

Illinois State University Student Government Association

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the members of the student body of Illinois State University, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Student Government Association (SGA) of Illinois State University. We further recognize the SGA as the official student governing body.

Article I. Bill of Rights

Section 1. Students' Rights and Freedoms

The following rights and freedoms are afforded to each member of the student body of Illinois State University:

- A. A. The right to receive financial aid from public funds and to participate fully and freely in University and student-sponsored activities and services without discrimination based on a student's race, creed, color, sex, gender, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.
- B. B. The right in the classroom to full freedom of expression, discussion, and inquiry related to the course, and the right to evaluation during and upon completion of the course.
- A. A. The right to protection against any unauthorized disclosure of a student's information by the University concerning a student's views, beliefs, or political associations unless required by law.
- B. B. The right to affiliate with any registered student organization without discrimination or prejudice towards the student's race, creed, color, sex, gender, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.
- C. C. The right to affiliate with any registered student organization without adversely affecting the student's standing in the University.
- D. D. The right to organize student organizations.
- E. E. The right to establish and maintain a democratic student government in which each student shall have an equal right to participate.
- F. F. The right to access services provided by the University.
- G. G. The right to due process and appeal with an established University judicial system in all matters which can result in the imposition of sanctions for misconduct.
- H. H. The right of unaltered University status independent of non-University financial obligations.
- I. I. The right to petition the University for changes in academic or policy regulations.
- J. J. The right to be free from any mandatory dress code.

Section 2. Registered Student Organizations' Rights and Freedoms

The following rights and freedoms are afforded to each registered student organization of Illinois State University:

- A. A. To be recognized by the SGA.
- B. B. To petition the SGA.
- C. C. To endorse specific groups.

- D. D. To establish its own constitution or rules of governance.
- E. E. To select its own leadership.
- F. F. To give audience to any person or group.
- G. G. To participate freely in both on- and off-campus activities.
- H. H. To receive preferential use of available University facilities in accordance with established reservation procedures.
- I. I. To advertise opinions publicly via the dissemination of literature or vocal expression.
- J. J. To participate in the student fee distribution process.
- K. K. To maintain local autonomy from extra-University organizations.

Article II. Illinois State University Student Government Association

Section 1. Organization

The official governing structure for the student body of Illinois State University shall be named the Student Government Association (SGA), with power vested in and distributed between an executive branch and a legislative branch.

Section 2. Affiliation

All undergraduate and graduate students not having full-time administrative, faculty, and/or civil service status at Illinois State University are members of the student body, and, as such, are eligible to vote in its elections and participate in its activities.

Section 3. Purpose

The purpose of the SGA shall be the following:

- A. A. To represent the needs and interests of the student body through Assembly legislation and positions of advocacy.
- B. B. To proactively effect change in the best interest of the student body.
- C. C. To address issues affecting members of the student body.
- D. D. To provide services to meet student needs.
- E. E. To build a vital, thriving university community.
- F. F. To promote student rights.
- G. G. To provide input to University policy decisions.
- H. H. To further the cultural, social, and physical growth of the student body.
- I. I. To recognize outstanding achievement by students and organizations.

Article III. The Administration

Section 1. Membership, Qualifications, and Compensation

- A. A. The executive branch of the SGA shall be named the Administration. The Administration will be composed of the executive officers and the executive staff.
 1. The executive officers are the Student Body President, the Student Body Vice President, and the Chief of Staff.
 2. The Administration shall have five (5) executive staff members, each of whom shall have charge of an executive division. The titles of the executive staff members, the names of the executive divisions, and the respective authority,

