

The Constitution of the Youngstown State University Student Government
Association

As amended 7 April 2005

As amended 25 Sept. 2006

As amended 26 April 2010

As amended 10 September 2012

As amended 30 September 2013

As amended 31 August 2015

As amended 27 February 2017 (Rayann Atway, Parliamentarian; Gabriella
Gessler, President)

IN ORDER to better represent the students of Youngstown State University, to unite more closely the interests of undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff, to obtain the best leadership for guidance to higher goals and ideals, and to provide for the most efficient and successful management of all student activities, we, the students of Youngstown State University, do ordain and establish this Constitution.

Article I: Name and Purpose

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association of Youngstown State University. The Student Government Association is defined as a governing body set forth in this Constitution, all administrative agencies established by legislation, and student representatives.

Section 2: Purpose

The purpose of this organization shall be to further the best interests of the Students of Youngstown State University through student representations in matters affecting student life and affairs, through promotion and supervision of student organizations and activities, and through promotion of improved community conditions.

Article II: Authority and Powers

The Student Government Association exercises concurrently with the university faculty and administration the following power delegated to it by the Board of Trustees, the President and the faculty of Youngstown State University:

Student Government Association shall have the power to conduct all elections for Student Government Association and any other election of importance to the entire student body.

The Student Government Association shall have the power to recommend all student representatives to administrative boards and advisory committees appoint students to Academic Senate committees and to recommend removal of those students for just cause, related to duties of appointment.

The Student Government Association shall have the power to recommend an annual budget to the University Budget Committee and to administer the funds allocated to the Student Government Association and all programs funded to it.

The Student Government Association shall have the power to make any recommendations in writing to any part of the university community on behalf of the legitimate interest of the student body.

The Student Government Association shall have the power to maintain access to information pertinent to university operations and to higher education in the State of Ohio, other than personal files and student records.

The Student Government Association shall have the power to recommend the allocation of funds for the operation of the Student Government Association and its projects, as well as recommend allocation of funds to registered student organizations for their programs and projects and regulate the use of funds upon the approval of the University Budget Committee.

The Student Government Association shall have the power to pass legislation that shall be necessary and proper for the execution of the foregoing powers and all other powers based in this Constitution of the Student Government Association of Youngstown State University, or any committee or officer thereof.

The Student Government Association is bound to protect legitimate rights and interests of the student body.

The Student Government Association shall be the sole, legitimate, organized representation of the student body at Youngstown State University.

Article III: Structure

The Student Government Association of Youngstown State University shall consist of the Executive Committee, the Legislative Assembly, and Student Academic Senators.

Article IV: President and Executive Vice President

Section 1: Term of Office

The President and Executive Vice President of Student Government shall be the officers bested with power to govern all sections of the Student Government Association. There shall be one President and one Executive Vice President, either undergraduate or graduate student, elected by the student body on a single ballot as running mates. They shall take office the first Monday following the spring commencement exercises at 12:01 AM, and shall serve for a term of one year after election or until resignation, or impeachment.

Section 2: Qualifications

1. The qualifications for the offices of President and Executive Vice President of the Student Government Association shall be:

A. At least 49 hours completed, with at least 24 hours completed at this institution.

B. Have and maintain good academic standing.

C. Be full-time students, except for their last semester at Youngstown State University.

2. No student officially approved by the Student Publications Committee to serve on any campus publications shall be eligible to hold either of the above-mentioned offices.

3. No person shall be elected to the office of President more than twice.

4. The President or Executive Vice President shall not serve as an elected or appointed executive officer (included, but not limited to President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) of any other registered student organization.

