



# CONSTITUTION

We, the student body of Westchester Community College, in order to establish a means from which the student body's voices can be heard and interests met, do create this constitution, and through it, establish the Student Government Association of Westchester Community College, also referred to as the SGA.

The mission of the Student Government Association is to represent the student body's best interest by effectively communicating and collaborating with administration, staff, faculty, and students to enhance the campus community.

## I. Membership

- A. All students currently enrolled at Westchester Community College who pay a student activity fee shall be considered members of the SGA.
- B. All members of the SGA share equally in the rights of the SGA, which shall include the right to:
  - i. Vote in the elections of the SGA.
  - ii. Participate in all events sponsored and/or funded by the SGA.
  - iii. Attend all meetings of the SGA.
  - iv. Submit a written complaint about the SGA to the Department of Student Involvement.
- C. SGA members and officers, including, but not limited to: Executive Board members, Senators, committee members, club officers and club members shall not receive stipends for their service or involvement.

## II. Non-discrimination policy

- A. The SGA shall not discriminate on any basis including but not limited to real or perceived age, race, sex, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, sexual history, religious orientation, physical or mental disability, veteran status, alienage, citizenship, marital or parental status, legally recognized domestic partnership status, national origin, ancestry, creed, political belief, employment status, arrest and/or conviction record, or any other criterion prohibited by federal, state or local law.

## III. SGA Executive Board

- A. The Executive Board shall be the primary committee to guide the SGA in the best interest of the student body. All SGA committees are responsible to the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall act to uphold this Constitution.
- B. Executive Board members must: (1) maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5; (2) be enrolled in at least six credits each semester of their term; (3) be in good

- judicial and academic standing at the College; and (4) meet the other criteria of membership in the SGA.
- C. SGA members may serve a maximum of two, one-year terms or a maximum of four semesters in total on the Executive Board.
  - D. Executive Board members will attend weekly one-on-one meetings with the Advisors to the SGA.
  - E. The Executive Board shall be responsible for interpreting the wording of this constitution and will review all interpretations made by other committees.
  - F. The Executive Board shall oversee and set policy with regard to the use of SGA property and the SGA offices, with approval from the Department of Student Involvement.
  - G. The Executive Board shall be concerned with all areas of the Student Government Association and may take necessary action with regards to these areas when deemed absolutely necessary, to include such cases where SGA Committees or bodies are unable to meet but decisions are required. The only exception to this clause will be amending the Constitution.
  - H. The Executive Board shall consist of the following members:
    - i. President
      - a. The President is the chairperson of the Executive Board and the Senate.
      - b. The President is the chief liaison between SGA and the administration of the College and shall be the official spokesperson for SGA.
      - c. The President shall only vote in the event of a tie in which they shall serve as the tie-breaker.
      - d. The President shall create an agenda for each meeting.
      - e. The President shall have the power to make appointments to College or SGA committees with confirmation of their appointment by the Executive Board.
      - f. The President shall have the power to remove, with the approval of the Executive Board, persons in either standing or ad-hoc committees outside of recognized clubs who are not fulfilling requirements and/or acting against the SGA constitution. This decision can be appealed by presenting the case to the Hearing Committee.
      - g. The President shall have the power to appoint special ad-hoc committees, should they feel that there is a need for such a committee.
    - ii. Vice President
      - a. The Vice President is a voting member of the Executive Board and the Senate.
      - b. The Vice President is the Chair of the Club Affairs Committee.
      - c. The Vice President will serve as a resource to recognized clubs and their officers, helping to ensure they understand what is required of them and that they complete all objectives in a timely manner.
      - d. The Vice President shall assume the Presidency, should the President be unable to complete their duties for any reason.
    - iii. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer is a voting member of the Executive Board and a voting member of the Senate.
- b. The Treasurer is the chairperson of the Finance Committee.
- c. The Treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing and updating budgets for all the groups funded by SGA.
- d. The Treasurer shall issue budget reports to SGA Committees or recognized club as requested. The Treasurer shall issue monthly financial statements or presentations to the Executive Board.
- e. The Treasurer shall understand and help others adhere to all fiscal policies and procedures of the Faculty/Student Association.

iv. Secretary

- a. The Secretary is a voting member of the Executive Board and the Senate.
- b. The Secretary is the Chair of the Civic Engagement Committee.
- c. The Secretary is responsible for the recording, publishing, and cataloging of the minutes on the Executive Board, Senate, and Hearing Committee.
- d. The Secretary shall maintain a necessary supply of office supplies for official SGA purposes.
- e. The Secretary is responsible for compiling and maintaining a schedule of meeting times and places for SGA Committees.
- f. The SGA Secretary shall oversee the elections process for SGA Senators and Executive Board members; this does not include appointments made mid-year as determined by the SGA President.
- g. The Secretary of the Student Government Association shall act as the SUNY Student Assembly liaison, taking on duties as described by SUNY Student Assembly.

