

## **The Constitution of the Student Government at Virginia Wesleyan University**

At Virginia Wesleyan University (The University), there shall be formed a Student Government to represent the students body at meetings and in initiatives for change within The University. This government is divided into three branches: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial, as outlined in the successive articles. Elected in a democratic fashion, the officers shall represent the interests, goals and aspirations of the students in College committees and through direct legislative and administrative action.

### **Article I: Student Body**

**Section A** The formal title of the student organization under this constitution shall be the Student Government Association of Virginia Wesleyan University.

**Section B** Every currently registered student shall be considered a member of the Student Body and shall have one vote in all matters decided by popular vote.

### **Article II: Interpretation and Ratification of the Constitution**

**Section A** The Student Government Association Constitution must be ratified by two-thirds of the students voting in the ratification referendum.

### **Article III: The Student Government Association Members**

**Section A** The Student Government Association (S.G.A.) shall exist to coordinate, legislate and appropriate necessary funds toward matters of interest to the Student Body. The considerations of the government extend over a broad area of subjects involved with student interests. The initiative in many such matters lies with the government and its role is to be open-minded and adaptable.

**Section B** The Student Government Association shall consist of a President and Vice President, sixteen (16) class representatives of the Student Senate, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Chair of Special Events popularly elected each year. An appointed Judicial Review Board shall be appointed by the President-elect and the SGA Advisor each year, consisting of one (1) Chief Justice and four (4) Associate Justices.

1. There shall be one (1) president, one (1) Vice President, one (1) Finance Chair, and one (1) Events Chair from each of the sophomore, junior and senior classes elected in the spring of each year.
2. There shall be one (1) president, one (1) Vice President, one (1) Finance Chair, and one (1) Events Chair from the freshman class elected in the fall of each year.
3. There shall be one (1) President, one (1) Vice President, one (1) Secretary, one (1) Treasurer, and one (1) Chair of Special Events, to be elected annually by the Student Body.

**Section C** To be eligible to run for or hold an S.G.A. office, individuals must be in good academic standing. Good academic standing is defined as a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 for members of the Student Senate and 2.5 for the Executive Board. The individual must not be on disciplinary probation or any more severe of a sanction when running for or holding an S.G.A. office. Any individual who has ever received official sanctions at Virginia Wesleyan University for offenses involving illegal drugs (excluding alcohol) is ineligible to run for or hold S.G.A. office.

**Section E** Upon resignation, dismissal or any other means by which a vacancy of an elected official's position occurs, the President of the Student Government Association will nominate and/or take nominations from the floor, for the name of the student to complete the remaining term. This individual may be the student who had received the highest vote count in the previous election and had not been elected. If the Presidential office is vacated, the Vice President automatically attains the Office of the President and must, within one week, nominate a vice-presidential candidate. In order to assume any of the above offices by nomination, the nominee must be ratified by 2/3rds of the Student Senate at the next senate meeting. In the case of a rejection by the Senate or a refusal by the proposed nominee to accept the nomination, a special election may be conducted by the Student Government.

**Section F** S.G.A. will hold weekly meetings which will be open for all students to attend. The meeting day, time and location will be determined and announced at the beginning of each semester.

#### **Article IV: Student Elections**

##### **Section A** Election Guidelines

1. Student Government Association members **MUST** be able to serve from graduation to graduation; the full-term to which they were elected as a continually enrolled student.
2. The president and vice-president, during their term must not be the head (or title of equal value) of a campus club or organization, which does not include athletic teams and/or honor societies.
3. All students who are running for a position in the Student Government Association must be in good academic standing according to the duties of their position.

**Section B** The current SGA president, Vice President, primary and secondary advisors shall constitute an electoral commission which will organize, announce, supervise and set rules for the election of S.G.A. officers. If the electoral commission finds that a candidate breaks the campaigning rules, it will be their job to disqualify the candidate. If the SGA President and Vice President decide to re-run, the primary and secondary advisors will constitute the electoral commission.

**Section E** The election for all elected positions shall be determined by the electoral commission.

**Section F** The official vote totals in all elections for Student Government officers shall be made available to the Student Body upon request.

**Section G.** If the tabulated vote totals indicate a tie, the Advisors will "break the tie" in the Presidential/Vice Presidential Election and the Current President/Vice President will "break the tie" in the Student Senate Election.

