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## Student Government Association Constitution

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# **Student Government Association Constitution**

## **Southwestern Oklahoma State University**

### **PREAMBLE**

We, the students of the Weatherford Campus of Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU), in order to ensure that our interests are represented, to provide student leadership, and to promote the general welfare of the university, do hereby create this Constitution of the SWOSU Student Government Association (SGA). We recognize SGA as the legitimate governing entity of the student body, and do empower it with all necessary authority toward the benefit of the student body.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Section One**

The Student Government Association shall be governed in accordance with this Constitution, which shall have precedence; the SGA By-Laws, which shall contain the rules and regulations of the Student Government Association; the SWOSU Student Statutes, which shall contain all acts of the Student Government Association affecting the student body as a whole; and such standing rules as adopted by the legislative, executive, and judicial branches for their own governance.

#### **Section Two**

All members of the Student Government Association shall be installed with an oath of office administered by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or, in his or her absence, an associate justice. The specific oath shall be found in the SGA By-Laws.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Section One**

All legislative powers of the Student Government Association shall be vested in the student legislature, which shall be called the Student Senate.

#### **Section Two**

The Student Senate shall be comprised of student Senators, who shall be elected by their respective SWOSU College. There shall be fifty (50) seats in the Student Senate, which shall be distributed as followed: 5 seats allocated for Sayre, and a changing number of seats for the SWOSU Colleges that are to be distributed by the proportions of students enrolled in each college each year at the start date of the fall semester.

#### **Section Three**

At the time of taking office, all members of the Student Senate shall be enrolled as full-time students as set forth by the university and shall not be on academic or disciplinary probation or suspension.

#### **Section Four**

The Student Senate shall organize in accordance with its rules under the Vice President of the Student Body, who shall serve as the President and Chair of the Student Senate. The Student Senate shall elect from its membership a President Pro Tempore, who shall serve as Chair in the absence of the President of the Senate, and other officers as prescribed by the By-Laws.

## **Section Five**

All Student Senators shall serve a term extending from the date on which that Senator takes the oath of office until the date of sine die adjournment of the Student Senate for that academic year.

## **Section Six**

Vacant seats within the Senate membership shall be declared by the President Pro Tempore, unless declared by a simple majority of the members, and shall occur under the circumstances of resignation, impeachment, or automatic removal for absences or failure to meet qualifications for office. The President Pro Tempore shall nominate students to fill vacant seats, and such nominations shall be confirmed by a majority vote of seated Senators prior to the administration of the oath of office.

## **Section Seven**

Student Senators shall be subject to impeachment on the following grounds: failure to uphold their duties, failure to abide by the constitution, or any other high crimes or misdemeanors as deemed legitimate by the judicial branch. Impeachment proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the By-Laws.

## **Section Eight**

The Student Senate shall convene no later than one month and seven days after the beginning of the fall semester, shall adjourn sine die no later than seven days prior to the first day of final exams in the spring semester, and shall hold regular meetings in accordance with the By-Laws.

## **Section Nine**

The Student Senate shall sponsor such student activities as it deems advisable, shall confirm any student government monetary expenditures, shall oversee student elections, shall confirm all executive and judicial appointments made by the Student Body President by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, and shall be empowered to remove justices of the SGA Supreme Court by a three-fourths (3/4) vote on passage of a resolution of removal.

# **ARTICLE III**

## **Section One**

The executive power of the Student Government Association shall be vested in a President of the Student Body.

## **Section Two**

The President, Vice President, and Treasurer ("elected officer") shall take the oath of office at a business meeting of the Student Senate following their election and prior to sine die adjournment of the Student Senate for that academic year.

The elected officers shall serve a term extending from the Monday after graduation in the year in which they are elected until the Monday after graduation of the following academic year. (SB S1201)

## **Section Three**

The President shall possess full-time student status at SWOSU at the time of election as set forth by the university, shall possess and maintain a GPA of 2.50 or better on a 4.0 scale, and shall possess at least sophomore status at the time of taking office.

The Student Body President shall serve as Chief Student, representing all students enrolled at SWOSU's Weatherford Campus, and shall, with the assistance of the Student Body Treasurer, prepare an annual budget to fund student government operations that shall be presented to the Senate for approval no later than the second meeting of the Senate's first session. The President shall address the Senate regarding the state of the university, and shall coordinate the activities of his or her Cabinet.

#### **Section Four**

The Student Body Vice President shall preside at all meetings of the Senate as the constitutional Chair of the Senate. The Vice President's qualifications for office shall be the same as those of the Student Body President. The Vice President shall become President should the President resign, die, become incapacitated, impeached, or any other incident which would render him or her unable to continue serving in office. Should the Vice President become President, he or she may nominate a new Vice President to fill his or her term with a 2/3 affirmative vote of the Senate. The Vice President shall vote while chairing the Senate only in the case of a tie.

#### **Section Five**

The financial authority of the student body shall be vested in a Treasurer of the Student Body. The Treasurer's qualifications shall be the same as those of the Student Body President. The Treasurer shall oversee the financial affairs of the Student Government Association and shall provide monthly written financial reports to the Student Body President and the President Pro Tempore of the Student Senate. The Treasurer shall serve as the Student Government Association representative on the annual Bernhardt Award selection committee.

