



## STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

# STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

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# UNG | UNIVERSITY of NORTH GEORGIA™

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

### **PREAMBLE**

We, the students of the University of North Georgia, in order to preserve the rights and privileges of students while promoting a common understanding between students, faculty, and administration, to guarantee a student voice within the University, to advocate on behalf of the common interest of all students, to promote responsible and effective student leadership, and to train ourselves in democratic government, do hereby establish this Constitution.

### **ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of the organization shall be the Student Government Association of the University of North Georgia (abbreviated hereafter as SGA).

### **ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

The purposes of the Student Government Association (SGA) shall be:

1. To serve as a mechanism for student self-governance.
2. To advocate on behalf of the students' academic, social, and cultural welfare.
3. To serve as a liaison between students, faculty, staff, and the administration, and between the various campuses of the University of North Georgia.
4. To provide enriching activities and opportunities for the student body.
5. To provide an opportunity for students to develop leadership skills.
6. To provide representation for the student body to campus, university, state, and national bodies, including the Board of Regents.
7. To provide opportunities for students to work together to benefit their campus communities and all of UNG.

### **ARTICLE III. AUTHORITY**

It is recognized that the University is governed by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents that may delegate governing powers to students. The Student Government Association is the official voice of the student body, and shall work with faculty, staff, and administration in efforts of serving the students of the University of North Georgia. The Student Government Association has the authority and responsibility in participating in the recommendation of Mandatory Student Fee allocations, appointing student representatives to campus and university-wide committees, maintaining self-governance, and working to resolve institutional student concerns and issues.

### **ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP**

#### **SECTION 1. STUDENT MEMBERSHIP**

All University of North Georgia students are members of SGA upon payment of their Student Activity Fee. Elected Official and Appointed Officials are considered Active.

#### **SECTION 2. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HAZING POLICY**

The SGA understands and agrees to abide by the University's Policy on Hazing and Non-discrimination, as well as all other policies for student organizations.

1. The University of North Georgia [Hazing Policy](#)
2. The University of North Georgia [Non-discrimination Policy](#)

#### **SECTION 3. OPEN MEETINGS**

All meetings of SGA shall be open to all members of the University community, except where expressly provided for by this Constitution and Bylaws.

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### SECTION 4. CODE OF ETHICS

All members of the SGA, including but not limited to all appointed and elected officials, should keep the Code of Ethics at the forefront of their actions and always be prepared to give account of their actions and words. Members of the SGA shall represent their constituencies first by expressing their interests and concerns within SGA, and second by being a good example of conduct in the execution of their duties.

### ARTICLE V. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### SECTION 1. BRANCHES

SGA shall be organized into three branches: the Executive, the Legislative, and the Campus.

1. The branches are considered to be separate bodies whose powers are enumerated in this constitution and expanded upon in the statutes.
  - i. The Executive Branch shall consist of the President, Speaker, Director of Finance, Director of Communication, Director of Elections, Director of Diversity & Inclusion and each campus Vice President.
  - ii. The Legislative Body shall consist of all Legislative Officers and Members of the Senate.
  - iii. The Campus Governance shall consist of the campus Vice President, Finance Chair, Communication Chair, and the Elections Chair.

#### SECTION 2. EXECUTIVE BRANCH

1. The term of office for each executive officer shall be one academic year.
2. An executive officer must have a minimum institutional GPA of 2.5 and must maintain this 2.5 GPA throughout the individual's term of office.
3. An officer whose GPA falls below the required 2.5 shall be replaced by means of a special election held two weeks after the office is vacated with the exception of the President, whose unfilled term shall be completed by the Senate Chair.
4. In the event of a vacancy caused by illness, transfer, or resignation, the executive officer shall be replaced pursuant to the statutes and procedures laid out in this constitution and the SGA Bylaws.
5. An officer must be a duly enrolled student at the University of North Georgia, in good standing, pursuing 6 or more academic hours.
6. May not be on academic or disciplinary probation.

##### PARAGRAPH 1. PRESIDENT

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours by the end of the semester elected and have had two (2) semesters of SGA experience, including the current semester.

##### PARAGRAPH 2. SENATE CHAIR

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of forty-five (45) semester hours by the end of the semester elected and have had two (2) semesters of SGA experience, including the current semester.

##### PARAGRAPH 3. VICE PRESIDENTS

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of nine (9) semester hours by the end of the semester elected.
- ii. Must be enrolled in and maintain at least three (3) credit hours on the campus for which they are running during their term.

