

**PREAMBLE**

We, the students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, pledge to provide a unified organization that is capable of planning and executing college functions, voicing its opinion, and aiding in the implementation of programs planned in accordance with the wants and needs of the student body. We commit ourselves to providing a proper educational and social atmosphere for the University of Maryland School of Social Work, instituting or complementing extra-curricular activities, creating a comprehensive and varied slate of activities, ensuring and protecting the rights of students matriculated at the University of Maryland School of Social Work as guaranteed by the constitution and laws of the United States of America. Finally, we will work to make the University of Maryland School of Social Work an integral part of the Baltimore community and the state of Maryland. It is with these principles and promises in mind that we ordain and establish this constitution of the Student Government Association of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, hereby dedicating ourselves as members of the Student Government Association.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE I. Name of the organization.**

The name of this organization shall be Student Government Association (hereafter referred to as SGA) of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

### **ARTICLE II. Purpose of organization.**

The purpose of the SGA shall be to enhance the quality of the graduate school experience for students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work. To achieve this purpose, SGA shall provide programming to complement the educational opportunities available to the University of Maryland School of Social Work students, as well as provide leadership opportunities to its members. The SGA shall also avail itself, in any way possible, to represent the needs of the students to the University of Maryland School of Social Work Faculty, Administrative Advisor, Staff, and Board.

### **ARTICLE III. Membership**

**Section 1.** The SGA shall strive to maintain a minimum of one member from each club or organization of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

**Section 2.** All students (hereafter referred to as the General Assembly) enrolled at the University of Maryland School of Social Work for six (6) credits or more or pursuing dual degrees simultaneously in conjunction with another school within the University of Maryland system are eligible to vote or can be considered as a candidate for elected offices of all recognized student organizations and school committees.

### **ARTICLE IV. Executive Board**

**Section 1.** The officers of the SGA shall be the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer. These five positions will comprise the Student

Government Association Executive Board. The Executive Board shall have the authority to make temporary and emergency decisions that are vital to SGA business. These decisions must be approved by at least two-thirds of the SGA body at the next SGA meeting, or the action is to be null and void. The Executive Board will meet once each month, or more in the case of an emergency.

**Section 2.** The student body of the University of Maryland School of Social Work shall elect the officers of the SGA Executive Board. Officers shall be elected each spring with date and guidelines, non-discriminatory in any way, set by a committee within the current SGA. Election guidelines shall be available a minimum of one month prior to the beginning of the campaign period. The campaign period shall be limited to the 14 days preceding the posted election date. Candidates running for office cannot participate in or speak to the election committee about the guidelines of the election other than to obtain those guidelines from the election committee.

- (a) All candidates must be current University of Maryland School of Social Work students enrolled in a credit course with the understanding that they must attend the fall and spring semesters with a minimum of six (6) credit hours or be pursuing dual degrees simultaneously in conjunction with another school within the University of Maryland system.
- (b) All Executive Board candidates and officers must be in good academic standing; this is evidenced by a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in graduate-level courses for the duration of their service (students may not be at academic risk during their tenure in office).
- (c) All Executive Board candidates and officers must maintain good standing within their field practicum with confirmation from the field office.
- (d) All Executive Board candidates shall conduct themselves according to the NASW Code of Ethics at all times and are expected to follow all ethical and academic guidelines contained within the student handbook and field manual. Failure to follow these

guidelines will lead to an academic or ethical review, as detailed in said documents, and result in removal from office.

- (e) The election committee for each election will set dates, campaign guidelines, and balloting hours. The election committee chairperson will administer the election, and supplies will be provided by SGA. Unless otherwise decided by the SGA, the Recording Secretary shall assume the role of the election committee chairperson.
- (f) A simple majority of ballots cast will be required to elect each officer.
- (g) The term of office shall be for one year beginning at the meeting immediately following the election.

**Section 3.** Any office that is vacant after the formal election process may be filled by the simple nomination of a voting member of the General Assembly and approval by a vote of two-thirds of the voting members present at any SGA meeting.

**Section 4.** Executive Board officers must attend monthly meetings, maintain membership status with a minimum of (6) credit hours or enrollment in a dual degree program within the University of Maryland system throughout the term, and maintain the expectations set forth in Article IV Section 2.

**Section 5.** The duties of the Executive Board officers shall be to serve the General Assembly as parliamentarian, guided minimally by the SGA constitution, SGA bylaws, and all rules and policies of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

(a) The President of the SGA shall:

- 1) Preside at all meetings of the SGA and Executive Board.
- 2) Be an official representative of the students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.
- 3) Be a non-voting member of the SGA and Executive Board. The President shall, however, have the right to vote to break a tie.

