



Constitution of the Student Government Association of Barnard College





We the members of the Student Government Association of Barnard College recognize this Constitution as our governing document intended to make clear the purposes, structures, and powers of this body.



CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF BARNARD COLLEGE

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Article I: PURPOSE

Section 1.

The name of the organization shall be the Student Government Association of Barnard College, hereafter referred to as the “SGA.”

Section 2.

To facilitate the expression of opinions on matters affecting the Barnard community.

Section 3.

To connect students, administration and faculty.

Section 4.

To encourage and sponsor undergraduate extracurricular activities and organizations that enhance student life at Barnard College.

Section 5.

To establish and maintain conditions which encourage high academic and creative achievements

Section 6.

To promote and ensure responsible self government by selecting student representatives within fair and transparent elections and appointments processes.

Article II: MEMBERSHIP

All Barnard College students by virtue of having paid the student activities fee are members of the SGA and are entitled to attend all open meetings, vote on issues and candidates in College-wide elections, and to hold offices for which they meet the eligibility requirements as defined in the SGA By-laws (hereafter referred to as the “By-laws”).

Article III: POWERS

Section 1.

The responsibility of the SGA, subject to the statutory jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees, shall be all extracurricular activities and student organizations, which are funded by the Student Activities Fee.

Section 2.

In order to appeal any action of the officers of the SGA, any member of the SGA may present a petition signed by twenty members of the SGA to the Representative Council. The rules of such petition procedures are outlined in the By-laws.

Article IV: FINANCE

Section 1.

A Student Activities Fee, proposed by the SGA Executive Board, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees and the Representative Council as stated in Art. VIII, 3, 5, shall be paid by every member of the SGA. The administration of the Student Activities Fee is the sole responsibility of the elected officers of the SGA.

Section 2.

All recognized student organizations shall qualify to be funded by the SGA.

Section 3.

The Vice President of Finance shall report to the Executive Board on the amount of money in the budget surplus in the Spring Semester of each year. In the event of a surplus the Executive Board shall recommend several possible uses of the surplus to the Representative Council. At this time the Representative Council can propose alternative uses for the surplus. A two-third vote of the Representative Council shall be necessary to accept the proposed use.

Section 4.



The Executive Board of the SGA may request in writing to the President of the College that the current fee be changed for the following academic year. Any such recommendation shall be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Representative Council members.

Article V: OFFICERS

Section 1.

The following SGA officers shall be elected by the members of the SGA:

Clause 1. A President, a Vice President for Student Government, a Vice President for Student Activities, a Vice President of Finance, and a Vice President for Communications. These five officers shall form the Executive Board of the SGA.

Clause 2. The Barnard College Senator to the University Senate.

Clause 3. The Junior and Senior Representatives to the Barnard College Board of Trustees.

Clause 4. The representatives to the undergraduate student councils of Columbia College, School of Engineering and Applied Science and School of General Studies.

Clause 5. The Representative for Diversity.

Clause 6. The Representative for University Programming.

Clause 7. The Representative for Student Services.

Clause 8. The Community Affairs Representative.

Clause 9. The Academic Affairs Representative.

Clause 10. The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer of each class.

Section 2.

Each class council may elect to appoint class representatives. Each representative shall be appointed by the Representative Council (see Article X, Section 6) as outlined in the By-laws.

Section 3.

The terms of all SGA officers, unless otherwise specified, are limited to one year at which time they shall be eligible for re-election if the student meets the eligibility requirements (see Article X Section 2 and Section 4).

Section 4.

All officers of the SGA shall be held accountable to the duties of their respective position as they are outlined in the By-laws.

Article VI: THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1.

The purpose of the Executive Board of the SGA shall be:

Clause 1. To administer and oversee the work of the SGA in areas of student government organizations and activities.

Clause 2. To ensure that decisions legislated through the Representative Council are carried out.

Clause 3. To draft a yearly budget, subject to the approval of the Representative Council.

Clause 4. To review all proposed budgets and scheduling of events for Barnard and joint Barnard College/Columbia College/School of Engineering and Applied Science/School of General Studies organizations.

Clause 5. To advise and approve all Student Activity funded organization spending throughout the academic year.

Section 2.

The powers of the Executive Board shall be:

Clause 1. To propose and appoint ad hoc committees for the purpose of completing projects deemed necessary in the interest of the SGA.

Clause 2. To deal with matters pertaining to the SGA which are not specifically delegated to any committee, the Representative Council, any individual officer, or to the members of the SGA.

Article VII: THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Section 1.

The purpose of the Representative Council shall be:

Clause 1. To serve as the legislative body of the SGA.

Clause 2. To act as official spokespersons for the SGA in dealings with the faculty, administration, and other colleges.



Clause 3. To voice student opinions and concerns, facilitate communication and act as liaisons between the members of the SGA and the administration, and members of the SGA and the faculty.

Clause 4. To make information available to the entire SGA in written form on all matters related to the activities of the representatives.