- powers, and responsibilities afforded to each staff member and division shall be set forth in the Bylaws.
- B. B. All Administration officials shall be members of the student body and shall be in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of election or appointment.
1. The Student Body President, the Student Body Vice President, and the Chief of Staff must be students who have attended Illinois State University for at least two full semesters at the time of election or appointment, not including a summer semester, with the exception of the following:
 - a. a. A second semester transfer student with an associate's degree or at least sixty (60) cumulative academic credits.
 - b. b. A second semester graduate student with a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year academic institution.
 2. The executive staff members must be students who have attended Illinois State University for at least one full semester at the time of appointment.
 3. No executive officer or executive staff member may hold his/her SGA position concurrently with another office or position in the Administration or an ex-officio representative seat, with the exception of concurrent services during the transition period.
- C. C. The executive officers, executive staff members, and senators shall receive financial compensation, which shall be enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 2. Authority, Powers, and Responsibilities of the Executive Officers

- A. A. The Student Body President shall have the following authority, powers, and responsibilities:
1. To abide by, enforce, and support the SGA Constitution.
 2. To exercise overriding executive authority within his/her administration, as well as delegate assignments to other executive officers and executive staff members, as necessary.
 3. To supervise the operations of the SGA executive officers and executive staff.
 4. To serve as the chief student official and spokesperson for the student body.
 5. To faithfully execute the policies and legislation of the SGA and the Academic Senate.
 6. To deliver the "State of the Student Body Address" to the student body.
 7. To serve as an ex-officio member of all internal committees.
 8. To regularly meet with and accept reports from all Administration officials.
 9. To nominate and, with the advice and consent of the Assembly, appoint students to vacant executive and legislative offices and positions, as provided for in this Constitution or the Bylaws.
 10. To veto legislation deemed not in the best interests of the student body.
 11. To advise the Vice President for Student Affairs on issues affecting students.
 12. To perform other duties as assigned by the Assembly or the Bylaws.
- B. B. The Student Body Vice President shall have the following authority, powers, and responsibilities:
1. To abide by and support the SGA Constitution.
 2. To serve as Acting Student Body President in the absence of the Student Body President.

3. To generally assist the Student Body President with the management and supervision of the Administration.
 4. To advise the Student Body President on all personnel appointments.
 5. To advise the Student Body President on matters pertinent to the student body.
 6. To perform other duties as assigned by the Student Body President, the Assembly, or the Bylaws.
- C. C. The Chief of Staff shall have the following authority, powers, and responsibilities:
1. To abide by and support the SGA Constitution.
 2. To serve as the fiscal officer for the SGA, maintaining accurate financial records of all disbursements and receipts and upholding the fiscal integrity of the SGA.
 3. To advise the Student Body President on matters pertinent to the student body.
 4. To authorize expenditures consistent with the appropriated budget.
 5. To serve as custodian of all SGA equipment and resources.
 6. To be responsible for the coordination and oversight of the executive staff members.
 7. To cause to be maintained order in all Assembly meetings, at the direction of the Speaker, through the designation of a Sergeant-at-Arms.
 8. To perform other duties as assigned by the Student Body President, the Assembly, or the Bylaws.

Article IV. The Assembly

Section 1. Membership and Qualifications

- A. A. The legislative branch of the SGA shall be called the Assembly. The Assembly will be composed of the elected and appointed student senators.
- B. B. The Assembly will consist of twenty (20) student senators, each with equal voice and voting privileges.
 1. On-campus senators must maintain on-campus residency from the fall of their terms through the inauguration of the next elected officers the following spring.
 2. Off-campus senators must maintain off-campus residency from the fall of their terms through the inauguration of the next elected officers the following spring.
 3. Underrepresented senators shall be nominated and, with the advice and consent of the sitting Assembly, appointed by the Student Body President. The Student Body President shall initiate a mechanism by which can be determined the underrepresented constituencies not reflected by the sitting membership of the Assembly and shall also initiate an application process before submitting nominations to the Assembly.
- C. C. All senators must have completed at least one full semester at Illinois State University at the time of election or appointment, with the exception of transfer or graduate students.
- D. D. No senator may hold his/her seat on the Assembly concurrently with an office or position in the Administration or an ex-officio representative seat.