- 4) Appoint voting members to all committees but can have appointments of committee members over-ruled by a majority of the SGA.
- 5) Periodically inspect and confirm the Financial Advisor's Reports.

(b) The Vice President of the SGA shall:

- 1) Assume Presidential duties in the absence of the President.
- 2) Serve as coordinator of all SGA committees.
- 3) Be given automatic voting member status and Executive Board membership upon being elected to office, except when fulfilling the duties of the SGA President.
- 4) Be an official representative of the SGA and the students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

(c) The Recording Secretary of the SGA shall:

- 1) Record the minutes of all SGA and Executive Board meetings and distribute them prior to the next SGA meeting.
- 2) Take attendance at the SGA meeting.
- 3) Be given automatic voting member status and Executive Board membership upon being elected to office, except when fulfilling the duties of the SGA President.
- 4) Assume presidential duties in the absence of the President and Vice-President.
- 5) Ensure and maintain a proper record system for internal SGA use, as well as for public inspection.

(d) The Corresponding Secretary of the SGA shall:

- 1) Be responsible for all correspondences with anyone outside of the SGA, as approved and ordered by the SGA.
- 2) Check all incoming messages to the SGA e-mail address and notify appropriate officers when their response to a message is required.
- 3) Maintain the SGA bulletin board and initiate all communication between SGA and the student body, including event fliers and submissions to the daily bulletin.

- 4) Be given automatic voting member status and Executive Board membership upon being elected to office, except when fulfilling the duties of the SGA President.
- 5) Assume Presidential duties in the absence of the President, Vice President, and Recording Secretary.

(e) The Treasurer of the SGA shall:

- 1) Be responsible and accountable for the recording and processing of all SGA reimbursement forms to the SSW Accounting Office (via the Office of Student Affairs).
- 2) Submit a copy of the SGA Budget Report to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.
- 3) Be cognizant of the SGA limitations to student organization funds as determined during the initial SGA meeting in September of each year.
- 4) Give an oral financial report at each meeting of the SGA and Executive Board.
- 5) Be given automatic voting member status and Executive Board member upon being elected to office, except when fulfilling the duties of the SGA President.
- 6) Assume Presidential duties in the absence of the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary.

**Section 6.** Any officer who fails to maintain the qualifications for an officer as stated in Section 4 or their respective duties as stated in Section 5, or who have performed contrary to the goals of the SGA may be removed from office by the following procedure:

- (a) A petition bearing charges against the accused officer must be signed by no less than one-third of the current voting membership of the Executive Board of the SGA.
- (b) An SGA Student Review Committee will review charges brought against the accused officer. That officer shall have an opportunity to view the charges against him/her and will have an opportunity to appeal his/her case before the meeting of the committee. The

SGA Student Review Committee shall then make a recommendation to the SGA no later than the second meeting following the filing of the petition.

- (c) The accused officer will have an opportunity to appeal to the SGA before an impeachment vote is taken. A two-thirds vote is required for impeachment. Any lesser vote shall result in the rejection of the petition of impeachment.

**Section 7.** Officers' involvement in student organizations or positions:

- (a) No officer shall seek to be a student representative for other organizations at the University of Maryland School of Social Work while serving as an officer of the SGA.
- (b) The President of SGA may not take the position of any other offices in any student organization recognized by the SGA.

**Section 8.** Committee recommendations:

- (a) This body, with a written recommendation from the SGA President, will recommend students who express an interest in representing the student body as members of standing committees within the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

**ARTICLE V. Student Government Association**

The President shall serve as moderator of all SGA meetings.

- (a) Each member shall automatically have one vote, with the exception of the President, who shall vote only to break a tie.
- (b) Meetings will be held monthly, September through December and February through May.

**ARTICLE VI. Meeting**

**Section 1.** The new officers shall publish a monthly meeting time for the following school year to the close of the summer term. This schedule shall be posted no later than the second week of the

fall semester. This meeting time will remain in effect unless changed by a majority vote of the current SGA.

**Section 2.** The procedural rules governing the meeting of the SGA shall be Roberts Rules of Order or available Parliamentary Procedures.

**Section 3.** The President may call for special meetings at regularly scheduled meetings, subject to approval by a quorum, including Executive Board members, at any SGA meeting.

**Section 4.** Any executive officer may call a special mandatory meeting of the Executive Board members as long as all Executive members are notified at least two (2) weeks in advance.

Decisions can be made at this meeting with a 2/3 vote of attending members. Information from a special board meeting must be presented to the General Assembly within seven (7) days of the Special Executive Board meeting.

