

Towson University Student Government Association



Constitution

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>PREAMBLE</i>	4
<i>FRANCHISE AND CITIZENSHIP</i>	4
SECTION ONE – Membership	4
SECTION TWO – Official Name & Governance.....	4
SECTION THREE – Resignations and Vacancies in Student Government Positions	4
SECTION FOUR – Term Conditions for Student Government Association Positions	5
SECTION FIVE – Oath, Code of Ethics, and Code of Conduct.....	5
<i>ARTICLE I EXECUTIVE BRANCH</i>	6
SECTION ONE – Executive Branch Composition	6
SECTION TWO – Executive Board Officers	6
SECTION FOUR – President Powers & Responsibilities.....	6
SECTION FIVE – Vice President Powers & Responsibilities	7
SECTION SIX – Treasurer Powers & Responsibilities	8
SECTION SEVEN – Attorney General Powers & Responsibilities.....	8
SECTION EIGHT – Chief of Staff General Powers & Responsibilities.....	9
SECTION NINE – The Executive Cabinet	9
<i>ARTICLE II – LEGISLATIVE BRANCH</i>	10
SECTION ONE – Student Senate.....	10
SECTION TWO – Student Senate Leadership Officers	10
SECTION THREE – Student Senate Composition	11
SECTION FOUR – Student Senate Committees	11
<i>ARTICLE III – JUDICIAL BRANCH</i>	11
SECTION ONE – Judicial Branch Authority.....	11
SECTION TWO – Judicial Branch Composition	12
SECTION THREE – Chief Justice Selection.....	12
SECTION FOUR – Judicial Branch Appeals Process	12
<i>ARTICLE IV – LINES OF SUCCESSION</i>	12
SECTION ONE – Succession in the Executive Board	12
SECTION TWO – Succession in the Senate Leadership.....	13
SECTION THREE – Succession in the Judicial Branch	13
<i>ARTICLE V – IMPEACHMENT</i>	14

SECTION ONE – Scope of Punitive Powers 14
ARTICLE VI - CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAWS..... 14
ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS..... 14
ARTICLE VIII – ELECTION PROCEEDINGS 14
SECTION ONE – The Election Policy..... 14
SECTION TWO – Logistics..... 14
ARTICLE IX – RATIFICATION & AMENDMENTS TO THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION..... 15

Towson University Student Government Association Constitution

PREAMBLE

We, the students of Towson University, desiring to preserve within the University an atmosphere of free discussion, inquiry, and self-expression, to ensure the personal freedom and general welfare of the student body, to promote principles of all aspects of diversity, and to continue in our tradition of responsible self-governance, do hereby establish this constitution of the Student Government Association (SGA) of Towson University.

FRANCHISE AND CITIZENSHIP

SECTION ONE – Membership

All fee-paying undergraduate students enrolled in Towson University's main campus shall have the right to vote in the Student Government Association Elections and to participate in the Student Government Association, hereinafter referred to as the SGA. This right may not be curtailed or removed. Membership shall be detailed in Article IX.

SECTION TWO – Official Name & Governance

The official name of this government body shall be the Student Government Association of Towson University. Hereafter referred to as the "Towson University Student Government Association" or "Towson SGA." The SGA shall be composed of three branches: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.

SECTION THREE – Resignations and Vacancies in Student Government Positions

Those who wish to resign from their respective branches must give a formal written Notice of Resignation to their specific liaison. In addition, they must also announce their resignation at the subsequent General Assembly meeting. If they choose not to announce their resignation, it will be announced by the liaison.

A vacancy in the Student Government Association, resulting from the resignation or removal of an appointed and/or elected official shall be filled through an application process. Any full time degree seeking, fee-paying undergraduate student at Towson University main campus may apply for the

position. The Chief of Staff and other designated Executive Branch members shall interview all candidates of the Executive Branch. The Vice President and the Senate Selection Committee shall interview all candidates of the Legislative Branch. The Justice Selection Committee, headed by the Attorney General shall interview all candidates of the Judicial Branch.

A two-thirds [2/3] majority vote of the Student Senate must confirm the appointment of all candidates. Should the Senate approve the nominee(s), they must immediately swear oath, sign the Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct, and assume office.

SECTION FOUR – Term Conditions for Student Government Association Positions

All members of the Student Government Association must be enrolled as a full-time degree seeking, fee-paying undergraduate students at Towson University main campus, and a minimum of a 2.5 Cumulative GPA at the time of their election or appointment. All members must remain enrolled as full-time degree seeking, fee-paying undergraduate students in the university and maintain good academic and ethical standing for the duration of their term in office.

The term of the elected members in the Student Government Association shall begin immediately after inauguration. Inauguration must take place within two (2) weeks after the election. The terms of appointed individuals will begin immediately after confirmation.

