

# **SCHENECTADY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION**

**PREAMBLE**            We, the students of Schenectady County Community College, in order to form an organization through which the students may voice their opinions, register their wishes and insure their rights, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the students of Schenectady County Community College.

**ARTICLE I.            Name of Organization**

The name of the organization shall be the Student Government Association of Schenectady County Community College.

**ARTICLE II.          Purpose**

The purpose of the organization shall be to represent the interests, further the social and personal growth, and promote the general welfare of the members of the student body. This Constitution shall be the basis of the Student Government.

**ARTICLE III.        Membership**

A.     All full- and part-time students of Schenectady County Community College shall become members of the Student Government Association upon payment of the appropriate student activities fees.

B.     All members of the Student Government Association may participate in Association meetings and may vote in elections and referendums of the Student Government Association.

**ARTICLE IV.        Student Senate**

**Section 1.        Duties and Powers**

A.     To act for and in behalf of the student body in promoting and supporting all activities which enhance the purpose of the Student Government Association.

B.     To be responsible for the determination of, the administration of and the allocation of all funds accruing to the Student Government Association.

C.     To maintain cooperative relationships with student leaders of other institutions of higher learning and the community.

D.     To represent the Student Government Association in relations with the faculty and administrative officers of the College.

E.     To appoint members of the Association to serve as members of those committees of the College that are denoted as joint student-faculty-administration committees or boards. These committees will only be open for second semester freshmen or seniors.

- F. The power to oversee all organizations of the Association.
- G. The Senate has final approval of line item transfers in excess of:
  - 1. \$50 between line items
  - 2. \$300 within an organization's account.
- H. The Senate has the power to freeze an organization's budget until a time when a proper investigation can be conducted.

**Section 2. Senate Meetings**

- A. Regular meetings of the Student Government Senate shall be called by the President at least once a week during the regular academic year at times and places to be determined by the Student Senate, in cooperation with the College.
- B. Notice of all regular meetings of the Student Senate, including the time and place of such meetings, shall be published at least two (2) days prior to the meeting.
- C. Special sessions of the Student Senate may be called by the President of the Student Senate, any quorum of the Student Senate, by 10 percent of the Student Government Association, or by the President of the College, for designated purposes. Only such designated purposes shall occupy the time of the meeting.
- D. Notice of all special meetings of the Student Senate, including the time, place and purpose of the such meetings, shall be published at least two (2) days prior to the meeting.
- E. A quorum shall consist of at least a majority of the elected and seated Senate members and a majority of a quorum shall decide all legislation passed by the Senate.
- F. All meetings of the Student Senate shall be open to the college community and any one present may be recognized by the chair. Executive sessions may be called by two-thirds (2/3) vote of a quorum.
- G. All minutes of the Student Senate shall be available to the Student Government Association members.
- H. Senate sessions shall be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order as modified by this Constitution.

**ARTICLE V. Association Officers and Student Senators**

**Section 1. Positions**

- A. The officers of the Association shall be: President, Vice President and Treasurer.
- B. The student representative to the Board of Trustees shall be considered a non-voting

officer of the Association.

- C. The officers of the Association shall also be officers of the Student Senate.
- D. There will be eight (8) freshmen senators and eight (8) senior senators excluding officers of the Student Senate.

**Section 2. Qualifications**

- A. To be eligible for any position in the Student Government Association, a student must be a member of the Student Government Association and must maintain an average academic rating of at least 2.0 cumulative average. If any member of the Student Government Association fails to achieve a 2.00 cumulative average, they will be dismissed from their office. First semester freshmen are exempt from the 2.0 cumulative average restriction.
- B. To be eligible for an officer position in the Student Government Association, a student must also have at least twenty-four (24) accepted credits as defined by Schenectady County Community College at the end of the current academic semester.
- C. To be eligible to run for a senior senate seat, a student must have no less than twenty-four (24) accepted credits as defined by Schenectady County Community College at the end of the current academic semester.
- D. To be eligible to run for a freshman senate seat, a student must have no more than twenty-four (24) accepted credits as defined by Schenectady County Community College at the end of the current academic semester.
- E. Candidates shall meet further specific requirements for each office as set forth by the Elections Board and approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Student Senate.
- F. No student shall be eligible to run for any Student Government Association position in a regular election who lacks only the equivalent of one semester as a full-time day student for the completion of graduation requirements as defined by Schenectady County Community College.
- G. The student representative to the Board of Trustees as defined by Schenectady County Community College can be a full- or part-time student.

**Section 3. Nominations**

- A. Candidates for official Student Government Association positions shall present to the Elections Board a Petition for Candidacy which has been signed by no less than fifty (50) members of the Student Government Association. Signatures on such petitions may be duplicated on petitions of other candidates seeking the same office but not on the same petition. The Elections Board with the vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Student Senate may increase but not decrease the number of signatures needed on Petitions of Candidacy.

