

Board of Trustees Policy

SUBJECT: Student Government Association Constitution	NUMBER: 3.10
	DATE: May 19, 2025 Resolution # 25-53
	SUPERSEDES: Resolution #21-59, May 17, 2021

Purpose

The Student Government Association (SGA) of SUNY Schenectady exists to represent the student body in campus affairs, to protect student rights, to advocate for resources and support services, and to ensure transparent governance in all matters concerning the welfare and interests of students.

Policy

The Student Government Association Constitution shall be the basis for the governance of the SGA. All full-time (full-time status is defined as enrollment in at least 12 credit hours per semester.) and part-time students (part-time status is defined as enrollment in fewer than 12 credit hours) of SUNY Schenectady shall become members of the student body upon payment of the appropriate student activities fees. The SGA shall review any special circumstances to ensure equitable participation, including students who are transitioning between part-time and full-time statuses. All members of the SUNY Schenectady student body may participate in SGA Senate meetings and may vote in elections for SGA Senators and executive officers.

Procedures

This constitution shall be reviewed a minimum of every two years by an ad-hoc committee with the purpose of determining if any revisions or additions are needed. If so, the committee will make recommendations to the SGA Student Senate for approval and transmittal to the Board of Trustees.

Preamble:

We, the students of SUNY Schenectady County Community College (“SUNY Schenectady”), in order to form an organization through which the students may voice their opinions, register their wishes and ensure their rights, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the students of SUNY Schenectady.

Article I: Name of Organization

The name of the organization shall be the Student Government Association of SUNY Schenectady County Community College (the “SGA”).

Article II: Purpose

The Student Government Association (SGA) of SUNY Schenectady exists to represent the student body in campus affairs, protect student rights, advocate for resources and support services, and ensure transparent governance in all matters concerning the welfare and interests of students. The constitution shall be the basis for the governance of the SGA.

Article III: Membership of the Student Body

Section 1. Eligibility

All full- and part-time students of SUNY Schenectady shall become members of the student body upon payment of the appropriate student activity fees. All full-time (full-time status is defined as enrollment in at least 12 credit hours per semester.) and part-time students (part-time status is defined as enrollment in fewer than 12 credit hours) of SUNY Schenectady shall become members of the student body upon payment of the appropriate student activities fees. The SGA shall review any special circumstances to ensure equitable participation, including students who are transitioning between part-time and full-time statuses

Section 2. Rights and Responsibilities

All members of the SUNY Schenectady student body as defined in Article III, section 1 may participate in SGA meetings and may vote in elections for SGA Senators and executive officers.

Article IV: Student Senate Section 1: Duties and Powers

The Student Senate shall:

Act on behalf of the SUNY Schenectady student body to promote and support activities that enhance the purpose of the Student Government Association (SGA).

Be responsible for:

Determining, administering, and allocating all funds accruing to the student body, subject to the discretion of the SUNY Schenectady Board of Trustees.

- Approving line-item budget transfers exceeding:
- \$500 between line items.

- \$300 within an SGA organization's account.

Maintain cooperative relationships with student leaders from other institutions of higher learning and the community, as well as the Faculty Student Association of SUNY Schenectady.

Represent the SUNY Schenectady student body in its relations with faculty and administrative officers.

Oversee all organizations of the SGA, subject to the discretion of the SUNY Schenectady Board of Trustees.

Exercise financial oversight by:

- Investigating any apparent or suspected improper expenditures by SGA organizations.
- Freezing the budget of an organization for a reasonable period during such investigations until proper conclusions are reached.
- Approval or disapproval of all disbursements within the SGA organizations

Section 2: SGA Senate Meetings

A. Regular Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Student Government Association Senate (the "Student Senate") shall be called by the President of the SGA at least every other week during the regular academic year.
2. Times and places for these meetings shall be determined by the SGA Executive Board, in cooperation with SUNY Schenectady.

B. Notice for Regular Meetings

1. Notice of all regular SGA Student Senate meetings, including the time and place, shall be published at least two days prior to the meeting.
2. Such notice shall be delivered by the SGA President or Secretary to the SGA Advisor for electronic distribution to the SUNY Schenectady student body.

