



**Student Government Association  
Constitution**

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## **PREAMBLE**

We, the students of Dutchess Community College, in order to form a more perfect learning environment, establish a just college community, ensure internal harmony, provide for the democratic participation in the areas of concern to the college community, to ourselves and to all students at Dutchess Community College, do ordain and establish this constitution for the Dutchess Community College (DCC) Student Government Association (SGA).

## **NAME, MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION**

The name of this organization shall be the Dutchess Community College Student Government Association, herein referred to as SGA.

All credit-bearing students duly registered at Dutchess Community College are members of the Association and are entitled to all benefits and privileges the Association may provide.

The SGA shall be composed of three (3) branches: Legislative, Executive and Judicial and shall be the only official representation of the students of DCC.

The SGA, as outlined within this Constitution and all applicable bylaws, shall be empowered to create all policies and rules necessary to its successful operation.

The SGA shall make no laws that infringe on the rights of or excludes any student based on race, color, national origin, religion, creed, age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, familial status, pregnancy, predisposing genetic characteristics, military status, domestic violence or dating violence victim status, or criminal conviction or any other attribute covered under law.

## **ARTICLE 1 - LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

**Section 1.01** The Student Senate shall be the legislative and policy-making body of the SGA, except as may otherwise be provided for by law or by this Constitution and its bylaws. The Senate shall not violate any law, rule or policy of the State of New York, the County of Dutchess, or the DCC Board of Trustees. The Senate shall have and exercise all legislative powers and duties now and hereafter conferred by the State of New York, the County of Dutchess, or by the DCC Board of Trustees, upon such legislative bodies and all powers and duties incidental thereto. Among such powers, not by way of limitation, the Student Senate shall:

- A. Determine the Student Activity Fee of Dutchess Community College, and make appropriations and adopt the budget for all student activities within the limits prescribed by New York State Law.
- B. Enact, amend, or rescind bylaws.
- C. Charter all student clubs/organizations. A chartered club/organization is one that must participate and has a vote in the Student Senate and has the option for obtaining a budget for its operation. Eligibility requirements can be found in the SGA bylaws.
- D. Pass resolutions which serve as the official position of the student body regarding campus issues.
- E. Join intercollegiate student organizations or associations that will promote the general interests of the student body.
- F. Undertake or support such projects or activities it deems in the general interest of the student body, the college, or the community.
- G. Conduct surveys, use technical advice, appoint committees, commissions, and boards in order to further its legislative functions.
- H. As necessary or appropriate override a veto by the President of the SGA of its legislative enactments by a two-thirds vote of all its voting membership. This may be done at the next Senate meeting deemed necessary.
- I. Have the authority to sanction any club who violates this Constitution or any subsequent bylaws of the SGA or its own Constitution or bylaws.
- J. Act as the impeaching body for actions against judicial officers in conformity with this Constitution.
- K. Shall have the option to review and vote on all budget allocations and reallocations, and record the results in the minutes of the Student Senate meetings.

**Section 1.02** The Student Senate shall be composed of Senators representing the general student body as well as Club Representatives from each active, chartered club on campus. The number of Senators that serve in the Senate shall be equal to the number of clubs active on campus at the beginning of each academic year.

**Section 1.03** Senators and Club Representatives must be enrolled in no fewer than three (3) credit hours, shall have no violations of the Student Code of Conduct, and shall not be enrolled in greater than eight (8) credit hours at any other institution.

**Section 1.04** Senators may be appointed anytime during the academic year. Appointment and confirmation procedures can be found in the SGA bylaws. Student Senators cannot be Club Representatives. Duties of a Senator include, but are not limited to:

- A. Attend all Senate meetings.
- B. Represent and be in contact with constituents. Senators represent the students, so they need to be aware of issues concerning the student body at large in order to act as a link between the students and the Senate.
- C. Be able to evaluate information from sometimes conflicting sources and make decisions benefiting their constituents. Senators are required to vote on all issues presented to the Senate.
- D. Serve on a standing committee that requires them to become knowledgeable in the topics of their committee assignments. As a member of a committee, a Senator is required to attend all committee meetings and fulfill the requirements of such committee.
- E. Be present for Senate-sponsored events, including, but not limited to Student Government booths at various events and campus-wide and community service projects sponsored by the Student Senate/Student Government Association.
- F. Perform all duties outlined in the Student Government Association Constitution and SGA bylaws.