There is no limit to the number of terms that can be served in any position of the Executive, Legislative, or Judicial Branch. No member of the Executive Board, Executive Cabinet and may simultaneously be a member of the Legislative Branch or the Judicial Branch.

SECTION FIVE – Oath, Code of Ethics, and Code of Conduct

All members in the Student Government Association must take the following oath on the day that they are inaugurated or on the day that they assume office:

“I do solemnly affirm that I will faithfully serve the Students of Towson University, execute all of the duties and responsibilities of this position and strive to achieve the high level of expectation that accompanies a position within the Student Government Association of Towson University. I will preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and all other governing documents of the Student Government Association of Towson University to the best of my ability.”

All members in the Student Government Association must sign a Code of Ethics & Code of Conduct upon their assumption of office.

The Attorney General must collect and maintain a signed copy of the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct within five (5) business days of inauguration or confirmation.

ARTICLE I EXECUTIVE BRANCH

SECTION ONE – Executive Branch Composition

The Executive Branch shall consist of two (2) divisions: an Executive Board and an Executive Cabinet.

SECTION TWO – Executive Board Officers

The Executive Board shall consist of the President, the Vice President, the Attorney General, and the Treasurer of the Student Government Association. The student body of Towson University main campus shall elect these board members annually during the Student Government Association elections.

SECTION THREE – Executive Branch Authority

The Executive Branch authority shall be vested in the SGA President.

SECTION FOUR – President Powers & Responsibilities

The SGA President shall:

- A. Serve as the Student Government Association Chief Executive Officer;
- B. Appoint and/or nominate all members of the Executive Cabinet and Judicial Branch upon vacancies;
- C. Chair Executive Board meetings;
- D. Serve as Student Government Association spokesperson;
- E. Serve on the University Senate;
- F. Attend all General Assembly meetings and Pre-Meetings unless a concrete reason that inhibits the President from attending such meetings. The concrete reason must be disclosed to the Attorney General at least 24 hours before the meeting;
- G. Represent the Student Government Association in any and all affairs that pertain to the faculty/staff of Towson University, the Administration of Towson University, other Universities, and the community;

- H. Assume the duties and responsibilities of the University System of Maryland Student Council Representative. If they cannot assume such duties, they must delegate it to another Student Government Association member with a two-thirds [2/3] majority approval from the Student Senate;
- I. Enforce and enact all legislation that is approved by the Student Senate;
- J. Have the power to veto any legislation that is approved by a simple-majority vote of the Student Senate within five (5) business days after receiving the Bill or Resolution;
- K. Notify the Vice President and the Senate within two (2) business days from exercising veto power;
- L. Address the Student Senate as necessary. Should the President desire to charge the Student Senate with a particular mandate or task they must notify the Vice President and President Pro Tempore who shall then communicate that to the Senate within twenty-four (24) business hours;
- M. Appoint and/or remove members of the Student Government Association to University Committees;
- N. Dismiss any appointed member of the Executive Branch;
- O. Create and dissolve any positions or departments within the Executive Branch as deemed necessary to carry out the duties as President;
- P. Create and fill any Ad Hoc positions in the event that a matter of concern is not within the jurisdiction of the Executive Cabinet. These positions are only valid throughout the term of President in office.

SECTION FIVE – Vice President Powers & Responsibilities

The SGA Vice President shall:

- A. Serve as the Executive Board liaison for the for the Student Senate;
- B. Serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of the Student Senate;
- C. Exercise the powers of the President should they be unavailable to do so;
- D. Call special meetings with the three members of Senate Leadership as deemed necessary with an advanced notice of two (2) business days;
- E. Serve on the University Senate;
- F. Appoint vacant Senators;
- G. Oversee all Ad Hoc committees.

SECTION SIX – Treasurer Powers & Responsibilities

The SGA Treasurer shall:

- A. Compile and record all internal expenses of the Student Government Association;
- B. Prepare and submit to the Student Senate the annual Student Government Association operating budget;
- C. Serve as the Chairperson for the Student Government Association Budget Allocation Committee;
- D. Serve as an **ex-officio** member of the Student Government Association Grant Review Committee;
- E. Have the power to examine the financial records of any and/or all student organizations that are budgeted through the Student Government Association;
- F. Approve or deny student organization budget change requests that are less than or equal to \$500.00. They preserve the right to approve or deny two (2) requests per student organization per semester;
- G. Examine and maintain all finances of the Student Government Association;

SECTION SEVEN – Attorney General Powers & Responsibilities

The SGA Attorney General shall:

- A. Serve as the Chair of the Student Government Association Grant Review Committee;
- B. Develop an internal accountability system to hold Student Government Association members accountable;
- C. Provide proper and clear interpretation of any and all Student Government Association Governing Documents;
- D. Investigate all alleged violations of any and all Student Government Association Governing Documents;
- E. Enforce and oversee office hours of all members within the Student Government Association;
- F. Enforce the roles and responsibilities of all Student Government Association members as outlined in the Constitutional Bylaws;
- G. Maintain attendance records of all members at General Assembly meetings and Pre-Meetings;

- H. Have the power to suspend student organizations' funding that are in violation of the Student Government Association Financial Policy for Student Organizations, which shall be approved or denied by a simple majority vote done by the Student Senate;
- I. Reprimand any student organization for violation of the Student Government Association Financial Policy for Student Organizations or other governing documents concerning the matters of student organizations upon communications from the Treasurer;
- J. Serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Government Operations Committee;
- K. Serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Rules Committee.