##### PARAGRAPH 4. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of nine (9) semester hours by the end of the semester elected
- ii. Must possess a working knowledge of business and accounting procedures.

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### PARAGRAPH 5. DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of nine (9) semester hours by the end of the semester elected.

### PARAGRAPH 6. DIRECTOR OF ELECTIONS

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of nine (9) semester hours by the end of the semester elected.

### PARAGRAPH 7. DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of nine (9) semester hours by the end of the semester elected.

## SECTION 3. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

1. The term of office for each member of the legislative branch shall be one academic year.
2. A member of the legislative branch must possess a GPA of 2.0 at the time of their election or appointment, and must maintain 2.0 GPA during their term of office.
3. Must be a duly enrolled student at the University of North Georgia, in good standing, pursuing 6 or more academic hours.
4. May not be on academic or disciplinary probation.

### PARAGRAPH 1. COLLEGE SENATORS

- i. Must be pursuing a degree in the college in which they are elected.

### PARAGRAPH 2. CAMPUS SENATORS

- i. Must be pursuing at least three (3) credit hours on the campus for which they are elected.

### PARAGRAPH 3. COMMISSION SENATORS

- i. Should be a member of the community and/or population that they serve.

### PARAGRAPH 4. SENATE SECRETARY

- i. Successfully completed a minimum of nine (9) semester hours by the end of the semester appointed.

## SECTION 4. CAMPUS GOVERNANCE

1. The term of office for each member shall be one academic year.
2. A member of the campus governance must possess a GPA of 2.0 at the time of their election, and must maintain 2.0 GPA during their term of office
3. Must be a duly enrolled student at the University of North Georgia, in good standing, pursuing 6 or more academic hours.
4. May not be on academic or disciplinary probation.

### PARAGRAPH 1. COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

- i. Must be enrolled in and maintain at least three (3) credit hours on the campus for which they are elected and serve during their term.
- ii. This person preferably has knowledge and experience in managing social media, creating marketing materials, and branding campaigns but not required

### PARAGRAPH 2. FINANCE CHAIR

- i. Must be enrolled in and maintain at least three (3) credit hours on the campus for which they are elected and serve during their term.
- ii. Must possess a working knowledge of business and accounting procedures.

### PARAGRAPH 3. ELECTIONS CHAIR

- i. Must be enrolled in and maintain at least three (3) credit hours on the campus for which they are elected and serve during their term.

**ARTICLE VI. DUTIES & POWERS**

**SECTION 1. EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**PARAGRAPH 1. PRESIDENT**

1. The President shall represent the student body at official school functions.
2. Shall act as administrative head for the entire organization and shall not vote in any matters except to break a tie.
3. Shall have the power of veto bills originating in the Senate and said veto may be overturned by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.
4. Shall have the power to appoint chairpersons of student committees and special committees with the approval of the body.
5. Shall make nominations to certain University committees with the approval of the Student Government Association.
6. Shall preside over all Executive Body Student Government Meetings.
7. Shall be an ex-officio member of all standing, and special committees of the Student Government Association.
8. Shall serve as the official representative of the student body and send a delegate when necessary.
9. Shall be responsible for regular communication with the University President and the Cabinet.
10. Shall have the power to form and dissolve Ad-Hoc Committees, pursuant to the rules and policies outlined in this constitution and the SGA Bylaws.

**PARAGRAPH 2. SENATE CHAIR**

1. The Speaker of the House works hand in hand with the Executive council to lead the Student Government Association and to make central decisions regarding the direction of the student body
2. Shall preside over all Student Government Association Legislative Meetings.
3. This person serves as a liaison between the Legislative body and the Executive Council.
4. Is responsible for the legislative body and must equip them for success, motivating them to serve the students they represent and holding them accountable.
5. Shall act as the interim President in the absence of the President.
6. Shall only vote in the case of a tie.

**PARAGRAPH 3. VICE PRESIDENTS**

1. For Executive Board Responsibilities
  - i. Shall act as a voting member on the Executive Board and represent their campus in the university wide structure.
2. For Campus-Based Responsibilities
  - i. Shall represent the student body at official campus functions.
  - ii. Shall act as administrative head for the campus governing organization and shall not vote in any campus-based decisions except to break a tie (at his or her discretion).
  - iii. Shall have the power of veto in matters of campus governance only and can be overturned by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the campus governing body.
  - iv. Shall preside over all Campus Student Government Body Meetings.

