



CONSTITUTION OF THE LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Adopted in 1997

Preamble

We the Student Government Association establish this Constitution in furtherance of the following outcomes:

That we may facilitate communication, coordination, and cooperation with Lipscomb University's faculty, staff, and administration on behalf of the University's undergraduate students.

That we may advocate for and enact the desires of our diverse student population in the spiritual, academic, and social spheres of the University's affairs.

That we may work to support the interests of current student organizations and to aid in establishing future student organizations.

That we may endeavor to represent the interests of all students by a good-faith effort to work impartially on behalf of each and every constructive desire of our student body

And that we may daily realize a greater vision of our University by action, attitude, and conduct, while providing for student participation in its affairs.

For these reasons, we hereby establish this Constitution of Lipscomb University's Student Government Association.

Article 1: General Provisions

Section 1. Name

This organization shall be known as the Student Government Association of Lipscomb University—hereinafter, SGA.

Section 2. Objectives

The objectives of this association shall be to promote the Christian values and principles of the university, to provide liaison with the administration, to sustain the spirit and the morale of the student body, to enable campus leadership, and to serve as a catalyst for spiritual, academic, and social growth.

Section 3. Membership

SGA represents every regularly enrolled undergraduate student of Lipscomb University.

Section 4. Sponsor

The SGA sponsor shall be the Vice-President of Student Life.

Section 5. Motto

The SGA motto shall be 1 Kings 3:9, “So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?”

Section 6: Elections

Elections for all SGA offices shall occur in April of each year. Rules governing the elections and campaigning procedures shall be adopted by the President in the form of either personally adopted said rules or through the appointment of an Election Commissioner to adopt said rules. All rules must be approved by the Sponsor.

Article 2: Legislative Branch

Section 1. Senate

As the SGA's legislative body, the Senate shall comprise 28 Senators and 4 Executive Officers.

Class Senators

The Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Classes shall each be represented by 5 Senators. Each Class Senator must be a member of the class which they seek to represent, determined by:

- Total Semesters Completed
- Credit Hours Completed
- Expected Graduation Date.

Students who have a legitimate case that they would be better classified under a different class may present their case to the SGA sponsor, who will render a final decision along with the Executive Officers.

Freshman Senators

The Freshman Class shall be represented by 5 Senators. These Senators are selected by the Executive Officers through an interview process at the beginning of each academic year.

At-Large Senators

The Student Body shall be further represented by an additional eight Senators, known as At-Large Senators. They will enjoy the same rights & privileges as Class Senators.

Section 3. Term

- A. The session of the Senate shall coincide with the traditional academic year, starting at the beginning of each fall semester and ending at the conclusion of the following spring semester.
- B. During the summer term, there shall be an advisory committee, consisting of all senators who continue in school during that term, which shall counsel the executive officers of the SGA as the president may direct or as may otherwise be appropriate.

Section 4. Committees

- A. **The Senate shall have the following three standing committees: the academic committee, the social committee, and the spiritual committee. These committees are agreed to be integral to the SGA's mission, and will be established each year. Standing committees may only be created or dissolved by a constitutional amendment.**

- B. The academic committee shall seek to further the academic activity on this campus. It shall cooperate with the Lipscomb University Provost and with the various department chairpersons. It shall also deal with problems involving interrelationships between faculty members and students.
- C. The social committee shall be in charge of all facets of student entertainment. It shall conduct all planning, coordination, and promotion of all movies, concerts, shows, and other approved programs.
- D. The spiritual life committee shall promote spiritual life on campus. It shall cooperate with the administration in planning chapel, devotionals, or any other such activity to foster the spiritual development of the students during their stay at this university.
- E. **In order to facilitate the interests of the SGA and the student body, the SGA may create non-standing committees dedicated to specific areas of student interest. Both the Senate (by majority vote) and the President (by executive action) shall have the power to create or dissolve these non-standing committees as they deem necessary.**
- F. No committee chairperson shall ever abuse his/her authority by disregarding a proposal brought before his/her group.

Section 5. Vacancy

- A. In the event of a Senator vacancy, the Executive Officers will consider nominations from the Senate and any interested parties. The Executive Officers shall then appoint a replacement senator to complete that term in office, either from the nominations or otherwise at their discretion.
- B. When a Senator vacancy occurs during the academic year, the person selected by the Executive Officers must be approved by a majority of the Senate.
- C. When a Senator vacancy occurs during the summer, the nominee may immediately take office with all rights and privileges of a duly elected Senator.
- D. In the event of an Executive vacancy, the Executive Officers should seek counsel and nominations from other Senators. The Executive Officers shall then appoint an Executive Officer from the existing Senators to complete the vacated term. The Senator selected must be approved by a majority of the Senate.
- E. Upon the successful confirmation of a Senator to an Executive position, the Executive Officers shall then nominate another student to fulfill the remainder of the term of the vacated Senate position in accordance with this section.

