

Marywood University

Undergraduate Student Government Association Constitution

Ratified: March 7, 2023

Joint Statement of Rights and Freedoms

Academic institutions exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students, and the general well-being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. As members of the academic community, students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth.

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities in the classroom, on the campus and in the larger community. Students should exercise their freedom with responsibility.

The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community. Each college and university has a duty to develop policies and procedures, which provide and safeguard this freedom. Such policies and procedures should be developed at each institution within the framework of general standards and with the broadest possible participation of the members of the academic community.

Agreeing with this statement by the Joint Commission on the Rights and Freedoms of Students, Marywood University sets forth the procedures, rights, responsibilities, and guidelines outlined in this handbook as indispensable for achieving the goals desired: freedom to teach, to learn, and to search for truth.

From "Student Rights and Freedoms" NASPA, Washington, D.C., November 1992

Student Government Association (SGA) Mission

The Undergraduate Student Government Association of Marywood University serves not only as the voice of the undergraduate students, but also the link between faculty and staff. Adhering to the core values of Marywood, these student leaders will do everything in their power to exercise their leadership skills to represent the student body.

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section I.

- Name
 - The organization shall be named the Undergraduate Student Government Association of Marywood University, which shall be referred to as the SGA throughout the remaining document.

Section II.

- Purpose
 - To serve as the voice of the undergraduate student body;
 - To advocate and pursue changes in Marywood;
 - University policy that enrich or enhance the quality of student life;

- To uphold the SGA Constitution and follow the procedures set forth within the Constitution and by-laws in all matters pertaining to the SGA;
- And as outlined by the student handbook and calendar.

Article II. Structure

Section I. General Assembly

- **Purpose**
 - To provide a forum where undergraduate students may observe the functioning of the SGA and voice their concerns and/or suggestions to all SGA officers;
 - To hold the final vote on all issues originating from committees;
 - To consider new ideas or issues established by fellow undergraduate students and direct them to the appropriate Representative member for further investigation;
 - To review progress of all committee meetings as submitted each meeting by their respective committee chairs and secretaries;
 - And to allow non-elected students to participate in the SGA.
- **Regulations**
 - Each meeting shall be advertised to the University community at least one week before its scheduled time. Advertisements must clearly state the date, time, and location of the meeting as well as convey that the meeting is open to all undergraduate students.
 - Each meeting must be open to all undergraduate students and be held in a location that can comfortably accommodate the expected meeting turnout.
 - Meetings are to be held no less than once every two weeks unless cancelled due to extenuating weather conditions or some other emergency situation. Any meeting cancellation shall be relayed to all SGA members and posted at the advertised location of the meeting.
 - Members shall include the Executive Cabinet, Representatives, and General Members. All members shall obtain voting powers during their term.
- **Procedures**
 - The Secretary shall record meeting minutes at every General Assembly meeting.
 - Each meeting shall begin with a call to order, followed by roll call. Each of these procedures must be completed through a motioning process. Members will review minutes from previous meeting prior to attending our next meeting.
 - Each meeting shall proceed according to an agenda prepared by the President. This agenda must be approved by the advisor of the SGA and presented to all those in attendance during the meeting.
 - Each meeting shall include an allotted amount of time for Committee Meetings, during which members and guests may introduce new goals as well as discuss the status of on-going goals until they reach resolution. It shall be during these meetings Representatives collaborate in working towards their committee's goals.
 - Each meeting shall include a Committee Reports section, allowing for the committees to update the General Assembly on the progress made during their Committee Meetings.
 - Each meeting shall include an Open Floor section, during which anyone in attendance may speak.
 - Each meeting shall conclude with the adjournment procedure, which must be completed through a motioning process.
 - An example agenda with all of these procedures can be found the Appendix I of the Undergraduate Student Government Association Constitution.

Section II. Executive Cabinet

- Purpose
 - To oversee the SGA and preside over the General Assembly
- Expectations/Responsibilities
 - The Executive Cabinet and Adviser to meet every two weeks as a cabinet to discuss progress of the SGA and push forward with new ideas;
 - With the exception of the President, each member of the Executive Cabinet shall serve as a Committee Chair;
 - To attend SGA trainings, including fall training;
 - And to attend all General Assembly meetings.
- Positions
 - The members of the Executive Cabinet shall include the President, Vice President, Secretary, Communication's Manager, and Chief Funding Officer. Detailed descriptions of these positions can be found in Appendix III of the Undergraduate Student Government Association Constitution.

