

# **The Constitution of the Student Government Association of Saint Francis University**

## **Preamble**

We, the students of the Saint Francis University community, desire to advance academic responsibility, promote social conscientiousness, encourage communication and cooperation among students, faculty, and administration, and inspire democratic processes, do hereby establish the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Saint Francis University (herein called SGA).

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Student Government Association is to serve as the voice of the student body by providing Saint Francis students with representation, services, and advocacy within the University structure. It is our purpose to cultivate strong student leadership, to build connections between students, faculty and administration, and to better our campus community.

## **Values**

The values SGA looks to uphold are leadership, service, and community.

## **Article I: Purpose**

The purpose of SGA shall be:

- (1) To act as the sole, official representative of the students of Saint Francis University;
- (2) To present the student perspective and vote on subjects of concern regarding the University community (this includes, but is not limited to the student body, the faculty, the administration, the community at large, and all associated, related bodies and entities);
- (3) To enhance the academic, educational, social, community, and religious experiences at Saint Francis University;
- (4) To promote, encourage, and coordinate the activities and services of all student organizations;
- (5) To provide guidance and recommendations on student related functions, activities, and organizations;
- (6) To receive, review, and act upon issues or subjects related to student, faculty, and/or administration concerns;
- (7) To establish an interface with faculty, administration, the community, and student entities;
- (8) To develop specific rules, regulations, by-laws, and amendments as deemed necessary and proper to the well-being of the SGA, and
- (9) To protect, enhance, and serve individual and collective rights and freedoms.

## **Article II: Name and General Organization**

### **Section I: Name**

The official name of the governing organization shall be “The Student Government Association of Saint Francis University” in Loretto, Pennsylvania. Informally, the organization shall be called SGA.

### **Section II: Membership**

The members of the SGA shall consist of all matriculating students of Saint Francis University, who are in good academic and disciplinary standing with the University. Good standing is a GPA of 2.5. Freshmen shall be the exception to this policy.

### **Section III: Operation Entities**

The SGA shall consist of five operating entities:

- (1) The Executive Board;
- (2) The Senate;
- (3) The SGA subcommittees;
- (4) The Judicial Appeals student representatives; and
- (5) The Academic Appeals Board student representative.

### **Section IV: Executive Powers**

The executive powers of the SGA shall be vested in the following duly-elected officers, and additional roles and information shall be included in the Executive Officer Handbook.

- (1) The President;
- (2) The Executive Vice President;
- (3) The Vice President for Communications; and
- (4) The Vice President for Finance.

### **Section V: Incompatibilities**

- (1) No person shall simultaneously serve as an Executive Officer and as a Senator.
- (2) No person shall serve in more than one (1) SGA executive office simultaneously.
- (3) The President and Vice President shall not simultaneously hold the Presidency of another SGA sponsored student organization.

## **Article III: The Executive Board**

The Executive Board will operate under the duly-elected president of SGA.

### **Section I: Membership**

The Executive Board of the SGA shall consist of the following duly-elected members:

- (1) The President;
- (2) The Executive Vice President;
- (3) The Vice President for Communications;
- (4) The Vice President for Finance; and
- (5) Two (2) Chief Senators.

## Section II: Eligibility for Executive Officers

- (1) Candidates for executive office shall be required to attend the University for a minimum of (1) semester.
- (2) Candidates for an executive office must meet requirements established by the University, outlined in the Student Handbook, for participation in co-curricular activities.
- (3) Candidates must be a current full-time matriculating student.
- (4) Candidates must have a minimum QPA of two and one half (2.5) at the time of nomination.
- (5) Candidates for President and Executive Vice President must have served as a senator of the SGA for at least one (1) year.
- (6) Candidates for all executive offices (President, Executive Vice President, Vice President for Communications, Vice President for Finance) must meet the minimum class requirement of sophomore status.

## Section III: Executive Board Nomination Process

- (1) Executive Board nominations are to be made at least two weeks prior to the election scheduled on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in November.

## Section IV: The President

- (1) The President will act as the official representative of the SGA.
- (2) The President will preside over the Executive Board, coordinating the meetings and setting the agenda.
- (3) The President will have the power to call emergency meetings when deemed necessary.
- (4) The President will be a standing member of the Faculty Senate.
- (5) The President will be an ex-officio member of all SGA subcommittees.
- (6) The President will oversee the operation of the SGA, making sure all members carry out designated responsibilities.
- (7) The President will serve as committee chair of the SGA Leadership Conference Planning Committee.
- (8) The President will appoint the members of the SGA Committees, members of all Faculty Senate Committees, members of the Judicial Appeals Board, and other committees, as outlined in this Constitution, for the approval of Senate.
- (9) The President shall convene a monthly meeting with the Vice President for Student Development and the Executive Board.
- (10) The President, along with the Executive Board, will deliver a "State of Students Address" to the University President's Council at the beginning of the Term of Office.
- (11) The President, along with the Executive Board, will deliver an end of the year report to members of the Board of Trustees at the end of the Term of Office.
- (12) The President will serve on the Vice President for Finance Selection Committee.

