

Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Student Government Association
Constitution

Preamble

The Student Government Association (SGA) at the Alexandria campus of Northern Virginia Community College must at all times represent the rights, welfare, and interests of the student body. The SGA advocates on behalf of the student body and serves as the overall liaison between the college administration, faculty, and staff. SGA promotes an enhanced quality of student life through supporting student organizations, relaying student concerns, making recommendations and assisting in the implementation of solutions. We, the students of Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Alexandria, do ordain and establish this Constitution.

Article I- Name

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association and may be referred to as the SGA.

Article II - Membership

Any registered and enrolled student of NOVA who has paid the student activity fee shall be a member of the Student Government Association entitled to vote in all elections, attend any meeting of the Student Senate, and any committees established there under once becoming a member.

Article III - Oath of Office

The Oath of Office shall be administered by the SGA President or any official so authorized. The Oath shall be as follows:

“I (*insert name*) do hereby promise to fulfill faithfully my responsibilities to the student body vested in this office as (*state office*) according to the constitution of the NOVA Alexandria SGA.

Article IV - Branches of Organization

The SGA shall consist of two branches, Executive and Legislative Branch.

Article V- Executive Board

Section 1. The officers of the Executive Board shall be President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Student Government Association shall be elected by receiving the majority of votes of the student body at the annual elections held each Spring.

- Section 3. Candidates for Executive Board Offices shall be eligible provided they are currently enrolled at the Alexandria Campus, have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours, have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.25 and are in good academic and financial standing at the time of application.
- Section 4. Executive Board members must maintain a 2.25 grade point average per semester at NOVA. Failure to maintain this average for one semester is grounds for impeachment.
- Section 5. The term of Executive Board members shall be one academic year including one fall and one spring from the date of their installment. Any appointed Executive Board member shall finish the term of the Executive Board member they are replacing.
- Section 6. If for any reason a position on the Executive Board is vacant, the President will appoint an individual who will be vetted by the SGA Advisor and if they meet all the requirements outlined in this constitution, they may fill the vacant position with a two-third majority vote of approval from the Student Senate.
- Section 7. In the event that the elected President's positions becomes vacant through resignation, removal, or any other inability to serve his/her full term, the Vice President shall serve as the constitutional successor for the remainder of that term.
- Section 8. If an Executive Board member, accumulates three (3) excused or unexcused absences combined during one full semester, this will constitute a motion for impeachment by the Student Senate.
- Section 9. The Executive Board, by majority vote, may veto acts or resolutions of the Student Senate if such veto is exercised by midnight of the seventh calendar day following the date of the Student Senate action. Legislation or resolutions enacted by the Student Senate and not vetoed by the Executive Board shall be signed by the President and the Secretary.

Article IV- Student Senate (Legislative)

- Section 1. The purpose of the Student Senate shall be to protect the rights, welfare, and interests of all students at the Alexandria campus.
- Section 2. The Student Senate shall consist of 17 senators appointed by the Executive Board and vetted by the SGA Advisor and if they meet all the requirements outlined in this constitution, they may fill the vacant position with a two-third majority vote of approval from the Student Senate.
- Section 3. Candidates for the Student Senate shall be eligible provided they are currently enrolled at the Alexandria Campus, have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours, have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.25 and are in good academic and financial standing at the time of application.
- Section 4. Any new student wishing to apply for the Student Senate will be given the opportunity if all qualifications are met with the exception of the grade point

average. A new student constitutes (1) any first-time NOVA student, (2) any returning student who has not registered for any classes at NOVA in five years

Section 5. The Student Senate aims to represent the various demographics that make up the Alexandria campus. For this purpose, the Senators shall represent portions of the campus with positions that include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Adult Student Senator (2)
- b. At-large Student Senator (2)
- c. International Student Senator (2)
- d. Military Student Senator (2)
- e. Senior Citizen Senator (2)
- f. Student w/ Disabilities Services Student Senator (2)
- g. Traditional Student Senator (3)
- h. Transfer Student Senator (2)

Section 6. Student Senators must maintain a 2.25 grade point average per semester at NOVA. Failure to maintain this average for one semester is grounds for removal.

Section 7. The term of Student Senate members shall be one academic year including one fall and one spring from the date of their installment. Any appointed Student Senator shall finish the term of the Student Senate member they are replacing.

Section 8. Each senator shall have one vote. There shall be no voting by proxy.

Section 9. A quorum consists of 2/3 majority vote of the Student Senate.

Section 10. Student Senators:

- a. May hold only one appointed office in the SGA
- b. Are to complete any task delegated to them by the Executive Board or Student Senate.
- c. Shall volunteer, attend, and participate in at least 70% of SGA events per year.

