The Constitution of Penn State Brandywine's Student Government Association

Preamble

We the undergraduate students of Penn State Brandywine will effectively execute and establish the principles of a democratic society through self-representation. As officers of the Student Government Association, we in trust that this constitution shall represent the undergraduate students of Penn State Brandywine.

Article I: Executive Parliamentary Government System

All Student Government Executive Board seats will be elected on a party ticket basis except in cases of discontinuance of office. The other positions will be filled by appointment from the Executive Board after their inauguration.

Article II: Membership

Membership shall be defined as follows:

Section A- Eligibility

Membership of the Student Government Association shall be inclusive to all undergraduate students at Penn State Brandywine. No membership shall be determined and or, questioned by a person's race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, social status or affiliation, age, ethnic background or differential ability.

Section B - Valid Membership

Membership is hereby considered valid for any Penn State Brandywine student as long as the Student Government Officer:

1. Is a full-time or part-time student.

2. Maintains the minimum cumulative grade point average for his or her major.

3. Does not violate any University policy that leads to expulsion.

Section C - General Duties

The Student Government Association (SGA) is expected to execute the following duties to the best of their ability:

1. Effectively represent the student body of Penn State Brandywine.

2. To attend all SGA meetings.
    a. Including all emergency meetings.

3. To uphold the SGA constitution and by-laws with honesty and integrity.

4. To help with all SGA sponsored or organized activities as needed.

5. To serve on designated committees and organizations as needed.

6. To brief the incoming position officer of their duties and help with the year-to-year transition of the SGA.

7. Attend your necessary CCSG meetings.

Article III: Transfer of Power

The Student Government Executive Board shall take the following oath on the day of inauguration to support the constitution:

> I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute my office of the Student Government Association, and I will protect, preserve and defend the constitution of the Student Government Association. I will vigorously work towards the betterment of student life, at Penn State Brandywine.

Article IV: Executive Board

The Executive Board consists of the President, Vice President, Head of Senate, Secretary, and Treasurer. The executive authority shall be vested in a President who is competent and will uphold the constitution; the President and the Executive Board are hereby granted legislative power. All executive decisions shall be exercised with cooperation and assistance of the President, Vice President, Head of Senate, Secretary, and Treasurer. The President, Vice President, Head of Senate, Secretary, and Treasurer must initially be from the same party ticket as defined in Article I of the constitution. It is the Executive Board's responsibility to appoint committee chairs and senators. As the academic year progresses, the Executive Board is responsible for appointing members for all SGA, campus, and external committees as well as boards when necessary.

Succession of power:

President
Vice President
Head of Senate
Secretary
Treasurer
Academic Affairs Chair
Diversity Affairs Chair
Governmental Affairs
Events Coordinator
Public Relations
Web Master
Club Coordinator
Athletic Chair
Freshman Representative Chair

Section A – President's Duties

The President of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Serve as the Chairperson of the Student Government Association.

2. Oversee ALL SGA events, functions, plans, etc.

3. Act as the student body representative at all ceremonial, media, and campus functions for Penn State Brandywine.

4. Sign all amendments made to SGA by-laws, constitution, and paperwork to place them into effect.

5. Be a member of the Faculty Senate as a permanent seat holder.

6. Per University Policy, shall co-chair the Student Activity Fee Allocations Committee which includes meeting the second week of every month during the academic year, and updating SAF Policies and Regulations prior to the start of each academic year.

7. Shall attend all Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (CCSG) meetings and remain on the council at all times or appoint a proxy as CCSG regulations demand.

8. Oversee the executive branch of the SGA by holding meetings and acting as a resource and means of communication between the members.

9. Assist the Treasurer in submitting a budget for the Student Government Association to the Office of Student Affairs and the Student Government members each semester that is consistent with Article X of the constitution.

10. Assist the secretary in preparation of an agenda for all SGA meetings and Campus meetings.

11. Call SGA emergency meetings with at least a 24 hour notice as all members must attend emergency meetings or provide a valid explanation if absent.

12 Appoint temporary positions when needed at CCSG meetings, general meetings, events, etc.

13. Act as the SGA resource for Roberts Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.

14. Must attend Freshman Convocation to spread the word about the Freshman Representative and other available SGA positions.

15. Appoint Freshman Representative Chair within the first two weeks of the semester.

16. Must complete a minimum of two (2) office hours a week.

Section B – Vice-President's Duties

The Vice President of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Serve as SGA representative on the Council of Club Presidents.