Section 3: President

The President of the Student Government Association shall have the following duties:

- To act as the official representative of the Student Government Association and the student body.
- To serve as the official student representative on appropriate university committees, or appoint an individual to serve in his/her absence.
- To preside over all meetings of the Legislative Assembly.
- To serve as an at-large representative in the Legislative Assembly; as such, he or she will have the power to make recommendations to the Assembly and propose legislation. The president must forfeit the rights and privileges afforded to Representatives that conflict with his or her duty as the presiding officer of a meeting.
- To approve or veto any legislation moved by the Legislative Assembly.
- To aid the Legislative Assembly in fulfilling student-oriented objectives.
- To execute and enforce all legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly.
- To execute actions necessary for efficiently running the Student Government Association office.
- To submit recommendations for Executive Committee Members to the Legislative Assembly for its approval when article VIII of this Constitution requires such approval.
- To appoint special assistants to execute a specified duty for the duration of the academic year or until duties are completed.
- To coordinate the activities of the Executive Committee and ensure the fulfillment of their charged duties.
- To assume responsibility for all authority which s/he has delegated.
- To serve as an ex-officio member of the Academic Senate.
- To aid in the appointment of the Chair(s) of the Homecoming Committee

Section 4: Executive Vice President

The Executive Vice president of Student Government shall have the following duties:

- To perform any duties delegated to him/her by the President.
- To preside over all meetings of the Legislative Assembly in the absence of the President.
- To serve as an at-large representative in the Legislative Assembly; as such, he or she will have the power to make recommendations to the Assembly, propose legislation, and vote, except when limited by provisions in the Constitution and the By-laws.
- To serve as an ex-officio member of the Academic Senate and coordinate the Academic Senators, appointing Academic Senators to the Academic Senate Appointed Chartered Committees with the approval of the Executive Committee.
- To assume the functions and duties of the President should the latter be declared temporarily incapacitated by the Executive Committee and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

- To act as the liaison between SGA and the Academic Affairs division of YSU.

Section 5: Succession and Vacancies

1. In the event of the death, removal or resignation of the President, the Executive Vice President shall become President.
2. In the event of the death, removal or resignation of the Executive Vice President, the President may appoint an Executive Vice President contingent upon approval by a two-thirds majority of the Legislative Assembly.
3. In the event the offices of both the President and Executive Vice President are vacant concurrently, the Vice President for Student Life shall become the President and shall select from the Legislative Assembly the Executive Vice President.
4. If the positions of President, Executive Vice President, and Vice President for Student Life all become vacant, the Vice President for Assessment and Enrichment shall fill the position of President and shall select from the Legislative Assembly an Executive Vice President.
5. If the positions of President, Executive Vice President, Vice President for Student Life and Vice President for Assessment and Enrichment all become vacant, the Legislative Assembly shall elect a President from its membership. The Parliamentarian shall chair this meeting. The newly elected President shall select an Executive Vice President from the Legislative Assembly.

Article V: Academic Senators

Section 1: Membership

1. The total number of Academic Senators shall be fifteen (15).
2. By virtue of their elected posts, the President, Executive Vice President and Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee shall have automatic Senate membership.
3. One student shall be elected from each college, and the remaining student representatives shall be elected at-large from among the student body.

4. All student senators shall be elected in accordance with the rules, regulations, and qualifications established by the Student Government Association.

Section 2: Organization

1. The Executive Vice President shall have a meeting with the Academic Senators prior to the first Academic Senate meeting of the academic year for the purpose of election from them one Academic Senator to serve as a member of the Academic Senate Executive Committee.

2. The Executive Vice President shall chair this meeting and distribute the minutes of this meeting to the Legislative Assembly Representatives and the Academic Senators.

3. The Executive Vice President shall also appoint students to the Academic Senate Appointed Chartered Committees with the approval of the Executive Committee.

4. To ensure that student members of the Academic Senate Appointed Chartered Committees are notified of upcoming meetings, it shall be the responsibility of the Executive Vice President to provide the most recent and convenient addresses of each student member to the chair of Academic Senate.

Section 3: Duties

1. Student Academic Senators must abide by the attendance policy within the By-Laws.

2. Members not following these requirements shall be subject to dismissal by the impeachment proceedings outlined in Article X of this Constitution.

