

# **Student Government Association Neumann University**

## **Constitution**

### **Preamble**

Through mutual cooperation, use of talents and love, we, the students of Neumann University, unite in mind and spirit to willingly subscribe to the following Constitution in the hope that we will lead one another and grow spiritually, intellectually, physically and culturally in the mature pursuit of truth and honor in the Catholic Franciscan tradition.

### **Article 1: Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association (SGA) of Neumann University. The elected representatives shall be named the Student Government Board (SGB.).

### **Article 2: Purpose**

- A. To represent the student body.
- B. To support and enhance the mission of Neumann University.
- C. To promote harmonious relationships between and among the student body, faculty and administration.
- D. To support the social, cultural, spiritual and educational activities of Neumann University.
- E. To establish and maintain a system of self-government, which includes the opinions and ideas of the student body.
- F. To inform students of any pertinent information.

### **Article 3: Structure**

#### **Section A: Governance**

The Student Government Board is a freely established organization self-funded through the Student Government Association fee. The Student Government Board serves as a liaison between administration and all full-time matriculated day students at Neumann University. The Student Government Association Constitution is the foundation for the Student Government Board. The Student Government Board oversees all standing committees including Student Activities Board, Resident Life Advisory Board, and all registered student clubs and organizations.

#### **Section B: Membership**

Full-time and part-time undergraduate students with the exception of Continuing and Adult Professional Studies (CAPS) students of Neumann University shall be members of the Student Government Association upon payment of the Student Government Association fee. The Association shall elect its Student Government Board, which includes executive officers and a legislative council. Membership of the Student Government Board includes:

1. Seven executive officers:
  - President
  - Vice President
  - Vice President for Student Activities
  - Chief Justice
  - Clubs Coordinator
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
2. Eight class representatives:
  - freshman representatives (2)
  - sophomore representatives (2)
  - junior representatives and (2)
  - senior representatives (2)
3. Residence Life Advisory Board Chair (1)
4. Commuter Representatives (2)

Members of the Student Government Board must be elected by their constituents and maintain membership in their constituency, and in the Student Government Association for their term of office.

### **Section C: Powers**

1. **Executive:** Executive power shall be vested in the executive officers of the Student Government Board. The purpose of the executive board is to ensure that administrative communication is effective and productive.
2. **Legislative:** Legislative power of the Student Government Board shall be vested in the voting members (legislative council). The purpose of the legislative council is to ensure that student communication is effective and productive. Voting members include:
  - Vice President
  - Vice President of Student Activities
  - Chief Justice
  - Treasurer
  - Clubs Coordinator
  - Secretary
  - Senior Representatives (2)
  - Junior Representatives (2)

- Sophomore Representatives(2)
  - Freshman Representatives (2)
  - Residence Life Advisory Board Chair
  - Commuter Representatives (2)
- A. Legislation shall be passed by a simple majority of the Student Government Board. A simple majority is 51% of the Student Government Board.
1. Any member of the Student Government Board may propose legislation.
  2. Members of the Student Government Association may propose legislation by presenting a petition containing the signatures of 33% of the student body, or by having a member of the legislative council forward their proposal to the SGB.
3. **Judicial:** Judicial power of the Student Government Board shall be vested in the Chief Justice and his/her selected committee made up of five (5) members with two (2) alternates from the Student Government Board. They shall investigate and correct any evident transgressions by students of the Student Government Association Constitution. The purpose of the Judicial Committee is to ensure that the Constitution is properly interpreted, translated and executed.

## Article 4: Elections

### Section A: Qualifications

Any member of the Student Government Association interested in running for the Student Government Board must be in strong academic standing and maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.7 for Executive Board and 2.5 for Legislative Board. Students must be in good disciplinary status that is defined in the Neumann University Student Handbook.

1. Students running for the position of President must:
  - have one-year of experience on the Student Government Board
  - have completed four academic semesters by the first day of fall semester following the election
  - have a minimum of 48 credits

If a student does not meet the criteria, he/she may petition to the executive board for permission to run for President. Any member of the Student Government Association may petition before the application deadline. The Election Petition Committee will be made up of the entire executive board. Petitions will be read by the entire current executive board with the exception of potential candidate(s) who will be removed from the process. During the reading of petitions, the current President

would be a voting member. The decision would be based on a 2/3 majority vote. The administrative or faculty advisor must be present to witness the process. The petition would include an essay discussing the relevance of the reasons why the potential candidate is qualified for the position accompanied by two letters of reference.

