

# Webster University Student Government Association Constitution

## **Preamble**

We the Students of Webster University, in order to improve the quality of student life, establish this Constitution of the Student Government Association of Webster University. In all pursuits the Student Government Association will strive to preserve a meeting ground of peace and education in which all may prosper.

## **Article I - Organization**

**Section 1:** The Student Government Association of Webster University, also known as SGA, shall consist of all students at the Webster Groves campus and SGA will elect members from that body to represent them on matters concerning SGA as contained in Article III.

**Section 2:** These elected representatives shall consist of a SGA Executive board consisting of seven officers: a President, Vice President, Comptroller, Secretary, a Sergeant-at Arms, Student Organization Liaison. There also shall exist a Student Senate containing two elected student representatives from each of the Webster University Colleges and Schools, two student representatives for graduate students and four (4) At-Large Senators from the Webster Groves campus.

## **Article II - Duties**

**Section 1:** SGA shall hold General Meetings every other week during the fall and spring semesters proper.

**Section 2:** SGA shall consult with and advise the Administration of Webster University on matters that concern the general well-being of the students.

**Section 3:** SGA shall answer all Student Petitions with affirmative action.

**Section 4:** SGA shall charter Student Organizations by a simple majority vote.

**Section 5:** SGA has the power to authorize any and all funding for SGA approved student organizations and groups.

**Section 6:** SGA shall, by affirmative action and all means available to it, endeavor to improve the quality of student life.

**Section 7:** Individuals or organizations may appeal the decisions of SGA committees to the SGA Voting Body as a whole. A two-thirds majority of the SGA Voting Body's membership is required to overturn any decision of those SGA committees.

## **Article III - Rights**

**Section 1:** SGA retains the right to amend this document. A two-thirds majority of the SGA Voting Body's membership is required to amend the constitution.

**Section 2:** SGA retains the right to grant and revoke the Recognition of Student Organizations

**Section 3:** SGA retains the right to accept, refuse, approve, and decline proposals brought before it for such consideration.

**Section 4:** SGA retains the right to authorize plans for the execution of any event for which SGA allocates funding.

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**Section 5:** SGA retains the right to allocate what funding is available for such consideration, to those purposes it sees will promote a higher quality of student life.

## **Article IV - General Meetings**

**Section 1:** SGA shall hold regular General Meetings pursuant to Article II sect. 1.

**Section 2:** Parliamentary Procedure, according to Robert's Rules of Order, shall be the rule at all the General Meetings of SGA. In the case of a disagreement within the membership in regard to a Point of Order, the President may direct the Vice-President or another officer to make a final ruling on the issue.

**Section 3:** By the direction of the President, SGA may hold Special Meetings for the purpose of addressing specific concerns in timely manner. Special Meetings shall be conducted as General Meetings pursuant to Article IV. The President shall inform the membership of the date, time, and location of Special Meetings in a timely manner allowing for adequate preparation by the membership or those involved.

**Section 4:** Quorum at General Meetings is constituted by half the members plus one in addition to the President. Issues requiring determination by open vote require a simple majority of votes during a Quorum session for a valid determination of outcome.

**Section 5:** Discussion of any topic shall take place in an orderly and timely manner as determined by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

**Section 6:** Voting members of SGA include the President, Vice-President, Comptroller, Secretary, Sergeant-at-Arms, Student Organization Liaison, Ambassador for Student Inclusion and the sixteen members of the Student Government Senate.

**Section 7:** Members may submit to the President proxy votes before the commencement of a General or Special Meeting. Proxy votes must be in writing and must identify specific motions to which the proxy votes pertain. Members may not grant general proxy authority to other members.

**Section 8:** All recognized student organizations are strongly encouraged to have at least one representative of their organization attend the bi-monthly SGA meetings. Organizations that cannot attend SGA meetings will submit a report to SGA each semester updating SGA on the progress of their organization.

## **Article V – Executive Officers**

**Section 1:** The *President* shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall chair General Meetings of the SGA Voting Body and meetings of the Executive Board.
2. Shall appoint members to ad hoc and external standing committees, and shall submit a recommendation for permanent appointments to SGA internal standing committees to the Executive Board for ratification by a majority vote.
3. Shall enforce the bylaws of SGA.
4. Shall communicate with the administration of Webster University for the purpose of advocating student initiatives.

