

The University of Texas at Tyler

Student Government Constitution

Revised (Fall 2014)

Preamble

We, the Students of The University of Texas at Tyler, hereby recognize the Student Government Association (SGA) as the forum of student opinion. The SGA shall operate within the laws of the state of Texas and the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of The University of Texas at Tyler. The SGA shall assist the University with identifying the interests, programs, and goals of the majority of students, communicate to the University community those interests, programs, and goals of students, and assist the University in providing students with programs to meet students' needs.

ARTICLE I

MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY

- 1.1 All students enrolled at The University of Texas at Tyler (UT Tyler) as so defined by the Office of the Registrar shall be eligible to participate in the SGA except as noted herein.
- 1.2 All members of the student body not on scholastic or disciplinary probation, as so recorded by the Offices of the Registrar and Judicial Affairs, shall be eligible to campaign for and hold elective office within the SGA, with the exception of Executive Officers and Executive Officer candidates, who must also have and maintain a cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.75 or above.
- 1.3 In order to file and campaign for an Officer Position, a student must have previously served at least six (6) academic weeks from their swear in date as either a Senator or Officer for the SGA.
- 1.4 In order to file and campaign for elected office, a student must be registered as a full-time student, as so defined by the Office of the Registrar.
- 1.5 In order to hold an elective office, each student must maintain his or her full-time status unless the office holder is within eleven (11) hours of graduation during the last semester of their current term. Graduate students must maintain their full-time status unless they are within eight (8) hours of graduation during the last semester of their current term. This is a direct exception to Article 1, Section 4 of this Constitution.
- 1.6 No member shall be denied full and equal opportunities in the SGA on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, creed, disability, age, sexual orientation, national and/or ethnic origin.
- 1.7 The rights and privileges of members of the SGA shall be:
  - a. The right to vote in all SGA elections for which they are eligible;
  - b. The opportunity to participate in all organizations, committees, activities and programs for which they are eligible; and,
  - c. The opportunity to run for and to hold elected positions in the SGA, providing all requirements for that position are met.

ARTICLE II  
EXECUTIVE BRANCH

2.1 Executive Board

- 2.11 Executive power within the SGA shall be vested in the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Parliamentarian.
- 2.12 The executive officers shall receive financial compensation at an amount determined by the Chief Student Affairs Officer.
- 2.13 Officers shall serve one year terms beginning on May 1 and ending April 30.
- 2.14 All elected officers must serve the entirety of their term, unless removed from office due to violation of the SGA Absence Policy, or in compliance with Article III, Section 3.11.d of this Constitution.
- 2.15 Executive Officers shall hold office hours each semester.
  - a. The number of office hours for President and Vice-president shall be set by the Manual of Operating Policies and Procedures.
  - b. The number of office hours for Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian shall be set by the Chief Student Affairs officer.
- 2.16 Duties of the Executive Board
  - a. To set the agenda for SGA General Assembly meetings;
  - b. Sit on the Senate (General Assembly) as ex officio members and attend all Executive and Senate meetings;
  - c. Take primary responsibility for the coordination, implementation, and evaluation of all SGA activities, programs and services;
  - d. To set the official SGA calendar (including the list of mandatory events) no later than the first day of scheduled classes for the semester. This calendar may later be amended per the SGA Absence Policy;
  - e. To set the SGA Absence Policy by the first day of scheduled classes for the semester;
  - f. To set the SGA Dress Code Policy by the first day of scheduled classes for the semester;
  - g. To set the SGA Expectations Policy by the first day of scheduled classes for the semester;
  - h. Every Officer shall allow the SGA Advisor(s) or their authorized representative to verify their eligibility to hold office every semester, in accordance with Article I of this Constitution;

- i. To dispose of SGA property and determine the use of assigned SGA space provided that these are consistent with appropriate University policies and procedures; and,
- j. The Executive Board shall serve as the Interim General Assembly between the last day of Spring finals and the first day of regularly scheduled Fall classes. The Executive Board shall notify the General Assembly members of any decision rendered under this subsection by the first day of regularly scheduled Fall classes. Any decision rendered by the Interim General Assembly under this subsection is subject to General Assembly review. This review must occur within two regularly scheduled General Assembly meetings from the beginning of the Fall semester. This subsection is a direct exception to Article III, Section 3.11.g of this Constitution.

