



University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
Student Government Association Constitution

SGA Constitution

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IN ORDER to represent the students of UAFS, to give students a voice and a vote, to maintain the integrity of our institution, and to make viable progressive changes for the good of the students, faculty, staff, and administration, we, the students of UAFS, do ordain and establish this Constitution.

Article I: Name and Purpose

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be the UAFS Student Government Association (SGA).

Section 2: Purpose

The purpose of the SGA shall be to further the interests of the students of UAFS through representation in matters concerning student life, affairs, and the Campus and Community Engagement (CACE) Office. We strive to be the liaison between the student body and the institution.

Article II: Authority and Powers

The SGA exercises concurrently with the university faculty, staff, and administration the following powers delegated to it by the students of UAFS:

- SGA shall have the power to conduct all elections for the SGA and any other election of importance to the entire student body.
- The SGA shall have the power to appoint student representatives, as requested, to administrative boards, advisory committees, and any other committee or board requesting a student presence.
- The SGA shall recommend an annual budget to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and administer the funds allocated to the Student Government Association and all programs funded by the Association.
- The SGA shall have the power to make any recommendations in writing to the appropriate Dean or Vice Chancellor on behalf of the legitimate interests of the student body.
- The SGA shall have the power to recommend the allocation of funds for the operation of the SGA and its projects, as well as recommend the allocation of funds to Registered Student Organization(s) (RSO, RSOs) for their programs and projects and regulate the use of funds upon the approval of the CACE Office.
- The SGA shall have the power to deny the request of a potential RSO if they have not completed all the necessary paperwork and qualifications set forth by the RSO Handbook to become recognized. This decision can be overruled by the CACE Office at their discretion.
- The SGA shall have the power to revoke the status of an RSO if they have not completed all requirements for renewal set forth by the CACE Office.
- The SGA shall have the power to pass legislation deemed necessary and proper for the execution of the foregoing powers and all other powers based in this Constitution of the SGA of UAFS or any committee or officer thereof.
- The SGA is bound to protect the legitimate rights and interests of the student body.
- The SGA shall be the sole, legitimate, organized representation of the student body at UAFS.
- The SGA shall aid in advertising and critiquing NUMAS award application packets.

Article III: Officers

Section 1: Term of Office

The President and Vice President of Student Government shall be the offices vested with power to govern all sections of the Student Government Association. There shall be one President and one Vice President, elected by the student body on a single ballot as running mates. They shall take office during the “Passing the Gavel” ceremony in accordance with the NUMAS Award Ceremony held annually and shall serve for a term of one year after election or until resignation or impeachment.

Section 2: Qualifications

- 1) The qualifications for the offices of President and Vice President of the SGA shall be:
 - Completion of a minimum of sixty (60) hours, with at least thirty (30) hours completed at this institution.
 - Have and maintain good academic and disciplinary standing.
 - Maintain twelve (12) hours per semester, except for their last semester prior to graduation from UAFS, in which they can have as little as three (3) hours.
 - Maintain at least a minimum of a 2.5 cumulative GPA.
- 2) The qualifications for the offices of Chief of Staff, Secretary, and Treasurer of the SGA shall be:
 - Completion of a minimum of thirty (30) hours, with at least fifteen (15) hours completed at this institution.
 - Have and maintain good academic and disciplinary standing.
 - Maintain twelve (12) hours per semester, except for their last semester prior to graduation from UAFS, in which they can have as little as three (3) hours.
 - Maintain at least a minimum of a 2.5 cumulative GPA.
- 3) No person shall be elected to the office of President more than twice.
- 4) The President and Vice President shall not serve as President, Vice President, or Treasurer of another RSO.

- 5) All officers receiving a scholarship/stipend must carry no less than twelve (12) semester hours each semester receiving the scholarship/stipend, except in the case of graduating seniors. They may carry no less than three (3) hours for his/her last semester.
- 6) The Treasurer shall not serve as the President, Vice President, or Treasurer of any SGA funded organization.

