



Code of Official Conduct

Student Government Association

Stephen F. Austin State University

Section 1

Purpose

The Students of Stephen F. Austin State University are entitled to a fair, ethical, and fully accountable student government which has earned and may continue to inspire the Student Body's full confidence in pursuance of integrity in public service. In keeping with this Student Government Association's commitment to free inquiry and expression, academic excellence, and student welfare, the responsible administration of this democratic student government therefore requires that: Student Government Association officials who may be elected, appointed, or employed comply with both the Letter and the Spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of this student government; all Student Government Association officials maintain independence, impartiality, and fairness in their judgment and actions; all public offices of this Student Government Association be used for the good of the Student Body of Stephen F. Austin State University and not for personal gain; all public deliberations and processes be conducted openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility. To this end, the Student Government Association of Stephen F. Austin State University has adopted this Code of Official Conduct to assure confidence in the Student Body of the integrity of this Student Government Association and its effective and fair operation.

A. Serve the Public Interest

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be of primary concern, Student Government Association members must work for the common good of the Student Body of Stephen F. Austin State University and must not work for any private or personal interest. Student Government Association members shall:

1. Exercise discretionary authority to promote the common good of the Student Body.
2. Oppose all forms of discrimination and harassment and assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims, and transactions placed before this Student Government Association, its Student Supreme Court, boards, committees, and commissions.
3. Involve students and university administrators, faculty, and staff in policy-making decisions.

4. Assist student and university administrators, faculty, and staff in their affairs with this student government.
5. Respond to public concerns, questions, and inquiries within means that are publicly accessible and complete, clear, and honest.
6. Exercise compassion, benevolence, fairness, and optimism.
7. Be prepared to execute decisions that may not be popular.

B. Respect the Constitution and the Law

Student Government Association members shall respect, support, and study the laws of the United States of America, the State of Texas, the City and County of Nacogdoches Texas, Stephen F. Austin State University, and the Constitution, By-Laws, and Election Code of this Student Government Association. Student Government Association members shall:

1. Understand and apply the legislation and regulations relevant to any and all professional roles within this Student Government Association.
2. Work to improve and change laws and regulations that are counterproductive or obsolete.
3. Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
4. Prevent all forms of mismanagement of public funds by establishing and maintaining strong fiscal and management controls, and by supporting audits and investigative activities.
5. Encourage, protect, and facilitate legitimate and civil dissent within this Student Government Association and the Student Body of Stephen F. Austin State University.
6. Promote Constitutional principles of equality, fairness, representation, responsiveness, and due process in protecting students' rights.

C. Demonstrate Personal Integrity

Student Government Association members must demonstrate the highest standards in all activities to inspire confidence and trust within the Student Body. The professional and personal conduct of Student Government Association members must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Student Government Members shall:

1. Refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other Student Government Association members, boards, committees, and commissions; University administrators, faculty, and staff; and the Student Body.

2. Maintain genuine honesty not to be compromised for the sake of personal gain or advancement and guard against conflicts of interest and the appearance thereof.
3. Ensure that others receive proper credit for their work and contributions to the Student Government Association and the Student Body.
4. Take responsibility for their own errors.
5. Ably conduct all official acts with efficiency and professionalism.
6. Expose corruption wherever discovered.

D. Promote an Ethical Student Government Association

To assure independence and impartiality for the benefit of the common good of the Student Body, Student Government Association members shall not use their official positions within this student government to influence decisions in which they may have material or personal interests or where they may have an organizational responsibility to fulfill which may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. Student Government Association members shall:

1. Enhance this student government's organizational capacity for open communication, creativity and dedication, and shall publicly share substantive information that is relevant to matters under consideration by the Student Supreme Court and boards, commissions, and committees of this student government.
2. Subordinate institutional loyalties to the benefit of the common good of the student body.
3. Establish and maintain procedures that promote ethical behavior and hold individual members accountable for their conduct.
4. Provide members with an administrative means for civil dissent, assurance of due process, and safeguards against reprisal.
5. Promote merit principles that protect against arbitrary and malicious actions.
6. Periodically review this code of conduct as a living document.

E. Strive for Professional Excellence

As the Student Government Association of Stephen F. Austin State University is a professional organization intended to teach its members the proper functions and roles of government, members of this student government are obligated to strengthen their individual skills and talents and encourage the professional development of their peers. Student Government Association members shall:

1. Accept, as a personal duty, the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and potential problems facing the Student Body of Stephen F. Austin State University.

2. Properly educate and prepare themselves to publicly address issues arising from the student body, listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions held before this student government, and focus on resolving the affairs of the student body in an expedient and proficient manner.
3. Refrain from interrupting other speakers, making personal comments not germane to the matters of business addressed before the body, or otherwise interfere with the orderly conduct of meetings.
4. Respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel, or affairs of the Student Body of Stephen F. Austin State University.
5. Not interfere with the administrative functions of this student government or the professional duties of its staff, nor impair the ability of this student government and its staff to implement policy decisions.
6. Refrain from using public resources not available to the public in general, such as student government staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.