## 2.2 President

- 2.21 The President must be elected by members of the student body in accordance with Article II of the SGA Bylaws.
- 2.22 Duties of the President
  - a. To faithfully execute all acts of the Assembly;
  - b. With advice of the Executive Board, nominate or appoint, as appropriate, students to serve on University committees and boards and to identify potential Senators for appointment to vacant positions in accordance with Article III, Section 3.11.e of this Constitution;
  - c. Have the power to establish Ad Hoc committees and shall appoint the members of such a committee;
  - d. To serve as the official voice of the SGA, making information on the state of The University and the SGA readily available; and,
  - e. To sit on the Senate as an ex officio member, without vote, and be impartial towards motions and student opinions brought forth before the Student Government Association.
  - f. To serve as the supervisor and advisor to the Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian.
- 2.23 The President may convene the assembly of the Student Government by giving notice to all SGA members at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the special session. Any use of this clause shall automatically be considered a mandatory event. Absences shall be assessed in accordance with the SGA Absence Policy.
- 2.24 Preside over all SGA General Assembly meetings.
- 2.25 Execute and enforce all decisions rendered by the Student Judicial Board.
- 2.26 Exercise the option of voting in case of a tie vote during a General Assembly meeting. This is a direct exception to Article II, Section 2.22.e of this Constitution.

## 2.3 Vice President

- 2.31 The Vice President must be elected by members of the student body in accordance with Article II of the SGA Bylaws.
- 2.32 Duties of the Vice President
- a. Assist the President in the execution of their duties;
  - b. Perform the duties of the President in the case of absence;
  - c. Serve as liaison to the Faculty Senate;
  - d. With advice of the Executive Board, have the authority to assign SGA Senators to a standing committee; and,
  - e. Oversee the planning and execution of all SGA events.

## 2.4 Secretary

- 2.41 The Secretary must be elected by members of the student body in accordance with Article II of the SGA Bylaws.
- 2.42 Duties of the Secretary
- a. Maintain a record of all proceedings of the SGA;
  - b. Post General Assembly meeting minutes no more than forty-eight (48) hours after the adjournment of the meeting;
  - c. Manage all SGA correspondence;
  - d. Oversee and update the SGA website regularly to ensure all posted information and documents are up to date;
  - e. Ensure the proper advertisement of all official SGA events and elections as they see fit;
  - f. Maintain an accurate record of all Senator and Officer absences;
  - g. With a notice of no less than one (1) week, provide the Student Senate (General Assembly) with a record of the absences of all members; and
  - h. Assist the President and Vice President in the execution of their duties.

## 2.5 Treasurer

- 2.51 The Treasurer must be elected by members of the student body in accordance with Article II of the SGA Bylaws.
- 2.52 Duties of the Treasurer
- a. Maintain the financial records of the SGA;

- b. Make available to all official University Publications (As defined by the Office of Marketing & Communications) and the student newspaper the biannual financial report of the SGA no later than December 1<sup>st</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup> each year. It shall include a complete record of all financial transactions of the SGA and any other information the SGA may designate;
- c. Turn in a yearly budget plan for the following fiscal year to the designated Chief Student Affairs Officer and the SGA Advisor(s) by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year;
- d. With a notice of no less than one (1) week, provide the Student Senate (General Assembly) with a copy of the most up to date versions of the SGA budget and financial report; and,
- e. Assist the President and Vice President in the execution of their duties.

## 2.6 Parliamentarian

2.61 The Parliamentarian must be elected by members of the student body in accordance with Article II of the SGA Bylaws.

### 2.62 Duties of the Parliamentarian

- a. Render and enforce all decisions regarding Parliamentary procedure in accordance with the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised, except as otherwise noted in this Constitution;
- b. Ensure documentation related to parliamentary procedure is readily accessible to General Assembly members;
- c. Oversee all official SGA elections, with the assistance of the Rules Committee;
- d. Ensure all SGA policies and documents are properly and professionally written and in compliance with the SGA Constitution and Bylaws;
- e. Maintain copies of all current SGA documents and make said documents available to the General Assembly, Executive Board, SGA Advisors, Judicial Board and student body of UT Tyler;
- f. Serve as the Liaison to the Student Judicial Board;
  - 1. The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for convening the Judicial Board to special session as necessary; and,
- g. Assist the President and Vice President in the execution of their duties.

