

**Constitution
of the
Student Government Association of
Stephen F. Austin State University**

**Article I
Purpose**

Free inquiry, expression, and the responsible use thereof, are essential attributes of the community of scholars. As members of that community, students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for the truth. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. Students should endeavor to exercise their freedom with maturity and responsibility. The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community, Stephen F. Austin State University has a duty to develop policies and procedures, which provide and safeguard the freedom to learn. Such policies and procedures should be developed with the broadest possible participation of the members of the academic community based on the aims and objectives of the institution, and the general standards herein defined. We, the students of Stephen F. Austin State University, in order to assume the privileges and responsibilities of self-government and to promote the welfare of the student body, do hereby adopt and establish this constitution.

**Article II
Name**

**Section 1
Official Name**

A. The name of this organization will be the Student Government Association (SGA) of Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU).

**Section 2
Jurisdiction**

A. This organization will serve as the governing body for the students of Stephen F. Austin State University.

Article III Membership

Section 1 Elections and Appointments

A. SGA offers two types of membership: elected and appointed.

Section 2 Branches

A. There are three branches within SGA: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.

Section 3 Membership Limitations

A. Any elected or appointed member of SGA may only hold membership within one (1) branch of SGA at any given point within their membership.

Article IV Executive Branch

Section 1 Executive Authority

A. All executive powers of the Student Government Association of SFASU will be vested in the Executive Branch as outlined in the Bylaws.

Section 2 Officers

- A. Student Body President
- B. Student Body Vice President

Section 3 Requirements

- A. Have at least a 2.25 GPA at the time of election and maintain that GPA throughout their term.
- B. Not be on disciplinary probation.
- C. Be enrolled for a minimum of six (6) semester hours as an undergraduate or three (3) as a graduate student, and maintain those hours throughout the duration of their term. If in their final semester, the number of enrolled hours may be only what is required to finish their degree plan.
- D. Attended SFASU as a student for two (2) consecutive regular semesters

immediately preceding election to office, including the semester in which the election is held. If the student participates and successfully completes an internship endorsed by an accredited college/university, the internship absence will not be counted as an interruption of the two (2) consecutive long semester rule; however, the candidate must be present during the semester the election is held and the semester immediately preceding the election.

Section 4

Election and term of office

- A. The President and Vice-President will be elected at-large by a majority vote of the registered students of the University voting in the spring semester general elections, for those offices.
- B. The President and Vice-President will serve terms of one year beginning immediately following their swearing in and will relinquish office following the regular spring elections and installation of the newly elected officers.
- C. All appointed officers will assume office upon approval by the Senate and swearing in and will relinquish office following the regular spring elections and installation of the newly elected officers.
- D. Officers elected in special elections or appointed to office will serve until the next regularly scheduled election or appointment for their respective office.

Section 5

Removal of Executive Officers

- A. The President and Vice-President may only be removed from office through the process of impeachment. In such case, their monetary compensation will be terminated upon final removal.
- B. Any officer removed from office will be responsible for repayment of monetary compensation received in accordance with their oath.

Section 6

The Filling of Vacant Offices

- A. In the event that no person shall seek the office of President or Vice-President, thus rendering that office vacant, the Internal Affairs committee shall offer nominations to the Senate pending approval by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- B. If at any time the presidential seat becomes vacant, the Vice-President will fill the seat left vacant. The new President will appoint a new Vice-President with the approval of a 2/3 vote from the Senate.
- C. If the Vice-President seat becomes vacant, the current President will appoint a new Vice-President with the approval of a 2/3 vote from the Senate.
- D. If the President and Vice-Presidential seats become vacant at time other than elections, the Speaker will become President. The new President will appoint a new Vice-President. The Senate will appoint a new Speaker by a 2/3 vote.

Article V

Legislative Branch

Section 1

Officers of the Senate

- A. The officers of the Senate are:
 - 1. Speaker of the Senate
 - 2. Sergeant at Arms
 - 3. Committee Chairs
- B. All legislative powers of the Student Government Association of SFASU will be vested in the legislative branch.

Section 2

Members of the Senate

- A. There are five (5) off-campus senatorial seats.
- B. Each class (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, and Graduate) will receive one (1) senatorial seat per 600 class members as of fall enrollment prior to elections.
- C. Academic colleges will receive one (1) senatorial seat per 600 students enrolled in each respective college as of fall enrollment prior to elections.
- D. Regardless of size, every class and college is guaranteed a minimum of one (1) senatorial seat.