Section 2. Authority, Powers, and Responsibilities

- A. A. The Assembly as a whole shall have the following authority, powers, and responsibilities:
1. To support the University community and its mission.
 2. To represent the student body to the University and local community.
 3. To initiate student referenda in accordance with University guidelines.
 4. To approve and monitor the SGA budget.
 5. To confirm presidential appointments.
 6. To enact legislation, resolutions, and policies on behalf of and in the best interests of the student body.
 7. To accept reports from the Administration, internal committees, and members of the University community.
 8. To override a presidential veto.
 9. To elect as Assembly officers the Speaker of the Assembly, the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, and the Secretary of the Assembly.
- B. B. Administrative leadership for the Assembly shall be vested in the officers of the Assembly, while legitimate authority is vested in the collective voting of the Assembly senators. The officers of the Assembly shall be the Speaker of the Assembly, the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, and the Secretary of the Assembly.
1. The Speaker of the Assembly shall have the following authority, powers, and responsibilities:
 - a. a. To abide by and support the SGA Constitution.
 - b. b. To preside at all Assembly and caucus meetings.
 - c. c. To set the agendas for all Assembly and caucus meetings.
 - d. d. To direct the maintenance of order and decorum in all Assembly meetings, directing the Chief of Staff to take appropriate enforcement action, when necessary.
 - e. e. To serve as the chief spokesperson for the Assembly.
 - f. f. To delegate assignments to the Deputy Speaker, the Secretary of the Assembly, and other senators.
 - g. g. To perform other duties as assigned by the Assembly or the Bylaws.
 2. The Deputy Speaker of the Assembly shall have the following authority, powers, and responsibilities:
 - a. a. To abide by and support the SGA Constitution.
 - b. b. To advise the Speaker on matters pertaining to Assembly legislation.
 - c. c. To serve as Acting Speaker in the absence of the Speaker.
 - d. d. To generally assist the Speaker with the administration of the Assembly.
 - e. e. To perform other duties as assigned by the Assembly or the Bylaws.
 3. The Secretary of the Assembly shall have the following authority, powers, and responsibilities:
 - a. a. To abide by and support the SGA Constitution.
 - b. b. To advise the Speaker on matters pertaining to Assembly legislation.
 - c. c. To generally assist the Speaker with the administration of Assembly matters.
 - d. d. To perform other duties as assigned by the Speaker, the Assembly, or the Bylaws.

4. The on-campus, off-campus, and underrepresented senators shall have the following authority, powers and responsibilities:
 - a. a. To abide by and support the SGA Constitution.
 - b. b. To represent their respective constituencies.
 - c. c. To cast binding votes on matters before the Assembly.
 - d. d. To perform other duties as assigned by the Speaker, the Assembly, or the Bylaws.

Article V. Internal Committees, External Committees, and Commissions

Section 1. Internal Committees

- A. Membership on internal committees is afforded to SGA executive officers, executive staff members, and Assembly senators. The Assembly may provide for additional memberships.
- B. The committees, their memberships, and the respective authority, powers, and responsibilities of the internal committees shall be enumerated in the Bylaws.
- C. C. All internal committee members shall have equal voice in internal committee proceedings.
- D. D. Every attempt should be made to reach consensus on any decision before an internal committee. If, however, a vote must be taken, only the seated senators have voting privileges in committee proceedings. The only exception is for Executive Committee proceedings, in which all members may vote.
- E. E. All meetings of the Executive Committee shall be conducted in executive session, with guests permitted only with the consent of a majority of the committee's membership.

Section 2. External Committees

Student membership on external committees is afforded to any interested member of the student body. The external committees to which the SGA makes student appointments and their respective authority, powers, and responsibilities shall be enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 3. Ad Hoc Committees

- A. A. Ad hoc committees may be created for the purposes of conducting preliminary deliberation on legislative matters or for making specific recommendations to the Assembly when the focus of the committee is not consistent with the authority, powers, or responsibilities of an internal committee.
- B. B. Ad hoc committee chairpersons shall be afforded the same authority, powers, and responsibilities of an internal committee chairperson.
- C. C. Ad hoc committee secretaries shall be afforded the same authority, powers, and responsibilities of an internal committee secretary.
- D. D. Ad hoc committees shall receive their charges and/or direction from the Speaker or the Assembly.