SECTION EIGHT – Chief of Staff General Powers & Responsibilities

The SGA Chief of Staff shall:

- A. Be appointed by the President;
- B. Be confirmed by a two-thirds [2/3] majority of the Student Senate;
- C. Serve as the Student Government Association Chief Operations Officers;
- D. Serve as the Chairperson of the Executive Cabinet;
- E. Assist the President with assigning Student Government Association members to respective University Committees on or before September 30th of a regular academic year or as needed;
- F. Plan and coordinate all Student Government Association Retreats;
- G. Hold members of the Executive Cabinet accountable with the assistance of the Attorney General;

SECTION NINE – The Executive Cabinet

The Executive Cabinet's purpose is to advise the SGA President and Student Senate on any matters of student policy or on any student programs and services and to assist in the coordination of the Executive Branch. The Executive Cabinet shall consist of Directors, Assistant Directors, and Representatives. The presiding officer of the Executive Cabinet shall be SGA President; however the SGA Chief of Staff shall be the Chair of all Executive Cabinet proceedings.

Each Cabinet member shall reserve the right to maintain a Department that shall serve as assistance in carrying out the mission of that particular Department. These Departments and their general members can only be active for the duration of the Director's position in the Cabinet.

All Executive Branch members must attend all General Assemblies and Pre-Meetings.

ARTICLE II – LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Student Senate

SECTION ONE – Student Senate

The supreme legislative power for the student body shall be vested in the Student Senate of Towson University. The purpose of the Student Senate is to represent the student body, write proper and necessary legislation, and monitor university policies and/or programming that concerns the undergraduate student body at Towson University.

SECTION TWO – Student Senate Leadership Officers

The presiding officer of the Student Senate shall be the President Pro-Tempore of the Student Government Association. The President Pro-Tempore shall serve as a non-voting **ex-officio** member of the Senate. The President Pro-Tempore shall have the assistance of the Chair of Government Operations Committee and the Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. These three (3) officers shall hereinafter be referred to as Senate Leadership. Senate Leadership shall establish rules of order in which they will delineate their duties and responsibilities.

The Government Operations Chair shall preside over the Senate when and if the President Pro-Tempore is unable to do so and shall assume the duties of the President Pro-Tempore if it becomes vacant and until a new President Pro Tempore is elected through an internal student senate election. The Vice President will chair until the President Pro-Tempore is initially elected at the annual summer retreat. Then, if the President Pro-Tempore is vacant after that election, the Government Operations Chair will take on those duties and responsibilities. The President Pro-Tempore shall preside over the Rules Committee. The Chair of Government Operations shall preside over the standing Government Operations Committee, and the Chair of Appropriations shall preside over the standing Appropriations Committee.

SECTION THREE – Student Senate Composition

The Student Senate shall be comprised of twenty-eight (28) total Senators. Each Senator shall serve as a representative of one of the six (6) Colleges which include College of Business and Economics, College of Education, College of Fine Arts and Communication, College of Health Professions, College of Liberal Arts, and Fisher College of Science and Mathematics. The maximum number of seats for each College is four (4). The student body of Towson University can elect no more than twenty-four (24) Senators. Out of the remaining four (4) seats, two (2) are reserved for transfer students, and two (2) are reserved for freshman students. Any Senator who is appointed must be interviewed by the Senate Selection Committee and appointed by the Student Government Association Vice President.

SECTION FOUR – Student Senate Committees

The twenty-five (25) members of the Student Senate shall be divided into two standing committees: The Appropriations Committee and the Government Operations Committee.

There shall be a Rules Committee comprised of Six (6) Senators.

There shall be a Senate Selection Committee chaired by the Vice President. This committee shall be comprised of Senate Leadership.

Members of the Student Senate may form special Ad Hoc Committees or Task Forces in the event that a matter of concern is not within the jurisdiction of the Standing Committees.