Section 3

Requirements

- A. Be a registered student of SFASU.
- B. Be enrolled for a minimum of six (6) semester hours as an undergraduate or three (3) as a graduate student, and maintain those hours throughout the duration of their term. If in their final semester, the number of enrolled hours may be only what is required to finish their degree plan.
- C. Not be on disciplinary probation.
- D. Maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.
- E. Be a member of the class or college they represent at the time of office.
- F. Maintain a schedule of prompt and regular attendance at all Senate meetings, Senate committee meetings, and organizational retreats.

Section 4

Election and Term of Office

- A. Speaker of the Senate
 - 1. Only the current Speaker of the Senate, class senators, and newly elected college senators are eligible to run for the office of Speaker.
 - 2. The Senate Speaker is elected by a majority vote of the Senate body.

3. The regularly scheduled election of the Speaker of the Senate will take place at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the spring semester.

4. The new Speaker of the Senate will assume office immediately upon election and serve a term ending at the conclusion of the Spring Elections.

B. Senators

1. Academic college senators and off-campus senators will be elected in the general election of the spring semester.

2. Class senators will be elected in the general election of the fall semester.

3. Senators will serve a term immediately following their swearing in and ending at the conclusion of the Spring Elections.

C. Officers and senators elected in special elections or appointed to office will serve until the next regularly scheduled election or appointment for their respective office.

Section 5

Removal of Senators and Senate Officers

A. The Speaker and Senators may only be removed from office through the process of impeachment. Malfeasance, neglect of duty, or improper conduct shall constitute reasons for removal. In such case, his/her monetary compensation will be terminated upon final removal.

B. The Sergeant at Arms may be removed from office either by impeachment or Speaker recall. In such case, his/her monetary compensation will be terminated upon final removal.

C. Any officer or senator removed from office will be responsible for repayment of monetary compensation received in accordance with their contract.

D. In the event a person is removed from his chair position, such action will be limited to the chairmanship only and will not affect other SGA offices or seats held by that person. The Committee Appointment Board will then appoint a new chairman with two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Senate. The person will also be responsible for repayment of any monetary compensation they received during their current term of office.

Section 6

Filling Vacant Offices

A. Should the office of Speaker become vacant, the Sergeant at Arms will serve until the Senate elects another Speaker.

B. Should a senate seat become vacant, the Internal Affairs Committee will appoint a new senator with the approval of two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Senate.

ARTICLE VI

The Judicial Branch

Section 1

Judicial Authority

A. All judiciary powers of the Student Government Association will be vested in the judicial branch as outline in the Bylaws.

Section 2

Supreme Court Justices

- A. The Supreme Court will be headed by one (1) Chief Justice.
- B. The Chief Justice will be assisted by eight (8) Associate Justices.
- C. The demographics of the Supreme Court shall be represented by:
 - 1. One freshman justice
 - 2. One sophomore justice
 - 3. One junior justice
 - 4. One senior justice
 - 5. One off-campus justice
 - 6. Four at-large justices
- D. In the event the demographics cannot be met, the position(s) shall be filled at the discretion of the president.

Section 3

Appointment of Justices and Advisors

- A. The Chief Justice and all Associate Justices are appointed by the Student Body President.
- B. These Justices are subject to review by the Internal Affairs Committee.
- C. Justices require approval by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

Section 4

Requirements for Justices

- A. Be registered students of SFASU.
- B. Be enrolled for a minimum of six (6) semester hours as an undergraduate or three (3) as a graduate student, and maintain those hours throughout the duration of their term. If in their final semester, the number of enrolled hours may be only what is required to finish their degree plan.
- C. Not be on academic or disciplinary probation.
- D. Maintain at least a 2.0 GPA during their term of office.
- E. Justices may not hold any other SGA office concurrently with their justiceships.
- F. The Chief Justice must have served at least one (1) semester as an Associate Justice prior to his/her appointment as Chief Justice.

Section 5

Terms of Office

- A. The Chief Justice will serve, beginning with the fall semester, two consecutive long semesters (Fall/Spring) including semester of appointment.
- B. Each Associate Justice will serve two consecutive long semesters (Fall/Spring) including semester of appointment.