ARTICLE III  
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

3.1 Functions of The Senate

- 3.11 The Student Senate shall be the primary legislative body of the SGA and shall have the primary authority for all fiscal affairs. The Student Senate shall:
- a. Have the power to pass legislation for the benefit of the Student Body;
  - b. Be the final arbiter of decisions of the Standing Committees;
  - c. Have the power to remove any Senator or Officer in neglect of their duties by two-thirds (2/3) vote;
  - d. Be responsible for the proper and prudent distribution of Student Government funds. The Assembly shall maintain funds for distribution to student organizations, to Student Government agencies, and for special Student Government projects. The budget of the Student Government shall be approved by the Assembly;
  - e. Vote any potential Senator or Judicial Board Commissioner identified by the President of the Student Government into office with a two-thirds (2/3) vote;
    - 1. Any Senatorial appointment may be reversed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Assembly;
  - f. Undertake no formal action without a quorum present, which shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the total seats currently filled;
  - g. The Assembly shall have the power to convene itself by written request of one-third (1/3) of the Representatives and to not convene itself by written request of two-thirds (2/3) of the Representatives;
  - h. Meet throughout the fall and spring semesters, on a day and time to be set by the Executive Board;
  - i. Render and enforce all its decisions in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised except as contraindicated in this Constitution.
    - 1. The Legislative Branch retains the right to determine the rules of its own proceedings.
  - j. Elect officers not specified in this Constitution; and,
  - k. Have one vote during General Assembly meetings, excluding the President of the SGA, except as noted in Article II, Section 2.26 of this Constitution.

3.12 Responsibilities of Senators

- a. Serve one year terms beginning May 1 and ending April 30. Appointed Senators shall serve the remainder of the term in which they were appointed;
- b. Attend and participate in all scheduled meetings, special sessions, and mandatory events as designated by the Executive Board;
- c. Serve on at least one (1) standing SGA committee and at least one (1) University Committee. Exceptions to this policy may be made by a majority vote of the Executive Board;
- d. Regularly contact students, groups and organizations from their respective constituencies;
- e. Meet twice a semester with the head of their respective constituencies. The Executive Board shall be responsible for setting the deadline for these meetings;
- f. Attend Senator orientation unless the office is assumed after the orientation has occurred;
  1. Reasonable efforts to orient Senators appointed or elected after Senator Orientation shall be made; and,
- g. Every Senator shall allow the SGA Advisor(s) or their authorized representative to verify their eligibility to hold office every semester in accordance with Article I of this Constitution.

ARTICLE IV  
JUDICIAL BRANCH

4.1 Judicial Review Board

- 4.11 The Judicial Review Board shall be composed of five (5) Commissioners charged with interpreting the Constitution, Bylaws and acts of the Student Government Association.
- 4.12 Commissioners shall serve two (2) academic year terms, with two (2) Commissioners being selected on even-numbered years and three (3) Commissioners being selected on odd-numbered years. Replacement Commissioners may be appointed to fulfill the remainder of a former Commissioner's term as needed.
- 4.13 The Judicial Commission shall have original jurisdiction in all cases arising under this Constitution and Bylaws.
- 4.14 Commissioners must maintain the same eligibility requirements for holding an Executive Office as defined in Article I of this Constitution.
- 4.15 No person shall be a Commissioner while also serving as an Executive Officer or Senator of the SGA.
- 4.16 Vacancies shall be filled as needed in accordance with Article III, Section 3.11.f of the SGA bylaws.
- 4.17 No formal action shall be taken without a quorum present, which shall consist of all currently appointed Commissioners.

