

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

**PREAMBLE**            We, the students of Schenectady County Community College (“SCCC”), 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 SCCC.

**ARTICLE I.      Name of Organization**  
                                 The name of the organization shall be the Student Government Association of Schenectady County Community College (the “SGA”).

**ARTICLE II.     Purpose**  
                                 The purpose of the SGA shall be to represent the interests, further the social and personal growth, and promote the general welfare of the members of the SCCC student body. This Constitution shall be the basis for the governance of the SGA.

**ARTICLE III.    Membership**

- A.      All full- and part-time students of SCCC shall become members of the student body upon payment of the appropriate student activities fees.
- B.      All members of the SCCC student body may participate in SGA meetings and may vote in elections for SGA Senators and executive officers.

**ARTICLE IV.    Student Senate**

**Section 1.      Duties and Powers**

- A.      To act for and on behalf of the SCCC student body in promoting and supporting all activities which enhance the purpose of the SGA.
- B.      To be responsible for the determination of, the administration of and the allocation of all funds accruing to the student body, subject to the discretion of the SCCC Board of Trustees.
- C.      To maintain cooperative relationships with student leaders of other institutions of higher learning and the community.
- D.      To represent the SCCC student body in relations with the faculty and administrative officers of SCCC.

- E. The power to oversee all organizations of the SGA, subject to the discretion of the SCCC Board of Trustees.
- F. The SGA Senate has final approval of line item transfers in excess of:
  - 1. \$500 between line items
  - 2. \$300 within an SGA organization's account.
- G. In the event of an apparent or suspected improper expenditure by an SGA organization, the SGA Senate has the power to freeze such organization's budget for a reasonable period of time until a time when a proper investigation can be conducted and concluded.

**Section 2. Senate Meetings**

- A. Regular meetings of the SGA Senate (the "Student Senate") shall be called by the President of the SGA at least every other week during the regular academic year at times and places to be determined by the SGA Executive Board, in cooperation with SCCC.
- 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. Such posting will be delivered by the SGA President or Secretary to the SGA advisor for electronic distribution to the SCCC student body.
- C. Special meetings of the Student Senate may be called by the SGA President, by quorum of the Student Senate, by 10 percent of the SGA, or by the President of SCCC, for designated purposes set forth in the notice of such special meeting. Only such designated purposes shall occupy the time of the special meeting.
- D. Notice of all special meetings of the Student Senate, including the time, place and purpose of such meetings, shall be published at least two (2) days prior to the meeting. Such posting will be delivered by the SGA President or Secretary to the SGA advisor for electronic distribution to the SCCC student body.
- E. A quorum shall consist of at least a simple majority of the elected and seated Senate members and a majority of a quorum shall decide all legislation proposed by the Senate.
- F. All meetings of the SGA shall be open to the SCCC community and anyone present may be recognized by the Chair.
- G. All minutes of the Student Senate shall be available to the SCCC student body members.

- H. Student Senate sessions shall be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order as modified by this Constitution.

**ARTICLE V.**

**SGA Officers and Student Senators**

**Section 1. Positions**

- A. The officers of the SGA shall be: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Student Trustee.
- B. The Student Trustee to the SCCC Board of Trustees shall be a non-voting officer of the SGA.
- C. The officers of the SGA shall also be officers of the Student Senate.
- D. There will be 11 SGA Senators, excluding officers of the SGA, of the Student Senate.

**Section 2. Qualifications**

- A. To be eligible for any position on the SGA Senate, a student must be a member of the SGA and must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.25. If any member of the SGA Senate fails to achieve a 2.25 cumulative grade point average, they will be dismissed from their office. First semester students on the SGA Senate are exempt from the 2.25 cumulative grade point average restriction. No member of the SGA can receive payments from any SGA organization.
- B. To be eligible for an officer position in the SGA, a student must also have at least twenty-four (24) accepted credits, as defined by SCCC, at the end of the then current academic semester. Students must also be in good standing with SCCC, as determined by the Vice President of Student Affairs, in order to serve as an officer of the SGA.
- C. 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.