Article VI: Legislative Assembly

Section 1: Authority

1. The Legislative Assembly shall be the legislative branch of the Student Government Association of Youngstown State University.

2. The Legislative Assembly shall:

A. Effectuate all Articles of this Constitution and its By-laws.

B. Aid and assist students and registered student organizations.

C. Receive student complaints, investigate student problems, and work toward their resolution.

D. Coordinate on-going research and information gathering in determining student interests.

E. Review and evaluate recommendations or proposals from members.

F. Inform the student body of proposals initiated and actions taken by the Legislative Assembly.

G. Establish By-laws, regulations, and policies to govern the internal functions of the Student

Government Association.

H. Approve or Dismiss recommendations, decisions, and actions of all standing and ad hoc committees.

I. Overturn a presidential veto with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

Section 2: Membership

1. The membership of the Legislative Assembly shall be derived from the undergraduate and graduate students of Youngstown State University who are in good standing, as defined by university policy.

2. The Student Government Association shall conduct elections during the spring semester for the student body to elect representatives for a term of one academic year.

3. No Legislative Assembly member shall serve in any Student Government position outside of the legislative branch, except for those representatives serving on the Executive Committee

4. The membership of the Legislative Assembly shall also include two (2) ex-officio seats for each of the student members of the Board of Trustees. They shall be granted the same rights and privileges of members of the body, including engagement in discussion and participation in committees, but will not be permitted to vote and will not be penalized for delinquent attendance.

Section 3: Distribution of Seats

1. A constituency shall be defined as three hundred seventy five (375) registered students.
2. The number of representatives on the Legislative Assembly shall be determined by dividing the fall enrollment from the previous year by the constituency size, rounding to the nearest whole number.
3. The Legislative Assembly shall obtain a report from the Office of the Registrar documenting the total enrollment of Youngstown State University and the enrollment within each of the colleges.
4. Three (3) seats shall always be filled by freshmen students by the fourth week and no sooner than the second week of the fall semester. The Executive Committee shall determine these seats through appointment.
5. Each college shall have a minimum of three (3) representatives, regardless of constituency size. This will take effect in the fall of 2013.
6. After determining the total number of available seats on the Legislative Assembly, seats shall be allocated first to freshmen representation. All remaining seats shall be divided among the colleges of Youngstown State University in proportion to the percentage of the total student population each college contains.

Section 4: Term and Succession

1. Representatives must be a candidate for a major in the college from which they are elected and carry at least six (6) semester hours.
2. Freshman representatives must fulfill all the requirements of a representative except for the qualification based on a student's major and college. Only first-year students may serve as a freshman representative.
3. The international representative on the Legislative Assembly must be studying at Youngstown State University for at least one (1) year. The representative shall serve as a liaison between the international students and the Legislative Assembly. They shall be granted the same rights and privileges of members of the body, including engagement in discussion and participation in committees, but will not be permitted to vote and will not be penalized for delinquent attendance. The Executive Committee shall solicit applications for the position of international representative no later than the fourth week of the Fall Semester

and recommend to the Legislative Assembly students to be appointed to those positions no earlier than the second week of the Fall Semester but no later than the sixth week of the Fall Semester.

4. Representatives shall take office at 12:01 AM on the Monday of the last general meeting before spring commencement exercises, which shall be held during the last week of classes before finals. The outgoing Executive Board shall also attend this meeting.

5. The eligible candidate having the next highest number of votes in the most recent election shall automatically fill any representative seat that becomes vacant due to death, removal, or resignation for the remainder of the unexpired term. The Chief of Staff or his/her designee shall notify the eligible candidate within one (1) week of the seat becoming vacant.

6. If there are not any other eligible vacancies, the Executive Committee shall advertise the vacant seat for one (1) week. The Executive Committee shall interview the interested students and appoint an eligible candidate to the vacant seat within two (2) weeks of the seat becoming vacated.

