

# Towson University

## Student Government Association Constitution

### PREAMBLE

We the students of Towson University, desiring to preserve within the University an atmosphere of free discussion, inquiry, and self-expression, to insure the personal freedom and general welfare of the Student Body, to promote principles of all aspects of diversity, and to continue in our tradition of responsible self-governance, do hereby establish this constitution of the Towson University Student Government Association.

### FRANCHISE AND CITIZENSHIP

All students who are fee paying undergraduate students enrolled in Towson University shall have the right to vote in the Student Government Association Elections and to participate in the Student Government Association, hereinafter referred to as the SGA. This right may not be curtailed or removed.

### Article I LEGISLATIVE

#### The Student Senate

**SECTION ONE – Student Senate** The supreme legislative power for the Student Body shall be vested in the Student Senate of Towson University.

**SECTION TWO – Student Senate Composition** The Student Senate shall be composed of twenty-five total senators, eighteen elected at large by the student body. In addition, there will be five freshman senators and two transfer student senators appointed by the Executive Board and approved by a two-thirds vote of the Student Senate every year in the month of September. If no transfer students are available for appointment, the Executive Board may appoint additional senators up to twenty five. Each senator shall serve a one-year term based on the academic calendar. All senators shall, at time of their election, be a student in the University in good standing with a minimum of a 2.5 Cumulative GPA. Further, Senators must remain enrolled students in the University and in good standing for their entire term. Each senator shall have one vote. There is no limit to the number of terms the position of Senator may be held.

**SECTION THREE – Student Senate Vacancies** Vacancies created by the resignation or removal of a duly elected senator shall be filled by an application process. Any student may apply for the vacant position. A Senator Selection Committee, headed by the SGA Vice President and comprised of various SGA Senators and Directors, interviews candidates. After interviewing candidates, the Senator Selection Committee makes recommendations. Following the recommendation, the SGA Vice President nominates senatorial appointees to the Student Senate for approval.

**SECTION FOUR – Student Senate Powers and Duties** The Student Senate shall:

- A. accredit its own membership;
- B. establish its own rules of procedure which shall be included in the Student Body Bylaws;
- C. enact all legislation necessary and proper to promote the general welfare of the Student Body;

- D. provide for the compilation and publication of Student Body Documents in order that the Student Body may be informed;
- E. enact by a two-thirds majority vote the Student Body Bylaws;
- F. expel or suspend any student organization, the activities, or a finance thereof, that does not abide by the SGA funding policy or other university financial policies;
- G. approve the Constitutions of student organizations, and revisions to previously approved student organization constitutions;
- H. approve a yearly budget of the SGA and Campus Activities Board;
- I. approve semester budgets of Student Groups;
- J. allocate Student fees:
  - i. to agencies of SGA;
  - ii. to such co-curricular activities registered with the university as it shall deem compatible with the general welfare of the Student Body, provided that all funds appropriated for use but not expended during a given year shall remain in the SGA Funds;
- K. override a presidential veto by a two-thirds vote;
- L. try all impeachments and suspend or remove from office by a two-thirds majority vote any elected official;
- M. elect from the senators, at the beginning of each annual session and at whatever other times the office shall be vacant, a Student Senate *President Pro Tempore*, who shall preside over the Senate whenever the Vice President is unable to do so, and who shall succeed to that office if it becomes vacant;
- N. elect from the senators, at the beginning of each annual session and whatever other times the office shall be vacant, an Appropriations Committee Chair and a Government Operations Committee Chair. These Standing Committees shall establish its own rules of procedure which will be included in the Student Body Bylaws;

**SECTION FIVE – Student Senate Standing Committees** The concerns of the Student Senate shall be investigated and legislation shall be formulated by the Senate Standing Committees. The Student Senate will be divided into two standing committees, the Appropriations Committee and the Government Operations Committee. The distribution will be as follows: thirteen Senators appointed to the Appropriations Committee and twelve appointed to the Government Operations Committee. There will also be a Rules Committee comprised of three Senators, the President Pro Tempore, and the chairs of the Government Operations and Appropriations Committees. The specific area of concern and the specific duties of each Standing Committee shall be as chartered in the Student Body Bylaws. Special and *Ad Hoc* Committees shall be formed by the Student Senate in the event that a matter of concern is not within the jurisdiction of the Standing Committees.

