

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

## **ARTICLE I The Student Government Association**

SECTION 1. The title of this association shall be the University of Southern Maine Student Government Association, "SGA." The SGA shall include the Student Senate, "Senate," and the Student Body President.

SECTION 2. The SGA derives its authority from the University of Southern Maine Governance Constitution, and acknowledges that the Board of Trustees is the governing institution of the System and that any action of the SGA that is in conflict with the policy of the Board is void upon the SGA's receipt of an injunctive memorandum from the Board of Trustees or their designee.

SECTION 3. The SGA shall serve as the stewards of the Student Activity Fee, "SAF", as approved by the Board of Trustees, and shall represent the undergraduate student population of the university.

SECTION 4. The SGA is beholden the policies outlined by documents in the following order of precedence:

- I) The Constitution of The United States of America.
- II) The laws of the United States federal government.

- III) The Constitution of the state of Maine.
- IV) The laws of the state of Maine.
- V) The Board of Trustees Governance Constitution.
- VI) The Constitution of the Student Government Association.
- VII) The Bylaws of the Student Government Association.
- VIII) Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

SECTION. 5. The following are entitled to receive compensation from the SGA: the Chair, Vice Chair, Parliamentarian, Treasurer, Clerk, the Student Body President and Student Body Vice President, the Student Representative to the Board of Trustees, and other officers as designated by the SGA.

SECTION 6. The Senate may not suspend any part of this Constitution without the consent of a two-thirds majority of the full membership of the Senate.

SECTION 7. The SGA recognizes the following entities: the Board of Student Organizations (BSO), Gorham Campus Activities Board (GCAB), Commuter Student Association (CSA), Outdoor Activities Board (OAB), Leadership Development Board (LDB), and the Student Communications Board (SCB) as designees tasked to disburse and manage funds.

## **ARTICLE II The Student Senate**

SECTION 1. The Student Senate shall be composed of nine commuter students and six resident students chosen by their respective constituencies, and six students elected at large, all of whom must be activity-fee-paying students, for one-year terms.

SECTION 2. Terms of office for senators shall commence on the first Friday of the month of May of each year and shall expire after the inauguration of the next Senate one year from that date.

SECTION 3. Senators are authorized to introduce policies, programs, appropriations and any other kind of resolution.

SECTION 4. The Senate shall appoint a Chair, Vice Chair, Parliamentarian, Treasurer, Clerk.

SECTION 5. All senators are subject to the VIC policy and Intent to Recall processes by threshold of a two-thirds majority of the seated Senate.

SECTION 6. The Senate shall have the sole authority to remove the Student Body President from office. To begin the process of removal, a petition to remove shall be signed by one-quarter of the Senate's membership. The whole Senate, after receiving the petition, shall meet in closed session with the Student Body President, and any of their witnesses, to address allegations of misconduct. After the closed session concludes, the Chair of the Senate shall schedule a vote on the

Resolution for the next Senate meeting. If two-thirds of the Senate concurs with the Resolution, the Student Body President will be immediately removed from their position and forbidden to hold any office within the SGA ever again.

SECTION 7. Elections for senators shall be held during the first week of the month of April. The Student Body President shall appoint, with the Senate's advice and consent, a Commissioner of Elections, who shall oversee the elections process. No person running for office may serve as the Commissioner. If there is no one qualified to serve, a commission consisting of the Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, and the Senate's Chair and Parliamentarian shall be formed as the Special Commission on Elections. When there is a vacancy in the Senate, the Senate shall appoint voting members to it.

SECTION 8. A majority of the Senate shall constitute a quorum to do business. The Senate is empowered to determine the Rules of its proceedings, and shall keep, maintain and publish a record of all official actions considered by the Senate.

SECTION 9. Every policy or appropriation approved by the Senate shall be presented to the Student Body President to sign. If the Student Body President chooses not to sign, they shall return it to the Senate, with their objections, to be reconsidered. The Senate, by two-thirds majority, can overrule this action of the Student Body President. If the Student Body President fails to sign the resolution

within ten academic days after it has been presented to them, it shall have the same force and effect as if the Student Body President had signed it.

SECTION 10. The Student Body President has the power to disapprove any dollar amount appearing in an appropriation, but when disapproving a line-item, it shall be returned to the Senate, with the Student Body President's objections, no later than five academic days after its presentation to the Student Body President. Upon its return, the Senate shall proceed to reconsider the disapproved portions, and if two-thirds of it agrees to the expenditure, it shall have the same force and effect as if it had been signed by the Student Body President.

SECTION 11. The Senate shall have authority to; (1) oversee the allocation and use of the Student Activity Fee money, (2) regulate the activities of student organizations, (3) promote and finance the professional and academic endeavors of the University's undergraduate students, (4) control the SGA's material, intellectual and financial assets, and (5) adopt resolutions recommending matters to the consideration of the Board of Trustees, Chancellor of the University of Maine System, the President of the University, other University officers, and other entities.

SECTION 12. The Senate shall be empowered to meet in closed session to discuss matters it designates as confidential. Closed sessions shall never be designed to prevent the attendance of individuals who will be the subject of official review or

pending disciplinary action, nor will a closed session of the Senate ever prevent the attendance of the University President, the appointed Adviser of the SGA, or any of these people's designees, and the Senate is forbidden to conduct official action while it is in closed session.

SECTION 13. The Chair shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Association and shall ensure that Senate meetings run smoothly.

SECTION 14. The Vice Chair shall aid the Chair in their completion of their official duties and other administrative tasks.

SECTION 15. The Parliamentarian shall have general charge to enforce the policies of the SGA and to interpret the Constitution of the same.

SECTION 16. The Treasurer of the Senate shall oversee the assets and expenditures of the Association.

SECTION 17. The Clerk shall be responsible for maintaining the official records of the Senate.

### **ARTICLE III The President of the Association**

SECTION 1. The executive power of the SGA shall be vested in the Student Body President, who shall hold office for a term of one year, and together with the Student Body Vice President of the SGA, who shall serve for the same term, be

elected as follows: Students seeking to run shall submit twenty-five signatures of presently enrolled undergraduate students of the University to the Elections Commissioner.

If the candidate presents a completed form, they, along with their selection for the Vice Presidency, shall appear on the ballot. The student with the greatest quantity of votes shall be elected. The Student Body President shall be sworn in before the Senate, by the Chair, with the following oath:

“I swear to faithfully execute the office of the Student Body President of the Student Government Association of the University of Southern Maine, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve and uphold the Constitution of the University of Southern Maine Student Government Association.”

SECTION 2. In the case of the removal of the Student Body President from office, or of their death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of that office, the Student Body Vice President of the SGA shall assume the position of the Student Body President, and in the case of a vacancy in the Vice Presidency, the Senate shall convene in emergency session to appoint a Student Body President, and until the Senate has made such appointment, it may not consider any business which would require presidential assent.

SECTION 3. The Student Body President, when the chair is unable or unwilling, is authorized to convene and adjourn the Senate. The Student Body President, or their

designee, shall serve on all University committees when necessary. The Student Body President shall also be authorized to sign purchase orders for appropriations approved by the Senate.

SECTION 4. Once a semester that Student Body President shall give the Senate a report on the State of the University and recommend actions.

SECTION 5. The Student Body President may appoint members to their cabinet and must report appointments to the Senate.

#### **ARTICLE IV Mode of Amendment**

SECTION 1. The Senate, by two-thirds majority, shall propose amendments to this Constitution. Amendments shall then be presented to the President of the University to be signed and present it to the Chancellor of the System for their approval. If either University President or Chancellor disapprove, they may send it back to the Senate with their objections.