- B. The Petition for Candidacy must be approved by the Director of Student Activities as to scholastic eligibility.

#### **Section 4. Elections**

- A. The officers of the Association shall be elected by a plurality vote of the members of the Student Government Association voting. A secret ballot or voting booth must be the medium of the election. The date or dates of the election shall be set by the Election Board and shall be within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of classes for Spring Semester. The date of elections shall be made public no less than seven (7) days prior to the election.
- B. Officer positions shall run consecutively from commencement to commencement of the academic year at Schenectady County Community College
- C. Senate elections for senior senate seats must be held within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of classes for Spring Semester.
- D. Senate elections for freshmen senate seats must be held within thirty (30) days after the commencement of classes for the Fall Semester.
- E. Freshmen senate seats shall be awarded to the eight (8) freshmen candidates who receive the highest number of votes in the senate elections.
- G. Student senators shall assume their positions immediately after the Student Senate meeting at which election results are announced.
- H. In order to maintain eligibility as a Student Government Association officer or as a student senator, such persons shall be required to maintain a cumulative average of at least 2.0 those semesters in attendance.
- I. In the event of a vacancy in the Presidency, the Vice-President shall assume that office. For any other vacancy including one caused by the assumption of the Presidency by the Vice-President, the remaining association officers and the members of the Student Senate shall elect replacements who shall complete the unexpired term of office. Candidates for such replacement positions shall follow the procedures as stated for the nomination of those persons they are replacing and shall meet the same qualifications and requirements as stated for original elections. In the event the number of vacancies is four (4) or more at one time, the Senate will hold school-wide elections for those positions.
- J. In the event of a tie for one of the officer positions or if more than one (1) candidate receives the highest number of votes for freshmen and senior senate seats, a run-off election will be held between the tied candidates within seven (7) school days after the initial election took place. The Election Board will institute and govern the run-off election.

#### **Section 5. Officers: Duties and Powers**

- A. ***President:*** It shall be the duty of the President to execute and enforce the provisions of this Constitution. The President shall call and preside over all meetings of the Association and the Student Senate. He/She shall vote on a senate legislation only

in the event of a tie vote. He/she shall appoint all necessary committee chairpersons and shall receive the reports of all subsidiary organizations. The President shall serve as the official representative of the Association and the Student Senate to the duly constituted authorities of the College and to the community.

- B. ***Vice-President:*** The Vice-President shall perform all duties of the President in his/her absence. The Vice-President shall also be responsible for presenting to the Senate all charters and material relevant to chartering school clubs and activities. The Vice-President shall make every effort to see that scheduled events of school clubs and organizations do not have conflicting dates and time and shall also make public a calendar of upcoming events. The Vice-President shall also initiate with the Treasurer the coordination of all clubs and organizations activities. The implementation of programs desired to develop civic responsibility shall also be directed through this office.
- C. ***Treasurer:*** The Treasurer shall receive and dispense funds as directed by the Student Senate. He/she shall also be responsible for keeping accurate accounts of all revenue and expenditures of student activities fees and he/she shall insure that files and books concerning all fiscal matters of the Student Government Association are kept current. He/she shall also insure enforcement of fiscal policy as required through finance rules and regulation. The Treasurer shall submit financial reports at least twice yearly as directed by the Student Senate and be the chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee of the Senate. In addition, implementation and enforcement of direct communications with clubs and organizations shall be the duties of this office.
- D. ***Secretary:*** The Secretary is appointed by the Executive Board of the Student Government Association based on his/her secretarial skills. The Secretary's duties shall include filing, taking dictation, and transcribing communications for the Executive Board and the Senate. He/she is responsible for keeping the minutes of each senate session and publishing them at least two (2) days prior to the next regular session. He/she is a non-voting member and is not required to serve on any standing or special (ad-hoc) committees. He/she is not an elected senator.
- E. ***Student Representative to the Board of Trustees:*** The student will serve as liaison between the Senate and the Board of Trustees. He/she shall be elected within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of classes for Spring Semester by the student body through popular vote as set forth by the Election Board of the Senate. Unless elected as a senator, the Student Trustee is a non-voting member of the Senate. His/her term of office is held from July 1 - June 30. The Student Trustee is requested to attend all senate meetings and to communicate Board of Trustee's actions to the senate.
- F. ***The President, Vice-President and Treasurer*** comprise the Executive Board of the Student Government Association. Weekly meetings to discuss various areas of the Association's business shall be held as announced. Actions taken by the Executive Board in joint decision making shall stand as final until Student Senate vote, Constitution and Judicial Committee, or a student body vote shall challenge and appeal that vote and action.

