

Preface to the Constitution

According to Article IX, Section 4 of the previous Constitution, if a Constitution is deemed inadequate, “the President of the SGA is required to head a Constitution Committee with the duty of writing a new constitution.” This new Constitution is an effort to bring legitimacy and uniformity to fulfill the responsibility as stated in the Preamble.

This new Constitution incorporates general ideas set forth by the previous, yet attempts to perfect and expound upon the same. These changes include a newly expansive description of Committee Chairs, their respective committees, and their responsibilities. Our goal was to accurately reflect the current practices and structure of the contemporary SGA.

In closing, the purpose of the Constitution is to uphold and solidify the ideals expressed in the Preamble and to increase efficiency in various legislative operational procedures.

Respectively Submitted,

Kyle Batte '09

Constitutional Committee Chairman

Benton Collins '10

Constitutional Committee Parliamentarian

Preamble

Students at Freed-Hardeman University have made considerable spiritual, social, financial, and psychological investments in this institution. The realization of the full merits and virtues of the educational experience requires student participation of a legitimate, meaningful, and worthwhile nature. A conduit for the representation of student concerns, interests, and needs is paramount to the maintenance of the highest standards of academic excellence, professional prowess, and spiritual growth.

We, the students of Freed-Hardeman University, so hereby form the FHU Student Government Association to serve and to uphold a vital component of the university community and are therefore entitled to an active role in deciding its policies and priorities. To this end, the SGA shall function to improve the quality of students' academic, professional, and spiritual development.

Article I – General Provisions

Section 1: Name

The undergraduate government shall be the Student Government Association of Freed Hardeman University.

Section 2: Derivation of Authority

This Constitution shall be the ultimate authority in the exercise of power by and on behalf of the student body of Freed-Hardeman University. Student governing authority shall be vested in the Student Government Association (SGA) of Freed Hardeman University under the provisions of this Constitution.

Section 3: Purpose

The SGA shall serve as an advocate for the students of Freed-Hardeman University, shall ensure that their rights are respected, shall act as the official voice of the student body, shall represent the students' interests in all matters, and shall enact legislation with these goals in mind.

Article II – Membership

Section 1. Members

There shall be three types of voting members. Students must be in good standing in the school to be members of SGA. The Vice President of Student Services will determine eligibility and/or questions of eligibility.

1. *Executive Committee Members.* Executive Committee members shall be the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.
2. *Senators.* The Senate is the Legislative body. The Senate shall be comprised of twenty members elected from the student body at large (four Senators from each grade classification and four general Senators at large). Note: The four freshmen senators shall hold the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Public Relations Manager of the Freshman Advisory Committee (FAC). These positions are decided upon by a vote of the FAC at a time of convenience after the general election.
3. *Chairs of Standing Committees.* The Chair of Rules and Regulations, Food, Student Life, Safety, Spiritual Life, Technology, and Community Service committees shall be voting members.

Section 2. Election Process

Twenty senators shall be elected to comprise the Senate body. Sixteen SGA senators are elected by their own respective class (four from each class) during general elections in the Spring term of each academic year. In addition, four senators are selected by the student body at large, regardless of their class, fulfilling a twenty-person body of SGA senators. Furthermore, the student body shall also elect Executive Committee members during general elections each year.

Chairs of the Rules and Regulations, Spiritual Life, Student Life, Safety, and Food committees are appointed by the President and serve at his or her pleasure.

Note: A nomination form must be submitted by the candidate for all elected positions through self-nomination by the stated deadline. In addition, each candidate for election must submit a statement of candidacy.

Section 3. Term of Membership

Membership shall last for one academic year beginning as soon as candidates for election to SGA are notified of the election results.

Section 4. Rights, Duties, and Responsibilities

Section 4.1 Statement of Obligation.

It shall be the right of every elected SGA member to address issues brought before the Association either in writing or at Association meetings. In exercising SGA voting privileges, each SGA member should endeavor to represent the views of all FHU students or the members of the organization they represent to the best of their ability. In addition, SGA members are authorized to work with members of the faculty, staff, and administration on behalf of SGA, with the full support of the SGA Executive Committee in a manner agreed upon by the Executive Committee, without fear of threat to their academic careers.

Section 4.2 Duties of Senators.

Senators shall represent the student body FHU. They shall be responsible for presenting the views, concerns, and opinions of their constituency and acting on those. Each Senator shall have one vote in the general assembly of SGA and one vote in any assigned committee. Senators shall be responsible for participating on at least one SGA affiliated committee.

