



Constitution of the Student Government Association

Approved October 19, 2018

Preamble

We, the Student Government Association of Western Connecticut State University, in order to effectively represent the student body shall communicate with faculty, staff, and administration to perpetuate the best traditions of the Western campuses; to enact and enforce such rules as are deemed necessary for the protection of the welfare of the students; to direct and promote student involvement in campus activities; and to enhance student life through leadership, do establish this constitution of the Student Government Association of Western Connecticut State University.

Article I – Title and Membership

Section 1 – The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association of Western Connecticut State University, hereinafter referred to as the SGA.

Section 2 – All registered and enrolled students in good standing with the university and who have paid their Student Activities Fee shall be members of the Student Electorate. Representatives of the Student Electorate shall comprise the legislative, executive, and the judicial branches of this government.

Section 3 – All members of the SGA, Western Connecticut State University student body, and student organizations shall uphold and act in accordance with this constitution, its bylaws, and any other documents hereinafter referred to as the “Governing Documents,” and the policies of Western Connecticut State University, hereinafter referred to as WCSU.

Article II – Bill of Rights

Section 1 – Recognizing that opinions and ideas should be allowed to flourish, we the students resolve that the following rights shall be absolute and may not be abridged:

1. The freedom of speech.
2. The freedom of the press.
3. The freedom of assembly and association.
4. The right to petition for the redress of grievances.
5. The right to due process.

Section 2 – Inherent in the democratic process is the right and privilege to have the opportunity to communicate one’s ideas without fear of reprisals and reprimand. To seek, receive, and impart information and ideas are fundamental to the nature of the university community.

Section 3 – The enumeration in this constitution, of the aforementioned rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people through local, state, and federal laws.

Article III – Powers and Duties

Section 1 – The SGA is the sole government and official voice of the student body and other student organizations at WCSU.

Section 2 – The SGA is established to promote and protect the student body’s rights, interests, and general welfare.

Section 3 – The SGA will have the authority to initiate, coordinate, and execute all actions on behalf of the student body at WCSU.

Section 4 – The SGA will act as a liaison for the student body between the administration, faculty, and other entities at WCSU.

Section 5 – The SGA will advocate for an environment of academic freedom, personal and professional responsibility, the pursuit of excellence, and a sense of scholarship in an atmosphere of free and objective inquiry.

Section 6 – The SGA shall have the sole primary authority for the utilization and distribution of all Student Activity Fees paid by the students at WCSU.

Section 7 – The SGA will uphold and act in accordance with any local, state, or federal statutes, and the policies of the Board of Regents.

Article IV – Composition

Section 1 – The SGA shall be comprised of the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches.

Section 2 – The Legislative Branch shall consist of the Student Senate, hereinafter referred to as the Senate.

Section 3 – The Executive Branch shall consist of the offices of President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of Student Relations, Vice President of Finance, and Parliamentarian, each elected by the plurality vote of the student electorate.

Section 4 – The Judicial Branch shall consist of the Parliamentarian and the Judicial Board, chosen from the Senate and confirmed by a two thirds (2/3) vote by the Senate.

Article V – The Legislative Branch

Section 1 – The Senate shall be considered in session during the fall and spring semester as defined by the university, with the exception of holidays defined by the University Academic Planning Calendar.

Section 2 – The Senate shall be comprised of the following representation:

1. Three (3) elected Senators per academic school/division (Ansell School of Business, Macricostas School of Arts and Science, School of Professional Studies, and the School of Visual and Performing Arts); a total of (12) twelve seats are school/division specific.
2. The one (1) candidate in the Fall Election and the two (2) candidates in the Spring Election with the highest number of votes per academic school shall be the elected Senators representing their academic school/division.

Constitution of the Student Government Association

3. Eight-teen (18) elected Senators shall be at-large seats open to eligible members of the Student Electorate.
4. The candidates in the election with the highest number of votes, outside of the four (4) elected candidates per academic school, shall fill the open at-large seats.

Section 3 – The Senate will meet in accordance with the “Governing Documents” and must convene no later than the second week of classes each academic semester, barring school closure.

Section 4 – The powers of the Senate shall be:

1. To introduce legislation.
2. To enact all legislation concerning the student body, appropriations, student organizations and elections.
3. All decisions and votes of the Senate shall require a majority vote in the affirmative of the senate members present and voting, unless otherwise indicated in the governing documents.
4. To properly appropriate the Student Activity Fee at the discretion of the Senate.
5. Appropriations must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) vote in the affirmative of the Senate members present and voting.
6. To nominate and approve appointments to the SGA and University Committees.
7. To create Standing and Ad-hoc Committees.
8. To override a presidential veto by three-fourths (3/4) vote in the affirmative of the Senate members present and voting.
9. To recognize, suspend, or dissolve any student organization under the jurisdiction of the SGA.

