

Constitution of the Student Government Association of Stevens Institute of Technology

Ratified by Student Council, 4/13/97

I. Definition

1. Name

- A. There shall be an organization known as the Student Government Association of Stevens Institute of Technology, hereafter referred to in this document as SGA.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this organization shall be to promote the welfare of the full-time undergraduate students ("the Student Body") and the Stevens Institute of Technology ("the Institute") as a whole.

I. Membership

- A. All members of the Student Body of the Institute are considered members of the SGA.
- B. All members holding elected or appointed positions shall be called Officials of the SGA.

II. Powers and Limitations

- A. SGA shall have the power, within its own means, to provide for the general welfare of the Student Body.
- B. SGA shall have the power to govern the Student Body, and represent its interests.
- C. SGA shall have the power to levy a Student Activity Fee, Special Project Fee, or both upon each member of the Student Body, which shall fall equally on each matriculated student each semester. In the event that the amount of either fee is to change, this fee change shall be determined by SGA no less than three weeks before the end of a given school year and subsequently submitted for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- D. SGA shall govern the use, by and for the Student Body, of undergraduate student funds and property, as well as Institute property pending approval by the Institute departments concerned. SGA shall only allow such use when it is conducive to the general welfare and best interests of the Student Body.
- E. SGA shall have the power to grant, deny or revoke the status of Recognized Student Organization.
- F. SGA shall make no legislation that is in conflict with the rights and privileges granted to individuals and organizations under the Constitution of the United States of America.
- G. SGA shall have the power to make all legislation necessary to carry out its powers and duties.

III. Branches

1. The Legislative Branch

- A. Purpose
 - i. All legislative duties performed by SGA shall be the responsibility of the Legislative Branch, and all related powers therefrom shall be vested in a Senate of Student Representatives.
- B. Membership
 - i. The Senate shall consist of Representatives from every Class, elected by the members of their Class.

- ii. A Class shall be defined as any group of members of the Student body that entered into the Institute during the same Institute Year, with the following further specifications:
 - a. Classes and their Members shall be referred by their entrance year and enrolled in classes at the end of the current Institute Year.
 - b. Classes shall be divided according to the following stipulations.
 - 1. Students entering in the fall of the current academic year shall be named the Freshmen Class.
 - 2. Students who entered into their second academic year during the fall of the current academic shall be the Sophomore Class.
 - 3. Students who entered into their third academic year during the fall of the current academic year shall be named the Junior Class.
 - 4. Students who entered into their fourth or greater academic year in the fall of the current academic year shall be named the Senior Class
 - c. Incoming transfer students should be members of the sophomore class and advance accordingly.
- iii. Classes shall have one Representative in the Senate for every fifty students in their Class, up to and including the first one hundred students. For every subsequent one hundred students, each Class will receive one additional Representative in the Senate. Should the Senior Class be fewer than fifty in number, it will be granted one Representative in the Senate.
- iv. All Representatives shall function as equals, with no Representative having authority over another except in Committees and in the following instances:
 - a. The Vice-President of SGA shall hold the title of Senate Chairperson and chair all Senate meetings.
 - b. One Representative shall be designated by the Vice-President as Alternate to function as Chairperson when the Vice-President is absent or performing the duties of President.
 - c. In the absence of both the Vice-President and the Alternate Chairperson, and if a Quorum is still attainable, the Representatives shall elect from among themselves a Chairperson pro tempore to chair all meetings until either of the permanent Chairpersons returns.
 - d. The Representatives of each Class shall decide among themselves the appropriate leadership roles each should take in the executive responsibilities of their Class, provided no specific method is stated in the Bylaws.

C. Responsibilities

- i. It shall be the responsibility and duty of the Representatives assembled to represent the best interests of their respective constituents, the entire Student Body, the Institute, and SGA by hearing and voting on matters presented to them.
- ii. The Senate shall meet each Spring and Fall semester no later than two weeks after the start of the semester.
- iii. The Senate shall meet at least once every two weeks that classes are in session.
- iv. The Senate shall meet during the week that classes are in session that follows the week in which the Cabinet has met.
- v. The Senate shall meet at the request of the President, if an Emergency exists.
- vi. Each Representative must attend at least seventy-five percent of the Senate meetings each Semester, or be subject to disciplinary action.
- vii. In the absence of the Secretary, the Chairperson shall designate one Representative to handle the duty of taking minutes.