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5. Shall have authority to represent and/or act on the behalf of the Students of Webster University, subject to ratification by the SGA Voting Body by simple majority.
6. Shall give a full accounting to SGA of information that the President may be privy to, relevant to matters that come before SGA for consideration and review.

**Section 2:** The *Vice-President* shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence.
2. Shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties.
3. Shall chair the Student Grant Fund Committee.
4. Shall write and maintain the SGA column in paper.

**Section 3:** The *Comptroller* shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President and Vice-President.
2. Shall chair the Budget Committee. Shall enforce the policies and procedures of the Budget Committee, in the course of due process, in cooperation with the SGA advisors.
3. Shall be held to the highest standard of accountability to the Student of Webster University by SGA and shall make timely reports to the Executive Board and the SGA Voting Body pursuant to this duty.
4. Shall not be a treasurer of any student organization that receives funds from SGA.

**Section 4:** The *Secretary* shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall provide to the SGA a recording of the minutes of meetings.
2. Shall establish and maintain a library of minutes, agendas, and a legislative history.
3. Shall be responsible for developing and maintaining the SGA website and updating it with the latest minutes and announcements.
4. Shall promote any and all events sponsored by SGA.
5. Shall update the communications board on an every other week basis.

**Section 5:** The *Sergeant-at-Arms* shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall carry out the actions of enforcement of appropriate conduct at meetings and the laws of the SGA.
2. Shall be the chair the Constitution Committee.

**Section 6:** The *Ambassador for Student Inclusion* shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall assist the SGA Advisor in updating and maintaining the SGA group on the Webster Connections website.
2. Shall pursue regular meetings with the Associate Vice President of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement.
3. Shall be chairperson of the diversity committee.
4. Shall be a member of the diversity council.

**Section 7:** The *Student Organization Liaison* shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall identify and resolve any communications issues between SGA and on-campus organizations.
2. Shall facilitate officer transitions of on-campus organizations by:

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- A. Educating and informing organizations about officer transition.
- B. Meeting with the presidents of the organizations once a semester to help with officer transition.
3. Shall assist student groups throughout the process of becoming recognized.
4. Shall be the chairperson of the Programming Pool Committee.

## Article VI – Senators

**Section 1:** The Senators and Officers shall have duties as set forth in the following:

1. Shall attend all regular SGA meetings occurring every other Tuesday during the Fall and Spring semesters. If a member of SGA expects to be absent, he or she can obtain an excused absence by notifying the appropriate parties in a timely manner:
  - A. The member will notify the President via e-mail at least 24 hours in advance of the absence.
  - B. The individual will notify the Sergeant-At-Arms via e-mail of any reports to be given or proxy votes, when applicable, at least 24 hours in advance of the absence.
2. Shall serve on at least one internal SGA committee and two University Committees. The SGA member will attend all internal committee meetings occurring every other Tuesday during the Fall and Spring semesters. If a member of SGA expects to be absent, he or she can obtain an excused absence by notifying the committee chair via e-mail at least 24 hours in advance of the absence.
3. Shall serve on at least two external University Committees which will meet at the committee chair's discretion.
4. Shall submit a regular report to the SGA President and SGA voting body on matters discussed and meetings attended related to SGA.
5. Senators shall meet with the dean of their school once a month and report meetings to the SGA President and SGA voting body.
6. If a member of SGA expects to be absent, he or she can obtain an excused absence by notifying the President via e-mail at least 24 hours in advance of the absence.

## Article VII - Election of Officers

**Section 1:** Pursuant to Article 1, Section 1 of this document, SGA shall hold annual elections open to the student body for the purpose of electing eligible members of the student body for the SGA President, Vice-President, Comptroller, Secretary, Sergeant-at-Arms, Student Organization Liaison, Ambassador for Student Inclusion and Senators.

1. Candidates wishing to pursue and hold an elected or appointed position must be a currently enrolled student in good standing. Good standing is defined as:
  - A. Maintaining a cumulative GPA of a 2.5 on a 4.0.
  - B. Not having a GPA below 2.5 for 2 consecutive semesters.

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- C. Not on academic or judicial probation through the Dean of Students Office or Office of Housing and Residential Life.