C. Special Meetings

1. Special meetings of the SGA Student Senate may be called by:
 - a. The SGA President, A quorum of the Student Senate, The SGA Advisor, The President of SUNY Schenectady
 - b. Special meetings shall address only the designated purposes specified in the meeting notice.

D. Notice for Special Meetings

1. Notice of all special meetings, including the time, place, and purpose, shall be published at least two days prior to the meeting.

2. Such notice shall be delivered by the SGA President or Secretary to the SGA Advisor for electronic distribution to the SUNY Schenectady student body.

E. Quorum

1. A quorum shall consist of at least a simple majority of the elected, seated and voting members of the SGA Senate members.

2. A majority of the quorum shall decide all legislation proposed by the SGA Student Senate.

F. Accessibility

- a. All meetings of the SGA shall be open to the SUNY Schenectady community.
- b. Anyone present at these meetings may be recognized by the President.
- c. Outside parties may attend with pre-approval by the Vice President of Student Affairs and SGA Advisor

G. Meeting Records

All minutes of the Student Senate shall be made available to SUNY Schenectady student body members.

H. Procedures

SGA Student Senate sessions shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, as modified by this Constitution.

Article V: SGA Officers and Student Senators

Section 1. Structure

The composition of the SGA Student Senate shall be reviewed annually to reflect the current student population and the number of student organizations. In the event of vacancies, the Student Senate shall appoint new members from the pool of eligible students, ensuring diverse representation.

Section 2. Positions

A. The officers of the SGA shall be: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Student Trustee.

B. The Student Trustee to the SUNY Schenectady Board of Trustees shall be a non-voting officer of the SGA.

C. The officers of the SGA shall comprise the officers of the SGA Student Senate.

- D. There will be a maximum of 11 SGA Senators, excluding officers of the SGA, Student Senate.
- E. There shall be 1 Secretary appointed by the SGA President. The Secretary shall be a non-voting member of the SGA Student Senate.

Section 3: Qualifications

A. General Eligibility for the Student Senate

- To be eligible for any position on the Student Senate, the student must:
- Be a member of the Student Government Association (SGA).
- Maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.25
 - If a Student Senate member's cumulative GPA falls below 2.25, they will be dismissed from their office.
- First-semester students are exempt from the 2.25 GPA requirement.
- No member of the SGA may receive payments from any SGA organization without the unanimous approval of the SGA.

B. Eligibility for SGA Officer Positions

To qualify for an officer position in the Student Government Association (SGA), a student must meet the following criteria:

1. Credit Requirement:

- a. A student must have successfully completed at least twelve (12) accepted credits at SUNY Schenectady
- b. "Accepted credits" are defined as credits recognized and recorded by SUNY Schenectady toward a student's degree or program requirements.

2. Good Standing Requirement:

A student must be in good standing with SUNY Schenectady, as determined by the Vice President of Student Affairs. Good standing includes meeting academic, financial, and conduct expectations as set by SUNY Schenectady policies.

C. Additional Requirements for Specific Offices

- 1. Candidates must meet any further specific requirements for their desired office.
- 2. Such requirements shall be established by the Elections Board and approved by a two-thirds majority of the entire Student Senate.

Section 4. Nominations

- 1. Candidates for all positions on the SGA Senate shall present to the Elections Board a Petition for Candidacy. The Petition for Candidacy may be signed to support candidacy by members of the SUNY Schenectady student body. The Elections Board, with the vote of two-thirds of the entire Student Senate, may increase or decrease the number of signatures needed or not needed on all Petitions of Candidacy.
- 2. Candidates for all positions on the SGA may campaign and engage with the student body and promote their candidacy, each individual candidate is subject to the approval of the SGA Advisor & VP of Student Affairs
- 3. The Petition for Candidacy must have final approval by the Vice President of Student