Section 6. Speaker

The President shall preside over all facets of SGA meetings but parliamentary voting, which will be handled by the Vice-President.

Section 7. Non-Voting Committee Member & Campus Organization Liaisons

- A. **The Executive Officers may make SGA Representative positions available to interested students.** Representative members of SGA are permitted to participate in all SGA activities except retreats and parliamentary voting. The **Executive Officers** shall assign each Representative to a committee according to the committees' needs and the student's personal preferences. The **Executive Officers** or a Committee Chair may remove a student appointed as a Representative in the case of misconduct or excessive absences.
- B. **The Executive Officers may make SGA Liaison positions available to all Lipscomb University organizations.** One liaison position will be available per Lipscomb University organization; the organization must be authorized by the **Office of Student Life** to participate. The campus organization shall elect an SGA Liaison from within their own body. The **Executive Officers** or a Committee Chair may remove a student appointed as an SGA Liaison in the case of misconduct or excessive absences.
- C. **Both SGA Representatives and SGA Liaisons are required to abide by the expectations described in this Constitution, and failure to do so will result in removal from the SGA.**

Article 3: Executive Branch

Section 1. Executive Officers

This association shall have four officers: the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.

Section 2. Qualifications for Executive Officers

- A. All Executive Officer candidates must have at minimum a 3.0 GPA, which must be maintained during their tenure as an Executive Officer
- B. Every candidate for President must have completed at least six (Fall or Spring) semesters, four of which are in residence at this university, or achieved senior status (as defined by the registrar) prior to the beginning of the term for which they are running.
- C. Every candidate for Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer must have completed at least four (Fall or Spring) semesters, two of which are in residence at this university, or achieved junior status (as defined by the registrar) before the beginning of the term for which they are running.
- D. All Executive Officer candidates must attend at least four Senate meetings and four Committee meetings during the academic year prior to the year for which they seek election.
- E. All Executive Officer candidates must be able and willing to serve for a full academic year.

Section 3. Duties, Responsibilities, and Authority

- A. The President shall appoint the chairperson and the other members of each committee, and he/she may, at his/her discretion, also appoint any number of nonvoting aides for any committee; he/she shall have the authority to call a special meeting of any committee with approval of the Vice-President of Student Life; he/she shall have the power to veto any measure by the Senate, provided he/she exercises his/her veto power within forty-eight hours of the actions by the Senate and notifies the Senate immediately and publicly at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting, or calls a special meeting of the entire Senate.
- B. In the event of a Presidential Veto, the Senate after at least one week following the veto shall have the power to override that action by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.
- C. The Vice-President of the SGA shall, in the absence of the President, perform all other appropriate executive functions, and he/she shall, upon a vacancy in the office of the President, immediately succeed to the post and shall occupy it until the installation of the president's successor, at which time he/she shall resume

- his/her former office. The Vice-President shall retain his/her right to vote with the Senate even while acting as the President.
- D. The Secretary shall maintain the minutes of all proceedings of the Senate and shall keep a copy available for student review, distribute them to each Senator, and shall record and report the results of all elections. The Secretary shall have a vote in the Senate. The Secretary will be treated as a Senator with a vote as such, equal with all other SGA Senators.
 - E. The Treasurer shall maintain the SGA budget, maintain a record of the financial affairs of the SGA, make a financial report at each senate meeting and shall post it in some appropriate place, and make the necessary arrangements for the payment of all SGA debts to the University through the business office. The Treasurer shall have a vote in the Senate. The Treasurer will be treated as a Senator with a vote as such, equal with all other SGA Senators.

Article 4: Discipline

Section 1. Misconduct

- A. Any Executive Officer or Senator who, whether in word or deed, impugns the reputation, impairs the efficacy, or otherwise inhibits the SGA will be subject to impeachment. This includes, but is not limited to, dereliction of one's SGA duties, failure to adhere to Lipscomb's standards of behavior & conduct, and other behavior which rises to such a level, as determined by the Vice-President of Student Life

Section 2. Absences

- B. **Members of SGA** are permitted one absence from Senate Meetings **and one absence from Committee Meetings** each semester. Additional absences may be excused if approved by the **Executive Officers and the SGA Sponsor**. If two unapproved absences occur, the Senator or Executive Officer in question will be terminated from office. **The Executive Officers must utilize fair and sustainable methods of excusing absences.**

Article 5: Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by the following procedure:

Any Senator or Executive Officer may introduce an Amendment Proposal before the Senate. In order to pass, the Proposal must receive a majority vote by the Senate.

If the Executive Officers approve the Proposal, the Amendment Proposal will be adopted & made part of the SGA Constitution.

If the Executive Officers fail to approve the Amendment Proposal, it passes back to the Senate. The Senate may overrule the decision of the Executive Officers by a three-quarter majority vote, after which the Amendment Proposal will be adopted & made part of the SGA Constitution.

(Fall Semester, 1997)

(Amended Spring Semester 2000)

(Amended Spring Semester 2015)

(Amended Spring Semester 2020)