

Constitution and By-laws

Southern Virginia University Student Association

Preamble

The mission of Southern Virginia University is to "prepare leader-servants in the workplace and the world, in the community and the church, and in the home." We, the associated students of Southern Virginia University, in order to more perfectly accomplish our mission to prepare leader-servants, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution for the Southern Virginia University Student Association (SVUSA). The SVUSA is the representative body of the Student Association. The general purpose of the SVUSA is to represent student interests, provide a forum for student expression, serve as a reliable information source for the student body, secure an active role for students in the university's decision-making process, promote and defend the honor of the Southern Virginia University campus community, and foster academic excellence.

The Southern Virginia University Student Association recognizes that final authority belongs to the Board of Trustees and its designated representatives and asserts that this Constitution shall not limit the authority of university officials.

Article I. Membership

Section 1. All members of the SVUSA shall be enrolled in at least one class for credit at Southern Virginia University.

Article II. The Executive Council

Section 1. The function of the SVUSA Executive Council (EC) shall be to supervise, organize and carry out all the affairs of student governance.

Section 2. The EC shall serve as a liaison for the Student Association to the community and other organizations and universities.

Section 3. Quorum can be declared when all but one of the currently elected Executive Council members are present.

Section 4. Motions may be passed by simple majority and, in the case of a division, the advisor may vote.

Section 5. The elected members of the Executive Council shall be the President, Vice President of Operations, Vice President of Honor, Vice President of Campus Programming, Vice President of Finance, Vice President of Arts and Athletics and Vice President of Academics & Service.

Section 6. The appointed member of the Executive Council shall be the Executive Council Secretary. The Executive Council Secretary shall be appointed by the SVUSA President and ratified by simple majority of the SVUSA Executive Council.

Section 7. A member of the Executive Council may be removed for misconduct, negligence or incompetence in office by the Dean of Students or by a two-thirds vote of the Senators of the SVUSA. Charges against any officer, which may be brought by any member of SVUSA, must be brought to the SVUSA advisor or a member of the Executive Council. The Executive Council will determine the validity and severity of the charges by a two-thirds vote. If the Executive Council upholds the charges they will be brought to a regular meeting of the Senate.

Section 8. A member of the Executive Council may resign through the submission of a letter of resignation. The SVUSA shall follow all replacement procedures as stated in the by-laws when filling the vacant position.

Section 9. The Executive Council shall meet weekly at a regularly arranged time and the VP of Operations shall conduct those meetings.

Section 10. The President or Executive Council Secretary must be notified of an absence prior to the Executive Council meeting. After one unexcused absence any member of the Executive Council is subject to dismissal of the Executive Council.

Section 11. The Executive Council shall have power to veto by a two-thirds vote on decisions of the Senate, which may be overridden by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.

Article III. The Senate

Section 1. The function of the Senate shall be to discover issues affecting the students, research and originate proposals conducive to the fulfillment of the Southern Virginia University Mission and accomplishment of the SVUSA general purpose and fulfill committee assignments.

Section 2. The Senate shall be comprised of elected representatives from the student body, namely: four Class Presidents (one from each class), four Class Senators (one from each class), an adequate number of District Senators determined by the President and VP of Operations, an Honor Senator, a Service Senator, an Academics Senator and an appointed Senate Secretary.

Section 3. The SVUSA President will serve as chair of Senate meetings with a voice and, in the case of a division, a vote.

Section 4. The Senate will meet bi-weekly, or as needed, during the academic year.

Section 5. The regular Senate meetings shall be open to all students, and club presidents shall be encouraged to attend.

Section 6. Quorum is declared when three-fourths of the current Senators are present.

Section 7. The Senate will run according to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th Edition.

Section 8. The Senate shall have the power to overrule vetoes made by the Executive Council by a two-thirds vote.

Section 9. Each Senator will be allowed two unexcused absences during their term. The President or Secretary must be notified of an excused absence prior to the meeting of the Senate. After two unexcused absences any member of the Senate is subject to removal from the Senate.