**PARAGRAPH 4. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

1. The Director of Finance shall keep all books and records of the Student Government Association, standing committees, and student activities fee allocations to campus organizations.
2. Shall advise the Student Government Association on the fiscal policies of the University of North Georgia and the Student Government Association.
3. Shall give a financial report to the Student Government Association at scheduled meetings.

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4. Shall be required to submit a formal financial statement of all student activity fees semesterly to the Student Government Association.
5. Shall preside over the five Finance Chairs from each campus (5).
6. Should conduct an annual review of the budget guidelines and preside over any changes.
7. Shall ensure budget guidelines are adhered to and consistent across all University of North Georgia campuses.

### PARAGRAPH 5. DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

1. Shall oversee all marketing and branding efforts for the consolidated SGA.
2. Shall oversee taking and distributing minutes and attendance at Executive meetings.
3. This person preferably has knowledge and experience in managing social media, creating marketing materials, and branding campaigns but not required.
4. Oversee the public relations and marketing efforts for the consolidated SGA including but not limited to informing students about the programs, resources, initiatives, and/or enacted legislation sponsored by SGA.
5. Shall provide direction and leadership for campus-based Communications Chairs.

### PARAGRAPH 6. DIRECTOR OF ELECTIONS

1. Shall serve as the chair-person for the Elections committee.
2. Shall record votes at Executive meetings.
3. Shall remain impartial to any candidates or parties participating in the election.
4. Shall be charged with the responsibility of enforcing and maintaining the Constitution, Bylaws, and Election code of the SGA.
5. Shall organize all necessary materials and coordinate all personnel for the efficient and prompt execution of the General Election, and all other SGA elections.
6. Shall ensure the topics to be discussed at the Mandatory Candidate Seminar shall include but are not limited to the following: Election Rules & Regulations, Election Schedule, Structure and Functions of the Student Government Association, and the duties and responsibilities of the elected officers of SGA.
7. Shall administer all Elections; including but not limited to preparing all ballots and any and all dates established for elections and runoff elections must be submitted to the Senate, for approval and notification purposes.

### PARAGRAPH 7. DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

1. Shall oversee the development and implementation of programs and services that promote diversity within the Student Government Association.
2. Shall provide direction and leadership for commission senators.
3. Actively engage in the UNG student experience.
4. Exhibit and adhere to SGA's values of inclusion, collaboration, advocacy, integrity, and engagement.
5. Serve as a liaison to the office of Diversity and Inclusion and Multi-Cultural Student Affairs office.

## SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

1. Shall make up the Legislative Body of the university wide structure.
2. Shall serve on a maximum of two Senate committees within the Student Government Association.
3. Shall serve on a Faculty Senate/University wide Committee pertinent to their chosen committee.
4. All senators shall have the power to draft legislation on behalf of the student body.
5. Senate Legislation
  - i. All Senate legislation shall be drafted pursuant to the requirements and procedures listed in this constitution, SGA Bylaws, and the Senate Rules.

### PARAGRAPH 1. COLLEGE SENATORS

- ii. Meet regularly with the deans and faculty members within your college.
- iii. Organize town halls for constituents to voice their concerns.

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- iv. College Senators shall represent their constituents from their colleges to ensure adequate advising, recommend changes to class offering etc.
- v. Senators shall stay informed on matters impacting their constituents.
- vi. Shall serve as a liaison to inform constituents on important university and student government initiatives.

### PARAGRAPH 2. CAMPUS SENATORS

- i. Serve as representatives for the students across their respective campus.
- ii. Shall address issues facing their constituency through outreach and working to create positive change for the campus community.
- iii. Organize opportunities for their constituents to voice their concerns.
- iv. Shall stay informed on matters impacting their constituents.
- v. Serve as a liaison to inform constituents on important university and student government initiatives.
- vi. Shall participate in Campus Governance activities including, but not limited to, voting on budget allocations, mini-grants, and new student organizations.

