

**CONSTITUTION OF THE  
SUNY COBLESKILL  
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)**

**PREAMBLE:** We, the elected government, hereby support, provide for, care for, and protect students in their views, concerns, and aspirations at all times.

**ARTICLE I: NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION**

§ 1 The name of this organization shall be the SUNY Cobleskill Student Government Association (hereafter referred to as SGA).

**ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

§ 1 The overall purpose of the SGA is to ensure a high quality college experience for the student body, advocate for student needs, and oversee the distribution of and use of the Student Activity Fee. See SGA Strategic Plan.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

§ 1 Membership into this organization is open to any student currently enrolled at SUNY Cobleskill with a grade point average of 2.0 or higher and who has paid a Student Activity Fee. The SGA does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or disability. Members are expected to be active participants in all aspects of SGA business. This includes regular meetings, committee meetings, SGA sponsored events and projects, and service outings. See New Member Policy and Active Member Policy.

§ 2 Members, including officers, shall be knowledgeable of the Constitution, the policies of SGA, the SGA Strategic Plan, and the process of Parliamentary Procedure.

§ 3 Members are encouraged to recognize, discuss and vote on issues that best represent the interests of the student body; while maintaining viewpoint neutrality at all times.

**ARTICLE IV: FORM OF GOVERNMENT**

§ 1 The Student Government shall be composed of the following: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and the Director of Public Relations, and members.

- § 2 Committees shall be formed as necessary; it is the duties of committee members to be present at all committee meetings and to keep SGA informed on progress within. The Committee chairs shall be appointed by the SGA Executive Board. It is the Committee Chair's responsibility to bring all necessary issues up for a vote at a regularly scheduled SGA meeting.
- § 3 The Advisors of the SGA shall be chosen by the SGA members and must be a faculty or staff member of SUNY Cobleskill. See Advisory Policy.

## **ARTICLE V: OFFICERS**

- § 1 The elected officers and chain of command of this organization shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Director of Public Relations.
- § 2 All Officers of SGA shall:
- V.2.1 Maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.25.
  - V.2.2 Attend all regular SGA meetings.
  - V.2.3 Designate required amount of office hours per week to address the questions and concerns of the student body.
  - V.2.4 Attend all Executive Board meetings.
  - V.2.5 Promote, follow, and educate others on the SGA Strategic Plan.
  - V.2.6 Promote a positive image of the Student Government Association and SUNY Cobleskill.
- § 3 President of SGA shall:
- V.3.1 Designate (at minimum) eight office hours per week.
  - V.3.2 Have completed at least 24 credit hours before appointment.
  - V.3.3 Preside over all student government meetings.
  - V.3.4 Act as an ex-officio (non-voting) member, except in the event of a tie.
  - V.3.5 Report to the Administration and the College Council on matters of interest or concern of the student body.
  - V.3.6 Administer Club Council, unless delegated to another officer.
  - V.3.7. Facilitate the Executive Board meetings.
- § 4 Vice President of SGA shall:
- V.4.1 Designate (at a minimum) five office hours per week.
  - V.4.2 Have completed at least 12 credit hours before appointment.
  - V.4.3 Attend all government meetings, and in the absence of the President, preside over said meetings.
  - V.3.4 Supervise the committee assignments of all members.
  - V.3.5 Oversee the Club Action Program.
  - V.3.6 Perform the duties of the President in his/her absence.

**§ 5** Treasurer of the SGA shall:

- V.5.1** Designate (at a minimum) five office hours per week.
- V.5.2** Assist all SUNY Cobleskill clubs, interest groups and affiliates with budget requirements, facilitate the initial review of proposed budgets and present proposed budgets at an assembly meeting.
- V.5.3** Facilitate the development of the annual SGA Budget during the spring semester. Once approved by the SGA membership, the proposed budget should be submitted to the College President or his or her designee for ratification.
- V.5.4** Keep an accurate, up to date record of all budget activity.
- V.5.5** Facilitate the Financial Committee and keep a record of all discussion.
- V.5.6** Be enrolled as a full time student.
- V.5.7** May appoint an Assistant Treasurer.

**§ 6** Secretary of the SGA shall:

- V.6.1** Designate (at a minimum) five office hours per week.
- V.6.2** Accurately record the minutes of all assembly meetings.
- V.6.3** Keep an accurate and up to date record of all member attendance and participation.
- V.6.4** As requested, submit said minutes to the SGA Advisor(s), President of the College, Vice President of Student Affairs, the SGA Accountant, the Library, and all SUNY Cobleskill Student Government members, following the appropriate policy.
- V.6.5** Chair the Elections Committee and keep a record of all discussion.
- V.6.6.** Keep a record of all discussion during Executive Board meetings.