Section III. Representatives

- Purpose
 - To serve as the liaison and connector of relations between the SGA and the area of the Marywood faculty or staff;
 - And to serve as researchers in collaboration with the rest of the SGA to accomplish committee goals.
- Expectations/ Responsibilities
 - To facilitate continuous relations between students and departments by establishing and maintaining strong lines of communication with their designated faculty or staff area;
 - To meet at least once a month with their designated departments, relaying any questions and/or concerns from any student to their expertise in a timely manner;
 - Each Representative is required to create an individual goal to accomplish each semester;
 - To attend all SGA trainings;
 - To serve on assigned SGA committees;
 - And to attend all General Assembly meetings;
 - Students may only hold one position within the SGA.
- Positions
 - The Representatives shall include:
 - Resident Representative
 - Commuter Representative
 - Athletics and Intramurals Representative
 - Student Life Representative
 - Serving and Volunteering Representative
 - Campus Safety and Parking Representative
 - Dining Services Representative
 - Multicultural and International Representative
 - Alumni Engagement Representative

- Media and Marketing Representative
- Veterans Affairs Representative
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Representative
- College of Health and Human Services Representative
- College of Professional Studies Representative
- Four “Class of” Representatives

Section IV. Collaboration Commissioner

- Purpose
 - To plan and implement training and collaboration activities for the SGA at large
- Expectations/Responsibilities
 - To plan team builder activities for trainings;
 - To plan three team bonding events per semester;
 - Cannot hold another position within the SGA;
 - Must provide the dates of Committee Collaborations at the beginning of the semester.
- Elections
 - Must be approved by Executive Cabinet to run for position;
 - All other election requirements must be fulfilled.

Section V. Advisor

- Appointment of Advisor
 - The advisor shall be the Director of Student Activities and Leadership Development (SALD).
- Purpose
 - To serve as the direct advisor for the Executive cabinet;
 - And to serve as the overall advisor for to the SGA.
- Responsibilities/Expectations
 - To serve as the administrative link/source of knowledge for any member of the SGA in any matter and seek knowledge for any matter necessary;
 - To assist in providing information and advice on how/where to pursue information relating to issues facing the SGA;
 - To preside over SGA training;
 - The Executive Cabinet and Adviser to meet every two weeks as a cabinet to discuss progress of the SGA and push forward with new ideas;
 - And to meet with each member of the executive cabinet every two weeks in a One-on-One meeting to discuss progress, issues, concerns and ideas related to the students’ position on SGA.
- Powers
 - The advisor does not have voting power, but shall advise the government in any matter.
 - The advisor shall preside over any impeachment hearing and provide an objective standpoint to both sides being debated.

- The advisor does have the right in special circumstances (alleged major violation of student code of conduct of other alleged violations of moral character) to meet with a member of the SGA to discuss such issues. If the circumstances are confirmed, the advisor does have the choice to remove the student from their position.

Article III. Training and Attendance Policy

Section I. Purpose and Description of Training

- To ensure that all elected members receive adequate information on how to perform their duties for the academic year, and knowledge of Roberts Rules of Order.
- To create organization wide goals and timelines for each of these goals to be completed for the academic year.
- During training, each elected member will be assigned to one of four committees. The Vice President, Communication's Manager, Chief Funding Officer, and Secretary will chair each of these committees. (Article VI. Section III). Each committee will work to establish goals and a timeline of competition during training.

Section II. Dates and Time of Training

- Training shall take place within the first month of the academic school year. The date and time of training will not take place while academic courses are in session. All training will take place before or after academic course hours.
- The training will last as long as needed, and could take up to a full day if pertinent information needs to be discussed.
- Additional training dates and times may be created through the academic year by the President as needed.