#### **Section Six**

The President shall, upon taking office, nominate an Executive Cabinet to assist him or her in overseeing the work of the executive branch. The Executive Cabinet shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the Student Senate during the first business meeting of the Student Senate in the academic year for which the Executive Cabinet is to serve. At the time of taking office, all members of the Cabinet shall be enrolled as full-time students as set forth by the university and shall not be on academic or disciplinary probation or suspension. All Cabinet members shall serve at the pleasure of the President, being subject to removal at any time.

#### **Section Seven**

The President, Vice President, and Treasurer ("elected officer") shall receive honorarium in accordance with the SGA By-Laws. The total amount of honorarium for each elected officer shall not exceed the lower of the maximum allowable federal work-study award for the academic year or 5% of the total budget for the fiscal year.

#### **Section Eight**

The President, Vice President, or Treasurer ("elected officer") shall be impeached for failure to uphold constitutional duties, failure to meet qualifications for office, or any other high crimes and misdemeanors. Impeachment shall begin by a 3/4 Senate passage of legislation containing articles of impeachment. Upon passage, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall preside over the Senate during trial. The President Pro Tempore shall nominate and the Senate shall, by a 2/3 vote, confirm an Attorney General from its membership to argue for prosecuting the elected officer. The elected officer shall be represented by his or her designee, who shall argue for the defense; the defensive

designee shall be a student enrolled at SWOSU. The impeachment proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the SGA By-Laws. Should the Supreme Court rule in the prosecution's favor, the elected officer shall be removed from office.

#### **Section Nine**

Should the position of Vice President or Treasurer be vacated prior to the completion of their term of office, the President may nominate a new Vice President or Treasurer to fill the vacancy, and such nomination shall be confirmed by a 2/3 affirmative vote of the Senate.

Should, at any time, the presidency and vice-presidency be simultaneously vacated, the Treasurer shall be sworn in as Student Body President. The Treasurer may nominate a new Vice President and Treasurer to serve out the current term with 2/3 Senate confirmation on each nominee.

Should the three elected executive offices be simultaneously vacated, an emergency campus-wide election shall be held in accordance with the SGA By-Laws and under the direction of the SGA Faculty Advisor.

#### **Section Ten**

The Student Body President shall have the power to temporarily invest his or her nominating and contractual authority in the Student Body Vice President or, should the vice-presidency be vacant, the Student Body Treasurer. Such a vestment shall be presented in writing to the Chief Justice and President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and shall contain a description of the scope and duration of the authority vested.

#### **Section Eleven**

The Student Body President shall be permitted to make recess appointments, being appointments of persons to executive and judicial offices, during the summer interim.

During the first legislative day of the following fall semester, the appointments shall be confirmed by the Senate in accordance with the appropriate section of this Constitution.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **Section One**

The judicial power of the Student Government Association shall be vested in a Supreme Court of the Student Body.

#### **Section Two**

The Supreme Court shall serve to provide interpretation of this Constitution and all other governing documents of the Student Government Association, shall hear all impeachment trial proceedings of members of the legislative and executive branches, shall hear all appellate cases regarding affairs within the student government, and shall provide recommendation to the university administration regarding all constitutions and charters of student organizations.

#### **Section Three**

The court shall consist of a Chief Justice and a minimum of two and no more than six associate justices. All justices shall possess and maintain full-time status as set forth by the university and shall not be on academic or disciplinary probation or suspension. Justices shall be nominated by the Student Body President and confirmed by a 2/3 majority vote of the Senate, and shall serve for the duration of their continued enrollment at SWOSU.

#### **Section Four**

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall be the official head of the court, and shall, at his or her discretion, establish rules and procedures to maintain order during sessions of the court. The Chief Justice shall be nominated by the Student Body President and confirmed by a 2/3 majority vote of the Senate. The Chief Justice may be an associate justice at the time of nomination.

#### **Section Five**

The Supreme Court shall provide interpretation of this Constitution and other governing documents and rule on appellate matters only upon receipt of a written request for such ruling. Each ruling shall be laid down in a written majority opinion with an accompanying minority report of dissent. The Senate may override any judicial ruling by 2/3 passage of a resolution stating the reasons for such override. The Student Body President may veto such resolution, and the Senate shall be empowered to override the presidential veto by a 3/4 vote. Any overridden ruling shall be considered null and void.

#### **Section Six**

The justices of the Supreme Court shall be impeached for failure to uphold constitutional duties, failure to meet qualifications for office, or any other high crimes and misdemeanors by ¾ passage of a resolution of impeachment.

#### **ARTICLE V**

Amendments to this Constitution shall be presented as a bill to the Student Senate and shall be passed by a 2/3 affirmative vote. The amendment shall then be distributed to the student body via electronic means. The amendment shall be included on the next university-wide election ballot, and shall be immediately effective upon ratification by three-fourths of the votes cast.

#### **ARTICLE VI**

This Constitution shall be in effect immediately following its passage, and all previous constitutions shall be at that time repealed.