D. Powers and Limitations

- i. The Senate may form its own ad hoc committees consisting of members from anywhere in the Institute and for any purpose not in conflict with a Standing Committee, a committee formed by the Executive Branch, or this Constitution.
- ii. The Senate may determine its own procedures and rules, provided they do not conflict with this Constitution, its Bylaws, or any legislation passed by SGA.
- iii. The Senate may discipline its own members through official censure, removal from committee or office of a certain title and, if there is a concurrence of seventy-five percent of all Representatives, expulsion.
- iv. If the Cabinet hears testimony on a certain item that it chooses not to include on the agenda for the Senate meeting, the Senate may open discussion on said item. The Senate must follow the agenda formed by the Cabinet in all other circumstances.
- v. The Senate may override Presidential vetoes by way of a two-thirds concurrence of all Representatives.
- vi. The Senate may call for the impeachment of any Official participating in SGA by way of a majority of one half of all Representatives assembled, with the following exceptions or additions:
 - a. The Senate may not impeach members of ad hoc committees formed by the Executive Branch.
 - b. The Vice-President shall chair all impeachment hearings except those involving the President or Vice-President.
 - c. The Senate may not attempt to remove the Vice-President from the office of Senate Chairperson, without also bringing forth removal from the office of Vice-President.
 - d. A concurrence of seventy-five percent of all Representatives is required to remove anyone from office.
- vii. The Senate may call for the revocation, temporary or permanent, of any Recognized Student Organization if and only if
 - a. it has failed to abide by its own constitution or charter and does not currently have a new constitution or charter under review by the Senate or Cabinet,
 - b. it has failed to appropriately manage its funding,
 - c. it has participated in or contributed to, under the pretense of activity official to said Recognized Student Organization, any activity that is in conflict with any legislation passed by the SGA, this Constitution or its Bylaws, the code of conduct of the Institute, or any State or Federal laws.

E. Meetings

- i. A Quorum for doing business shall be defined as two-thirds of all Representatives, not including the Vice-President and any Representatives having disciplinary action brought against them.
- ii. Meetings shall be open to all, but no person who is not a Representative may address the Senate without the consent of the Chairperson.

2. The Executive Branch

A. Purpose

- i. All executive and administrative duties performed by SGA shall be the responsibility of the Executive Branch, and all related powers therefrom shall be vested in the office of the President.

B. Membership

- i. The Executive Branch shall consist of the President and the Cabinet.
- ii. The members of the Cabinet shall be the Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and

the Chairperson of the Committee on Student Interests (CCSI).

C. Responsibilities

i. Individual Responsibilities

a. President

1. It shall be the responsibility of the President to act as the official representative of the Student Body.
2. The President shall preside over all meetings of the Cabinet.
3. The President shall sign all legislation passed by the Senate, thereby stating that it has been reviewed and validated by the Executive Branch. Failure to do so shall never be considered an implicit veto; unsigned legislation shall become law at the end of the Cabinet meeting following its passage by the Senate, unless otherwise stipulated in the text of said legislation.
4. The President shall, upon taking office, make appointments to the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, and CCSI, and subsequently seek Senate approval of said appointments.
5. The President shall make judgements, when necessary, regarding Emergencies and determine appropriate courses of action in such situations.

b. Vice-President

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Vice-President to perform all duties of the President in the absence of the latter.
2. The Vice-President shall act as Senate Chairperson, and chair all Senate meetings.
3. The Vice-President shall, upon taking office, designate one Representative to act as Alternate Chairperson of the Senate. Should that Representative leave or be removed from either the office of Representative or Alternate Chairperson, the Vice-President shall then, and only then, choose a new Alternate Chairperson.
4. The Vice-President shall act as the liaison between the Senate and the Cabinet.
5. The Vice-President shall perform all duties assigned by the President.

c. Chairperson of the Committee on Student Interests

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Committee on Student Interests (CCSI) to chair the Committee on Student Interests (CSI).
2. The CCSI shall aid in the formation and recognition of all new organizations.
3. The CCSI shall assume all duties of the office of Vice-President, not related to the Senate, in case of the absence of the latter.
4. The CCSI shall perform all duties assigned by the President.

d. Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall act as Chairperson of the Senate Budget Committee.
2. The Treasurer shall manage all financial transactions and records of the SGA.
3. The Treasurer shall perform all duties assigned by the President.

e. Secretary

1. The Secretary shall maintain accurate and complete minutes of all Cabinet and Senate meetings.

2. The Secretary shall, upon taking office, designate one Representative to act as Secretary pro tempore of the Senate. Should that Representative leave or be removed from either the office of Representative or Secretary pro tempore the Secretary shall then, and only then, choose a new Secretary pro tempore.
3. The Secretary shall approve all election procedures for the offices of President, Vice-President, and the Representatives, and chair the Election Committee.
4. The Secretary shall perform all duties assigned by the President.