Section 11. The Student Senate shall meet as needed, unless otherwise determined by the SGA Advisor, at a time and place determined by the majority vote of the Executive Board. The first meeting shall be decided by the majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 12. Any member of the SGA may present a petition or proposed resolution to the Student Senate at the regularly scheduled meeting. The petition or resolution must be in writing, any vote on the propose resolution or petition must be delayed for at least one meeting as deemed necessary. Any member may address the Student Senate for a period of 3 minutes on any issue of concern relating to college business.

Section 13. If, in the opinion of the SGA President and/or the SGA Advisor, an emergency arises which requires immediate action by the Student Senate, the Executive Board with the consent of the SGA Advisor or the SGA Advisor with the consent of the Dean of Students may take necessary action.

Section 14. The Student Senate shall have the authority to:

- a. Render a decision on the budget spending plan submitted by the Treasurer
- b. Override an Executive Board veto by two-thirds vote of the Student Senate at the next regularly scheduled Student Senate meeting after the Executive Board veto occurred.

Section 15. The guiding rules of order for this body shall be Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition), unless such rules shall be in conflict with this Constitution and bylaws, in which event the Constitution and bylaws shall take precedence.

Section 16. If a Senator accumulates three (3) excused or unexcused absences combined during one full semester; this will constitute a motion for impeachment from the Student Senate.

Article VII- Committees

Section 1. There will be two types of committees: Standing Committees and Ad-Hoc Committees. Membership is open to NOVA students provided they are currently enrolled at the Alexandria Campus, have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours, have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 and are in good academic and financial standing at the time of appointment.

Section 2. The Committees shall be headed by a committee chair. The Chair is to be appointed by the President of the Senate if not already outlined in his/her position duties. The duties and responsibilities of the Committee Chair shall be as follows:

- a. Work with the SGA President and Advisor to build membership of his/her committee from the Student Senate and the membership.
- b. Act as the public spokesperson for the committee when appropriate.
- c. Set the agenda for his/her committee
- d. Chair the meeting of his/her committee
- e. Vote only in the case of a tie.
- f. Make arrangements for meeting and notifies members of dates, times and place of meeting
- g. Delegate responsibilities to committee members
- h. Involve all members in the decision making process
- i. Report work of the committee to the Student Senate
- j. Keep a written file of work of committee (i.e. minutes and agenda of each meetings)
- k. Make sure the minutes are kept and recorded to insure the work is getting done.

Section 3. Any new student wishing to serve on an SGA committee will be given the opportunity if all qualifications are met with the exception of the grade point average. A new student constitutes (1) any first-time NOVA student, (2) any returning student who has not registered for any classes at NOVA in five years

Section 4. All Standing Committees are required by this Constitution and must be fulfilled by SGA at all time. Standing Committees shall include the Constitution Committee,

Elections Committee, Finance Committee, Publicity Committee and Planning Committee.

Constitution Committee

- a. Shall review this Constitution every year and make recommendations to the Senate for appropriate amendments, if needed.
- b. Shall study and issues of constitutionality directed to it by the Student Senate and the Executive Board.

Elections Committee

- a. Responsible for oversight and execution of all Student Government Association election in concert with the organization's Advisor(s).
- b. Provide forms by which a member may file for election to the SGA.
- c. Set the time, date, and place of the election.
- d. Ensure and certify the eligibility of the candidates with the SGA Advisor.
- e. Supervise all elections, ensure firmness and make known the results by informing

Finance Committee

- a. Work closely with the SGA Treasurer and the SGA Advisor to assist in preparing a proposed annual spending budget for submission to the Student Senate.
- b. Chaired by the Treasurer.

Planning Committee shall plan and coordinate all educational programs of the SGA of NOVA Alexandria including

- a. SGA Meet & Greet
- b. Welcome Week (in coordination with the Student Life Office)
- c. NOVA Day (in coordination with Student Life Campus's Activity Board)
- d. Spring Fling (in coordination with Student Life's Campus Activity Board)

Publicity Committee shall publicize and promote all activities sponsored by the SGA.

Section 5. All Ad-Hoc Committees may be created on an at-need basis with a recommendation from the SGA President with an approval from the Student Senate and are dismissed at the end of each semester.

Article VIII- Council of Representatives

Section 1. The purpose of the Council of Representatives shall be to represent the interests and concerns of all student clubs and interest groups on campus. Priorities will focus on sharing information, facilitating the co-sponsorship of events, and making recommendations as appropriate, in support of student extracurricular and co-curricular activities at the College Campus.

- Section 2. The Chair shall be the SGA President. The Chair shall be responsible for facilitating meetings and meeting agendas.
- Section 3. The term of Council of Representatives shall remain for the duration of the elected term of each officer of their respective student organization or interest group.
- Section 4. In the absence or inability of a club president or interest group coordinator to participate in a scheduled meeting, another officer of that organization may be designated to participate and represent their group.