2. Eligibility is defined as:

- A. Attending the SGA orientation prior to being sworn in as an officer

**Section 2:** An open election for the purpose of electing SGA Officers and Student Senators will be held no later than the 5th week after Spring Break each year. An open election for the At-Large Senators will be held no later than 4th week after the beginning of the Fall Semester.

**Section 3:** The SGA voting body shall vote on the presidential appointments to vacant positions and those temporarily open due to study abroad.

**Section 4:** Student senator and officer positions can be dismissed on the occurrence of at least one of the following:

- 1. A Member fails to receive an excused absence for three days' worth of meetings or mandatory events throughout the course of one semester. Absences will be monitored at general body meetings, committee meetings, working sessions, and mandatory SGA events.

- A. Additional excused absences may be granted retroactively by the President in cases of emergency.

- B. In the event that a member of SGA realizes they won't be present at a meeting within 24 hours of the meeting, they should make a concerted effort to immediately notify the President to the best of their ability.

- C. If a member of SGA disputes an unexcused absence, the status of the absence can be discussed by at least two of the following members: the President, Sargent at Arms, and/or Advisor.

- 2. A Member fails to abide by Webster University Rules and Regulations per the current Webster University Handbook.

- 3. A Member fails to abide by and/or uphold the Constitution of SGA.

- 4. A Member fails to maintain status as a currently enrolled student in good standing.

Students who are removed from a position in the Fall semester may not serve as a voting member of SGA until the next academic year. Students who are removed from a position during the Spring semester may not serve as a voting member of SGA until the second academic year after they were removed from a position.

**Section 5:** SGA members have the right to ask the SGA Constitution Committee to investigate occurrences of the above offenses by SGA officers and senators. If just cause exists, as determined by the Constitution Committee, SGA members have the right to call for a hearing with an impartial panel of students selected by the Office of Student Affairs to determine whether the elected officer or senator position shall be voided for violation of said offenses.

## Article VIII - Standing Committees

**Section 1:** The following Internal Standing committees are established: Allocation, Budget, Communications, Constitution, Delegate's Agenda, Programming Pool and Student Grant Fund.

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**Section 2:** The Constitution Committee shall take under discussion and consideration all matters concerning proposed legislation and make recommendations for action to the SGA Voting Body. The Committee shall maintain current records and make the same available to Student inspection. The Constitution Committee shall consist of the Sergeant-At-Arms as the Chairperson, the Secretary, and at least two other SGA elected representatives.

**Section 3:** The Budget Committee shall review financial initiatives submitted by student organizations for approval and shall make accountable to the students those student organizations for all financial transactions involving Student Activates derived funds. The Committee shall submit timely reports concerning the status of accounts to the Executive Board, the full SGA Voting Body, and the Office of Student Engagement. The Committee shall be held generally accountable for all financial dealings of SGA and its charters to the students of Webster University. The Budget Committee shall take under discussion and consideration all matters concerning Student funding, research and development, and administrative records and recommend expenditures of such funds based on Article VIII. The Committee shall consist of the SGA Comptroller as Chairperson and at least two other SGA elected Representatives.

**Section 4:** The Communications Committee shall provide information regarding SGA to the Webster University Community and receive suggestions from the Community concerning SGA. It shall keep records and report to SGA any pertinent information.

The Communications Committee shall also be responsible for maintaining the SGA webpage and for hiring a webmaster to keep the SGA webpage as up to date as possible. The committee as a whole would be responsible for finding and hiring a qualified individual.

**Section 5:** The Student Grant Fund Committee shall review students' applications for Student Grant Fund money and provide information to the students about this fund. The Committee will make recommendations to the SGA voting body on action to be taken on the proposals. The Student Grant Fund Committee will consist of the SGA Vice President as the Chairperson and at least three other members.

**Section 6:** The Programming Pool Committee shall review students' application for Programming Pool money and provide information to the students about these funds. The Committee will make recommendations to the SGA voting body on action to be taken on the proposals. The Programming Pool will consist of the Student Organization Liaison as the Chairperson and at least three other members.

**Section 7:** The Delegate's Agenda Committee shall carry forward the issues raised at previous Delegate's Agendas and will work with the administration on other concerns of the students. The committee shall consist of the SGA President as the Chairperson and at least four other members.