**Section 5.** The General Assembly of the University of Maryland School of Social Work and at least 2/3 of the members of the Executive Board present at any scheduled meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## **ARTICLE VII. Finance**

**Section 1.** The SGA shall be operated exclusively for the purposes of education and student and community service and shall be exempt from taxation under section 501 (a) and described in Section 501 (a) (3) in the Internal Revenue Code.

**Section 2.** Funds for operation will be obtained from a portion of the student activity fees paid by each University of Maryland School of Social Work student. Student Organizations can request co-sponsorship of events by the SGA or other student organizations.

**Section 3.** The budget for each organization must be submitted to the SGA Treasurer by the first week of October for the Fall semester. For the Spring term, the budget should be submitted by the first week of February. Organizations are allocated \$1,000.00 (via the SGA budget) for each semester. All funds will be distributed by the SGA to fund activities that complement and

enhance the missions and goals of SGA affiliate organizations and the educational experience of all University of Maryland School of Social Work students.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. Faculty Advisor**

**Section 1.** The Faculty Advisor shall be available to provide student guidance and support to address SGA issues.

**Section 2.** The Faculty Advisor will be made aware of decisions made by the SGA at SGA meetings or any Executive Board Meetings, Special Meetings, and affiliated Committee Meetings via minutes, email, discussion with SGA Executive Board members, or other agreed-upon forms of communication.

**Section 3.** The Faculty Advisor shall be available at least once a month to meet with any/all Executive Board members. The date for this meeting shall be provided to the Faculty Advisor with at least two (2) weeks' notice, or it will be pre-arranged upon commencement of the Fall semester.

**Section 4.** The Faculty Advisor can request emergency executive meetings to discuss issues/concerns with at least one week of notice to Executive Board members.

#### **ARTICLE IX. Amendments**

**Section 1.** Amendments to this constitution must be presented in writing to the Executive Committee. Such proposals shall be included in the business of the next regular SGA meeting for consideration. Action on such proposed amendments shall be taken at the following regular SGA meeting.

**Section 2.** Provision of Notice: The Executive Committee is responsible for posting notice of the proposed amendment(s) via any campus media that will provide sufficient notice of the proposed change to the students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

**Section 3.** The proposed amendment(s) may be added to the constitution upon acceptance of one over majority votes cast of a quorum.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I. Membership of Officers**

#### **Section 1.**

- (a) Membership applications are available for the first six (6) weeks of classes of the spring semester.
- (b) Voting status is good only for the current academic year, and representatives must be re-elected in the Spring semester.
- (c) For voting privileges, each delegate must present an official petition signed by 25 current the University of Maryland School of Social Work students by a designated deadline.

**Section 2.** Active members shall enjoy all the rights and voting privileges so long as they maintain eligibility requirements as stated in ARTICLE III of the SGA Constitution and Section I of the By-Laws.

**Section 3.** Any delegate or officer who fails to maintain membership requirements as stated in ARTICLE II of the By-Laws may be removed from membership by the following procedures. Additionally, any delegate who has performed contrary to the goals of SGA may be removed by these same procedures.

- (a) A petition bearing charges against the member and signed by no less than one-fourth of the current membership of the Executive Board of the SGA must be presented to the presiding officer at a scheduled SGA meeting.
- (b) The SGA Student Review Committee of the SGA Executive Board will review the charges brought against the member. The accused member shall have the right to view charges brought against him/her and will have the opportunity to appeal his/her case before the meeting of the special committee. The meeting of this committee shall be open; the decision of this committee shall be a closed meeting. The

committee shall make a recommendation to the SGA no later than the second meeting following the filing of the petition.

- (c) The accused member will have an opportunity to appeal to the SGA before a vote regarding his/her removal is taken. By a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly and Executive Board members of the SGA, this request for appeal shall either accept or reject the committee's recommendation.

## **ARTICLE II. Membership Requirements**

Members of the Executive Board of the SGA must be present at all meetings of the SGA, or they shall give proper notice to the SGA office prior to the next meeting if they are unable to attend. Members of the Executive Board of the SGA may be excused from no more than two meetings annually, without notification.

## **ARTICLE III. Committees**

**Section 1.** There shall be five standing committees: Activities, SGA Student Review, Graduation, Election, and Publicity.

**Section 2.** The chairpersons of the standing committees shall be chosen by majority approval of the committee members.

**Section 3.** Standing Committees shall not be in effect until the SGA voting membership reaches a minimum of five (5) voting members, including Officers/Co-Chairpersons and Student Representatives. Until these requirements are met, the responsibilities of the five standing committees shall become those of the voting membership as a whole.

**Section 4.** The duties of the standing committees shall be as follows:

- (a) Activities Committee: The purpose of this committee is to organize and facilitate activities conducive to the best interest of the students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

(b) SGA Student Review Committee: This committee will be established in order to address the issue of impeachment. This committee will be comprised of 2/3 of the Executive Board of the SGA within one week of the petition of impeachment being submitted to the SGA.

