



**Student Government Association
Constitution
3/4/2013**

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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 By-Laws, 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 sex, religious views, age, ethnicity, political views, sexual orientation or any other attribute covered under law.

DEFINITIONS

A **freshman** is a student at DCC with 23 hours or less completed course hours.

A **sophomore** is a student at DCC with more than 24 course hours completed.

A **student in good academic standing** is one who's cumulative GPA (CPA) is 2.0 or greater.

ARTICLE 1 - LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 1.01 The Student Senate shall be the legislative and policy-making body of the SGA, except as many otherwise be provided for by law or by this Constitution and its By-laws. 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 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, 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 By-laws.
- C. Charter all student organizations. A chartered club is one that must participate and have a vote in the Student Senate and has the option for obtaining a budget for its operation.
- D. Enter into intercollegiate student organizations or association that will promote the general interests of the student body.
- E. Undertake or support such projects or activities it deems in the general interest of the student body, the college or the community.
- F. Conduct studies and investigations, use technical advice, appoint committees, commissions, and boards in order to further its legislative functions.
- G. Override the veto by the President of the SGA of its legislative enactments by a two-thirds vote of all its membership. This may be done at the next Senate meeting deemed necessary.
- H. Have the authority to sanction any club who violates this Constitution or any subsequent By-laws of the SGA or its own Constitution.
- I. Act as the impeaching body for actions against judicial officers in conformity with this Constitution.

Section 1.02 The Student Senate shall be composed of representatives of the freshman and sophomore classes as well as representatives from each active, chartered club on campus. The number of Senators that serve on the Senate shall be equal to the number of clubs active on campus at the beginning of each academic year but shall not fall below twelve (12) positions.

Section 1.03 Senators and Club Representatives must comply with the following requirements to participate in the Student Senate:

- A. A student must be enrolled in no less than three (3) credit hours in good academic standing and not be enrolled in greater than eight (8) credit hours at any other institution.
- B. Regularly attend Senate meetings.
- C. Required to serve on at least one standing committee and attend its meetings.
- D. Follow all guidelines within this Constitution, the Constitution of DCC, and Local, State, and Federal laws.

Section 1.04 Senators may be elected during the spring elections. No more than eight (8) Senator positions will be filled at that time. The Senate will confirm the remainder of the seats during the academic year in which they will serve. Student Senators cannot be Club Representatives. Duties of a Senator include, but are in no way limited to:

- A. Attend all Senate meetings and maintain personal voting records.
- B. Represent and be in contact with constituents. Senators represent the students they were elected by, 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. Senators need to be knowledgeable, 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. Senators must serve on a standing committee that requires them to become experts in the topics of their committee assignments. As a member of a committee, a Senator needs to attend all committee meetings and fulfill the requirements of such committee.
- E. Be present for all 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 By-laws.

Section 1.05 Club Representatives will be selected based on the club's Constitution and By-laws. 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 and maintain personal voting records.
- 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 and the Senate.
- C. Club Representatives need to be knowledgeable, 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. Club Representatives must serve on a standing committee that requires them to become experts in the topics of their committee assignments. As a member of a committee, a Club Representative needs to attend all committee meetings and fulfill the requirements of such committee.
- E. Be present for all 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 By-laws.

Section 1.06 All votes for removal of a Senator will take place during regular scheduled Senate meetings and require a majority two-thirds vote. A Senator may appeal the Recall for Misconduct with the College's Fair Procedure Committee under the direction of the Vice President and Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management.

Section 1.07 The Senate shall have the power to form an ad-hoc committee to fill a vacancy in the SGA if:

- A. A vacancy exists in the position of Senator twenty-one (21) days after the first Senate meeting.
- B. Any vacancy(s) exist in the position of a Director or the position of Chief Justice twenty-one (21) days after the second meeting of the Senate.
- C. A vacancy exists in the position of Associate Justice after twenty-one days after the Chief Justice has been confirmed.