2. Sit on council at CCSG meetings.

3. Attend all Advisory Board meetings as the student body representative.

4. Act as the President Pro-Tempore if the need arises.

5. Send out meeting information to all SGA members.

6. Act as spokesperson for Public Relations and Club Coordinator Chairs addressing concerns/questions to the President.

Section C – Head of Senate's Duties

The Head of Senate of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Sit on the Strategic Planning Committee at the Brandywine campus.

2. Reports SGA's attendance of meeting and events to Secretary.

3. Appointing members to Senate.

4. Act as spokesperson for Events Coordinator and Freshmen Representative Chairs addressing concerns/questions to the President.

5. Attend CCSG meetings.

6. Responsible for keeping Senate Active.

7. Assumes all unfulfilled chair positions responsibilities but not their vote.

Section D – Secretary's Duties

The Secretary of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Submit meeting minutes to all SGA members and the Advisor after every SGA and campus meeting.

2. Submit webpage updates to the Webmaster as needed.

3. Update the SGA and Club Calendars as needed.

4. Responsible for obtaining all council members' contact information.

5. Act as spokesperson for Diversity Chair and Webmaster Chairs addressing concerns/questions to the President.

6. Send attendance reports from Head of Senate to President and Director of Student Affairs.

Section E – Treasurer's Duties

The Treasurer of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Submit the SGA Budget to the Office of Student Affairs and the SGA members each semester with the assistance of the executive board.

2. Keep all SGA and club financial records current.

3. Pay all SGA and club bills in a timely fashion while keeping accurate paperwork on all account activity.

4. Approve club budgets along with the Office of Student Affairs every semester by enforcing club form and proposed budget submissions.

5. Act as spokesperson for Governmental Affairs, Academic, and Athletic Chairs addressing concerns/questions to the President.

6. Complete monthly account reconciliations with the assistance of the Office of Student Affairs.

7. Must complete a minimum of two (2) office hours a week.

Article V: Permanent Committee Chairs

The Student Government Association will have nine permanent committees, thus requiring nine permanent chair positions. These positions include Academic Affairs Chair, Diversity Affairs Chair, Governmental Affairs Chair, Events Coordinator Chair, Public Relations Chair, Webmaster Chair, Club Coordinator Chair, Athletic Chair, and Freshman Representative Chair, which are hereby given legislative power. All permanent committee chairs have equally significant responsibilities and power. Each Chair must adhere to the general duties set forth in Article II, Section C of the constitution. Each Chair must meet the qualifications for valid membership as set forth in Article II, Section B of the constitution. Each Chair will report directly to the assigned person of duty within the Student Government Association two (2) days prior to each general meeting. To be appointed to any of these positions one must hold a Senator position excluding the Freshman Representative Chair.

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A plan of goals and incentives for the upcoming academic year must be made from each Chair and given two (2) days prior to the first general meeting to their respected person of

duty within the Student Government Association to be delivered on the first general meeting.

Section A – Academic Affairs Chair

The Academic Affairs Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Work on issues including, but not limited to, First Year Seminar, Advising, Transfer, and Change of Assignment, in order to improve the student experience at Penn State University.

2. Chair the Academic Affairs Committee by recruiting students, faculty, and staff; planning and executing meetings; and focusing on Academic Affairs issues.

3. Oversee the planning and execution of the Advising Town Meetings as they occur throughout the academic year.

4. Act as the Brandywine representative on the Academic Affairs Committee at CCSG and inform the Brandywine campus of the committee's efforts.

5. Attend all Administrative Staff meetings as the student body representative.

6. Report progress to Treasurer.

Section B – Diversity Affairs Chair

The Diversity Affairs Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Work on the improvement of diversity awareness by assisting the Office of Student Affairs with events and increasing resources on campus.

2. Chair the Diversity Affairs Committee by recruiting students, faculty, and staff; planning and executing meetings; and focusing on Diversity Affairs issues.

3. Assist the Office of Student Affairs in the planning and execution of the Annual Multicultural Day festivities.

4. Act as the Brandywine representative on the Diversity Affairs Committee at CCSG and inform the Brandywine campus of the committee's efforts.

5. Help plan at least two diversity events a year.

6. Report progress to Secretary.

Section C – Governmental Affairs Chair

The Governmental Affairs Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Build communication with government representatives in order to promote Penn State students' issues.