(c) Graduation Committee: The SGA President shall establish this committee during this fall semester to begin addressing the topics and decisions to be made in preparation for spring graduation.

(d) Election Committee: The SGA Vice-President will establish this committee at the beginning of the spring semester. This committee will prepare the ballots, nomination forms, and election process for the elections that will take place in April.

(e) Public Relations Committee: The Corresponding Secretary of the SGA will establish this committee at any time during the fall semester. This committee will help advertise special events and annual events and can also work within the community and with other campus events.

#### **ARTICLE IV. Implied Powers**

The Executive Committee at a Special Board meeting will decide upon implied powers concerning controversy about SGA procedures or membership duties, which are not specifically stated in the SGA Constitution. This decision will then be presented to a quorum for a two-thirds confirmation vote at the next meeting. The controversial decisions will then be added to a list to be reviewed by the next constitution revision.

#### **Article V. Student Organization**

- (a) All student organizations shall provide the SGA office with their constitution and by-laws (updated as necessary), budgets Faculty Advisor(s) names(s), and current list of officers/co-leaders to be recognized as a Student Government affiliated Student

Organizations. This information will be turned in at the first SGA meeting of the Fall Semesters.

- (b) Revisions to Constitutions and Bylaws will be presented at an SGA meeting and will require a quorum to review and vote.
- (c) Student organizations shall further provide SGA with minutes from all meetings; activity plans; and dates, times, and places of organization's regular meetings.
- (d) All University of Maryland School of Social Work student organizations must have at least one member in attendance at SGA regular meetings unless prior notification has been given to an SGA representative.
- (e) All funds must be utilized for activities provided which are relevant to a course of study and advancement of the University of Maryland School of Social Work to be advertised and provided for General Assembly attendance.
- (f) Organizations must publicize all meetings and events to the General Assembly.
- (g) Neither the General Assembly nor any interested participant from the other schools within the University of Maryland or the community at large can be refused from attendance at any SGA funded event.
- (h) Funds will not be available to student organizations unless they have complied with the previously stated items found within ARTICLE V of the Bylaws.
- (i) No student organization may request additional funding beyond "seed" money without complying with the items found within ARTICLE V of the Bylaws.
- (j) Formation of a new student group requires the signatures of no less than ten interested students.
- (k) All SGA supported groups will consist of the E-Board leadership, and at least 5 general members to be considered a quorum. Ongoing challenges maintaining stable

attendance/participation may be subject to a meeting with OSS to brainstorm ways to increase student body participation.

#### **Article VI Fund Usage**

- (a) Copies of the budgets for each student organization should be forwarded to the Assistant Dean for Student Services/SGA Faculty Advisor and the SGA Executive Board.
- (b) Student events that incorporate meals or food may be attended by faculty, staff, and administration who should be prepared to pay a fee for attending the event, with the exception of Faculty Advisors who have been identified by each student organization.
- (c) If an organization does not foresee utilizing more than 75 percent of its budget per each academic year, it should be noted that the unused funds will be returned to the general SGA budget.
- (d) Allocated funds for the fall term may roll over to the spring term. Leftover funds at the end of the spring term will be credited back to the SGA General Budget.
- (e) Any and all funds that are available to the SGA can be requested by the student organizations for events that incorporate the General Assembly of the University of Maryland School of Social Work or other student affiliated organizations on campus.
- (f) Faculty, staff, and administration CANNOT UTILIZE funds for any purpose unless formally requested and approved by the Executive Board of the SGA in consultation with the SGA Faculty Advisor and/or Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.
- (g) The spending cap for meals will not exceed \$27 per person, per meeting or event. Excessive food spending that does not directly correlate with the headcount on the sign-in sheet may consequently result in financial consultation with OSS or subsequent denial funding requests.

## **Article VII. Public Relations**

- (a) All events should be publicized at least two (2) weeks in advance, utilizing at least two or more of the following outlets:
- 1) The SSW Daily Bulletin
  - 2) Organization bulletin boards
  - 3) Fliers
  - 4) Email
  - 5) Monitors
  - 6) The USGA Bulletin
- (b) Bulletin boards provided to student organizations must be properly maintained throughout the school year by each student organization.
- (c) Fliers posted for special events cannot be posted on the entry doors of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, in the elevator within the school, or on painted surfaces.
- (d) Fliers must be removed after the event has taken place.
- (e) Student organizations can be fined if they do not comply with the items stated in ARTICLE VII of the Bylaws.
- (f) Copies of all fliers should be filed with the SGA and Office of Student Affairs for future use and/or reference.