Article IV- Meetings

- Section 1. After one (1) unexcused or excused absence from a regularly scheduled meeting, a written notification of SGA attendance requirements will be issued by the President, or the Chair of the branch affected, as appropriate. After two (2) combined unexcused and excused absences, a member must meet with the President and the SGA Advisor to discuss their participation in the SGA. After the accumulation of three (3) combined excused or unexcused absences during one full semester; this will constitute a motion for impeachment or removal from the Student Senate.
- Section 2. Special meetings called by the President and/or the Executive Board, or by a twenty percent (20%) vote of the members of that particular branch of the Student Government Association.
- Section 3. A quorum shall be 2/3 of the membership of that particular branch of the Student Government Association.

Article X- Impeachment and Removal

- Section 1. The following are grounds for impeachment:
- a. Any violation of NOVA Alexandria's Student Code of Conduct
 - b. Negligence of one's duties and responsibilities as outlined in this Constitution
 - c. Failure to comply with any part of this Constitution
 - d. Reasons stated in the current edition of Robert Rules of Order.
- Section 2. The Student Senate shall initiate impeachment proceedings against any officer or Student Senator. Removal from office requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Senate. Robert Rules of order (current edition) shall be followed in cases of impeachment.
- Section 3. . Advisors may be recommended for removal from their position by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of Student Senate. Once the vote has been recorded, a written report must be submitted to the Dean of Students for approval.

- Section 4. Any member of the Executive Board and the Student Senate may make the recommendation to initiate impeachment proceedings against a member to the Executive Board.
- Section 5. Any member of the Council of Representatives may be removed with the recommendation of two thirds (2/3) vote of the Council of Representatives.
- Section 6. Any individual who is recommended for impeachment and removal shall be given full notice in writing of the allegations against him/her and have an opportunity to respond before voted upon by the Student Senate.

XI – Fiscal Year

- Section 1. The fiscal year of the Student Government Association shall coincide with that of Northern Virginia Community College.

XII- Finances

- Section 1. Funds will be used for the operation of SGA as presented by the Treasurer and approved by two-third (2/3) vote by the Student Senate.
- Section 2. All finances shall be handled in accordance with the established policy and fiscal procedures in effect for Northern Virginia Community College.
- Section 3. In the event of loss of organization recognition, any funds remaining in the Student Government Association's campus accounts shall remain in the Student Government Association's account until the organizations is reactivated.

XIII- Amendments

- Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution shall be proposed by the Constitution Committee.
- Section 2. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members of the Student Senate shall be necessary to approve amendments to this Constitution.
- Section 3. All approved amendments to this Constitution shall be signed off by the President and Secretary and will be enacted upon Senate approval.
- Section 4. Any proposed amendment, defeated in the Student Senate or by the student body membership, may be resubmitted within the same fiscal year of such action.

Article XIV- General Provisions

Participation in the Student Government Association of Northern Virginia Community College/ Alexandria Campus shall not be restricted on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, physical handicap, source of income, place of residence, or any other forms of discriminations.

Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Student Government Association
By-Laws

Article I- Duties of Officers

Section 1. The Duties of the President shall be to:

- a. Serve as the official representative of the student body and have the ultimate authority and responsibility to the student body.
- b. Preside over all Executive Board and chair the Council of Representatives meetings.
- c. Represent the Student Government Association to the faculty, staff and administration of the Campus on an as needed basis.
- d. Call all special meetings of the Executive Board, Student Senate, and Council of Representatives.
- e. Inform all members of the Student Government Association of all activities, proposals and actions taken throughout his/her term of service.
- f. Provide a yearend report on all activities to the SGA Advisor before the end of his/her term.
- g. Sign all financial documents of the organization in concert with the SGA advisor.
- h. Hold and preside over monthly student body meetings for the purpose of keep students abreast of college and campus information that are of public knowledge.
- i. Appoint standing committee chairpersons from the Senate, if needed.
- j. Appoint ad hoc committees, if needed.
- k. Serve at least five scheduled office hours per week.

Section 2. The duties of the Vice President shall be to:

- a. Assume the duties of President upon absence or incapacity of the President. Serve as the chairperson of the Student Senate
- b. Assist the President in administering the business of the Executive Board of the Student Government Association.
- c. Serve as the chair of the Student Senate
- d. Have knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order
- e. May vote at Senate meetings only in the event of a tie.
- f. Perform those duties assigned by the President
- g. Serve at least five scheduled office hours per week.

Section 3. The duties of the Secretary shall be to:

- a. Assist the President with developing an agenda for all meetings
- b. Maintain the office calendar of appointments & events that require SGA participation
- c. Take minutes or brief notes of each meeting; submit minutes within 48 hours to the Executive Board for revisions/approval;

- d. Post all meeting minutes to the official SGA website.
- e. Pick-up and distribute mail from the SGA mailbox located in the Student Life Office.
- f. Manage any major correspondence concerning the Student Government Association.
- g. Assist in the organization and facilitation of meetings.
- h. Maintain records of all historical documents.
- i. Serve at least five scheduled office hours per week.