Clause 5. To assist in projects related to maintaining an effective student government.

Clause 6. To form a committee to draft revisions of the constitution, when such revision is requested.

Section 2.

The members of the Representative Council with full voting privileges shall be:

Clause 1. Officers of the SGA Executive Board. The chair of the meeting may vote only in the case of a tie.

Clause 2. Officers who hold the positions of Senator, Representative to the Board of Trustees, Academic Affairs Representative, Representative for University Programming, Community Affairs Representative, Representative for Student Services, Representative for Diversity, representatives to the undergraduate student councils of Columbia College, School of Engineering and Applied Science, and School of General Studies.

Clause 3. Class Council Presidents and Vice Presidents share one vote.

Section 3.

The powers of the Representative Council shall be:

Clause 1. To legislate on matters related to student government and activities.

Clause 2. To investigate and present resolutions and proposals on matters related to the members of the SGA to the appropriate College committees or the Board of Trustees.

Clause 3. To interpret and initiate revisions to the Constitution and By-laws. The Representative Council shall have the power to accept and approve changes to the By-laws when they are deemed necessary.

Clause 4. To make budget recommendations to the SGA Executive Board.

Clause 5. To approve the SGA budget by a majority vote, as proposed by the Executive Board.

Clause 6. To request that any elected or appointed committee member, officer, or representative report on her activities as they relate to the student government.

Clause 7. To invite, for the purpose of information or communication on matters related to the SGA, any administrator, faculty member, or non-Barnard affiliate to attend a Representative Council meeting.

Clause 8. To consider and approve all referenda to be placed before a vote of the entire SGA.

Article VIII: TRIPARTITE, STUDENT SERVICES, AND INTERNAL COMMITTEES

Section 1.

The Tripartite Committees shall consist of administrators, faculty members, and students of Barnard College.

Clause 1. The committees will be chaired by Barnard College administrators.

Clause 2. If the committee deems it necessary they may also appoint a co-chair.

Clause 3. The student representatives will either be appointed by the Representative Council (see Article X, Section 6) or elected by the SGA as outlined in the By-laws.

Section 2.

The Student Services Committees shall consist of administrators and students of Barnard College

Clause 1. The committees will be chaired by an appointed student representative in conjunction with Barnard College administrators.

Clause 2. If the committee deems it necessary they may also appoint a co-chair, who must also be an appointed student member of the committee.

Clause 3. The student representatives will either be appointed by the Representative Council (see Article X, Section 6) or elected by the SGA as outlined in the By-laws.

Section 3.

The Internal Committees shall consist of officers of the SGA.

Clause 1. The committees will be chaired by an officer of the SGA (as outlined in the By-Laws).

Clause 2. If the committee deems it necessary they may also appoint a co-chair.

Clause 3. Members of internal committees will be appointed by the chair of the committee.

Section 4.



All committees will exist and function as set forth in the Tripartite, Student Services, and Internal Committee By-Laws.

Article IX: STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. Recognition

There shall be recognized student organizations at Barnard College.

Clause 1. The guidelines for SGA recognition are set forth in the By-laws.

Clause 2. The SGA recognizes the Student Governing Board (SGB), the Club Sports Governing Board (CSGB), the Interschool Governing Board (IGB) and Community Impact (CI). All organizations receiving recognition by these bodies are also indirectly recognized by the SGA.

Clause 3. No sororities or clubs involving membership on a discriminatory basis shall be recognized by the SGA. However the SGA supports students involved in Greek organizations through the Pan-Hellenic Council.

Clause 4. No organization affiliated with either a national or local political organization or a religious organization shall be directly recognized by the SGA.

Section 2.

All recognized student organizations shall be funded.

Clause 1. The guidelines for funding of SGA recognized student organizations are set forth in the By-laws.

Clause 2. The SGA funds SGB, IGB and CI, as such all SGB, IGB and CI recognized organizations must seek funding directly from their respective governing boards.

Section 3.

A recognized organization is subject to disciplinary procedures if the organization fails to adhere to the guidelines stipulated in Article X, Sections 1 and 2. These procedures include, but are not limited to: deletion of funds from the organization's account, the placement of a hold on the organization's account, and organization derecognition. The derecognition of the organization is subject to the approval of the Representative Council.

Article X: ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Section 1.

All officers shall be elected by a plurality of the votes cast by the SGA, except for the officers of the class councils who shall be elected by the plurality of the votes of their respective classes.

Section 2.

The required class status for officers of the SGA, when elected during regularly scheduled Spring elections, shall be as follows:

An Election Commission shall be created in every election in order to set forth the elections guidelines.

Clause 1. The President shall be a rising Junior or Senior.

Clause 2. The Vice President for Student Government shall be a rising Sophomore, Junior, Senior.

Clause 3. The Vice President for Student Activities shall be a rising Sophomore, Junior, Senior.

Clause 4. The Treasurer shall be a rising Sophomore, Junior or Senior.

Clause 5. The Vice President for Communication shall be a rising Sophomore, Junior or Senior.