**Section V: The Executive Vice President**

- (1) In the absence of the President, the Executive Vice President shall be considered acting President, except that the Executive Vice President shall retain only one (1) vote in the case of a tie.
- (2) The Executive Vice President shall chair all Senate meetings.
- (3) The Executive Vice President will be a standing member of the SGA Leadership and Awards Committee.
- (4) The Executive Vice President will coordinate and manage all Senate elections.
- (5) The Executive Vice President will organize and manage a new senator orientation program prior to the first meeting of Senate for each term.
- (6) The Executive Vice President will be a standing member of Faculty Senate.

**Section VI: The Vice President for Communications**

- (1) The Vice President for Communications will record all Senate and Executive Board meeting minutes. The Vice President for Communications shall compile all minutes of Senate and Executive Board into one volume and submit one copy to the Vice President for Student Development, one copy to the library archives, and retain one copy for the SGA office before the expiration of his/her term.
- (2) The Vice President for Communications will collect and file all committee reports and meeting minutes for all the SGA sponsored organizations.
- (3) The Vice President for Communications will be responsible for all external correspondence as well as handle all public relations, including working with the *Troubadour* staff in publishing up-to-date reports on all the SGA activities.
- (4) The Vice President for Communications will work with the Vice President for Finance in coordinating the office work-study staff schedules.
- (5) The Vice President for Communications will publish Senate minutes.
- (6) The Vice President for Communications will publish all election results.

**Section VII: The Vice President for Finance**

The Office of the Vice President for Finance is a paid position of the SGA and is a direct financing position. The Executive Board, with the approval of the Senate, shall set payment for the position. The Center for Student Life and the SGA shall be responsible for the funding of this position. Selection criteria for this position are outlined in the "Vice President for Finance Selection Handbook."

- (1) The Vice President for Finance is responsible for overseeing all financial obligations of the organization.
- (2) The Vice President for Finance is a standing member of the Finance and Operations Committee.

- (3) The Vice President for Finance will provide budgetary reports to the Senate and Executive Board.
- (4) The Vice President for Finance will provide monthly budgetary reports to each of the SGA sponsored organizations.
- (5) The Vice President for Finance will fulfill all job requirements as listed on the published job description for the paid position, which is outlined in the "Vice President for Finance Selection Handbook."

**Section VIII: Voting Powers of the Executive Board**

Each member of the Executive Board shall have one vote in the Senate. Only in the case of a tie will the President be vested with the power to cast an additional vote to break the tie.

**Section IX: The Executive Board Meetings**

The Executive Board shall meet once each week or when deemed necessary by the President. The Executive Board shall set the agenda for the Senate meetings, set the meeting days and times, conduct the meetings, and establish voting dates.

**Section X: Term of Office**

All Executive Board members are elected for the period beginning January first (1<sup>st</sup>) of the year in which they are elected until December thirty-first (31<sup>st</sup>) of the same year.

**Section XI: Executive Officer Vacancies**

In the event that the office of President, Executive Vice President or Vice President for Communications shall become vacant due to disqualification, absence, resignation, or any other reason, a special election shall be held within thirty (30) days of the vacancy.

- (1) In case of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice President will assume the office until a special election takes place.
- (2) In case of a vacancy in the office of Executive Vice President or Vice President for Communications, the President will appoint an interim officer until the special election takes place.

Nominations for the vacant position of President, Executive Vice President or Vice President for Communications shall be made from members of both the Executive Board and the Senate who are otherwise qualified. However, if no individual is qualified, if those who are qualified refuse the position, the selection will be made from any member who is of sophomore to senior status.

**Article IV: The Senate**

The Senate shall be the legislative body of the SGA. The Senate shall consist of thirty-two (32) Senators duly-elected by their respective constituency.

- (a) Three (3) Senators from the Senior Class;
  - a. One (1) Senior Senator shall be selected by and from the Senior Class Officers to sit on Senate;