Section 1.08 The Senate may adopt, repeal or amend By-laws through the method outlined in this Constitution. Each By-law shall embrace only one subject, and may relate to all matters that properly concern the Senate. All By-laws shall be consecutively numbered and retained in a book of By-laws, which will be presented to every Senator and Club Representative upon the joining of the Senate.

Section 1.09 No resolutions or major motions (i.e. opening a caucus, By-laws or nominations) may be acted upon at the same meeting in which it is introduced except when deemed necessary by a three-fourths majority vote of the members of the Senate.

Section 1.10 Any member of the SGA may introduce legislation, provided that the Executive Board places that person on the agenda. The Senate will then receive the proposal and then shall take one week to review the proposal. At the following meeting, the Senate will vote on the proposal, unless more time is asked for and approved by majority vote.

Section 1.11 Legislation that is passed by the Senate goes to the President of the SGA for his/her approval or veto. If the proposal is vetoed, it then goes back to the Senate for further review. The Senate can then choose to override the veto through a two-thirds vote in favor of the proposal. If the SGA President does not act upon the proposal within ten days, or get on the agenda for the next Senate meeting, the proposal is considered passed. If the SGA President needs more time, then he/she must request more time from the Student Senate. This will require a majority vote in favor of the request in order to be granted more time. If the request is denied and ten (10) days have expired, then the President of the SGA is required to render a decision at that meeting.

Section 1.12 All Student Senate meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified by this Constitution.

Section 1.13 Quorum shall consist of 60% of the members of the Senate, excluding vacant seats.

Section 1.14 The Student Senate shall elect one (1) of its members as President Pro Tempore. The President Pro Tempore, at the time of nomination and for the duration of the term, shall be a full-time student in good academic standing, with a minimum Cumulative GPA (CPA) of 2.5. The President Pro Tempore, upon the absence or incapacitation of the President of the Senate, shall preside over the Student Senate. In the event that a vacancy is deemed to exist in the office of the Vice-President, the President Pro Tempore shall assume all duties and powers of that office for the duration of the term of office. In the event that a vacancy is deemed to exist in the offices of both the President and Vice-President, the President Pro Tempore shall succeed to the office of President and the Senate elects a new Vice-President and President Pro Tempore.

Section 1.15 The President Pro Tempore is an elected officer of the Senate and may be impeached as prescribed by this Constitution. The President Pro Tempore shall:

- A. Assist the President of the Senate in the successful operations of the Senate.
- B. Monitor 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. Notify the Senate of clubs whose budgets are frozen.
- F. Shall be present for a minimum of four (4) posted office hours a week.

Section 1.16 Any Senate member who misses a meeting must submit to the President Pro Tempore, in writing, the reason for his/her absence.

Section 1.17 All Senate members shall adhere to the attendance policy found in the By-laws. Senators who fail to comply with the attendance policy are subject to removal of office; such action shall be brought before the Senate by the President Pro Tempore in the first meeting following the reaching of the limit.

Section 1.18 Senators failing to comply with the attendance policy or charged with misconduct will be dismissed from the Senate by:

- A. President Pro Tempore informing the Senate of any Senators failing to comply with the attendance policy.
- B. A petition of 3 ½% of the student body is submitted to the President of the SGA for misconduct.
- C. A petition of a majority of the Student Senate, excluding vacant seats, is submitted to the President of the Student Senate for misconduct.

Section 1.19 The President of the Senate shall maintain the attendance records of the President Pro Tempore. In the event that the President Pro Tempore reaches the attendance limit, the President of the Senate shall call for the dismissal of the said President Pro Tempore.

Section 1.20 Any Senate member who arrives more than fifteen (15) minutes late but less than thirty (30) minutes late, after the meeting has been called to order, shall be charged with one-half an absence. Any Senate member more than thirty (30) minutes late shall be charged with a full absence. Any Senate member who leaves more than fifteen (15) minutes early but less than thirty (30) minutes early before the meeting is adjourned, shall be charged with a full absence. Exceptions to the above are made only for academic requirements or justified personal emergency.