Section 4.3 Standards for all SGA Members

Section 4.3.1 Meeting Attendance. Members are expected to miss no more than two meetings per semester (barring any extenuating circumstances). After the second absence, the member is subject to review by the Executive Committee. SGA members are expected to contact the President and/or Secretary before meeting time if an absence is imperative. Even in the event of absence, all committee members are expected to perform the duties and responsibilities of their office. In addition, an accumulation of three instances of being tardy (defined as arriving five or more minutes after roll has been called) to a meeting will be regarded as on full absence in record for the member.

Section 4.3.2 Event Attendance. SGA members should be present at SGA sponsored events.

Section 4.3.3 Retreat Attendance. SGA members are required to attend the annual SGA retreat, unless extenuating circumstances arise, which are deemed to be legitimate for excuse.

Section 4.3.4 Academic Standing. SGA members must be in good academic standing. Any member who is not in good standing will have their membership reviewed by the Dean of Student Life to determine appropriate course of action, which may include the member resigning from the position.

Section 5. Vacancies

In case of vacancies after the general election, the alternate candidate(s) who were not elected, in order of the number of votes received in the general election shall be considered to fill the vacant position(s). If there was a tie between two or more alternates in the number of votes received in the general election, the Association will use a ballot to elect the new Association member. In the event there are no

alternates, all interested student(s) at FHU may apply for the open position(s). The student(s) will be elected to the Association upon a two-thirds vote of a quorum of the Association.

Section 6. Resignations

Any representative may resign his/her seat at any time, in writing, by notifying the President. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified. The acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section 7. Removal

A representative may be removed from the Association for failure to carry out the responsibilities of his or her office as listed in the Statement of Obligation (see Section 4 of this article) or for violation of University policy. Removal of an SGA member cannot be automatic, except in the case of academic standing, which is determined by the Dean of Student Life. Removal shall require a 2/3 vote of the entire Association. An SGA member who is being considered for removal must be notified in advance that he/she is being considered for removal and informed of the reason. Also, he/she has the right to be granted a fair hearing before the entire SGA body.

Article III: Organization

Section 1. Committees

There shall be five standing committees: The Rules and Regulations Committee, The Food Committee, The Safety Committee, The Student Life Committee, and the Spiritual Life Committee. Policy matters shall fall into the appropriate committee jurisdiction. Additional committees may be formed or dissolved by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the elected body. All committees shall be comprised of elected members of the SGA.

Section 1.1 The Rules and Regulations Committee

The Rules and Regulations Committee shall represent undergraduate interests in official University policies and priorities, and shall safeguard academic freedom and student rights. This committee will work to ensure the needs of the students within the official context of the University. It is the duty of the committee Chair to meet regularly with the Dean of Students concerning student interests.

Section 1.2 The Food Committee

The Food Committee shall act as liaison between the undergraduate student body, and the Food Services, reflecting the concerns and interests of the students. It is the duty of the Committee Chair to meet regularly with a Food Services Administrator.

Section 1.3 The Safety Committee

This committee shall be responsible for any and all matters relating to student security and safety. Further, it is the duty of the Committee Chair to act as intermediary for the student body and the Faculty and Administrative Safety Committee.

Section 1.4 The Student Life Committee

The Student Life Committee shall foster and coordinate student activities, provide meaningful services to the Freed Hardeman and undergraduate communities, and involve undergraduates in the undertaking of these activities and services.

Section 1.5 Spiritual Life Committee

The Spiritual Life Committee shall aid in creating and maintaining an atmosphere at FHU that promotes spiritual wellbeing centered on Christian values. This committee under the leadership of its Chair, will help coordinate evening devotionals for the student body. In addition, this committee should take initiative in tasks that will help to enhance the spiritual experience of each student of FHU.

Section 1.6 Technology Committee

The Technology Committee shall work with and be liaison for the student body to the Information Technology Department on all technology related issues and concerns. The creation and maintenance of a working website would also fall under the jurisdiction of this committee.

Section 1.7 Community Service Committee

The purpose of the Community Service committee shall be to coordinate and organize activities and events that will benefit the lives of not only FHU students, but those living in Henderson, Chester County, and surrounding communities.

Section 2. Executive Officers

The executive officers shall be a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary who shall be elected by the student body. No one may hold more than one of these offices concurrently, and no one may serve as a Committee Chair while serving as an executive officer. The executive officers shall serve yearlong terms.

Section 2.1 President

The President shall be the chief executive officer of the SGA and shall coordinate and direct all business and affairs of the SGA. He/she shall preside at all meetings of SGA, and shall be ex-officio member of all committees. He/she will represent the FHU student body. He/she shall have such other duties and powers as are prescribed by these bylaws and as may be assigned to him/her by the SGA. The President shall report to SGA concerning any committees that he/she serves on outside of SGA. The President is also responsible for upholding the Association's bylaws and monitoring members' adherence to the Statement of Obligation.

