

**Constitution of the Student Government Association  
University of Massachusetts at Boston  
2009**

### **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.

### **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, including but not limited to, 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 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, and the Board of Trustees, as provided for in Section 3, Chapter 75 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 the “Student Activities Fee” are members of the SGA.
- Section 2 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 3 SGA members are eligible to vote for the SGA President and SGA Vice-President.
- Section 4 SGA members are eligible to vote in the general election of the Senate for the academic unit or college in which the SGA member is registered.
- Section 5 SGA members are eligible to vote on referenda questions in the general election.
- Section 6 SGA members are eligible to vote in the election of the student member of the University Board of Trustees.
- Section 7 Members who are elected or appointed to office shall hold the title of SGA Official.
- Section 8 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. In addition, Officials of the SGA shall meet all the following minimum requirements at the time of their election or appointment and throughout their term in 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, or the equivalent competencies if enrolled in the College of Public and Community Service (CPCS).
- Section 9 Vacancies on the Senate may be filled by election as defined in the Bylaws. Students that are elected to fill vacancies shall be eligible to serve until the next election.
- Section 10 The SGA shall have the power to provide compensation for its Officials, as prescribed in the Bylaws.

**Article V**  
Structure

- Section 1 The SGA shall be comprised of a Legislative Branch, consisting of the Senate and its committees; an Executive Branch, consisting of the President, Vice President and Cabinet; and a Judicial Branch.
- Section 2 The three Branches shall be collectively referred to as the Undergraduate Student Government (USG).
- Section 3 No Official shall hold office in more than one branch of the USG.
- Section 4 The Student Trustee is ineligible to hold any elected or appointed position in the USG.
- Section 5 The USG shall have the authority to create Bylaws to carry out its duties and responsibilities under the Constitution.
- Section 6 There shall be a general election once per academic year.
- Section 7 The SGA may initiate impeachment proceedings against any SGA Official, as prescribed in the Bylaws.

## **Article VI** The Legislature

- Section 1 The Legislative Authority of the SGA shall be vested in the Legislative Branch.
- Section 2 The Legislative Branch shall be comprised of the Senate and any other bodies recognized by this Constitution or Bylaws.
- Section 3 The Senate shall have one Senator for every 350 members of the SGA. The Senate shall not consist of fewer than 30 Senators.
- Section 4 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
- Section 5 Senators shall be elected in a manner prescribed by the Bylaws of the SGA and serve for a term prescribed therein.

- Section 6 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. Senators elected to seats apportioned in their respective colleges shall serve as the official representatives of their college as described in the Bylaws.
- Section 7 The Senate shall elect from among its membership a chairperson and official representative to the other SGA Branches. The chairperson of the Senate shall hold the title of Speaker. The Speaker of the Senate shall have duties and responsibilities as prescribed in the Bylaws.
- Section 8 The Senate shall provide for the formation of standing committees as provided for in the Bylaws, which shall include but not be limited to the following:
1. The Steering Committee.
    - a. Shall consist of the Speaker, Vice Speaker, and the chair of any standing committee as members. The President, Vice President and the Student Trustee are ex-officio members.
    - b. The Speaker shall be the chair of the Steering Committee meetings, and does not have a vote.
    - c. Shall set the agenda for all Senate meetings
    - d. Shall place Senators in standing committees.
  2. The Budget and Finance Committee.
    - a. The Vice-Speaker shall be a voting member.
    - b. Shall consist of between five (5) and seven (7) Senators, including the Vice-Speaker.
    - c. 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 9 The quorum for the conduct of business at the meetings of the Senate shall consist of a majority (50% + 1) of voting Officials.
- Section 10 The Senate shall govern its meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- Section 11 The Senate shall have regular meetings and publish minutes as provided for in the Bylaws.
- Section 12 All resolutions, policy, and procedure of the Senate shall be considered acts of the SGA only after being signed by the SGA President. Any act remaining unsigned within one (1) day of the next regular meeting of the Senate following its passage shall be considered vetoed.

Section 13 All bills regarding legislation, policy and procedure of the SGA shall be introduced, read, and passed in a manner prescribed by this Constitution and the Bylaws.