2. Work with clubs to improve their constitutions in order to better fit the clubs' needs.

3. Make necessary changes to the SGA constitution, clubs and organizations' constitutions, and by-laws once legislation is approved.

4. Chair the Governmental Affairs Committee by recruiting students, faculty, and staff; planning and executing meetings; and focusing on Governmental Affairs issues, such as state appropriations for higher education.

5. Act as the Brandywine representative on the Governmental Affairs Committee at CCSG and inform the Brandywine campus of the committee's efforts.

6. Report progress to Treasurer.

Section D – Events Coordinator Chair

The Events Coordinator of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Co-chair the Programming and Activities Committee (PAC) by recruiting members, and planning and executing meetings with the help of the Office of Student Affairs.

2. Work towards increasing event and entertainment programming on campus in order to improve the student experience at Penn State Brandywine.

(Must execute a minimum of ten (10) events every academic year: six (6) fundraising, two (2) community service, and (2) campus-wide.)

3. Oversee the PAC in regards to the planning, advertising, decorating, executing, and evaluating of on-campus events.

4. Report progress to Head of Senate.

5. Responsible for getting a chaperone at every after school event.

Section E – Public Relations Chair

The Public Relations Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Advertise all SGA sponsored events and meetings.

2. Submit articles to "What's Happening?" and the Lion's Eye to inform campus of SGA happenings as needed.

3. Edit all SGA releases, forms, and legislation.

4. Act as a resource for all Media Clubs on campus.

5. Report progress to Vice President.

Section F – Webmaster Chair

The Webmaster Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Design an informative and creative SGA website.

2. Update the SGA website with meeting minutes, calendar events, and messages as needed.

3. Assist clubs and organizations with technology-related needs and concerns.

4. Produce technical support for all SGA-related functions, projects, and committee tasks.

5. Report progress to Secretary.

Section G – Club Coordinator Chair

The Club Coordinator Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Act as a resource for SGA members and Clubs in the Events Planning

Process.

2. Attend all Council of Club Presidents (CCP) meetings as an observer, acting as a resource to clubs and organizations and distributing current budget statements.

3. Assist the Office of Student Affairs in updating club and organization policies, forms, and handbooks.

4. Make efforts to establish more clubs and organizations on campus.

5. Report progress to Vice President.

6. Assist the Office of Student Affairs with the preparations for the Club Fair.

7. Advertise upcoming dates for the clubs and organizations.

Section H – Athletic Chair

The Athletic Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Act as a communicator between SGA and all varsity and intramural sports.

2. Work with Events Coordinator Chair for varsity athletic events.

3. Act as a communicator between SGA and Athletic Director.

4. Act as a communicator between SGA and coaches/team captains.

5. Report progress to Treasurer.

6. Attend all Varsity Athletic events.

Section I – Freshman Representative Chair

The Freshman Representative Chair of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Publicize his/herself to the freshman class.

2. Uncover any freshman issues.

3. Report progress to Head of Senate.

Article VI: Senators

These students do not hold a specific title, but are apprentices to the chairs and act together to form one (1) vote. There is no set limit to the number of senators. An application must be filled out and approved by the elected board one week prior to the first general meeting. A senator position MUST be attained prior to becoming other positions in the SGA with the exception of the Freshman Representative Chair.

The Senators of the Student Government Association will be expected to perform the following duties to the best of his/her ability:

1. Assist committee members with their tasks.

2. Attend CCSG when requested by the President.

Article VII: Legislation

The Student Government Association at Penn State Brandywine is comprised of 15 members: five (5) Executive and ten (10) appointed (one of the appointed to the undetermined number of senators). All of which have legislative authority. With this authority, each member has the right to propose legislation. All proposals will be voted on by the members of the Student Government Association. A majority vote must be reached for legislation to become law. If no majority vote in favor of the proposal is achieved, the proposal is rejected. Once a proposal has been rejected, it may not be resubmitted until the following general meeting.

To make up the Senates one (1) vote, Senate must reach a 2/3 majority. If no 2/3 majority Senates vote become an abstention.

All new legislative proposal must be distributed to everyone seven days prior to voting, by way of E-Mail. If any changes are made within those seven days, or before the meeting it would be considered a new piece of legislation. If legislation comes to a vote and a motion is made to change part of the legislation and that motion reaches a simple majority then the proposed legislation goes to a vote.

Article VIII: Voting

All Student Government positions as defined in Articles IV, V, and VI are voting members. Each member has the right to vote in the following ways:

Yes
No
Abstain

When a member abstains his or her right to vote, their vote shall not be counted. This member shall be considered not present, and their vote shall not be taken into consideration during vote calculation.