4. Affairs as to such candidate's eligibility.

Section 5. Elections

- A. The officers of the SGA shall be elected by a plurality vote of the members of the SUNY Schenectady Student Body. The date of elections shall be announced to the SUNY Schenectady Student Body no less than fourteen days prior to the election.
- B. All Student Senate and officer positions shall run consecutively from June 1 – May 30.
- C. In the event of a vacancy in the Presidency of the SGA, the Vice-President of the SGA shall assume that office. For any other vacancy including one caused by the assumption of the Presidency by the Vice-President, the remaining SGA officers and the members of the Student Senate shall elect replacements who shall complete the unexpired term of office.
- D. Candidates for such replacement positions shall follow the procedures as stated for the nomination of those persons they are replacing and shall meet the same qualifications and requirements as stated for original elections. In the event the number of vacancies is four or more at one time, the Student Senate shall hold an election open to the SUNY Schenectady student body. In the event the number of vacancies is four or more at one time, the SGA Student Senate shall hold an election open to the SUNY Schenectady
- E. In the event of a tie for one of the officer positions of the SGA or if more than one candidate receives the highest number of votes, a run-off election will be held between the tied candidates within seven school days after the initial election took place. The Election Board will institute and govern the run-off election.

Section 6. Officers: Duties and Powers

- A. President

The President of the SGA shall:

- Execute and enforce the provisions of this Constitution.
- Call and preside over all meetings of the SGA and the Student Senate.
- Vote on Student Senate legislation only in the event of a tie.

- Appoint all necessary SGA committee chairpersons.
- Appoint interim chairs for any SGA committee not fulfilling its appointed role.
- Receive reports from all SGA subsidiary organizations.
- Serve as the official representative of the SGA and Student Senate to SUNY Schenectady and the community.

- Appoint a representative from the Student Senate, with SGA Advisor approval, if unable to serve.
- Veto any motion passed by the Student Senate within two school days of adjournment, with a written statement of reason.

- Have vetoes overridden by a two-thirds vote of the entire Student Senate.

B. Vice-President

The Vice-President of the SGA shall:

- Perform all duties of the President in their absence.
- Present charters and materials relevant to chartering SGA clubs and activities to the Student Senate.
- Prevent scheduling conflicts for SGA clubs and organizations.
- Publish a calendar of upcoming events.
- Coordinate club and organization activities with the Treasurer.
- Enforce and implement direct communications with SGA clubs and organizations.

C. Treasurer

The Treasurer of the SGA shall:

- Receive and dispense SGA funds as directed by the Student Senate.
- Maintain accurate accounts of all revenue and expenditures of student activity
- fees.
- Ensure that all files and books concerning fiscal matters are up to date.
- Enforce fiscal policies in compliance with finance rules and regulations.

D. Secretary

- Provide the SGA Annual Year-End Audit Report to SGA members.
- The Secretary of the SGA shall:
- Be appointed by the President based on secretarial skills.
- Perform filing, dictation, and transcription tasks for the Executive Board and Student Senate.
- Keep and publish minutes of each Student Senate session at least two days prior to the next session.
- Typically serve as a non-voting member of the SGA and is not required to join standing or ad hoc committees.
- May be selected from elected voting members of the Senate at the President's discretion if necessary.

E. Student Representative to the Board of Trustees

The Student Trustee shall:

- Serve as the liaison between the Student Senate and the SUNY Schenectady Board of Trustees.
- Attend all Student Senate meetings.
- Report Board of Trustees actions to the Student Senate.
- Be elected within 30 days of the conclusion of Spring Semester classes via popular vote.

- Serve from July 1 to June 30.

F. Executive Board

The Executive Board of the SGA shall consist of:

- President
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Student Trustee (non-voting member)

Duties of the Executive Board:

- A. Hold weekly meetings to discuss SGA business.
- B. Actions taken by the Executive Board shall stand as final unless challenged and appealed by:
 - A Student Senate vote.
 - The Constitution and Judicial Committee.
 - A SUNY Schenectady student body vote.

Section 7. Senators: Duties and Powers

- A. Senators are elected to serve one academic year and shall receive compensation for their services per semester in accordance with the SGA approved budget for the applicable academic year. Each Senator shall have one vote per legislative item during Student Senate sessions.
- B. Absent members who fail to notify an Executive Board member prior to any Student Senate session are considered "unexcused" and will receive a deduction in stipend proportionate to the quantity of unexcused absences, all in accordance with the following schedule:

Unexcused Absences: deduction in stipend

- 1 per semester = 10 percent
- 2 per semester = 50 percent
- 3 per semester = 100 percent

Section 8. Student Activity Fee

The Student Senate is responsible for the distribution of the Student Activities funds to the various student clubs, organizations and athletic teams. Annually in June, the SGA will participate in a professional audit conducted by an external, professional auditing firm.