Section 1.21 Any Club Representative who violates the attendance policy shall initiate disciplinary action towards the club as a whole. This disciplinary action can be found in the By-laws. The President Pro Tempore shall report to the Senate the first meeting after the violation of the disciplinary action taken against the club. The President Pro Tempore shall also be responsible for issuing a warning through email and/or interoffice mail to the Club Advisor and the Club Representative when the club reaches one absence less than allowed by the attendance policy in either excused or unexcused. A second letter will be sent to both the Advisor and the club when the said club reaches the limit and disciplinary action is taken against the club.

Section 1.22 All approved expenditures must correspond with the “Master Student Activities Budget” which is approved by the Student Senate, SGA President, College President and the Board of Trustees. All subsequent allocations and reallocations must be covered by a duly approved Student Senate resolution, which appears in the minutes of the Student Senate meetings.

Section 1.23 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 to the Senate.
- B. The Community Services Committee shall be empowered to investigate and help organize community service projects with the Student Government Association.
- C. The Charters and By-laws Committee shall be empowered to examine all new club constitutions and revisions, then determine whether to present the club for Senate vote and hold a hearing if a club is in violation of its constitution.
- D. The SGA Awareness Committee shall be empowered to publicize the Student Government Association and its member clubs as needed or requested.

Section 1.24 Each committee with the following exceptions shall determine the committee procedures:

The time and place of each committee meeting shall be posted in the SGA Office.

Standing committees shall be required to meet and report to the Senate at least once every two weeks, upon the direction of the President of the Senate, or upon a vote by the majority of the Senate present at any regular SGA meeting.

ARTICLE II - 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 and Treasurer as well as any appointed Directors. The Executive Branch shall act as a liaison between the Students, Administration, Faculty/Staff and other Institutions. The Executive Branch shall exercise all powers necessary for the successful completion of these goals, except whereas otherwise denoted in this Constitution, or by Local, State and Federal laws.

Section 2.02 There shall be a President/Student Trustee of the SGA who shall be elected by the student body at large. The President/Student Trustee shall serve for a one year term. The term of the President shall begin the day after Commencement of the year of election, and shall continue in that office until the day of Commencement immediately following. The term of the Student Trustee shall commence on July 1 of the election and terminate on June 30 of the following year. At the time of Presidential nomination and for the duration of the term, the President/Student Trustee shall be a full-time student in good academic standing, with a minimum Cumulative GPA (CPA) of 2.5. The President may only be elected once every two years. Should the President fail to meet with these qualification at any time during his/her term, a vacancy shall be deemed to exist in that office.

Section 2.03 The President of the SGA shall be the official Student Representative of DCC students. He/She shall exercise all executive powers of a President of the SGA in conformity with this Constitution, applicable By-laws 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 Senators, Directors and Chief Justice.
- E. Serve as Student Trustee on the DCC Board of Trustees in accordance with all NY State laws.
- F. Be the delegation leader and nominate members of a delegation to all SGA intercollegiate conferences and meetings.
- G. Shall be present for a minimum of four (4) posted office hours a week.
- H. Be an ex-officio member of all committees, clubs and commissions. He/She will also be required to attend two (2) Student Senate meetings per month, so as to open a more direct line of communication.
- I. Shall have the sole power to declare special election.

Section 2.04 There shall be a Vice-President of the SGA who shall from the time of nomination and for the duration of the term, be a full-time student in good academic standing, with a minimum Cumulative GPA (CPA) of 2.5. The Vice-President shall be elected by the student body at large and shall serve for a one-year term beginning on the day after Commencement, and shall continue in that office until the day of commencement the following year. Should the Vice-President, at any time during his/her term, fail to meet these qualifications, a vacancy shall be deemed to exist in that office. The Vice-President shall assume the office of the President should a vacancy be deemed to exist in that office. The Vice-President may only be elected to the office once every two years.

