



UNIVERSITY  
*of* MOBILE

*Higher Education for a Higher Purpose*

## **SGA Constitution**

University of Mobile Student Government Association  
5735 College Parkway Mobile, AL 36613

# Constitution of the University of Mobile

## Student Government Association

### Preamble

We, the students of the University of Mobile, in order to create an effective student government, to promote the activities of student life, to augment communication between the administration and the student body, and uphold the Christian ideals and standards of this institution, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the Student Government Association of the University of Mobile.

### Article I – General

**Sec. 1.** The name of this organization shall be the “Student Government Association,” hereinafter referred to as the SGA.

**Sec. 2.** All currently enrolled students, upon paying the Student Activities Fee, are entitled to all rights and privileges of membership subject to the rules and regulations set forth by this constitution and enacted by this organization including the right to vote in all SGA elections.

**Sec. 3.** The SGA shall be divided into a Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branch.

### Article II – Legislative

**Sec. 1.** All Legislative powers shall be vested in a Senate.

#### **Sec. 2. Duties and Powers**

The Student Senate shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

Par. 1. Receive and evaluate the annual SGA budget as well as regular updates throughout the year and regularly report activity fee expenditures.

Par. 2. Investigate and approve recommendations suggesting Administrative action in matters affecting University of Mobile students.

Par. 3. Promote student activities, provide for the welfare of the student body and express the opinions and sentiments of the students.

Par. 4. Confirm by a two-thirds majority any appointments made by the SGA President.

Par. 5. Vote by two-thirds majority to remove, censure, refuse to seat, or punish any member of this body.

Par. 6. Bring Articles of Impeachment against any elected or appointed official by a three-fourths majority.

Par. 7. In coordination with University administration and the University Club Charter Policy, grant or revoke charters for officially recognized student organizations.

Par. 8. Maintain a Code of Laws to govern this body and the SGA as necessary.

#### **Sec. 3. Membership and Qualifications**

Par. 1. The SGA is made up of the SGA President, Vice President and 6 Senators representing the 6 academic departments. Representation of the student body is to be divided up into one seat per academic school (Schools of Business, Education, Christian Studies, Alabama School of The Arts, College of Arts and Sciences, and College of Health Professions). There are also two Freshman Senate seats available and selected each fall.

Par. 2. Senators must be full time students of the University of Mobile as defined by the most current Catalog and, other than freshmen, must have a cumulative GPA of 2.75. No student on academic or disciplinary probation may serve as a Senator. Students must have a letter of recommendation from their Academic Department Chair. All letters of recommendation will be passed on to the respective Academic Dean of that Department. All letters of recommendation will be passed on to the respective Academic Dean of that Department. Senators must also go through an interview and application process through Student Life, before being eligible to be selected.

## **Sec. 4. Organization**

### **Par. 1. OFFICERS**

- A. The Vice President of the SGA shall be the presiding officer in Senate sessions, voting only in cases of a tie.
- B. The Senate Clerk shall keep an official record of events and decisions of the Senate and maintain a public file of such on the MyUM website, as well as send meeting minutes to the Vice President for Student Life.
- C. Additional officers and ex-officio members of the Senate may be appointed as necessary to conduct business.

### **Par. 2. COMMITTEES**

- A. The Senate may establish committees, standing or special, to propose legislative solutions to issues pertinent to the student body. The SGA President and Vice President shall appoint chairpersons to each committee.
- B. Each Committee shall consist of no less than three members including a chairperson
- C. Each Senator shall serve on at least one committee.

## **Sec. 5. Meetings**

### **Par. 1. RULES OF MEETINGS**

- A. Meetings shall be held regularly every two weeks following the first ten days of classes in the Fall Semester.
- B. Meetings shall be open to all who wish to attend, except in cases
  - a. regarding personal character or special circumstances whereby an executive closed session will be established upon a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
- C. Each meeting, except executive closed sessions, shall contain an open forum time whereby all that are present and wish to may voice their concerns upon recognition by the chair.

### **Par. 2. POWERS OF PRESIDING OFFICER**

- A. The presiding officer has the authority to take such actions as are reasonable and necessary to maintain order of the meetings and such actions are subject to override by a two-thirds vote.
- B. The presiding officer may designate a temporary substitute in order to debate or present legislation.

### **Par. 3. ATTENDANCE**

- A. Attendance of all Senators is mandatory to all sessions, regular and specially called. Excessive absences, defined as more than two a semester, will result in forfeiture of that Senate seat unless a special allowance is granted by a majority vote of the Senate.
- B. Schools or colleges whose Senator is found to have an excessive number of absences will result in a forfeiture of that school or college's Senate seat until the following semester or academic year if a new Senator cannot be selected.

