

Constitution of the Student Government
Association
University of Massachusetts at Boston



2005

Preamble:

We, the undergraduate students of the University of Massachusetts Boston, in order to form a more democratic system for university governance and promote the general welfare of all undergraduate students, do hereby establish and ordain this Constitution of the Student Government Association of the University of Massachusetts at Boston. In the exercise of its powers, the Student Government Association shall not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, age, sex, religion, handicap, sexual orientation/preference, or veteran status.

Article I

Name

Section 1 The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association, herein denoted SGA, of the University of Massachusetts at Boston, herein denoted the University.

Article II

Purpose

Section 1 The SGA exists to provide a democratic and formal vehicle to represent the interests of students in all aspects of University life, not limited to but including promoting student leadership at the University, and enhancing the educational, cultural and community experience of the students of the University.

Article III

Authority

Section 1 This constitution shall supersede any other previously existing system of campus-wide governance for the undergraduate students of the University.

Section 2 The SGA derives authority from the undergraduate students of the University, in regular election, and the Board of Trustees, as provided for in chapter 75 section 3 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Section 3 The SGA shall govern in accordance with the Board of Trustees' Statement on University Governance [T73-098, as amended] herein denoted the Wellman Document.

Section 4 All Bylaws, Acts, procedures and all other actions of the SGA shall be in accordance with this Constitution and the Wellman Document.

Article IV

Membership

Section 1 All undergraduate students who are assessed a student activities fee are members of the SGA.

Section 2 SGA members shall be eligible to vote in the general election of Senate seats for the academic unit or college in which the SGA member is registered.

Section 3 All SGA members are eligible to vote on ballot questions in the general elections.

Section 4 In addition all University members shall elect the student member of the University Board of Trustees.

Section 5 Members who are elected or appointed to office shall hold the title of SGA official, and shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Section 6 All SGA officials of the University shall meet the qualifications prescribed by the General Bylaws of the SGA, as approved by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, unless otherwise provided for. In addition, elected officials of the SGA shall meet all the following minimum requirements at the time of election and throughout their term of office:

1. They are matriculated, degree-seeking undergraduates at the University of Massachusetts Boston.
2. They hold at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average based on a minimum of nine (9) credit hours per semester, or the equivalent competencies per semester if enrolled in the College of Public and Community Service (CPCS).

Section 7 Vacancies on the Senate may be filled by election as defined in the General Bylaws of the SGA, herein denoted Bylaws. Students that are elected to fill vacancies shall be eligible to serve until the next election.

Section 8 The SGA shall not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, class, handicap, political affiliation or veteran status.

Section 9 The following shall be ex-officio members of the Senate:

1. The Student Trustee
2. The Chancellor, or his/her designee
3. The Chief Officer of Student Affairs, or his/her designee
4. the head of the Department of Student Life, or his/her designee
5. a representative selected by the Faculty Council
6. a representative selected by the Faculty Staff Union

Article V

Structure

- Section 1 The SGA shall be comprised of a Senate and its committees, herein denoted Senate.
- Section 2 The Senate shall hold a thirty (30)-seat maximum.
- Section 3 No Senator shall hold more than one office in the SGA, unless provided for in the Bylaws.
- Section 4 A minimum of two (2) seats in the Senate will be apportioned to each College of the University; thereafter seats shall be filled by general membership as described in the Bylaws.
- Section 5 Senators elected to seats apportioned in their respective colleges shall serve as the official representatives of their college as described in the Bylaws.
- Section 6 The Senate shall provide for the formation of standing committees as provided for in the Bylaws, which shall include the following:
1. The Executive Committee.
 - a. This committee shall include the President, the Vice President, and the chairs of the committees of the Senate.
 - b. This committee shall set the agenda for all General Senate meetings and recommend the membership of other committees to the Senate.
 - c. This committee shall have Executive Authority as defined in Article VIII of this constitution.
 2. The Budget and Finance Committee.
 - a. This committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members who are Senators.
 - b. This committee shall have complete responsibility for the planning and review of the budgeting of the Student Activities Trust Fund (SATF) and for presenting its plans and recommendations to the Senate.

Section 7 The Senate shall have regular meetings and publish minutes as provided for in the Bylaws.

Article VI

Powers

Section 1 The Senate shall have the power to invoke and amend this Constitution as prescribed in Article X of this Constitution requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership and the approval of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and a majority (50% +1) vote of the SGA through an action referendum, and the Board of Trustees.

Section 2 The Senate shall have the power to enact, amend or repeal the Bylaws, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the Senate, and the approval of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, unless otherwise provided for by said Bylaws.

Section 3 The Senate shall have the power to recommend and establish legislation, policy, and procedure regarding the governance of the undergraduate students at the University.

Section 4 The Senate shall have the power to recognize and grant authority to student-initiated college-level governments, and communicate with them as provided for in the Bylaws.

Section 5 The Senate shall have the power to budget and recommend the annual allocation of the Student Activities Trust Fund and all revenues generated by said funds, which the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Chancellor shall approve prior to submission to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Section 6 The Senate shall have the power to serve as a consultative student body on all campus affairs affecting the Undergraduate Student Body as set forth in the Wellman Document.

Section 7 The Senate shall have the power to provide for student input in developing and monitoring academic policies, and in evaluating courses, programs, and graduation requirements as pursuant to the Wellman Document.

