

Towson University
Student Government Association



**Accountability and Ethics
Handbook**

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Article I – General Expectations

Section One - Responsibilities

- A. All SGA members are required to meet the following expectations:
 - a. Maintain the required cumulative GPA of 2.5
 - b. Attend and be professional at all pre-meetings and General Assembly meetings;
 - c. Complete the constitutionally required amount of office hours for your position;
 - d. Attend all University Committee meetings (if you serve on a committee) and compile a report after each meeting to be submitted to the Attorney General no later than a week after the meeting;
 - e. Attend all assigned ad hoc committees;
 - f. Answer all SGA related emails within 48 hours of reception;
 - g. Do not communicate with the press (TowerLight, news stations, social media) on behalf of the SGA without being cleared by the Director of Communications or the SGA President;
 - h. Participate in tabling events, as your schedule permits, to inform the student body about SGA events and initiatives;
 - i. Respect the Student Government Association office and keep the office CLEAN and ORGANIZED;
 - j. There will be no sleeping in the office; this includes the entire SGA office;
 - k. Be respectful to your peers and audience members during General Assemblies. This includes no side conversation, condescending tones, profanity etc.;
 - l. Follow through on all events that you may choose to volunteer to help/support as the year progresses. This includes tabling events;
 - m. Respect the Student Government Association office staff and OSA (Office of Student Activities) Employees;
 - n. Follow all rules and complete all duties prescribed for your position in the SGA governing documents, including the Student Government Association Accountability Procedures;
 - o. All members are expected to be mindful of all SGA values when governing themselves online and be a positive representation of the organization at all times. Any actions that are deemed contradictory to these values are subject to the Professional Development Review Process.
 - p. Contact a member of the Executive Board if there are ever any concerns.

Section Two- General Body Meetings

- A. General Assembly
 - a. All members are required to attend all General Assembly, unless otherwise specified by the President and/or Vice President.
 - i. Attire: Business Professional
 1. SGA Oxford
 2. Nametag
 3. Black, gray, khaki pants/skirts (no jeans, leggings, yoga pants, joggers, etc.)
 4. Professional/appropriate shoes (no flip flops, boots, sneakers, etc.)

5. No coats, jackets, or outerwear. Members may wear cardigans or dress coats matching the color of the pants/skirt that the member is wearing.
- ii. Reports
 1. Reports given at General Assembly meetings are to be as concise as possible and contain only information that is pertinent. The Chairperson of the General Assembly meeting reserves the right to limit the time of reports if timing becomes an issue.
 - iii. Technology Use
 1. Technology should not be used during General Assembly & Pre Meetings, unless otherwise specified by the Vice President.
 - iv. Respect
 1. All members are expected and required to be respectful for the duration of their attendance at General Assembly meetings. Side conversations are not allowed.
 2. The Chairperson of the General Assembly meeting reserves the right to dismiss individuals who become distractions.
- B. Pre-meeting
- a. All members are required to attend all Pre-meetings, unless otherwise specified by the President and/or Vice President.
 - b. Attire: Casual
- C. Excused Absences
- a. Excused absences will be granted when an Absence Request at least 24 hours prior to the General Assembly or Pre-meeting with a valid excuse.
 - b. The validity of an excused absence will be determined and granted by the Attorney General, only if these procedures are followed.
 - c. All members are required to attend all Pre-meetings, unless otherwise specified by the President and/or Vice President.
 - q. Pre-meeting
- D. Unexcused Absences
- a. Consequences for unexcused absences will be as follows:
 - i. One unexcused absence will result in a written warning.
 - ii. Two unexcused absences will result in a PDR and a mandatory meeting with the Chief of Staff and the Attorney General.
 - iii. Three unexcused absences will result in a PDR, a meeting with the Attorney General, The Chief of Staff, and an Advisor, and a sanction.
 - iv. Four Unexcused Absences will result in an Employment Review Conducted by the President/Chief of Staff and the Attorney General.

Section Two- Service Hours

- A. All members must complete three (3) community service events each semester. The Director of Community Outreach shall monitor this progress.
- B. Those who fail to complete their community service events during the Fall Semester shall be submitted to the internal accountability process and handled by the Attorney General. Those who fail to complete their community service events during the Spring Semester will be ineligible to run for elected office or apply for an appointed position for the next school year.