**SECTION SIX – Directorial Standing Committees**

- A. Academic Affairs Committee shall:
  - i. have Senate representation;
  - ii. consist of representatives from the College of Business and Economics, the College of Education, College of Fine Arts and Communication, the College of Health Professions, the College of Liberal Arts, the Jess and Mildred Fisher College of Science and Mathematics, and the Honors College; as chosen by the dean of each of the colleges;
  - iii. be responsible for the representation of issues that relate to academics;
  - iv. be chaired by the Director of Academic Affairs.
- B. Athletic Affairs Committee shall:
  - i. have Senate representation;
  - ii. be responsible for planning and promoting Athletics related student events and initiatives;
  - iii. promote and encourage student involvement at Athletics events;
  - iv. be chaired by the Director of Athletic Affairs.
- C. Civic Engagement Committee shall:
  - i. have Senate representation;

- ii. include student representatives on subcommittees of the Civic Engagement Advisory Board;
  - iii. be responsible for the promotion and facilitation of Civic Engagement;
  - iv. be chaired by the Director of Civic Engagement.
- D. Community Outreach Committee shall:
- i. have Senate representation;
  - ii. be responsible for planning and promoting SGA sponsored community service events as well as promoting and participating in other community service events that come about;
  - iii. be chaired by the Director of Community Outreach.
- E. Diversity Outreach Committee shall:
- i. have Senate representation
  - ii. consist of members from organizations that represent the diverse population at Towson
  - iii. be responsible for planning and promoting SGA sponsored diversity initiatives
  - iv. be chaired by the Director of Diversity Outreach.
- F. Legislative Affairs Committee shall:
- i. have Senate representation;
  - ii. be responsible for researching legislation concerning higher education;
  - iii. establish the official position of the SGA through the authoring of Senate legislation and the Towson University SGA's Legislative Agenda;
  - iv. support active promotion of legislation;
  - v. be chaired by the Director of Legislative Affairs.
- G. Student Groups Committee shall:
- i. have Senate representation;
  - ii. promote communications between student organizations, both amongst each other, and with the SGA and other bodies on campus;
  - iii. be responsible for initiatives that will promote interaction between the various student organizations and bodies;
  - iv. assist the Director of Student Groups in coordinating and organizing events to facilitate Student Groups' understanding of the SGA;
  - v. be chaired by the Director of Student Groups.
- H. University Communications Committee shall:
- i. have Senate representation;
  - ii. be responsible for promoting communication between the Student Government Association, student organizations, and the entire student body at Towson University;
  - iii. be chaired by the Director of University Communications.

### **Term Conditions**

**SECTION SEVEN – Term** The term of the Student Senate shall end at noon on the first Monday in May after inauguration and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

**SECTION EIGHT – Resignation** All officers of the Legislative Branch must give at least 2 weeks notice before they officially leave office.

## **Article II EXECUTIVE**

### **Student Body Officers**

**SECTION ONE – Authority** The executive power of the SGA shall be vested in the SGA President, who shall have the assistance of the Vice President, Treasurer, Attorney General, and Chief of Staff.

**SECTION TWO – Elections** The SGA Officers shall be elected for a one-year term by a majority of those voting in the Student Government Elections. The SGA Officers shall be chosen from the student body at large. Each officer shall at the time of the election, and throughout their term, remain a full time

undergraduate student in good standing with a minimum of a 2.5 Cumulative GPA and be enrolled as a degree seeking student at the University. Requirements for Student Body Offices shall be listed in the Student Body Bylaws.