Section III. Training Attendance Policy

- Attendance on all training dates is mandatory for elected members of SGA. Training will take place on a time and date where academic courses will not take place to ensure all student participation.
- Elected members who are unable to attend training for personal reasons will be assessed two absences. Members will forfeit their allotted one absence per semester (described below).
- Any addition absences by these members through the upcoming academic year will result in removal from their position

Section IV. General Meeting Attendance Policy

- Attendance of all elected members of the SGA is required at every General Assembly meeting. As a student leader, it is understood that academics come first. However, holding an elected position is a responsibility, not a right.
- Each elected member is allowed two absences per academic year. Notice to the Executive Secretary is courteous but not necessary.
- If a member expects to miss a third meeting, notice to the Executive Secretary is required by 12 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The Executive Cabinet reserves the right to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.
- If the third absence is deemed unexcused, the elected member will be removed from their position.
- No penalty shall be given for excused absences.

Section V. General Meeting Lateness Policy

- Elected members will be considered late when their arrival is 15 minutes after the meeting has been called to order.
- Three late arrivals will be considered an absence.
- Lateness will not be counted against the elected member until a full absence has been acquired (3 late arrivals). For example, a person will not be removed from their position if they have been absent twice and late once. They will be removed from their position if they have been absent twice and late three times.

Section VI. Committee Collaboration Absence Policy

- Each elected member is allowed one absence from Committee Collaborations per academic year. Notice to the Executive Secretary and Collaboration Commissioner is courteous but not necessary.
- If a member expects to miss a second Committee Collaboration, notice to the Executive Secretary is required by 12 p.m. on the day of the event. The Executive Cabinet reserves the right to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.
- If the second absence is deemed unexcused, the elected member will be removed from their position.
- Obligation to work is excused for Committee Collaborations.

Article IV. Elections, Appointments, and Terms of Office

Section I. Election Logistics

- Spring I- Executive Cabinet Elections
 - Executive Cabinet Elections are intended to fulfill only Executive Cabinet positions. Candidates running for President and Vice President are to run on one ticket. The remaining Executive positions shall be filled by the incoming President and Vice President in an interview process of candidates with advice from the Advisor and an incumbent President if one exists. Those selected by the President shall be placed into nomination with the incoming group of representatives. A simple majority in support of each nominee will be sufficient for them to be seated.
 - Shall take place at least four weeks prior to the end of the spring semester.
 - Graduating seniors in the Marywood community are not eligible to vote for Executive Cabinet members spring semester of their senior year.
 - Any undergraduate (who shall not be graduating before May of the upcoming academic year) shall be eligible to pursue the role of President, Vice President or the other Executive positions.
 - Interviews for the executive positions shall be conducted in the period between the Presidential Election and the Representative Elections. Potential nominees shall be eligible to run for a representative position.
- Spring II- House of Representative and Senate Elections
 - Representative Elections are intended to fulfill all positions, excluding the positions of the incoming "Class of" Representative. Each candidate is to run individually.
 - Shall take place at least two weeks prior to the end of the spring semester and after Executive Cabinet elections.
 - Graduating seniors in the Marywood community are not eligible to vote for Representative Positions during spring semester of their senior year.
- Fall I – Campus Wide Elections
 - Fall elections are to take place within the first two weeks of the fall semester.
 - The incoming "Class of" Representative position will be filled during this election.

- Fall semester elections will be held to fill any vacant positions that were not previously filled in Spring I and Spring II elections. All first year and returning undergraduate students are eligible to run for any additional vacant positions, as long as General Requirements found in Section IV are met.
- Advertisements
 - Advertisements for elections shall be posted two weeks before the date of the elections and shall include information on how to run, in addition to when, where, and how to vote.
 - Advertisements for individual candidates should be approved by the SALD office. Students may inquire with the SALD Office for appropriate places to hang advertisements.
 - The SGA will reimburse up to a previously established amount for advertisement costs to students running for an elected position.

Section II. Special Elections

- In the event that a position becomes vacant mid-term, a special election shall be held. The special election is to be announced at the first General Assembly meeting following the position becoming open and held during the following meeting. The election is to be advertised to all undergraduate students for the two weeks following the announcement. Special Elections will be open to campus and follow the guidelines and regulations of General Elections.
- Candidates shall each give a speech and voting shall take place immediately following through secret ballot. The tabulations shall be made by the members of the executive cabinet, excluding any members who may be running for a position. The decision shall be made by a simple majority vote.
- In the event of a tie, the President shall cast their deciding vote.

Section III. Coordinator

- The Vice President shall preside over all annual election proceedings including publicity, election procedures, and tallying. The Vice President shall also be the main point of communication for all candidates.