- G. The President of the Student Government Association shall have the power upon statement of reason in writing to veto any motion passed by the Senate provided that it is done within two (2) school days from adjournment of the Student Senate. An executive veto can be overridden by two thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Student Senate.

**Section 6. Senators: Duties and Powers**

- A. Senators are elected to serve one (1) academic year and shall receive compensation for their services per semester. Each senator shall have one (1) vote per legislative item during senate sessions.
- B. Absent members who fail to notify an Executive Board member prior to any senate session are considered "unexcused" and will receive a deduction in salary proportionate to the quantity of unexcused absences, i.e.:

<u>Unexcused Absences</u>	<u>Deduction</u>
1 per semester	10 percent
3 per semester	100 percent

All members will be allowed two (2) excused absences per semester as defined by the Executive Board. Any member who enters the Senate session after the Calling of Order is considered late. Two (2) such lateness constitute one (1) unexcused absence.

**Section 7. Impeachment and Removal**

- A. The Senate may by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Senate impeach any member of office of the Senate for causes.
- B. Specific reasons for impeachment shall be announced at least one (1) week prior to a hearing before the Senate.
- C. The Chairperson of the Constitution and Judicial Committee of the Student Senate shall preside over the hearing at which time the impeached member will be given the opportunity to propose a defense.
- D. The President shall preside over the Constitution and Judicial Committee in the event the Chairperson of the Constitution and Judicial Committee has been impeached.

**Section 8. Re-Call**

Any member of the Student Senate or an official of the Association may be re-called by a petition of half plus one (1) of the total membership of the Student Government Association.

## ARTICLE VI.

### Student Senate Committees

#### Section 1. Types and Structures

- A. All standing and special (Ad-Hoc) committee chairpersons shall be named from among the members of the Student Senate and shall be appointed by the President of the Student Government Association with the approval of the Senate except where the Constitution mandates other appointments. The appointed chairpersons of standing and special (Ad-Hoc) committees shall have the privilege of naming those members of the Association to serve on their committees, provided the President approves such persons for committee membership. Each chairperson should document and report all pertinent information to the Senate.

#### Section 2. Special (Ad-Hoc) Committees

The President may appoint such special (Ad-Hoc) committees as he/she deems necessary and may name any member of the Association to act as chairperson. The President may receive reports from special committees at any time.

#### Section 3. Establishment Clause

At the beginning of each academic year, the Senate shall establish and maintain (throughout the school year) the following standing committees and require that each senator be active on a minimum of one (1) of these:

- A. ***Student Organizational Board:*** This committee should be chaired by the Vice-President of the Student Government Association with the President (or representative) of all organizations and at least four (4) senators as its members. This group shall be charged with maintaining open communications between the Senate and its satellite organizations. Meetings of this board should be held at least three (3) times each semester.
- B. ***Awards Committee:*** This committee shall be responsible for recognizing the special achievement of students, faculty, staff, and administrators in relation to the College. All awards to be issued by the Student Government Association and/or its committees should be referred to this committee for their consideration and recommendation. Should a member of this committee be nominated for an award, he/she should immediately relinquish this committee seat while the chairperson and President shall select a replacement.
- C. ***Budget and Finance Committee:*** It shall be the responsibility of this committee to hear budget requests in the excess of \$50 (fifty dollars), prepare and recommend statements of budget allocations for proposed clubs and organizations, recommend fiscal policy to the Student Senate, and enforce fiscal policies, rules and regulations as set forth by the Senate. This committee shall meet for deliberation of such rules as necessary with its members and/or newly elected membership in joint session. The members of the Budget and Finance Committee shall include the Treasurer of the Association, who shall be the chairperson, the Vice-President of the Association, the President of the Student Activities Board, and four (4) senators. They shall be responsible for recommending the stipend of the senators and officers.

- D. ***Constitution and Judicial Committee:*** This committee shall consist of no less than three (3) and no more than five (5) members. This committee shall coordinate with College officials on matters involving Student Disciplinary Procedures. This committee shall upon request rule upon the constitutionality of and legislation passed by the Student Senate. This committee shall meet no less than three (3) times each semester to review legislation, proposed club charters, operational procedures of Student Senate, Finance Board, Executive Board, Athletic Board and Student Organizational Board. This committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President of the Student Government Association.
  
- E. ***Athletic Board:*** The Athletic Board shall work in conjunction with the Athletic Director in formulating budgets and salaries for intercollegiate sports and athletics that are supported by the student activities fees. The Athletic Board shall consist of no less than three (3) and no more than five (5) members. The Chairman of this Board shall be a senior senator.
  
