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***Constitution***

***of the***

***Student Government Association***

***of the***



***University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point***

Last update of the Finance Policies: July 28, 2009

Last update of the SGA Constitution: July 28, 2009

**Guide to the Constitution**

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**Votes Required for Action**

Type of Action ……………………………………………………..Vote Required

Authorize an official letter ……………………………………………………..Majority

Pass a Resolution ……………………………………………………..Majority

Confirm an appointment ……………………………………………………..Majority

Pass a Statute ……………………………………………………..2/3

Override veto ……………………………………………………..2/3

Over-rule the chair ……………………………………………………..2/3

Revise the Bylaws ……………………………………………………..2/3

Revise the Constitution ……………………………………………………..3/4 full Senate

**Article I – Name**

Section 1 – The name of this organization shall be the "Student Government Association" of the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, abbreviated as SGA.

Section 2 – The name of this organization shall not be lent to any political candidate, political campaign, or political organization, or used to endorse any commercial enterprise.

**Article II – Purpose**

 The purpose of the Student Government Association is to represent the interests of the students of the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point in the governance of the University. The Student Government Association works in alliance with the administration, faculty, staff, students, and student organizations of the University, the University of Wisconsin System, and with the Stevens Point community in order to provide the best possible university environment and educational experience at UWSP.

**Article III – Authority**

 The Student Government Association of the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point derives its powers from the consent of the student body and from Wisconsin state law. SGA is the organization of student representation recognized by the Chancellor under Wisconsin State Statute 36.09(5) that reads:

*The students of each institution or campus, subject to the responsibilities of the board, the president, the chancellor, and the faculty shall be active participants in the immediate governance of and policy development for such institutions. As such, students shall have the primary responsibility for the formulation and review of policies concerning student life, services, and interests. Students in consultation with the chancellor and subject to the final confirmation of the board shall have the responsibility for the disposition of those student- fees, which constitute substantial support for campus student activities. The students of each institution or campus shall have the right to organize themselves in a manner they determine and to select their representatives to participate in institutional governance.*

**Article IV – Membership**

Section 1 – All rights, responsibilities, offices, and benefits of the Student Government Association are equally available to all people without regard to age, ancestry, color, creed, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, parentage, pregnancy, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Section 2 – All persons who are enrolled in classes or other activities providing academic credit from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point shall be members of the Student Government Association.

Section 3 – Any person in good academic standing with a GPA of no less than 2.25 (with the exception of incoming freshmen) enrolled in at least six academic credits at the undergraduate level or four credits at the graduate level at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point during the current semester or in the semesters both preceding and following other periods such as Winter and Summer breaks shall be eligible to hold any office or position in SGA.

**Article V – Offices and Structure**

Section 1 – Terms of Office

A. The terms of all offices shall begin with a ceremony during the final Senate meeting of the academic year or upon special appointment by the Senate or President.

B. The terms of all offices shall end upon the close of the final Senate meeting of the academic year.

C. No individual may hold more than one office simultaneously with the exception of the Speaker of the Senate, Speaker Pro Temp, and Caucus Chairs, who perform the duties of their respective offices concurrent with those of a Senator.

D. Members transitioning between offices will assume the duties of the new office upon adjournment of the meeting at which he or she was approved.

Section 2 – The duties of all offices shall be detailed in the Bylaws of this document.

Section 3 – The Student Government Association shall consist of three branches, the

Legislative, the Executive, and the Judicial Branch.

Section 4 – The Legislative Branch

A. The Legislative Branch shall consist of the Senators and Caucus Chairs, and be headed by the Speaker of the Senate.

B. A maximum of thirty Senators shall be elected by a popular vote of the students in their respective colleges according to the guidelines laid out in the Bylaws of this document.

C. Senators may be appointed by the Senate Body according to the guidelines laid out in the Bylaws of this document.

D. Proportional Representation

1. The four colleges shall be represented by a number of Senators proportional to the enrollment of those colleges.

2. A minimum of four seats shall be allotted for each college.

3. The Rules committee shall calculate and set the number of seats allotted to each college in the spring election by examining fall semester enrollment.

