

Student Constitution

Of The

University of North Texas

(Ratified Spring Election 2016)

Preamble

The Student Government Association at the University of North Texas is the official governing body for all undergraduate students. We, the Students of the University of North Texas, in order to promote the interests and opinions of the Student Body, to undertake and promote programs and projects which are of benefit to the Student Body, to serve as the official voice of the Student Body on matters of Student welfare, campus policy, and the implementation of this policy, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution of the Students, by the Students, and for the Students as the binding Constitution of the Student Body and the Student Government Association.

Article I - Name and Purpose

Section 1: Name

- A) The organization of the Student Body as a whole at the University of North Texas Denton campus shall be known as the Student Government Association.

Section 2: Purposes

- A) The Student Government Association shall serve as the central and all encompassing student organization on campus.
- B) The Student Government Association shall create, promote, and support programs of benefit to all students.
- C) The Student Government Association shall provide a legislative body that is representative of the Student Body.
- D) The Student Government Association shall establish and provide communication within the Student Body and with administrators, faculty, and student bodies of other institutions.
- E) Above all, the Student Government Association shall ensure that the voice of the Students Body is always heard at the University of North Texas.

Article II - Membership

- B) Every duly registered student, as defined by the University of North Texas, shall have equal membership and voting rights in the Student Body.
- C) Membership will not be denied or discriminated upon on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, physical challenges, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, or any other qualities that have no bearing on a Student's ability to function as a member of the Student Body.

Article III - Composition of the Association

- A) The Association will consist of the voting Student Body, a Student Senate, an Executive Branch, and a Judicial Branch.
- B) No member of the Executive Branch shall serve concurrently in any other branch of the SGA.

Article IV - Student Senate

Section 1: Authority

- A) The legislative and fiscal powers of the Association shall be vested in the Student Senate.

Section 2: Composition of the Student Senate

- A) The Student Senate shall consist of 45 Senators.
- B) Student Senate seats shall be apportioned to each school, college, or academy of the University of North Texas according to student population as reported in the most recently published Viewbook and in accordance with the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- C) Each school, college, or academy of the University shall be apportioned at least one Student Senate seat.
- D) Non-voting delegations to the Student Senate with otherwise full procedural rights shall be accepted from the following organizations: Eagle's Nest, the Residence Hall Association, the Graduate Student Council, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Council, the Freshmen Interns, and the office of the University of North Texas President.

Section 3: Appointments

- A) In the event that a Student Senator is unable to serve any portion of his or her term, or in the event that a vacancy arises in the Student Senate, a student of the appropriate constituency may petition to fill the vacancy.
- B) All appointments subject to a confirmation by a simple two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Student Senate and any rules established in the Student Government Association Bylaws with regards to Appointments.

Section 4: Election and Terms of Student Senators

- A) Student Senators will be elected according to the rules and eligibility requirements established by the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- B) Student Senators must be enrolled in the constituency in which they have filed for election.
- C) Student Senate elections will be held in the spring semester in accordance with the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- D) The results of any Student Senate election will take effect in the immediately following long semester. Students Senators shall serve a term of two long semesters.

Section 5: Meetings

- A) The Student Senate will meet bi-weekly during each long semester.

- B) Fifty percent plus one (50%+1) of the seated Student Senators shall constitute quorum.
- C) Proceedings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order as may be modified in the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- D) All Student Senate meetings are subject to Texas Open Meetings Laws.

Section 6: Student Senate Committees

- A) The Vice President shall create Standing Committees to be enumerated in the Student Government Association Bylaws.

Section 7: Officers of the Senate

- A) The Officers of the Senate shall be the Speaker Pro Tempore, Sergeant at Arms, Senate Secretary, and any other positions detailed in the SGA By-Laws.

Section 8: Duties and Powers of the Student Senate

- A) The Student Senate shall have the power to consider Bills and Resolutions presented to it in accordance with the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- B) The Student Senate shall have the power to approve, modify, or deny all expenditures of the Association that total over four hundred dollars (\$400).
- C) The Student Senate shall have the power and duty to elect Senate Officers from their own number.
- D) The Student Senate shall have the power to confirm or deny non-elected appointees of the Executive and Judicial Branches by a simple two thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- E) The Student Senate shall have the power to remove or fire non-elected members of the Executive and Judicial Branches by an absolute two thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- F) The Student Senate shall have the duty to carry out duties assigned to it by the Student Government Bylaws.
- G) The Student Senate shall have the power to amend the Student Government Association Bylaws by a simple two thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- H) The Student Senate shall have the power and duty to perform any other actions as may be deemed necessary and proper but are not explicitly provided for in this document or the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- I) Student Senators shall be required, as a part of their duties, to sit on a Senate Standing Committee and at least one external University committee.