Section 5: Duties and Privileges of Representatives

1. Representatives shall have the following duties:

A. Attend a weekly meeting of the Legislative Assembly to be held at a specific location and time announced.

B. Make themselves available to students at publicized times.

C. Serve on at least one committee.

D. Attend all committee meetings.

E. Abide by the attendance policies outlined in the By-laws.

F. Abide by the Constitution and its By-laws.

2. Failure to uphold the duties of the office described in the Constitution and the By-laws is sufficient grounds for removal from office, as outlined in Article X, Section 2 of the Constitution, or in the case of absences, in the By-laws.

3. Each representative shall have the privilege of debating and voting during meetings of the Legislative Assembly. Members may also initiate legislation to be placed before the body.

Section 6: Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Legislative Assembly shall be held once a week at a regular time and place as determined by the By-laws.

2. The President or Executive Committee may call special meetings of the Legislative Assembly at any time. Upon the written request to the President by ten (10) representatives or one hundred (100) members of the student body, the President shall call a special meeting of the legislative Assembly. Notification of representatives of the time and place of a special meeting must occur at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the time of the meeting.

3. All meetings shall be open to the public and shall be governed by the rules contained within the By-laws and, in cases not specifically provided for by the By-laws, Roberts' Rules of Order, latest revised edition.

4. A quorum consists of two-thirds, or the next highest whole number, of representatives at that point in time. Business shall be carried on only when a quorum of members and a faculty or administrative advisor is present.

5. The President shall chair all meetings of the Legislative Assembly. In the absence of the President, the Executive Vice President shall assume the chair. Should the Executive Vice President be unable to assume the chair, the Vice President for Student Life shall assume the chair.

6. Each representative shall have one vote.

7. The President, as the chairperson of meetings, shall only vote in order to break a tie.

8. All official actions that take place with all the meetings of the Legislative Assembly shall be recorded in the minutes. The correction and approval of the minutes shall be the responsibility of the Chief of Staff or his/her designee.

9. The business of all meetings of the Legislative Assembly shall be conducted in the order specified in the By-laws, unless a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present suspend the rules and change this order.

10. The Legislative Assembly shall establish an attendance policy by which all members must abide and failure to do so will result in immediate removal from office.

Section 7: Committees

1. The Legislative Assembly shall have committees to fulfill its constitutional duties.

2. The President shall accept nominations from the Representatives for each individual position. Those individuals who have accepted the nomination shall give a short speech to the body in favor of their candidacy.

3. Following all of the candidates' speeches, the Executive Vice President shall distribute ballots to all of the Representatives-Elect, upon which they will vote for one individual. Any candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be elected to that position. Should no candidate receive a majority of the votes cast, the candidate(s) receiving the least votes during the election shall be removed from the ballot, and the Representatives shall vote from the remaining candidates. This process shall continue until a candidate has received a majority of the votes cast.

4. Should only two candidates remain and neither receives a majority of votes cast on the first ballot, the Representatives shall recast their vote for either of the candidates. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast on that ballot, then the President shall break the tie.

5. No Executive Committee member shall serve as a standing committee chair in the Legislative Assembly, except under special circumstances determined by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Legislative Assembly.

6. Ad Hoc committees may be created by the President or the Legislative Assembly.

Article VII: Executive Committee

Section 1: Membership

1. The membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Executive Vice President, Vice President for Financial Affairs, Vice President for Student Life, Vice President for Assessment and Enrichment, Chief of Staff, Secretary of Technology, Parliamentarian, and all advisors to the Student Government Association.

2. The faculty and administrative advisors shall not vote in Executive Committee meetings.

3. The Vice President for Student Life, Vice President for Assessment and Enrichment, and Parliamentarian shall be elected by the Representatives-Elect after the last regularly scheduled meeting of the Legislative Assembly during the spring semester. The procedure outlined in Article VI, Section 7.2 of the Constitution shall be followed for this election.