Section 4. Commissions

- A. A. The Student Body President shall establish student commissions. The memberships of the commissions shall be described in the Bylaws.
- B. B. Commissions shall be established to involve members of the student body in gathering information, debating alternative solutions, and recommending to the SGA solutions to specific student issues and concerns.
- C. C. The Student Body President may abolish a commission at any time, or once it has completed its charge. The Assembly may at any time abolish a commission that strays from its charge by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.
- D. D. Every attempt shall be made to reach consensus on any decision before a commission. If, however, a vote must be taken, all commission members have equal voice and vote, including the commissioner.

Article VI. Membership

Section 1. Membership

- A. A. Any registered student organization, or person designated by the Vice President for Student Affairs as a special representative, may petition the Assembly for ex-officio status if said organization's constitution and purpose reflect the desire to represent a specific group or groups of students not represented on SGA. Priority for ex-officio status will be afforded to those organizations or special representatives designated by federal Affirmative Action Information Classifications with race/ethnic, gender, disabled, disabled veteran, or Vietnam-era veteran classifications. Consideration will be given to other populations that represent specific student groups but are not reflected in the Affirmative Action guidelines. However, these groups in petitioning must show an unmet student need for current representation.
- B. B. After the organization formally petitions the Assembly, the Assembly will consider the petition over a period of three months from the date of the petition, excluding summer months. When three months have expired, the Assembly will render its decision.
- C. C. A denied petition will offer rationale for the decision of the Assembly to the rejected student organization.
- D. D. A petition approved by the Assembly will result in the conferment of ex-officio status upon the student organization, and said organization will be eligible for financial compensation after one full fiscal year expires from the date of Assembly approval.
- E. E. The student organizations and offices with ex-officio status on SGA at the time of ratification of this Constitution shall automatically acquire ex-officio status under the auspices of the newly ratified Constitution.
- F. F. The ex-officio organizations of the SGA shall be enumerated in the Bylaws.

Article VII. Elections

Section 1. Executive Officers

- A. A. The Student Body President, the Student Body Vice President, and the Chief of Staff must be elected as a slate by the student body at large.

- B. B. The *Student Elections Code* shall govern the election of the SGA executive officers.

Section 2. Assembly Senators

- A. A. The on-campus senators must be elected by students residing in University housing at the time of election.
- B. B. The off-campus senators must be elected individually by students living off-campus at the time of election.
- C. C. The *Student Elections Code* shall govern the election of the on- and off-campus Assembly senators, unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution or the Bylaws.

Section 3. Ex-officios

Each ex-officio organization shall conduct its own election and inauguration of officers, within the guidelines established by the *Student Elections Code*.

Article VIII. Operations and Procedures

Section 1. Attendance and Participation Requirements for Assembly Senators

- A. A. Each senator of the Assembly shall be required to participate fully in or assist with all activities, functions, operations, and official meetings sponsored or co-sponsored by the Student Government Association, at the request of the Student Body President or the Speaker of the Assembly.
- B. B. Attendance and participation requirements for Assembly senators may be enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 2. Summer Assembly

The Assembly may delegate its authority to a group of individuals in the summer so as to maintain checks and balances. Special authorizations and/or delegation may be designated in the Bylaws.

Article IX. Removal and Revocation

Section 1. Recall

- A. A. Any SGA executive officer, elected Assembly senator, or ex-officio representative may be recalled from office by his/her constituents. The procedure for removal through recall is as follows:
 1. A petition for recall signed by five (5) percent of an elected SGA member's constituency must be submitted to the Student Body President or the Speaker of the Assembly.
 2. Upon submission of the recall petition, the Student Body President or the Speaker of the Assembly shall convene a special hearing for all members of the charged member's constituency. At this hearing, the charged SGA member shall present his/her case to his/her constituents.
 3. After the special hearing has occurred, a recall referendum shall be initiated by the Student Body President or the Speaker of the Assembly.