Section 14 The Legislature shall have the power to:

1. Amend this constitution as prescribed in article X of this Constitution.
2. Enact, amend or repeal the Bylaws of the SGA as provided for in the Bylaws, requiring a two thirds vote of the Senate, the approval of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, the signature of the SGA President, and approval of the Judicial Branch.
3. To budget and recommend the annual allocation of the Student Activities Trust Fund, which the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Chancellor shall approve prior to submission to the Board of Trustees for final approval.
4. Recommend and establish legislation, policy and procedure regarding the governance of the undergraduate students at the university.
5. Initiate a referendum, as described by Article IX of this constitution, requiring a majority vote of the Senate.
6. Require reports from Officials as defined by bylaws
7. Override a Presidential Veto, requiring a two-thirds vote of the Senate
8. Initiate Impeachment Proceedings of Officials belonging to the Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Branch, conducted in a manner prescribed in the Bylaws.
9. Provide for the succession of those offices not otherwise provided for in this constitution.
10. Assume and delegate all powers of the SGA not provided by the constitution or bylaws
11. Remove a non-Judicial Presidential Appointment, requiring a two-thirds vote of the Senate
12. Approve a Presidential Appointment to the Judiciary, requiring a majority vote of the Senate.
13. Provide for the transition of the SGA to this constitution.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. 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.

17. 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, an affirmative vote of the SGA membership through a referendum, and the signature of the SGA President.

## **Article VII**

### The Executive

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| Section 1 | The Executive Authority of the SGA shall be vested in the Executive Branch   |
| Section 2 | The Executive Branch shall be comprised of the SGA President, the SGA Vice President, the Executive Cabinet and any other bodies recognized by this Constitution or the Bylaws.  |
| Section 3 | The SGA President shall serve as the official representative and chief executive of the SGA  |
| Section 4 | The SGA Vice President shall serve as SGA President in the event the SGA President resigns, is impeached, or becomes ineligible to serve as provided in Article IV, Section 8 of this Constitution.  |
| Section 5 | Candidates for SGA President and SGA Vice President must run as a ticket.  |
| Section 6 | Candidates shall be elected by a popular vote of the SGA, and serve for a term prescribed in the Bylaws.   |
| Section 7 | The Executive Committee shall have the power to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Execute, uphold and defend the Constitution, Bylaws, and Acts of the SGA.</li><li>2. Appoint Officers of the Executive Cabinet</li><li>3. Appoint Justices of the Judiciary, requiring approval by the Senate.</li><li>4. To call the Legislature into session as prescribed in the Bylaws.</li><li>5. Make a semester address to the Senate regarding the state of the SGA.</li><li>6. Establish and coordinate all communications from the Senate, Executive Branch, and Judiciary to the SGA.</li><li>7. Veto a bill upon its passage in the Senate, as prescribed in the bylaws.</li></ol> |

8. Initiate a referendum as described in Article IX of this Constitution.
9. Establish policy and procedure regarding the operations of the Executive in accordance with Constitution and the Bylaws.
10. Initiate Impeachment an Official of the SGA. Impeachment proceedings will be determined and conducted in a manner prescribed the Bylaws.
11. Expel a non-elected executive Officer as prescribed in the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
The Judiciary

- Section 1      The judicial authority of the SGA shall be vested in a Judicial Branch.
- Section 2      The Judicial Branch shall be comprised of a Chief Justice, in addition to no fewer than two (2) and no more than four (4) Justices, to be appointed by the SGA President as prescribed in this Constitution and the Bylaws and serve for a term described therein.
- Section 3      The Chief Justice is a voting member of the Judicial Branch. In the event of a tie, the Chief Justice will break the tie.
- Section 4      The Judiciary shall have original jurisdiction over this constitution and the Bylaws.
- Section 5      The quorum for the conduct of business of the Judiciary is three Justices.
- Section 6      The Judiciary shall have the power to:
1. Adjudicate the constitutionality of legislation passed by the Senate in a manner described by the bylaws.
  2. Adjudicate cases of policy and procedure arising in the Legislative or Executive Branches as prescribed by the Bylaws.
  3. Conduct Impeachment proceedings initiated by the Legislative or Executive branches, or the SGA, as prescribed by the Bylaws.
- Section 7      The Judicial Branch is responsible for archiving the minutes of the Legislative, Executive, and the Judicial Branches.

**Article IX**  
SGA Referenda

- Section 1      The SGA may initiate referenda concerning the interest of the undergraduate students at the University as prescribed in the Bylaws.



- Section 2      There shall be two Primary types of referenda, Action and Advisory.
- Section 3      Upon majority (50% +1) vote by the SGA, 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      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 approval 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.