4. The President shall appoint the Vice President for Financial Affairs.

5. All officers receiving an hourly wage/stipend must carry no less than twelve (12) semester hours for undergraduate members, and no less than nine (9) semester hours for graduate members each semester receiving the wage/stipend, except for his/her last semester.

6. The Vice President for Financial Affairs, Vice President for Student Life, Vice President for Assessment and Enrichment, and Parliamentarian must have completed forty-seven (47) hours of credit, twenty four (24) of which shall be carried at Youngstown State University.

7. No person shall serve as more than one position on the Executive Committee.

Section 2: Duties

1. The Vice President for Financial Affairs shall be the treasurer for The Student Government Association; serve as the executive officer for his or her assigned committee; assist the President in preparing an annual budget; supervise all allocations made by the Student Government Association; assist the Student Organizations and Student Activities Committees with their duties; and advise the Legislative Assembly regarding the Student Government Association's finances on a regular basis.

2. The Vice President for Student Life shall be the liaison between the Student Government Association and the Student Affairs division of Youngstown State University. The Vice President for Student Life shall head and carry out requests made by his or her assigned committee and be responsible for taking action on any issue related to the charge of that committee. The Vice President for Student Life shall also serve as the liaison between the Student Government Association and other programming bodies on campus, including, but not limited to, Greek Life, Athletics, Residence Life, and any student programming boards.

3. The Vice President for Assessment and Enrichment shall be the executive officer of his or her assigned committee and shall be responsible for taking action

of any issue related to the concern of the student body and the University. When appropriate, the Vice President for Assessment and Enrichment shall also assist students who have complaints against the university regarding services provided to the student body and may work with other members of the Student Government Association, or with the Legislative Assembly, to address these concerns.

4. The Chief of Staff shall assist the President in organizing the internal structure of the Student Government Association and be responsible for the internal harmony necessary for the execution of Student Government Association initiatives. The Chief of staff shall also serve as the liaison between the Student Government Association and students who serve on university committees, including the Student Trustees.

5. The Secretary of Technology shall maintain and develop the Student Government Association website; maintain the network and computer hardware within the Student Government Association office as well as advise the President on new technological purchases; advise the Legislative Assembly, when needed, on technical issues; and act as a liaison between the Student Government Association and the appropriate university offices.

6. The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for ensuring adherence to parliamentary procedure during meetings of the Legislative Assembly, assisting Representatives and Committees with drafting legislation, and maintaining updated versions of Student Government Association charter documents and legislation. The Parliamentarian shall also be responsible for ensuring the body's adherence to its most current charter documents.

Section 3: Removal of Executive Committee Members

The Legislative Assembly reserves the right to remove its Representatives from their positions on the Executive Committee in a manner outlined in the By-laws.

Article VIII: Finances

Section 1: Budget Authority for Appropriations for Student Organizations

The Legislative Assembly shall have the authority to pass appropriation bills on those funds designated for the funding of student organizations in a manner described by statute.

Section 2: Budget Preparation and Approval

1. The President, with the assistance of the Vice President for Financial Affairs, must prepare a budget for the fall and spring semesters during the summer months.
2. The budget shall be distributed to the Legislative Assembly no later than the first day of classes of the fall semester.
3. The budget shall be included in the new business of the Legislative Assembly during the first meeting of the fall semester.
4. A majority vote is required for the approval of the budget.

Section 3: Budget Authority for Office Funds

1. The President shall be responsible for decisions concerning those funds designated to the office of the Student Government Association. S/he shall likewise be held accountable for all transactions affecting those funds.
2. The President reserves the right to share authority over office funds with any member(s) of the Student Government Association in a manner seen fit by the President. A decision to include any other member shall be placed in written form and distributed to all members of the Legislative Assembly. This written article shall include names and privileges granted to all included individuals and are not subject to approval by the Legislative Assembly.

Section 4: Budget Authority for Stipends

1. The President shall determine the value of wages/stipends granted to members of the Student Government Association.
2. If the value of a wage/stipend varies from the value determined by the previous President, the change must be presented in the prepared budget described in Article IX, Section 2.
3. The President must submit the finalized wage/stipend values to the Executive Director of Student Activities and the Office of the Budget, and these values shall take effect upon the next confirmation of an affected position and in accordance with University policy.

