

**The Constitution**  
**Of**  
**The Student Government Association**

**Prairie View A & M University**  
**Prairie View, Texas**

**Approved and Ratified:**

**March, 2008**

# **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION PRAIRIE VIEW A & M UNIVERSITY**

## **PREAMBLE**

We the students of Prairie View A & M University, in order to provide an official and representative student organization to investigate student problems and take appropriate action, promote effective representation and responsible student participation in the overall policy and decision making processes of the University, promote academic excellence and the quality of education, provide the official voice through which student opinion may be expressed, do hereby, adopt, and establish this Constitution for the Student Government Association of Prairie View A & M University. The Student Government Association is the highest-ranking student organization at Prairie View A&M University and is officially chartered to speak on the behalf of the student body to the University Administration, as well as all internal and external organizations.

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

- 1.1 The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association of Prairie View A&M University.

## **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.1 Membership in the Student Government Association shall consist of all students officially enrolled at Prairie View A & M University. Students enrolled at Prairie View A&M University after the 12th class day each semester determines each semester voting membership. All qualifying students as defined by this article shall be called the General Student Body.

## **ARTICLE III: ORGANIZATION AND FUNDING**

- 3.1 The governing structure of the Student Government Association shall consist of three branches: the Executive Branch, Legislative Branch, and Judicial Branch.
- 3.2 The Student Government Association structure should be reflective of the current University structure.
- 3.3 No individual shall be a member of more than one branch referred to in 3.1 with the exception of the Executive Vice-President who shall also serve as the President of the Student Senate. Two elected offices shall not be held simultaneously by the same person, nor shall two persons simultaneously hold the same elected office.
- 3.4 There shall exist for each branch a bylaw regulating its internal business, subject to the approval of the Student Senate.
- 3.5 The Student Government Association shall receive funding from the Student Service Fees

and optional student fees, which have been appropriated and approved by the appropriate authorities. The Student Government Association may generate additional revenue, provided the collection of such additional revenues complies with all university regulations.

#### **ARTICLE IV: THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

- 4.1 The Executive Branch of the Student Government Association shall consist of the President, the Executive Vice-President, and Comptroller, who shall be elected by the Student Body, and members as enumerated in the Executive Board Code, appointed in like manner as prescribed by the relevant sections of the Executive Board Code. Only these Executive Branch members are permitted to vote in Executive Branch meetings. Additionally, the President abiding by the provisions of the Executive Board Code may include ex-officio members on the board.
- 4.2 A candidate for President and Executive Vice-President must be a student of Prairie View A&M University and have completed at least sixty (60) semester hours in residence at Prairie View A&M University and a minimum of one fiscal year active experience in Student Government Association the year prior to assuming office. Candidates for President and Executive Vice-President must be full-time students, have a least a 2.70 grade point average from the previous semester prior to assuming office and a 2.70 cumulative grade point average. While holding office the President and Executive Vice-President must maintain at least a 2.70 cumulative grade point average, a 2.70 semester grade point average, must not be on disciplinary or scholastic probation, and must be in good standing (academic, fiscal, and moral conduct) with the University.
  - 4.2.1 In the event that President and Executive Vice-President shall fail to meet any of these requirements or is placed on conduct probation or determined to have acted contrary to the provisions of the Constitution and or Bylaws, the Student Senate shall begin proceedings to remove any of these officers with the Chief Justice presiding in any of these cases. The Student Senate shall cause the Chief Justice to set up a panel of inquiry of five justices including the Chief Justice to investigate allegations against the officers and make a recommendation to the Student Senate for necessary action. The Student Senate can accept or reject the recommendation of the panel by two-thirds (2/3) of senators sitting in quorum at a normal sitting. The Student Government Association Advisor shall enforce the decision of the Senate immediately. All incumbent powers or responsibilities bestowed upon the President or Executive Vice-President is declared null and void upon the conclusion of the impeachment proceedings, as described in the Senate Bylaws. The individual has the right of due process of law as outlined in the current Prairie View A&M University Student Handbook and current University Catalog.
  - 4.2.2 In the event of the inability of the President to fulfill the duties of the office, or upon his\her removal or resignation from office, the Executive Vice-President shall assume the office of the President subject to a vote of confidence by two-thirds (2/3) of the Senate present and voting at an announced sitting. Upon failure of Executive Vice-President to receive this vote of confidence, the Senate will proceed to elect a delegate for the position from within the Student Senate. The elected delegate shall be known as the Interim President and shall serve until the term of the removed President expires.
- 4.3 The Executive Branch voting members must be a student of Prairie View A & M University and have completed at least thirty (30) semester hours in residence at Prairie View A & M

