



CONSTITUTION OF THE SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

Through the adoption of this constitution and bylaws, the undergraduate student body of Suffolk University hereby establishes the Student Government Association (SGA) as its official representative to University shared governance. The SGA represents the undergraduate student body in voicing concerns, promoting interests, and advocating for student life and academic concerns at Suffolk University. The SGA will be responsible for the management and distribution of funds collected through the University Student Activities Fee.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization will be the Suffolk University Student Government Association, hereinafter referred to as the SGA.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section One. Composition.

The SGA will consist of its officers, advisors, a legislative body of 48 senators, and members at-large. Nine (9) senators will be elected from each of the four academic classes – Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior. Nine (12) additional senators will be elected at-large from the Suffolk University student body.

Section Two. Senators.

A. Requirements to Hold Office. Senators must:

1. Be a Suffolk University undergraduate student in good academic standing. Good academic standing is defined as a 2.3 GPA or above.
2. Attend the Fall Leadership retreat.
3. Be taking classes at the Suffolk University Boston campus during their term.
4. Serve on at least one SGA standing committee.
5. Not have been previously removed by the SGA.
6. For the office of academic class senator, be a member of that academic class for the coming term of office.

B. Election.

1. The student body will elect the SGA Senators through plurality at-large voting.
2. Election of academic class senators will be conducted through balloting within their academic class only.
3. Election of at-large senators will be conducted through balloting throughout the undergraduate student body.
4. Election of freshmen class senators will be held annually by the end of September.

5. Election of sophomore, junior, senior class and at-large senators will be held annually the week before Spring Break.
6. In the event of a tie among candidates polling lowest for the last available office, only the names of the candidates tied will be placed on a new ballot and a run-off election will be conducted within ten (10) days of the original election date.
7. If there is only one candidate for an office, the office may be filled by acclamation.

C. Term of Office.

1. Freshmen class senators will serve a term of office beginning on the date of election and terminating five (5) business days after the conclusion of the following spring Final Examination period.
2. Sophomore, Junior, Senior class, and at-large senators will serve a term of office beginning five (5) business days after the conclusion of spring Final Examination Period in the current year to five (5) business days after the conclusion of spring Final Examination Period of the following year.
3. Individuals may only serve in one office at a time. There is no limit to the number of terms that a student may serve as a senator.

D. Removal and Resignation.

1. Removal. A senator will be removed from office for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Failing to maintain good academic standing.
 - b. As a result of successful disciplinary proceedings against a senator, conducted as per the organization's parliamentary authority, in which removal from office is the sanction.
 - c. Failing to serve on at least one SGA standing committee, which includes missing 4 committee meetings in one academic year.
 - d. Failing to attend three (3) required SGA activities within one academic year, including general and special SGA meetings, the SGA Fall Retreat, or the SGA Winter Retreat.
2. Resignation. A senator may resign by submitting a request in writing to the SGA Executive Board.

E. Vacancies.

1. Academic Class Vacancies. Vacancies in the office of academic class senator may be filled by a student in that academic class who:
 - a. Currently serves as a Member at-large, and;
 - b. Submits a petition with the signatures of a minimum of 25 students from their academic class, and;
 - c. Receives a majority of the legal votes cast by members present and voting in an election at a general or special meeting of the SGA for which notice of the election has been given.
2. At Large Vacancies. Vacancies in the office of at-large senator may be filled by an undergraduate student who:
 - a. Currently serves as a Member at-large, and;
 - b. Submits a petition with the signatures of a minimum of 25 students from the undergraduate student body, and
 - c. Receives a majority of the legal votes cast by members present and voting in an election at a general or special meeting of the SGA for which notice of the election has been given.

Section Three. Members at-large.

A. Requirements to Become a Member at-large. Members must:

1. Be a Suffolk University undergraduate student in good academic standing.
2. Be taking classes at the Suffolk University Boston campus during their term.
3. Serve on at least one SGA standing committee.
4. Not have been previously removed by the SGA.
5. Have attended three(3) SGA general meetings in a row.

