Hoc Committees shall not remain active beyond the completion date of assigned tasks or beyond the academic year.

Section 3. The Executive Committee

- 1. Shall be composed of the SGA President, Vice President, Business Manager, Executive Administrator, Parliamentarian, the class Presidents and the Vice Chairs

of each standing Committee (with the exception of the Campus Queens and Kings Committee).

2. Serve as an advisory board to the SGA.

The Royal Court Committee (RCC)

1. Shall be composed of Mr. and Miss NSU and the four campus Queens and Kings.
2. Mr. and Miss NSU shall serve as the co-chair of this committees
3. Mr. and Miss NSU will represent NSU at official and designated functions, including Alumni functions.
4. Set up, schedule, promote and participate in community service activities.
5. Meet at least once a month on regular days and times.

Section 5. Homecoming Activities Committee (HAC)

1. Be composed of the Class Presidents and two representatives appointed by the SGA
2. President and two Representatives appointed by the Class Presidents.
3. SGA President shall be chair of this committee and the vice chair shall be appointed by the committee.
4. Meet to plan fall events beginning the first week of the summer term and every week until the actual date.
5. Meet to plan spring events beginning the fall semester and every week until the actual date.
6. Report all matters to the Vice President for Student Affairs and advisors.
7. Work with the Business Manager.

Article III: Meetings

Section 1. General Assembly and Standing Committee Meetings

- A. The frequency of General Assembly meetings shall be at least two times per semester, standing committee meetings shall be at least bi-weekly
- B. A quorum for General Assembly meetings and standing committee meetings shall be one-half (1/2) of the voting members plus one.

Section 2. Executive Committee Meeting

- A. Regular scheduled meeting times shall be bi-weekly.
- B. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the student body President.
- C. A quorum for Executive Committee meetings shall be one-half (1/2) of the voting members plus one.

Section 3. Student Forums (Town Hall Meetings)

- A. Meetings of the student forum shall be called at the request of the student body President, or upon a majority vote of the General Assembly.

B. The Executive Committee shall plan and arrange Student Forums (Town Hall Meeting).

Section 4. The Senate shall follow the same meeting guidelines as the General Assembly.

Article IV: Impeachment and Removal from Office

Section 1. Starting the Impeachment Process

- A. Any elected or appointed officer of the SGA may be impeached for
 - 1. Infractions of the provisions of the Constitution;
 - 2. Infractions of the Code of Student Conduct;
 - 3. Infractions of local ordinances, the statute of the Commonwealth of Virginia; or malfeasance, or nonfeasance.
- B. The impeachment process may begin
 - 1. By the petition of three fifth's (3/5) of the Senators, or
 - 2. By the petition of ten percent (10%) of the student body.
- C. The petition shall specifically cite alleged violations,
- D. Copies of the petition shall be given to all members of the Executive Committee.
- E. The Executive Committee shall call a General Assembly meeting within one (1) week of receipt of a petition for impeachment.
- F. A majority vote of the Senate shall be required for an impeachment hearing to be scheduled within one (1) week of the Senate meeting and to be called by the Executive Committee.
- G. A member of the executive committee being tried for impeachment shall not participate in the impeachment process. Their responsibility in the impeachment process shall succeed to the executive officer next in line.

Section 2. The Impeachment Hearing

- A. The impeachment hearing shall be held during a special General Assembly meeting at which no other business may be conducted.
- B. No one being impeached may chair the impeachment hearing.
- C. Any voting member of the Senate shall be able to question the accused, bring witnesses and/or address the General Assembly.
- D. The accused shall be allowed to present evidence, bring witnesses, and/or address the General Assembly.
- E. At the close of the presentation of evidence, the Senate shall go into executive session, at which time the Senate shall deliberate without the accused being present.
- F. At the close of deliberations the Senate Pro Tempore shall announce the vote publicly.
- G. A two thirds (2/3) vote of the senate shall be required for the accused to be removed from office
- H. The findings of the General Assembly shall be announced publicly and the minutes kept for written record.

Article V: Resignations

Section 1. Student Body President

- A. The student body President may resign from his/her office by submitting a letter of Resignation to the Vice President of Student Affairs and the advisor. The advisor will notify the executive committee and the senate.
- B. Upon acceptance of the resignation, the student body President shall be relieved of his/her duties.

Section 2. Student Body Vice President

- A. The Vice President may resign from his/her office by submitting a letter of resignation to the Student Body for President, the Vice President of Student Affairs and the advisor. The advisor will notify the executive committee and the senate.
- B. Upon acceptance of the resignation, the resigning Vice President shall be relieved of his/her duties.

Section 3. General Information

- A. Vacating a currently held position to succeed to a higher position shall not be construed as a resignation.
- B. All letters of resignation must be submitted two (2) days prior to resigning.

Articles VI: Vacancies

Section 1. Student Body President

- A. The SGA Vice President shall vacate his/her office and assume the duties of the SGA President should the position become open; the Executive Administrator shall occupy the position of Vice President.
- B. Rules for succession below the Vice President shall be made by Presidential appointments.

Section 2. Vice President

- A. If a vacancy occurs, the Executive Administrator shall occupy the position.