**Section 8.** The Allocation Committee shall meet prior to the first SGA general body meeting of each semester to determine their recommendation to the SGA general body on how the funds allocated to SGA shall be distributed.

1. At least 4 members are required to be at quorum. Four of those members must be the SGA President, the Comptroller, the Chair of Programming Pool and the Chair of the Student Grant Fund.
2. The committee meeting will be open to any member of the Budget Committee, Programming Pool and Student Grant Fund.

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3. The meeting shall be chaired by the SGA President.
4. Student Bank funds shall be distributed to the following funds: Student Grant Fund, Programming Pool, Election Fund, Readership Fund. Undistributed funds shall be left in the Allocation Fund for distribution to funded student organizations.
5. 2/3 majority of votes of members present at the first SGA General Body meeting shall be required to pass any recommendation of funding distribution recommended by the Allocation Committee.

**Section 9:** All SGA internal standing committees are expected to meet as necessary to fulfill duties as listed above.

**Section 10:** SGA external standing committees are University committees in which SGA members will serve as student representatives. External committees will meet at the discretion of the committee chairs.

**Section 11:** SGA-chaired ad hoc committees are hereby established as the SGA sees the need to establish them. Ad hoc committees will be evaluated at the end of each academic year to determine the future of each committee.

## **Article XI - Finances**

**Section 1:** All student organization funds will be handled through the Student Bank and Business Office of Webster University.

**Section 2:** The beginning of the Fall budget shall begin on June 1st and end on December 31st. The beginning of the Spring budget shall begin on January 1st and end on May 31st. All budget requests for a specified term must be in at the time indicated by Budget Committee. The Budget Committee reserves the right to call a member of an organization to a Budget Committee meeting to answer questions about their request. Budget allocations will not be considered at an earlier time, unless special circumstances warrant earlier action. Budget allocations will be made on the merits of each proposal as opposed to a first-come first serve basis taking into account previous budgetary information about the organization.

**Section 3:** Budget Committee, upon receiving the requests for funds from students, will make their recommendations to the entire SGA elected voting body for a final vote.

**Section 4:** The Comptroller shall receive Monthly Reports for all Recognized Student Organizations on or before the fifth of each month, which shall include receipts for the expenditures detailed in the Monthly Reports if expenditures were made.

**Section 5:** The Budget Committee reserves the right to call a group before its members to justify spending, and to impose any measures that it deems necessary on an organization in violation of any rules pursuant to Article VIII.

**Section 6:** Organizations may appeal decisions of the Executive and/or Budget Committee to the SGA Voting Body. A two-thirds majority of the entire membership of the SGA Voting Body is required to overturn any decision of the Executive or Budget Committees.

**Section 7:** The Comptroller has the duty of maintaining a record of the balances of organization and SGA accounts, and is subject to inquiry by SGA.

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**Section 8:** Before receiving access to budgeted funds, each Student Organization must register their organization for the given semester. Funds will not be released without a completed registration per semester.

**Section 9:** No SGA funds may be used as a direct donation to charitable organizations or to purchase gifts. Only the proceeds from fundraising events can be used for these purposes.

**Section 10:** At its discretion, the Budget Committee reserves the right to require that any revenue raised at events produced with SGA funds should go back to SGA to cover the costs of the event. Therefore, the money deposited in organizations' fund-raising accounts would only be that money over and above the amount of the original SGA allocation for that event.

**Section 11:** The budget committee shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the Budget bylaws as it deems necessary. Any changes must be approved by a 2/3 majority of the SGA General Assembly before they can be effective.

## Article X - Charters

**Section 1:** SGA may grant Recognition to any group of students hereafter, Organization Candidate that fulfills the following criteria:

1. Have submitted to SGA an organization constitution and a Statement of Purpose.
2. Have submitted to SGA a written Petition containing 25 of student signatures.
3. Must have given a short presentation to the SGA Voting Body at a General Meeting, the purpose of which is to demonstrate to SGA the need to have such an organization on campus and the benefits to Webster University.
4. Have submitted an official Organization registration, listing officers and the advisors of the group.

**Section 2:** A vote of two-thirds of SGA Voting Body members present is required to grant a charter. Required majority having been achieved, Recognized Organization status shall be granted.

## Article XI - Recognized Student Organizations

**Section 1:** There shall be two categories of Recognized Student Organizations: those that receive SGA funding and those that do not.