**Section 1.05** Club Representatives will be selected based on each club's Constitution and bylaws. A Club Representative may only represent one club at each Senate meeting. Duties of a Club Representative include, but are in no way limited to:

- A. Attend all Senate meetings.
- B. Represent and be in contact with their club and club advisor. Club Representatives represent the students in the club they were elected by, so they need to be aware of issues and upcoming events concerning their club to be able to act as a link between the Club, Club Advisor and the Senate.
- C. Be able to evaluate information from sometimes conflicting sources and make decisions benefiting their club. Club Representatives are required to vote on all issues presented to the Senate.
- D. Serve on a standing committee that requires them to become knowledgeable in the topics of their committee assignments. As a member of a committee, a Club Representative, or designee is required to attend all committee meetings and fulfill the requirements of such committee.
- E. Be present for Senate-sponsored events, including, but not limited to Student Government booths at various events and campus-wide and community service projects sponsored by the Student Senate/Student Government Association.
- F. Perform all duties outlined in the Student Government Association Constitution and SGA bylaws.

**Section 1.06** All Senate members shall adhere to the attendance policy found in the SGA bylaws.

- A. Any Senate member who misses a meeting must submit to the Coordinator of Internal Affairs, in writing, the reason for their absence prior to the meeting.
- B. Senators who fail to comply with the attendance policy are subject to removal from office; such action shall be brought before the Senate by the Coordinator of Internal Affairs in the first meeting following the reaching of the limit.

**Section 1.07** In the event that any Club Representative violates the attendance policy, disciplinary action towards the club as a whole will be initiated by the Coordinator of Internal Affairs. Disciplinary procedures can be found in the SGA bylaws.

**Section 1.08** The Vice-President of the SGA shall maintain the attendance records of the Coordinator of Internal Affairs. In the event that the Coordinator of Internal Affairs reaches the absence limit, the Vice-President of the SGA shall call for the dismissal of the Coordinator of Internal Affairs.

**Section 1.09** Any Senate member found to be in violation of the Student Code of Conduct, conviction for criminal activity, or nonperformance of their duties shall be subject to impeachment. Impeachment proceedings may found in the SGA bylaws.

**Section 1.10** All Student Senate meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified by this Constitution.

**Section 1.11** Quorum shall consist of 50% + 1 member of the active members of the Senate.

**Section 1.12** Any member of the SGA may introduce legislation, provided that the Executive Board places that person on the agenda. The procedure for voting on legislation will follow Robert's Rules of Order.

**Section 1.13** The Senate may adopt, repeal or amend bylaws. Each bylaw shall embrace only one subject, and may relate to all matters that properly concern the Senate. All bylaws shall be consecutively numbered and retained in a book of bylaws.

**Section 1.14** Senators and Club Representatives are the only voting members of the Senate. Each member will have 1 vote.

**Section 1.15** The following shall be considered standing committees of the Student Senate:

- A. The Budget Committee shall be empowered to review all financial proposals including: budgets, allocations, reallocations and fundraising proposals and determine whether or not to present each proposal to the Senate. The SGA Treasurer shall act as chair of the Budget Committee.
- B. The Community Services Committee shall be empowered to investigate and help organize community service projects with the Student Government Association and its member clubs as needed or requested. All activities will proceed after approval from the SGA Vice-president. The Director of Community Services shall act as chair of the Community Service Committee.
- C. The Charters and Bylaws Committee shall be empowered to examine all new club constitutions and bylaws. They shall also examine all club constitution revisions. They will determine whether to present the club constitution for Senate vote. They shall also hold a hearing if a club is in violation of its constitution. The Director of Charters will chair the Charters and Bylaws Committee.
- D. The SGA Awareness Committee shall be empowered to publicize the Student Government Association and its member clubs as needed or requested. They shall also have the ability to organize events to increase student's awareness and understanding of the SGA and its clubs. All activities will proceed after approval from the SGA Vice-president. The Director of Public Relations will chair the SGA Awareness Committee.

**Section 1.16** Standing committees of the Student Senate shall adhere to the following committee procedures:

- A. The time and place of each committee meeting shall be posted in the SGA Office.
- B. They shall meet at least once every week during the time period in which the College is open.
- C. Each Committee shall have a Chair that reports to the Senate and Executive Board.
- D. Standing committees shall be required to meet and report to the Senate at least once every month, upon the direction of the Vice-President of the SGA, or upon a vote by the majority of the Senate present at any regular SGA meeting.

## **ARTICLE 2        -    THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**Section 2.01**    There shall be an Executive Branch of the SGA. This branch shall contain the offices of President, Student Trustee, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Coordinator of Internal Affairs, and shall be referred to as the Executive Board. The Executive Branch shall act as a liaison between the Students, Administration, Faculty/Staff and other institutions and shall exercise all powers necessary for the successful completion of this charge except where otherwise denoted in this Constitution, or by Local, State and Federal laws. The Executive Board shall serve as the final arbiter to all appeals issued against the Student Court that deal with the SGA Constitution or bylaws or club's constitutions or bylaws.