4. An elected SGA member shall be recalled from office if a majority of the charged individual's constituents vote in favor of recall.
 5. No individual who has served less than one month shall be eligible for recall.
 6. No individual may be considered for recall on the same charge in a single term.
- B. B. If an executive officer or elected Assembly senator is recalled from office, the respective executive office or legislative seat shall be immediately considered vacant.
- C. C. If an ex-officio representative is recalled from office, then his/her respective organization or office shall select a qualified student to fill the ex-officio representative seat.

Section 2. Impeachment

- A. A. Any executive officer, Assembly senator, or ex-officio representative may be removed from office by impeachment. The procedure for removal through impeachment is as follows:
1. A motion to impeach an individual for negligence or irresponsibility must be adopted by a majority of the total membership of the Assembly.
 2. If a motion to impeach is adopted by a majority, then the Student Body President or the Speaker of the Assembly shall convene a special hearing for all SGA members. At this hearing, the case against the impeached SGA member shall be presented. The impeached individual shall have the opportunity to present a defense against the charges.
 3. At the next Assembly meeting subsequent to the hearing, the accusing party must move to convict the impeached member. The impeached member shall have the opportunity to address the Assembly before a vote is taken. The impeached member may be convicted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Assembly.
 4. No individual may be impeached more than once on the same charge.
 5. No Assembly senator may vote on a motion to impeach or a motion to convict in which he/she is named.
 6. No motion to impeach shall be in order if the motion names more than one SGA member.
- B. B. If an executive officer or Assembly senator is impeached and convicted, the respective office or legislative seat shall be immediately considered vacant.
- C. C. If an ex-officio representative is impeached and convicted, then the ex-officio status of the ex-officio organization or office shall be suspended until the organization or office designates a new ex-officio representative.

Section 3. Dismissal

The Student Body President may dismiss any executive staff member for negligence or irresponsibility in performing assigned duties. If an executive staff member is dismissed, his/her position shall be considered vacant.

Section 4. Revocation of Ex-Officio Status

- A. A. The Assembly may revoke the ex-officio status of an ex-officio organization or office for failure to satisfy attendance requirements, negligence in representing a respective constituency, deficiency in support of the activities and operations of the

SGA, or default on other responsibilities determined by the Assembly. The procedure for revocation of ex-officio status is as follows:

1. A motion to consider the revocation of the ex-officio status of an ex-officio organization or office for good cause must be adopted by the majority of the total membership of the Assembly.
 2. If a motion to consider the revocation is adopted by a majority, then the Student Body President and Speaker of the Assembly shall jointly convene a hearing for all SGA members. At this hearing, the case for revocation shall be presented. The ex-officio organization or office in question shall have the opportunity to present a defense against these charges.
 3. At the next Assembly meeting subsequent to the hearing, the accusing party must move for the formal revocation of the ex-officio status of the ex-officio organization or office. The ex-officio organization or office in question shall have the opportunity to address the Assembly. The ex-officio status of the organization or office in question may be revoked by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Assembly.
 4. No consideration for the revocation of the ex-officio status of an ex-officio organization or office may be entertained more than once for the same charge in a single term.
- B. B. If the ex-officio status of an ex-officio organization or office is revoked by the Assembly, then the organization or office shall immediately forfeit all of the rights and privileges of an ex-officio organization, excluding the privilege of compensation, which shall be retained through the end of the pay period.