Article IX: Meetings

Section A –Sound Offs

Sound Offs will be held once a month during the academic year. This meeting is open to all students, faculty, and staff. As stated in Article II, Section C-2, all Student Government members must attend these meetings.

Section B – General Meetings

General Meetings will be held as needed throughout the academic year in order to conduct SGA business. These meetings will only be attended by the SGA advisor and all SGA members as stated in Article II, Section C-2 in the constitution. President will deliver the information from the reports given by each Chair and necessary questions/concerns can be conveyed by any member when given permission to speak from the President.

Section C – Executive Board Meetings

The SGA executive board should hold regular meetings in order to conduct business and discuss SGA matters. Only the members of the Executive Board and the SGA Advisor may attend these meetings. All Executive Board members and the SGA Advisor must attend these meetings.

Article X: Committees

Section A- Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (CCSG)

1. The Student Government Association of Penn State Brandywine has two permanent seats on the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments. These two seats will be held by the President and Vice-President of the SGA unless otherwise appointed.

2. Expenses for CCSG meetings will be paid through the SGA Budget as mentioned in Article X.

3. Only SGA members that are attending CCSG for Penn State Brandywine SGA matters may be reimbursed for their expenses.

Article XI: Finances

All SGA finances will be handled by the SGA Treasurer as stated in Article IV, Section D of the constitution.

All SGA finances will be handled in the following manner:

1. The Treasurer will keep a current and accurate record of said finances.

2. A budget for the SGA appropriations will be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs at the beginning of each semester.

3. A portion of the SGA budget must be allocated to each recognized student club and organization at Penn State Brandywine.

4. Another portion of the SGA budget must be reserved at the beginning of each semester for further club and organization allocation as needed.

5. All CCSG expenses will also be budgeted into the SGA finances for the academic year.

6. A representative from the Office of Student Affairs will oversee the finances of all clubs and organizations (including the SGA) in order to prevent inappropriate expenditures or transactions.

7. A monthly reconciliation will be completed for the SGA account by the SGA Treasurer and the Office of Student Affairs.

8. All Student Government Association checks shall be signed by two people. Those people include:

    a. An SGA member – only the President, Vice-President, and Treasurer are permitted to sign their name to financial documents.

b. A Student Affairs Representative – only those authorized at the beginning of the year are permitted to sign financial documents regarding the SGA account.

Article XI: SGA Advisor

The Student Government Association Advisor will be a senior staff member from the Office of Student Affairs. The SGA Advisor will oversee all activities and guide the SGA in all its business. The SGA Advisor must:

1. Attend all SGA Meetings.

2. Be non-partisan during campaigning and elections.

3. Collect all party forms during elections.

4. Sign checks as needed.

5. Must manage the Impeachment process if needed.

Article XII: The Election Code

The election code to run for SGA is as follows:

Section A – Party Formation

All parties intending to run must submit the following information to the SGA Advisor no later than the eleventh week of the spring semester:

Cover Letter
Party Name
Party Objectives
Personal Statements from each party member which declares candidacy for their intended position.

(President, Vice-President, Head of Senate, Secretary, Treasurer)

Section B – Campaign

1. Campaigning will start during the twelfth week of the spring semester at which time a campaign kick-off event will be held. No campaigning can be done before this time.

2. Campaigning will end at the conclusion of the Debate on the fourteenth week of the spring semester.

Section C – Debate
A debate will be held on the first day of online voting before any votes are taken.
The Office of Student Affairs will host the debate and select all questions and topics to be discussed during the debate. The debate will discuss issues that directly affect student life at the campus and university. The entire student body, faculty, and staff may attend the debate and ask questions during the Question/Answer part.

The format of the debate shall be as follows:

1. Only the Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates will participate in the debate.

2. The debate will consist of four parts: Introduction, Questions/Answers, Debate, and Closing.

Introduction – Each candidate will have three minutes to give an opening speech.

Questions/Answers – Each candidate will answer two questions each that are non-debatable.

Debate – Candidates will debate with their counterpart within the following format:

1. Response – 60 seconds to answer.

2. Rebuttal – 45 seconds to respond. Each candidate is allowed one rebuttal per question.

Q/A- Any remaining time is to be used for Questions from any students or faculty.

Closing – Each candidate will have two minutes to give a closing speech.