Section 5- Fifteen (15) appointed/elected Representatives shall be at-large seats open to eligible members of the Student Electorate.

Article VI – The Executive Branch

Section 1 – The President shall be afforded the following powers and be required to fulfill the following duties during his/her term of office:

1. Shall only have the powers granted to him/her in the “Governing Documents.”
2. Shall serve as or appoint an official representative of the SGA to committees including, but not limited, to Foundation, University Senate, IT&I, and CSC Board.
3. Shall attend regular meetings with the University President and University Vice President of Student Affairs.
4. Shall preside over sessions of Senate.
5. Shall oversee the SGA President’s Budget and provide notification to all SGA members within 24 hours of approval or expended funds.
6. May call a special session with forty-eight (48) hours public notice.
7. Shall pass or veto legislation within five (5) business days of it being approved by the Senate or Legislative Committee.
8. If the President fails to act upon legislation within five (5) business days, the legislation will be approved.
9. Shall have the authority to sign all vouchers concerning the SGA accounts in the absence of the Vice President of Finance.

Constitution of the Student Government Association

10. Shall oversee the Executive Branch and projects deemed appropriate by the Senate.
11. Shall be responsible for presenting the “SGA Annual Report.”
12. May appoint students to fill vacancies of elected and appointed positions, subject to Senate confirmation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote in the affirmative of the Senate members present and voting.

Section 2 – The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall be afforded the following powers and be required to fulfill the following duties during his/her term of office:

1. Shall only have the powers granted to him/her in the “Governing Documents.”
2. Shall assume the duties of the President in the event the President is unable to serve or the position becomes vacated.
3. Shall cast the tie-breaking vote in Senate.
4. Shall be responsible for maintaining the SGA Office and SGA equipment.
5. Shall maintain an accurate account of the SGA Operations Budget.
6. Shall be responsible for conveying all SGA Committee and University Committee meeting times to the Senate.
7. Shall serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of all SGA Committees, unless otherwise specified in the governing documents.
8. Shall oversee the organization of the SGA Leadership Training to be held in both the fall and spring semesters and any other SGA internal events as deemed appropriate by the Senate.
9. Shall assist the other executive officers per the authority of the President or the Senate.
10. Shall be responsible for contributing to the “SGA Annual Report.”
11. Shall take and maintain the Senate minutes, unless a secretary is hired.
12. May hire assistants with the approval of the Senate.

Section 3 – The Vice President of Student Relations shall be afforded the following powers and be required to fulfill the following duties during his/her term of office:

1. Shall only have the powers granted to him/her in the “Governing Documents.”
2. Shall assume the duties of the President in the event both the President and Vice President of Internal Affairs are unable to serve or the position becomes vacated.
3. Shall serve as or appoint the liaison or liaisons between the SGA and student organizations.
4. Shall ensure consistent support for all student organizations.
5. Shall oversee the coordination and execution of all SGA sponsored events.
6. Shall coordinate direct contact with each student organization at least once per semester outside of Executive Council.
7. Shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of all student organization executive committees unless otherwise stated in the student organization’s governing documents.
8. Shall assist the other executive officers per the authority of the President or the Senate.
9. Shall be responsible for contributing to the “SGA Annual Report.”
10. Shall attend and actively participate in the Homecoming, Orientation, and WestFest committees.
11. Shall be the signatory of the SGA Events Budget.

Section 4 – The Vice President of Finance shall be afforded the following powers and be required to fulfill the following duties during his/her term of office:

Constitution of the Student Government Association

1. Shall only have the powers granted to him/her in the “Governing Documents.”
2. Shall assume the duties of President in the event the President, Vice President of Internal Affairs and Vice President of Student Relations are unable to serve or the position becomes vacated.
3. Shall maintain an accurate account of all budget expenditures.
4. Shall maintain an itemized report of all SGA accounts.
5. Shall have the authority to sign all vouchers concerning SGA.
6. Shall report all activities of SGA expenditures to the Senate.
7. Shall serve as a liaison between the SGA and the University Student Organization Fiscal Manager and their designee.
8. Shall have the authority to freeze or audit any student organization’s SGA account to ensure compliance with SGA, university, and state financial policies.
9. Shall report violations of a student organization’s account to the Senate.
10. Shall assist other executive officers per the authority of the President or the Senate.
11. Shall be responsible for contributing to the “SGA Annual Report.”
12. May provide financial guidance to student organizations.
13. Shall be responsible for maintaining the SGA Financial Resolutions.