- (b) Three (3) Senators from the Junior Class;
  - a. One (1) Junior Senator shall be selected by and from the Junior Class Officers to sit on Senate;
- (c) Three (3) Senators from the Sophomore Class;
  - a. One (1) Sophomore Senator shall be selected by and from the Sophomore Class Officers to sit on Senate;
- (d) Three (3) Senators from the Freshman Class;
  - a. One (1) Freshman Senator shall be selected by and from the Freshman Class Officers to sit on Senate;
- (e) Two (2) Senators from the Commuter Connection Club;
- (f) One (1) Senator from the Multi-Cultural Awareness Society;
- (g) Two (2) Senators from the Intra-Fraternity/Sorority Council;
- (h) Two (2) Senators from the Student Athlete Advisory Committee;
- (i) Two (2) Senators from the Student Activities Organization;
- (j) One (1) Senator from Residence Life;
- (k) One (1) Senator from the International Students Union;
- (l) One (1) Senator from either Campus Ministry or Peer Ministers;
- (m) Two (2) Senators from the North Side of Campus;
- (n) Two (2) Senators from the South Side of Campus;
- (o) One (1) Senator from the School of Health Sciences;
- (p) One (1) Senator from the School of Natural Sciences;
- (q) One (1) Senator from the School of Humanities;
- (r) One (1) Senator from the School of Business;
- (s) Two (2) Chief Senators elected from within the Senate.

#### Section I: Election of Senators

- (1) Students interested in having their names placed on the ballot for Class Senators, School Senators, or North/South Senators must submit a petition containing twenty-five (25) signatures from students within their respective constituencies (i.e. someone interested in North Side Campus Senator must get twenty-five (25) signatures from residents living on the North Side of Campus).
- (2) Once on the ballot, students will be voted on by members of their respective constituency.
- (3) For internal elections, only Senators who are able to complete the entire one-year term will be selected from within their respective group, club, council, organization, etc.
- (4) Freshman recipients of the SGA Scholarship will be members of Senate effective on the first day of the new school term, and will be subject to standard voting rules in November.
- (5) A student cannot hold more than one senate position at a time.

#### Section II: Duties of Senators

The Senate duties shall include:

- (1) Acting on all matters presented by the Executive Board;
- (2) Establishing laws, by-laws, and all other legislative acts for the SGA;

- (3) Overseeing all financial matters relating to SGA funding and expenditures;
- (4) Proposing and recommending constitutional amendments to the student body;
- (5) Approving nominees for any Judicial Appeals decisions if needed;
- (6) Being responsible for initiating all funding of student activities; and
- (7) Reviewing all contingency reports.

**Section III: Duties of Chief Senators**

The duties of the Chief Senators shall include:

- (1) Attending executive board meetings;
- (2) Informing senators who have two (2) absences of their status for impeachment;
- (3) Making recommendations to the President for nominations for any Senate vacancy within his/her area;
- (4) Serving on the election commission; and
- (5) Taking meeting attendance.

**Section IV: Membership on Faculty Senate/Student Development Subcommittees**

Each Senate member and Class Officer shall serve on at least one (1), but not more than two (2) Faculty Senate/Student Development subcommittees in the course of an elected year. Appointments shall be made by the President at the beginning of the fall semester.

The Faculty Senate/Student Development subcommittees are as follows:

- (1) Athletics Advisory Board – two (2) representatives;
- (2) Student Affairs Committee – four (4) representatives;
- (3) Library Resources Committee – two (2) representatives;
- (4) Standards and Admissions Committee – two (2) representatives;
- (5) Curriculum and Teaching Committee – three (3) representatives;
- (6) General Education Committee – two (2) representatives;
- (7) INFONET Committee – one (1) representative;
- (8) University Police/Parking Review Board – two (2) representatives;
- (9) Graduate Studies Committee- two (2) representatives;
- (10) Independent Studies Committee – two (2) representatives;
- (11) Academic Court – two (2) representatives;
- (12) Campus Coalition for Alcohol Abuse Committee – two (2) representatives;
- (13) Campus Safety Committee- two (2) representatives;
- (14) Student Health Advisory Committee – two (2) representatives;
- (15) Day of Reflection Committee – one (1) representative; and
- (16) Faculty Senate – President and Executive Vice President shall represent the student body.

**Section V: Senate Sub-Committees**

Any senate member or Class Officer can serve on the inter-senate subcommittees. Appointments and nominations will be made at the beginning of the fall semester.

- (1) Food Services Committee- three (3) senators from residence life and three (3) representatives who are Torvian administrators;
- (2) Leadership and Awards Committee – Chaired by the Executive Vice President and will have a minimum of three (3) senators;
- (3) Public Relations/Social Committee – Chaired by the Vice President of Communications and will have a minimum of six (6) senators;
- (4) Finance and Operations Committee – Chaired by the Vice President of Finance and will have a minimum of five (5) senators;
- (5) Election board – Chaired by the Executive Vice President and both Chief Senators and will have a minimum of five (5) senators;
- (6) Leadership Conference Committee – Chaired by the President and will have a minimum of five (5) senators.

Other subcommittees can be established as deemed necessary by the Senate.