University prior to assuming office. Members of the Executive Branch must be full-time students, have at least a 2.50 grade point average from the previous semester prior to assuming office and must have a 2.50 cumulative grade point average. While holding office Executive Branch voting members must maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative grade point average, a 2.50 semester grade point average, must not be on disciplinary or scholastic probation, and must be in good standing (academic, fiscal, and moral conduct) with the University.

- 4.3.1. In the event that an Executive Branch member fails to meet any of these requirements or is placed on disciplinary or scholastic probation, the Student Government Association President shall ask for the Branch member's resignation and shall notify the Student Government Association Advisor. Only the Executive Vice-President shall have the due process of law enumerated in section 4.2.1 above. If the President does not receive the resignation within seven (7) class days, the individual is thus considered terminated and replaced immediately. All incumbent powers or responsibilities bestowed upon the individual are declared null and void upon the request of his/her resignation.
- 4.4 The term of office for the Student Government Association officials shall commence the Monday after graduation, at the end of the spring semester provided there has been accurate certification of all election results and they have been sworn in by an oath administered by the University President or his/her designee.
- 4.5 The President shall:
  - 4.5.1 Carry out all duties properly incumbent on the President of the Student Government Association and serve as the representative of the Student Body.
  - 4.5.2 Execute all acts of the Student Senate.
  - 4.5.3 Present a tentative specified, goal-oriented plan for the new school year to the Student Senate. This plan shall also include the budget for that period.
  - 4.5.4 Serve on, or appoint a representative to committees, boards, and councils. He or she shall also serve as a member of the Student Services Fees Allocation Board.
  - 4.5.5 Have the power to call a special sitting of the Student Senate, address the Student Senate, receive senatorial reports, and answer all questions for clarification purposes prior to all actual senatorial sittings. The President shall not participate nor vote in the actual Student Senate meetings.
  - 4.5.6 Have the power to veto all legislation passed by the Student Senate. The power of veto may be overridden by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Senate present at an announced meeting providing the majority to duly sworn senators are present, thus consisting a quorum. Any legislation not signed or vetoed within five (5) class days shall be considered passed. Once legislation has been passed by the president, it cannot be subsequently vetoed. The President shall have the line item veto power on all money Bills including the budget. This veto power shall not extend to Constitutional Amendments or measures approved in a referendum.
  - 4.5.7 Have the power to appoint qualified individuals to fill any open Executive board (voting members only) or Senate seats with the approval by simple majority vote of the Student Senate present at an announced meeting within ten (10) class days of the vacancies, and create any needed Presidential committees. The President shall also exercise full control over the bureaucracy as enumerated in the Executive Board Code. The Student Government Association President shall also recommend to the President of the University all student appointments to various University-wide

Committees with the approval of a simple majority of the Student Senate at an announced meeting.