Article II – Accountability Procedures

Section One- Accountability Review Process

A. Professional Development Review (PDR)

- a. Before a member may be submitted for a Professional Development Review (PDR), the accuser must submit an Accountability Request Form online. Only after an official Accountability Request form is submitted will the Attorney General reach out to the individual and begin the Accountability Review Process (ARP). Every Accountability Request Form will be reviewed in a courtroom judicial setting by an associate justice who is assigned to the case by the chief justice. The associate justice assigned to the case will hear the facts from both the Attorney General and the accused and will make a decision if the PDR stands or not based on the merits of the governing documents and the facts of the case. If the individual receiving the PDR does not show up or reschedule the hearing of the case, then the PDR stands. If the Attorney General does not show up, then the PDR does not stand and cannot be refiled for that instant.
- b. Any member of the SGA can be submitted to the internal accountability process for reasons including, but not limited to the following:
 - i. Neglect of duties.
 - ii. Violation of the SGA Code of Conduct.
 - iii. Violation of the SGA Constitution and or Bylaws
 - iv. Violation of the SGA Code of Ethics.
 - v. For members of the Executive Branch, failure to uphold an expectation outlined by Executive Board members.
 - vi. For members of the Legislative Branch, failure to uphold an expectation outlined by Senate Leadership members.
 - vii. For members of the Judicial Branch, failure to uphold an expectation outlined by the Chief Justice.
 - viii. Failure to uphold an expectation outlined by an Executive Board member.
 - ix. Failure to contribute to a positive decorum during meetings.
 - x. Any offense that is believed to be harmful to the SGA and its mission.
- c. For record-keeping purposes, Every case proceeding shall be properly documented by the Chief of Staff or the Deputy Chief of Staff. This record shall be open to the public no more than 24 hours after the case proceedings.

B. Accountability Review Process:

- a. PDR Level #1: Warning
 - i. The member will be contacted by the Attorney General after the Associate Justice’s decision on the case.
 - ii. The Attorney General will make themselves available to the member to meet to clarify any questions or concerns.

- iii. This is the members' opportunity to give the Attorney General feedback on what they need to succeed in their position, and to receive feedback from the AG on how to improve for the future.
- b. PDR Level #2: Required Meeting
 - i. The members will be contacted by the Attorney General after the Associate Justice's decision on the case.
 - ii. The member will be required to meet with the Attorney General and Executive Board Liaison.
 - iii. This is the member's opportunity to give the Attorney General and Executive Board Liaison feedback on what they need to succeed in their position, and to receive feedback from the Attorney General and Executive Board Liaison on how to improve for the future.
 - iv. This is the Attorney General/Executive Board Liaison's opportunity to outline the opportunities they have provided to help the member succeed that they might not have taken full advantage of. The Attorney General and Executive Liaison must then give feedback on how the individual can improve. The purpose of this meeting is to come up with a plan going forward.
- c. PDR Level #3: Sanction
 - i. The members will be contacted by the Attorney General after the Associate Justice's decision on the case.
 - ii. The member will be required to meet with the Attorney General, their Executive Board Liaison, and an Advisor.
 - iii. This is the member's opportunity to give the Attorney General and Executive Board Liaison feedback on what they need to succeed in their position, and to receive feedback from the Attorney General and Executive Board Liaison on how to improve for the future.
 - iv. This is the Attorney General/Executive Board Liaison's opportunity to outline the opportunities they have provided to help the member succeed that they might not have taken full advantage of. The Attorney General and Executive Liaison must then give feedback on how the individual can improve. The purpose of this meeting is to come up with a plan going forward.
 - v. The member will be issued a sanction to be determined by the Attorney General and the member's Executive Board liaison (may include but is not limited to additional tabling, additional volunteer hours, docked pay, etc.)
- d. PDR Level #4: Employment Review Process
 - i. An employment review will be conducted by the Chief Justice.
 - ii. The Executive board liaison and Attorney General must present evidence of misconduct and lack of improvement on the part of the individual being reviewed to the Chief Justice.