Section 5 – The Parliamentarian shall:

1. Schedule and preside over the Judicial Board and Judicial Hearings and enforce Judicial Board Procedures as delineated in the SGA Bylaws.
2. Serve as the sole official representative of the Judicial Board.
3. Ensure a fair hearing and due process for all participants.
4. Write an explanation for all decisions of the Judicial Board without opinion.
5. Call a special session of the Judicial Board with forty-eight (48) hours public notice.
6. Not issue advisory opinions without the consensus of the Judicial Board at large.
7. Have original jurisdiction over review of the governing documents, orders of the Senate, and regulations within the jurisdiction of the SGA and may issue advisory opinions to the SGA to ensure constitutionality of all orders of the Senate, regulations within the jurisdiction of the SGA, and the governing documents.
8. Maintain rules of procedures as outlined in the governing documents.
9. Conduct all hearings open to the public.
10. Be responsible for contributing to the “SGA Annual Report.”
11. Shall be responsible for maintaining the SGA Constitution and Bylaws.

Article VII – The Judicial Branch

Section 1 – The Judicial Branch shall consist of:

1. The Parliamentarian.
2. The Judicial Board.

Section 2 – The Parliamentarian shall:

1. Refer to Article VI Section 5.

Section 3 – The Judicial Board shall:

1. Assist in conducting fair hearings and ensuring due process for all participants.

Constitution of the Student Government Association

2. Maintain an objective and fair basis for all decisions and advisory opinions.
3. Maintain rules of procedures as outlined in the “Governing Documents.”

Article VIII – Advisors

Section 1 – The SGA must have at least one (1) advisor appointed annually by the Executive Board, with two-thirds (2/3) vote in the affirmative of the Senate members present and voting.

Article IX – Elections and Transfer of Office

Section 1 – In order to be eligible to run for elected office, all candidates must fulfill the SGA membership requirements as defined in the SGA Bylaws.

Section 2 – In order to be placed on the ballot, all candidates must submit a completed Elections Packet by the deadline set forth by the Senate.

Section 3 – The SGA Elections packet shall be distributed no later than the eighth week of the Fall and Spring Semesters. The SGA Elections shall occur no later than the twelfth week of the Fall and Spring Semesters. The SGA Transition Meeting shall occur no later than the fifteenth week of the Fall and Spring Semesters.

Section 4 – In order to run for President or Vice President of Internal Affairs, candidates must have served at least sixteen (16) weeks. In order to run for Vice President of Student Relations, Vice President of Finance, or Parliamentarian candidates must have served at least eight (8) weeks in the WCSU SGA prior to what would be their executive term of office and must run in the Spring Semester.

Section 5 – All candidates must abide by any and all existing posting policies and must abide by the rules of the election packet of the year. Any candidate found to be violating any rules established here or in the elections packet may face disqualification.

Section 6 – The President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of Student Relations, Vice President of Finance, Parliamentarian, and Senators shall be elected by a plurality of votes upwards of thirty (30) votes, serving one (1) year terms.

Section 7 – A transition meeting shall occur no later than the first regularly scheduled Senate meeting in December and May.

Section 8 – Any student enrolled at WCSU for the following academic term may run for one (1) executive position and one (1) Senate position. If a student is elected to multiple positions, he/she must decide within forty-eight (48) hours of results notification which position he/she will be recognized as by the SGA.

Article X – Impeachment

Section 1 – Impeachment procedures shall be delineated in the SGA Bylaws.

Article XI – Committees

Section 1 – The Senate shall maintain Standing Committees and Ad-hoc Committees as defined in the Bylaws.

1. Committees shall have the power to propose legislation to the Senate.

Constitution of the Student Government Association

2. Appointments to closed committees are subject to Senate confirmation by a majority vote in the affirmative by members of the Senate present and voting.

Article XII – Student Activity Fee

Section 1 – The Student Activity Fee shall be distributed through the SGA budget process as defined in the “Governing Documents.”

Section 2 – Direct Allocation accounts may be established for those student organizations designated by the SGA to directly receive money from the Student Activity Fee.

Article XIII – Amendments

Section 1 – Proposed amendments to this Constitution must be submitted by the Strategic Planning Committee to the Rules Committee, and approved by a majority of the voting members present at the Rules Committee meeting.

Article XIV – Enabling Clause

Section 1 – This Constitution shall supersede all previous constitutions.

1. This Constitution shall take effect upon approval by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senators present.