ii. Shared Responsibilities

- a. The Executive Branch shall consider the best interests of all students by determining the methods to address all needs and concerns raised by the Student Body and the Senate.
- b. The Executive Branch shall make the Agenda for a given Senate meeting available to the Representatives at least five days before said meeting, with the Executive Branch approval being shown by signatures from the President and the Secretary. Should the Secretary be absent or otherwise unable to perform those duties relating to creating the Agenda, another Cabinet member shall do so.
- c. The Executive Branch shall report all decisions or progress on any items of business presented to it, at either their Cabinet meetings or at Senate meetings. These reports shall be made available to the Representatives at least five days before the next Senate meeting, and shall be made available to the Student Body.
- d. The Cabinet shall meet each Spring and Fall semester no later than one week after the start of the semester.
- e. The Cabinet shall meet at least once every two weeks that classes are in session.
- f. The Cabinet shall meet during each week that classes are in session that follows the week in which the Senate has met.
- g. The Cabinet shall meet at the request of the President, if an Emergency exists.
- h. The Executive Branch shall insure that all reports made to the Cabinet be made available to all Representatives and all members of the Student Body.
- i. The Executive Branch shall aid any member of the Student Body in the formation of all legislation to be brought to the Senate.

D. Powers and Limitations

- i. The Executive Branch shall have the power, vested in the office of the President, to veto any bill passed by the Senate, provided this is done before the next Senate meeting, and during an official Cabinet meeting. Any veto shall only be considered official if the President states the reasons for the veto in written form, and makes them available to the Senate five days before the next Senate meeting.
- ii. The Executive Branch shall have the power to determine the Agenda for Senate meetings. The items on the Agenda shall be gathered in Cabinet meetings from among those concerns brought forth by members of the Student Body. All such concerns, even those not placed on a given Agenda by the Cabinet, shall be reported to the Senate along with the Agenda at the next Senate meeting.
- iii. The Executive Branch shall have the power to request reports from any Recognized Student Organization and any Committee about any business relevant to their status.

- iv. The Executive Branch shall have the power to create Standing and ad hoc Committees. The Executive Branch shall also have the power to make appointments for heads of Standing and ad hoc Committees. Any appointments for heads of Standing Committees must be approved by the Senate. Any Standing Committee must have its definition, membership and procedure added to the Bylaws of this Constitution.
- v. The Executive Branch shall have the power to determine how best to deal with any Emergency that may arise during the semester. All such determinations shall be made by a consensus of all members of the Cabinet. If no consensus can be reached, the final decision shall lie with the President. Emergency situations may be handled in one or both of the following ways:
 - a. The Executive Branch may decide to dispense Student Activity Fee money, or upon some other course of action related to the Emergency. All such decisions shall be written and made available to the Senate within forty-eight hours.
 - b. The Executive Branch may call for an Emergency Senate Meeting, to be attended by all members of the Cabinet. At such a time when this determination is made, the Senate shall be required to meet in no sooner than forty-eight hours, provided notification goes out to all Representatives no later than twenty-four hours. At such a meeting, the Senate shall have only items on its Agenda related to the State of Emergency. Upon passage by the Senate, Emergency legislation shall go into effect immediately.

E. Meetings

- i. Cabinet meetings may be held provided one member of the Cabinet is present.
- ii. Cabinet meetings shall be open to all.
- iii. Anyone may address the Cabinet at a meeting if recognized by the Chairperson.

IV. Elections

- A. The President and Vice-President shall be chosen yearly by the entire Student Body and by secret ballot during the first full week of February.
- B. Candidates for President and Vice-President shall be elected together on one ticket. Each vote cast in elections for these offices shall be for a ticket, and not for one particular candidate.
- C. In the case of a tie between any number of tickets in a Presidential election, the Senate shall choose, by majority vote, from those tickets the ticket that is allowed to take the offices of President and Vice-President.
- D. The Representatives shall be chosen yearly by the entire Student Body and by secret ballot during the last full week of April by the Class that they represent. First Year students in their Fall semester at the Institute shall choose their Representatives during the first full week after the release of mid-term grades by the Registrar.
- E. Candidates for any election shall only be included on a ballot if they have submitted a petition to the Election Committee. The number of signatures on each petition and the deadline by which petitions must be submitted shall be determined by the Election Committee in its rules and procedures, and be made public to the Student Body two weeks before said deadline.
- F. The specifics of election rules and procedures and all modifications thereof shall be submitted directly to the Senate by the Election Committee for inclusion in the Bylaws.