- iii. The Executive Board Liaison must also provide evidence of professional development opportunities/other opportunities provided by the executive board that the individual did not take advantage of.
- iv. The Chief Justice will decide if termination or impeachment is the most appropriate course of action. If it is impeachment, then the Chief Justice will count this as a preliminary hearing for impeachment. Impeachment cannot happen unless a special resolution is filed. The Chief Justice is not allowed to bring up anything that was discussed in the preliminary proceedings. However, the Attorney General is in their opening arguments.
- v. The Chief Justice can order the case to be dropped for whatever reason. If this is done, the case and the PDR will be dropped. The Attorney General is allowed to appeal the case to the full court. The decision of the entire court is final.

Section Two- Exceptions

- A. The Student Government Association is hereby mandated to follow the regulations implemented under the Professional Development Review System (PDR). Under the PDR system, SGA members, including those on the Executive Board, are required to abide by the current PDR system. However, exceptions to the current PDR level system, will be made if an SGA member does the following:
 - a. Makes any racist, homophobic, xenophobic, or sexist remarks.
 - b. Inflicts physical or verbal harm onto another.
 - c. Intentional destruction of SGA property
- B. Consequences
 - a. If any member of SGA is found to have committed any of the acts outlined above they will be subjected to an immediate issuance of a PDR Level 3: Sanction
 - i. The member will be contacted by the Attorney General
 - ii. The member will be required to meet with the Attorney General, their Executive Board Liaison, and an Advisor.
 - iii. This is the member's opportunity to give the Attorney General and Executive Board Liaison feedback on what they need to succeed in their position, and to receive feedback from the Attorney General and Executive Board Liaison on how to improve for the future.
 - iv. This is the Attorney General/Executive Board Liaison's opportunity to outline the opportunities they have provided to help the member succeed that they might not have taken full advantage of. The Attorney General and Executive Liaison must then give feedback on how the individual can improve. The purpose of this meeting is to come up with a plan going forward.
 - v. The member will be issued a sanction to be determined by the Attorney General and the member's Executive Board liaison (may include but is not limited to additional tabling, additional volunteer hours, docked pay, etc.)
 - vi. As seen in PDR Level 3, SGA member will be subjected to one or all of the following:

1. Tabling
2. Additional volunteering/community service hours
3. Docking of pay

Section Three- Complaints

- A. Filing a complaint against another member
 - a. All members reserve the right to use the online Accountability Review Request form to report another member. An issue cannot be resolved if the executive board is not made aware of it.
 - i. Requests will be reviewed by the Attorney General who will reach out to the individual who submitted the form for a meeting to gather more information.
 - ii. The Attorney General will then meet with the accused individual to investigate further.
 - iii. The Attorney General will complete the investigation and will decide what (If any) action should be taken.
- B. Filing a complaint against Attorney General
 - a. Should the Attorney General be submitted to the ARP (Accountability Review Process), the Solicitor General will assume the role of the Attorney General, and the Attorney General will recuse themselves from the investigation. The Solicitor General will conduct an investigation and make a recommendation to the President as to what (if any) course of action should be taken.
- C. Filing a complaint against Executive Board
 - a. When a complaint is filed against any other member of the Executive Board, the investigation will be handled by the Attorney General and the Solicitor General. The Solicitor General will aid the Attorney General in the investigation to ensure that members of the Executive Board are held to the same standards as all other members. Anytime action needs to be taken against an Executive Board member, it is mandatory that they meet with an advisor for professional development.
- D. External ARP
 - a. Student organizations and/or students will have access to an external complaint form where they will be asked to describe the incident involving an SGA member. This form will be submitted automatically to the Executive Board.
 - i. The Attorney General will conduct an investigation into the matter and meet with both the accused and the accuser (separately) to gather more information. The Attorney General will complete the investigation and will decide what, if any, action should be taken.

Section Four- Appeals

- A. An individual is entitled to appealing any sanction they have received to the Judicial Board
 - a. An appeal must be filed within forty-eight Hours of notification of any action being taken against an individual.
 - b. The individual reserves the right to get assistance from the Solicitor General.