**Section 2.02**    All Executive Board positions shall:

- A. Be held for one (1) academic year and shall not be held by the same student for two (2) consecutive years in a row.
- B. Be elected by the student body at large in spring elections.
- C. Be held by full-time students who have no violations of the Student Code of Conduct, have a minimum Cumulative Point Average (CPA) of 2.5 and be present for a minimum of four (4) office hours every week when the College is open during the fall and spring semesters.
- D. All elected positions, with the exception of the Student Trustee shall commence their terms on June 1<sup>st</sup> and terminate on May 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.
  - a. The Student Trustee shall commence their term on July 1<sup>st</sup> and terminate on June 30<sup>th</sup> the following year.
  - b. The time between elections and the end of the spring semester shall be used as a training period for newly elected officers.
    - i. This training shall involve their attendance at Senate meetings, Executive Board meetings, and committees that they will chair and meeting with current members to learn their new position.
    - ii. They will meet with the Student Activities/Student Life Staff prior to the beginning of each semester.
- E. The officers or their designees shall undertake or support such projects or activities they deem in the general interest of the student body, the college, or the community, and represent on boards of shared governance within the campus community.
- F. Should any member of the Executive Board fail to meet these qualifications, a vacancy shall be deemed to exist in that office.

**Section 2.03**    There shall be a President of the SGA. The President of the SGA shall be the official Student Representative of DCC students. They shall exercise all executive powers of a President of the SGA in conformity with this Constitution, applicable bylaws and applicable state law. These powers include, but are in no way limited to:

- A. Approve or disapprove in writing all legislative acts of the Student Senate.
- B. Appoint, supervise, and terminate all executive committees and boards.
- C. Coordinate the Executive Branch of the SGA.
- D. Nominate candidates for the positions of Directors and Chief Justice.
- E. Serve as the delegation leader and nominate members of a delegation to all SGA intercollegiate conferences and meetings.
- F. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees, clubs and commissions.
- G. Attend a minimum of two (2) Student Senate meetings per month, so as to keep open a direct line of communication.
- H. Have the sole power to declare special election.

**Section 2.04** There shall be a Vice-President of the SGA.

The Vice-President shall be the official representative of the Student Senate, and in the absence of the President shall be the official representative of the SGA. They will execute all executive powers of the Vice-President of the SGA in conformity with this Constitution, applicable bylaws and applicable state laws. The Vice-President shall:

- A. Serve as President of the Student Senate.
- B. Run all Student Senate meetings.
- C. Maintain a liaison between the legislative and executive branches of the SGA.
- D. Have the power to appoint and supervise committees of the Student Senate.
- E. Have the power to vote in the Student Senate only in the event of a tie.
- F. Assist the Executive Board in determining the agenda of business for the Student Senate meetings.
- G. Maintain the attendance record of the Coordinator of Internal Affairs.

**Section 2.05** There shall be a Coordinator of Internal Affairs. The Coordinator of Internal Affairs shall:

- A. Assist the Vice President of the SGA in the successful operations of the Senate.
- B. Maintain the attendance of all members in Senate and committee meetings.
- C. Rule on the legitimacy of all absences of the Club Representatives and Senators.
- D. Notify the Senate of any Senator in violation of the attendance policy.
- E. Monitor the submission of club minutes and attendance.
- F. Freeze club budgets for policy violations and notify the Senate of clubs whose budgets are frozen.
- G. Act as temporary President of the Senate in the absence of the Vice-President.

**Section 2.06** There shall be a Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be the Chief Fiscal Officer of the SGA. Except as may otherwise be provided by this Constitution, the Treasurer shall:

- A. Have charge of the administration of all SGA funds.
- B. Review all expenditures which must correspond with the "Master Student Activities Budget" which is approved by the Student Senate, SGA President, College President, and the Board of Trustees.
- C. Present approved budget issues to the Senate.
- D. Be Chair of the Budget Committee.

**Section 2.07** The order of succession shall be as follows:

- A. President
- B. Vice-President
- C. Coordinator of Internal Affairs
- D. Treasurer
- E. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Treasurer, a special election shall be held in the Student Senate.
- F. Any Executive Board member shall have the option to deny the advance for any reason.
- G. In the event a vacancy still exists after the order of succession has occurred, a special election shall be held in the Student Senate to fill the vacancy.