Section D – Endorsements

An endorsement is the backing of a ticket running for SGA. Support for a ticket may be expressed verbally, in written form, in a social setting, or any other form that is deemed appropriate. A club or organization may endorse a party during the campaign.

Section E – Slander

Any act of slander or any verbal remarks deemed offensive in nature will be in direct violation of this election code. The ticket/candidate or persons responsible for slander will be subject to review by the SGA Advisor.

Section F – Libel

Any written, printed, or posted material that is deemed offensive in any environment will not be accepted and is a direct violation of this election code. The ticket/candidate or persons responsible for slander will be subject to review by the SGA Advisor.

Section G – Party Running Unopposed

In the event a single party runs unopposed, the party wins by default. If this happens, a democratic referendum must be conducted with the party having a specified number of signatures from the student body at Penn State Brandywine within two weeks of being recognized as the winning party. The amount of signatures needed is equal to 15% of the student body population on campus.
The student body population includes all full-time and part-time students.

Section H- Term

Although there is one year per term, there is an unlimited about of terms one can run.

If you run for an Elected position you must remain at Penn State Brandywine for the duration of the academic school year.

Article XIV: Referendum

In the event a petition of legislation originates from the student body, a referendum shall be formed with regards to the following procedure:

1. The petitioner(s) shall bring forth their case in front of the entire SGA.

2. The petition shall contain signatures that make up no less than five percent of the current full-time and part-time student body population.

3. The SGA must hold a meeting no later than thirty days after the petitioner(s) request is brought forth.

4. The SGA will conduct a referendum and vote which will need a 2/3 majority in order to approve or reject the legislation.

5. If the SGA does not approve the request with a 2/3 majority vote, the request cannot be petitioned within the same academic year.

6. If the SGA does not reach a 2/3 majority vote in either direction, then the request shall be resolved and a new petition can be submitted the following semester.

Article XV: Amendments

In the event an SGA member considers revising any articles or sections to this constitution, the following procedure must be followed:

1. A written proposal, explaining the logical reasoning of the potential revision, must be presented to the entire SGA.

2. The proposal is then voted on by all 15 members of the SGA.

3. The SGA must reach a 2/3 majority in order to approve the proposed amendment(s).

4. If the proposed amendment is dismissed, the proposal can not be voted on again until the following semester.

Article XVI: Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be followed at all meetings conducted by the SGA unless otherwise noted from the President.

Article XVII: Discontinuance of Office

An SGA member's office can be ended either by resignation, impeachment, or layoff.

Section A – Resignation

1. Immediately following a Presidential resignation, the Vice President shall take oath in front of the entire SGA at a special meeting lead by the SGA Advisor.

2. In the event any of the other Executive Board members resign, the remaining Executive Board members will nominate a replacement for the position to the other members of the SGA. The nominated replacement will then be voted on by the ten non-Executive Board members. A 2/3 majority vote is required to appoint the new Executive Board member into office.

3. In the event a non-Executive Board member resigns, the Executive Board will appoint someone into the vacant position.

4. Once someone is appointed or elected into a vacant position, they must take the oath defined in Article III of the constitution at the next campus meeting.

Section B – Impeachment

1. The impeachment of any SGA officer must first be discussed with the Director of Student Affairs and/or the Asst. Student Affairs Director and the SGA Advisor.

2. The SGA member(s) seeking impeachment shall call a special meeting in order to let the SGA decide, by a simple majority, whether or not to proceed with the impeachment.

3. In the event the proposal is approved, a special impeachment hearing shall be supervised by the Director of Student Affairs and/or Asst. Student Affairs Director, the SGA Advisor, and all SGA members will attend.

4. There must be a 2/3 majority vote by the entire SGA in order to fairly impeach an SGA officer.

5. If a 2/3 majority is reached, the impeached officer must concede his or her seat in accordance with Article XVII, Section A of the constitution.

Section C- Layoff

A non- Executive member may be laid off and relived of their duties by the majority vote of the Executive board.

Reasons to be impeached or laid off are, but are not limited to:

(1). Miss more than two (2) unexcused general meetings.
(2). Miss more than one (1) unexcused CCSG meeting.

(3). Not fulfilling the responsibilities of the Constitution.

(4). Missing more than one (1) unexcused SGA sponsored event (fundraiser, sound off, etc.).

Note for Matt*
2012 this full constitution will be in effect.
2011 - this constitution will be in effect, however the parties running for office are still protected by the previous constitution.