### PARAGRAPH 3. COMMISSION SENATORS

- i. Commission Senators serve as representatives for the students in their constituency.
- ii. Senators shall address issues facing their constituency through outreach and working to create positive change for those they represent. Integral in collecting student concerns in order to promote diversity and inclusion on our campuses.
- iii. Shall meet with the Director of Diversity and Inclusion to report concerns of their constituents.
- iv. Meet regularly with the professional staff member associated with your area.
- v. Organize opportunities for constituents to voice their concerns.
- vi. Collaborate with other student organizations and/or departments related to your area.
- vii. Each commission must annually compile a report covering issues of their constituency, demonstrated efforts and outreach to address the issues of their constituency, and recommendations for SGA for the future.

### PARAGRAPH 4. SENATE SECRETARY

- i. Shall be responsible for maintaining Senate attendance, taking minutes of Senate meetings, and distribute said minutes to all relevant revenues.
- ii. Must maintain the Senate voting record.
- iii. Shall be responsible for maintaining and distributing accurate copies of the Senate agenda, keeping records on the status of all legislation, and sending passed legislation to the proper recipients.
- iv. Shall be responsible for maintaining records of the Senate Rules.
- v. Shall not vote in any matter brought before the Senate or Executive Council.

## SECTION 3. CAMPUS GOVERNANCE

### PARAGRAPH 1. COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

- 1. Shall take and distribute minutes and attendance for campus-based meetings.
- 2. Shall oversee all marketing and branding efforts for their campus SGA.
- 3. Oversee the public relations and marketing efforts for their campus SGA.
- 4. Shall meet with the Director of Marketing and Communication regularly.

### PARAGRAPH 2. ELECTIONS CHAIR

- 1. Shall be responsible for serving on the Election Committee and assist in the implementation and creation of university wide elections.
- 2. Shall oversee recording votes for campus-based meetings.
- 3. Shall oversee establishing and operating their respective campus elections.
- 4. Shall be charged with the responsibility of enforcing and maintaining the Constitution, Bylaws, and Election code of the SGA.

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### PARAGRAPH 3. FINANCE CHAIR

1. Shall have access and keep records of their campus government's budgets and report to any SGA members as well as other students when asked.
2. Shall keep record of their SGA's budgets.
3. Shall keep constant contact with each Student Involvement Office in order to have access to the SGA's budget.
4. Is chairperson of their own campus Finance Committee.
5. Shall serve as a member on the Budget and Finance Committee.

## ARTICLE VII. IMPEACHMENT & REMOVAL

### SECTION 1. REMOVAL OF OFFICE

All active members of SGA shall be subject to removal of office for any one or more of the following:

PARAGRAPH 1. Abandonment of office;

PARAGRAPH 2. Failure to uphold the requirements of the position.

### SECTION 2. PROCEDURE FOR REMOVAL

PARAGRAPH 1. Any member of the Student Government Association wishing to remove any active member of SGA shall file a petition for removal to the immediate chair or head of the respective branch setting forth in writing one or more of the grounds found in Section 1 of this Article that the stated position holder within SGA has violated.

PARAGRAPH 2. Within a week of notification, the chair or head of their respective branch will investigate the case and determine whether officer removal is warranted. If it is not, the accusing officer has the ability to pursue impeachment.

### SECTION 3. IMPEACHMENT OF OFFICE

All active members of SGA shall be subject to impeachment of office for any one or more of the following:

PARAGRAPH 1. Incompetence, malfeasance, or misfeasance in office;

PARAGRAPH 2. Willful violation of any express provision of this Constitution or any other governing documents;

PARAGRAPH 3. Failure, for any other cause, to perform the duties of office.

### SECTION 4. PROCEDURE OF IMPEACHMENT

PARAGRAPH 1. Any student wishing to remove any active member of SGA shall file a petition for impeachment and removal to the Secretary of the Senate setting forth in writing one or more of the grounds found in Section 3 of this Article that the stated position holder within SGA has violated.

PARAGRAPH 2. This petition must include the signatures of at least fifteen Senators wishing to investigate the stated position holder within SGA.

### SECTION 4. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

PARAGRAPH 1. Upon filing of a petition with the Secretary of the Senate, a committee composed of the Director of Elections will create an Ad-Hoc committee that consists of; 1 person per campus who will be appointed by the Director of Elections - shall review the claim or claims stated in the petition for impeachment and removal.

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PARAGRAPH 2. If a petition for impeachment and removal has been filed against the Director of Elections or in the event that the Director of Elections is ineligible or recused themselves from serving on the committee, the vacated seats will be filled by an executive committee member that is appointed by the President.

