



Student Body Constitution of George Mason University

We, the students of George Mason University, in order to promote the general student welfare, do hereby establish this Constitution to govern and delegate rights and responsibilities of those parties stated herein.

ARTICLE I: MISSION STATEMENT

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government of George Mason University. Student Government is a permanent standing entity which receives its legitimacy and authority as representatives of the entire student body. The Student Government of George Mason University advocates the interests of the student body, educates the University community with regard to the state of the institution, and represents the interests of each student. The Student Government of George Mason University will serve as a liaison to the administration, faculty, staff, and University community.

ARTICLE II: LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 1. Establishment

1.1 All Statutory powers are herein granted and shall be vested in the Student Senate of George Mason University.

Section 2. Composition, Qualifications, and Term

2.1 The Student Senate of George Mason University shall be composed of students, chosen by the students; and each senator shall have one vote. Any person may be elected to the Senate, who, at the time of the election has attained a cumulative GPA no lower than 2.5, and is enrolled as either an undergraduate or graduate student at George Mason University.

2.2 The terms of the Senators shall expire in the timeframe of 4:30pm on the last Thursday of April.

2.3 Each Senator shall be a representative of the Student Body of George Mason University, with the exclusion of the Law school.

Section 3. Officers

3.1 The Student Senate shall choose a Speaker who shall preside, a Speaker Pro-Tempore, and a Clerk.

3.2 The members of the Student Senate shall choose the Chairman(s) of the standing committee(s).

Section 4. Duties & Powers

4.1 The Student Senate shall assemble every Thursday of the month, unless otherwise deemed unnecessary by university recognized holiday or statute.

4.2 The Student Senate shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, and the yeas and nays of the members on any questions shall, at the desire of a majority of those present, be entered into the journal.

4.3 The Student Senate shall establish uniform rules of Student Governance.

4.4 The Student Senate shall have the sole power to impeach a member of Student Government.

Section 5. Member Restrictions

5.1 No senator, while holding office, shall be appointed to the Election & Disputer Commission or the Executive Branch of the Student Government; and no person holding office under the Elections & Disputes Commission or the Executive Branch of the Student Government, shall be a member of the Student Senate.

5.2 No candidate for elected office may run for more than one position in Student Government at the same time.

Section 6. Bills and Statutes

6.1 Every bill which shall have passed the Student Senate, shall, before it become a Statute, be presented to the Student body President of George Mason University; if the President approves, the bill shall be signed, but if not, the bill shall be returned with any objections to the Senate which shall enter the objections at large in their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such reconsideration two thirds of the body shall agree to pass the bill, it shall become a statute. But in all such cases the votes of the Student Senate shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the person voting for and against the bill shall be entered into the journal.

Section 7. Limitation of Power

7.1 No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto statute shall be passed.

7.2 No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by statute; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

ARTICLE III: THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Section 1. Establishment, Qualifications, and Terms

1.1 The Executive Power shall be vested in a Student Body President and Vice President of George Mason University, who shall be chosen by the registered students of George Mason University for the same term.

1.2 No person except a student of George Mason University shall be eligible to hold the Office of Student Body President; neither shall any person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained the age of eighteen years, be in good academic and University standing with a cumulative GPA no lower than 2.5, and have attended George Mason University for one year.

1.3 No person constitutionally ineligible to the Office of Student Body President shall be eligible to that of the Student Body Vice President of George Mason University.

1.4 The terms of the Student Body President and the Vice President shall commence at noon on the Saturday following the first Monday of May, next succeeding the election, and ending one year thereafter immediately upon the inauguration of their successors.

Section 2. Elections

2.1 All persons seeking the Office of Student Body President shall designate a nominee for Student Body Vice President, and the names of said nominees shall appear jointly on one ballot, and each registered student shall cast a single vote applicable to both offices.

2.2 All ballots shall be tabulated and transmitted to the Chairperson of the Election and Disputes Commission who shall, in the presence of the Election and Disputes Commission, open all certificates and affirm the results. The persons having the greatest number of votes for Student Body President and Student Body Vice President shall be elected to said offices.

Section 3. Disability, Vacancy, Succession

3.1 In case of the removal of the President from office, or, in the case of death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of said Office, the Student Body Vice President shall assume the powers, duties, and title of said Office. In case of the removal of both the President

and Vice President from office, or in case of death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers of said Offices, the officer of the Student Government who is highest on the following list shall become the Acting Student Body President—upon resignation from their previous office—and shall uphold the powers, duties, and title of the Office of the President: Speaker of the Senate, Speaker Pro-Tempore of the Senate, then to the Chairman in order of the longest to the newest standing committees as laid out in the Code of Student Governance.

3.2 Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Student Body Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a two-thirds vote of the Student Senate.

Section 4. Responsibilities and Powers

4.1 The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Student Government and shall be elected at large from the student body, serving a one-year term as previously defined.

4.2 The President has veto power over all Senate bills. This veto must be exercised before the next Senate meeting, and must be submitted in writing to the Speaker of the Senate.

4.3 The President shall be the official representative of the Student Government to the administration, faculty, and University Committee.

4.4 The President shall have the power to appoint a cabinet to be confirmed by the Senate.

4.5 The President shall be the Chief contracting officer of Student Government and is authorized to review all contracts which commit Student Government funds. The Student Government advisor must co-sign all contracts.

4.6 The President or Executive Branch Designee shall make an Executive Report to the Senate at all regularly scheduled full senate meetings.