Clause 6. The student representative to the Barnard College Board of Trustees shall be a rising Junior.

Clause 7. The Barnard College Senator to the University Senate shall be a rising Sophomore, Junior or Senior.

Clause 8. All other officers, excluding the Class Council officers, shall be a rising Sophomores, Juniors or Seniors.

Clause 9. The class standing of each class council officer shall reflect the standing of their constituencies.

Section 3.

In the case of a special election, the student vying for the position must fall into the class standing as defined in Section 37.

Section 4.

All candidates must personally affirm prior to running for office that they are in good academic standing (defined as a 2.5 grade point average or higher). If elected, they must commit to maintaining this average in addition to fulfilling their duties.

Section 5.

An Election Commission shall be created in every election in order to set forth the elections guidelines.



Clause 1. The President, the Senior Representative to the Board of Trustees and the Junior Representative to the Board of Trustees shall serve as the Elections Commission.

Clause 2. The Representative Council shall approve all decisions made by the Elections Commission.

Section 6.

When a new position is created by the SGA a special election will be held in order to fill the position.

Section 7.

The Representative Council shall create an Appointments Committee in the fall of every academic year. The Appointments Committee shall consist of non-SGA officers who apply for the position. The committee shall make recommendations to the Representative Council for the appointment of the officers and committee members of the SGA.

Article XI: IMPEACHMENT

Section 1.

All elected or appointed officials shall be brought up on impeachment charges for either:

Clause 1. Failing to fulfill the duties of their position as set forth in the By-laws.

Clause 2. Missing any two meetings during a semester, which the officials are required to attend without appropriate excuse and arrangements, as defined in the By-Laws.

Section 2.

Any member of the SGA may bring charges against an elected or appointed official at any time by following the procedures as they are set forth in the By-Laws.

Article XII: VACANCIES

Section 1.

A vacancy in the SGA occurs when a position has not been filled by election or appointment, or when an officer or committee member has been removed from her position, resigns, does not keep up her academic standing, or is no longer registered at and attending Barnard College.

Section 2.

The Appointments Committee shall recommend students for appointment to fill vacancies other than the President of the SGA and the presidents of each class council (see Article X, Section 6).

Section 3.

In the case of a vacancy in the office of the President of SGA, the VPSG shall assume the responsibilities of the President. A new VPSG will be appointed (see Article X, Section 6).

Section 4.

In the case of a vacancy in any other Executive Board office, the President shall assume the responsibilities of that officer until someone is appointed.

Section 5.

In the case of a vacancy in the office of the President of any class council, the Vice President of the respective council shall assume the responsibility of the President. A new Vice President will be appointed (see Article X, 6).

Article XIII: REFERENDA

Section 1.

Obtaining a referendum is set forth as follows:

Clause 1. The Representative Council may initiate a referendum.

Clause 2. Any member of the SGA may petition the Representative Council to hold a referendum upon the presentation of a petition signed by 100 members of the SGA, stating the purpose of said referendum.

Section 2.

All referenda require approval by a two-thirds vote of the Representative Council.

Section 3.

Once approved, the referendum shall be drafted by the VPSG. A majority vote of the Representative Council is required to approve the wording of the referendum.

Section 4.

Once the draft has been approved, the referendum shall be part of the ballot of the next general All-College election or a special All-College vote. The draft shall be posted on the SGA Bulletin Board at least twentyfour hours before the election.

Section 5.



A two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the members of the SGA shall be required for a referendum to pass.

Article XIV: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1.

Amendments proposed by the Representative Council.

Clause 1. An amendment may be proposed to the Representative Council by any member of the SGA.

Clause 2. After the Representative Council considers an amendment, a draft shall be posted on the SGA Bulletin Board.

Clause 3. At the next meeting of the Representative Council, after the posting of the amendment, the amendment shall be presented for a vote of the Representative Council.

Clause 4. A two-thirds vote of the Representative Council shall be necessary to accept an amendment.

Clause 5. Once accepted by the Representative Council, the amendment shall be presented to the SGA as a referendum in the next general All-College election or a special all college vote (see Article XII).

Clause 6. Amendments related to changes in grammar or procedural internal SGA updates can be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Representative Council, without having to be voted on in an All-College election or a special all college vote.

Section 2.

Revision of the constitution

Clause 1. Every three years, the Constitution and By-Laws shall be reviewed by a special ad hoc committee to be chaired by the Vice President for Student Government made up of 2 members of Representative Council, 2 members of the Committee System, and 2 students who are not members of Representative Council or a Committee.

Clause 2. The report of the ad hoc committee shall be considered at a meeting of the Representative Council. If the report proposes amendments then the procedures of Article XIII, Section 1 above shall be followed.

Article XV: THE POWERS OF THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1.

This Constitution, having been approved by the SGA, shall supersede all other committee guidelines and constitutions governing student-related matters.

Section 2.

In the case of a discrepancy in Section 1, the matter shall be decided by the General Counsel in conjunction with the President of the College