



# CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

### ARTICLE I. PURPOSE AND MISSION

**Section 1.** The Student Government Association, as part of the greater academic representative voice of the student body, serves as the deliberate and consultative body vested with the power to advocate for students' rights, needs, interests, and welfare. The Student Government Association shall advocate for students at all University levels, including but not limited to the Board of Trustees, the President of the University, the Provost, the Dean of Students, the Faculty Senate, the administrative offices of the University, and the general public.

**Section 2.** The purpose and duty of the Student Government Association is:

- A.** To insist upon quality education for students and foster scholarship in an atmosphere of free and objective inquiry;
- B.** To insist upon academic responsibility and excellence;
- C.** To exercise, protect, and preserve students' rights according to the University policy and Student Conduct Code;
- D.** To protect students from any form of harassment and discrimination by advocating for a safe campus environment.
- E.** To maintain a forum for expressing student opinions and interests;
- F.** To initiate, coordinate, and guide efforts aimed at improving student life and activities;
- G.** To seek and obtain effective opportunities to develop student leadership skills;
- H.** To promote student involvement, leadership, and service within the community;
- I.** To administer part of the Student Activity Fee.

## WORKING DOCUMENT

### ARTICLE I. NAME AND MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1.** This organization shall be named the Student Government Association, hereinafter referred to as the SGA.

**Section 2.** All undergraduate students, both full and part-time, at Chapman University who have paid the established Student Activity Fee are subject to this Constitution and all of the ordinances lawfully enacted. All members of SGA shall be entitled to the privileges of this membership.

**Section 3.** Non-discrimination clause: the SGA and Chapman University is committed to providing an environment which is free of any form of harassment and discrimination based upon an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, emotional disability, intellectual disability, behavioral disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, genetic information, or any other classifications protected by applicable state or federal law, so that all members of the community are treated at all time with dignity and respect. It is the University's policy, therefore, to prohibit all forms of such harassment or discrimination among University faculty, students, staff, and administration.

## **ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

**Section 1.** The SGA shall be organized into three branches: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches.

- A.** The Executive Branch of this association shall be made up of the President, the Vice President, the Director of Senate, the Director of Operations, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Public Relations.
  - i.** The Executive Council shall be made up of the President, the Vice President, the Director of Senate, the Director of Operations, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Public Relations.
  - ii.** Additional support staff positions may be added to the Council as deemed necessary by the existing Council and approved by a majority vote of the Senate.
- B.** The Legislative Branch shall be comprised of the Student Senate chaired by the Vice President, and comprised of seventeen (17) senators:
  - i.** Academic Senators shall account for ten members (one per school/college).
    - 1.** The schools/colleges represented include: Argyros College of Business & Economics, Attallah College of Educational Studies, Dodge College of Film & Media Arts, Wilkinson College of Humanities & Social Sciences, College of Performing Arts, Schmid College of Science & Technology, Crean College of Health & Behavioral Sciences, School of Pharmacy, School of Communication, and Fowler School of Engineering.
    - 2.** If an additional school/college is added, one Senate seat shall be added to the total without an amendment.

- 3. Senators holding an Academic Senator seat must have a declared major within the represented college. If an Academic Senator decides to change their major during their term, they will not be allowed to remain an Academic Senator for the position in which they ran.
  - ii. Class Senators shall account for four (4) members: one (1) First-Year Senator, one (1) Sophomore Senator, one (1) Junior Senator, and one (1) Senior Senator.
    - 1. Class rank is determined by the number of expected completed credits by the end of the Spring semester for Spring general elections.
    - 2. For Fall general elections and any special elections, class standing will be determined by the current number of completed credits.
    - 3. First-Year students shall be classified by fewer than 30 credits; Sophomore students shall be classified by 30 to 59.9 credits; Junior students shall be classified by 60 to 89.9 credits; Senior students shall be classified by 90 or more credits. If there is a special circumstance, contact the Director of Senate for classification and approval.
  - iii. Student Organization Senators shall account for two (2) members.
  - iv. An At-Large Senator shall account for one (1) member.
  - v. The Spring general election shall include all Academic Senators, Sophomore Senator, Junior Senator, Senior Senator, two (2) Student Organization Senators, and one (1) At-Large Senator.
  - vi. The Fall election shall include one (1) First-Year Senator and any vacant seats from the previous Spring general election.
- C. The Judicial Branch shall consist of the Director of Justice and the Student Government Association Review Board.

**Section 2.** No person or group of persons in any one of these branches shall exercise power belonging to the other branches, except as hereinafter expressly directed or permitted.