Section 5: Budget Reports

1. The Vice President for Financial Affairs shall report to the Legislative Assembly on a regular basis.

2. Reports shall include transactions that affect all funds designated to the Student Government Association, excluding the individual stipends and wages earned by students working for the Student Government Association.

Article IX: Advisors

There shall be at least one faculty and at least one administrative advisor to the Student Government Association who shall be approved annually by the Student Government Association at the beginning of the academic year. The process for selecting advisors shall be outlined in the By-laws.

Article X: Impeachment and Removal from Office

The Student Government Association reserves unto itself the right to impeach any of its members for any behavior which it deems as irresponsible and neglectful conduct in the member's responsibility to carry out his/her constitutional duties.

Section 1: Representatives and Academic Senators

1. A bill of impeachment must contain formal charges against the member and must be passed by a majority vote of those present to institute such proceedings.

2. The person so charged shall be notified in writing of the charges against him/her, the date of the hearing, and his/her right to present witnesses in his/her behalf.

3. The person(s) sponsoring the bill of impeachment shall then be charged with the duties of presenting the case. The case shall be heard by the total membership of the Legislative Assembly in open session. Then the Legislative Assembly shall deliberate in closed session. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire membership shall be required to hold responsible.

4. Upon being held responsible by the Legislative Assembly, the respondent shall be immediately removed from office. The decision of the Legislative Assembly shall be final.

Section 2: President, Vice President, and Executive Appointments

1. The impeachment of the President, Executive Vice President, or any Executive Appointment requiring Legislative Assembly ratification shall follow the procedure outlined in Article X, Section 1, of the Constitution.
2. Should the President face impeachment, the commissioner of the Elections Board shall chair the impeachment hearing.

Article XI: Referendum

Section 1: Definition

A referendum is the casting of votes by the students of Youngstown State University for effecting change of existing policy initiated by students.

Section 2: Process

1. Any petition signed by ten-percent (10%) of the student body of Youngstown State University may be presented to the President for an initiative by referendum
2. The referendum may be held at a special election or at the next regularly scheduled election.

Article XII: Amendments

Section 1: Process

1. An amendment to this Constitution may be proposed to the student body by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Legislative Assembly or by ten-percent (10%) of the student body of Youngstown State University upon petition to the President.
2. The student body shall vote on the proposed amendment at a special election or at the next regularly scheduled election.
3. If a simple majority of those students voting approve the amendment, it shall become a part of the Constitution.

Section 2: Process for making technical, editorial, or conforming changes

1. The Parliamentarian may make article and section designation, punctuation, cross reference, spelling, grammatical, and typographical changes to Constitution, By-laws, and Standing Rules.

2. All technical, editorial, and conforming changes made must be approved by a majority of the Executive Committee and must be reported to the Legislative Assembly and Academic Senators.

Article XIII: By-laws

Section 1: Authority

The Legislative Assembly shall adopt and amend its own By-laws as necessary for efficient and effective operation.

Section 2: Amending the By-laws

New and amended By-laws must receive a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Legislative Assembly.

Article XIV: Non-Discriminatory Clause

The Student Government Association of Youngstown State University shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or handicap in recruitment, admission to membership, or access thereof, or treatment in its programs and activities.

Article XV: Ratification

Section 1: Scope of this Constitution

This Constitution shall supersede any and all previous Constitutions of the Student Government Association of Youngstown State University.

Section 2: Process

This Constitution shall enter into effect the academic semester (summer included) following ratification by a majority of the student body of Youngstown State University.

Section 3: Transitory Period

The Legislative Assembly shall determine the specific nature for the implementation of this Constitution, except that the distribution of seats outlined in Article VII, Section 3, shall not take effect until the next regular election following the ratification of this Constitution.

