Constitution Of The Student Government Association of Texas A&M University-Commerce

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We, the students of Texas A&M University-Commerce, in order to voice the opinions of the student body, promote projects for the benefit of the students, and serve the University community of Texas A&M University-Commerce, do hereby establish this document as the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Texas A&M University-Commerce. All provisions of this Constitution are subject to the regulations of the Coordinating Board of Texas College and University Systems.

Article I Definition and Purpose

Section 1: DEFINITION
A. Student Government Association of Texas A&M University-Commerce shall hereafter be referred to as SGA.
B. Texas A&M University-Commerce shall hereafter be referred to as TAMU-C.

Section 2: PURPOSE
The purpose of this governmental organization shall be as follows:
A. To serve as the voice of the Student Body.
B. To serve as a channel of communication with the faculty and administration of TAMU-C with respect to the opinions, wishes, and needs of the students of TAMU-C.
C. To continually promote and improve relations between the city of Commerce and the students of TAMU-C.

Article II
Legislative Branch

Section 1: DEFINITION
The Legislative branch of SGA shall hereafter be referred to as the Senate.

Section 2: COMPOSITION
The Senate shall be composed of up to thirty (30) representatives, elected from the eligible population of the student body.

Section 3: QUALIFICATIONS
A. All applicants, besides freshmen and transfers, must provide two letters of recommendation from two (2) different recognized campus organizations, faculty, or staff with at least one (1) being from faculty or staff.
B. Be a regularly enrolled student at TAMU-C with a status of at least half-time during the Fall/Spring semesters.
C. Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or greater.
D. Maintain good standing with TAMU-C.

Section 4: TERM OF OFFICE
Senate members shall be elected for one-year terms in the spring of each year. Senate members shall serve from the date of installation until a duly elected successor is installed, provided they remain qualified. All candidates to fill vacancies shall be confirmed through a two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met.

Section 5: MEETINGS
The Senate shall meet at least twice a month during the Fall and Spring semesters at a place and time to be determined at the first meeting of the majority of the elected Senate, and will be in the Senate STANDING RULES subject to the University calendar and any school closings that may occur. Meetings of the Senate shall be open to the public except those instances of Privileged Discourse. Official Senate meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Section 6: QUORUM
Three-fifths (3/5) of those members presently serving in the Senate shall constitute a quorum. No business shall be conducted at any meeting when a quorum is not present (except that the meeting may be called to order, the roll called, and the meeting recessed or adjourned). Any Senate meeting which begins with a quorum, but which later loses a quorum is a valid meeting until the absence of a quorum is recognized. Over the Winter/Summer semesters quorum shall be determined in the STANDING RULES.

Section 7: POWERS
A. To approve, modify, or disprove by majority vote, the proposed budget of SGA
before sending it to the Student Service Fee Committee.

B. To enact legislation or create resolutions reflecting the opinions of the student body on matters that affect them by a simple majority vote.

C. To override an SGA presidential veto requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met.

D. To impeach and remove any officers or Senators as outlined in Article VI.

E. The Senate shall have the power to consent to nominations for appointment by the SGA officers and the Chief Justice.

F. To serve on SGA and University committee(s).

G. To order the Senate Chair to convene an emergency session by the petition of two-thirds (2/3) of the Senate.

H. Each Senator shall have the power of Senatorial Privilege. This motion shall have the power to table a resolution/referendum/motion until the next official Senate meeting. This privilege may only be invoked once per issue with the concurrence of no less than three (3) Senators.

I. Senators shall engage in Privileged Discourse, without fear of reprisal, during confirmation of candidates to the Senate. Issues of impeachment shall be invoked once per issue with the concurrence of no less than three (3) Senators. Discussion shall not be recorded in the official minutes or otherwise disclosed.

Section 8: EX-OFFICIO (PERMANENTLY NON-VOTING) MEMBERS

A. SGA President

B. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

Section 9: OFFICERS OF THE SENATE AND ASSOCIATED DUTIES

A. Vice Chair of the Senate
   1. Shall conduct Senate meetings in the absence of the Vice-President/Senate Chair and shall also perform such duties as the Vice-President/Senate Chair assigns.

B. Secretary
   1. Shall accurately record the minutes of official meetings and distribute those accordingly prior to the next meeting.

C. Treasurer
   1. Shall give an updated report of the budget to the Executive Board and Senate at least once a month during their report.

D. Parliamentarian
   1. Advises Senate on proper parliamentary procedures and ensures the orderly progress of official meetings.

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2 One full term is defined as starting at the first Senate meeting in September.
E. Historian
   1. Shall maintain accurate records of events and activities in which SGA participates.