**Section H** Late petitions shall not be accepted. If it is discovered that less than the necessary number of candidates are running, the normal election shall proceed with those who have submitted petitions. If there are vacant seats, a special election shall be held to fill those seats.

**Section J** The Student Government Association may hold a special election at any time the need arises. The electoral commission will determine all guidelines and procedures for each special election.

**Article V: The Duties of the Executive Board of the Student Government Association**

**Section A** The duties of the President of the Student Body shall be as follows:

1. In the capacity as chief executive officer of the S.G.A., the president shall represent the student body at school functions and execute the directives of the student senate.
2. The President shall serve as ex-officio member of the Student Government Association senate. In this capacity, the Student Government Association president must attend all meetings and events of the Student Government Association, but is granted no vote at Student Senate Meetings.
3. The President shall have the ability to veto any decision made by the Senate and, thus, must be informed of any and all votes and decisions which occur in the senate. The veto may only be overruled by a vote of the Judicial Review Board.
5. The President shall serve as the official liaison between the administration of the University and the student body.
6. The President shall fulfill any other duties set forth in amendments to the Student Government Association Constitution.

**Section B** The duties of the Vice President of the Student Body shall be as follows:

1. The Vice President shall serve as chairperson and a non-voting member of the Student Senate and, as such, shall be responsible for scheduling, announcing, conducting and controlling all meetings of the Student Senate.
2. The Vice President is responsible for all senate activities and committees, assuring that they are properly organized and that all senate decisions are upheld.
3. In the case of a tie vote in the senate, the Vice President will "break the tie".
4. The Vice President shall be responsible for relaying all messages and announcements between the Student Senate and the President.
5. The Vice President shall make sure that all the representatives remain in good academic and disciplinary standing as per Article III or bring the matter to the attention of the President, who shall follow procedures for nomination of a new candidate for the office.
6. The Vice President shall fulfill any other duties set forth by the Student Government Association.

**Section C** The duties of the Student Body Secretary shall be as follows:

1. The Secretary shall record minutes at all meetings of the Student Senate.
2. The Secretary is responsible for coordinating all guests invited to meetings of the Student Senate.
3. The Secretary shall record minutes at all Executive Board Meetings, which the Secretary is required to attend.

**Section D** The duties of the Student Body Treasurer shall be as follows:

1. The Treasurer shall Chair the Student Finance Committee.
2. The Treasurer will authorize any and all uses of SGA funds, co-signed by the President of the Student Body.

3. The Treasurer will provide regular financial updates at all Executive Board Meetings, which the Treasurer is required to attend.

**Section E** The duties of the Chair of Special Events shall be as follows:

1. The Chair of Special Events shall Chair the Events Committee and coordinate each SGA Event.
2. The Chair of Special Events will maintain all SGA Social Media.
3. The Chair of Special Events will provide regular event updates at all Executive Board Meetings, which the Chair is required to attend

#### **Article VI: Duties of the Student Senate**

**Section A** The Senate shall determine an expression of student opinion on all matters of policy both in the Student Government Association and College affairs.

**Section B** Any Student Government Association meeting shall be considered a Student Government Association function.

**Section C** The representatives are required to attend all functions.

1. The secretary shall issue a report of these meetings for distribution to the Student Government Association.
2. Minority reports may be presented at these meetings and shall be circulated by the Student Government Association.

**Section D** Each Class President:

1. The Class President will coordinate weekly meetings with their Vice President, Event Officer, and Finance Officer, which will be openly advertised to their class.
2. The Class President will serve as a voting member of the Student Senate for all official votes.
3. The Class President will attend weekly Executive Board meetings to advise the President of the Student Body of any matters discussed in the Class meetings.

**Section E** Each Class Vice President:

1. The Class Vice President will manage the concerns of the class, bringing reports to the Student Senate each week, by attending the weekly meetings of the Class and Senate.
2. The Class Vice President will serve as a voting member of the Student Senate for all official votes.
3. The Class Vice President will attend weekly Executive Board meetings to advise the President of the Student Body of any matters discussed in the Class meetings, in the absence of their Class President.

**Section F** Each Class Event Officer:

1. The Class Event Officer will create, manage, and report on one fundraiser per year to benefit the Class Gift of their respective Class.
2. The Class Event Officer will serve as a voting member of the Student Senate for all official votes.
3. The Class Event Officer will serve on the Event Committee, representing their class in the planning of all SGA Events/fundraisers.