Section 6

Jurisdiction

- A. Final student jurisdiction over all conflicts brought before the Court, between students, between students and student organizations, and between student organizations.
- B. Appellate jurisdiction in all student traffic cases, as well as all cases charging denial of due process from the Resident Hall Association Hearing Board.
- C. Act as an advisory body in disciplinary cases at the request of the Director of Student Affairs.
- D. The Director of Student Affairs will have appellate jurisdiction over decisions of the SGA Supreme Court, except in student traffic cases.
- E. The SGA Supreme Court shall determine which non-traffic cases it will hear with the request of at least three (3) justices.

Section 7

Removal of Justices

- A. Justices may be removed from office either by impeachment or Presidential recall following review and recommendation by the Internal Affairs Committee of the Senate.
- B. The Chief Justice, if removed from office, will be responsible for repayment of monetary compensation in accordance with their oath.

Article VII

Student Initiative

Section 1

General Elections

- A. The Student Body President must call a general initiative election of the student community if petitioned by ten percent (10%) or more of the students of SFASU.
- B. The election must take place within twenty (20) regular class days of the receipt of the petition.

Section 2

Recall Elections

- A. The registered students of SFASU may at any time recall any elected SGA official.

- B. The recall petition requires both a signature and identification number form students.
- C. The recall petition must be signed by a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the students within the affected officer's college or class. In the case of officers elected at-large, the petition requires at least ten percent (10%) of the registered students of SFASU.
- D. The petition must state "We, the undersigned, agree that (name of the officer in question) holding the office of (office held by officer in question), should be recalled form office."
- E. Each page of the petition should be dated and publicly noted by the Director of Student Affairs.
- F. If a complete and valid petition is submitted to the Director of Student Affairs, Immediate notification will be given to the acting election judge. Within twenty (20) class days form the date of submission to the election judge, a recall election must take place.
- G. The officer will be immediately recalled if a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the registered students of SFASU is in favor of recall, rendering the office vacant and to be filled as prescribed in this Constitution.

Section 3 Referendum

- A. Any registered student of SFASU may initiate legislation provided the legislation bears the valid signatures of five percent (5%) of the registered students of SFASU.
- B. The legislation will be introduced to the Senate for approval or rejection at the following regular legislative meeting.
- C. If the legislation is rejected by the Senate, it must be put before a vote of the entire registered student body of SFASU within twenty (20) regular class days and will require a simple majority of affirmative votes for passage.
- D. The results of such an election are not subject to presidential veto and will be binding upon the Senate.

Article VIII Amendments & Ratification

Section 1 Amendments

- A. This Constitution may be amended by three-fourths (3/4) vote of the SGA Senate at the second reading of the proposed amendments before the Senate body.
- B. The Bylaws of this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the SGA Senate at the first reading of the proposed amendment before the Senate body.
- C. The Election Code may be amended by a (2/3) vote of the SGA Senate at the first reading of the proposed amendment before the Senate body.
- D. The Code of Official Conduct may be amended by a (2/3) vote of the SGA Senate at the first reading of the proposed amendment before the Senate body.

Section 2 Ratification

- A. This Constitution will be enacted and enforced upon approval by three-fourths (3/4) of the SGA Senate.
- B. All officers elected under the previous Constitution will continue to serve until the expiration of their term as prescribed in the previous Constitution.

Article IX Legal Authority

Section 1 Legal Authority

- A. This Constitution shall be subject to the laws of the United States of America, the State of Texas, the City and County of Nacogdoches, Tx., and the policies and rulings of the administration of Stephen F. Austin State University.

Section 2 Organizational Oversight

- A. Any Legislative, Executive, or Judicial action or duty which is not in compliance with this Constitution shall be considered invalid.
 - 1. The Student Supreme Court shall have jurisdiction over the actions of duties of the Executive and Legislative Branches of this SGA.
 - 2. The Office of the Student Life shall have jurisdiction over the actions and duties of the judiciary of this SGA.

Section 3 Member Compliance

- A. All members of the Student Government Association of Stephen F. Austin State University shall be bound by oath to comply with and enforce all articles of this Constitution and all legislation passed in compliance thereof.

Article X: Governing Documents

Section 1: The governing documents of the Student Government Association of Stephen F. Austin State University are:

- A. Student Government Association Constitution
- B. Student Government Association Bylaws
- C. Student Government Association Election Code
- D. Student Government Association Code of Official Conduct