v. Director of Public Relations

- a. The Director of Public Relations is a voting member of the Executive Board and the Senate.
- b. The Director of Public Relations is the chairperson of the Public Relations Committee.
- c. The Director of Public Relations shall positively promote the Association, its actions, and decisions to the student body, administration, faculty, staff, and/or outside community.
- d. The Director of Public Relations shall be responsible for coordinating any events sponsored by the Student Government Association.
- e. The Director of Public Relations shall submit a monthly press release detailing current happenings of the SGA to the Viking News or an equivalent student publication.
- f. The Director of Public Relations shall host a meet and greet once per semester to introduce the Executive Board, Senate and Finance Committee to the student body.

- g. The Director of Public Relations shall maintain and keep active the social media accounts of the SGA.

vi. Student Trustee

- a. The Student Trustee is a voting member of the Executive Board and Senate.
- b. The Student Trustee shall represent the student body to the Board of Trustees.
- c. The Student Trustee shall have the responsibility to report the activities of the Board of Trustees to the Student Government, and to bring matters of concern from the students to the attention of the Board of Trustees.

I. The members are listed in order of succession to the Presidency.

J. Professional staff in Student Involvement, assigned by the Director of Student Involvement and the Associate Dean of Student Life will serve as the Advisors to the Executive Board and the entire Association and shall serve in an advisory, non-voting capacity to the Student Government Association.

IV. SGA Senate

A. The Senate is the legislative branch of the SGA. It is a forum that serves as the liaison between students and College officials. Its chief role is to deliberate, approve, and set policies that are pertinent to the student body and the operations of the SGA.

B. The Senate shall consist of the following members:

i. SGA President

- a. The President is the Chairperson.
- b. The President shall create an agenda for each meeting.
- c. The President shall only vote in the event of a tie in which they shall serve as the tie-breaker.
- d. The President shall appoint one Hearing Committee Representative and one alternate Hearing Committee Representative, both from within the Senate with confirmation from the Senate.
- e. The President shall determine the meeting schedule for the Senate.

ii. SGA Vice President

- a. The Vice President is as a voting member of the Senate.
- b. The Vice President shall serve as chairperson of the Senate in the absence of the President and assume all of their responsibilities.

iii. SGA Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer is as a voting member of the Senate.

iv. SGA Secretary

- a. The Secretary is as a voting member of the Senate.
- b. The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording & publishing of minutes.

- v. SGA Director of Public Relations
  - a. The Director of Public Relations is as a voting member of the Senate.
  
- vi. Student Trustee
  - a. The Student Trustee is as a voting member of the Senate.
  - b. The Student Trustee shall be responsible for bringing matters of importance to the Senate from the Board of Trustees and vice versa.
  
- vii. Senators
  - a. The student body shall elect eight to thirteen voting members of the Senate.
  - b. Senators shall take actions in the best interests of the student body.
  - c. SGA members may serve a maximum of two, one-year terms or a maximum of four semesters in total on the Senate.
  
- viii. Extension Center Representatives
  - a. The directors and/or assistant directors of each extension centers will have the ability to recommend students to the SGA Executive Board, as a non-voting member, to act in an advisory capacity to the Senate. The President will then appoint one (1) representative from each extension center to serve for the academic year to be confirmed by the Executive Board.
    - a. No one student will be selected to represent more than one extension center.
    - b. The director and/or assistant director of each site will also have the ability to make mid-year recommendations if the position becomes vacant.
  - b. Representatives will have all the rights and responsibilities as a senator except for voting privileges.
  
- C. Senate meetings shall be conducted using a modified version of Robert's Rules of Order.
- D. The Senate shall have the power to officially recognize student clubs to become part of the SGA and be eligible for funding; funding is not guaranteed.
- E. The Senate shall also reserve the right to dissolve a recognized club of the SGA. The Senate may also issue sanctions to any recognized club found to be in violation of SGA or College policies.
- F. The Senate shall have the power to review, approve and amend constitutions of SGA recognized clubs, to ensure compliance with the SGA Constitution.
- G. The Senate may pass resolutions which serve as the official position of the student body regarding a campus issue.
- H. Any member of the WCC community may attend a meeting of the Senate, but only an official member of the Senate may introduce a motion.