**Section 3.** Individuals in any one of these branches can either be full-time or part-time students during their term of office.

**Section 4.** No person shall hold more than one office in SGA at one time.

### **ARTICLE III. EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**Section 1.** The membership and qualifications of this branch shall include:

- A.** The SGA Executive Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, shall consist of six (6) members: the President, the Vice President, the Director of Senate, the Director of Operations, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Public Relations.
- B.** The President and Vice President will be elected as described in the By-Laws.
- C.** The Director of Senate, the Director of Operations, the Director of Finance, the Director of Public Relations will be appointed by the incoming President and Vice President, with support from the outgoing President and Vice President, and the SGA Advisor(s).
- D.** Council members must be enrolled as an undergraduate student while in office and must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 for each semester office is held. Council members must also receive a conduct clearance from the Dean of Students Office.
- E.** Individuals running for President and Vice President must have completed a total of at least sixty (60) units each by the beginning of the Fall semester following the Spring elections of that same year.

**Section 2.** All Council members shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of the Senate.

**Section 3.** The President shall be ultimately responsible for the welfare of SGA and serve as the primary liaison with the University community at large.

**Section 4.** The Vice President shall serve as the primary liaison between the Senate and the Council and work closely with the President to serve the University community at large.

**Section 5.** The Director of Senate shall call and preside over all sessions of the Senate, be responsible for the content of each session's agenda, and oversee all SGA elections throughout the academic year.

**Section 6.** The Director of Operations shall be responsible for managing all logistical and operational needs of the Council.

**Section 7.** The Director of Finance shall be responsible for overseeing the financial operations of SGA and advise SGA on all financial matters relating to SGA funds and spending decisions.

**Section 8.** The Director of Public Relations shall be responsible for maintaining all communication channels utilized by SGA and promoting all SGA activities through various media platforms.

**Section 9.** All roles and responsibilities of the Executive Branch shall be outlined in the Executive Operating Procedures.

#### **ARTICLE IV. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

**Section 1.** The membership and qualifications of this branch shall include:

- A.** The Senate shall be composed of seventeen (17) senators as described in Article II, Section 1, part B.
- B.** Senators must be enrolled as an undergraduate student while in office and must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 for each semester office is held. Senators must also receive a conduct clearance from the Dean of Students Office.

**Section 2.** The legislative body of the SGA shall be known as the Student Senate of Chapman University, hereinafter referred to as the Senate. The Senate shall be responsible for serving as the primary forum through which student concerns are addressed and acting as the voice of the undergraduate student body to the Executive Council and University administration.

**Section 3.** Senators are expected to attend all regularly scheduled SGA meetings and any additional representative commitments as assigned by the Vice President.

**Section 4.** There shall be no less than three (3) standing Allocations Committees that meet regularly and are composed of members of the Senate. Each Senator shall be required to serve on one (1) Allocations Committee. The Director of Finance shall serve as Chairperson and ex-officio member of all committees and, with the Executive Council, determine how best to divide the SGA budget amongst them.

**Section 5.** All Senate meetings shall be open to the Chapman Community unless it is closed for a limited time by a three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) vote of the Senate.

- A.** Internal matters and issues of sensitivity to individuals are the only reason for a closed meeting. One must be stated as a purpose for a closure and a meeting may not be closed for more than an hour. If a meeting is closed, discussion is confidential, but the result of any vote must be recorded and made public.

**Section 6.** The Senate shall meet regularly, as deemed necessary by the Director of Senate, during the Fall and Spring semesters, when school is in session, with no more than seven (7) academic days in the Fall and Spring semesters passing between the time each meeting has been called.

- A. No act of the Senate shall be valid unless there is a quorum present. A quorum shall consist of the two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority of the Senate's total membership at the time of the meeting.
- B. A roll call shall be required at each meeting of the Senate, and shall be considered an official notice for records.
- C. Any member of the Chapman community may address the Senate by speaking upon recognition by the Director of Senate, but shall not have the right to vote, or to make motions.

**Section 7.** All roles and responsibilities of the Senate shall be outlined in the Senate Operating Procedures.

## **ARTICLE V. JUDICIAL BRANCH**

**Section 1.** The membership and qualifications of this branch shall include:

- A. The Judicial Branch shall consist of the Director of Justice and the Student Government Association Judicial Review Board, hereinafter referred to as the Review Board.
- B. The Director of Justice shall be appointed by recommendation from the Dean of Students or their designee. The appointment is then subject to majority approval of the Senate.

**Section 2.** The purpose of the Judicial Branch shall be to ensure that the Executive and Legislative branches are acting in accordance with the SGA operating documents.