- c. The Judicial Board must hear an appeal within five business days of the appeal being filed during the Fall and Spring semesters. Appeals not filed within either Fall or Spring semester will be heard at the Judicial Board's earliest convenience.
- d. The Judicial Board's opinion shall be the final decision and cannot be appealed.

Section Five- Performance Reviews

A. Executive Branch

a. Directors

- i. Directors are required to submit a Weekly Progress Report. This report ensures that Directors are doing meaningful and productive work during their office hours.
- ii. Weekly Progress Reports shall be reviewed and approved/denied at the discretion of the President and Chief of Staff.

b. Assistant Directors

- i. Assistant Directors are required to submit a Weekly Progress Report. This report ensures that Assistant Directors are doing meaningful and productive work during their office hours.
- ii. Weekly Progress Reports shall be reviewed and approved/denied at the discretion of the President and Chief of Staff. The Director reserves the right to monitor their Assistant Director's progress through whichever means is most feasible.

c. Executive Board Members

- i. Executive Board members are all required to submit a Weekly Progress Report to be approved/denied at the discretion of the President. These reports can be made available to any other member upon request.

B. Legislative Branch

a. Senators

- i. Senators are required to submit a Weekly Progress Report. These reports shall be reviewed and approved/denied at the discretion of the Vice President.
- ii. The respective committee chairs shall monitor the progress of all other members of the Legislative Branch. Committee chairs shall aid in helping Senators maximize their potential in helping the student body through initiatives, legislation, etc.

C. Judicial Branch

a. Chief Justice

- i. The Chief Justice is required to submit a Weekly Progress Report. These reports shall be reviewed and approved/denied at the discretion of the Attorney General.

b. Associate Justices

- i. All Associate Justices must serve on at least one University Committee and submit the notes and minutes of the meeting to the Attorney General and the President within 24 hours

Article III – Code of Conduct

Section One- Scope

The SGA Code of Conduct serves to create a productive work environment for SGA members.

Section Two- Guidelines

- A. As a member of the Towson University Student Government Association, each member must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. Be dedicated to serving the members of the Towson University SGA, Towson University Community, Baltimore Community and all Towson University Students;
 - b. Be able to attend all mandatory meetings, events, and retreats, and submit an Absence Request when an excusable conflict arises;
 - c. Be free of commitments that will interfere with their term of office, unless otherwise specified;
 - d. Accept and seek constructive criticism in order to grow as both a leader and individual;
 - e. Develop relationships within the SGA, as well as outside of the SGA to better enhance the student experience, but also establish boundaries and know how to separate personal relationships from work relationships;
 - f. Refrain from participating in public displays of affection to their partner in the SGA office and during both official and unofficial SGA events/meetings;
 - g. Be an embodiment of the SGA at all times and present the SGA in a positive light when posting to social media platforms including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.;
 - h. Be respectful towards all administrative assistants, student workers, and all other workers employed by the University;
 - i. Refrain from using excessively explicit or disrespectful language while in the office, at meeting, and when conducting both official and non-official SGA business;
 - j. Produce regular status reports and updates for all tasks they are responsible for by the deadlines established by the President and other Executive Board members;
 - k. Be respectful of the SGA office space, and not leave food, papers/documents, and/or trash in the shared office spaces.

Article IV – Code of Ethics

Section One- Scope

The SGA Code of Ethics serves to encourage an ethical and transparent environment within the SGA.

Section Two- Guidelines

- B. As a member of the Towson University Student Government Association, each member must adhere to the following:
- a. To treat all members within the organization equally regardless of race, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ability, religion or political affiliation, etc.;
 - b. To actively pursue and cultivate an environment of “anti-hate” and “anti-bias” in the office and on campus;
 - c. To avoid participation in negative or degrading conversations about another member of the organization and not to triangulate. If the member has a problem with a certain individual, they will take it to that individual and that individual alone, or speak with their Executive Board liaison;
 - d. To represent the organization in a positive light and spread the message of the Student Government Association, even when not performing SGA duties;
 - e. To listen to student organizations and student concerns with the utmost respect, regardless of whether or not they agree with what they are saying;
 - f. To be willing to serve at the pleasure of the President and the rest of the Executive Board when called upon;
 - g. To practice “active listening” when participating in conversations with other members of the organization;
 - h. To forego all alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs as limited by law while involved in official and unofficial SGA activities;
 - i. To avoid discussing or partaking in discussions about personal matters of discourse that do not contribute to productivity;
 - j. To avoid places, activities, situations, and verbal or written comments which in any way would raise questions about their moral character or conduct.
 - k. To behave in a manner that conveys and commands respect without any air of superiority;
 - l. Abide by all federal, state, county, and city laws.