ARTICLE IV. ELECTIONS & DISPUTES COMMISSION

Section 1. Establishment, Qualifications, and Terms

1.1 The Elections & Disputes Commission shall have sole power over holding official elections of the Student Government of George Mason University, and preside as an independent adjudicator when and should disputes arise between the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch. The Elections & Disputes Commission is established as an independent body from the Student Government of George Mason University, and except for elections, can be summoned

by either chamber of Student Government if there is ever a dispute between the Legislative and the Executive Branches.

1.2 The Commissioners shall be registered students of George Mason University and shall hold their offices during good University standing, in addition to maintaining a cumulative GPA no lower than 2.5. Commissioners shall hold their office until the date of their respective graduation, resignation, or removal from office.

Section 2. Composition

2.1 That the Elections & Disputes Commissioners shall be appointed by the Student Body President and confirmed by a two thirds majority vote of Senators Present. The Commission shall be comprised of no fewer than three Commissioners, of which there will be one Chief Commissioner, and at least two Associate Commissioners.

2.2 The Election & Disputes Commission shall elect of its own members, in a manner of their own choosing, a chairman who shall run meetings, render rulings, and represent the Elections and Disputes Commission generally, Once elected chair, said individual will remain chair for the remainder of their tenure on the Elections & Disputes Commission.

Section 3. Responsibilities

3.1 The Elections & Disputes Commission shall conduct two regularly scheduled elections each year.

- The EDC shall conduct an election within the Spring Semester, which determines the President and Vice President and thirty seats for senate.
- The EDC shall conduct an election within the Fall Semester, which determines the remaining ten Senate seats. Only freshman and first-semester transfer students shall be eligible to run for Senate during this election.

3.2 The Elections & Disputes Commission shall conduct any emergency elections as conditions may dictate.

- The EDC shall hold an emergency election to fill the Senate if membership drops below 21 members.

3.3 The Elections & Disputes Commission shall provide oversight of elections to ensure compliance with election rules and procedures.

3.4 The Elections & Disputes Commission shall have the power to settle disputes between the Legislative and Executive Branch.

Section 4. Limitations

4.1 Members of the Election and Disputes Commission may not aid in the execution or planning of any Student Government function or event not directly related to the responsibilities stated in this article. This section explicitly does not prohibit commissioners from attending Student Government sponsored functions or events.

4.2 No member of the Elections & Disputes Commission may simultaneously hold any other office within Student Government. Upon resignation or removal from office, former Election and Disputes Commission members are not eligible to hold another office within Student Government for a period of one calendar year.

Section 5. Procedure

5.1 The Elections and Disputes Commission shall be responsible for setting its own procedure and schedule.

ARTICLE V. OATH OF OFFICE

Section 1. Presidential Oath

1.1 Before entering on the execution of the Office of Student Body President, the following Oath or Affirmation shall be taken: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of Student Body President of George Mason University, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United states, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Student Body Constitution of George Mason University."

Section 2. Constitutional Oath

2.1 The Senators, Election & Disputes Commissioners, and all other officers of Student Government, shall be bound by the following Oath or Affirmation: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Student Body Constitution of George Mason University; and that I will faithfully and honorably discharge all the duties incumbent upon me as an officer of the Students to the best of my ability."

ARTICLE VI. IMPEACHMENT

Any elected or appointed official under the Student Government of George Mason University can be impeached upon accusations hereby defined as alleged malfeasance, alleged corruption, alleged negligence, dereliction of duty, or alleged misconduct.

Section 1. Articles of Impeachment

1.1 A resolution of impeachment, after being passed by a two-thirds majority of Senators present, is to be submitted in writing to the Elections & Disputes Commission in accordance with the rules and regulations and is considered binding.

Section 2. Penalties and Punishment

2.1 Should the Elections and Disputes Commission find the accused Officer responsible for the offense(s), the Elections and Disputes Commission shall impose any punishment not exceeding removal from office and exclusion from the Student Government of George Mason University.

ARTICLE VII. SUFFRAGE

Section 1. Source of Power

1.1 All power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the students, who all have the right of suffrage.

Section 2. Qualifications

2.1 In elections by the people, each qualified elector shall be a student of George Mason University.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Right of Reform

1.1 The Student Body and the Student Government shall share the power to amend this Constitution.

Section 2. Student Government

2.1 Any member of the Student Government may submit a bill to amend this Constitution.

2.2 After a bill is composed to amend this Constitution, the Senate must hold at least one open public hearing in which students will be given adequate time to speak and give input into the proposed changes. This public hearing must be publicized, through appropriate media sources, at least two consecutive weeks before the hearing is held. The Senate shall have the power to establish procedures for the open hearing. After holding the public hearing the bill may be submitted for first reading to the Senate.

2.3 Two-thirds of the Senate must be present in order to vote on the proposed amendment(s), and four-fifths of those present must approve in order to pass the bill.

2.4 Upon signature of the Student Body President, or Legislative Override, the bill shall be forwarded to the Commissioner of the Elections & Dispute Commission. The Commissioner shall place the proposed amendment on the referendum at the next appropriate election.

2.5 A majority of the students voting on the proposed amendment shall be required to amend the Constitution.

Section 3. Student Body

3.1 Five percent of the Student Body of George Mason University, excluding the Law School, must transmit a signed petition complete with school identification numbers, to amend this Constitution to the Commissioner of the Elections & Disputes Commission.

3.2 Once the petition is received, and the requisite number of petitioners is confirmed as registered students of George Mason University, the Commissioner of the Elections & Disputes Commission shall vote to determine if the issue merits a special election or if the issue is to be decided at the next election.

ARTICLE IX. INSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY

The powers and provisions contained herein, shall serve as the primary source of George Mason University Student Government authority, and any further documents regarding statutes of Student Governance shall be viewed as inferior to this Constitution.