## **Sec. 6. Legislative Process**

### **Par. 1. GENERAL PROTOCOL**

- A. A majority of Senators shall be present to constitute a quorum. A quorum must be present for any business to be decided.
- B. The President of SGA may address the Senate at any time he or she sees fitting and proper but at least once a semester.
- C. The rules of procedure shall be the current version of *Robert's Rules of Order* unless otherwise stated in this constitution or subsequent legislative action.

### **Par. 2. All legislation of the Senate shall be categorized as follows:**

- A. Bills of Law: Laws, the Budget and Organization Charters which are subject to veto.
- B. Resolutions: Expressions of the sentiments of the Student Senate and are not subject to veto but may be signed as approval.

### **Par. 3. APPROVAL AND VETO**

- A. Any legislation that is approved by a majority of Senators present within a quorum shall be signed by the presiding officer of the Senate and sent, in a timely manner, to the President of the SGA for approval.
- B. Upon the President's approval, the legislation shall be signed and immediately communicated to the faculty/staff liason.
- C. If the President vetoes the bill, he or she shall return the bill with its objections to the Vice President for reconsideration at the next Senate meeting. The bill shall be approved if two-thirds of the Senators present vote to approve the legislation.

**Par. 4. STUDENT REFERENDUM AND INITIATIVE**

- A. Upon request of one-third of Senators, any legislation shall be taken to the general Student Body for approval by a majority vote and will not be subject to veto.
- B. Any legislation accompanied by a petition of two hundred and fifty (250) students must be voted upon at the next Senate meeting.

**Article III – Executive**

**Sec. 1.** All Executive power shall be vested in the President of the SGA whom shall be assisted by a Vice President and other administrative officers, boards and committees.

**Sec. 2. Duties and Powers**

**Par. 1. THE PRESIDENT SHALL**

- A. Enforce and uphold this constitution.
- B. Be the official representative and spokesman for the University of Mobile student body.
- C. Fill by appointment all non-elected positions and any other vacancies which may arise within the SGA, subject to Senate confirmation.
- D. Remove any appointed Executive Officer without Senate consent.
- E. Appoint students to serve on University committees as requested by the Administration.
- F. Propose legislation and/or recommendations to the Senate as deemed appropriate.
- G. Call special meetings of the Senate.
- H. Veto or approve legislation passed by the Senate.
- I. Ensure that students are properly informed of SGA activities and business.
- J. Supervise all elections unless participating in said election.

**Par. 2. THE VICE PRESIDENT SHALL**

- A. Preside over Senate meetings, casting a vote only in cases of a tie.
- B. Assist the President in fulfilling his or her duties.
- C. Execute the duties of the President in cases of the President's temporary absence or assume the office of the President in cases of vacancy.
- D. Keep and make available a permanent and official record of this Constitution and any amendments to it, Senate documents and the official Code of Laws.

**Sec. 3.** The President and Vice President of the SGA shall:

Par. 1. Be fully qualified members of the SGA.

Par. 2. Have and maintain a Cumulative Institutional GPA of 3.0.

Par. 3. Have held an SGA Executive office, Senate seat, served on Cabinet, or held a Student Life leadership position for no less than one year.

Par. 4. Have at least 60 credit hours from the University of Mobile.

Par. 5. Be students in good standing with the University.

Par. 6. Must maintain a presentable appearance at all times as determined by the current Vice President for Student Life.

Par. 7. Complete 2 hours of SGA related work every week.

Par. 8. Must make yourself available for appearances as required by the Vice President for Student Life.

Ex: Preview Days, Registration Weekends, Ram Rush, Miss UM Pageant, Etc.

## **Sec. 4. Executive Organizations**

### **Par. 1. CABINET**

- A. A Cabinet shall exist for the purpose of assisting the President in carrying out the duties of office and advising the President on pertinent issues.
- B. It shall consist of the President and Vice President as well as any appointed officers and any Directors of Executive Boards.
- C. The President may create additional positions as necessary with the approval of the Senate.

## **Article IV – Elections**

### **Sec. 1. Senatorial Selections**

Par. 1. Senate selections shall be held during the Student Life student leader application and interview process in the Spring Semester.

Par. 2. Senators must have a letter of recommendation from their Academic Department Chair.

Par. 3. Senators then must go through an interview and application process through Student Life, before being eligible to be selected.