The President shall be the arbiter and interpreter of the SGA constitution and bylaws. All such decisions can be appealed and overturned by a majority vote of the SGA. Any other official action by the President may be overturned by the entire SGA by a majority vote.

Section 2.2 Vice President

The Vice President shall serve as the primary liaison for all internal relations. Under the authority of the President, the Vice President is responsible for monitoring each of the Standing Committees through regular contact with the Chair of each Standing Committee. He/she will ensure that the Chair of each standing committee is well informed of what the other committees in SGA are doing. In addition, in the case that the President cannot fulfill his/her duties for any reason, the Vice President will assume responsibility for all duties and powers afforded to the President.

In regards to specific duties, he/she shall be responsible for reserving places for the meetings to take place, and also shall coordinate general elections in the spring semester.

Section 2.3 Secretary

The Secretary will be in charge of objectively recording the minutes of each meeting. Copies of minutes shall be distributed to SGA and relayed to the FHU community at large within 72 hours of an SGA meeting. The duties associated with this role include being responsible for informing the student body about SGA activities and events. He/she shall also submit a set of approved minutes to the SGA sponsor upon the conclusion of each meeting and once at the end of his/her term.

Section 2.4 Treasurer

The Treasurer will be responsible for the financial oversight of the SGA budget. He/she shall also be responsible for passing on all financial record to the treasurer-elect before the expiration of his/her term. He/she shall present a financial report to the sponsors and president of SGA at mid-term and the end of each semester accounting for all SGA financial transactions.

Section 3. Executive Cabinet

The Cabinet shall consist of only the holders of those offices of the Student Government Association listed below, serving with the President of the SGA.

- The Vice President of the SGA
- The Secretary of the SGA
- The Treasurer of the SGA
- The Chair for Rules and Regulations
- The Chair for Food Services
- The Chair for Safety
- The Chair for Student Life
- The Chair for Spiritual Life
- The Chair for Technology
- The Chair for Community Service

Section 3.1 Committee Chair Duties

Committee Chairs shall be responsible for the general oversight of his/her respective committee. He/she must maintain substantial communication with executive officers, namely, the President and Vice President. Committee Chairs shall submit regular reports of their committees' actions during sanctioned SGA meetings. In addition, he/she shall reserve the authority to call meetings with his/her committee respectively outside sanctioned SGA meetings. He/she shall also be responsible for meeting with appropriate individuals/committees operating outside of the SGA. These Committee Chair shall be appointed by the elected President of each term, and may chosen from elected senators or the student body at large.

Article IV: Legislative Business

Section 1. Meetings

Any undergraduate may participate in any meeting of the SGA, unless the Sponsor or President has closed the meeting for necessary purposes. Such a decision to close the meeting may be overturned by a majority vote of the Association.

Section 2. Committee Jurisdiction

Only one committee may pursue legislative work in one area unless the Committee Chairs in question determine otherwise. In the event of disputed jurisdiction, the President has the power to refer all legislation to a certain committee.

Section 3. Quorum

The quorum of any meeting shall be a simple majority of the voting members. SGA business may continue in the absence of a quorum. No legislation can be passed in the absence of the quorum.

Section 4. Motions

A motion may be made by any member of the SGA. No motions will be allowed unless permitted by Parliamentary procedure.

Article V: Accountability

Section 1. Information

Any document or record produced by the SGA or any department shall be a matter of public record.

Section 2. Officers

Every officer who exercises any power or duty under the authority of this constitution, or who represents the SGA, is responsible to the electing body and ultimately to the SGA. The SGA may move to expel any officer or member.

Section 3. Expulsion

Expulsion shall be defined as the removal of an individual for misconduct from the SGA. Expulsion results in the forfeiture of all associated offices and privileges. Any individual who exercises power or duty under this constitution or bylaws may be subject to expulsion. Expulsion due to attendance or misconduct, as outlined in Article II, shall require a 2/3 vote of the entire SGA.

Article VI: Amendment to the Constitution

Section 1. Proposal

Amendments to this Constitution shall be made exclusively at a regularly sanctioned meeting by a 2/3 majority vote of the SGA and by the decision of the sponsor. Proposed amendments to this Constitution must be received in written form by the SGA President at least one week prior to the designated regularly sanctioned meeting of the SGA.

Section 2. Voting

All amendments to be voted on at an SGA meeting must be approved by the sponsor, published, and distributed at least four days prior to the voting date. If $\frac{3}{4}$ of the SGA vote that this constitution is inadequate, the SGA president is required to head a constitution committee with the duty of writing a new constitution that must be published and distributed to each member at least three weeks before final examinations and will become effective the following semester upon approval of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the SGA members and the approval of the sponsors.

Article VII: By-laws

Section 1. Presentation and Ratification

By-laws shall be presented to the SGA by the President, and may pass with a simply majority vote among the members of the SGA.