Article X. Succession and Vacancies

Section 1. Executive Succession

- A. A. In the event that the Student Body President is unable to fulfill his/her duties due to extended illness or absence, the Student Body Vice President shall serve as the Acting Student Body President.
- B. B. In the event that the office of Student Body President is vacated due to resignation, removal, or disqualification from office, the Student Body Vice President shall automatically become the Student Body President. The office of the Student Body Vice President shall then be considered vacant.
- C. C. In the event that the office of the Student Body Vice President or the office of Chief of Staff is vacated, the Student Body President shall fill the vacant position by nomination and appointment as prescribed by this Constitution.
- D. D. In cases where the Student Body Vice President cannot serve as the Acting Student Body President, or when the office of Student Body President is vacated due to resignation, removal, or disqualification from office and cannot be filled by the Student Body Vice President, the order of succession then shall be respectively the Chief of Staff, the Speaker of the Assembly, the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, the Secretary of the Assembly, and then an executive staff member as determined by the Assembly.

Section 2. Legislative Succession

- A. A. In the event that the Speaker of the Assembly is unable to fulfill his/her duties due to extended illness or absence, the Deputy Speaker shall serve as Acting Speaker.
- B. B. In the event that the Secretary of the Assembly is unable to fulfill his/her duties due to extended illness or absence, the Speaker shall appoint a member of the Assembly to serve as Acting Secretary.
- C. C. In the event that the office of Speaker is vacated due to resignation, removal, or disqualification from office, the Deputy Speaker shall serve as Acting Speaker until a new Speaker is elected. The Student Body Vice President shall preside over the election of a new Speaker.
- D. D. In the event that the office of Secretary is vacated due to resignation, removal, or disqualification from office, the Speaker shall conduct an election for a new Secretary.

Section 3. Filling Vacancies

- A. A. To fill any vacant executive office, executive staff position, or Assembly legislative seat, the Student Body President shall nominate and, with the advice and consent of the Assembly, appoint a qualified student to fill the vacancy.
- B. B. A student shall immediately assume the duties of his/her respective office or position after confirmation by the Assembly and receipt of the oath of office from the Student Body President in the presence of the Assembly

Article XI. Constitution, Bylaws, and Amendments

Section 1. Constitution

Upon effective ratification by the SGA Assembly, this Constitution shall supersede all rules set forth in previous Constitutions. However, in cases where this Constitution conflicts with the University Constitution, the University Constitution shall prevail.

Section 2. Bylaws

The SGA Assembly may create Bylaws to enumerate rules and procedures in addition to those set forth in this Constitution. However, in cases where the Bylaws conflict with this Constitution, this Constitution shall prevail.

Section 3. Amendments

- A. A. This Constitution may be amended by a majority of the voting student body.
 - 1. Any SGA member may introduce proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution at any regular Assembly meeting. At said meeting, the proposed amendment(s) shall undergo a first reading.
 - 2. At the next regular Assembly meeting, the proposed amendment(s) shall undergo a second reading. After the second reading, the amendment(s) may be submitted to the Assembly in the form of a preliminary referendum for ratification.
 - 3. If the Assembly approves a preliminary referendum, then the referendum shall be officially submitted to the student body for approval.

- B. B. This Constitution may also be amended by a $\frac{3}{4}$ approval of the present and voting membership of the Assembly and a petition signed by 10% of the student body attesting to its approval of the change(s) to the Constitution.
1. Any SGA member may introduce proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution at any regular Assembly meeting. At said meeting, the proposed amendment(s) shall undergo a first reading.
 2. At the next regular Assembly meeting, the proposed amendment(s) shall undergo a second reading. After the second reading, the amendment(s) may be submitted to the Assembly for consideration.
 3. If the Assembly approves the amendment(s), the Assembly shall have at least two weeks from the approval date to acquire the signatures of consent from 10% of the student body in order for the change(s) to take effect.
- C. C. The Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the total membership of the Assembly.
1. Any SGA member may introduce proposed amendment(s) to the Bylaws at any regular Assembly meeting. At said meeting, the proposed amendment(s) shall undergo a single reading.
 2. After the reading, the Assembly may consider the amendment(s) immediately.

Ratified:
2/06/01