Section 2.05 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. He/She will execute all executive powers of the Vice-President of the SGA in conformity with this Constitution, applicable By-laws and applicable state laws. The Vice-President shall:
Be President of the Student Senate.

- A. Maintain a liaison between the legislative and executive branches of the SGA.
- B. Have the power to appoint and supervise committees of the Student Senate.
- C. Have the power to vote in the Student Senate only in the event of a tie.
- D. Shall assist the Executive Board in determining the agenda of business for the Student Senate meetings.
- E. Shall be present for a minimum of four (4) posted office hours a week.
- F. Maintain the attendance record of the President Pro Tempore.

Section 2.06 There shall be a Treasurer who shall be elected by the student body at large. He/She shall serve for a one-year term beginning the day after commencement of the year in which he/she is elected, and shall continue in that office until the day of commencement immediately following. The Treasurer may only be elected to the office once every two years. In the absence of an elected Treasurer, the President shall nominate a Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be a student in good academic standing, with a minimum Cumulative GPA (CPA) of 2.5.

Section 2.07 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. Meet on a weekly basis with the SGA bookkeeper to review SGA accounts.
- C. Submit a statement of SGA finances to the President of the SGA and the Student Senate monthly or at such times as may be required.
- D. Present approved budget issues to the Senate.
- E. Be Chair of the Budget Committee.
- F. Shall be present for a minimum of four (4) posted office hours a week.

Section 2.08 The Executive Board will consist of the President/Student Trustee, Vice-President, Treasurer and President Pro Tempore. This Board meets to plan the agenda and discuss SGA business. The SGA Advisor will serve as consultants to the Board.

Section 2.09 In the event that any member of the SGA is charged with any form of misconduct, he/she shall be subject to impeachment. Impeachment proceedings may be instituted by written petition signed by not less than 5% percent of the student body or two-thirds of the Student Senate.

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 an Administrative Assistant that will be responsible for maintaining all financial records for the Student Government Association. He/she shall work with the Treasurer in preparing all financial reports for the SGA. A job description of duties will be on record in the Office of Student Activities. The bookkeeper will be supervised by the Director of Student Activities.

Section 2.12 A certified audit of the Student Activity account will be conducted on an annual basis.

Section 2.13 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 will assist the Student Activities Office in selecting, planning, and executing student events.

Section 2.14 Presidential nominations shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the body. No nomination shall be voted on in the same meeting in which they are introduced.

Section 2.15 The Director of Student Events shall be appointed by the President of the SGA, subject to confirmation by the Senate. At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term he/she shall be a student in good academic standing (GPA 2.0). He/she can be removed through impeachment or executive termination. The Director of Student Events shall:

- A. Meet with the Assistant Director of Student Activities on a weekly basis to plan major events.
- B. Submit to the Senate on a semester basis a calendar of activities and programs for the student body.
- C. Chair meetings of the Campus Activity Board.

Section 2.16 The Director of Academics shall be appointed by the President of the SGA, subject to confirmation by the Senate. At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term he/she shall be a student in good academic standing (GPA 2.0). He/she can be removed through impeachment or executive termination. The Director of Academics shall:

- A. Examine student opinion on academic affairs.
- B. Serve as student representative on such faculty and administrative committees as may be required.
- C. Be required to give a report in writing and orally of the activities of his/her office to the Senate not less than twice each semester or as often as may be required.
- D. Be the chairperson of any committees formed for the execution of the foregoing powers.

Section 2.17 The Director of South Affairs shall be appointed by the President of the SGA, subject to confirmation by the Senate. At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term he/she shall be a student in good academic standing (GPA 2.0). He/she can be removed through impeachment or executive termination. The Director of South Affairs shall:

- A. Be required to give a report in writing and orally of the activities of his/her office to the Senate not less than twice each semester or as often as may be required.
- B. Work with the Campus Activity Board and the Office of Student Activities in serving Dutchess South students.
- C. Serve as student representative on such faculty and administrative committees as may be required.