Section 9: Summer Senate

- A) The Summer Senate shall consist of ten (10) Student Senators who have been elected by the Student Body to serve a regular Senate term, which includes the Spring semester immediately preceding or the Fall Semester immediately following the Summer Term in question.
- B) These Student Senators shall be selected by the President on a volunteer basis and must be confirmed by a simple two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Student Senate.

- C) The Summer Senate shall exercise all duties and powers of the Student Senate to exclude the impeachment and removal of the Student Body President.

Section 10: Removal of Student Senators

- A) Student Senators may be recalled and removed from the Student Senate by a majority vote of the Judicial Branch after such a vote is called by either (1) a majority vote of the Senate or (2) a verifiable petition of five percent of the members of their constituency.
- B) Student Senators may also be removed from the Student Senate by the Speaker of the Senate on the grounds of neglect of office, absence from Student Senate sessions, moral turpitude, dereliction of duty, or gross malfeasance of Office. The Removal may be appealed to the Judicial Branch.
- C) The internal discipline and remove of Student Senators is deferred to the Senate Code of Conduct.
- D) The process for removal of elected executives will be outlined in the University of North Texas Student Government Bylaws.

Article V - The Executive Branch

Section 1: Executive Powers

- A) The Executive Power of the Student Government Association is vested in the Student Body President and Executive Branch.

Section 2: Composition of the Executive Branch

- A) The Executive Branch shall consist of the Student Body President, the Vice President and any appointed or hired members of the Student Government Association paid and volunteer staff.

Section 3: Election of Executives

- A) The President and Vice President shall be popularly elected as a team by a majority of all voting students during the Spring semester, according to the rules established in the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- B) Any candidates for President or Vice President must meet eligibility requirements as defined by this constitution.
- C) The President and Vice President shall serve a concurrent term of two Summer Semester and two long semesters, the Fall and Spring of one academic year.

- D) The President and Vice President shall officially assume office on June 1st following their election.

Section 4: Eligibility for Executive Office

- A) The President of the Student Body and the Student Government Association must have attained junior status by the time of his or her assumption of office and must be in good standing with the University.
- B) The President of the Student Body and the Student Government Association must not have previously served as President of the Student Body and the Student Government Association.
- C) The Vice-President of the Student Body and the Student Government Association must not have previously served as Vice-President of the Student Body and the Student Government Association.
- D) The Student Body President and Vice President must be in good standing with the University.
- E) Other requirements for eligibility may be established in the Student Government Association Bylaws.

Section 5: Duties and Powers of the President

- A) The President shall serve as Chief Executive of the Student Government Association.
- B) The President shall be empowered to represent the Student Body to the administration, faculty, and parties outside the University.
- C) The President shall be empowered to call special sessions of the Student Senate.
- D) The President shall be empowered to appoint members of the Student Body to appropriate University Committees and Boards.
- E) The President shall be charged to maintain the physical offices of the Association.
- F) The President shall be empowered to sponsor and submit legislation to the Student Senate.
- G) The President shall be empowered to hire or appoint other members of the Executive Branch.
- H) The President shall be empowered to appoint Supreme Court Justices and the Advocate General.
- I) The President shall be empowered to veto any legislation of the Student Senate within 14 days of its passage.
- J) The President shall be empowered to set policy consistent with this Constitution in the absence of direction from the Student Senate.
- K) The President shall be empowered to perform other duties as directed by the Student Senate or as required to achieve the purposes of this Constitution.
- L) The President shall be empowered to override the Student Senate's denial of an appointee to the Executive and Judicial Branch.
- M) The President shall be empowered to override bills or resolutions failed in the Student Senate.
- N) The President shall be empowered to override a decision of the Student Senate to fire or remove non-elected members of the Executive and Judicial Branch.

Section 6: Duties and Powers of the Vice President

- A) The Vice President of the Association and the Student Body will have the duty to serve as President in the event that the Student Body President is unable to serve and to perform other duties as assigned by the Student Body President.
- B) The Vice President will serve as the Speaker of the Senate.
- C) The Vice President shall have the power to create the Student Senate standing committees for the administrative year.