### SECTION 5. COMMITTEE DECISION

PARAGRAPH 1. If an absolute majority of  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the committee finds that the claims stated in the petition for impeachment and removal meet the grounds for removal found in this Constitution, then they shall send the petition for impeachment and removal to the Senate for a formal impeachment hearing by the Senate.

### SECTION 6. SENATE IMPEACHMENT HEARING

1. The Senate shall consider the claims for impeachment and removal during the two scheduled consecutive Senate meetings immediately following the release of the committee's decision.
2. The designated member of the committee shall notify all those accused and the filer of the petition for impeachment and removal of the dates, times and procedure for the Senate Impeachment Hearing.
3. A Senator who is accused in the petition for impeachment and removal shall not vote in the Senate impeachment and removal process.
4. In the first Senate session following the release of the committee's decision, the Senate shall formally hear the claims for impeachment and removal through a presentation of the facts and evidence presented by the Director of Elections or designated chairperson.
5. Following the presentation of the facts and evidence, the accused, the filer of the petition, and any necessary witnesses shall appear before the Senate to answer questions.
6. The accused and the Director of Elections shall be allowed to make brief statements to state their case at the end of this Senate session.
7. In the second Senate session following the release of the committee's decision, the Senate shall vote to impeach and remove the accused position holder or holders from their office.
8. A two-thirds majority of the full membership of the Senate must vote to impeach and remove in order for the position holder to be removed from office; however, the Senate must only have quorum to hold proceedings.
9. If the Senate lacks quorum, then the Senate shall stand in recess until quorum is reached. Immediately upon reaching quorum, the Senate must vote on the impeachment and removal of the accused position holder or holders.
10. If two-thirds of the full membership of the Senate votes to impeach and remove the accused position holder from office, then the accused position holder or holders shall immediately lose their SGA office and all the rights and privileges afforded by the office.

## ARTICLE VIII. VACANCIES

### SECTION 1. VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

1. The Senate Chair shall assume said office for the remainder of the term. Beginning at the next immediate Senate meeting, The Office of the Senate Chair shall then be replaced in the interim by the Director of Diversity & Inclusion until a formal election is held.

### SECTION 2. OTHER VACANCIES

1. All students who meet the defined qualifications of the seat for which they are seeking office may apply for a vacant seat.
2. Applicants must file a Statement of Intent to the Director of Elections.
  - i. If vacancy is in the Office of the Director of Elections, the President handles process.
3. Applicants will be approved by a majority vote (50% + 1) of the Senate.

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### SECTION 3. RESIGNATION

1. An elected or appointed official who wishes to resign shall submit a resignation in writing to their immediate chair or head of their respective branch. If the head of a branch resigns, they must submit their resignation to the President or Faculty Advisor.

## ARTICLE IX. CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

### SECTION 1: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be initiated in one of the following ways:

1. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senate.
2. A petition signed by ten percent of the student body, to be defined as ten percent of the number enrolled during the fall term followed by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Senate

After one of the two preceding steps has been completed, the following process must occur in specified order:

PARAGRAPH 1. After passage by the University-Wide Senate, the text of the proposed changes and the original text shall be published on the spring semester ballot.

PARAGRAPH 2. Copies of the amendment(s) shall be available for review online at least seven days prior to the election.

PARAGRAPH 3. A simple majority of at least 51 percent of votes cast must be affirmative to pass the amendment(s).

PARAGRAPH 4. Approved amendments shall become part of the Constitution when ratified by the President after a simple majority is received. The amendments are effective immediately upon ratification.

### SECTION 2: EDITORIAL CHANGES

Editorial changes such as grammar, formatting, and non-substantive rewording may be proposed by any member of the Senate at an official Senate meeting and are then approved and ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senate members present.

## ARTICLE X. OATH OF OFFICE

I (*State Your Name*),

Pledge to uphold the Student Government Association Constitution and Bylaws

And abide by the regulations and policies as prescribed by the administration of the university.

I pledge to be fair in all of my endeavors and promote goodwill for the university.

I pledge to carry out the responsibilities of my office to the best of my ability and to be a voice among all segments of the student body.

## ARTICLE XI. CONSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY

Upon ratification, this Constitution and its associated codes shall supersede all previous governing documents, which shall be deemed null and void.

## ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

The Bylaws of this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote with a quorum present of the Student Government Association and ratified by the Student Life Committee. The proposed amendment shall be submitted at least one (1) week prior to the meeting of the Student Government Association.