**SECTION THREE – SGA President** The SGA President shall:

- A. serve as chief executive officer of the SGA;
- B. represent the SGA in dealings with the students of other universities, the faculty, the administration, and the community;
- C. enforce and administer all acts passed by the Student Senate;
- D. have the power to veto any Student Senate act;
- E. attend meetings of the SGA;
- F. make appointments to fill vacated elective offices, unless otherwise specified in the SGA Constitution or Student Body Bylaws subject to the approval by a two-thirds [2/3] majority of the Student Senate;
- G. address the Student Senate as deemed necessary;
- H. oversee the Budget of the SGA;
- I. appoint Directors and Representatives

**SECTION FOUR – Vice President** The Vice President shall:

- A. serve as presiding officer and chairperson at all SGA meetings and serve as a nonvoting ex-officio member of the Student Senate, except in the case of a tie vote;
- B. call special meetings of the Student Senate;
- C. assist the SGA President in the performance of his/her duties;
- D. exercise the powers of the SGA President if he/she is prevented from exercising his/her powers;
- E. oversee the endeavors of the Student Senate to make sure it is fulfilling its responsibilities.

**SECTION FIVE – Treasurer** The Treasurer shall:

- A. be the chief financial officer of the SGA;
- B. prepare and present a written monthly financial report, available on the first Tuesday of every month, to the student body consisting of how much the SGA has in all active accounts
- C. have the power to examine the financial records of any Student Group that has the power to determine a budget, or any organization that receives funds under SGA Budget;
- D. serve as a nonvoting ex-officio member of all Senate Financial Committees;
- E. serve as consultant for all Senate Appropriations bills;
- F. prepare and submit to the Student Senate an annual SGA Budget;
- G. advise all disbursements of SGA funds;
- H. provide leadership to SGA review of fees.

**SECTION SIX – Attorney General** The Attorney General shall:

- A. act as the SGA Parliamentarian;
- B. act as SGA Student Group advisor for prospective groups;
- C. serve as the Government Operations Committee advisor;
- D. serve as chair to the standing grant Review Committee;
- E. advise the President Pro Tempore.

**SECTION SEVEN – Chief of Staff** The Chief of Staff shall:

- A. serve as Chief Operations Officer;
- B. serve as chairperson of the Executive Cabinet;
- C. act as an intermediary for the President;

- D. assist any acting President with his/her duties;
- E. be responsible for accountability of Directors;
- F. coordinate the Student Senate retreats.

### **Veto of Legislation**

**SECTION EIGHT – Veto** The SGA President may veto any legislation passed by the Student Senate within two business weeks of the date of receipt. For a veto to be valid, the President must submit a written explanation of the reasons for the veto to the Vice President within one business day of the date of veto. The veto and the reason for the veto shall be made a matter of public record by the Vice President at the following General Assembly meeting of the Student Government Association. Any legislation not thus vetoed shall be considered enacted two business weeks after the date of receipt.

### **The Executive Cabinet**

**SECTION NINE – Cabinet Officers** The presiding officer shall be the SGA President. All proceedings of the Executive Cabinet shall be chaired by the Chief of Staff.

**SECTION TEN – Cabinet Powers and Duties** The Executive Cabinet shall:

- A. Advise the SGA President on any matters of student policy or on any student programs and services;
- B. Provide coordination and communication amongst the Student Senate.

**SECTION ELEVEN – Cabinet Composition** The Executive Cabinet shall consist of the SGA Chief of Staff, the Directors, and the Representatives. Directors and Representatives must be full time, fee paying, undergraduate students in good standing.

- A. Director of Academic Affairs shall:
  - i. serve on the University Senate;
  - ii. relay all academic issues concerning the Towson University students to the SGA;
  - iii. facilitate all functions academic in nature as the SGA President deem necessary;
  - iv. chair the Academic Affairs Committee.
- B. Director of Athletic Affairs shall:
  - i. shall work with members of the Athletic Department on joint projects;
  - ii. serve as one of the student representatives to the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee;
  - iii. take an active role in student spirit activities with Towson University Athletics;
  - iv. chair the Athletics Affairs Committee.
- C. Director of Campus Activities shall:
  - i. serve as a liaison between Campus Activities Board and the SGA;
  - ii. perform his/her duties as stated in the Campus Activities Board constitution;
  - iii. chair the programming branch for the SGA.
- D. Director of Civic Engagement shall:
  - i. work to increase the awareness of social issues on campus;
  - ii. advocate for and research service learning opportunities within the University classes;
  - iii. create University sustainability initiatives in conjunction with the Administration and Finance division;
  - iv. sit on the Civic Engagement Advisory Board;
  - v. chair the Civic Engagement Committee
- E. Director of Community Outreach shall:
  - i. coordinate community outreach and community service projects;
  - ii. coordinate other related projects as the SGA President deems necessary;
  - iii. be responsible for cataloging the community service requirements of budgeted Student Groups;