**Section 2:** At no time shall any SGA recognized organization eligible for SGA funding draft any resolution, adopt any policy or rule, or accept any restriction that would preclude membership of any Webster University Student or face revocation of Recognition by SGA.

**Section 3:** Candidates wishing to pursue and hold an elected or appointed positions as officers in recognized student organizations must be a currently enrolled student in good standing. Good standing is defined as maintaining a cumulative GPA of a 2.5 on a 4.0, not having a GPA below 2.5 for 2 consecutive semesters and not on academic or judicial probation through the Dean of Students Office or Office of Housing and Residential Life.

**Section 4:** Any recognized organization is dissolved after one year of no monetary activity and no registration forms being turned into the Office of Student Engagement. When ruled dissolved, the remaining funds revert back to SGA



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to be reallocated as it deems appropriate, and the organization loses its recognition and all rights and privileges thereof. If a student wishes to re-establish a group that has previously been dissolved, they must go through the recognition process as if they were a new group applying for recognition.

**Section 5:** The following provisions apply to both SGA funded and unfunded organizations:

1. At no time shall any student organization engage in any act the SGA shall find to be in violation of, or contrary to, the Policies and Regulations of Webster University and/or the Constitution of the Student Government Association.
2. The following acts, if engaged in by any student organization or recognized special interest group, are grounds for immediate and permanent revocation of that organization's recognition:
  - A. used of controlled substances by members on campus
  - B. any criminal act
3. SGA shall adjudicate all matters regarding alleged violations under Article X and shall make the final determination of the facts of each case. The judgments of SGA in these matters shall be final.
4. Recognized Student Organizations must register their organization for the current academic semester no later than the third Wednesday of the semester. Failure to do so will result in the loss of privileges including, but not limited to: funding, space, reservations, and usage of Webster University in the Organization name.

## Article XII - Resolution Process

**Section 1:** The Student Government Association of Webster University shall, at their discretion, use the below described process to give Student Government Association's public opinion on campus, community, and global issues.

**Section 2:** Submission Requirements

1. Resolutions may be submitted by any active voting member of SGA.
2. Students, clubs, and other interested campus groups will be encouraged to petition senators or members of the Executive Board for sponsorship of their resolutions, or to get help crafting them.
3. All resolutions must be submitted by the normal time required for all agenda items, as determined by the Sergeant-at-Arms of SGA.

**Section 3:** Resolution format will consist as follows:

1. The title of the resolution will be at the top of the page.
2. Under the title will be the resolution number. (See Article XI, Section 4)
3. Under the resolution number will be the name of the SGA member sponsoring the resolution, along with any co-sponsors.
4. Following the sponsors and co-sponsors will be pre-ambulatory clauses, describing the conditions that brought about the need for action.
5. Following pre-ambulatory clauses will be operative clauses, describing the actions needing to be taken.

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6. Following operative clauses will be any citations of any relevant research that has been conducted in regard to the resolution.

**Section 4:** Resolution codes will be assigned to resolutions as a way to archive them. Each number will be unique and be composed of the following components:

1. The first character will be either an "F" or an "S" signifying whether the resolution came to a vote in the Fall or Spring semester, respectively.
2. The next two digits will consist of the last two digits of the year the resolution was voted on.
3. The final digit will be the number of the resolution, that semester. Resolutions, as they are voted on in a semester, will be counted. That number will make up the last one or, if needed, two digits of the resolution identifying code.
4. After submission to the Sergeant-at-Arms the Recording Secretary will be responsible for assigning a code to the resolution using the above described format.

**Section 5:** A resolution will be considered "passed" after a 2/3 majority votes in favor of passage of the resolution in the general body meeting of the Webster University Student Government Association. After passage, the resolution will be considered the official opinion of the Student Government Association of Webster University, the representative body of the students of Webster University.

**Section 6:** After passage, the Secretary will be responsible for affixing the Student Government Association's logo to the top of the resolution and notifying all relevant groups on or relating to the campus of the passed resolution with a press release, in addition to any other forms of communication. These groups could include, but are not limited to:

1. The administration of Webster University
2. Departments, colleges, and schools within the university.
3. Campus, student-run publications.
4. Community publications, if applicable.
5. Area businesses and community groups.