Section 10. The first Senate meeting shall be held no later than the first week after the election of the District Senators, Freshman Class President and Freshman Senator in the fall term.

Article IV. Honor System

Section 1. The Honor System shall have an Honor Council and other committees as needed.

Article V. Advisor

Section 1. In order to provide administrative assistance to the SVUSA, an advisor will be appointed by the Dean of Students to advise and recommend proper procedures to the SVUSA.

Article VI. Finances

Section 1. The fiscal year of the SVUSA shall be from July 1 to June 30 inclusive.

Section 2. Student Financial Services shall issue all checks on behalf of the SVUSA.

Section 3. All payments due to the SVUSA shall be made to the VP of Finance who shall record them. Checks for payments shall be made payable to the appropriate vendors through the normal requisition process.

Section 4. The newly elected and outgoing VP of Finance, in conjunction with the SVUSA advisor, and newly elected and outgoing SVUSA President, shall formulate a budget for the upcoming fiscal year prior to the end of the previous fiscal year. This budget shall be subject to the approval of the newly elected Executive Council and the Senate.

Article VII. Clubs and Other Student Organizations

Section 1. All newly formed student organizations may be granted up to \$150 in "one time" start-up funds.

- a) Each student organization receiving funds from the SVUSA will be audited by the university auditor, and may be audited by the Dean of Students, Student Financial Services, or a representative of either. Each organization is required to maintain orderly financial records including copies of any receipts and purchase orders.
- b) No SVUSA funds shall be used in violation of the Southern Virginia University Honor Code.
- c) The organization must use funds to conduct a public performance, display, activity or other project related to the student organization.

Section 2. Each student organization desiring funds from the SVUSA must meet the following criteria:

- a) The organization must be recognized by the SVUSA as an official club of the school.
- b) The organization must recertify annually with the Department of Student Life.

Section 3. To be recognized by the SVUSA, each student organization shall complete the following steps:

- a) Complete student organization application and turn it into the SVUSA advisor or VP of Finance.
- b) Submit a constitution for the student organization to the advisor or VP of Finance, who in turn will forward it to the Senator for review.

c) Present the idea before the Senate, answer questions and wait for adoption of the club by majority vote in a senate meeting.

Article VIII. Amendments

Section 1. Amendments to the constitution may be proposed either by the Senate Issues Committee or the Executive Council.

Section 2. Proposed amendments must receive a two-thirds of the Executive Council.

Section 3. Proposed amendments must receive a two-thirds vote in the Senate.

Southern Virginia University Student Association By-Laws

Preamble

There are no by-laws for this Article.

Article I. Membership

There are no by-laws for this Article.

Article II. Executive Council

Section 1. The duties of the President shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Executive Council.
- b) Sit with a voice and, in the case of a division, a vote on the Senate.
- c) Chair and direct the affairs of the Issues Committee.
- d) Chair and call regular and special meetings of the Senate and preside over the Executive Council.
- e) Call all special meetings of the Senate.
- f) At his or her discretion, excuse Senators from regular or special meetings of the Senate.
- g) Represent the student body at official university functions.
- h) Carry out all ordinances and legislation passed by the Senate.
- i) Make all appointments pursuant to the SVUSA Constitution.

- j) Serve as liaison with the administration, and when requested, serve on administrative committees or appoint students to serve on administrative committees.
- k) Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average during term.

Section 2. The duties of the VP of Operations shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Executive Council.
- b) Chair and direct the affairs of the Elections Committee or nominate a replacement.
- c) Chair and direct the affairs of the Communications Committee.
- d) Conduct all Executive Council meetings.
- e) Fulfill all responsibilities of the President in the event of an absence.
- f) Oversee publication of the SVUSA newsletter to promote policy awareness, advertise SVUSA events and defend student rights.
- g) Assume the office of the President should that office become vacant, in which case the office of the VP of Operations shall be appointed as stated in the by-laws.
- h) Maintain the SVUSA section of the tri-ad including a section with information on the members of the SVUSA, committees and meeting times and locations.
- i) Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average during term in office.