- iv. be responsible for investigating and coordinating community service opportunities for student groups including the SGA;
  - v. chair the Community Outreach Committee.
- F. Director of Diversity Outreach shall:
- i. act as a liaison between the Center for Student Diversity and the SGA;
  - ii. represent and advocate for the diverse populations of Towson University;
  - iii. plan and promote diversity centered events;
  - iv. chair the Diversity Outreach Committee.
- G. Director of Legislative Affairs shall:
- i. research legislation concerning higher education in the State Legislature;
  - ii. lobby on behalf of legislation concerning higher education;
  - iii. establish a presence for the Towson University students in the State Legislature;
  - iv. chair the Legislative Affairs Committee.
- H. Director of Student Groups shall:
- i. address Student Groups' complaints and grievances;
  - ii. develop and host events to facilitate Student Groups' understanding of SGA policies;
  - iii. chair the Student Groups Committee.
- I. Director of University Communications shall:
- i. coordinate on campus communications and promotions;
  - ii. be responsible for external communication;
  - iii. be responsible for SGA marketing;
  - iv. chair the University Communications Committee.
- J. Commuter Student Representative shall:
- i. represent the commuter student population during General Assembly Meetings of the SGA.
  - ii. be the President of the Commuter Student Organization
- K. Fraternity and Sorority Life Representative shall:
- i. represent the Four Councils in the Greek Community to the SGA, and vice versa;
  - ii. be chosen by the Coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Life through an application and interview process and verified by the Student Senate.
- L. Residential Student Representative shall:
- i. represent the resident student population during General Assembly Meetings of the SGA.
  - ii. be the President of University Residence Government.
- M. Sports Club Representative shall:
- i. represent the Sports Club Organizations and Governing Body to the SGA, and vice versa;
  - ii. be selected by the Governing body of the Sports Club Organizations and verified by the Student Senate.

**SECTION TWELVE – Higher Education Liaisons:**

- A. University System of Maryland Student Council (USMSC) shall:
- i. have two (2) representatives chosen to represent Towson University to the University System of Maryland Student Council;
  - ii. be chosen through an application and interview process decided upon by the SGA and Associate Vice President of Campus Life
  - iii. be able to appoint a shadow representative to attend meetings.
- B. Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Advisory Council (MHEC SAC) shall:
- i. have one (1) representative chosen to represent Towson University to the Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Advisory Council;
  - ii. be chosen through an application and interview process decided upon by the SGA and Associate Vice President of Campus Life.

**Lines of Succession**

**SECTION THIRTEEN –** If the SGA President is removed or leaves office for any reason, he/she shall be replaced by the Vice President.

**SECTION FOURTEEN** – If the Vice President is removed or leaves office for any reason, he/she shall be replaced by the Student Senate President *Pro Tempore*.

**SECTION FIFTEEN** – If the Treasurer is removed or leaves office for any reason, he/she shall be replaced on an acting basis by the Chair of the Appropriations Committee until a new appointment by the president can be made. This appointment must be approved by the Senate. Should the election of the new treasurer fall within the thirty [30] day period, the Chair of the Appropriations Committee will continue as Treasurer until the election.

**SECTION SIXTEEN** – If the Attorney General is removed or leaves office for any reason, he/she shall be replaced on an acting basis by the Chair of the Government Operations Committee until a new appointment by the president can be made. This appointment must be approved by the Senate. Should the election of the new Attorney General fall within the thirty [30] day period, the Chair of the Government Operations Committee will continue as Attorney General until the election.

**SECTION SEVENTEEN** – If the Chief of Staff is removed or leaves office for any reason, the President shall assume the roles and responsibilities of this position until he/she makes an appointment for the position. This appointment must be approved by the Senate.

### **Term Conditions**

**SECTION EIGHTEEN** – The term of the Executive Board shall end at noon on the first Monday in May after inauguration and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

**SECTION NINETEEN** – No member of the Student Government Association of Towson University Executive Board may be a senator.