B. Election.

Any Senator or Executive Board member may nominate a student to become a member at-large during the open-forum of a general SGA meeting. The Senate will then conduct a simple majority vote on this nomination.

C. Powers.

Members at-large retain the following rights:

1. Speaking privileges during SGA meetings.
2. The ability to fill vacancies in the Senate.
3. The ability to be nominated for an Executive Board position during the Spring Election.

Members at-large do not retain the following rights:

1. Voting rights during SGA meetings.

D. Removal and Resignation.

1. Removal. A member at-large will be removed from office for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Failing to maintain good academic standing
 - b. As a result of successful disciplinary proceedings against that member at-large, conducted as per the organization's parliamentary authority, in which removal from membership is the sanction.
 - c. Failing to serve on at least one SGA standing committee, which includes missing four (4) committee meetings in one academic year.
 - d. Failing to attend three (3) SGA meetings during one academic year.
2. Resignation. A member at-large may resign by submitting a request in writing to the SGA Executive Board.

Section Three. Advisors.

A. Composition. There will be three (3) advisors to the SGA: a Program and Treasury Advisor, a Faculty Advisor, and a Graduate Fellow Advisor.

1. Program and Treasury Advisor. The Director of the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will serve as the Program and Treasury Advisor. The Program and Treasury Advisor will:
 - a. Meet generally with the SGA Treasurer.
 - b. Advise the Finance Committee.
 - c. Be a signatory to all SGA accounts.
2. Faculty Advisor. The Senior Assistant Dean of Students will serve as the Faculty Advisor. The Faculty Advisor will:

- a. Facilitate a network of support for the Executive Board and the Senate.
- b. Help to resolve conflicts within the Association.
- c. Coordinate the selection of the graduate fellow.
- 3. Student Judiciary Review Board (SJR) Advisor. The SJRB Advisor will be identified by the incoming SGA Executive Board following elections. The SJRB Advisor will:
 - d. Advise the Student Judiciary Review Board.
 - e. Assist the Faculty Advisor in resolving conflicts within the Association.
 - f. Assist the Executive Board with the daily operation of the Association.

B. Rights of Membership. Advisors will attend SGA and Executive Board meetings and participate in discussion and debate. No membership privileges will be given to advisors.

ARTICLE III. SGA OFFICERS

Section One. Composition.

The officers of the SGA will consist of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section Two. Requirements to Hold Office.

Officers must:

- 1. Serve as a member of SGA during the Spring Semester in which they are nominated for elections.
- 2. Be a Suffolk University undergraduate student in good academic standing.
- 3. Be a full-time student at the Suffolk University campus in Boston.
- 4. Not have been previously removed by the SGA.
- 5. Not be serving on the executive board of any other campus student organization or club.

Section Three. Election of Officers.

A. Voting. The student body will elect, by electronic ballot, the officers of the Student Government Association. A plurality vote will elect.

B. Timing. Election of SGA officers will be held annually in March.

C. Tie Vote. In the event of a tie for any office, only the names of the candidates tied will be placed on a new ballot and a run-off election will be conducted within ten (10) days of the original election date.

D. Acclamation. If there is only one candidate for office, the office may be filled by acclamation.

Section Four. Duties of Officers.

A. SGA President. The SGA President will:

- 1. Chair meetings of the SGA and the SGA Executive Board.
- 2. Serve as, or appoint a designee to serve as, a representative to Suffolk University boards and committees whenever student representation is requested by the administration.
- 3. Appoint SGA members to SGA standing committees unless otherwise specified in this constitution.
- 4. Nominate students to serve as committee chairs of SGA standing committees, unless already provided for in the constitution or bylaws.

5. Annually, deliver a State of the Association annually.
6. In the absence of the SGA Treasurer, sign checks and be a signatory to SGA accounts.
7. Perform other duties as prescribed in this constitution, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the SGA.