- 4.5.8 Enter into agreement with agencies and organizations outside the University community, on behalf of the Student Government Association, subject to the simple majority approval of the Student Senate or majority approval of the Officers of the Student Senate in case the Student Senate is in recess. Recess shall be defined as the Summer Sessions and official University holidays and breaks during the academic year.
  - 4.5.9 Have the power of additional appointments under the due process of law as provided by the Executive Board Code.
- 4.6 The Executive Vice-President shall:
- 4.6.1 Succeed to the Presidency in case of removal, resignation, or incapacitation of the President. This is subject however, to the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the Student Senate.
  - 4.6.2 Assist the President with the assigned responsibilities.
  - 4.6.3 Serve as President of the Senate; yet, he\she may not debate or vote on an issue within the Student Senate unless there is a tie.
  - 4.6.4 Serve as liaison for the Student Senate and the Student Government Association President.
- 4.7 The Comptroller shall:
- 4.7.1 Assist the President in developing an annual budget for approval by a simple majority vote of the Student Senators present at an announced sitting within two sittings (10 class days) after the start of the Fall Semester. The Senate before approval may change the allocation of funds in the budget by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Student Senate present at an announced sitting.
  - 4.7.2 Suggest ways in which the revenue base of the Student Government can be increased.
  - 4.7.3 Act as an advisor to the Student Senate – particularly as a financial adviser off the floor. Thus he/she cannot contribute to debate or offer advice before the Student Senate, except a special sitting is called for this purpose.
- 4.8 Vice Presidents:
- 4.8.1 Shall administer the permanent divisions of the SGA, which are congruent with the administrative structure of the university in a manner prescribed by the Executive Board Code. They shall also accept reports on the activities of the committees under them and forward such to the chief of staff for the attention of the President.
  - 4.8.2 The vice-presidents shall sit on the Executive-board only, and may be elected during the spring elections. In case of vacancies, the new President shall appoint, subject to the approval of the new senate a replacement until an election is held to fill that vacancies.
  - 4.8.3 The Vice Presidents shall be voting members of the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE V: THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

- 5.1 The Legislative powers shall be vested in the Student Senate of the Student Government Association of Prairie View A&M University. The Student Senate shall be the official

group which shall identify students' concerns and formulate student policy.

- 5.1.1 Each Senator is to serve as a liaison for his/her particular College, Department, Council, Organization, Class or Interests and the Student Government Association Student Senate, thus allowing more collaboration among these entities and providing a more efficient and knowledgeable Student Senate.
- 5.2 The Student Government Association Student Senate shall assemble at least twice a month as designated by the Senate leaders. The President of the Student Government Association and /or the President of the Student Senate are empowered to call additional meetings at any time he/she deems necessary in line with the provisions of the Senate Bylaws, and these shall constitute officially recognized sittings provided a quorum exists.
- 5.3 The student senate shall be composed of both elected and appointed positions: Two thirds of the members of the Student Senate shall be elected by the senator's constituency in the fall general student body election. One third shall be non constituent positions and shall be appointed by the newly elected Vice President within five class days of being sworn in. These appointees shall subsequently be approved at the following senate meeting by the old senate. If these positions are not filled within the allotted time frame, they will be declared vacant and submitted to the internal affairs committee to be filled after Fall General Elections.
  - 5.3.1 The Student Senators shall meet the requirements as outlined in the Senate bylaws.
  - 5.3.2 The power of re-apportionment of the student senate positions shall be invested in the Student Senate in line with the growth of the student population.
  - 5.3.3 Job descriptions for all senators shall be described in the Student Government Association Senate bylaws.
  - 5.3.4 The Student Senate Leadership shall include all Chairs of the Student Senate Standing Committees, the President Pro-Tempore of the Student Senate and the Executive Vice-President who shall also be the Student Senate President.
- 5.4 The Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior class senatorial representatives shall be the Class President of each class for the current academic school year.
- 5.5 The Student Senate shall:
  - 5.5.1 Enact all measures necessary and proper for the general welfare of the Student Body in accordance with this Constitution.
  - 5.5.2 Establish such procedures as might be necessary for the proper functioning of the Student Senate by a majority vote of the membership.
  - 5.5.3 After receipt of the Student Body President's tentative specified goal-oriented plan, the officers (listed in the Bylaws of the Student Senate) shall create a Senatorial Agenda. These agendas shall be presented for a majority approval of the Senate at the second Student Senate at the second sitting of the Fall Semester.
- 5.6. Business shall be conducted as follows:
  - 5.6.1 A simple majority of members of the Student Senate shall constitute a quorum at sittings.
  - 5.6.2 General minutes of all General Student Government Association meetings shall be made available to the public.