E. The Speaker of the Senate shall be elected by a majority of the Senators present at the final meeting of the Senate each academic year, with elections to be held after the seating of new Senators.

1. If a clear majority is not achieved, then the top two candidates with the most votes shall be voted on separately for a second time.

2. If there are three top candidates and there is a tie for second (Example: there are 10 votes and one candidate gets 4 and two others receive 3) the two tied candidates shall be voted on with the majority winner running against the candidate who received the most votes.

3. Voting shall be done by a paper ballot, to be collected by the Chair of the Election Committee and counted by the Chair and other member of the Election Committee.

F. In the event that the Speaker of the Senate is unable to complete their term, or is removed for any reason with a vote of no-confidence, the following shall occur:

1. The Speaker Pro Tempore shall assume all responsibilities of the Speaker of the Senate immediately following the Speaker of the Senate’s resignation.

2. Elections shall be held one week after the official resignation of the Speaker of the Senate, at the next Senate Meeting.

3. Nominations shall be given by senators only.

4. The position of the Speaker of the Senate shall be open to Senators and students-at-large.

5. The Speaker of the Senate shall be elected by a majority of Senators present and voting at the Senate meeting.

a. If a clear majority is not achieved, then the top two candidates with the most votes shall be voted on separately for a second time.

b. If there are three top candidates and there is a tie for second (Example: there are 10 votes and one candidate gets 4 and two others receive 3) the two tied candidates shall be voted on with the majority winner running against the candidate who received the most votes.

c. Voting shall be done by a paper ballot, to be collected by the Chair of the Election Committee and counted by the Chair and other member of the Election Committee.

G. The Chair of each Caucus shall be elected by a plurality of the Senators in each respective college.

Section 5 - The Executive Branch

1. The Executive Branch shall consist of the President, the Vice President, and the Executive Cabinet.
2. The President and Vice President shall be elected on a combined ticket by a popular vote of the student body according to the guidelines laid out in the Bylaws of this document.
3. In the event the President is unable to complete his or her term, the following will occur:
	1. Succession will be Vice President, Speaker of the Senate with a majority vote of the Senate.
	2. In the event that neither of the above mentioned accept the position, the Speaker of the Senate will act as temporary President.
	3. A new President will be elected by a ¾ majority vote of the Senate.
4. In the event the Vice President is unable to complete his or her term, the following will occur:
	1. Succession will be Speaker of the Senate, with a majority vote of the Senate.
	2. In the event that the Speaker of the Senate does not accept the position, s/he will act as temporary Vice President.
	3. A new Vice President will be appointed by the President and approved a by ¾ majority vote of the Senate.
5. The Executive Cabinet shall consist of the Academic Issues Director, Budget Director, Assistant Budget Director, Public Relations and Communications Director, Executive Director, Legislative Issues Director, Multicultural and Diversity Issues Director, Student Life Issues Director and the Environmental and Sustainability Issues Director.

F. The members of the Cabinet shall be appointed by the incoming President in consultation with the Vice President and subject to approval by a majority vote of the Senate. After notifying the Vice-President, the President may terminate any executive for incompetence or insubordination in compliance with state statutes for terminating employees of the state of Wisconsin.