Section 8 The Senate shall have the power to initiate a referendum, as described by Article IX of this Constitution, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership.

Section 9 The Senate shall have the power to ratify appointments of the SGA and any other body recognized by this Constitution or the Bylaws, requiring a majority vote of the membership as prescribed in the Bylaws.

- Section 10 The Senate shall have the power to override an Executive Veto, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership.
- Section 11 The Senate shall have the power to impeach or rescind an appointment of an official of the SGA for violation of their responsibilities to the SGA, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership.
- Section 12 The Senate shall have the power to expel a member of the Senate for violation of their responsibilities to the SGA, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership.
- Section 13 The Senate shall have the power to provide for the succession of those offices not otherwise provided for in this Constitution.
- Section 14 The Senate shall have the power to participate in an annual review of the performance of staff members paid from the SATF and to make recommendations for changes in the offices of the staff members.
- Section 15 The Senate shall have the power to make recommendations concerning the charge and composition of all search committees that nominate and/or select the administrative officers of the University. The Senate shall send nominations for student membership on these search committees to the Chancellor, or when appropriate, to the Board of Trustees.
- Section 16 The Senate shall have the power to make recommendations concerning the charge and composition of all committees and boards whose decisions affect the interests of the Undergraduate Student Body.
- Section 17 The Senate shall have the power to assume and delegate all powers of the SGA not expressly provided for by the Constitution or Bylaws
- Section 18 The Senate shall have the power to provide for the transition of the SGA to this Constitution.
- Section 19 The Senate shall have the power to approve a recommended increase in the Student Activities fee of over 7.5%, and any such increase shall require approval of the Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate membership, and an affirmative vote of the SGA membership through a referendum.
- Section 20 The Senate shall have the power to suspend Roberts Rules of Order, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate membership.
- Section 21 The Senate shall have the power to provide for compensation for its membership.

Article VII

Procedures

- Section 1 The Senate shall elect from among its membership a Senate President, Senate Vice President, Faculty Council Representative and Chairpersons of the Committees. The elected officials of the Senate shall have duties and responsibilities as prescribed in the Bylaws.
- Section 2 All resolutions, policy, and procedure of the SGA shall be introduced, read, and passed in a manner prescribed by this Constitution and the Bylaws. Matters brought before the Senate may be reviewed by the appropriate committee prior to action taken by the Senate.
- Section 3 All resolutions, policy, and procedure of the SGA shall be considered acts of the Senate only after being signed by the Senate President. Any act remaining unsigned within one (1) day of the next regular meeting of the Senate following its passage shall be considered vetoed, as prescribed in the Bylaws.
- Section 4 The quorum for the conduct of business at the meetings of the Senate shall consist of a majority (50% + 1) of the membership, unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution or the Bylaws.
- Section 5 The Senate shall govern its meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order, except as provided for in this constitution or the Bylaws.

Article VIII

The Executive

- Section 1 The Executive Authority of the SGA shall be vested in the Executive Committee, chaired by the Senate President.
- Section 2 The Executive Committee shall have the power to:
1. Execute, uphold and defend the Constitution, Bylaws, and Acts of the SGA.
 2. Make appointments to and recommendations concerning the charge and composition of all committees and boards whose decisions affect the interest of the Undergraduate Student Body.
 3. To call the Senate or any committee thereof into session as prescribed in the Bylaws.

4. Establish and coordinate all communications within the Senate and from the Senate to the University community.
5. Veto, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority, a resolution upon its passage in the Senate, as prescribed in the Constitution and Bylaws.
6. Initiate a referendum as described in Article IX of this Constitution.
7. Make reports on University governance to the University community
8. Ensure operation of the Senate and all committees thereof.
9. Temporarily suspend, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, a senator until the next full Senate meeting. Suspension shall initiate a vote of no confidence as prescribed in the Bylaws at the next meeting.

Section 3 The Executive Committee shall assume all powers not provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 4 The Senate President shall assume all powers of the Executive Committee not requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote when the committee is not in session.

Section 5 The Senate Vice President shall serve as Senate President in the event of an absence until the next election.

Article IX *SGA Referenda*

Section 1 The SGA may initiate referenda concerning the interest of the undergraduate students at the University.

Section 2 There shall be two Primary types of referenda, Action and Advisory.

Section 3 Upon passage in the Senate and signing of the President on behalf of the Executive Committee, an Action referendum shall become an Act of the SGA as prescribed in the Bylaws, and may be submitted pursuant to the Wellman Document.

Section 4 Upon passage in the Senate and signing of the President on behalf of the Executive Committee, an Advisory referendum shall be a measure of public opinion.

Article X
Amendments

Section 1 This Constitution shall be amended as provided for in this Constitution.

Section 2 An amendment to this Constitution shall be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate and a majority (50% + 1) of those voting of the SGA through an Action referendum, with the ratification of the Board of Trustees.

Section 3 Upon its passage in the Senate, signing of the President, approval of a majority of the SGA, and approval from the Board of Trustees, an Amendment shall become duly promulgated legislation of the SGA.

Article XI
Ratification

Section 1 This constitution shall be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate and a majority (50% + 1) vote of the SGA through an Action referendum, with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2 Ratification of this Constitution shall be scheduled on a regular basis for a period of no less than two (2) and no more than four (4) terms, each term consisting of one full academic year, of the SGA.