V. Requirements of Officials

- A. No person shall hold more than one of any of the positions defined in this Constitution.
- B. No person who has not at least completed at least three semesters at the Institute shall be President.

- C. Any persons seeking the positions of President or Vice-President must disclose to the Election Committee, prior to their nomination, any positions held in any campus organization.
- D. Any person nominated to the position of CCSI must disclose to the Senate, prior to their appointment, any positions held in any campus organization.
- E. Upon taking office, any persons holding the position of President, Vice-President, or CCSI shall not, for their duration of those terms, take on any new responsibilities in any campus organization.
- F. No person shall hold any of the following positions in any campus organization while serving in the capacity of President, Vice-President, or CCSI: Any Executive Board (or its equivalent) position including, but not limited to President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer; Social Chair of any campus organization; Manager of any campus facility; any position charged with the management of funds; or any representational, voting position in any Recognized Student Organization which has governance or judicial power over any segment of the Student Body.
- G. No person who has not completed at least two semesters at the Institute shall be Vice-President.
- H. No person who has not attended the Institute for one semester up to the point at which the Registrar releases mid-term grades shall be a Representative.
- I. No person shall seek the office of Representative of a Class of which they are not a member.
- J. No person who has a Grade Point Average of below 2.0 shall seek or be appointed to any SGA office.
- K. Any person seeking or holding any SGA office must publicly disclose all confessions to or convictions of Honor Board violations previously made.

VI. Recognized Student Organizations

1. Definition

- A. A Recognized Student Organization is any organization of students that has its constitution or charter approved by the Senate, and signed by the President. It must subsequently be approved by the Faculty Committee on Student Affairs.
- B. A Recognized Student Organization is any organization that was given that status under the previous Student Government.
- C. The Student Government Association of Stevens Institute of Technology shall be considered a Recognized Student Organization, subject, accordingly, to all requirements and privileges of that designation.

2. Qualifications for Recognition

- A. The organization must be shown to have the potential to contribute to improving the Stevens community.
- B. The organization must have established, by its membership, its constitution or charter prior to presenting it to the Senate.
- C. The constitution or charter presented to the Senate must contain either of the following clauses, henceforth referred to as "the Honor Board clause:"
 - i. The clause stated exactly as "If any person seeking an elected or appointed position has any past Honor Board violations, confessions or convictions, said person must divulge that information to the members prior to their election or appointment. If any person seeking or currently holding an elected or appointed position has any present Honor Board violations, confessions or convictions, said person must divulge that information to the members immediately."
 - ii. An Honor Board clause deemed acceptable by this or the previous Student Government in a previous constitution or charter for that organization.

3. Requirements of Recognized Student Organizations

- A. All Recognized Student Organizations must submit a list of their membership to Student Affairs once every semester.
- B. All Recognized Student Organizations must give a report of their activities to the Chairperson of the Committee on Student Interests once every semester.
- C. All Recognized Student Organizations must cooperate in investigations of their activity brought forth by the SGA.
- D. No Recognized Student Organizations may preclude any person in the Student Body from being a member and participating in its activities.

VII. Bylaws

- A. The Bylaws of the SGA shall dictate the procedures for the regulation of its affairs and shall be valid for all intents and purposes as part of this Constitution.
- B. No Bylaw shall supersede, or be inconsistent with this Constitution.
- C. No procedure or legislation, excluding temporary suspension of the Bylaws and new Bylaws, shall supersede any existing Bylaw.
- D. A Bylaw shall be introduced in the form of a bill to the Senate. It shall require a majority vote to pass, and shall be subject to veto by the President.

VIII. Amendments

- A. SGA shall hold a referendum for the ratification of any proposed amendment upon receipt by any elected Official of the SGA a petition bearing the signatures of fifteen percent of the undergraduate students enrolled in the Institute, or upon the initiative of SGA itself.
- B. Amendments shall become effective upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the undergraduate students voting, provided at least one third of the Student Body casts votes.

IX. Adoption

- A. This Constitution shall become effective upon:
 - i. Ratification by the current Student Government.
 - ii. Ratification by the Student Body during a closed-ballot referendum held under the direction of the current Student Government. Ratification shall be completed when, provided at least fifty percent of the Student Body casts ballots, fifty percent of those voting signify their approval.
 - iii. Approval by the Faculty Committee on Student Affairs.
- B. The establishment of this, the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Stevens Institute of Technology, shall abolish the previously existing constitution for the governance of the Student Body.
- C. This Constitution of Student Government Association of Stevens Institute of Technology, and all Laws brought into effect by its Powers, shall be the supreme law of the undergraduate Institute, and the Student Body shall be bound thereby.