Article V – Executive Branch

Section One- Expectations

- A. Responsibilities
- a. Complete weekly executive cabinet status report;
 - b. Hold bi-weekly committee meetings;
 - c. Abide by the director-assistant director agreement;
 - d. Maintain a relationship with faculty and administration within their respective areas of work;
 - e. Plan, promote, and participate in activities that are in their area of focus;

- f. Utilize Basecamp as the primary project management software for their initiatives;
 - g. Complete assigned duties and responsibilities by specified due dates as authorized by the President, Chief of Staff, Director of Special Projects, or any other individual within their respective department Basecamp;
 - h. Each director must facilitate initiatives based on their area of focus;
 - i. Engage the student body in initiatives beneficial to the overall Towson and Baltimore communities
 - j. Participate in monthly department overview meetings with the Chief of Staff;
 - k. Participate in bi-weekly department check in's during the Cabinet Break Out in the General Assembly time;
 - l. Keep the Executive Cabinet Office CLEAN (It should not have to be requested to be cleaned);
- B. Office Hours
- a. Complete a minimum of 10 office hours a week (Assistant Directors must complete 5);
 - b. All members of the Executive Branch are required to complete a certain amount of office hours. Refer to the SGA Constitution for specific hourly requirements;
 - i. Those who do not complete their office hours shall be submitted to the internal accountability process, handled by the Attorney General.

Section Two- Branch-Specific Meetings

- A. Executive Branch Meetings
 - a. The President, in accordance with the SGA Bylaws, shall outline these meetings and their requirements.
 - b. Expectations
 - i. The President and Chief of Staff shall specifically outline expectations for decorum for Executive Cabinet meetings at the first meeting and can be updated throughout the year. All Executive Cabinet members are expected and required to adhere to these expectations.

Section Three- Accountability

- A. Attorney General
- B. Executive Board

Section Four- Expectations

- A. Reports

Article VI – Legislative Branch

Section One- Expectations

- A. Responsibilities
 - a. Use voting power to better the campus community. Senators **CANNOT** cast joke votes;

- b. Attend at least one of your student organizations' events/meetings a week and one meeting of each of your student organizations' per semester (student group form signed);
 - c. Submit a weekly progress report;
 - d. Communicate to the Vice President and Director of Student Organizations if no contact was made with a student organization and if you unable to establish a connection in the first two (2) weeks of the fall semester;
 - e. Ensure that there is at least one contact in communication with your individual assigned student organizations per week;
 - f. Senate Leadership must attend every weekly Senate Leadership Meeting with the Vice President;
 - g. Maintain contact with assigned student groups and assist them with all things SGA related.
- B. Office Hours
- a. Complete 5 office hours per week (Senate Leadership must complete 10 hours);

Section Two- Branch-Specific Meetings

- A. Committee Meetings
- a. Membership
 - i. As outlined in the Constitution, each member of the Legislative Branch is required to sit on a committee.
 - b. Scheduling
 - i. The Chair of each committee shall set times for meetings that are feasible for all members to attend.
 - c. Minutes
 - i. Following the completion of each committee meeting, the Chair will be required to submit attendance records and minutes of each meeting to the Vice President within 48 hours of the meeting's end.
 - ii. If the Chair does not submit the attendance records and minutes of the meeting to the Vice President within the specified time limits, they shall be submitted to the internal accountability process, handled by the Attorney General.
 - d. Excused Absences
 - i. Excused absences will be granted by the Vice President when an Absence or Request is submitted at least 24 hours prior to the General Assembly meeting with a valid excuse. The validity of an excused absence will be determined and granted by the Vice President only if these procedures are followed.

