

The Student Government Association at the University of South Florida Lakeland

PREAMBLE

We the student body of the University of South Florida Lakeland, in an effort to establish ourselves as a responsible unit for democratic self-government, further the rights and obligations of all students, and initiate stimulating and rewarding activities for the betterment of the University and civic community, do ordain and establish this Constitution, within the structure established and subscribed to by the University of South Florida Lakeland. We shall be known as the Student Government Association of the University of South Florida Lakeland and shall herein be referred to as the USF Lakeland SGA

ARTICLE I

- Section I:** The purpose of the Student Government Association shall be to represent the interests of the student body including coordinating activities through allocations and expenditures of Activities and Service Fee Fund, with the ability to audit such funds.
- Section II:** The USF Lakeland SGA, shall consist of elected members of the student body properly appointed as defined in the By-Laws. It will be comprised of the Executive, and Legislative, and various Standing Committees. The power and duties of SGA are set forth in this Constitution and by Florida law, and these powers cannot be increased or decreased except by added amendments to this Constitution or applicable law.
- Section III:** All students who have identified their home campus as USF Lakeland shall be entitled to vote in the special and general elections of the Student Government Association. Any such student has the right to call for a University-wide referendum / recall election provided that a petition signed by at least 10% of the currently enrolled Student Body is submitted as specified by the By-Laws. Student enrollment figures shall be determined by the Registrar's Office at the time of the referendum / recall.
- Section IV:** It is the Student Government Association's responsibility to adapt to the changing needs of the student body both educationally and socially in the process of creating and developing a direction and unified vision. The Student Government Association in representing the student body shall work to encourage and support the development of the University of South Florida Lakeland students. Just as a good classroom experience is vital to a student's academic excellence, the co-curricular experiences that a student has through leadership opportunities of SGA is crucial to a student's desire to contribute to community, while developing skills that they can use in their lives away from the university

ARTICLE II: THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- Section I:** The Executive Council is comprised of the Executive Board (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer), as well as branch and agency heads and all executive appointees. Members of the Executive Council are the most visible and active members of the SGA who work closely with the Director of Student Life to address students' concerns at the university. The Executive Council sets the vision for student-driven cocurricular life.

- Section II:** All executive powers of Student Government Association shall be vested in the President. The President shall have the power to nominate and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint other executive appointees who will be paid for their duties. All other executive officers may be appointed by the President without the advice and consent of the Senate unless otherwise provided by the Constitution.
- Section III:** The President shall be responsible for all agencies of the Student Government Association. The President shall have the power to nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Review Board, appoint and remove all agency heads. The Board shall be composed of all agency heads, the President, 2 Senators, the SGA Treasurer and the advisor.
- Section IV:** The President shall recommend students for appointment to, or removal from, University-wide councils, committees and boards.
- Section V:** The President shall sign or veto, within ten (10) school days all constitutional amendments, statutes and budgetary allocations passed by the Senate. The President's failure to act during this specified time shall be deemed approval of such legislation. The Senate may override, by a two-thirds vote, a veto by the SGA President.
- Section VI:** The President may call for a referendum of the student body, subject to approval by two-thirds vote of the Senate.
- Section VII:** The President may initiate budget proceedings by providing a proposed Activity and Service fee budget to the Senate.
- Section VIII:** The President, Vice President and all executive officers must be enrolled for a minimum of six credit hours as undergraduate degree seeking students or five hours as post-baccalaureate students during the fall and spring semesters. Summer semester requirement shall be provided in the By-Laws. The President, Vice President and all executive officers must be students in good academic standing and may not be under disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion. No candidate shall be elected or appointed to any executive office unless and until a certification from the Office of Student Life attesting that the candidate has met all of the qualifications for office, has been filed with the Office of the SGA President.
- Section IX:** After such election or appointment, no executive officer shall continue in office unless and until a certification from the Office of Student Life, attesting that the executive officer has met all of the qualifications for office, has been filed with the Office of the SGA President within ten (10) school days after the beginning of a term for which the officer must be enrolled pursuant this section.
- Section X:** All candidates for the offices of President and Vice President shall form joint candidacies so that each voter shall cast a single vote for a candidate for President and a candidate for Vice President running together. Candidates must be Lakeland home students or be enrolled in 60% of Lakeland classes each semester if Lakeland is not their home campus. Election for President and Vice President shall take place two consecutive days beginning on the Tuesday and Wednesday nine business days prior to Spring Break. Run-off elections, if

necessary, shall be held the following Tuesday and Wednesday. The President and Vice President shall take office the first Monday following Spring Commencement. The President and Vice President shall serve a one-year term of office. No President or Vice President may serve more than two consecutive terms.

Section XI: In the event the President resigns, is impeached, or is unable to perform the powers and duties of the office, the Vice President shall become the President.

Section XII: In the event an Executive Branch member becomes vacant for any reason, the President shall nominate and, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint a new Executive Branch member.

Section XIII: In the event of vacancy in the office of President and Vice President at the time of vacancy of the office of President, the order of succession shall be the Treasurer, and Secretary.

ARTICLE II: THE LEGISLATIVE

Section I: The legislative authority of the student body shall be vested in the Student Representative Senate, hereinafter referred to as the Senate.

Section II: The Senate will be comprised of representatives from each of the Colleges of the University. The total number of Senate seats will not exceed 60. The apportionment of the seats will be set according to the percentages of the total number of students, with Lakeland as their home campus, enrolled at each of the respective Colleges.

Section III: Members of the Senate represent specific populations within USF Lakeland community. The representatives shall represent the interests of their respective colleges. They, and the SGA Executive Board officers, shall convene collectively for the purpose of formulating policy and procedures pertaining to student activities, functions, and benefits funded by Activity & Service Fee money. This shall be accomplished by vote of the Senators and the SGA Executive Board.