Section 3. The duties of the VP of Honor shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Executive Council.
- b) Chair and direct the affairs of the Honor Council and Honor Council meetings or designate a replacement from among the members of the Honor Council if unable to attend.
- c) Together with the Honor Senator, appoint members of the Honor Council and any other Honor Committees.
- d) Together with the Director of Honor Code Affairs and Honor Senator, train and instruct members of the Honor Council.
- e) Together with the Director of Honor Code Affairs, call all meetings of the Honor Council.
- f) Other duties as outlined in the procedure manual of the honor system.
- g) Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average during term in office.

Section 4. The duties of the VP of Campus Programming shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Executive Council.
- b) Chair and direct the affairs of the Campus Activities Committee.
- c) Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average during term in office.

Section 5. The duties of the VP of Finance shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Executive Council.
- b) Chair and direct the affairs of the Appropriations Committee.
- c) Provide necessary information to Student Financial Services as required (i.e. financial receipts and documentation).

- d) Adhere to a sound economic policy and handle carefully and accurately all monies of the SVUSA.
- e) Report the activities of the Appropriations Committee to the Senate at least once a semester.
- f) Report monthly concerning any financial actions and the current status of SVUSA funds to the Executive Council.
- g) Establish and maintain orderly records of all expenditures and receipts of monies of the SVUSA.
- h) Oversee the certification and auditing process of student clubs and organizations, which have received, appropriated SVUSA funds during the school year.
- i) Plan and oversee at least one fundraiser and/or charity event per semester.
- j) Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average during term in office.

Section 6. The duties of the VP of Academics and Service shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Executive Council.
- b) Chair and direct the affairs of the Service Council.
- c) Serve as a liaison between the students and Admissions Office.
- d) Serve as a liaison between the students and the Academic Affairs Council.
- e) Work together with Director of Admissions and Provost to discover, research and address issues regarding service and academics.
- f) Serve as requested on administrative committees regarding academics and service.
- g) Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average during term in office.

Section 7. The duties of the VP of Arts and Athletics shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Executive Council.
- b) Chair and direct the affairs of the Arts and Athletics Committee.
- c) Serve as a liaison between the students and Athletics Department.
- d) Work together with the Athletic Director, coaches, and other athletic personnel to discover, research and address issues regarding athletics.
- e) Organize and oversee the Southern Virginia “Superfans” club by appointing two co-chairs and direct the affairs of the club and meet with these co-chairs monthly to ensure quality and control.
- f) Work to promote support and awareness for athletics, fine and performing arts, community events, etc.
- g) Serve and/or attend any meetings regarding arts and athletics as relevant to students.
- h) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar’s office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA and striving to live the honor code and uphold the core values of the university.

Section 8. The duties of the Executive Secretary shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice on the Executive Council.
- b) Together with the VP of Operations develop agendas for Executive Council meetings.

- c) Take and distribute minutes for each meeting of the Executive Council within 48 hours of the meeting.
- d) Keep attendance at Executive Council meetings and report any member who has one unexcused absence to the president.
- e) At his or her discretion, excuse Executive Council from regular or special meetings of the Senate and inform the president of the absence before the Executive Council meeting.
- f) Assist the President and other Executive Council officers as needed.
- g) Shall report actions and decisions of the Executive Council to the Senate.
- h) Meet bi-weekly with the Senate Secretary to update constitutional changes, and report on any senatorial absences.
- i) Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average during term in office.