G. The duties of all offices shall be laid out in the Bylaws of this document.

Section 6 – Judicial Branch

1. The Judicial Branch shall consist of Associate Justices, the Vice Chief Justice, the Clerk of Courts, and shall be headed by the Chief Justice.
2. 5 Justices, not affiliated with the same college, shall be appointed by the SGA President and approved by a majority vote by the Senate.
	1. The Justices and the Chief Justice shall be nominated by the SGA President to be approved by a majority vote of the Senate.
	2. The Vice Chief Justice shall be nominated from the Justices by the Chief Justice and approved by a majority vote of the Senate.
	3. The Associate Justices, the Vice Chief Justice, and the Chief Justice shall be voting members that make up the Court.
3. The position of Clerk of Courts shall be advertised and an application provided by SIEO. The Court shall interview the applicants every year. One applicant shall be nominated by the Court and shall be approved by a majority vote of the Senate.
4. In the event that the Chief Justice is unable to complete his or her term, the Vice Chief Justice shall assume the responsibilities of the Chief Justice temporarily until a new Chief Justice is nominated by the President and approved by the Senate.
5. In the event that the Vice Chief Justice is unable to complete his or her term, the Chief Justice shall nominate a different Vice Chief Justice from the remaining Justices and be approved with a majority vote of the Senate.
6. In the event that the Clerk of Courts is unable to complete his of her term, the Vice Chief Justice shall assume responsibilities until another Clerk of Courts is approved.
7. Terms of the Justice shall last two years, if applicable; where upon the Justice shall come up for re-approval if so desired.
8. Jurisdictions:

1. The Court shall have primary jurisdiction over all cases arising under the SGA constitution, bylaws, laws, statutes, policies and regulations, with the exception of:

a) The Court shall have an appellate jurisdiction over the assessment of points to Senators, with primary jurisdiction granted to the SGA Rules Committee.

2. The Court shall primary jurisdiction over all cases arising under the Constitutions, bylaws, laws, statutes, policies and regulations of recognized student organizations, with the exception of:

a) The Court shall have an appellate jurisdiction over all cases considered to be in violation of the code of conduct by recognized student organizations, with primary jurisdiction granted to the Policy and Advisory Committee for Student Organizations (PACSO).

1. Policies and procedures of Judicial Branch shall be outlined and included as an attachment as outlined in Section 20 of the Bylaws.

Section 7 – Advisor

A. The Advisor shall be a person or persons selected by the University Administration and subject to the majority approval of the Senate and Executive staff.

B. The responsibilities of the Advisor shall be assigned by the University Administration

**Article VI – Committees**

Section 1 – The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Vice President, and the members of the Executive Cabinet and shall be chaired by the President.

Section 2 – The Rules Committee shall consist of the Speaker of the Senate, the Speaker Pro Temp, the chair of each Caucus, and the Executive Director. The Speaker Pro Temp and the Executive Director shall not have a vote on the committee. The Speaker of the Senate shall chair the Rules Committee and vote only in the case of a tie.

Section 3 – The Academic Issues Committee shall consist of Senators and students from the UWSP student body, and shall be chaired by the Academic Issues director.

Section 4 – The Communication Committee shall consist of Senators and students from the UWSP student body, and shall be chaired by the Public Relations and Communications Director.

Section 5 – Finance Committee – The purpose, membership, and policies and procedures of the Finance Committee are included as an attachment as outlined in Section 18, Line D of the Bylaws.

Section 6 – The Legislative Issues Committee shall consist of Senators and students from the UWSP student body, and shall be chaired by the Legislative Issues director.

Section 7 – The Multicultural and Diversity Issues Committee shall consist of Senators and students from the UWSP student body, in addition to the eleven positions which are available to one representative from each of the following recognized student organizations or clubs: BSU, AIRO, AISES, SALSA, HaSEAAC, CCC, South Asia Society, International Club, Women’s Resource Center, and the Gay-Straight Alliance, and shall be chaired by the non-voting MultiCultural and Diversity Issues Director.

Section 8 – The Student Life Issues Committee shall consist of Senators and students from the UWSP student body, and shall be chaired by the Student Life Issues Director. The committee shall work in conjunction with SIEO as a resource for leadership development programs and training, and the approval of the former shall rest with the Student Life Issues Committee.

Section 9 – The Election Committee shall be made up of the Executive Director, the Communication Director, and no less than three students selected by the Senate. The members of the Election Committee shall select the chair of the Election Committee. In the event that either specified director is running for the office of President, Vice President or senator, said director shall be replaced by a member of the Executive Branch selected by the senate. Individuals running for office are not eligible to be members of the Election Committee. The Election Committee shall be established and approved no later than the last three weeks before finals week of the fall semester. The Election Committee shall approve all persons who assist in the election process. Unless there is no Elections Committee, then ballots shall be counted by the President, if there is no President, then by the Vice-President.