Section 7: Removal of Elected Executives

- A) The Student Body President and/or Vice President may be removed from office in a two-step process. The first step will consist of either: (1) a majority vote of all seated Senators, or (2) a verifiable petition of five percent (5%) of the Student Body. If this step is successful, the second step, a 2/3 majority vote of the Senate will be necessary to remove the President and/or Vice President from office.
- B) The process for removal of elected executives will be outlined in the University of North Texas Student Government Association Bylaws.
- C) A removal election shall not coincide with a regular Student Election.

Section 8: Executive Succession

- A) In the event that the Student Body President is unable to serve, the Vice President shall assume that office.
- B) In the event that the Vice President is unable to serve, the President shall nominate a successor to the Student Senate. This successor must be confirmed by an absolute two thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- C) In the event that the President and Vice President are simultaneously rendered unable to serve, the Speaker Pro Tempore shall immediately become interim President of the Student Body and the Student Government Association. The interim President shall be charged to conduct a general student election to elect a new President and Vice President in the timeliest manner possible. The interim President retains his or her membership in and chairmanship of the Student Senate, and is eligible to be elected President of the Student Body and the Student Government Association.

Article VI - The Judicial Branch

Section 1: Composition of the Judiciary

- A) The Judicial Branch shall consist of the seven-member Supreme Court and the Advocate General.

Section 2: Composition of the Supreme Court

- A) The Supreme Court shall consist of seven Justices appointed from the Student Body by the Student Body President who have attained junior status and are in good standing with the University.
- B) The Supreme Court will elect from their number a Chief Justice to preside over all judicial proceedings and administer the business of the Judicial Branch. Justices must be in good standing with the University.

Section 3: Terms of Justices

- A) Supreme Court Justices shall be appointed to serve terms coinciding with the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters of one academic year.

Section 4: The Advocate General

- A) The Advocate General shall be appointed by the Student Body President to serve a term coinciding with the Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters of one academic year.
- B) The Advocate General will advise the Student Government Association in legal matters and represent the Association in judicial proceedings before the Supreme Court.
- C) The Advocate General must be in good standing with the University.

Section 5: Jurisdiction

- A) The Supreme Court shall have binding original jurisdiction over disputes arising over this Constitution, the Student Government Association Bylaws and its component documents, actions of the Student Senate, and Student Elections.
- B) The Supreme Court shall have non-binding jurisdiction over disputes brought before it by Students or Student Organizations.

Section 6: Procedures of the Judicial Branch

- A) The procedures of the Judicial Branch shall be enumerated in the Student Government Association Bylaws.
- B) The Supreme Court shall meet regularly at least once per month, unless no it has no business to consider.

Article VII - Eagle's Nest

- A) The Eagle's Nest Organizational Council shall be governed by the Student Government Association Bylaws.

Article VIII - Fiscal Matters

- A) The Student Government Association shall annually apply for the receipt of Student Services Fees from the University of North Texas Student Service Fees Committee.
- B) The Association shall function as an independent Student Service Fees unit within the University of North Texas and shall follow all fiscal procedures pertaining to such status.

Article IX - Amendment to this Constitution

Section 1: Proposal of Amendments

- A) Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by a two thirds (2/3) absolute majority vote of the Student Senate or by a verifiable petition of one thousand two hundred and fifty (1250) members of the Student Body.

- B) Any action calling for amendment of this Constitution must specify whether the issue shall be considered in the immediately following general election or in a special election call for that purpose.
- C) Meeting the requirements for the proposal of amendments shall be considered sufficient grounds and merit for the calling of such an election.
- D) Constitutional Amendments must be in the form of Striking Out, Inserting, or Striking Out and Inserting. This Constitution shall not be stricken in its entirety without the concurrent proposal of a legitimate Insertion.

Section 2: Passage of Amendments

- A) Amendments must be passed by a majority of the members of the Student Body voting in an election in which Amendments are to be considered.

Article X - Legality of this Constitution

- A) This Constitution shall become the official and binding Constitution of the Student Government Association and the Student Body of the University of North Texas upon majority ratification by the Student Body.
- B) This Constitution shall be subject to the laws of the United States of America, the State of Texas, the policies of the University of North Texas, and maintenance of the utmost good faith to the Students of the University of North Texas.