- I. The Senate shall have the power to set policy for the Student Government Association. These rules and procedures may not alter powers both expressed and implied by this document, and must be approved by the Executive Board.
- J. The Senate shall be responsible to the Executive Board.

V. Finance Committee

- A. The Finance Committee is the fiduciary branch of the SGA. It shall be responsible for the allocation of the funds given to the SGA by the Faculty/Student Association in a way that best serves the interest of the student body.
- B. The Finance Committee shall consist of the following members:
  - i. SGA Treasurer
    - a. The Treasurer is the chairperson.
    - b. The Treasurer shall create an agenda for each meeting.
    - c. The Treasurer shall only vote in the event of a tie in which they shall serve as the tie-breaker.
    - d. The Treasurer shall determine the meeting schedule for the Committee.
    - e. The Treasurer shall appoint a secretary.
    - f. The Treasurer shall appoint one Hearing Committee Representative and one alternate Hearing Committee Representative, both from within the Finance Committee with confirmation from the Finance Committee.
    - g. The Treasurer shall report to the Finance Committee the status of SGA funds, and any important budgetary concerns pertaining to clubs.
  - ii. Finance Committee Secretary
    - a. The Finance Committee Secretary is a non-voting member.
    - b. The Finance Committee Secretary shall be appointed by the Finance Committee Chairperson.
    - c. The Finance Committee Secretary shall be responsible for the recording and publishing of minutes for the Finance Committee meetings.
  - iii. SGA Senators
    - a. The Senate shall elect one to three members of the Senate to serve as voting members of the Finance Committee.
  - iv. Students at Large
    - a. The SGA Treasurer shall recommend one to three members of the student body to serve as voting members of the Finance Committee to be confirmed by the SGA Senate.
  - v. Club Representatives
    - a. The Vice President shall recommend one to three club officers as voting members of the Finance Committee to be confirmed by the SGA Senate.

- C. Each spring semester, the Finance Committee shall prepare the SGA budget for the next fiscal year, to be presented to the Faculty/Student Association each May for approval.
- D. The Finance Committee shall review all requests from recognized clubs or other College entities for SGA funding, to include budget requests or additional allocation requests.
- E. Any member of the WCC community may attend a meeting of the Finance Committee, but only an official member of the Finance Committee may introduce a motion.
- F. The Finance Committee shall be responsible to the Executive Board.

## VI. SGA Recognized Clubs

- A. A group of students with a common interest may pursue recognition from the SGA. Recognition will be granted by the Senate. All groups seeking recognition must create a constitution and have it first approved by the Club Affairs Committee. This constitution may not implicitly or explicitly violate the SGA Constitution.
- B. Club funds must be used to promote social, educational, and/or cultural functions open to all members of the SGA. These functions should relate in a meaningful way to the mission statement of each group.
- C. Clubs shall not engage in actions which are contrary to the mission and goals of Westchester Community College. Questionable actions, to include violations of College or SGA policy, shall be discussed by the Senate, which shall have the right to discipline groups for said actions.
- D. The President of each club, or their designee, shall participate in at least two (2) of the Club Council events a semester.
- E. Club officers shall be elected by the club members.
- F. Recognized clubs must keep a current copy of their constitution on file with the Department of Student Involvement.
- G. Clubs must know and follow the College's Club/Organization Policy & Procedures Manual found online or in the Department of Student Involvement. Clubs who fail to adhere to these policies may risk losing recognition from the College as determined by the Department of Student Involvement.
- H. Recognized clubs must have a faculty or staff advisor whose name is on file with the Department of Student Involvement. Advisors to SGA clubs shall not receive stipends for their services.
- I. Clubs must fulfill all the responsibilities in this constitution and in their own constitution.

## VII. SGA Standing Committees

- A. SGA Public Relations Committee
  - i. The Public Relations Committee shall increase community awareness of the SGA.
  - ii. The Public Relations Committee shall consist of the following members:
    - a. Director of Public Relations
      - 1. The Director of Public Relations is the Chairperson.
      - 2. The Director of Public Relations shall instruct and aid its members in the creation of campus publicity for the SGA.
    - b. Any member of the SGA may serve on the Public Relations Committee.

- iii. The Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for coordinating any events sponsored by the SGA.
- iv. The Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for promoting the membership and actions of the SGA to the campus.
- v. The Public Relations Committee is responsible to the Executive Board.