Article III. The Senate

Section 1. The duties of the Class Presidents shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Senate.
- b) Represent and promote unity within their respective classes.
- c) Bring concerns of their classes before the Senate.
- d) Hold class meetings each semester to address concerns of class members and discuss service projects, funding and possibilities relative to the class gift.
- e) Senior and Junior Class Presidents shall serve on the Graduation Committee
- f) Serve on additional committees as appointed by the SVUSA President.
- g) Assist the Class Senator with planning and organizing an assigned dance.
- h) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and striving to live the honor code and uphold the core values of the university.

Section 2. The duties of the Class Senators shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Senate.
- b) Assist the Class President in planning and organizing a dance.
- c) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and striving to live the honor code and uphold the core values of the university.

Section 3. The duties of the Honor Senator shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Senate.
- b) Represent the honor system.
- c) Promote the honor code on campus.
- d) Together with the Dean of Students and VP of Honor plan and promote Rise Up for Honor.
- e) Plan and prepare honor week with the VP of Honor.

- f) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and striving to live the honor code and uphold the core values of the university.

Section 4. The duties of the Service Senator shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Senate.
- b) Serve as Vice Chair of the Service Council.
- c) Plan and create an awareness of service opportunities on campus and in the community.
- d) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and striving to live the honor code and uphold the core values of the university.

Section 5. The duties of the Academic Senator shall consist of the following:

- a) Discover, research and make proposals to improve the academic experience at Southern Virginia University.
- b) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Senate.
- c) Serve as Vice Chair of the Academics Committee.
- d) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and striving to live the Code of Honor and uphold the core values of the University.

Section 6. The duties of the District Senators shall consist of the following:

- e) Sit with a voice and a vote on the Senate.
- f) Bring concerns of their district to the Senate.
- g) Serve on at least two standing committees.
- h) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and striving to live the honor code and uphold the core values of the university.

Section 7. The duties of the SVUSA President (in relation to the Senate) shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice and, in the case of a division, a vote on the Senate.
- b) Chair the Senate.
- c) Call additional Senate meetings as needed.
- d) Develop the Senate agenda with the Senate Secretary.
- e) Assign Senators to serve on standing committees.
- f) Reserve the right to make any changes to any committee assignments.
- g) In the absence of the Executive Council Secretary, the President shall assign a member of the Executive Council to report actions and decisions of the Executive Council to the Senate.

Section 8. The duties of the Senate Secretary (appointed by the SVUSA President) shall consist of the following:

- a) Sit with a voice on the Senate.
- b) Take minutes at all Senate meetings and send those minutes to all Senate members and the VP of Operations within 48 hours of the meeting.
- c) Create agendas under the direction of the President.
- d) Keep attendance at Senate meetings and report any member who has two unexcused absences to the SVUSA President.
- e) At his or her discretion, excuse senators from regular or special meetings of the Senate.
- f) If asked by the President, serve as parliamentarian of the Senate meetings.
- g) Meet bi-weekly with the Executive Council Secretary to update constitutional changes and report on any senatorial absences.
- h) Maintain a good standing with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, and the Southern Virginia University community while maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and striving to live the honor code and uphold the core values of the university.

Article IV. Honor System

Section 1. For additional guidelines see the procedure manual of the honor system.

Article V. Advisor

Section 1. In case of a division in an Executive Council vote, the advisor may vote.

Article VI. Finances

Section 1. The amount of the SVUSA fund shall be determined annually by the Chief Operations Officer of the university.

Section 2. The Executive Council shall prepare an annual budget of all SVUSA funds and approve said budget by a two-thirds majority vote.

- a) The Executive Council is to include in their annual budget an appropriation for the Senate.

Section 3. Provisions governing the spending and distributions of Senate funds shall be established by the Appropriations Committee.

- a) Use of Senate funds shall be monitored and approved by the Appropriations Committee

Section 4. All approved expenditures shall be reported to the Chief Operations Officer of the university.

Article VII. Elections and Appointments

Section 1. The Elections Committee shall supervise all election procedures.