**Section 3. Nominations**

- A. Candidates for all positions on the SGA Senate shall present to the Elections Board a Petition for Candidacy which has been signed by no less than fifty (50) members of the SCCC student body. 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 all Petitions of Candidacy.

- B. The Petition for Candidacy must be approved by the Vice President of Student Affairs as to such candidate's eligibility.

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

- A. The officers of the SGA shall be elected by a plurality vote of the members of the SCCC Student Body. The date of elections shall be announced to the SCCC Student Body no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the election.
- B. All Student Senate and officer positions shall run consecutively from June 1 – May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- C. Any member of the Student Senate returning for a second consecutive year shall be considered a second year SGA Senator and shall be eligible for chairing of committees of the SGA at the discretion of the President of the SGA.
- D. In the event of a vacancy in the Presidency of the SGA, the Vice-President of the SGA shall assume that office. For any other vacancy including one caused by the assumption of the Presidency by the Vice-President, the remaining SGA 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 Student Senate shall hold an election open to the SCCC student body.
- E. In the event of a tie for one of the officer positions of the SGA or if more than one (1) candidate receives the highest number of votes, 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 of the SGA to execute and enforce the provisions of this Constitution. The President shall call and preside over all meetings of the SGA and the Student Senate. He/she shall vote on Student Senate legislation only in the event of a tie vote. He/she shall appoint all necessary SGA committee chairpersons and shall receive the reports of all SGA subsidiary organizations. The President shall serve as the official representative of the SGA

and the Student Senate to the duly constituted authorities of SCCC and to the community. If for some reason he/she is unable to do so, he/she has the authority to appoint a representative from the Student Senate to be his/her representative, with the approval of the SGA advisor. The President of the SGA has the authority to appoint interim chairs to any SGA committee that is not fulfilling its appointed roll. All SGA committees, both standing and Ad hoc, will report directly to the SGA executive committee before the next scheduled meeting. The President of the SGA shall have the power upon statement of reason in writing to veto any motion passed by the Student 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.

- B. ***Vice-President:*** The Vice-President of the SHA shall perform all duties of the President of the SGA in his/her absence. The Vice-President shall also be responsible for presenting to the Student Senate all charters and material relevant to chartering SGA clubs and activities. The Vice-President shall make every effort to see that scheduled events of SGA 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 of the SGA, the coordination of all SGA clubs and organizations activities. The implementation of programs desired to develop civic responsibility shall also be directed through this office. In addition, implementation and enforcement of direct communications with SGA clubs and organizations shall be the duties of this office.
- C. ***Treasurer:*** The Treasurer shall receive and dispense funds of the SGA 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 SGA are kept current. He/she shall also insure enforcement of fiscal policy as required through finance rules and regulation. The Treasurer will make available to the SGA members the SGA's Annual Year-End Audit Report.
- D. ***Secretary:*** The Secretary is appointed by the President of the SGA based on his/her secretarial skills. The Secretary's duties shall include filing, taking dictation, and transcribing communications for the Executive Board and the Student Senate. He/she is responsible for keeping the minutes of each Student 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 Trustee to the SCCC Board of Trustees will serve as liaison between the Student Senate and the

Board of Trustees of SCCC. He/she shall be elected within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of classes at SCCC for the Spring Semester by the SCCC student body through popular vote as set forth by the Election Board. The Student Trustee is a non-voting member of the Student Senate. His/her term of office is held from July 1 - June 30. The Student Trustee is requested to attend all Student Senate meetings and to communicate SCCC Board of Trustee's actions to the Student Senate.

- F. **The *President, Vice-President Treasurer, and Student Trustee*** comprise the Executive Board of the SGA. The Student Trustee is to serve as a member of the Executive Board; however, in a non-voting role. Weekly meetings to discuss various areas of the SGA'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 SCCC student body vote shall challenge and appeal that vote and action.