#### Section VI: Senate Terms

- (1) The term of office for senators will be for one calendar year.
- (2) Senators will be elected during the fall semester. Elections shall be completed on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Tuesday of November.
- (3) In the event that there are no candidates for a senate position, the seat shall be filled by a qualified candidate of the represented constituency. The candidate(s) must be nominated by either a Senator or an Executive Board member, and must receive a majority vote of the Senate for approval.
- (4) If any vacancies occur due to resignation, residency change, election to executive board, or disqualification, the President may appoint a qualified person to serve in the interim until the next election. When a vacancy occurs within an internal group, that group may select a replacement Senator.

#### Section VII: Senate Meetings

- (1) The first meeting of the new Senate will be conducted before the fourteenth (14<sup>th</sup>) day of the spring semester.
- (2) Senate meetings will be held at least every other week.
- (3) The Executive Board may call emergency meetings as deemed necessary.

#### Section IX: Attendance

- (1) All Executive, Senate, and Judicial Board members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings, committee meetings, or special meetings whenever the respective body is in session. Because of the importance of continuity and managing the affairs of the SGA, any absence is considered detrimental to the activities of the respective SGA organizations.
- (2) Senators are required to attend all scheduled meetings. Any expected absences shall be formally presented in writing to the Executive Vice

President of Communications stating the reason for absence during their term of office. After the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) absence, the Chief Senators will be responsible for informing the Senator in writing of his/her status. After the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) absence during a term of office, impeachment proceedings will be initiated.

- (3) It is the spirit of this section to communicate the need for attendance at all the SGA meetings. Consideration shall be given in the event a Senator is unable to attend due to a death in the family, when the student is absent from the school premises, hospitalization of the student, a family emergency which requires absence from the school premises, and participation in an activity, sport, or other function sponsored by Saint Francis University. Other considerations will be made when deemed necessary and accepted by the Executive Board.

#### **Article V: Impeachment**

Any SGA member (Senators and Executive Board Members) may be subject to impeachment when in violation of term agreements.

##### **Section I: Grounds, Senate**

Any senator member who misses more than three (3) scheduled meetings during a semester will be subject to impeachment.

##### **Section II: Ground, Executive Board Member**

Executive Board members, who miss more than three (3) Senate and Executive Board meetings during a semester, will be subject to impeachment.

##### **Section III: Procedure**

- (1) Any person who is subject to impeachment shall be notified in writing by the Chief Senators of the impending action. This notification must take place no later than forty-eight (48) hours of the regularly scheduled meeting.
- (2) A motion for impeachment will be made by the Executive Board and voted upon by the Senate.
- (3) The President will be notified in writing of any dismissals within forty-eight (48) hours of the meeting. The President will appoint an interim senator from the vacant seats constituency. Approval of the term shall be made by a simple majority of the Senate for the remainder of the term.
- (4) In the event an executive officer is impeached, the procedure outlined in Article III Section X will be utilized.
- (5) The Vice President for Communications will notify all impeached members in writing of their inactive status within twenty-four (24) hours of impeachment.

#### **Article VI: The Election Board**

The Election board will be comprised of three (3) members that will ensure a fair and honest election.

### Section I: Membership

The Election Board will consist of three (3) members to be established by the Executive Board.

The Members include:

- (1) The Executive Vice President; and
- (2) The Chief Senators.

### Section II: Election Board Chair

- (1) The Election board shall be chaired by the Executive Vice President.
- (2) The chairperson will keep the Executive Board aware of all voting dates and times.

### Section III: Elections

The Election Board will run all the SGA elections, class officer elections, and any special student voting issues, including, but not limited to, the Outstanding Educator Award. This includes publicity, coordinating speeches, manning the voting area, and counting ballots.

### Section IV: Replacements

Any Election Board member who is running for an office cannot serve on the election board and will be replaced by the Executive Board.

## **Article VII: Judicial Appeals**

In the interest of the students, pertaining to judicial appeals, SGA will seek to maintain the right and ability to appoint students to serve in the capacity as a neutral and informative party in the matter of judicial appeals. In a case where a decision has been rendered by the Vice President for Student Development or his/her designate, and the accused student is dissatisfied with the decision rendered, he/she may appeal the decision to the President of the University. In this instance, SGA would seek to nominate students to represent the overall interests of the student body.

### Section I: Nominations

- (1) SGA shall accept nominations from the student body at large.
- (2) The nominated students must be a matriculating student, have a GPA of 2.5 or better, and cannot hold a position as a class officer, Senator, or Executive Board member.
- (3) The Senate will then review the nominees and appoint six (6) of these students to be considered by the President of the University. The President of the University may then decide to accommodate the student representatives if he/she chooses.

## **Article VIII: Amendments**

This Constitution is a live document that allows for amendments. This constitution shall be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

## **Article IX: Ratification**

Constitutional ratifications may be made on this Constitution. This constitution must be approved by a simple majority of the student body that will vote on the ratification.