## **Article III JUDICIAL**

### **The Judicial Board**

**SECTION ONE – Judicial Board Authority** The Judicial Board will be the main appellate body utilized in cases of disagreement with the Student Senate's mandate. A general student or a Senator may call for an appeal if they feel the Student Senate unjustly rendered a decision on a piece of legislation.

**SECTION TWO – Judicial Board Composition** The Judicial Board shall be composed of two Associate Justices, one Chief Justice, and a Judicial Board Advisor. The advisor of the Judicial Board shall be the Director of Student Activities. Members of the Judicial Board shall be elected. Each Justice shall serve a one-year term based on the academic calendar. All Justices shall, at time of their election, be a student in the University in good standing with a minimum of a 2.5 Cumulative GPA. Further, Justices must remain enrolled students in the University and in good standing for their entire term. There is no limit to the number of terms the position of Justice may be held.

**SECTION THREE – Chief Justice Selection** The Chief Justice will be appointed by the President and confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.

**SECTION FOUR -- Judicial Board Vacancies** In the event that there are still vacancies in the Judicial Board after elections, the additional positions will be appointed by the Executive Board with the confirmation of 2/3 of the Senate. Vacancies created by the resignation or removal of an appointed Justice shall be filled by an application process. Any student may apply for the vacant position. A Justice Selection Committee, headed by the SGA Chief of Staff, interviews candidates. After interviewing candidates, the Justice Selection Committee makes recommendations. Following the recommendation, the SGA President nominates judicial appointees to the Student Senate for approval.

**SECTION FIVE – Judicial Board Powers and Duties** The Judicial Board shall:

- A. attend all SGA meetings
- B. convene upon notification of the Judicial Board Advisor that he/ she received an appeal
- C. be the final arbiter on all appealed decisions
- D. notify the Student Senate once a decision has been made on an appeal

**SECTION SIX – Judicial Board Appeals Process**

If the Judicial Board receives notification from the Judicial Board Advisor of an appeal that merits consideration, the Judicial Board shall establish a meeting time to convene. At this meeting, the Judicial Board shall determine whether or not to overturn the decision of the Student Senate.

If the Judicial Board chooses to overturn the decision of the Student Senate, the decision is final and then must be challenged through a new piece of legislation that meets the requirements as set forth in the decision of the Judicial Board.

If the Judicial Board chooses to uphold the decision of the Student Senate, the decision is final and then must be appealed to the Associate Vice President of Campus Life or the Vice President of Student Affairs.

**Term Conditions**

**SECTION SEVEN –** The term of the Justices and Chief Justice shall end at noon on the first Monday in May after inauguration and the terms of their successors shall then begin

**SECTION EIGHT –** No member of the Student Government Association of Towson University Judicial branch may be an officer or senator.

**Article VI PROCEDURES FOR IMPEACHMENT**

**SECTION ONE - Scope of Punitive Powers** The punitive powers rest solely with the Student Senate and shall extend to all elected and appointed officials of the Student Government Association. No resolution for impeachment shall be subject to the veto of the Student Body President.

**SECTION TWO - Specific Charges for Impeachment** Charges Generally a Senator or Executive Officer of the SGA may be impeached based on the following charges explicitly defined by this article.

**Abuse of Power** The charge of Abuse of Power shall apply to cases in which the execution of an official power has been in a manner inconsistent with its just purpose or fair use, to the detriment of the Student Body or the Student Government.

- a. **Neglect of Duty** The charge of Neglect of Duty shall apply to cases in which an official is in gross dereliction of legislative duty or willfully failed to execute a specific duty to the best of his or her ability. The scope of Neglect of Duty shall include the roles and powers outlined in this Constitution and its Bylaws.
- b. **Breach of Ethical Duty** The charge of Breach of Ethical Duty shall apply to cases in which an official is responsible for moral turpitude detrimental to the reputation of the Student Government Association and/or Towson University and its constituents.