- 5.7 Non-members of the Student Senate are not allowed to participate in the Student Senate meetings. A non-member of the Student Senate may make a special request to the Student Senate President that an individual be allowed to address the Student Senate, such is subject to the approval of the Officers of the Senate.
- 5.7.1 The President of the Student Senate will present all bills passed by the Senate to the Student Government Association President for his/her approval or veto.
- 5.7.2 The Student Senate may call a general referendum of the Student Body in order to consider proposed legislation.
- 5.7.3 The Student Body shall have the power to enact measures independent of the Student Senate on legislative issues. An initiative petition containing the signatures of ten (10) percent of the Student Body or referendum petition containing ten percent of the student body shall be required to call a referendum within ten (10) class days after issuance of petition obtained from the Student Government Association office. The petition shall contain the date of issuance, the signatures, and Identification numbers of the signers. The measure shall be held within fifteen (15) class days after presentation of the petition to the Student Government Association President. The Student Government Association President shall implement the result of the referendum.

#### **ARTICLE VI: The Judicial Branch**

- 6.1 The Judicial Branch shall consist of (5) five justices. There shall be (1) one chief justice and (4) four associate justices.
- 6.2 The Judicial Branch members must be a student of Prairie View A & M University and have completed at least thirty (30) semester hours in residence at Prairie View A & M University prior to assuming office, with the exception of the incoming Freshman Class Justice. Members of the Judicial Branch must be full-time students, have at least a 2.50 grade point average from the previous semester prior to assuming office and must have a 2.50 cumulative grade point average. While holding office Judicial Branch members must maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative grade point average, a 2.50 semester grade point average, must not be on disciplinary or scholastic probation, and must be in good standing (academic, fiscal, and moral conduct) with the University.
- 6.3 There shall be (4) four associate justices: one Freshman Class Justices, Sophomore Class Justices, Junior Class Justices, and Senior Class Justices. Each class shall elect their Associate Justice during Fall Semester Elections.
- 6.4 The Chief Justice shall be appointed by the President of the Student Government Association at the beginning of the Fall Semester for a one year term and must be approved by (2/3) two-thirds of the Student Senate majority.
- 6.5 The Judicial Branch shall be formally referred to as the Judicial Panel and shall be guided in by the provisions of the Judicial Bylaws.
- 6.6 The constitutional powers of the panel shall be to interpret the Constitution and any such laws of the SGA, and adjudicate between parties appearing before it to settle disputes in matters of law. It shall have the powers to grant legal instruments to exercise these powers. Any powers conferred on it by an act of the senate or this constitution shall also be legal.

- 6.7 In case of resignation or incapacitation of any Justice, the President shall appoint a qualifying student in an acting capacity until the senate approval of any new nominations to the position upon the recommendation of the President.
- 6.8 A Justice sitting on the panel can be removed in accordance with the provisions of the Judicial Bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE VII: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS**

- 7.1 In the event of the removal of the Student Government President or the Executive Vice-President, the Chief Justice shall preside over such a process. The panel of inquiry for the impeachment process shall consist of the members of the Judicial Branch of the Student Government Association.
- 7.2 All other officials shall be removed in line with the provisions of the bylaws that guide the branch of the Student Government Association they belong to.
- 7.3 No member of the Student Senate shall be on conduct probation with the university. All elected, executive, senatorial, and judicial members may be removed for such acts as not coming to meetings, insubordination, or not fulfilling one's responsibilities. Senatorial, senate officers, and senate ex-officio officers shall maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative G.P.A. as well as maintain a minimum 2.50 for every semester (spring, summer, and fall) while in office. Refer to the University Handbook regarding disciplinary procedures, rights, and privileges.
- 7.4 In the case where no Judicial Panel is present, removal of the President or Executive Vice-President shall be done inline with the provisions as stated in the Senate Bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

The Constitution of the Student Government Association may be amended in the following manner:

- 8.1 By referendum, with a majority vote of the members of the Student Government Association.
- 8.2 A referendum will be held on a proposed amendment to the Constitution.
  - 8.2.1 If proposed in the Student Senate and two thirds (2/3) of the total voting membership Student Senate is in favor of the amendment being brought before the Student Government Association for a vote.
  - 8.2.2 By petition of members of the Student Government Association. The number of members required on the petition must equal or be greater than thirty (30) percent of the total number of ballots cast in the last general election.
  - 8.2.3 By two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total voting membership of the Student Senate if proposed by an external entity outside the Student Senate.
- 8.3 Any proposed amendment, together with parts of the Constitution affected, should be published in the Prairie View A&M University Student Newspaper at least one week prior to the election.

- 8.4 All approved amendments will be appended to the original Constitution.

#### **ARTICLE IX: RATIFICATION**

- 9.1 This Constitution shall be effective immediately and enforced once ratified by majority of the ballots cast in an election by the members of the General Student Body and approved by the appropriate authorities.
- 9.2 The President and Executive Vice-President shall immediately, after the ratification of the Constitution, take steps to bring all the activities of the Student Government Association in line with the relevant provisions of the Constitution.

#### **ARTICLE X: GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

- 10.1 The President of the Student Government Association is empowered to call meetings at anytime he/she deems necessary, and these shall constitute officially recognized meetings, provided that notice has been given to the student population by the appropriate advertisement at least seventy-two hours or (3) days prior to the General Assembly with the Student Government Association.

#### **ARTICLE XI: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- 11.1 This Constitution and Bylaws supersedes all previous Constitutions and Bylaws. All Bylaws hereto now in effect and not in conflict with any provision of this Constitution and Bylaws are hereby declared to be valid as statutory enactments.
- 11.2 The President shall cause to budgeted for each branch of government an operations cost.
- 11.3 Any expenditure by the Student Government Association of Prairie View A & M University shall be signed off for approval by the Student Government President, who is the ultimate accounting authority after the proper senate approval have been secured.
- 11.4 The term "announced meetings" has been stated in this Constitution and thus means that all individuals possessing a Constitutional Right to fully participate in all meetings shall be notified at least 24 hours in advance. Any meetings held without such notification shall be considered null and void.
- 11.5 The position of Student Government Association President and Vice-President are separate, and candidates must file and be elected specifically for either of these positions.
- 11.6 All other references and regulations relative to the election process shall fall under the Bylaws and guidelines of the Election Code of the Student Government Association of Prairie View A & M University.
- 11.7 Every elected official of the Student Government Association, before entering upon the execution of his/her duties of office shall take the following oath or affirmation.

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute to the best of my ability, the office of (title of office) for the Prairie View A & M University Student Government Association, and at all times

protect the welfare of the student body and to promote good relations between the students and those concerned with the University."

All elected officials shall be deemed elected and sworn in at the first Senate meeting after the class elections and after the final election for the respective positions.

- 11.8 The summer session of Prairie View A&M University shall be considered a regular session only for those Executive Officers, Senators and Members of the Student Government Association enrolled in summer school. All action taken by the Legislative body during the summer session shall be subject to approval by the legislative body at its first meeting of fall semester.
- 11.9 There shall be no legal provision requiring a minimum number of voters participating in any general election in order to validate that election. It shall be the responsibility of the Student Government Association to encourage and facilitate a maximum voter turnout in all Student Government elections.
- 11.10 The president shall cause to be delivered to the Senate the projected revenue and expenditure for the impending year at the first Senate meeting of the fall semester.

**ARTICLE XII: CERTIFICATION**

This Student Government Association Constitution stands

Approved by a vote of the Student Body

November 17, 2007

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Approved Date

Ratified by vote of the Student Body

March 6, 2008

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Ratification Date

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President of the Student Senate

Johnie L Jones III

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President of the Student Government

Andre Evans II

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Student Government Advisor

Steve Ransom

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University President

Prairie View A & M University

Dr. George C Wright