ARTICLE III - 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 By-laws and college rules and regulations related to them.
- B. Hold Court hearings of all contested tickets given by DCC Security.
- C. Act as the impeaching body for the SGA except for the impeachment of members of the Judicial Branch.

Section 3.02 The Chief Justice shall be appointed by the President of the SGA, subject to confirmation by the Senate. At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term he/she shall be a student in good academic standing (GPA 2.0). He/she can be removed through impeachment in the Legislative Branch. The Chief Justice shall:

- A. Be the spokesperson for the court and the Judicial Branch of the SGA in accordance with this Constitution.
- B. Nominate four (4) students of good academic standing to serve as Associate Justices.
- C. Report to the Senate and President at least twice a semester or as often as requested.
- 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 submit in writing to the Vice-President, no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the elections, the results of the elections. In the event of a special election, the thirty (30) day requirement may be waived in conformity with appropriate laws regulating special elections.

Section 3.03 The Associate Justices shall be appointed by the Chief Justice, subject to confirmation by the Senate. At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term he/she shall be a student in good academic standing (GPA 2.0). He/she can be removed through impeachment in the Legislative Branch. The Associate Justices shall:

Hear all cases that come before the Student Court and render decisions.

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 By-laws.

ARTICLE IV - ELECTIONS

Section 4.01 Elections will be held for the following positions in the spring semester: President/Student Trustee, Vice-President, Treasurer and Senators.

ARTICLE V - SGA ADVISOR

Section 5.01 The Director of Student Activities shall be the advisor to the SGA.

Section 5.02 The SGA Advisor shall serve the Student Senate as a consultant. He/She shall, when called upon to do so, render an opinion to the Student Government Association in such form as the Student Senate may require.

ARTICLE VI - AMENDING PROCESS

Section 6.01 This Constitution may be amended through the following process. First, a proposal should be brought before the Charters and By-Laws Committee. If this committee approves this proposal through a majority vote then it will be passed onto the Senate for consideration. The proposal may be introduced one week but not voted on. At the second session of the Senate, a quorum must be present, and two-thirds vote is required for approval for consideration and review. The Senate must then wait through a four(4)-week caucus period for further discussion of the proposal. After this four(4)-week 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. The proposal is then sent to the College President for approval. Upon completion of this, a general referendum to the student body must be set up. To ensure the greatest possible involvement from the student body proper amounts of advertising must be done. Five percent (5%) of the student body must vote on the referendum with a simple majority voting in favor of the referendum. The results of the voting must be dispersed through proper media channels.

ARTICLE VII - SEPARABILITY

Section 7.01 If any provision of this Constitution is judged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such adjunction shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder of the document.

ARTICLE VIII - TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Section 8.01 The Student Senate shall determine and provide for any unexpected problems in transition to this Constitution.

Section 8.02 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 By-laws.

ARTICLE IX - PROVISIONS FOR DISSOLUTION

Section 9.01 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 non-profit organization that will best satisfy the extra-curricular activity needs of the students at DCC.

ARTICLE X - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 10.01 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 10.02 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.

ARTICLE XI - ELASTIC CLAUSE

Section 11.01 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 members, decide whether a proposal or motion may be enacted.

GLOSSARY

Ad-Hoc Committee - An ad hoc committee would be a temporary committee set up to solve a specific problem or work towards a specific goal.

Arbiter - a person empowered to decide matters at issue; judge; umpire.

By-law - A local or subordinate law; a private law or regulation made by a corporation for its own government.

Dissolution - the breaking up of an assembly or organization; dismissal; dispersal.

Impeach - to accuse (a public official) before an appropriate tribunal of misconduct in office.

Quorum - the number of members of a group or organization required to be present to transact business legally, usually a majority.

Referendum - the principle or practice of referring measures proposed or passed by a legislative body to the vote of the electorate for approval or rejection.

Separability - capable of being separated, parted, or dissociated.