B. Vice President. The Vice President will:

1. Chair general and special meetings of the SGA in the absence of the President.
2. Serve as the Chief Justice of the Student Judiciary Review Board (SJRB).
3. Notify officers, committee members, and senators of their election or appointment; furnish committees with whatever documents are required for the performance of their duties and have on hand at each meeting a list of existing committees and their members.
4. Perform other duties as prescribed in this constitution, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the SGA.
5. Maintain record book(s) in which this Constitution, the Bylaws, and any other documents of the SGA are entered, with any amendments to these documents properly recorded, and have the current record book(s) on hand at every meeting.
6. Maintain the SGA's official membership roll and call the roll when it is requested or required.

C. Secretary. The Secretary will:

1. Prepare, prior to each meeting, a suggested agenda to be distributed to members of the SGA, showing the exact order, under the correct headings, matters known in advance that are due to come up and, if applicable, the times for which they are set.
2. Maintain a record of the proceedings of the Executive Board and the SGA.
3. Serve as the Vice Chair of the Public Relations Committee.
4. Conduct and plan activities for the members of the SGA, unless otherwise prescribed.
5. Coordinate the daily operation of the SGA office including the assignment and execution of office hours by SGA Executive Board Members.
6. Perform other duties as prescribed in this constitution, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the SGA.

D. Treasurer. The Treasurer will:

1. Chair the SGA Finance Committee.
2. Maintain a record of SGA funds and SGA-funded accounts.
3. Sign SGA checks, check requests, and co-sponsorship agreements, and serve as the primary signatory on SGA accounts.
4. Oversee the distribution of funds and make financial reports at each general meeting of the SGA.
5. Perform other duties as prescribed in this Constitution, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the SGA.

Section Five. Term of Office.

- A. Term Timeframe.** SGA officers will serve a one-year term of office beginning five (5) business days after the conclusion of spring Final Examinations in the current year to five (5) business days after the conclusion of spring Final Examinations of the following year.

B. **Term Limits.** SGA Officers may only serve in one office at a time.

Section Six. Removal and Resignation.

A. **Removal.** An SGA Officer will be removed from office for any of the following reasons:

1. Failing to maintain good standing.
2. As a result of successful disciplinary proceedings against an officer, conducted as per the SGA's parliamentary authority, in which removal from office is the sanction.
3. Failing to attend three (3) required SGA activities including general SGA meetings, the SGA fall retreat, or Executive Board Meetings.

B. **Resignation.** An officer may resign by submitting a request in writing to an Executive Board Member or the SGA Faculty Advisor.

Section Seven. Vacancies.

A. **SGA President.** A vacancy in the office of SGA President will be filled by the SGA Vice President.

B. **Other Officers.** An officer vacancy, other than that of SGA President, will be filled by special election to occur within two SGA general meetings in which the vacancy is announced.

ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS

Section One. Meetings.

A. **General Meetings of the SGA.** General meetings of the SGA will be held weekly during each semester on Thursdays during activities period.

B. **Special Meetings of the SGA.** Special meetings of the SGA may be called by the SGA President or upon the written request of 1/3 of the members of the SGA. The purpose of the meeting will be stated.

Section Two. Legislative Rules.

A. **Quorum.** The quorum for general and special meetings of the SGA will be a majority of the membership.

B. **Constituent Comments.** General meetings of the SGA will provide an opportunity for comments from constituents.

C. **General Meeting Agenda.** The agenda for SGA general meetings will be provided to the membership at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.

D. **Executive Session.** The SGA may only go into executive session for strategic planning, or to address behavioral issues such as the disciplining of a member.

ARTICLE V. EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section One. Powers.

A. **Discretionary Account.** The Executive Board will be provided with a financial Discretionary Account, the amount to be determined annually by the Finance Committee, which may be used to support the business of the SGA.

B. **Conducting Business.** The Executive Board will be authorized to conduct the business of the SGA between academic semesters or in an emergency as authorized by the SGA Faculty Advisor, except for authorizing expenditures exceeding the amount made available to the Executive Board in the Discretionary Account by the Finance Committee.

Section Two. Meetings.