Section 3: Succession and Vacancies

- 1) In the event of the death, removal, or resignation of the President, the Vice President shall become President.
- 2) In the event of the death, removal, or resignation of the Vice President, the President may appoint a Vice President from the Legislative Senate contingent upon their eligibility and approval by a two-thirds majority of the Legislative Senate. If no one is eligible, a special election shall be called.
- 3) In the event the offices of both the President and Vice President are vacant concurrently, the Chief of Staff shall become the President, leaving the Chief of Staff vacant until an emergency election can be called. At such time, only the positions of President and Vice President will be on the ballot.
- 4) If the positions of President, Vice President, and Chief of Staff all become vacant concurrently, the Secretary shall fill the position of President and shall call an emergency election to fill the vacant positions of President, Vice President, and Chief of Staff.
- 5) If the positions of President, Vice President, Chief of Staff, and Secretary all become vacant concurrently, the Treasurer shall fill the position of President and shall call an emergency election to fill the vacant positions of President, Vice President, Chief of Staff, and Secretary.
- 6) If the positions of President, Vice President, Chief of Staff, Secretary, and Treasurer all become vacant, the Legislative Senate shall elect a President Pro-Tempore from its membership at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The advisor(s) shall chair this meeting. The newly elected President Pro-Tempore will then call an emergency election to fill the vacant positions of President, Vice President, Chief of Staff, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- 7) If the position of President becomes vacant within two weeks of the next regular election, an emergency election will not be necessary.
- 8) If the positions of three or more of the Executive Board members become vacant concurrently, an emergency election will be held.

- 9) An emergency election shall follow the same procedures as a normal election, with a shortened timeframe.
 - a. The positions will be advertised for a week, with applications being due that Friday.
 - b. Campaigning will start the Monday after applications are due.
 - c. Voting will be on the Thursday and Friday of the same week campaigning started.
 - d. The President and the Vice President shall run separately.
- 10) If either the Chief of Staff, the Secretary, or the Treasurer cannot fulfill their term, the President can appoint a qualified member from the Senate with the approval of a 2/3 majority.

Article IV: Legislative Senate

Section 1: Authority

- 1) The Legislative Senate shall be the legislative branch of the SGA of UAFS.
- 2) The Legislative Senate shall:
 - a. Effectuate all articles of this Constitution and its By-laws.
 - b. Aid and assist students and RSOs.
 - c. Receive student complaints, investigate student problems, and work toward their resolution.
 - d. Coordinate ongoing research and gather information in determining student interests.
 - e. Review and evaluate resolutions or proposals from members.
 - f. Inform the student body of proposals initiated, and actions taken by the Legislative Senate.
 - g. Establish By-laws, regulations, and policies to govern the internal functions of the SGA.
 - h. Approve or dismiss resolutions, decisions, and actions of all standing and ad hoc committees.
 - i. Overturn a presidential veto with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

Section 2: Membership

- 1) The SGA shall conduct elections during the spring semester for the student body to elect senators for a term of one academic year.
 - a. The Freshman Class and International Senate seats will be held vacant after spring elections until the following fall semester in

order to hold elections for this position with the new freshman and international student class.

- 2) Elections for vacant seats that were not filled in the previous spring semester may also take place.
- 3) The membership of the Legislative Senate shall be derived from the undergraduate students of UAFS who are in good standing, as defined by university policy.
 - a. All Senators must maintain a minimum of a 2.5 cumulative GPA while in office.
 - b. All Senators must be enrolled in a minimum of twelve (12) hours for the fall and spring semesters for which they are in the office. Except for their last semester of their senior year, they could carry a minimum of three (3) hours.
 - c. Class Senators must reside as a member of the class they represent by the time they take office for their term.
 - d. College Senators must be declared in a major from the college they represent.
 - i. If a College Senator changes their major, while in office, to a major outside of the college they represent, they forfeit their current position in SGA. They may run for another representative position for which they qualify in the next election.

Section 3: Distribution of Seats

- 1) There shall be three (3) Senators elected from each degree offering college at UAFS.
 - a. To be elected as a Senator of the college, you must be a member of that college, as defined by UAFS.
- 2) There shall be one (1) Senator elected from each class of freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior.
 - a. To be elected as a Senator of the class, you must be a member of that class as defined by UAFS.
- 3) There shall be four (4) at-large members elected from the student body as a whole.
- 4) There shall be one (1) Senator from the UAFS International Student population.