The Senate includes senators from the following areas:

Division of Arts & Sciences
Division of Business
Division of Education
Division of Engineering
Undergraduate Studies
Graduate Students

College enrollment Number of senators

0 – 75 students 2 senators
76 – 150 students 3 senators
151 – 225 students 4 senators
226 - 300 students 5 senators

301 - 375 students 6 senators

376 - 1450students 7 senators

Over 451 students 8 senators

Section IV: Elections for the Senate shall take place two consecutive days beginning on the Tuesday and Wednesday nine business days prior to Spring Break. Run-off elections, if necessary, shall be held the following Tuesday and Wednesday. Senators shall take office the first Monday following Spring Commencement. Senators shall serve a one-year term of office.

Section V: All undergraduate members of the Senate shall be enrolled for a minimum of six credit hours as degree seeking students and all graduate members of the Senate shall be enrolled for a minimum of five credit hours as post-baccalaureate students during the fall and spring semesters. Summer semester requirement shall be provided by statute. The composition of the Senate during the summer terms shall be determined as provided by statute. All members of the Senate must be students in good academic standing. No member of the Senate may be under disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion. Should a member of the Senate be placed under disciplinary probation while in office, the General Assembly must rule the member eligible in order to continue to participate. No student may be a candidate for election to the Senate unless and until a certification from the Office of Student Life attesting that the candidate has met all of the qualifications for office, has been filed with the Office of the SGA President. After election to the Senate, no senator shall continue in office unless and until a certification from the Office of Student Life, attesting that the senator has met all of the qualifications for office, has been filed with the Office of the SGA President within ten (10) school days after the beginning of a term for which the senator must be enrolled pursuant this section.

Section VI: The Senate shall have the authority to enact, amend or repeal statutes of SGA by a majority vote.

Section VII: The Senate shall have the authority to enact, by two-thirds vote, statutes governing election of all SGA officers.

Section VIII: The Senate may propose, by a two-thirds vote, any constitutional amendment.

Section XIX: The Senate may approve, by a majority vote, nominations of the President requiring Senate advice and consent. Failure to act on any Presidential appointment within twenty school days shall be deemed approval of such appointment.

Section X: The Senate may override, by a two-thirds vote, a veto by the SGA President.

Section XI: For purposes of this Constitution, a majority vote is defined as more votes yes than votes no cast by those members voting yes or no. A two-thirds vote is defined as two-thirds votes yes or no compared to the total number of votes cast by those members voting either yes or no. Members who abstain shall not be considered as voting either yes or no, except that abstentions by more than one-half of the members who vote will be considered as votes no.

Section XII: The Senate shall approve and allocate the Activity & Service fee budget.

Section XIII: The Senate shall establish its own meeting times, rules and procedures. The Senate shall assemble in open meetings at frequent intervals for the

deliberation of legislation and the business of the student body. No officer may hold an office in any other branch, agency, or department of SGA during his/her term of office in the legislative branch.

Section XIV: The Senate shall provide for the compilation and publication of all legislation.

Section XV: The Senate shall establish means through which the student body can actively participate in the formulation of policies that affect them.

Section XVI: The Senate shall have the power to appoint any committee necessary to the operation of the Senate, and to appoint and remove any committee chair. No member of the Senate may chair more than one committee, nor hold office in any other branch of SGA.

ARTICLE IV: STANDING COMMITTEES

Section I: The Budget Committee shall assist the Treasurer in appropriating funds, preparing budget reports, and acknowledging requests for additional funds. Membership and operation procedures will be defined in the Financial Procedures Act.

Section II: The Constitution Interpretation Committee shall be chaired by Associate Vice President of Administration & Campus Environments or his/her designee. The committee will be comprised of two additional committee members selected by the chair. This committee will determine any interpretation of the constitution and by-laws until such time that a Judicial Branch is developed for SGA Lakeland

Section III: The Lakeland Activities Board will be chaired by the executive council member who is responsible for the specific program/event currently requiring assistances. The committee will be charged with planning and implementing the programmatic aspects of SGA as needed. In the case of Homecoming, students involved with the committee may not participate in Homecoming activities including running for Homecoming Lord/Lady or as a member of a team.

Section IV: The Student Organizations Council shall consist of one representative from each student organization and shall be chaired by the Director of Student Life. Other members may be appointed by the chairperson. Its purpose shall be to inform each other of upcoming activities, share relevant ideas, and serve as a means to share information with various organizations.

ARTICLE V: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Section I: USF Lakeland SGA reserves the right to amend this constitution:

Section II: An amendment process is initiated by a majority vote of the full Senate.

Section III: Amendments so initiated must receive majority of the votes cast by the student body. Two weeks prior to the vote, an all-University town meeting shall be held to discuss any such amendment.

Section IV: Editorial changes may be made at the discretion of the full Senate.

ARTICLE VII: By-Laws

Section I: SGA will utilize additional documents which will govern the activities of the Student Government at USF Lakeland.

Section II: Operating Procedures act: This document details all policies and procedures related to ongoing operations of SGA

Section III: Financial procedures act: This document details all policies and procedures related to the Student Government allocation of A&S fees. In addition, the document will provide instruction to student organizations on the appropriate use of student fees and the ways in which SGA will distribute funds to these organizations

Section IV: Elections procedures act: This document details all policies and procedures related to student body elections including candidate requirements, campaigning procedures, and guidelines for the Election Rules Committee.

Section V: These governing acts shall not be altered except by majority vote of the Senate. The agreed upon changes, must first be reflected by statement and vote count in the meeting minutes, then signed by the President and reflected in the corresponding statutes.