**Section 2.08** There shall be a Student Trustee. The Student Trustee shall:

- A. Serve on the DCC Board of Trustees in accordance with all NY State Laws.
- B. Represent the students on the DCC Board of Trustees. They shall bring forth any issues or concerns of the students to the DCC Board of Trustees and take these issue into account when voting.
- C. Act as liaison between the SGA and the DCC Board of Trustees.
  - a. Keep the SGA informed of all non-confidential activities, discussions, developments and

- actions of the DCC Board of Trustees.
- b. Report to the DCC Board of Trustees all activities, discussions, developments and actions of the SGA.
- D. Attend at least one senate meeting per month. This meeting should be the one soonest after the DCC Board of Trustees meeting.

**Section 2.09** Any member of the SGA Executive Board found to be in violation of the Student Code of Conduct, conviction for criminal activity, or nonperformance of their duties shall be subject to impeachment. Impeachment proceedings may found in the SGA bylaws.

**Section 2.10** The Student Activities staff will deposit the Student Activities Fees in an interest-bearing account through the Dutchess Community College Association.

**Section 2.11** SGA will employ the services of a Bookkeeper/Secretary who will be responsible for maintaining all financial records for the Student Government Association. They shall work with the SGA Treasurer in preparing all financial reports for the SGA. A job description of duties will be on record in the Office of Student Activities. Bookkeeper/Secretary will be supervised by the Director of Student Life and/or their designee.

**Section 2.12** There shall be an executive committee known as the Campus Activity Board (CAB) under the direction of the Director of Student Events and advisement of the Assistant Director of Student Activities. The Campus Activity Board is open to all students and will assist the Student Activities Office with the purpose of selecting, planning, and executing student events.

**Section 2.13** Presidential nominations of Director Positions shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the Senate. All Directors must have a 2.0 CPA and have no violations of the Student Code of Conduct at the time of appointment and for the duration of the term. They can be removed from office through executive action.

**Section 2.14** There shall be a Director of Student Events. The Director of Student Events shall:

- A. Meet with the Assistant Director of Student Activities on a weekly basis to plan major events.
- B. Chair meetings of the Campus Activity Board.
- C. Announce/report on events to the Senate at least once a month or as often as may be required.

**Section 2.15** There shall be a Director of Academics. The Director of Academics shall:

- A. Examine student opinion on academic affairs.
- B. Serve as student representative on the Curriculum Committee of DCC.
- C. Be required to give a report in writing and orally of the activities of their office to the Senate not less than twice each semester or as often as may be required.
- D. Be the chairperson of any SGA committees formed dealing with any issues that are academic in nature.

**Section 2.16** There shall be a SUNY SA Liaison. The SUNY SA Liaison shall:

- A. Be the liaison to the SUNY Student Assembly (SUNY SA).
- B. Report to the Senate and Executive Board about new regulations, events, and changes in leadership in SUNY SA
- C. Be on at least one standing committee of the SUNY SA.
- D. Inform the Senate and Executive Board about the SUNY SA's importance and mission.

**Section 2.17** There shall be a Director of Community Services. The Director of Community Services shall:

- A. Coordinate community service and volunteer activities on behalf of the Senate.
- B. Chair the Community Service Committee
- C. Inform the Senate of Community Service Activities at least once a month or more often as required.

**Section 2.18** There shall be a Director of Public Relations. The Director of Public Relations shall:

- A. Positively promote the SGA and clubs.
- B. Chair the SGA Awareness Committee.
- C. Assist the SGA and clubs with promoting events.
- D. Monitor and update the SGA social media pages.
- E. Report to the Senate at least once a month or more often as required.

**Section 2.19** There shall be a Director of Charters. The Director of Charters shall:

- A. Review all new club Constitutions and revision requests.
- B. Chair the Charters and Bylaws Committee.
- C. Report to the Senate at least once a month or more often as required.

## ARTICLE 3 - THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

**Section 3.01** The Student Court shall be the Judicial Branch of the SGA. The Student Court shall be made up of one (1) Chief Justice and four (4) Associate Justices. The Court shall:

- A. Be the arbiter of all disputes arising under this Constitution, its bylaws and college rules and regulations related to them.
- B. Rule on all contested tickets issued by DCC Security.
- C. Act as the impeaching body for the SGA except for the impeachment of members of the Judicial Branch.
- D. Review all appeals of clubs denied approval.
- E. Review all appeals of Senators and Club Representatives.
- F. Refer all appeals to Student Court decisions to the Executive Board of the SGA for final consideration.

