THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Ratified by the Student Association: September, 2015

*Highlighted red denotes removed

*Highlighted green denotes added

*Highlighted yellow denotes amended

Preamble

We, the students of Virginia Wesleyan College, in recognizing the importance of the student body's role in the governance of this institution do hereby establish a Student Government Association. The student government association shall be the official voice of the students in student affairs. Elected in a democratic fashion, the officers shall represent the interests, goals and aspirations of the students in Community Council, College committees and through direct legislative and administrative action. We do on this 20th Day of February in the year of Our Lord 2011, adopt this Constitution for the student body at Virginia Wesleyan College.

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 College.

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.

Section B There will be a Constitutional Court with final authority on matters of interpretation of the Student Government Association Constitution.

Section C This Constitutional Court shall consist of the president and vice president of the Student Government Association and at least one member per senatorial class appointed by the senate. The president shall preside at these meetings.

Section D Meetings of the Constitutional Court may be called by any member.

Section E In its authority as the judiciary, it will be the job of the Constitutional Court to clarify matters of ambiguity, and make decisions regarding constitutionality.

Section F The Constitutional Court will also serve as the Constitution’s by-law and revisions committee to update and revise the Constitution. The president shall preside at these meetings. A call for a by-law and revisions committee shall be held at least every two years.
Section G All voting meetings of the Constitutional Court are closed to the student body. Minutes from these meetings shall; however, be made available to the student senate or student body upon request.

Article III: The Student Government Association

Section A The Student Government Association (S.G.A.) shall exist to coordinate, legislate and appropriate necessary funds towards the Student Body’s matters of interest. 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 popularly elected president and vice-president, sixteen (16) popularly elected senators, a student advocate, a public relations director, a secretary, a treasurer, a technology officer, a commuter representative, an athletic representative, and a director of special events.

1. There shall be four (4) senators from the sophomore, junior and senior classes elected in the spring.
2. There shall be four (4) senators from the freshman class elected in the fall.
3. There shall be one (1) student advocate, one (1) public relations director, one (1) secretary, one (1) treasurer, one (1) technology officer, one (1) commuter representative, one (1) athletic representative, one (1) greek representative, and one (1) director of special events to be appointed annually by the president elect with the consent of the senate elect.
4. The president may create other appointed positions as needed.
5. In order to conduct a vote in the senate, ten (10) senators must be present assuring a 2/3rd’s ratification.

Section C The Student Government Association shall consist of a lower house to be overseen by the Senatorial elect. The lower house shall hereby be officially known as the assembly.

1. There will be (4) assemblies: (1) freshman Assembly, (1) sophomore Assembly, (1) junior Assembly, and (1) senior Assembly.
2. Each assembly will be capped at 10 members by volunteer applications.
3. The volunteer applications will be reviewed by the senators for voting if volunteer applications exceed the cap. Volunteers for the assembly will be notified if voting procedures are implemented.
4. Members of the assembly will be held to the same standards as senators and the executive board, to be detailed in Article VI.
Section D To be eligible to run for or hold an S.G.A. office, the individual must be in good academic standing. Good academic standing is defined as a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 for members of the senate and the executive board and 2.5 for the vice president and president elect. 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 College 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, within one week, the name of the student to complete the unexpired 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 case of a rejection by the senate or a refusal by the proposed nominee to accept the nomination, a special election must be conducted by the electoral commission within ten (10) calendar days from the date of the senate rejection or nominee refusal.

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.

2. Either the president or vice president must have served a minimum of 1 full academic year (i.e. Fall Term and Spring Term) in the S.G.A. to be eligible to run for office.

3. The president and the vice-president shall run as a ticket.

4. Each presidential/vice-presidential ticket must obtain one hundred (100) student signatures and two faculty signatures on a petition.

5. 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.

6. 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 (refer to Articles V-VII).

7. Students who wish to run for the student senate must obtain fifty (50) signatures and one faculty signature on a petition.

8. Students who wish to run for the student government association need to obtain an election packet with their additional duties and contracts in the Dean of Students office.

Section B The 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
Section C Presidential Primary Election

1. Petitions for president and vice-president of S.G.A. shall be due by 4p.m. the last Friday in March. If this date conflicts with the college’s academic calendar or any other extenuating circumstances arise then the president and vice president reserves the right to change this date.

2. The electoral commission will determine when the date for the primary election will be held, as long as the election is held a week prior to the general election.

3. Write-in candidates are admissible for the primary. If the write-in candidate qualifies for the final election, the candidate must comply with Section C of Article III within 48 hours or their nomination shall be voided and the next highest vote recipients will be made eligible. The two highest vote recipients shall be made eligible for the final election.

Section D Presidential General Election. The electoral commission will deem when the final election will take place as long as it has taken place at an April campus event (e.g. Seafood Party in the Dell). The ticket receiving the majority of the votes shall be the president and vice president. Write-in candidates are prohibited from the final election.