Section 9. Impeachment and Removal

A. Grounds for Impeachment

1. Any Officer, Senator, or member of the SGA may be impeached for cause, including but not limited to:

- Violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
 - Failure to fulfill duties outlined in this Constitution.
 - Misuse of SGA resources.
 - Behavior that undermines the integrity of the SGA.
2. Initiation of Impeachment
 - A two-thirds vote of the entire Student Senate is required to initiate impeachment proceedings.
- B. Notification of Impeachment
- Written Notice
- Specific reasons for impeachment must be provided in writing to the member under impeachment at least seven days prior to the hearing.
- C. Impeachment Hearing
- Hearing Process
- The Chairperson of the Constitution and Judicial Committee shall preside over the impeachment hearing.
- The impeached member will have the opportunity to present a defense.
 - Special Cases
 - If the Chairperson of the Constitution and Judicial Committee is the member under impeachment, the President shall preside over the hearing.
- D. Attendance and Automatic Removal
1. Excessive Absences
 - Any Officer, Senator, or Secretary with more than three unexcused absences from Student Senate or SGA Committee meetings without prior approval from an SGA Officer or the SGA Advisor will be recommended for removal.
 - Written notification of the removal recommendation will be sent to the individual.
 2. Reinstatement Appeal Process
 - The individual may appeal their removal by submitting a written request to the SGA Advisor and the Student Senate Executive Board.
 - The Executive Board must review and decide on the appeal within five business days of receiving the request.
- E. Final Vote for Removal
1. Removal Decision
 - Following the impeachment hearing, a vote of two-thirds of the entire Student Senate is required to remove the individual from their position.
 2. Appeal of Decision
 - If removed, the individual may submit a final appeal to the SGA Advisor and Executive Board for reconsideration.

Article VI: Student Senate Committees

Section 1. Types and Structures

All standing and special (ad hoc) committee chairpersons shall be named from among the members of the Student Senate with the approval of the Student Senate, except where the Constitution mandates other appointments. The appointed chairpersons of committees shall have the privilege of naming SGA members to serve on their committees, provided the President of the SGA approves such persons for committee membership. Each chairperson must document and report all pertinent information to the Student Senate.

Section 2. Establishment of Committees

At the beginning of each academic year, the Student Senate shall evaluate the needs of the student body and establish standing committees accordingly. These committees will be determined by the SGA officers using the guidance outlined in this Article. Committees established for the academic year must be maintained throughout that year, and any additional special (ad hoc) committees may be created as necessary.

Section 3. Committee Leadership

Each committee must be chaired by a member of the Student Senate. The President of the SGA will appoint a Senator to serve as chair for each committee, subject to approval by the Student Senate. Senators may chair only one committee at a time unless expressly approved by the Senate. Senate chairs will receive an additional stipend set forth by the Senate in addition to the SGA stipend.

Section 4. Membership Requirements

The chairpersons of committees may invite additional SGA members, students, faculty, or staff to join their committees, subject to approval by the SGA President. Committees should strive for broad representation and inclusivity in their membership to reflect the diverse needs of the student body.

Section 5. Committee Responsibilities and Reporting

Each committee chairperson must:

- Convene meetings regularly to fulfill the objectives of the committee.
- Ensure that the committee operates in alignment with the mission and goals of the SGA.
- Document all meetings and activities, providing regular updates to the Student Senate.
- Submit an annual report summarizing the committee's work and outcomes to the SGA
- President and Senate.

Section 6. Special (Ad-Hoc) Committees

The President of the SGA may appoint special (ad hoc) committees as necessary to address specific issues or projects. The President may name any member of the SGA to act as chairperson, with approval from the Senate. Special committees are temporary and will

dissolve upon completion of their assigned tasks unless renewed by the Senate.

Section 7. Mandatory Committee Participation

Each Senator must actively participate in at least one committee, either as a chairperson or a member. This ensures broad involvement in the governance and operations of the SGA. The SGA President will monitor and enforce participation.