**Section G** Each Class Finance Officer:

1. The Class Finance Officer will serve as a voting member of the Student Senate for all official votes.
2. The Class Finance Officer will serve on the Student Finance Committee, representing their class in all votes of the Finance Committee.

**Section H** Excused absences from an S.G.A. function are determined and excused by the President of the Student Body.

**Section I** In order for a vote to proceed in the Student Senate, a quorum of 2/3 of the elected senators must be present for the vote. This applies for both Constitutional revisions and general procedures of the Student Senate.

#### **Article VII: Duties of the Judicial Review Board**

**Section A** The Judicial Review Board will evaluate the constitutionality of actions of the SGA and relevant bills for review of the SGA.

**Section B** The Judicial Review Board will meet weekly to discuss relevant constitutional issues and matters for review.

**Section C** The Justices are required to attend all meetings of the Judicial Review Board.

**Section D** The duties of the Chief Justice of the Judicial Review Board shall be as follows:

1. The Chief Justice will chair meetings of the Judicial Review Board in all review procedures.
2. The Chief Justice will draft either the majority or minority opinion of the Judiciary in all decisions
3. The Chief Justice will advise the President of the Student Body of any matters discussed in Judicial Review Board meetings.

**Section E** The duties of the four (4) Associate Justices of the Judicial Review Board shall be as follows:

1. The Associate Justices will attend all meetings of the Judicial Review Board.
2. Associate Justices will draft the opposite opinion of the one drafted by the Chief Justice of the Judicial Review Board in all decisions.

#### **Article VIII: Selection and Duties of the S.G.A. Advisor(s)**

**Section A** The Vice President of Student Affairs shall serve as an advisor of the S.G.A. In addition, a secondary advisor may be added, at the discretion of the President and Advisor.

**Section B** Duties of the Advisor(s) shall be:

1. To attend all meetings and functions.
2. To meet with the executive board weekly regarding planning and evaluation of the Senate's meetings and activities.
3. To attend all meetings and functions of the Student Senate.
4. To advise the S.G.A. regarding policies, procedures, and protocol.
5. To review and endorse all publicity plans.
6. To help with the budget and assist in the authorization of all expenditures.

## **Article IX: Recall Procedures**

**Section A** Any student serving on the Student Government Association or a standing committee is subject to recall at any time.

**Section B** Official Recall Procedures - The S.G.A. shall have the power to organize the recall of any student from his/her committee position or elected office

1. The initiation of this procedure is the prerogative of any student in the University and must be endorsed by ten percent (10%) of the Student Body by written petition. However, the accused must be made aware of these proceedings in a written letter.
2. The S.G.A. shall be required to provide, in the presence of all parties involved, an open hearing on the reasons for which this action has been initiated.
3. The parties involved in this action shall be provided an opportunity to defend his/her position.
4. The S.G.A. shall then go into a closed session, with the accused not present, for further discussion.
5. The S.G.A. must decide by two-thirds majority secret ballot vote of its total membership whether the accused shall be removed from office. If this majority is not obtained, the matter shall be considered closed.
6. A member of the S.G.A. be so charged shall abstain from voting or vetoing.

**Section C** Administrative Recall Procedure - Administrative recall will only apply to intra-student government disciplinary problems. Any member of the S.G.A. may initiate this procedure. A special closed meeting will take place. The Judicial Review Board must decide by two-thirds (2/3) majority secret ballot vote of its total membership to recall the member in question. The accused shall have no vote or veto during this procedure.

## **Article X: The Student Finance Committee**

**Section A** Once per week during the fall and spring semesters, the Student Finance Committee (SFC) will review requests for funding assistance for events, projects, or opportunities. These requests may come from any registered club/organization/chapter/honor society (exception: SGA and WAC have annual operating budgets and may not request funds through this committee). The amount approved will be deposited into the club's on-campus agency account. These funds must be used for their approved purpose (ex. If \$150 is granted for a dance, it should be used for that dance and not allocated to a different event). The University may reclaim unused funds, or deny future budget requests and/or pursue disciplinary charges if funds are misappropriated. If the event is canceled and the funds are no longer needed, the club should notify the Director of Student Activities so that they can be reallocated.

**Section B** In order to be eligible to receive funds, the club must register as 'active' for the current semester with the Office of Student Activities and submit an Event Request Form with the Office of Student Activities. Requests should be thorough and include an itemized list of expenses. Clubs that demonstrate involvement on campus, such as participation in Club Fair, attending required activities (ex. Student Organization Training, Club Leadership Luncheon), and sending representatives to Student Government Association meetings, may be given priority for funding requests.