2. Students running for the position of Vice-President of Student Activities must have at least one-year experience on the Student Activities Board of Neumann University. Any member of the Student Government Association may petition before the application deadline.
3. For the executive positions of Vice President, Chief Justice, Clubs Coordinator, Secretary and Treasurer, any member of the Student Government Association may run.
4. Class Representatives shall be elected by their respective classes.
5. Residence Life Advisory Board Chair shall be elected by the resident students.
6. Commuter Representatives shall be elected by the commuter students.

#### **Section B: Time**

1. General elections are to be held no later than three weeks prior to the end of the academic year. All elected executive officers and legislative positions except freshman representatives are selected during this election. Students selected at the general election shall take office and be sworn in at the Leadership Awards Ceremony.
2. Changes and/or amendments to the current Constitution election process are not permitted for the current year.
3. First year student elections are held no earlier than four weeks into the fall semester and no later than seven weeks. Elected first year representatives will take office immediately.

#### **Section C: Elections Rules and Procedures**

1. Nominations  
Nominations are to be made upon the completion of the appropriate application for the desired position. All nominees must adhere to all regulations, policies, and other pertinent information deemed appropriate by the Student Government Board.
2. Registration

- Student class registration must be completed prior to the elections.
3. Except otherwise provided in this Constitution, all elected or otherwise chosen members of the Student Government Association shall serve concurrent one year terms that begin and end in relation to the dates of the SGA Election Rules and Procedures
  4. The Student Government Association elections shall be held during the spring semester each year with the specific dates to be determined by the Election Committee
    - A. The SGA elections shall be governed by the SGA Elections Rules and Procedures, to be adopted by the Student Government Board by the last meeting of the fall semester of the Student Government Board
    - B. The persons charged with creating and executing the SGA Elections Rules and Procedures shall be the Student Government Vice President and the Chief Justice.
  5. Posting of the Results  
The Vice President for the Student Government Board will post results of the election no later than two class days following the election.
  6. Miscellaneous
    - A. The votes will be verified by the Vice President and the Chief Justice of the Student Government Board. In case the election process involves both the Vice President and the Chief Justice, the Advisor and two impartial members of the SGB may verify the results of the election.
    - B. Outgoing seniors may not vote in general elections.
    - C. SGB members seeking re-election may not be part of the elections team
  7. A candidate is declared winner of their position by receiving a simple majority of the votes.

#### **Section D: Petitioning**

Those who apply for positions on the Student Government Board that are mandated to petition to run, must do so by submitting their petition to the Student Government Executive Board by the application deadline. Petitions should include an essay discussing the relevance of the reasons why the potential candidate is qualified for the position accompanied by two letters of reference.

#### **Section E: Voting at a Meeting**

1. The President must ask for the affirmative vote first.
2. The President must ask for the negative vote, even if the affirmative vote seems unanimous. (abstention, hands, ballot, roll call or discreet ballot)

3. The President must announce the result of the vote and state who is responsible for carrying out the action. If the chair is in doubt about who should carry out the action, then the members need to make a motion about who should carry it out.
4. The President must stay neutral in asking for the vote as not to sway the membership.
5. It is understood that during all methods of voting a quorum must be present. Quorum is 2/3 of the voting members.
6. If the President is in doubt about the result of the vote, the chair can retake the vote.
7. If a member doubts the result of a vote, the member should call out "Division or I doubt the result of the vote."
8. Majority vote rules, unless the proposed action takes away members' rights, 2/3 vote is then necessary.
9. In case of a tie the President votes.
10. Members cannot vote when a motion is of direct personal or monetary interest to the member of the board.
11. Member has the right to change their vote, but not until the final vote is announced. Then that person may change their vote, upon permission of the executive board.

**Article 5: Dismissal**

- A. Any member of the Student Government Board may be dismissed for consistent exhibits of misconduct, neglect of duties, failure to abide by the attendance policy, failure to maintain required grade point average, or violations of the Student Government Association Constitution, By-Laws, University Student Handbook or policy, University Code of Conduct and of state, local and federal law.
- B. Any member of the Student Government Association except the Chief Justice may propose the dismissal of a member of the Student Government Board through the following process:
  1. A letter must be presented to the Chief Justice stating the member's transgression of the Student Government Association Constitution, or other pertinent information.

