# SGA
## BELMONT UNIVERSITY

2015-2016 Strategic Plan

# Table of Contents

# I. Introduction

As representatives of the student body, we are always striving to make Belmont a better place for students. We can only make progress if we head into the future with intentionality and specific plans. The only way to avoid the kind of failures SGA has witnessed in the past is to clearly define what success will look like for us.

The purpose of this document is to keep us on track over the next year. We will use it to plan our actions, reach our goals, and evaluate our progress. This is the yardstick we will use to measure our success. It is by no means a complete summary of everything SGA will do, but we believe these are our core objectives. I hope, after careful review and discussion, everyone in SGA and anyone who cares about Belmont's future can stand behind the vision we have laid out in this document.

While we want this to be a solid foundation for our organization, it's foolish to believe we can make a flawless plan. Our contact information can be found at the bottom, and we welcome any and all student or faculty input.

Jonathan Rankin

President

# II. General Objectives

I. Greater transparency and communication, both internally and externally

   A. A brand new, fully functioning website will be made available for anyone to use by the end of the fall semester at the latest. The President and any interested parties in SGA are responsible for the creation and implementation of this website.

   B. SGA will establish a biweekly (once every two weeks) newsletter, giving anyone who signs up insights into SGA's activities. The first campaign will go out by the week of the Fall Congress' first meeting. This newsletter is the prerogative of the Director of Campus Outreach and Events, Secretary, Vice President, and President. All are responsible for its publication.

   C. Internal SGA communication will be more transparent than ever through the use of the innovative platform Slack, detailed cabinet and committee reports, and regular "Presidential Post" emails.

II. Full utilization of funds

   A. The President, Vice President, Executive Cabinet, and Congressional Committee Chairs will create a detailed spending plan that will be finished and published by the beginning of the fall semester. It will outline where our money will be spent over the entire year. This document will aid the Treasurer in preparing semester-by-semester budgets.

B.  As always, a budget will be made for each semester. This is not just the job of the Treasurer; the President, Vice President, cabinet members, and committee chairs should be collaborating with the Treasurer to create a budget that is as comprehensive as possible.

C.  A spending report, detailing all purchases that have been made, will be presented at every Congress meeting. Everyone in SGA is responsible for making sure we are staying on track with spending.

III.  Fostering a cooperative atmosphere

A.  SGA leadership will meet regularly with Belmont administrators with the goal of working together on new initiatives while avoiding reactionary tendencies that promote an adversarial relationship.

B.  Student organizations will be able to engage with SGA through leveraging SGA's website and newsletter to advertise events and recruit new members, and through grant petitions.

C.  SGA will strive to cosponsor events as much as possible, whether it means partnering with other organizations for their events or inviting organizations to participate in our events.

# III. Campus Outreach and Events

IV.    Repurpose Coffee and Conversation and its objective

    A.  Focus on creating more of a dialogue between SGA and the student body, rather than the current interrogative relationship Coffee and Conversation fosters.

We would like to use Coffee and Conversation as a platform for informing students about what SGA is currently pursuing (including grant petitioning and legislative actions) and asking for feedback regarding said pursuits. This will take the place of the generic format of asking "Do you have any suggestions/concerns?" at each event and foster more creative and constructive feedback.

    B.  Encourage participants at Coffee and Conversation events to attend congress meetings as a way of seeing their suggestions/feedback in action.

This will help ensure the student body of their connection with SGA and assure them that they are being heard. We wish for students to directly see that their suggestion was taken into consideration, written into legislation, and then presented to the administration upon passing the congressional level.

    C.  Create specific objectives based on relevant issues before each Coffee and Conversation.

A document will be created stating the explicit goals for each Coffee and Conversation event held, complete with the outcome of each goal and further

action that will be taken. This will ensure that Coffee and Conversation remains effective and purposeful.

V. Outreach reform

    A. Revamp student organization delegation process

The current system of delegating certain student organizations will be redone, taking into consideration which members are part of certain groups, etc. The focus will be on quality of SGA-organizational relationships, rather than quantity.

    B. Community outreach events

Campus Outreach and Events will expand the organization's efforts in the surrounding community and work on further enhancing Belmont students' involvement and experience. This will include pursuing partnerships and relationships with local businesses.

    C. The SGA Newsletter will be advertised at every event, complete with sign-up sheets. At the beginning of the school year, Campus Outreach and Events will discuss design ideas/content areas to maximize popularity.

VI. Boost committee involvement and lower turnover rate

    A. Assess committee strengths and apply them to event scheduling.

Within the Campus Outreach and Events committee, there is a wide range of talent. By assessing the skills and interests of the committee members, we will have a better idea of how to best plan outreach efforts and events that utilize said skills and maximize outreach efforts.

    B. Assign specific jobs/projects to involved members

A common complaint within the Campus Outreach and Events committee is a lack of belonging/involvement felt among members. In order to solve this, certain roles such as "social media coordinator" will be given to members looking to get more involved, in accordance with letter A above. we will accomplish more as a committee and raise our retention rate.

C. Streamlined communication process

The chair and director of Campus Outreach and Events will decide on a clear process of communication for any concerns regarding the committee, which will then be emailed to all committee members in the hopes of eliminating confusion and internal conflict.

# IV. Finance

VII. Promote grant petitioning and strive towards a deeper understanding of the process by SGA as a whole as well as the greater University population.

    A. It will be ensured that all of SGA is educated regarding the grant petition process. This will be done initially by communicating to Congress (as a whole or in committee meetings) how petitioning is done and each step along the way. This will be continued by thorough reports that explain how and why decisions are being made by the committee.