**SECTION THREE - Form of Formal Charges** All formal charges of impeachment shall be introduced into the Student Senate in the form of a Special Resolution containing a Bill of Charges, in a context appropriate to the official status of the accused official and the sanction sought. Such a Senate Resolution must clearly state the sanction sought against the official.

**SECTION FOUR - Bills of Charges** A Bill of Charges shall be a resolving clause listing each charge alleged against an official and the specifications thereto. Any bill of charges lacking clearly defined charges and sustainable specifications shall be out of order.

**SECTION FIVE - Introduction of Formal Charges** All Special Senate Resolutions shall be filed pursuant to Senate Rule with either:

- A. the sponsorship and signatures of a minimum of three [3] Senators;
- B. a petition of 500 Towson University fee paying undergraduate students;
- C. the sponsorship of the President of the Senate;

**SECTION SIX - Notification of Charges** As soon as practical following filing of the Special Resolution and Bill of Charges, the Senate President shall notify the accused official by written statement, which shall include the resolution in full by hand delivery. The Senate President shall also make available the Special Resolution to all Student Government officials as soon as practical.

**SECTION SEVEN - Impeachment Trial**

- A. **Date of Trial** The trial of an impeached Student Government Official shall occur on the date no more than five [5] Academic Days hence the Special Resolution was filed, in the event the Senate President finds such would enable the impeached official to attend. Should an impeached official fail to attend, the trial shall be conducted in absentia.
- B. **Structure of Trial**
  1. Upon filing of the Special Resolution the Senate must convene at a time separate from the normal legislative session and shall be a closed session;
  2. The President Pro Tempore must preside over the impeachment trial. However in the event that the Vice President is unavailable or charges have been brought against him or her, the Chief Justice will then preside over the trial.
  3. Should the President Pro Tempore be unavailable or the one facing impeachment and/or removal from office, the Vice President shall reside over the impeachment hearing;
  4. no more than two [2] signatories of the Special Resolution shall formally present the Special Resolution to the Senate including evidence and witness testimony;
  5. The accused official shall then respond to the charges, cross examine all accusers and call witnesses on his or her own behalf;
  6. The Senate as a whole may question the accused or any witnesses that may be summoned.
- C. **Senate Debate**
  1. Following the hearing of evidence, the accused shall then be asked to leave the room and the Senate shall enter into deliberations;
  2. Senators shall have unlimited debating privileges during deliberations according to Robert's Rules of Order as long as deliberations remain relevant to the current impeachment.
- D. **Impeachment**
  1. Voting shall be done by confidential ballot;
  2. When voting is completed, the meeting shall be opened and the President shall immediately announce the result of the vote before the Senate;
  3. An impeached official shall only be convicted by a two-thirds [2/3] majority of the Senate;
  4. Removal from Office shall be invoked by conviction in an impeachment trial. No removal from office shall carry with it a ban on future service.

**SECTION EIGHT - Miscellaneous Punitive Powers**

- A. **Resignation** All Student Government Officials shall be permitted to resign their office in writing. Such resignation shall be effective at the date specified by the resignation.
- B. **Exclusivity** Except as provided elsewhere in these statutes for discipline within agencies, the provisions of this article shall exclusively contain processes for termination of any Student Government Office.

### **Article V STUDENT BODY BYLAWS**

The Student Body Bylaws shall be a supplemental document of the Constitution and shall require passage by a three-fourths majority vote of the Student Senate.

### **Article VI ELECTION PROCEEDINGS**

**SECTION ONE** – The times, manner and places of holding elections shall be prescribed by law and the Senate shall judge the elections and the qualifications of its own members. This shall be maintained by the election commission.

**SECTION TWO** – An election policy review committee composed of two non-returning SGA members and the Coordinator of Student Organizations must review the current policy and submit the proposed policy to the Senate by the second week of October every other year.

**SECTION THREE** – The election policy shall require approval of 2/3 majority vote of the senate and shall be approved before the end of the fall semester.

### **Article VII AMENDMENTS TO THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT CONSTITUTION**

All amendments to this SGA Constitution shall require:

- A. a two-thirds majority vote of the Student Senate, and
- B. to be brought to the administration for review and presented to the advisors;
- C. approved by majority vote of at least 1000 members of the undergraduate Student Body voting community.