4.2 Responsibilities of the Judicial Review Board

- 4.21 The Judicial Board shall elect a Chair within one (1) meeting of achieving a full board.
- 4.22 Any member of the SGA may petition the Judicial Review Board concerning the interpretation of this Constitution or the acts of the SGA.
- 4.23 The Judicial Review Board shall decide by a simple majority of its members whether to hear a petition. If a petition is heard, a decision shall be rendered by simple majority.
- 4.24 The Judicial Review Board shall establish its own rules of procedure and shall maintain a journal of proceedings. This journal shall remain with the current SGA advisor(s) when not in use.

4.3 Presiding Officer

- 4.31 The Chair of the Judicial Board shall preside as Executive Officer and voice of the members of that body for a one (1) year term.
- 4.32 The Chair of the Judicial Board shall convene all members at least once a month during the fall and spring semesters and promptly respond to appeals.

- 4.33 The Chair shall be responsible for executing the responsibilities and privileges of the Judicial Review Board.
- 4.34 The Chair shall, upon request and with the consent of the Judicial Board, provide accurate information regarding proceedings.
- 4.35 All Judicial Board meetings shall be considered closed meetings as defined in Robert's Rules of Order.

#### 4.4 Appeals Procedure

- 4.41 A decision of the Judicial Board may be appealed in writing to the Chief Student Affairs Officer within ten (10) business days of notification of the decision.
- 4.42 The appeal shall be reviewed and a written decision given within ten (10) business days.
- 4.43 If no resolution is reached, an appeal may be made to the President of The University. The decision of the President is the final appellate review.
- 4.44 This appeals procedure is not available for election disputes. Judicial Board rulings on election disputes are final.

## ARTICLE V

### RATIFICATION AND AMENDEMENT

#### 5.1 Amendments

- 5.11 Any elected member of the SGA may propose amendments to this Constitution.
- 5.12 A proposed amendment must remain on the table for thirty (30) days, after which the elected members must vote on the proposed amendment. A proposed amendment is tabled immediately following its proposal.
- 5.13 If three-fourths (3/4) of the elected members of the SGA favor the amendment, it must be submitted to the student body for approval or disapproval.
- 5.14 If five percent (5%) of the currently enrolled student body petitions the SGA in writing to amend the Constitution, the Student Government shall call an election within thirty (30) calendar days for consideration of said amendment.

#### 5.2 Ratification Process

- 5.21 Amendments to this Constitution shall become effective after ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of students voting on said amendment in an election, after certification by the Chairman of the Rules Committee that such amendments have been duly ratified, the Chief Student Affairs Officer, the President of the University, and the Executive Vice-Chancellor after approval by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System through its prescribed procedures.
- 5.22 Such amendments shall be deemed a revision of this Constitution, and a permanent copy shall be kept in the office of the Chief Student Affairs Officer.
- 5.23 No amendment or act of the SGA shall have retroactive application.

#### 5.3 Bylaw Proposal and Ratification

- 5.31 Any voting member of the General Assembly may present an amendment to the Bylaws at a General Assembly meeting. The amendment must be submitted to the Executive Board at least one week prior to its presentation in a meeting. Following the motion to amend the bylaws, the motion is immediately tabled without discussion or persuasion until the following meeting.
- 5.32 At the meeting following a motion to amend the Bylaws, the proposed bill shall be open for discussion, at which point voting and non-voting members shall have the opportunity to voice their opinion.
- 5.33 The bill shall then come to a vote, and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate to be ratified.
- 5.34 If passed, the Amendment shall then be submitted for further approval in accordance with Article V, Section 5.21 of this Constitution.

## ARTICLE VI

## THE OATH OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

### 6.1 The Oath

- 6.11 All Student Government representatives shall be sworn in using the following Oath.
- a. I, <insert name here>, do solemnly swear that I shall faithfully represent the interests of the Student Body of The University of Texas at Tyler. I shall dutifully uphold and preserve the Constitution and Bylaws of the Student Body while ardently executing the Office of <insert position here> of the Student Government Association at The University of Texas at Tyler.
- 6.12 When a newly elected or appointed representative swears their oath of office, all currently serving members of the SGA in attendance (except for the President) shall simultaneously reaffirm their Oath of office by repeating the Oath.