Section 10: STANDING COMMITTEES
A. The following shall serve as standing committees of SGA:
   1. Campus Safety & Security
   2. Academic Affairs
   3. Campus Life
   4. Internal Affairs
   5. External Affairs
   6. Public Relations

B. All committee chairs are to be Senators.

Article III
Executive Branch

Section 1: DEFINITIONS
A. The Executive Board of the SGA shall consist of the President, Vice President/Senate Chair and the Vice President of Senate Affairs. These three offices shall constitute the Executive Board, which shall meet once a week to discuss issues concerning the student body of TAMU-C, unless a majority of the board gives cause for not meeting.

Section 2: QUALIFICATIONS
A. Have completed 30 credit hours by the time they get confirmed into office, however fifteen (15) must have been completed at TAMU-C prior to running for office.
B. Have served one full term\(^2\) in the Senate, but may be in the process of completing the second semester of the term at TAMU-C.

\(^2\) One full term is defined as starting at the first Senate meeting in September.
C. In the event that there are no Senators who meet the qualifications to serve as an Executive officer, the current Executive Board shall nominate individuals who have ever served on Senate to fill the empty seat. The person shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met.

Section 3: VACANCIES

A. Executive Board
   1. In the event of death, resignation, removal, or ineligibility of the SGA President, the line of succession shall be as follows:
      A. SGA Vice President/Senate Chair
      B. SGA Vice President of Senate Affairs
      C. Vice-Chair of the Senate
      D. A Senator to be elected by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate
   2. In the event of death, resignation, removal, or ineligibility of a SGA Vice President, a Senator will be elected by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate to fill the office.
   3. If no one is willing or able to fill these positions, a special election shall be held to elect a new Executive Board.

Section 4: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

A. SGA President
   1. Shall be a visible representative of SGA to the Administration, Faculty, and Students at TAMU-C.
   2. Shall chair the Executive Board meetings and report to the Senate on all Executive Board decisions and activities discussed within the meetings.
   3. Shall attend all conferences and meetings that affect the interests of the Student Body, including the University Executive Council (UEC) Leadership Luncheons, and all other committees they are appointed to.
   4. After deliberation with the executive officers, shall recommend students for University Committees to the President of the University.
   5. Shall appoint the Election Board subject to confirmation by the majority of the Senate.
   6. Shall have the power to veto any bills of the Senate. Such bills will automatically be enacted seven (7) days from their Senate approval if not signed or vetoed while school is in session.
7. Shall be responsible for the execution of all Senate bills.
8. Shall administer the oath of office.
9. Shall have the power to delegate any of the above duties in case of absence to any member of the Executive Board or Senate.
10. Must work a minimum of ten (10) office hours per week.
11. Shall have the ability to call a special session of the Senate in regards to an immediate need occurring between semesters, any other events arising shall wait until the beginning of the Fall/Spring semesters.
12. Shall have the power to remove Election Board members with cause and to fill with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met in order to approve any vacancies on the Board.

B. SGA Vice President/Senate Chair
   1. Shall preside over all Senate meetings.
   2. Shall appoint the Chief Justice with the confirmation of a two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met.
   3. Shall have the authority to call special sessions of the Senate provided twenty-four (24) hours notice is given.
   4. Shall oversee the Officers of the Senate.
   5. Must work a minimum of ten (10) office hours per week.
   6. Casts the tie breaking vote in the event of a tied vote in the Senate.
   7. Must provide time in the agenda for observer and student input.
   8. Shall set up meetings with all officers on a biweekly basis during their first month of appointment.

C. SGA Vice President of Senate Affairs
   1. Shall serve as the SGA representative on the Student Organizations Allocations Committee (SOAC).
   2. Shall oversee all committees of the Senate.
   3. Shall be a member of the Senate with full Senatorial rights.
   4. Must work a minimum of ten (10) office hours per week.
   5. Shall set up meetings with all committee chairs on a biweekly basis.

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Article IV
Judicial Branch

Section 1: DEFINITIONS
The Judicial Branch of SGA shall consist of a Supreme Court and will hereafter be
referred to as the Court.

Section 2: MEMBERSHIP
The Court shall be made up of the Chief Justice, who shall preside, and will nominate four (4) associate justices chosen from the student body at large and confirmed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met.

Section 3: APPOINTMENTS
The Court shall be constituted with the approval of the simple majority of the Senate, the Chief Justice shall be appointed by the SGA Vice-President/Senate Chair as needed and shall serve a term not to exceed one year or a regularly scheduled Senatorial election.

Section 4: RESPONSIBILITIES
A. The Court shall be responsible for rendering a decision on any and all questions concerning Constitutional interpretation.
B. The Court shall determine the constitutionality of all bills, resolutions, or referendums passed by the Senate if challenged.
C. All decisions made by the Court are final.
D. The Chief Justice will preside over impeachment procedures.
E. The Chief Justice shall deliver to the Senate the entirety of the Court’s decision as defined to include the majority and minority opinions.
F. The Court shall comply with codifications as set by the JUDICIAL BOARD BY-LAWS.
G. The Chief-Justice shall attend two senate meetings a month.
H. The Chief-Justice is recommended to represent SGA on the Traffic Appeals Board.