**Section C** Submission of a request does not guarantee funds. The amount allocated will depend upon the strength of the proposal and the funding available.

**Section D** The following types of events or projects will receive consideration:

1. Those that will have a positive impact on the University community,
2. Those that are open to all students,
3. Those that expand evening or weekend activities,
4. Those that provide skill-building, networking, or training for members that, in turn, will benefit the campus as a whole,
5. Those that come at no-cost or low-cost to student participants (ex. The SFC will not purchase items to be resold to students for club profit)
6. Requests for supplies that help the club operate and benefit the campus (exception: no uniforms or giveaways that are only available to club members).

**Section E** The SFC will invite the club representative to their meeting to answer questions about the proposal. The SFC will then review and approve/disapprove the request after verifying eligibility and weighing the merit of all of the proposals on the table. The committee chair will notify the club of the outcome within two business days.

**Section F** The SFC is chaired by the Treasurer of the Student Government Association (SGA), whose role is to communicate with funding applicants, preside over meetings, facilitate discussion, insure that the SFC adheres to published guidelines, and communicates with the SFC advisor. The chair is a non-voting member, except when a tie-break is needed. The voting members of the SFC are four SGA Finance Officers (one representing each class) and four independent applicants from the student body (applications available annually through the Office of Student Activities).

**Section G** Members of the SFC must be available to attend all meetings (one excused absence permitted). Members are expected to excuse themselves from the room if there is a conflict of interest for a particular proposal.

**Section H** The SFC advisor must be present at meetings. The advisor is the Director of Student Activities (the Vice President for Student Affairs or Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs may fill in as needed). The advisor is a non-voting staff mentor who oversees and administers the financial aspects of the SFC.

## **Article XI: The Events Committee**

**Section A** The Events Committee will be Chaired by the Chair of Events and have four (4) class representatives.

**Section B** The Events Committee will meet each week.

**Section C** The purpose of the Event Committee is to plan, organize, lead, and control all SGA events and fundraisers

**Section D** These events and fundraisers include, but are not limited to: Pub and Club, the Homecoming Parade, and Senior Send-off

**Section E** The Events Committee will report updates to the Executive Board and Student Senate weekly

## **Article XII: Amendment Procedures**

**Section A** Any amendment may be proposed to the S.G.A. if endorsed by thirty percent (30%) of the total Student Senate by written petition.

1. Official notification of these proceedings shall be emailed to the student body at least one week in advance.
2. Those proposing the amendment shall be required to explain and defend their proposal in an open forum. This forum may occur at an official meeting of the Student Government Association.
3. The senate must decide by two-thirds majority vote of the total membership to commit the proposal to referendum.

**Section B** If the proposal is endorsed by two-thirds vote of the Senate, it shall be submitted to a referendum of the Student Body where it must obtain a two-thirds majority of the ballots cast to pass.

**Section C** If the proposal is not endorsed by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the S.G.A., it may be brought to referendum by endorsement of twenty-five percent of the Student Body by written petition.

## **Article XIII: Meeting Procedure**

**Section A** Official meetings of the Student Government Association shall follow the following agenda:

- Roll
- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Continuing Business
- New Business
- Questions for Officers
- Closure of Meeting

**Section B** At meetings, the following protocols will be maintained:

1. Any person desiring to speak must be recognized by the Vice-President prior to beginning to speak.



2. Any person asking a question must be recognized by the Vice-President prior to speaking.

**Section C** If the need arises, the President may call for a paper/digital meeting. Such meetings will be comprised of:

1. Submission of Reports via email to the Secretary, President, and Vice-President prior to the typical meeting time.
2. The release of meeting minutes no more than 24 hours following the typical meeting time by the Secretary.
3. Automatic tabling of any issue/action in need of discussion or vote of the Student Senate, to be included in the "Continuing Business" section of the next official meeting of the SGA.

#### **Article XIV: Community Council**

**Section A** The president of the Student Government Association is an automatic voting member of the Community Council.

**Section B** One student member from each of the Community Council's standing commission shall be selected by the Student Government Association President through a secret ballot senate vote to serve as a voting member of the Community Council.

**Section C** Four representatives shall be selected by the Student Government Association through a secret ballot senate vote to serve as an at large voting member of the Community Council.