**Section 3.** The Director of Justice shall serve as the head of the Review Board, hear all SGA related cases, and interpret and enforce all stipulations of the SGA operating documents.

**Section 4.** The Review Board shall support the Director of Justice as the voting body for any and all decisions pertaining to Judicial matters, convening whenever deemed necessary by the Director of Justice.

**Section 5.** All roles and responsibilities of the Judicial Branch shall be outlined in the SGA By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE VI. ELECTIONS**

**Section 1.** There shall be an Elections Committee, chaired by the Director of Senate, comprised of additional Elections Committee members, to be determined by the

Director of Senate and confirmed by a majority vote of the Senate. More information on elections can be found in the Election Code and Election Processes.

**ARTICLE VII. VACANCY PROCEDURE/SUCCESSION**

Section 1. The order of succession shall be as follows:

- A.** If the President is unable to complete the term of office or is removed from office, then the Vice President shall succeed them. A special election will be held to fill the Vice Presidency.
- B.** If the Vice President is unable to complete the term of office or is removed from office, then the Director of Senate shall serve as the interim Vice President while a special election is held to fill the role.
- C.** Should both the President and Vice President be unable to serve in their respective roles, the Director of Operations shall serve as interim President and the Director of Senate shall serve as interim Vice President. A special election will be held to fill both roles.
  - i.** Currently elected Senators will be eligible to run for vacancies in the Presidency or Vice Presidency.
- D.** Should the President-elect be unable to serve in their respective role, the Vice President-elect shall become the President-elect.
- E.** Should the Vice President-elect be unable to serve in their respective role, a special election shall be held.
- F.** The filing periods of any aforementioned special elections must begin within ten (10) academic days of notification of a vacancy in the President or Vice President roles.
- G.** If any remaining member of the Executive Council is unable to complete their term of office or is removed from office, then the President and Vice President will appoint a temporary replacement within ten (10) academic days. A permanent replacement must be appointed and pass with a majority vote from the Senate within four (4) weeks.
  - i.** In the event of any Executive Council vacancies, the President and Vice President will assume the roles and responsibilities until a replacement is appointed.
- H.** If the Director of Justice is unable to complete the term of office or is removed from office then the Advisor(s) and Dean of Students will appoint a replacement which must be approved by the Council and pass with a majority vote from the Senate within ten (10) academic days;
- I.** If a Senator is unable to complete the term of office or is removed from office, the office shall be filled as follows:
  - ii.** If there are fewer than ten (10) weeks remaining in the Senator’s term, the Vice President shall appoint an individual for the unexpired term of

office subject to the approval of the Senate. Approval shall be given by a majority vote.

- iii. If there are more than ten (10) weeks remaining in the Senator's term, there shall be an official election within two (2) academic weeks, excluding the weeks in which interterm classes are held.

## **ARTICLE VIII. DEFINITIONS**

**Section 1.** An academic day shall be defined as Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters, and interterm, excluding finals week, University breaks or holidays.

**Section 2.** Majority shall be defined as fifty percent plus one of members voting.

## **ARTICLE IX. ADVISOR**

**Section 1.** The SGA Advisor(s) shall be appointed by the Dean of Students, or their designee.

## **ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1.** The constitution may be amended in one of three ways:

- A. A proposal of amendment by a non-elected or appointed member of the SGA may be initiated by securing a petition of at least ten percent (10%) of the SGA membership and submitting it to the Senate. The Senate must then vote on the proposal and confirm it with a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote. Upon approval of such petition, the proposal shall be submitted to the SGA membership no less than ten (10) academic days from the date of presentation or approval by the Senate. Election procedures shall be followed as prescribed in the Election Code. A majority vote as well as eighteen percent (18%) of the SGA membership voting shall be required to amend the constitution.
- B. The Senate may initiate a proposal for amendment by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote in the affirmative. Upon approval of such petition, the proposal shall be submitted to the SGA membership no less than ten (10) academic days from the date of presentation or approval by the Senate. Election procedures shall be followed as prescribed in the Election Code. A majority vote as well as eighteen percent (18%) of the SGA membership voting shall be required to amend the constitution.
- C. The Senate may amend the constitution for non-substantive purposes such as removing inconsistencies and ambiguity or to achieve proper formatting. A



two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Senate is required to make non-substantive changes.

## **ARTICLE XI. STUDENT RIGHTS**

**Section 1.** SGA shall function in accordance with the Student Conduct Code and other appropriate University regulations.

**Section 2.** No member of this association shall be deprived office, status or property without due process.