Section 4. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to:

- a. Develop annual budget proposal in concert with the SGA President and the SGA Advisor prior to submission to the Student Senate for approval.
- b. Initiate all financial transactions, ensuring that appropriate signatures are obtained prior to submission to the Student Activities Accountant.
- c. Keep a record of all financial transactions and update the Executive Board on status as needed and at each official SGA E-board meeting, SGA Senate meeting and SGA General Body meetings.
- d. Submit all financial records to the SGA Advisor when required for audit.
- e. Chair the Finance committee
- f. Serve at least five scheduled office hours per week.

Section 4. The duties of Senators shall be to:

- a. Represent the student population based on the senate population the senate seat represents at all SGA Senate meetings, SGA Student Body meetings and all other SGA, college or campus meetings.
- b. Hold at least one meeting monthly with the student population that the senate seat represents.
- c. Serve at least five scheduled office hours per week.

Article II- Duties of Advisor(s)

Section 1. The SGA Advisor is the Student Life Program Administration Manager as mandated by the Dean of Students and reflected in the Student Life Program Administration Manager's Employee Work Plan (EWP).

Section 2. The duties of the Advisor(s) shall be to:

- a. Act as consultant for projects and special committees of the Student Government Association.
- b. Attend all Executive Board and Student Senate meetings.
- c. Ensure the Constitution is enforced.
- d. Attend scheduled events sponsored by the Student Government Association.
- e. Review and approve all proposed SGA sponsored programs and activities.
- f. Review and approve a proposed budget request for funding to support all proposed sponsored programs and activities prior to Senate approval.
- g. Review, approve and process all financial or college documents for the implementation of all approved SGA programs and activities.

- h. Review and verify eligibility requirements of all nominated and elected officers, committee chair, committee members and at-large SGA members.
- i. Assist the Election Committee with the annual election process.
- j. Maintain weekly correspondence with the President of the SGA
- k. Plan and implement formal training for SGA

Article III- Elections

- Section 1. Elections shall be managed by the Elections Committee of the Student Government Association and the SGA Advisor.
- Section 2. The elections to the Executive Board shall be elected by the student body. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected. If a candidate runs unopposed, a simple majority (over 50% of the ballots cast) of votes will determine the election of each member running unopposed.
- Section 3. Candidates for Executive Board Offices shall be eligible provided they are currently enrolled at the Alexandria Campus, have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours, have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.25 and are in good academic and financial standing at the time of application.
- Section 4. The guidelines for a recount are as follows:
- a. A candidate must file for a recount within three days after the results were announced. The recount form can be picked up from the Elections Committee of the SGA office and must be returned to the Elections Committee Chair.
 - b. The SGA Advisor shall then form a Recount Committee made up of three students and a faculty or staff member, none of which may be affiliated with the Student Senate or Executive Board.
 - c. Findings of this committee are final.

Article IV- Appointments after General Elections

Section 1. Eligibility

Any student body member is eligible for an appointment provided the following is met:

- a. The student shows an active interest in serving.
- b. The student meets the requirements outlined in the NOVA Alexandria SGA for the desired position.
- c. The student must show a general knowledge in the skills needed for the desired position.
- d. Attendance of a least three regular Student Senate meetings consecutively for consideration.

Section 2. Appointment Guidelines

All applicants must adhere to the requirements specified in the pertinent application and must observe all application deadlines. Selection and approval of the Senate and Executive Board positions shall be made by the Student Senate with a 2/3 vote based on an essay and application at the discretion of the Senate.

- a. All senators must work with the Advisor and Executive Board to become familiar with the process in which business is conducted within the SGA.
- b. All Executive Board members must work with the Advisor and SGA President become familiar with the process in which business is conducted within the SGA.
- c. No vacancies may be filled by appointment until after the Spring general election unless the vacancies occurs prior to the conclusion of the Fall semester.

Article V- Terms

Section 1. The term of Executive Board members shall be one academic year including one fall and one spring from the date of their installment.

Section 2. The term of Student Senator shall be one academic year including one fall and one spring from the date of their installment.

Section 3. The term of Council of Representatives shall remain for the duration of the elected term of each officer of their respective student organization or interest group.

Section 4. Any appointed Executive Board or Student Senate member shall finish the term of the Executive Board or Student Senate member they are replacing.

Section 5. No student shall be appointed to the Student Senate after the conclusion of the Fall semester.

Section 6. Any student wishing to be added to the Student Senate after the Fall semester must run during the Spring semester elections, unless pre-approved by the Executive Board and the SGA Advisor.