Section 5: MEETINGS
The Court shall meet at the Chief Justice’s discretion.

Section 6: CHIEF JUSTICE - MALFEASANCE
A. The Executive Board and Advisor shall review any claims of malfeasance against the Chief Justice.
B. Any findings of malfeasance by the Executive Board and Advisor are subject to approval by a majority vote in the Senate.

Article V
Advisor(s)
Any official advisor(s) of the SGA shall be chosen annually by the Executive Board in consultation with the Dean of Students and confirmed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met. Interim advisors will be subject to the same nomination and confirmation procedures as any official advisor(s). If confirmed, the interim advisor(s) will fulfill the remainder of the official advisor(s) term until any official advisor(s) is/are confirmed. If the interim advisor(s) is/are found guilty under Article VI Section 1 Subsection B, he or she will be subject to the regulations and guidelines set forth in Article VI Section 1 Subsection B. (Because it is a university job).

**Article VI**

**Impeachment**

**Section 1: REMOVAL**

A. Any elected or appointed officer or member of any branch of SGA may be removed from office by impeachment before the student Senate.

B. Charges of malfeasance or non-performance must be presented to the Internal Affairs Committee of the Senate, which shall investigate and present the findings to the Supreme Court of the SGA. If the Supreme Court rules that the charges of malfeasance or non-performance are valid, the Internal Affairs Committee shall present a bill of impeachment to the Senate.

C. A bill of impeachment shall only pass by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met.

D. If impeached, the person impeached cannot hold any position within SGA for the next two years.

**Article VII**

**Elections**

**Section 1: PROCEDURES**

A. SGA campaigning and elections for Officers and Senators shall start no earlier than the second week of the Spring semester and end no later than the third week of March. Campaigning shall be no shorter than two academic weeks. Elections shall follow the conclusion of the campaigning period and be held on the Wednesday and Thursday of the following academic week.

B. There shall be an Election Board appointed by the SGA President for the purpose of supervising campaigns and elections of SGA candidates. The Election Board shall consist of three (3) to five (5) members and each appointment must attain the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of
the Senate by vote.
C. No student shall be eligible to serve on the Election Board who holds office or is a candidate for office in SGA, excluding graduating senators.
D. A candidate for the SGA Officers and Senate shall be considered elected and eligible to assume the office of Senator when the Election Board of the SGA has certified that the person is a qualified candidate for the office and has received a plurality of the votes cast for that office.
E. The Election Board shall perform the following functions:
   1. Accept all applications for candidates to office.
   2. Upon certification, a candidate’s name and position filed for shall be posted in the SGA office.
   3. Prepare the official ballots and post a sample ballot for review.
   4. The Election Board shall verify all election results.
   5. Adjudicate any protest of conduct or campaign irregularities with a timely written notice of such hearings to be posted in the SGA office.
   6. The duties of the Election Board are inclusive of, but not limited to these specific duties.
   7. Term of office shall consist of the immediate elections for which they are appointed and confirmed.
F. Persons serving in SGA at the time of grade checks implicitly give their permission to have their grades checked by a faculty advisor of SGA.
G. Other provisions for elections shall be codified within the SGA- STUDENT ELECTION CODE.

Section 2: OATH OF OFFICE
A. A candidate for any office whose election to that office has been certified shall assume said position with all the powers, duties, and responsibilities therein immediately upon taking the following oath:

“I, do hereby, solemnly affirm that I shall faithfully execute the duties of the office of [name of office] of Texas A&M University-Commerce Student Government Association, and shall, to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and Rules of Texas A&M University-Commerce Student Government Association.”

B. Those Senators who may be elected or appointed to fill an unexpired term left vacant shall take the same oath of office after their election or appointment.
Article VIII
Operating Provisions

All other procedural matters shall be delineated and explained within the STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE or any other procedural documents.

Article IX
Amendments

Section 1: METHOD OF PROPOSAL
A. Amendments originating outside the Senate must be in the form of a petition signed by at least one hundred fifty (150) students of TAMU-C and approved by a majority of the total student Senate.
B. Modifications to the Constitution, originating within SGA, can be made with the approval of two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at a meeting where quorum is met.

Section 2: RATIFICATION
Amendments to this Constitution shall become effective by a majority vote of those TAMU-C students voting in an election called for that purpose.

Constitutional Amendments
Amendment I
If there should ever be conflict between the SGA constitution and any other of our standing documents, the Constitution shall prevail.

Amendment II
If there should ever be conflict between an amendment to this constitution and a prior standing article, the amendment shall prevail.