2. The Chief Justice will arrange a meeting with the accused and the Judicial Board to discuss the letter of accusation. This is the opportunity for the accused to address the accusations.
    - a. The Judicial Board will hear both sides and make decisions based on the evidence
    - b. There are three outcomes possible as a result of the hearing:
      - i. Acquittal
      - ii. Probation
      - iii. Dismissal
  3. The Chief Justice will deliver the decision letter to the accused party. The accused party must sign a formal Student Government Board document stating that the letter was received on a specific date and time.
  4. Terms of Probation  
Probation lasts for a period of 30 class days following receipt of the probation letter.
    - a. The accused acknowledges the probation letter and the terms of probation.
    - b. Violation of these probations may result in dismissal upon hearing of the judicial board.
  5. The accused has three class days to reply in writing to the Chief Justice regarding the accusation. If the accused party fails to respond in writing within the time limit, the accused will appear before the Judicial Board. By discreet ballot, the Judicial Board will vote on whether or not to dismiss the accused. If the accused does not appear before the Judicial Board, the Chief Justice will automatically dismiss the accused.
- C. All matters regarding Judicial Board or disciplinary actions, or notifications of, or the welfare of any Student Government Board member must be presented and notified to the Chief Justice.
- D. In the event that Student Government Board enters “Uncharted Territory” regarding the Constitution; the Chief Justice must be consulted and must agree to the charges decision made regarding the welfare of the Student Government Board, Constitution, or its members.
- E. In the event the Chief Justice is accused of transgression worthy of dismissal by the Student Government Board, the above process must be followed with the provision that the responsibilities of the Chief Justice be delegated to the Administrative or Faculty Advisor of the Student Government Board.

- F. If a member of the Student Government Board feels the terms for dismissal or probation were unfair, he/she may appeal as described in Article 6.
- G. If a member of Student Government Board has been dismissed, he/she may not return for a position on the Student Government Board for a period of one full school year (two semesters) following the dismissal.
- H. In an event that the Chief Justice cannot perform his/her duties, the executive board has the right to appoint a new Chief Justice.

#### **Article 6: Appeals**

The member dismissed or placed on probation may appeal through the following process:

- A. A letter of appeal must be made within five class days to the Chief Justice.
- B. A meeting is held in which the Chief Justice presides over and his/her Judicial Board listens to both parties and determines the outcome.
  1. Each party has the right to make his/her defense.
  2. The Board is given time to ask questions.
  3. After each party presents his/her complaint/defense, the Board has time for discussion. The complainant and/or defendant may not be present for discussion or voting.
  4. A secret ballot vote will be taken.
  5. A two-third-majority vote of the Board constitutes removal from office.
  6. The Chief Justice votes only in case of a tie.
  7. Facilitator in the process will be the Chief Justice. He/she will maintain procedure and will keep presentations objective and not personal.
  8. Other members of the Student Government Association may be asked by the Chief Justice to give pertinent testimony.
  9. Both parties involved will be notified of the decision by the Chief Justice of the Student Government Board.
  10. Both parties involved will be notified within two class days of the decision to appeal.

#### **Article 7: Vacancies**

If a vacancy is present on the executive board those members succeed to the next position in the following order: President, Vice President, Chief Justice, Clubs Coordinator, Treasurer, and Secretary. If the President position is vacant, the Vice President will assume the duties of the President. If still vacant after succession, the



position becomes open to all of the Student Government Association. Applications and petitions must be submitted and the current Student Government Board votes.

If a vacancy is present in the position of Vice President of Student Activities, it will be opened to the Student Activities Board. Applications and petitions must be submitted and the current Student Government Board makes a decision. If there is still a vacancy, the position becomes open to all of the Student Government Association. Applications and petitions must be submitted and the current Student Government Board makes a decision.

All members with the exception to the Vice President have the right to refuse succession of office. The position of President of the Student Government Board must be filled through the right of succession. If the right of succession by the executive board has been refused that position then comes open to the legislative board. Applications and petitions must be submitted and the current Student Government Board votes. If there is still a vacancy, the position becomes open to the Student Government Association. Applications and petitions must be submitted and the current executive Student Government Board votes.

If any position cannot be filled through these constitutional provisions that position shall remain vacant until it can be filled.

#### **Article 8: Amendments to the Constitution**

Amendments may be proposed by petition listing of at least 1/3 of the Student Government Association or by a voting member of the Student Government Board. A representative of the Student Government Association must notify the President of the Student Government Board within one week to allow time on the meeting agenda. Amendments shall be passed by a 2/3 vote of the Student Government Board. Proposed petitions exclude any changes to be made concerning Student Government Board elections for the upcoming year. The administration of Neumann University cannot dictate the Student Government Board's Constitution unless approved by a 2/3 legislative vote of the Student Government Board and then confirmed by a 2/3 vote of the SGB Executive Board. This verification process is to protect the SGB and interests of students.

#### **Article 9: Enactment**

The Student Government Association of Neumann University enacted this Constitution on May 7, 1997. The original constitution was affirmed by the Executive Council of Neumann University. All revisions must be sent to the Executive Council for affirmation prior to enactment. Revisions were approved by the Student Government Board of Neumann University on:

April 10, 2000

April 28, 2003

November 8, 2005

April 1, 2008  
June 15, 2011

Approval Signatures:

---

President Student Government

---

Vice President Student Affairs