Section E If the president-elect and vice-president-elect are unable or unwilling to fulfill their duties of office, the ticket receiving the plurality of the remaining votes in the final election shall assume the office.

Section F The election for the four (4) sophomore, four (4) junior and four (4) senior senators shall be determined by the electoral commission as long as it has taken place by the last weekend of the spring semester at a campus event (e.g. Spring Fling).

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

Section H The current president and vice president of S.G.A. shall not cast a ballot in Presidential/Vice-Presidential or Senatorial Elections. However, if the tabulated vote totals indicate a tie, the president will "break the tie" in the Presidential/Vice Presidential Election and the vice president will "break the tie" in the Senatorial Election. In addition, both the president and vice president must be at the tabulation of the ballots along with one of the S.G.A. advisors.

Section I 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 president and vice-president will establish an electoral commission, with the consent of the student senate, to determine all guidelines and procedures for each special election.

Article V: The Duties of the President and Vice-President of the Student Government Association

Section A The duties of the president 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 all 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.

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 two-thirds majority vote of the senate.

4. The president shall by virtue of the office sit as the student member on the Community Arbitration Board (CAB)

5. The president shall serve as the official liaison between the administration of the College and the student senate.

6. The president shall fulfill any other duties set forth in the Student Government Association Constitution.

**Section B** The duties of the vice-president shall be as follows:

1. The vice-president shall serve as chairperson and a non-voting member of the student senate.

2. The vice-president shall be responsible for scheduling, announcing, conducting and controlling (by means of parliamentary procedure set down in Robert's Rule of Order) all meetings of the student senate.

3. The vice-president is responsible for all senate activities and committees, assuring that they are properly organized and that all senate decisions are upheld.

4. In the case of a tie vote in the senate, the vice-president will "break the tie".

5. The vice president shall by virtue of the office sit as chairperson of the Community Relations Council (CRC).

6. The vice-president shall be responsible for relaying all messages and announcements between the student senate and the president.

7. The vice-president shall make sure that all the senators remain in good academic and disciplinary standing as per Article III, Section C or bring the matter to the attention of the president, who shall follow procedures for nomination of a new candidate for the office.

8. The vice-president will be the official liaison between computer services and the S.G.A.

9. The vice-president shall fulfill any other duties set forth by the Student Government Association Constitution.

**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** All members of S.G.A. are voting members of the Student Welfare Commission.
Section C Any Student Government Association meeting shall be considered a Student Government Association function.

Section D The senators are required to attend all functions set by the secretary.

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 E Each class is required to complete one project per senatorial term. This project is determined by the executive board.

Section F Each class is required to host one event during Homecoming Week. This event is determined by the executive board.

Section G Each class is required to host one forum with another class per senatorial term. The forum topic is determined by the senate and student advocate.

Section H Senators shall collect reports and take minutes during all special events meetings. The senators must also during a regular meeting of the student senate, present a summation of the reports.

Section I Each senator is required to have equal responsibility for each special event. If the duties assigned to student senators are not fulfilled the course of action will be as follows:

1. After the second unexcused absence, the senator will receive a warning in writing from the secretary.

2. Three (3) unexcused absences from Student Government Association functions will result in the initiation of the Administrative Recall Procedures by the president or vice president elect.

Section K Excused absences from an S.G.A. function are determined and excused by the secretary, vice-president, and the president.

Section L Each senator will be responsible for maintaining office hours in the Student Activities Office. Senators are expected to complete 8 hours per month or 2 hours per week. Hours will be logged in the SGA log book in the Student Activities Office.

Article VII: Executive Board

Section A Appointment of the executive board

1. The duties and expectations of the executive board should be recorded, witnessed and signed by the entire Student Government Association, including the signature of the officer.

2. Any member of the S.G.A. may challenge the performance of its officers. This can be done by submitting an official letter to the President of Student Government. The Official Recall Procedures set forth in Article IX, Section B would then be activated.

3. The executive board’s term shall run concurrent with that of the President and Vice-President.

Section B The duties of the student advocate shall be as follows:
1. The student advocate shall serve as the student member of the Agenda Committee and shall also serve as a voting member of the Community Council.

2. The student advocate shall meet periodically with the Dean of Students and/or the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Enrollment Services (or their designee) to discuss needs and concerns of the College community.

3. The student advocate shall conduct the recall of students from elective office in the Student Government Association or appointed members of College committees or arbitration boards as defined in Article IX.

4. The student advocate shall serve as official liaison between students and the student senate and shall publish weekly their availability and location to address student concerns.

5. The student advocate is an ex-officio member of the student senate and shall attend all their functions.

6. The student advocate shall serve as the parliamentarian of all S.G.A. meetings and/or functions.

7. The student advocate is an ex-officio member of the student senate and shall attend all functions.

Section C The duties of the public relations director shall be as follows:

1. The public relations director shall serve as the student liaison with the Director of Student Activities.

2. The public relations director will regularly meet with the senate to discuss programs and activities.

3. The public relations director shall be responsible for the making and hanging or the coordination with the senatorial classes of promotional materials for all S.G.A. events. This must be done in a timely manner applicable to the event. Small events may require a standard 2 weeks promotion and large events may require a 1 month promotion.