    B. There will be an increase in campus-wide advertisement of the grant petition process that includes, but is not limited to, periodic postings across campus, social media posts, and information on SGA's website and at hosted events.

    C. A one page flyer explaining the grant petition process will be made available at the first President's Council meeting of each semester as well as at events hosted by SGA. This brief explanation will outline the process and provide details of how and who to contact to continue with the process.

VIII. Improve the grant petitioning process along every step, beginning to end.

    A. The grant petition application will be amended to make applying to the process less of a hassle on the end of students and organizations as well as providing more details and information on the end of SGA. These

improvements will include common questions asked by the Finance Committee in deliberation due to University policies or details about the petition and will be completed prior to the first grant petition round.

B. A paper application will be created that, in addition to our online application which will be moved out of BruinLink onto our website, will give students and organizations a choice of how to begin the process and this preference makes petitioning more accessible. Applications will be made available at the first President's Council meeting of each semester.

C. Conversations with students and organizations will be open, clear, and thorough prior to petitioning. Following the Committee meeting petitioners will be given feedback on the decision made and will be given detailed steps for the remainder of the process.

IX. Build on the existing foundation and improve the awarding of funds as well as the reward for petitioning.

A. Meetings and petitioning rounds will be handled efficiently, and effective conversations will occur to make the process easier for students and more desireable to pursue. This will include all members being informed about the coming petitions prior to the meeting and more structured periods of time reviewing each petition. At the end of each semester a survey of committee members will be taken, and the returned award letters from student organizations will be reviewed to determine the efficiency of meetings (75% of both providing positive feedback).

B. We will increase the awarding of funds, which will be measured both monetarily as well as by the number of petitions, as compared to previous semesters. At least 60 unique student organizations will be awarded funding by the conclusion of the 2015-2016 academic year.

C. Events and organizations that have been awarded funding will be advertised for in our biweekly newsletter, website, and social media posts in the effort to promote these petitioners and their events.

# V. Policy Review

X. Expansion of the Legislative Process

    A. Create legislative templates for various bills

Make available various reference sheets that enable congress members from the most senior member to the newest freshman to easily follow proper legislative guidelines by filling in a template style form for various kinds of resolutions and amendments.

    B. Have an easily accessible, and up-to-date version of the constitution

Have one central copy of the most up-to-date constitution available online for both the members of SGA and the student body.

    C. Create a parliamentary procedure reference sheet

Make available various reference sheets that can aid congress members in their understanding and use of Robert's Rules within SGA meetings.

XI. Our Legislative Goals will include but are not limited to the following:

    A. Continue to work closely with the office of campus security to develop and promote programming to address the following issues: "active shooter" "assault" "bystander intervention" "speed bumps/parking issues"

    B. Continue to move forward with the "Credit Hours" resolution, and continue a dialogue with the upper administration on this issue.

    C. We will work closely with the elected Congress to bring forth legislation to address issues and concerns expressed by the student body.

XII.    Maintaining Constitutional Integrity

    A.  Streamline the Constitution

This process will be accomplished by going through the Constitution and removing references to Robert's Rules and SGA's By-laws.

    B.  Greater Amendment Scrutiny

This process will be accomplished by imposing greater scrutiny on potential amendments, and seeks to prevent the SGA constitution from being an ever-changing document. The need for prudence here stems from amendments in the past that have simply created and complicated issues as opposed to fixing them.

# VI. Conclusion

Through our comprehensive strategic plan for the year of 2015-2016, we hope to truly effect change in order to achieve positive results for the benefit of the students and community of Belmont University.

Our intention as servant-leaders of the student body is to act as a liaison and voice for students, while working towards meaningful goals and realistic outcomes. Through the objectives aforementioned, we hope to make further progress in all areas of concern for Belmont's growing and transformative community. Whether a student's concern lies in funding, outreach, legislation, or other matters regarding current campus issues,  we will strive to act as mediators and partners in hearing their concerns, taking steps forward to review and improve the environment of Belmont University.

Thank you for taking the time to peruse our strategic plan. We look forward to working with each member of the student body, faculty, and administration as the year begins. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to members of the Student Government Association leadership team (contact information below).

Jade Cooper

Vice President

# VII. Contact Information

**Jonathan Rankin**

President

(615) 481-5725

[jonathan.rankin@pop.belmont.edu](mailto:jonathan.rankin@pop.belmont.edu)


**Jade Cooper**

Vice President

(843) 424-9415

[jade.cooper@pop.belmont.edu](mailto:jade.cooper@pop.belmont.edu)


**McLean Pillon**

Director of Policy Review

(615) 828-1060

[mclean.pillon@pop.belmont.edu](mailto:mclean.pillon@pop.belmont.edu)


**Chris Dickerson**

Treasurer

(870) 210-0158

[chris.dickerson@pop.belmont.edu](mailto:chris.dickerson@pop.belmont.edu)

**Christina Ashworth**

Director of Campus Outreach and Events

(615) 473-2305

christina.ashworth@pop.belmont.edu

**Erica Rivero**

Secretary

(931) 308-3637

erica.rivero@pop.belmont.edu

**Madi Shultz**

Finance Committee Chair

(615) 613-5077

madi.shultz@pop.belmont.edu

**Mare Rote**

Campus Outreach and Events Committee Chair

(262) 498-0466

marianna.rote@pop.belmont.edu

**Alex Marsh**

Policy Review Committee Chair

(304) 208-6885

alexander.marsh@pop.belmont.edu