Section 10– Responsibilities and powers of all standing committees shall be laid out in the bylaws of this document.

Section 11 – Ad hoc committees may be formed by the President, Vice President, Speaker of the Senate, or the Senate body.

Section 12 – Subcommittees may be formed by any committee. The parent committee shall set the responsibilities, guidelines, and chair of subcommittees.

Section 13– SGA shall provide members for all University Committees and Faculty Senate Committees.

Section 14 – All committee appointments not otherwise stated in this document shall be made by the Vice President.

Section 15 – All meetings will be held in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.

Section 16 – The Environmental and Sustainability Issues Committee shall consist of Senators, UWSP student organization representatives and other students from the UWSP student body, and shall be chaired by the Environmental and Sustainability Issues Director.

**Article VII – Legislative Processes**

Section 1 – Bills may be of any of the following forms

A. Letter – a statement or request in the form of an official letter, issued on SGA letterhead, signed by the President, "on behalf of the Student Government Association of the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point." Requires a majority vote.

B. Resolution – a bill requiring action. Resolutions remain in effect until the end of the Academic year in which they are passed, or until overturned. Requires a majority vote.

C. Statute – a bill that sets policy. Statutes remain in effect until overturned, requires a 2/3 vote in favor by those present and voting.

D. Constitutional Amendments – bill that alters the Constitution. Requires ¾ written vote of the full seated senate. The seated senate shall consist of all senators currently holding office.

E. Bylaws Amendments – bill that adds to or alters the Bylaws. Requires a 2/3 in favor vote by those present and voting.

Section 2 – The agenda of each Senate meeting shall be set by the Rules Committee and published 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Section 3 – Meetings of the Senate shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order as they appear in the official copy to be maintained and selected by the Executive Director and as modified by this document.

Section 4 – Chairing of Senate Meetings

A. Meetings of the Senate shall be chaired by the Vice President.

B. The Speaker of the Senate shall chair in the absence of the Vice President or when the Vice President is called upon to take the floor.

C. A new chair may be elected by a 2/3 vote in favor by those present and voting of the Senate.

Section 5 – Elections

A. Elections shall be held according to the Bylaws of this document.

B. Election guidelines may be altered for the current year by a majority vote of the Senate until the end of the final Senate meeting of the first semester.

Section 6 – In the event that SGA is dissolved, any remaining balance of funds shall be dispersed for the benefit of students at the discretion of the Chancellor.

Section 7 – Ethics

A. Persons holding SGA offices shall act in accordance with this constitution, all state, federal, and local laws, and University policy, and shall behave in an ethical manner while in their official capacity.

B. Anyone not acting in accordance with these guidelines shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Bylaws of this document.

 Section 8 – Qualified Immunity Clause

A. All Senators, Executive Board Members and Advisor(s) shall be granted qualified immunity of expression while addressing the Senate body. Such individuals shall not face a tangible retaliation (formal written complaint, pursuant to Section 3 of the SGA Bylaws) for any statements on policy related issues while discharging their duties and responsibilities.

B. The qualified immunity shall not obstruct disciplinary proceedings in accordance of the Article VII, Section 7 of the SGA Constitution, Section 2 of the SGA Bylaws and Roberts Rules of Order.

C. All Senators, Executive Board Members shall confine themselves to the issues under debate, avoiding personality and disrespectful language.

Section 9 – The Constitution

A. An updated copy of the constitution shall be kept on file in the Student Involvement and Employment Office where it shall be available for review upon request.

B. The Constitution shall be reviewed every two years by the President, Executive Director, Speaker of the Senate, Chief Justice, and one Senator from each college.

C. Corrections of spelling, grammar, and numbering in the constitution may be made by the Executive Director upon a majority vote of the Rules Committee.

D. A proposed Constitutional Amendment shall remain on New Business for two (2) weeks before the amendment shall be voted on.