**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 in accordance with the SGA approved budget for the applicable academic year. Each Senator shall have one (1) vote per legislative item during Student Senate sessions.
- B. Absent members who fail to notify an Executive Board member prior to any Student Senate session are considered "unexcused" and will receive a deduction in stipend proportionate to the quantity of unexcused absences, all in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Unexcused Absences</u>	<u>Deduction in stipend</u>
1 per semester	10 percent
2 per semester	50 percent
3 per semester	100 percent

**Section 7. Student Activities Fee**

The SGA Senate is responsible for the distribution of the Student Activities funds to the various student clubs, organizations and athletic teams. Annually in June, the SGA will participate in a professional audit conducted by an external, professional auditing firm.

**Section 8. Impeachment and Removal**

- A. The Student Senate may, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire SGA Senate, impeach any member of office of the SGA for cause (such as: violation of the

Student Code of Conduct).

- B. Specific reasons for impeachment shall be provided in writing to the impeached SGA Senate member at least one (1) week prior to a hearing before the Student Senate.
- C. The Chairperson of the Constitution and Judicial Committee of the Student Senate shall preside over the hearing at which time the impeached SGA Senate 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.
- E. If any Officer, Senator, or the Secretary is absent or unexcused for more than three (3) Senate and/or SGA Committee meetings and they have not contacted any SGA Officer or the SGA advisor requesting an excused absence for the appropriate period of time, then they will be recommended for removal from their position on the SGA Senate with the approval of the SGA advisor. If the individual wishes to re-join the SGA Senate, they will need to submit an appeal to the SGA advisor and the SGA Senate Officers. The Executive Board of the SGA will consider the appeal and make a decision within five business days.

**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 SGA with the approval of the Student 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 SGA to serve on their committees, provided the President of the SGA approves such persons for committee membership. Each chairperson should document and report all pertinent information to the Student Senate.

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

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

**Section 3. Establishment Clause**

At the beginning of each academic year, the Student 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 the following such standing committees:

- A. ***Student Organizational Board:*** This committee should be chaired by the Vice-President of the SGA with the President (or representative) of each SGA club or organization and no more than four (4) Senators. This group shall be charged with maintaining open communications between the Student Senate and all clubs, organizations and athletic teams affiliated and recognized by the SGA. Meetings of the Student Organizational 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 SCCC. All awards to be issued by the SGA 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 shall immediately relinquish this committee seat and the chairperson and President of the SGA shall select a replacement.
  
- C. ***Budget and Finance Committee:*** It shall be the responsibility of this committee to hear and review all club/organization 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 Student Senate. For new club budgets, this committee will meet concurrently with the Constitution and Judicial Committee to expedite the approval process. 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 SGA, who shall be the chairperson. Members of the Constitution and Judicial Committee cannot serve on the Budget and Finance Committee.
  
- D. ***Constitution and Judicial Committee:*** This committee shall consist of no more than (4) members. 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 any clubs or organizations under the control of the SGA. For new club constitutions, this committee will meet concurrently with the Budget and Finance Committee to expedite the approval process. This committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President of the SGA. Members of the Constitution and Judicial Committee cannot serve on the Budget



and Finance Committee to remove conflict of interest.

- F. **Election Board:** This committee shall have the responsibility of conducting and coordinating all elections of the SGA, 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 no more than five (5) members.
- G. **Student Activities Board: (SAB)** is the major activities SGA planning organization for the SGA Senate. The events that SAB plans are many and varied, and they include cultural, social, educational and recreational activities. Although, a member of the SGA Senate, appointed by the President of the SGA, shall Chair this Board, any member of the Student body may be on the Board. The Board shall no more than ten (10) student members.

**ARTICLE VII. Dissolution Clause**

In the event of dissolution of the SGA, all assets remaining after payment of its just debts and obligations shall be transferred to SCCC and be used to promote the purposes of the SGA.

**ARTICLE VII. Amendment Clause**

An amendment to this Constitution must be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Student Senate and approval of the SGA advisor and announced to the SCCC student body no later than five (5) business days after approval.

**ARTICLE IX. Ratification Clause**

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

**ARTICLE X. Review Clause**

This constitution shall be reviewed a minimum of every three (3) years by an ad-hoc committee with the purpose of determining if any revisions or additions are needed. If so, the committee will make those recommendations and they shall be voted on by the Student Senate.

Approved by the SGA Senate on May 3, 2016