**§ 7** Director of Public Relations of SGA shall:

- V.7.1** Designate (at a minimum) five office hours per week.
- V.7.2** Coordinate the planning of events that the Student Government Association approves, sponsors, and/or finances.
- V.7.3** Oversees the Public Relations Line in the Student Government Budget.
- V.7.4** Act as the liaison with the event planning boards on campus such as Council for Student Activities (CSA), Brickyard Point (BYP), Coby Late Night (CLN), etc.
- V.7.5** Facilitate the Public Relations Committee and keep a record of all discussion.

**ARTICLE VI: ADVISORS**

- § 1 The Advisors shall be chosen by the SGA assembly and appointed annually. Any faculty or staff member is eligible to be an advisor.
- § 2 The Advisors shall express the views of the faculty and the administration and inform SGA of State University policies, guidelines, and regulations affecting students. Advisors will not determine policies affecting student life, nor will they inhibit students from representing themselves to the President of the College.
- § 3 The Advisor(s) shall serve as a resource person and provide advisory support for the officers and members. The faculty advisor(s) shall attend executive and general meetings; however, the faculty advisor is not eligible to vote. The faculty advisor(s) shall perform other duties as they are needed by the officers.

#### **ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS**

- § 1 Regular meetings shall be held once a week, during the fall and spring semesters, while classes are in session.
- § 2 Special meetings may be called to order by a majority vote. Said meetings shall not be called to order on a weekend, holiday, or without a twenty-four hour notice.
- § 3 Business cannot be conducted unless a quorum of the membership is present. A quorum for this organization is defined as 50% + 1 of the voting membership.
- § 4 Minutes of said meetings shall be recorded and sent out by e-mail.
- § 5 Any member who accumulates five excused or three unexcused absences from Regular Government meetings during a single semester shall be subject to immediate dismissal from the SGA voting member list (Exception for those with a leave of absence for the semester). See Active Member Policy.

#### **ARTICLE VIII: ELECTIONS**

- § 1 Officers are elected once an academic year. Elections are to be held at the end of each academic year in April, which will be the election for officers for the following academic year. Refer to SGA Election Policy.
- § 2 The Oath of Office shall be as stated:  
“As a student elected by my peers and a member of this community, I will strive to live by the Cobleskill Creed, exhibit behavior that is civil, positive, and responsible. I (insert name here) understand and will most importantly

represent the views of the students of this campus and support its Constitution.”

- § 3 In the event of a vacancy in one or more of the executive board positions, the SGA membership will elect an active member of SGA to the open seat. This special election must be held within two to four weeks after the vacancy of the Officer’s seat. The elections committee will approve the official date of the special election. Only active SGA members are eligible to vote in a special election. It is recommended, but not required, that said elections are conducted by secret ballot. See Officer Vacancy Policy.
- § 4 The advisors, along with the President, unless running for a position, shall supervise all elections.

### **Article IX: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

- § 1 An Officer can be removed from office if they fail to live up to the duties of their office, and/or if they fail to attend three SGA meetings.
- § 2 Removal of office can be achieved by obtaining a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote at a regular SGA meeting. For a vote to occur, the issue of removal from office must have been brought up at the prior meeting. The officer in question shall have the right to speak prior to the vote, unless they waive their right, or if he/she fails to show up to the meeting.

### **ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES**

- § 1 Finance Committee shall be managed by the Treasurer and composed of student government members with a minimum staff of 3, with always an odd numbers. Members must:
- X.1.1 Assist and advise the Treasurer (and Assistant Treasurer).
  - X.1.2 Collaborate and make recommendations as a whole about the allocation and spending of Student Activity Fee funds.
  - X.1.3 Assist clubs in making budgets and meeting criteria for budget process.
  - X.1.4 Oversee all documents of Student Government (club budgets, SGA budgets, and memos).
  - X.1.5 No new student organization shall be authorized to represent itself as associated with the college unless it has been chartered by Student Government.
- § 2 Public Relations Committee shall be managed by the Director of Public Relations and composed of student government members with a minimum staff of 3, with always an odd number. Members must:
- X.2.1 Plan events that the student government approves, sponsors, and/or finances.

- X.2.2 Procuring supplies as deemed necessary for purchase by the Director of Public Relations.
- X.2.3 Facilitate the staffing, preparing, promoting, and executing of major Student Government events and SGA recruitment opportunities.
- X.2.4 Promote a positive image of the SGA and SUNY Cobleskill through the following methods: advertising, contacting local media, taking photos and writing articles, and creating contact with students (through person to person contact, email notices, voicemail messages, fliers throughout campus, and advertising).