Section IV. General Qualifications

- To be eligible to campaign for a seat on the SGA the following qualifications must be met:
 - To qualify as an Executive Officer, you must have participated as a General Member with voting rights for a minimum of one academic year.
 - Must be a student in good academic and judicial standing (If the student does have violations of either, or, or both, the advisor of the SGA shall make a character call and have the final say as to if the student can run for office);
 - Must have a GPA of at least 2.50;
 - Must be a full-time undergraduate student;
 - And must submit to the Executive Cabinet an application for candidacy at least one week before the elections date.

Section V. Term Limits and Study Abroad

- The term limit for every SGA Officer is one academic year beginning in the Fall Semester after they are elected. Freshmen student terms begin immediately after their election into office. In the case of special elections, terms shall last from the time of election until the conclusion of the academic year.
- All reports required to be giving during General Member Meetings must be relayed and appointed by a current member present at the meetings.
- Travel abroad students are ineligible to be an elected member of SGA.

Section VI. Procedures

- Specific election procedures are to be left open for further progress. Examples include ballot boxes, online voting, etc. However, all methods used for elections shall be available for all undergraduate students, allowing only one vote per student, per electoral process.

Section VII. Tabulation and Results

- The Vice President, with assistance from the Adviser, shall be responsible for the tabulation of votes within twenty-four hours of the polls closing. All candidates shall be informed of the results before they become public and shall be notified via email immediately following the tabulation of the votes.

Article V. Committees

Section I. Existence

- Committees shall be created to assess and act upon the needs of the current Marywood environment. Thus said, committees shall be created at the beginning of each academic year and will complete three goals during each semester. These goals will be used to appease the needs of Marywood students or simply better serve the Marywood community.
- At SGA fall training, the roles and descriptions of committees shall be described to all members. Members from the Executive Cabinet and Representative positions shall be assigned to their committees at this time. (Article III. Section I)

Section II. Purpose

- To bring together the SGA members with similar interests and provide a forum for those members to accomplish goals. By dividing the General Assembly into committees, more goals can be accomplished within different areas of the University.

Section III. Committee Chairs

- Chairs of the committees shall be an Executive Cabinet member that has specific interest in that committee's goals. Their duties shall include guiding the students in the committee and assisting the committee in coordination of responsibilities and providing insight and advice when needed. Key components to success include: delegation, communication, setting goals and assigning tasks in between meetings.

Section IV. Membership

- Representatives shall be assigned to committees by the Executive Board. Members of the Executive Cabinet have the right to move committee members at any time deemed necessary and beneficial to the SGA organization.
- New members are welcome to join committees throughout the year. These new members shall be informed of current progress of goals and being work on those goals.

Section V. Expectations/Responsibilities of Committee Chairs and Members

- It is the expectation and responsibility of Committee Chairs to ensure all committee members have a delegated work load, and all goals are on the required timeline to completion.
- Committee members are to actively participate in committee meetings, trainings, as well as outside assignments. Failure to do so can result in removal from office.

Section VI. Regulations

- The list of the committees shall be stated in Appendix VI of the Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government. Since issues facing the SGA can and do change throughout the years, the purposes and goals of the committees may be altered by the executive cabinet member and the members of their committee during the SGA calendar.
- The committees may also change throughout the year if a special case arises. If this occurs, the President has the right to create a new special committee to work specifically on whatever specific challenge faces the SGA or the Marywood Community. Members of this committee may be Executive Cabinet Members or Representatives who are already members of previous committees.

Section VII. Procedures

- Meetings shall occur at an allotted time slot within the regularly scheduled General Assembly meeting. This time slot shall be announced by the President at each meeting prior to breaking up into committees.
- The secretary of each committee shall be appointed by the Committee Chair, therefore cannot be a member of the Executive Cabinet.
- Each meeting, the secretary of the committee must review the previous meeting's minutes and updates shall be provided on the aforementioned topics.
- Each meeting shall include a workshop consisting of discussion explaining how the information presented can be used to further advance progress of the goal.

Article VI. Vacancies/Removal from Office

Section I. President

- Should the position of the President become vacant mid-term, the Vice President shall succeed. The new President shall remain in office for the remainder of that term.