Section 2. The sitting Executive Council shall have authority to:

- a) Reject any applications for candidacy by a two-thirds majority vote if a potential candidate is believed to have failed in meeting the eligibility requirements outline in Article 8 (applicable to Executive Council and Senate elections).
- b) Authorize the candidacy of individuals who fail to meet one or more of the eligibility requirements outlined in Article 8 by a two-thirds majority vote (applicable to Executive Council and Senate elections).
- c) Organize and facilitate special elections:
 - i. Primary Elections in the event of more than 3 candidates running for the same position. The top two candidates with the most votes advance to the final elections. (Elected candidates will be determined by the largest number of votes in the final election).
 - ii. Runoff Elections in the event of two candidates receiving less than a difference of 3% (applicable to Executive Council and Senate Elections).

Section 3. The newly elected members of the SVUSA shall be installed by the out-going SVUSA officers at the last regular meeting or at a specially designated ceremony.

Section 4. Elections shall be conducted in a way to assure fairness and equality, maintain eligibility criteria, and allow ample time for training of the elected officers by their predecessors. Campaign guidelines shall be established by the Elections Committee.

Section 5. Elected candidates shall be elected by plurality.

Section 6. Elections for Honor Senator, Service Senator, and Academics Senator and all Class Presidents and Class Senators (except for the Freshman Class President and Freshman Class Senator) shall be held after the Executive Council elections.

Section 7. Elections for the Freshman Class President and Freshman Class Senator and the District Senators shall be held no later than 30 days into the fall term.

Section 8. In the event of a vacant Executive Council position, the office shall be filled in no more than three weeks either by special election or appointment according to the discretion of the Executive Council. Appointments to the Executive Council must be ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Council.

Section 9. In the event of a vacant senatorial position, the office shall be filled in no more than 30 days by special election or appointment according to the discretion of the Executive Council. The appointment must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.

Article VIII. SVUSA Eligibility

Section 1. All candidates for elected or appointed positions must:

- a) Be enrolled in at least one class credit at Southern Virginia University.
- b) Be a student in good standing at with the Registrar's office, Dean of Students, the Southern Virginia University community and have a minimum 3.0 grade point average while striving to live the honor code and uphold core values of the university. (See Article 7 Section 2 clause b for exceptions clause).
- c) May only run for one position at a time.
- d) Shall not have a departure date prior to the expiration of his or her term in office.
- e) Candidates for the office VP of Honor are required to have served on the Honor Council for at least one semester.
- f) Candidates for the office VP of Campus Programming are required to have served on the Campus Activities Committee for at least one semester.
- g) Candidates for the office VP of Academics and Service are required to have served on the Service Council for at least one semester.

Section 2. All candidates for all Senate positions, whether by election or appointment, must:

- a) Candidates for Class President shall be a member of the class they are representing for at least one semester during their term.
- b) Candidates for Class Senators shall be a member of the class they are representing for at least one semester during their term.
- c) Candidates for the office of Honor Senator shall be approved by the VP of Honor.
- d) Candidates for the office of Service Senator must have attended Southern Virginia University for at least one full semester.
- e) Candidates for the office of District Senator shall reside in the district they represent.

Article IX. Standing Committees

Section 1. Membership

- a) Any member of the SVUSA may serve on the senate committees at the discretion of the committee chair, the final size of each committee being determined by the respective chair.
- b) Student volunteers on the committees serve with a voice, but not a vote.
- c) Senators are appointed to serve on committees by the SVUSA President.

Section 2. Standing Committees shall be: Academics, Appropriations, Arts and Athletics, Campus Activities, Communications, Elections, Graduation, Issues, Service Council.

a) Academics Committee: Shall be chaired by the VP of Academics & Service with the Academics Senator serving as the Vice Chair. Duties are to discover, research and make proposals to improve the academic experience at Southern Virginia University; assist the administration and faculty in improving enrolment and retention issues of the school; work together with the Dean of Admissions and Provost to address relevant concerns.