Article VII: Summer Sessions and University Holidays

Section 1. During the summer sessions and University breaks beyond two weeks, the student body President shall have the power of the Executive Committee in the event that more than one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the members of the Executive Committee are unable to attend meetings

Section 2. The SGA President shall take initiative in informing student Senators on the actions and decisions during these periods.

Section 3. In the event that the student body President is prohibited from serving in the capacity of his/her office due to distance or any other factor, the Vice President shall assume the duties as acting student body President in accordance with the rules of succession.

Section 4. Attendance shall not be enforced during the summer session or during University breaks extending beyond two weeks.

Article VIII: Amendments

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution shall be brought in written form before the General Assembly.

- A. The General Assembly shall then lay the proposed amendments on the table until the next General Assembly meeting.
- B. At the next meeting, the General Assembly shall discuss and vote upon the proposed amendments.

Section 2. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the General Assembly shall bring an amendment into full effect and force.

Article IX: Precedence of Rules

Section 1. The Student Government Association shall operate under the following rules in order of precedence.

- A. Federal Law
- B. State Law
- C. Local Ordinances
- D. University Policy
- E. This Constitution
- F. Roberts Rule of Order

Article X: Elections

A. General Information

1. Uncontested candidates shall be declared winners by acclamation and shall not be placed on the ballot; however, they shall still be subjected to all applicable rules in these articles.
2. Officer candidates for President and Vice President must run on slate.
3. Changes may not be made to the slate after the deadline for submission of application; therefore, if either candidate (President or Vice President) fails to qualify, the entire slate will be disqualified.
4. Cabinet appointment applications for the positions of Executive Administrator, Finance and Parliamentarian must be submitted for approval by the last day of the spring semester. Cabinet appointment applications for freshman officers must be submitted for approval Within two (2) weeks of the freshman class.
5. Graduate student candidates must be accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies.

B. Qualifications

1. Candidates for officer positions (President, Vice President, Chief Justice, Associate Justice, Executive Administrator, Finance Manager, Parliamentarian, and University and class (Queens and Kings) must be Fulltime Matriculating student: have a minimum NSU cumulative **GPA of 2.50**; have a most recent semester minimum NSU **2.50 GPA** completing a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours; and maintain a minimum **2.50 GPA** to remain in office. The GPA will be reviewed at the end of the semester. The status of each officer candidate must be verified by the Dean of Students, to ensure that a candidate is not on disciplinary probation and the Registrar to ensure that a candidate meets the minimum GPA, classification, and semester hour requirements.
2. Candidate for officer positions must have been enrolled the immediate two prior consecutive semesters, with the exception of freshman class candidate.
3. Candidates for all senators must have a minimum NSU cumulative **GPA of 2.50** and most recent minimum semester completing a minimum of twelve hours; and must maintain a minimum 2.50 GPA to remain in office; GPA will be reviewed at the end of each semester.
4. Each officer candidate must plan to enroll as a NSU student until the day of spring Commencement of the following year.
5. The candidate must have completed semester hours appropriate with classifications Stated on electoral application; i.e. senior must have completed a minimum of ninety (90) semester hours.

Article XI: Elections Commission

- A. The Elections Commission shall consist of fifteen (15) persons, eight (8) faculty/ staff members and seven students.
- B. The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- C. The Chairperson shall vote only in case of a tie.

- D. The student members shall be the four class Presidents, two Senators, and an SGA appointee.
- E. Student members of the Elections Commission who fail to attend meetings may be replaced by the chair of the election commissions.
- F. No student running for any office i.e. (SGA President, SGA Vice President, Class president or Vice President or Chief Justice) shall serve on the Elections Commission during the election. If any vacancies occur, the chair of the Elections Commission shall fill the position.
- G. Faculty/ staff members shall be appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- H. The responsibility and authority of the University Election Commission shall be
 - 1. To conduct and supervise the election of officers for the Student Government Association.
 - 2. Control all activities related to the election
 - 3. Establish rules for election publicity
 - 4. Make known the qualifications for candidacy as well as duties pertaining to the office which the candidate is seeking.
 - 5. Establish deadlines for filing and the submission of applications and related materials by the candidates.
 - 6. Determine and announce the campaign period.
 - 7. Publicize the date, time and place(s) of voting.
 - 8. The Election Commission will determine if the ballot will be electronic or paper.
 - 9. Validate voter eligibility.
 - 10. Verify the academic and judicial qualifications
 - 11. Certify the election results.
 - 12. Make known all information concerning the election of the SGA officers at a formal meeting held before the first day of campaigning; and ensure that campaign regulations are adhered to and enforce appropriate disciplinary sanctions if violations occur.
 - 13. All campaign regulations and procedures will be determined by the Elections Commission.

Article XII: Meeting

A. Meeting Format

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Roll Call
- 3. Committee Report
- 4. Old Business
- 5. New Business
- 6. Announcement
- 7. Adjournment

APPENDIX

This Constitution has been adopted by the SGA Student Senate on November 30, 2015 at 5:47PM.

AMENDMENTS

(Amendments to this Constitution shall be numbered and placed under this section).