Each Standing Committee must maintain its specific purpose and responsibilities in the Constitutional Bylaws. All committees and/or task forces must maintain meeting minutes and send them to all members and the Vice President within two (2) business days of meeting and give a report at the subsequent General Assembly,

ARTICLE III – JUDICIAL BRANCH

SECTION ONE – Judicial Branch Authority

The Judicial Board will be the main appellate body utilized in cases of disagreement with mandates from the Executive Branch and the Student Senate. Any Towson University main campus student

may appeal an affirmation of the Student Senate if they feel that the Student Senate unjustly rendered a decision on a piece of legislation.

SECTION TWO – Judicial Branch Composition

The Judicial Branch shall be composed of a Chief Justice, a Deputy Chief Justice, and three Associate Justices. Members of the Judicial Branch are to be elected at large by the student body of Towson University.

SECTION THREE – Chief Justice Selection

The Chief Justice shall be appointed by the SGA President on or before September 30th of a regular academic calendar. The Student Senate must confirm the appointed Chief Justice by a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote.

SECTION FOUR – Judicial Branch Appeals Process

If the Judicial Branch receives notification from the Chief Justice of an appeal that merits consideration, the Judicial Branch shall convene upon its receipt. This is to afford the complainant or the appealing body a speedy and fair decision. At this meeting, the Judicial Branch shall determine whether or not to overturn the decision of SGA.

If the Judicial Branch chooses to overturn the decision made by the SGA the decision will henceforth be the final decision. If someone chooses to challenge the final decision of the SGA they must challenge it with a new piece of legislation or appeal to the Department of Student Activities.

ARTICLE IV – LINES OF SUCCESSION

SECTION ONE – Succession in the Executive Board

The Lines of Succession of Executive Board positions are as follows:

- A. President- If the SGA President is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the SGA Vice President shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the SGA President.

- B. Vice President- If the SGA Vice President is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the President Pro Tempore shall act in their place until the SGA President appoints a new SGA Vice President.
- C. Treasurer- If the SGA Treasurer is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the Chair of the Appropriations Committee shall act in their place until the SGA President appoints a new SGA Treasurer.
- D. Attorney General- If the SGA Attorney General is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the Chair of the Government Operations Committee shall act in their place until the SGA President appoints a new SGA Attorney General.
- E. Chief of Staff- If the SGA Chief of Staff is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the SGA President shall appoint an interim Chief of Staff until a new Chief of Staff is appointed.

SECTION TWO – Succession in the Senate Leadership

If the Government Operations Chair or Appropriations chair is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the Vice Chairs shall act in their place until a new chair will be elected through an internal election in the student senate within one week of the vacancy.

If the President Pro Tempore is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the Government Operations Chair shall act in their place until a new President Pro-Tempore is elected through an internal election. The Appropriations Chair will then serve as the interim Government Operations Chair, and their Vice Chair will assume the Appropriations Chair for the time being.

SECTION THREE – Succession in the Judicial Branch

If the Chief Justice is removed from office or leaves office for any reason, the Deputy Chief Justice shall assume all duties and responsibilities until a new Chief Justice is appointed by the SGA President. A new Deputy Chief Justice must be appointed within two (2) weeks of the vacancy by the newly appointed Chief Justice.

ARTICLE V – IMPEACHMENT

SECTION ONE – Scope of Punitive Powers

All members of the Student Government Association are subject to the provisions outlined by the Student Government Association’s Constitution, Bylaws, and Ethics and Standards Policy.

However, impeachment-voting power rests solely with the Student Senate and shall extend to all elected officials of the Student Government Association. No resolution for impeachment shall be subject to the veto of the Student Government Association’s President.

ARTICLE VI - CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAWS

The Constitutional Bylaws shall be a supplemental document that specifies duties and responsibilities of members within the Student Government Association. The Bylaws shall be confirmed by a two-thirds [2/3] majority of the Senate.

ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS

All full time, degree seeking, fee-paying Towson University main campus undergraduate students and/or student organizations shall have the right to participate, petition, exercise judicial and ethical practices, and be excluded from discrimination as specified in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII – ELECTION PROCEEDINGS

SECTION ONE – The Election Policy

An Election Policy Review Committee composed of two (2) non-returning SGA members and the Coordinator of Student Organizations must review the current Election Policy yearly. They must then submit the proposed policy to the Student Senate. The Student Senate shall confirm by a two-thirds [2/3] majority or deny the proposed policy.

SECTION TWO – Logistics

The time, manner, and place of the campus-wide SGA elections shall be decided on and maintained by the Undergraduate Election Commission.

**ARTICLE IX – RATIFICATION & AMENDMENTS TO THE STUDENT
GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION**

All amendments to the Towson University SGA Constitution shall require:

- A. A two-thirds [2/3] majority vote of the Student Senate;
- B. Administrative review by the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Campus Life, the Vice President for Student Affairs, and/or the SGA Staff Advisor;
- C. An approval by at least one thousand (1,000) full time degree seeking, fee-paying undergraduate Towson University main campus students.