The committee will report actions and decisions of the committee to the Senate. The committee should consist of at least 3 Senators with the option to include other students chosen from the general student body according to necessity.

b) Appropriations Committee: Shall be chaired by the VP of Finance. The committee should consist of at least two appointed Senators with the option to include two other students chosen from the general student body. The committee will serve the purpose of approving and allocating funds to student organizations and prepare the end of year financial report. The committee will work together with the advisor to establish the budget for the current school year and prepare it for proposal to the senate. The committee will also seek to organize fundraisers for the SVUSA, which funds will then be put into a separate budget from the regular SVUSA budget. The committee will report actions and decisions of the committee to the Senate.

c) Arts and Athletics Committee: Shall be chaired by the VP of Arts and Athletics. The committee will serve the purpose of promoting school spirit at Southern Virginia University and work to promote support and awareness for athletics, fine and performing arts, community events, etc. The committee shall also be responsible for organizing and maintaining the Southern Virginia Superfans Club. The committee shall include at least three Senators and other appointed representatives of the student body as needed. The committee will report its activity to the Senate.

d) Communications Committee: Shall be chaired by the VP of Operations and work with the director of Events and Scheduling to ensure clear communication between administration and SVUSA regarding SVUSA sponsored events. The committee will ensure that events are advertised and help other committees advertise events as requested. The committee will be responsible for the maintenance of the SVUSA section of the triad advertisement board and the creation of the SVUSA bulletin board with information on SVUSA members, committees, meeting times and locations, and other relevant material. The committee will also be responsible for the monthly publication of the SVUSA newsletter to promote policy awareness, advertise SVUSA events and defend student rights. The committee should consist of at least 6 Senators with the option to include other students chosen from the general student body according to necessity. The committee will report actions and decisions of the committee to the Senate.

e) Campus Activities Committee: Shall be chaired by the VP of Campus Programming. A representative of the Dean of Students and other interested Senators and students shall serve on it. It shall be responsible for planning and coordinating all SVUSA sponsored campus activities and assist other campus organizations to plan activities as needed. The committee should consist of at least 6 Senators, at least one Senator from each class, with

the option to include other students chosen from the general student body according to necessity.

f) Elections Committee: Shall be chaired by the VP of Operations. The committee should consist of two Senators and other students chosen from the general student body according to necessity for the purpose of coordinating all election efforts of SVUSA officers. Any candidate running for office is prohibited from serving on the Elections Committee during that semester. The committee shall be formed by January 20 for Spring semester and by April 20 for the following Fall semester. The duties of the Elections Committee include:

i) Collection of votes, counting and distribution of the results.

ii) Coordination of the fall and spring election processes.

iii) With the Registrar, check eligibility of all candidates.

g) Graduation Committee: A member of the Student Life staff serves as a chair of the Graduation Committee for the purpose of assisting the graduating class, organizing and coordinating the upcoming graduation.

h) Issues Committee: Shall be chaired by the SVUSA President. Three other Senators shall serve on it for the purpose of doing necessary research on issues brought before the Senate, which do not pertain to other standing committees, and report their findings to the Senate to assist them in making decisions.

i) Service Council: Shall be chaired by the VP of Academics and Service and the Service, with the Service Senator serving as Vice Chair. Other members of the Service Council will include members of the student body who will apply to sit on the council. The council shall help to make students aware of on and off campus service opportunities.

Article X. Ad Hoc Committees

Section 1. Ad Hoc Committees shall be formed as needed by the Executive Council or Senate.

Section 2. The chair of any Ad Hoc Committee will be selected by the Executive Council, or by the Senate with the approval of the Executive Council.

Section 3. At the formation of Ad Hoc Committees, the responsibilities of that committee must be outlined and presented to the Senate in writing.

Section 4. Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees shall report to their respective Executive Council members.

Article XI. Amendments

Section 1. All amendments to the by-laws shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council and Senate to become valid.