Section II. Vice President, Secretary, Communications Manager, Chief Funding Officer

- Should the position of Vice President, Secretary, Communications Manager, or Chief Funding Officer become vacant mid-term, the President shall appoint a present member.
- The new appointed member shall remain in office for the remainder of that term.

Article VII. Funding Allocation and Budgets

Section I. Funding & Budgets

- SGA shall have exclusive oversight of their yearly allocated budget from Marywood University. SGA has full authority to allocate these funds to individuals, organizations, and departments as deemed necessary.
- SGA reserves the right to grant or deny any funding request brought forth.

Section II. Oversight

- The Chief Funding Officer shall oversee all funding requests on submitted on behalf of recognized- funded organizations, individuals, and departments.
- Decisions for funding requests are made by the Executive Cabinet during their weekly meetings with the SGA Advisor.

Section III. Timeline for Approval

- All funding requests must be submitted to the Chief Funding Officer a minimum of three weeks prior to when funding is needed.
- After allocations have been approved, an individual from the requesting group must sign a contractual agreement and return to SGA within five business days. Without a return of contract, SGA has the right to rescind the funding offer.

Section IV. Individual Funding Requests

- SGA will consider a limited amount of individual undergraduate conference funding requests.
- SGA will only consider reimbursement of the individual's registration fee for the conference. Undergraduate individuals are eligible to request funds for transportation, hotel, or food, however approval is up to the discretion of the Executive Cabinet.

Section IV. Recognized – Funded Student Organization Requests

- All recognized, funded undergraduate student organizations are eligible for SGA funding while acting in accordance with the following stipulations.
- The organization must re-recognize within the first three weeks of the fall semester
- Two members of the organization must attend all Council of Clubs meetings.
- The organization must complete a service project through Campus Ministry each semester.
- The organization must submit an End of Semester Report at the conclusion of each academic semester. All paperwork must be submitted to the Graduate Assistant of Student Activities prior to submission to SGA to insure the organization is in compliance before funding requests will be considered.

Article VIII. Amendments

Section I. Definition

- An amendment shall be defined as any change to the physical wording and content of the Constitution of the SGA. An amendment could be an addition to the constitution, the removal of part of the constitution, or both.

Section II. Proposal of Amendment Procedure

- An amendment can be created by any elected member of the SGA.
- The proposal must be typed and properly detailed. The author must also provide a written explanation to what would be changing within the constitution if this amendment passes.
- The amendment must have five signatures in order to be formally proposed to the general assembly for voting.
- The author, 2 members of the House of Representatives.
- Once official, the amendment must be sent to the President to review and to be placed on the agenda for the next SGA Meeting. The President shall send out the proposed amendment via e-mail to the SGA prior to the next SGA meeting.

Section III. Presentation of Amendment Procedure

- This must only take place at an SGA meeting where there are at least 60% of the voting members present.
- The author of the amendment shall present the amendment to the SGA, reading it thoroughly and providing any background information related to the creation of the amendment.
- The author shall field questions from the General Assembly about the amendment; this process shall not to exceed ten minutes. After ten minutes have passed, the President shall then begin the ratification process.

Section IV. Ratification Process

- The President shall preside over the Ratification Process.
- This process is set in place to make any changes (if felt necessary by the SGA) to the amendment as well as to pass the amendment.
 - Changes to Amendments
 - Any elected member of SGA can propose a change, or amendment to the amendment. This must be done verbally and must be acknowledged by the President. Once acknowledged, the author of the change has the opportunity to explain the change. After explanation, the author shall field questions for no more than five minutes.
 - Once the time has elapsed, there shall be an immediate vote on the change to the amendment. The President shall conduct the vote, done by show of hands. A simply majority shall pass the change to the amendment.
 - There shall be a limit of only three possible changes of an amendment.
 - Ratification of Amendment
 - After the change to the amendment process is completed, the amendment shall then proceed through the ratification phase. The President shall preside over this process.
 - The amendment shall be typed in its entirety and read to the entire general assembly.
 - One read, roll-call of all voting members shall be taken, and each member shall vote by proclaiming “yes”, “no” or “abstain”. To pass the amendment, at least 60% of the present voting members must vote “yes” to the amendment. If the amendment passes, it shall immediately alter the current SGA constitution. If the amendment fails vote, it must go through the amendment procedure again.

Last Updated: March 2023