Section 4: Term and Succession

- 1) Senators must be able to serve a term of one (1) academic year and carry at least twelve (12) hours per semester.
- 2) Senators shall take office during the “Passing of the Gavel” ceremony at the NUMAS Award Ceremony held annually. Incoming senators shall have the opportunity to shadow outgoing Senators from the time they are elected until the NUMAS Awards as a part of the transition process.
- 3) The eligible candidate having the next highest number of votes in the most recent election shall automatically fill any Senator seat that becomes vacant due to death, removal, or resignation for the remainder of the unexpired term. The Chief of Staff or their designee shall notify the eligible candidate within one (1) week of the seat becoming vacant.
- 4) If there are not any other eligible candidates, the Executive Board shall advertise the vacant seat for one (1) week. The Executive Board shall interview the interested students and appoint an eligible candidate for the vacant seat within two (2) weeks of the seat becoming vacated.
- 5) Confirmation of such appointments will take place in the next legislative meeting and must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote.

Section 5: Duties and Privileges of Senators

- 1) Senators shall have the following duties:
 - a. Attend weekly meetings of the Legislative Senate to be held at a special location and the time announced.
 - b. Attend one (1) office hour a week during the time in which they serve.
 - c. Serve on at least one (1) committee.
 - d. Attend all committee meetings in which they serve on.
 - e. Serve as a liaison to RSOs.
 - f. Review all comments and submissions by students, delegating concerns to the appropriate committee.
 - g. Abide by the attendance policies outlined in the By-laws.
 - h. Abide by the Constitution and its By-laws.
 - i. Dress business casual and display SGA nametag while on campus at any time on the day of general meetings.
 - j. Wear SGA nametag while working SGA events.
- 2) Failure to uphold the duties of the office described in the Constitution and the By-laws is sufficient grounds for removal from their office, as outlined in the By-laws.

- 3) Each Senator shall have the privilege of debating and voting during meetings of the Legislative Senate. Members may also initiate legislation to be placed before the body.

Article V: Meetings

- 1) Regular meetings of the Legislative Senate shall be held once a week during the fall and spring semesters on Wednesday at 4:00.
- 2) The President or Executive Board may call special meetings of the Legislative Senate at any time. Upon the written request to the President by ten (10) representatives or one-percent (1%) of the student body, the President shall call a special meeting of the Legislative Senate. Notification to Senators of the time and place of a special meeting must occur at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the time of the meeting.
- 3) All meetings shall be open to the public.
- 4) A quorum shall be defined as two-thirds of the body, or the next highest whole number, of the Senate. Business shall be carried out only when a quorum of Senators are present.

Article VI: Procedure

- 1) The Senate shall be governed by the rules contained within the By-laws and, in cases not specifically provided for by the By-laws, Roberts' Rules of Order (Latest Revised Edition).
- 2) If there is a conflict between Robert's Rules of Order (Latest Revised Edition), this Constitution and By-laws shall take precedence.
- 3) The President shall chair all meetings of the Legislative Senate. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall assume the chair. Should the Vice President be unable to assume the chair, the Chief of Staff shall assume the chair. Should the Chief of Staff be unable to assume the chair, the Secretary shall assume the chair. Should the Secretary be unable to assume the chair, the Treasurer shall assume the chair. If no Executive Board members are present, then the Advisor(s) shall assume the chair and immediately dismiss the meeting.

Article VII: Advisors

- 1) There shall be at least two (2) advisors to the SGA who shall be selected by the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Article VIII: Referendum

Section 1: Definition

A referendum is the casting of votes by the students of UAFS for effecting change of existing policy initiated by students.

Section 2: Process

- 1) Any petition signed by ten-percent (10%) of the student body of UAFS may be presented to the President for an initiative by referendum excluding the allocation of students' fees.
- 2) The referendum may be held at a special election or at the next regularly scheduled election.
 - a. Votes may be cast via online voting OR by paper ballot.

Article IX: Amendments

- 1) An amendment to this Constitution may be proposed to the student body by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Legislative Senate or by ten-percent (10%) of the student body of UAFS upon petition to the President.
- 2) The student body shall vote on the proposed amendment at a special election or at the next regularly scheduled election as determined by the President.
- 3) If a simple majority of those students voting approve the amendment, it shall become a part of the Constitution.

Article X: Non-Discriminatory Clause

The SGA of UAFS shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or handicap in recruitment, admission to membership, or access thereof, or treatment in its programs and activities.

Article XI: Ratification

This Constitution shall supersede any and all previous Constitutions of the SGA of UAFS and any other organization(s) claiming to be the administration of students.

This revision shall go into effect after it has been approved by the student body, before the fall semester of the 2025-2026 academic year.