Article VII – Judicial Branch

Section One- Expectations

- A. Responsibilities
 - a. Chief Justice must report an “Opinion of the Court” to the SGA regarding decisions made;
 - b. Chief Justice must advise Student Organizations on the process that follows being charged with a violation;
 - c. Justices must decide whether or not to overturn a decision made by Senate (2/3 of Judicial Board must agree);
 - d. Develop a system to inform the Solicitor General when appeals have been filed so that the Solicitor General can assist the appealing group with their case;
 - e. Make decisions on Student Organization appeals

Section Two- Branch-Specific Meetings

- A. Appeal Meetings
 - a. Each Justice must be present for every appeal meeting, unless otherwise specified by the Chief Justice. A minimum of three Justices must be in attendance in order to hear and vote on an appeal.

Article VIII – Compensation

Section One- SGA Pay Procedures

- A. SGA Pay Procedures
 - a. The amount of pay a member receives will be contingent on their constitutionally required office hours. In order for a member to be compensated for their work they must meet the following requirements:
 - i. Submit a weekly progress report by Thursday at 5:00 PM. The Progress report shall include but will not limited to:
 - 1. What was accomplished during the respective week;
 - 2. How time was spent during office hours for that respective week;
 - 3. What wasn’t accomplished and a plan moving forward;
 - 4. Meetings attended (if applicable);
 - 5. Long term goals.
 - b. Submit an electronic timesheet by the deadline set by the Towson University Payroll Office.
 - c. Adhere to expectations set by their supervisor.\
 - d. Upload all meeting notes to the s-drive, all project management software, and/or email them to their executive board liaison.
- B. Late Progress Reports
 - a. Should a member fail to adhere to the expectations outlined above, they will be bound to the SGA Pay Procedures which are as follows:
 - i. First late, missing or denied will result in a written warning and an opportunity to submit by Thursday at 11:59 PM.

- ii. Second progress report that is late, missing or denied will result in a written warning and meeting with your Executive Board liaison, the SGA President, and an Advisor to discuss an action plan and docked pay if applicable.
- iii. Third progress report that is late, missing or denied will result in a meeting with your respective Executive Board liaison, the SGA President, and an Advisor to discuss an action plan and docked pay if applicable.
- iv. Fourth progress report that is late, missing or denied will result in immediate impeachment, termination or being stricken of title.

Section Two- SGA Presidential Pay Procedures Process

- A. In order for the SGA President to be compensated for their work they must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Submit a weekly progress report to the SGA Advisor by Thursday at 5:00 PM. The Progress report will outline the following:
 - b. What was accomplished for the respective week;
 - c. How was the time spent during office hours for that respective week;
 - d. What wasn't accomplished and a plan moving forward;
 - e. Meetings attended (if applicable);
 - f. Long term goals.
 - g. Submit an electronic timesheet by the deadline set by the Towson University Payroll Office
- B. Failure to Adhere
 - a. Should the SGA President fail to adhere to the expectations outlined above, they will be submitted to the SGA Pay Procedures which are as follows:
 - 1. First failure to submit or denial of a weekly progress report by Thursday at 5:00 PM will result in a written warning and an opportunity to submit by Thursday at 11:59 PM
 - 2. Second progress report that is late, missing or denied will result in a written warning and meeting with the SGA Advisor to discuss an action plan and docked pay if applicable.
 - 3. Third progress report that is late, missing or denied will result in a meeting with the SGA Advisor to discuss an action plan and docked pay if applicable.
 - 4. Fourth progress report that is late, missing or denied will result in immediate impeachment, termination or being stricken of title.
- C. Summer and Winter Break Pay
 - a. Should they have valid work to be doing during the winter and summer breaks, members may be paid more than their constitutionally required hours, to be determined by the SGA President.

Section Three- Withholding Pay

- A. Progress Reports
 - a. Should the SGA President deny the progress report, they reserve the right to withhold pay from the SGA member. This can be done through amendment or strike of hours off of the member's timesheet. Should the SGA President be denying pay or amending hours, they must communicate it with the member whose pay is being amended or denied. Failure to communicate this with the member will result in the appropriate Accountability Procedures being followed.

B. Service Hours

- a. Those in compensated positions who fail to meet their community service requirements in Fall or Spring may have their last paycheck withheld or docked pay if applicable.

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