§ 3 Elections Committee shall be run by the Secretary and be composed of student government members with a minimum staff of 3, with always odd numbers. Members must:

- X.3.1 Assist and advise the Elections Committee Chair.
- X.3.2 Research and make recommendations as a whole to the Chair.
- X.3.3 Assist guests in becoming SGA members.
- X.3.4 Oversee Meet the Candidates Night.

§ 4 Constitutions Committee shall be managed by the Constitutions Chair and composed of student government members with a minimum staff of 3, with always odd numbers. Members must:

- X.4.1 Assist and advise the Constitutions Chair.
- X.4.2 Research and make recommendations as a whole to the Constitutions Chair.
- X.4.3 Assist clubs in creating or editing constitutions, writing minutes, and writing agendas.
- X.4.4 Oversee all documents of Student Government (club constitutions, SGA constitution, memos, policies) and documents binding on the Student Government Association.

## **ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS**

§ 1 In the event that an amendment is proposed, said amendment must first be addressed, after two weeks' notice, to SGA. Upon a majority vote, the proposed amendment will be ratified and the Constitution will reflect such change.

§ 2 All changes must be recorded and reflected in the SGA minutes.

## **ARTICLE XII: RULES OF ORDER**

§ 1 Any issue not directly covered in this constitution or one of the SGA Policies will be resolved by referring to "Robert's Rules of Order."

§ 2 All meetings, assembly, committee and special, are recommended to follow parliamentary procedure.

### **ARTICLE XIII: RECOGNITION OF ORGANIZATIONS HAVING STUDENT MEMBERS**

- § 1 Student Government Association can recognize organizations that may use the name of the State University of New York or the College; for purposes of identification, obtaining organizational privileges to use College facilities, resources, and services, imply college sponsorship, or approval of activities.
- § 2 SGA may establish criteria consistent with college policy to recognize student groups and to provide financial support from the Student Activity fee. This criteria is subject to yearly review by SGA and no student organization will be recognized without approval.
- § 3 Each organization that is recognized by SGA may determine criteria for membership while complying with state and federal law. No organization shall discriminate in the acceptance of members or assignment of voting privileges, rank, or office on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, disability or handicap, marital status, or previous affiliations. Although involuntary acceptance of members will not be required as evidence, the names, purposes, and procedures of organizations must reflect this equality of opportunity. Local units of national, state, or regional organizations must be free to select individual members among those qualified; outside approval is prohibited.
- § 4 Each group applying for SGA recognition must agree to uphold the regulations of the College and the State University of New York. Application for recognition or renewal of recognition must include the following information: a statement of organization's purpose, membership requirements, sources of income and record of organization's monies, list of current officers, name of faculty or staff advisor or approved substitute, and organization's constitution or by-laws. Failure to keep current credentials compliant with College or SGA regulations will result in the loss of recognition. See Club Charter Process and Active Club Policy.
- § 5 Hazing, defined as the deliberate imposition of unusual stress on a student as a matter of formal or informal ritual, is illegal in New York State in connection with initiations or at any other time. Organizations responsible for incidents of hazing will lose SGA recognition, be excluded from the use of college resources, and may be subject to discipline under the Rules and Regulations for the Maintenance of Public Order on the premises of the State University of New York and criminal prosecution under Penal Law 120.17.

### **ARTICLE XIV: RATIFICATION**

- § 1 This constitution shall be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the SGA. After approval, the Constitution will be put up to a vote of all SUNY Cobleskill student body; ratification requires a vote of at least 25% of SUNY Cobleskill student body members and approval of the majority of those voting.
- § 2 This Constitution shall become effective upon ratification. Representatives and officers elected under the previous constitution will retain offices but operate under the provisions of this Constitution. Upon ratification, this Constitution shall replace and supersede all previous constitutions.

#### **ARTICLE XV: OPERABILITY**

- § 1 If any provision of this constitution shall be adjudged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such adjudication shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder of the document.

#### **ARTICLE XVI: FINANCES**

- § 1 All money under the supervision of SGA is to be managed by the SUNY Cobleskill Business Office and governed by generally accepted accounting principles.
- § 2 Financial decisions made by SGA must be in accordance with the Student Activity Fee Guidelines as set by SUNY.
- § 3 All SGA members and officers must maintain viewpoint neutrality when voting on funding allocations.

#### **ARTICLE XVII: DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE**

- § 1 SGA organization will not discriminate in the acceptance of members or assignment of voting privileges, rank, or office on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, disability or handicap, marital status, or previous affiliations.

Revised May 2015

Amended Article VIII Section 3 February 6, 2018