#### B. SGA Club Affairs Committee

- i. The Club Affairs Committee shall be concerned with matters relating to recognized clubs, to include, but not limited to: (1) reviewing existing constitutions of SGA recognized clubs and newly drafted constitutions of student groups before their presentation to the Senate for approval – ensuring all newly proposed constitutions contain proper formatting and the required information; (2) recommending the semester status for each recognized club for Senate approval; (3) recommending the creation of bylaws that govern clubs for Senate approval.
- ii. The Club Affairs Committee shall be responsible for planning and/or organizing Club Officer Events, which include, but are not limited to, educational workshops that will allow clubs recognized by the SGA to gain further knowledge of how to govern and conduct their clubs, networking events to meet other club officers and form connections and collaboration possibilities, and relevant trainings to have the opportunity to grow as a leader in their role.
  - a. There shall be a minimum of three Club Officer Events per semester.
  - b. Club Officers are not required to attend, but will be highly encouraged to through attendance incentives decided by the Club Affairs Committee.
  - c. The Club Affairs Committee shall host one town hall per semester that acts as a forum for club officers to represent themselves and express their opinions to the SGA in an official capacity.
- iii. The Club Affairs Committee shall consist of the following members:
  - a. SGA Vice President
    - 1. The SGA Vice President is the Chair
  - b. One to three Representatives to the Club Affairs Committee shall be elected from within the Senate by the Senate.
  - c. One to three Representatives to the Club Affairs Committee shall be recommended by the Vice President to be confirmed by the SGA Senate.
- iv. The Club Affairs Committee is responsible to the Senate.

#### C. SGA Hearing Committee

- i. The Hearing Committee shall be the primary committee for discipline and sanctioning, with the possible removal, of SGA officers. It shall hear all cases concerning individual misconduct that may damage the public image of SGA as well as actions that violate the SGA Constitution and/or Bylaws.
- ii. The Hearing Committee shall consist of the following members:



- a. Hearing Committee Chairperson
      - 1. The Associate Dean of Student Life is the chairperson.
      - 2. The Chairperson shall be a non-voting member of the Committee.
      - 3. The Chairperson shall ensure all cases are adjudicated in a fair & timely manner.
    - b. One representative shall be from the Senate, Finance Committee, and Club Officer at Large. No representative shall be a member of the Executive Board.
    - c. Alternate representatives shall be used if there is a significant conflict of interest, as determined by the Hearing Committee Chairperson.
    - d. The Director of Student Involvement is the Advisor to the Hearing Committee.
    - e. The SGA Secretary shall act as a non-voting member whose sole purpose is to record the minutes. If the Secretary is called into question, one of the three alternates shall assume the Secretary's duties on the Hearing Committee.
  - iii. The Hearing Committee shall meet after a formal written complaint is brought to the attention of the Director of Student Involvement and is found to have validity for the claims. Any member of the SGA may file a complaint.
  - iv. The Hearing Committee may issue sanctions ranging from a formal warning to expulsion from SGA.
  - v. The decision of the Hearing Committee is final and may only be appealed if a student believes a lack of due process was given. Appeals of this nature may be presented to the Vice President and Dean of Student Access, Involvement & Success.
  - vi. The Hearing Committee is responsible to the Executive Board.
- D. SGA Civic Engagement Committee
  - i. The mission of the SGA Civic Engagement Committee is to develop and implement nonpartisan ideas and initiatives to promote the political involvement of our student body. This can include, for example, voter registration tables and debates for political office. Additionally, the duties of SGA election outreach can be an issue of the committee, at the discretion of the chairperson.
  - ii. The Civic Engagement Committee shall consist of the following members:
    - a. SGA Secretary
      - 1. The SGA Secretary shall serve as the chairperson.
    - b. Students who are included in the Civic Engagement Strategic Plan as student leaders are invited to serve on the committee.
    - c. The Committee is open to all members of the SGA
  - iii. In addition to their own duties, the SGA Secretary shall coordinate with the Department of Student Involvement and other faculty organizations to draft a Civic Engagement Strategic Plan for the next academic year and implement campus-wide Civic Engagement activities.
  - iv. The chairperson of the committee shall help ensure that Westchester Community College remains a voter-friendly campus.

## VIII. Ratification and Amending Process

- A. This Constitution will be ratified if at least 200 members of the student body of Westchester Community College vote, in which at least half of those voting, vote in favor of ratification.

- B. Any member of the SGA may propose an amendment to this document. The proposed amendment must be presented to the Senate by a member of the Senate if it is to be considered. The proposed amendment must pass the SGA Senate by a 3/4 majority in which 2/3 of the voting members must be present.
- C. This document shall be reviewed annually by the SGA Executive Board before the beginning of the academic year.

Ratified On:

**December 7, 2012**

Last amended:

**April 23, 2020**