Par. 4. Allocation of Senate Seats

- A. There shall be no more than 6 Senators representing the 6 academic departments. Representation of the student body is to be divided up into one seat per academic school (Schools of Business, Education, Christian Studies, Alabama School of The Arts, College of Arts and Sciences, and College of Health Professions).
- B. There are also 2 Freshman Senate seats available and selected each fall as At Large Senators.

### **Sec. 2. Executive Elections**

Par. 1. Presidential and Vice Presidential elections shall be held concurrently in a spring General Election.

Par. 2. President and Vice President shall be selected by a majority of the ballots cast in the election, defined as each receiving more than half of the votes cast in an election to be elected.

Par. 3. Students wishing to run for the office of President or Vice President must, after demonstrating that all other requirements are met, deliver to the Vice President for Student Life a petition of one hundred students' signatures in order for their name to be placed on the ballot.

Par. 4. In addition, students wishing to run for the office of President or Vice-President must have attended one Senate meeting.

Par. 5. In cases where the President is running for re-election, or if the President deems it necessary, the President may appoint a Director of Elections with the approval of the Senate.

Par. 6. The SGA President may not serve, by election or succession or a combination of the two, in excess of two complete academic years.

### **Sec. 3. Elections Procedure**

Par. 1. The President shall determine the date, times, and method of elections and ensure the date and guidelines are publicized.

Par. 2. The President may appoint persons to assist in elections. These persons are not subject to Senate approval and may not currently hold or be a candidate for SGA office.

Par. 3. An official list of these persons must be submitted to the Vice President for Student Life and publicly displayed.

Par. 4. Candidates may not facilitate elections, make or count ballots, work ballot booths or campaign on election dates.

Par. 5. Tied elections shall be determined by a runoff election between the tied candidates no more than one week from the date of the election.

Par. 6. The President shall, at the published closing time, gather secured ballots and count them in the presence of the Vice President for Student Life or another designated official of the University to certify the results.

Par. 7. The results must be displayed no more than forty-eight hours from the published closing time of the polls.

Par. 8. Contests of Elections must be submitted in writing to the Vice President for Student Life within five regular class days of the election.

Par. 9 The President and Vice-President of the SGA may hold only one office and may not serve as a Cabinet member during the same academic year.

#### **Sec. 4. Term Lengths**

Par. 1. The President-elect and Vice President-elect shall assume the duties of their respective office following Spring Commencement and serve until the following Spring Commencement.

Par. 2. Senators shall serve from the date of their election until the following Senatorial election.

Par. 3. Appointed Cabinet Officers shall assume the duties of their respective office upon being appointed by the President-elect and confirmed by the Senate and shall serve until an appointment has been confirmed to replace them.

#### **Sec. 5. Inauguration**

Par. 1. Senators shall be administered the Oath of Office by the SGA President at the first Student Life leadership retreat or the first Senate meeting of each academic year.

Par. 2. Members of the Cabinet, following their confirmation, and the President-elect and Vice-President-elect shall be administered the Oath of Office at the first Student Life leadership retreat or the first Senate meeting of each academic year.

Par. 3. The Oath of Office shall read:

“I, (State your name), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of (state office) of the Student Government Association of the University of Mobile and work selflessly to serve my fellow students, uphold this Constitution and exemplify the ideals of this University, so help me God.”

### **Article V – Amendments**

**Sec. 1.** All amendments must be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the Senate or by a petition containing signatures of ten percent of the full membership of the SGA being delivered to the President.

**Sec. 2.** Proposed amendments will be considered adopted upon a two-thirds vote of the ballots cast, provided that ballots are cast by at least twenty-five percent of the membership of the SGA.

### **Article VI -- Ratification**

**Sec. 1.** Upon ratification, this Constitution shall provide for acceptance of the existing SGA officers until such time as new ones may be duly elected as set out in this document.

**Sec. 2.** This Constitution is hereby recommended to the general student body by the Executive Council of the Student Government Association of the University of Mobile as undersigned, and shall be considered ratified and accepted by two-thirds of ballots cast by that body, taking full force and effect as the Supreme Law of this Association, repealing all other previous documents and Constitutions not in accordance with this document as of this 26th Day of March, in the Year of our Lord, 2014.

### **Glossary of Terms**

**Ex-Officio** – An office-holder serving in a non-voting, advisory role.

**At-Large** – Person not representing any specific department but rather the student body as a whole.

**Good Standing** – Any student not currently under University probation or sanction.