Section 8. Committee Guidelines

The Student Senate will develop and maintain a set of guidelines for committees, including:

- General objectives for common types of committees (e.g., Budget and Finance, Elections, Student Programming Board).
- Procedures for creating and dissolving committees.
- Expectations regarding membership and chairperson responsibilities.

Section 9. Annual Review of Committees

During the last Student Senate meeting of the academic year, the Senate will review the effectiveness and relevance of all established committees. The SGA President will compile recommendations for committee changes or continuation to guide the next year's Senate in their establishment of committees.

Section 10. List of Committees

A. Council of Clubs and Organizations Committee

This committee facilitates communication and collaboration between the Student Senate and all SGA-recognized clubs, organizations, and athletic teams. This committee includes representatives from each club or organization and up to four Senators. Meetings will occur at least twice per semester to ensure effective coordination and support for student groups.

B. Budget and Finance Committee

Responsible for managing the financial activities of the SGA, this committee reviews and approves club/organization budget requests exceeding \$50. It also prepares budget recommendations, enforces fiscal policies, and advises the Student Senate on financial matters. . To avoid conflicts of interest, members of this committee may not serve on the Constitution and Judicial Committee.

C. Constitution and Judicial Committee

This committee oversees the governance and policy framework of the SGA. It reviews and rules on the constitutionality of Student Senate legislation and proposed club charters. The committee meets as needed each semester. Its members do not serve on the Budget and Finance Committee to maintain impartiality.

D. Election Committee

This committee manages and oversees all SGA elections, ensuring fair and transparent processes. It is responsible for setting election dates, coordinating election logistics, and recommending candidate eligibility requirements. The committee includes up to five members and reports directly to the Student Senate. Members of the SGA running for re-

election may not serve on the Election Committee

E. Student Programming Committee

This committee plans and organizes cultural, social, educational, and recreational events for the student body. Chaired by a Student Senator, it is open to all students and consists of no more than ten members. The committee aims to foster student engagement through diverse programming. The Student Programming Board will work with the Student Activities Advisor to ensure all programming reflects the mission of the college.

F. Intercultural Affairs Committee (IAC)

This committee promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion by organizing cultural events and initiatives that foster awareness and understanding. It collaborates with campus and community partners to create meaningful programming that reflects the diverse experiences of the student body. Membership includes up to eight individuals, with a Student Senator as chair.

G. Sustainability Committee

This committee advocates for sustainable practices and raises awareness of environmental issues within the campus community. Its initiatives aim to reduce the institution's environmental footprint and educate students on sustainable living. The committee is chaired by a Student Senator and includes up to six members.

H. Student Volunteer Committee

This committee's main role is to assist in planning, promoting, and carrying out events and service projects that enhance student life and contribute to the local community. The members will focus on areas such as community service, campus engagement, sustainability, and student wellness, fostering leadership, civic responsibility, and school spirit.

Section 11. Establishment and Review

The above committees are recommended as essential for fostering student engagement, governance, and campus life at a small community college. At the beginning of each academic year, the Student Senate will review the need for these committees and confirm their establishment based on the priorities of the student body.

Section 12. Committee Leadership

Each committee must be chaired by a Student Senator, with appointments approved by the Student Senate. Chairs are responsible for recruiting members, organizing meetings, and reporting on committee activities.

Article VII: Dissolution Clause

In the event of dissolution of the SGA, all assets remaining after payment of its just debts and obligations shall be transferred to SUNY Schenectady and be used to promote the purposes of the SGA

Article VIII: Amendment Clause

An amendment to this Constitution must be passed by a two-thirds vote of the entire Student Senate and approval of the SGA advisor and announced to the SUNY Schenectady student body no later than five business days after approval.

Article IX: Ratification Clause

Ratification of this Constitution will take place when it is approved by a majority vote of the SGA

Article X: Review Clause

This constitution shall be reviewed a minimum of every two years by an ad hoc committee with the purpose of determining if any revisions or additions are needed. If so, the committee will make those recommendations

Approved by the SGA on April 17th, 2025

Suggested Amendments approved by the Student Senate 4/9