4. The public relations director will be in charge of the creation and distribution of the Student Government Association monthly newsletter.

5. The information technology officer is responsible for maintaining the S.G.A. web page. This must be done on a timely and regular basis.

6. The public relations director is an ex-officio member of the student senate and shall attend all functions.

Section D The duties of the secretary shall be as follows:

1. The secretary shall take accurate minutes of the senate meetings.

2. The secretary shall publish weekly minutes 24 hours after the S.G.A. meeting. Additional copies shall be made available on the S.G.A. website.

3. The secretary shall be in charge of taking attendance and all attendance matters.
4. The secretary shall collect reports and minutes from all committees on which a student member sits.

5. The secretary will coordinate and room reservations and technology reservations when needed.

6. The secretary is an ex-officio member of the S.G.A. executive board and shall attend all functions.

Section E The duties of the treasurer shall be as follows:

1. The treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of the budget in cooperation with the president and advisor.

2. The treasurer shall make an oral report of the finances and expenditures at all S.G.A. meetings.

3. The treasurer is an ex-officio member of the S.G.A. executive board and shall attend all functions.

Section F The duties of the information technology officer shall be as follows:

1. The information technology officer is responsible for maintaining the S.G.A. web page. This must be done on a timely and regular basis.

2. The information technology officer will be the official liaison between computer services and the S.G.A.

3. The information technology officer will coordinate and room reservations and technology reservations when needed.

4. The information technology officer is an ex-officio member of the S.G.A. executive board and shall attend all functions.

Section G The duties of the commuter representative shall be as follows:

1. The commuter representative shall be the official liaison between the Commuter Club, commuter students and the S.G.A.

2. The commuter representative shall make an oral report of commuter concerns and any programming that will be done for commuter students at all S.G.A. meetings.

3. The commuter representative is an ex-officio member of the S.G.A. executive board and shall attend all functions.

Section H The duties of the athletic representative shall be as follows:

1. The athletic representative shall be the official liaison between student athletes and the S.G.A.

2. The athletic representative shall make an oral report of athletic concerns and events on a regular basis to keep all students informed on athletic news.

3. The athletic representative is a member of the executive committee of the S.G.A. and shall attend all their meetings and functions.
Section I The duties of the Greek representative shall be as follows:

1. The Greek representative shall be the official liaison between SGA, IFC, and PanHellenic Council.
2. The Greek representative shall make an oral report of Greek concerns and any programming that will be done for Greek students at all S.G.A. meetings.
3. Greek representative is an ex-officio member of the S.G.A. executive board and shall attend all functions.

Section J The duties of the director of special events shall be as follows:

1. The director of special events shall serve as the student liaison between the executive board and the senate.
2. The director of special events will regularly meet with the senate to discuss programs and activities.
3. The director of special events shall be responsible for overseeing all student government events.
4. The director of special events is a member of the executive committee of the S.G.A. and shall attend all their meetings and functions.

Section J If at any time, any of these members fails to fulfill his or her responsibilities, the Administrative Recall Procedure shall be initiated (See Article IX).

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

Section A The Dean of Students shall serve as an advisor of the S.G.A. In addition, a secondary advisor will be the Director of Student Activities, Greek Life, and Commuters.

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 grant approval for activities sponsored by the S.G.A., with presidential approval.
6. To review and endorse all publicity plans.
7. To help with the budget and authorize all expenditures.

Section C In the event that the executive board deems it necessary to remove the secondary advisor, the executive board will call for a closed meeting where the reasons for the removal of the secondary advisor will be presented. A two-thirds (2/3) total membership vote of the S.G.A. will be required for the removal of the secondary advisor. If the vote carries, the executive board will notify the secondary advisor of his/her removal from their position.
Article IX: Recall Procedures

Section A Any student serving on the Student Government Association, a standing committee or arbitral board, 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 committee position or elected office.

1. The initiation of this procedure is the prerogative of any student in the College 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 neither party 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. Should a member of the S.G.A. be so charged, he shall abstain from voting or vetoing.

Section C Administrative Recall Procedure - Administrative recall will only apply to intrastudent government disciplinary problems. Any member of the S.G.A. may initiate this procedure. A special closed meeting will take place. The S.G.A. 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: Referendum Procedures

Section A Any ballot for a referendum must be certified by the Student Government Association president and secretary.

Section B Announcements of referendum must be made at specified times prior to its being held.

1. For constitutional amendments, two (2) weeks.

2. For recall referendums, one (1) week.

3. For any issue which requires immediate action, at least one day, during which time every effort must be made to notify all students of this action. A three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the senate is needed to allow for this short notice or announcement.

Article XI: Amendment Procedures

Section A Any amendment may be proposed to the S.G.A. if endorsed by ten percent (10%) of the total Student Body 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.

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 XII: 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 senators, one senator from each year, 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.