- A. General Meetings.** The Executive Board will meet weekly during each semester at a time and place designated by the SGA President. Executive Board members must be provided with at least twenty-four (24) hours' notice.
- B. Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the SGA President or upon the request of any Executive Board member or the Faculty Advisor. Notice will be given twenty-four (24) hours in advance to all Executive Board members.
- C. Quorum.** The quorum for general meetings and any special meetings of the Executive Board will be a majority of its members.

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES.

Section One. Standing Committees.

- A. Committees.** There will be the following SGA standing committees: 1) Academics Committee; 2) Diversity Committee; 3) Finance Committee; 4) Housing and Facilities Committee; 5) Public Relations Committee; 6) Student Affairs Committee; 7) Student Judiciary Review Board.

B. Duties and Composition.

1. The Academics Committee will address concerns within the undergraduate student body.
2. The Diversity Committee will address concerns of Suffolk University undergraduate students of diverse or historically marginalized backgrounds in an effort to make the SGA accurately representative of all students.
3. The Finance Committee will recommend funding for recognized clubs and organizations, develop rules and policies for the distribution of funds from the Student Activities Fee, and manage SGA accounts. The committee will consist of nine (9) members: One senator from each of the four (4) academic classes, four (4) non-SGA undergraduate students, and the SGA Treasurer who will serve as the chairperson of the committee. The Program and Treasury Advisor will serve as the advisor to the committee.
4. The Housing and Facilities Committee will address concerns with the physical property of Suffolk University including the Residence Halls.
5. The Public Relations Committee will promote the work of the SGA to the University and surrounding community. The SGA Secretary will serve as the Vice Chairperson of this committee.
6. The Student Affairs Committee will address non-academic student life concerns including issues of community, safety and technology.
7. The Student Judicial Review Board (SJRB) will address concerns related to the interpretation of the governing documents of the SGA, alleged violations of student club and organization constitutions, and approval of governing documents for new SGA-recognized student clubs and organizations. The board will consist of nine (9) Justices: One senator from each of the four (4) academic classes, four (4) non-SGA undergraduate students, and the SGA Vice President, who will serve as the Chief Justice of the board.

C. Membership.

1. Standing Committees of the SGA will be comprised solely of members of the SGA, unless otherwise stated.

2. To be eligible to serve as a standing committee chairperson, a member must have previously served at least one semester as an SGA member.
3. Nominations by the SGA President for the chairperson of standing committees must be confirmed by receiving a majority of the legal votes cast by members present and voting on the nominations.

Section Two. Special Committees.

Special Committees will be created as ordered by the membership. Special Committees will consist of a chairperson and at least two (2) other members, nominated by the SGA President and confirmed by the SGA. Membership on special committees will not be limited to SGA members.

Section Three. Committee Action.

Committees will make recommendations to the SGA for any action that is to be taken on behalf of the organization. Committees will report when requested by the SGA to do so.

ARTICLE VII. ELECTIONS

The Fall and Spring elections of the Student Government Association will be conducted by the Elections Committee. This committee will function as a standing committee. The Elections Committee will operate under the Elections Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (RONR) will govern the SGA in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this constitution and any bylaws that the SGA may adopt from time to time.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

Section One. Proposing Amendments.

Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by the SJRB, or by any undergraduate student submitting a petition signed by at least 75 members of the undergraduate student body. Student petitions will be verified by the Program and Treasury Advisor.

Section Two. Approval of Amendments.

Amendments to this constitution will be adopted upon receiving an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the legal votes cast at a general or special meeting of the SGA for which notice of the proposed change has been announced to the student body at least seven (7) days in advance.

Section Three. Popular Amendments

Student petitions not adopted as amendments may be resubmitted as a question on the subsequent SGA election ballot after receiving 150 signatures from members of the undergraduate student body. Popular amendments take effect upon receiving the plurality of legal votes cast.

Section Four. Amended Constitution.

Amendments to this constitution take effect upon the approval of the SGA unless otherwise directed in the motion.

Section Five. Retroactivity

Upon adoption of this document, no current member will be retroactively punished for changes made between the former Constitution and this Constitution.