**Section 3.02** The Chief Justice shall be elected by the students in the spring elections. At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term they shall have a 2.5 CPA and have no violations of the Student Code of Conduct. The Chief Justice shall:

- A. Be the spokesperson for the court and the Judicial Branch of the SGA in accordance with this Constitution.
- B. Recommend four (4) students with a 2.0 CPA and who have no violations of the Student Code of Conduct to serve as Associate Justices to the President of the SGA.
- C. Report to the Senate and President at least twice a semester or more often as required.
- D. Render decisions with Associate Justices on all court cases.
- E. Appoint a substitute in the event that the Chief Justice is not present.
- F. Monitor all aspects of Spring elections and be informed of the election outcomes by the Student Activities/ Student Life Staff, no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the elections have ended.

**Section 3.03** The Associate Justices shall be recommended by the Chief Justice to the President of the SGA. President of the SGA will then bring forth the nominations for confirmation by the Senate. At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term they shall be a student with a 2.0 CPA and have no violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

- A. Hear all cases that come before the Student Court and render decisions.
- B. Appoint a Presiding Justice in the event that the Chief Justice is absent, and no representative has been appointed or is present.

**Section 3.04** The court shall establish rules necessary for its function as long as they conform to this Constitution and applicable bylaws.

**Section 3.05** Any member of the SGA Judicial Branch found to be in violation of the Student Code of Conduct, conviction for criminal activity, or nonperformance of their duties shall be subject to impeachment. Impeachment proceedings may found in the SGA bylaws.

## **ARTICLE 4 - SGA ADVISOR**

**Section 4.01** The Director of Student Life and/or their designee shall be the advisor to the SGA.

**Section 4.02** The SGA Advisor shall:

- A. Advise the students of all present College policies, rules and procedures as well as any changes thereof.
- B. Serve Student Senate as a consultant.
- C. Attend all SGA meetings
- D. Ensure the SGA adheres to the DCC Student Code of Conduct as well as other policies.
- E. Keep the SGA informed of any changes in faculty or administration that may affect the SGA.
- F. Act as a general liaison to the Dean of Student Services and DCC administration.
- G. Render an opinion to the Student Government Association in such form as the Student Senate may require.

## **ARTICLE 5 - AMENDING PROCESS**

**Section 5.01** This Constitution may be amended through the following process.

- A. The proposal is sent to the College President for approval.
- B. A proposal is brought before the Charters and Bylaws Committee. If this committee approves this proposal through a majority vote, then it will be passed onto the Senate for consideration.
- C. The proposal may be introduced in the Senate but may not be voted on in the same meeting it is introduced.
  - a. At the second session of the Senate, a quorum must be present, and two-thirds vote is required for approval for consideration and review.
  - b. The Senate must then wait through a two (2)-week caucus period for further discussion of the proposal.
  - c. After this period has expired, the Senate will then put the proposal to a vote; in order to be accepted it must pass with a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
- D. Upon completion of this, a general referendum to the student body must be set up.
  - a. In order for the amended constitution to be accepted, it has to pass by simple majority vote of all votes casted in that student referendum.
  - b. The results of the voting must be distributed through proper media channels.
  - c. Once passed, the new constitution shall be effective immediately.

## **ARTICLE 6 - SEPARABILITY**

**Section 6.01** If any provision of this Constitution is judged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such adjudication shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder of the document.

## **ARTICLE 7 - TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

**Section 7.01** The Student Senate shall determine and provide for any unexpected problems in transition to this Constitution.

**Section 7.02** Nothing contained herein, however, shall operate to prevent the creation of any unit or office of the SGA or additional offices of the Senate in its bylaws.

## **ARTICLE 8 - PROVISIONS FOR DISSOLUTION**

**Section 8.01** Upon dissolution of the Student Government Association, the Executive Board, in its last official act after paying and making provisions for all the just debts, transfer all remaining assets to the Dutchess Community College Office of Student Activities. If this is not possible, the assets will go to the DCC Association.

## **ARTICLE 9 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**Section 9.01** No elected SGA Officer may hold more than one (1) position at a time. The officers are also strictly prohibited from being an officer in any club.

**Section 9.02** The SGA President and Vice-President shall be prohibited from serving and voting on a standing committee but may assist any committee in accomplishing its objectives through any other means. The SGA President and Vice-President may serve on an Ad-Hoc Committee.

**Section 9.03** Directors may hold only one (1) position at a time.

## **ARTICLE 10 - ELASTIC CLAUSE**

**Section 10.01** In cases when the Student Senate encounters a Legislative Proposal which is not expressly forbidden by the authorized Student Government Association Constitution, nor is expressly stated in aforementioned Constitution, the Student Senate, shall by a three-fourths vote of all present, decide whether a proposal or motion may be enacted.