- F. ***Election Board:*** This committee shall have the responsibility of conducting and coordinating all elections of the Student Government Association, recommending to the Student Senate specific requirements for various association elective positions, and recommending to the Student Senate the date for regular elections. The Election Board shall consist of not less than three (3) and no more than five (5) members.
  
- G. ***Abilities Awareness Committee:*** The Abilities Awareness Committee of the Student Government Association will consist of three (3) senators, with a minimum of one (1) freshman and one (1) senior senator. It will also be open to students from the college community to serve as committee members. This committee will work in conjunction with the Disabled Student Services Coordinator at SCCC. The purpose of the committee will be to educate the college community on the needs and desires of students with disabilities. In addition to this, the committee will make every effort to ensure that students with disabilities get equal opportunities in all college affairs.

**ARTICLE VII. Student Clubs and Organizations**

**Section 1.** Active student clubs and organizations which are formed for one or more of the following purposes are strongly encouraged:

- A. For special or departmental interests, including those which have a common interest of educational purpose.
  
- B. Honorary groups where membership is earned as an award for achievement.
  
- C. Service groups which exist to serve the College and/or community.

**Section 2. Requirements for Proposed Chartered Clubs and Organizations**

Student desiring to form a chartered club or organization must submit (in duplicate) to the Constitution and Judicial Committee and the Budget and Finance Committee of the Student Government Association the following items:

- A. A prepared Constitution which includes a statement of the club's purpose.

- B. A statement from a member of the College's full-time faculty or staff volunteering himself/herself to act as the club's advisor.
- C. A detailed account of planned activities indicating cultural, civic and college interests.
- D. A list of signatures of its proposed membership.
- E. Only Student Government Association members may be eligible to join chartered clubs and organizations.
- F. Requirements of students holding an office in a recognized club or organization.

To be eligible to be an officer in a Student Government Association club or organization, a student must:

- 1. be a full-time student as defined by Schenectady County Community College,
- 2. maintain an academic cumulative average of at least 2.0.

If any officer fails to achieve a 2.0 cumulative average, the student will be:

- 1. ineligible for his/her present office,
- 2. notified in writing of his/her standing by the Executive Board of the Student Government Association.

The student will still be eligible for membership in the club or organization.

- G. The Director of Student Activities is responsible for notifying the Student Government Association Executive Board and the organization's faculty advisor in writing of the student's ineligibility. Continued participation as an officer of the club or organization shall result in disciplinary action by the Student Government Association's Constitution and Judicial Committee.

**Section 3. Requirements of Recognized Clubs and Organizations**

- A. Clubs and organizations which have been previously chartered (recognized) by the Student Government Association should submit to the Constitution and Judicial Committee any revisions or changes regarding name, purpose, faculty advisor, list of active members, financial status immediately following such actions. Only recognized clubs and organizations are eligible to receive allocations from the student activities fees.
- B. All clubs and organizations must have at least one representative at the Student Organizational Board meetings. Any club or organization who fails to send a representative to more than one (1) meeting per year will be recommended to the Senate for dismissal of recognition.

**Section 4. Recognition Clause**

The Senate may by a majority vote of a quorum recognize any club or organization fulfilling the requirements as set forth in Article VII. Section 2.

**Section 5. Failure Clause**

Any club or organization which fails to comply with the above (Article VII. Sections 1. and 3.) shall become subject to dismissal from the Association's roster of recognized clubs and organizations and relinquishes its privilege to use student activity funds. This action may be taken by a majority vote of a quorum in the Senate.

**Section 6. Non-Exempt**

No club or organization funded by student activities fees is under any circumstances exempt from the above (Article VII., Sections 1., 2., 3., 4., and 5.).

**Section 7. Posters, Notices and Publicity**

All matters concerning posters, notices and publicity must conform to the following regulations:

- A. All publicity must bear the name of the sponsoring group.
- B. Publicity must be removed by the sponsoring group within one (1) school day following the completion of the event. Failure to do so will result in a fine of \$1 (one dollar) per sign left up. The Vice-President and four (4) senators assigned to the Student Organizational Board are responsible for collection and implementation of the fines.
- C. The neatness of the material and the maintenance thereof is the responsibility of the sponsoring group.

**ARTICLE VIII. Dissolution Clause**

In the event of dissolution of the Student Government Association, all assets remaining after payment of its just debts and obligations shall be transferred to Schenectady County Community College and be used to promote the purposes of the Student Government Association.

**ARTICLE IX. Amendment Clause**

An amendment to the Constitution must be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Student Senate and then approved by a majority of the Student Government Association members voting in such a referendum.

**ARTICLE X. Ratification Clause**

Ratification of this Constitution will take place when it is approved by a majority of the members voting in the Student Government Association.

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