

Constitution and By-Laws of the Student Government Association of the Student Body of the Medical University of South Carolina

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1

This organization shall be known as the Student Government Association of the Medical University of South Carolina.

Section 2

The purposes of the Student Government are the following:

- To facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between the six colleges and all students attending the Medical University of South Carolina.
- To serve as a liaison between MUSC Students and the University administration in order to represent student opinion, needs and interests to the administration; and to disseminate and promote the exchange of information from the administration to students.
- To take action to increase the quality of student services and academic programs in order to further enhance the education of MUSC students.
- To plan and execute a variety of social, cultural and recreational events to promote fellowship, personal growth, and enjoyment of MUSC students and the University community.
- To maintain a budget, within the allocated funds, to most effectively serve the MUSC student body.

Article II. Membership

Section 1

Each college and affinity group in the Medical University of South Carolina is entitled to the following number of representatives based on the need for adequate communication:

Health Professions: 12

Dental: 5

Graduate Studies: 4

Medicine: 10

Nursing: 6

Pharmacy: 5

Multicultural Student Advisory Board: 1

International Student Association: 1

Alliance for Equality: 1

Alliance for Hispanic Health: 1

MUSC Asian Student Association: 1

Alliance for disAbility Advocacy: 1

In the event that an affinity group sends more than one representative to SGA meetings, only one person can be the designated SGA representative. Therefore, allowing only the designated representative to vote on matters before the SGA and to fulfill required representative duties.

Section 2

A university-wide student organization may petition the SGA to have one representative on the SGA. The position will be added provided that the SGA has a 2/3 majority vote to do so. This representative will be able to vote on SGA matters, but will not be considered an Affinity Group or receive Affinity Group funding, unless they pass the requirements set forth in this section.

(a) An Affinity Group is a student organization whose mission statement represents a minority identity, including but not limited to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or other identity that is not shared by the majority in any of the following locations of MUSC, Charleston, South Carolina, or the United States.

When a group is applying to become a student organization, the Executive Director of Student Programs and Student Diversity (SPSD) will determine if a new group meets this definition, and will award Affinity Group status in conjunction with registered student organization (RSO) status. The Affinity Group status will award them voting rights in SGA.

If a student group falls under this Affinity Group definition, they may apply for Affinity Group funding which will be brought to a vote at SGA. The membership and officers of that student group can come and state their case for further persuasion. If 2/3 majority vote is met, they will receive Affinity Group funding as described in Section 2 (b). If a 2/3 majority vote is not met, a petition with the same number of signatures as 2/3 of SGA membership can be brought to the SGA and another vote can be made, requiring only majority vote to achieve Affinity Group funding. The requesting affinity group representative will not be able to vote in this instance, just as allocations requesters cannot vote.

If they are still unable to complete a petition with majority vote, they will retain Affinity Group status and voting rights, but not receive funding. They will be treated as a university-wide organization with only voting rights.

(b) Once a student group is approved to be an Affinity Group by the Executive Director of SPSPD, and is approved to receive SGA Affinity Group funding, they will undergo the Welcome Period in which they receive \$1000 per semester or \$2000 per academic year.

If Affinity Groups are able to hold meetings with at least 10 people (the same number of signatures required to start a new student group), two times a semester, they should be granted the full \$2500 per semester or \$5000 per academic year the following year.

Affinity Groups will submit attendance records of meetings semesterly to the VP of Diversity and Inclusion to ensure compliance. If an affinity group is having trouble with attendance during the first semester, it is the role of the VP of D&I to assist and help the affinity group achieve compliance.

This is to help the new group properly grow, hold larger meetings to raise awareness, and celebrate the identity they represent to further enhance the diversity in MUSC campus.

(c) If an Affinity Group can no longer maintain their responsibilities as described in Section 4 that academic year, they will be placed on probation period and will not receive funding the next academic year.

If the Affinity Group representative also failed to meet expectations of an SGA representative such as not attending SGA meetings and not providing a stand-in replacement, the Affinity Group will also lose voting privileges for the next academic year.

If an Affinity Group has an active representative that has been attending SGA meetings and has been compliant with the requirements of an SGA representative that academic year, the Affinity Group can retain voting privileges for the next academic year and be treated as a university-wide organization as described in this section.

Once the group is ready to resume responsibilities, they will restart the voting process described in Section 2(b) for funding. If they achieve the vote, they will begin in the Welcome Period. If they have previously lost voting privileges, they will also regain voting privileges for their Affinity Group and begin in the Welcome Period.

Section 3

The members of the SGA must be students in good standing at MUSC as determined by the individual colleges under their respective grading systems and the Honor Code.

Section 4

Each college is responsible for electing or appointing the appropriate number of representatives, per the SGA constitution. If a representative position becomes vacant for any reason, each college may elect or appoint a representative (meeting the general standards of a representative stated in Article II) to succeed the previous representative. The college may appoint a temporary-voting representative until a permanent successor is elected or appointed.

In the event that a representative cannot attend a meeting, they are responsible for designating a reliable substitute. The substitute is invited to attend all SGA meetings but may vote only in the representative's absence.

No SGA representative may serve as a voting representative of more than one college or organization.

Representatives of the SGA may hold concurrent offices in College or University-wide organizations.

Each MUSC SGA Representative and the Executive Officers shall sign the Oath of Understanding and uphold the roles and responsibilities outlined in the MUSC SGA Constitution.

Section 5

Representatives from all but the incoming first-year class should be elected/appointed in the spring. Outgoing representatives will retain voting power and responsibilities through the end of the spring semester, except for Graduate Studies, Health Professions, and Nursing, which elect new officers according to their graduation cycles.

Section 6

All Student Government Representatives and Executive Officers shall be required to attend all regularly scheduled meetings. In the event that circumstances prevent the attendance of a member at a regularly scheduled session, then that member shall submit an excuse, written or oral, in advance to either the Communications Vice President of the Student Government Association or the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity. The Executive Committee shall have the power to excuse, or not excuse, the absence. A SGA representative will be reviewed in a semester. The representative under review shall have the right to appear before the Executive Committee to make a statement before a decision is rendered.

Section 7

The 'Function Policy' is as follows: Student Government members are required to work a predetermined number of SGA events and volunteer service hours. The requirements will be determined by the Executive Committee during the summer planning session according to the number of representatives and the number of events planned. One of the required work events should include a clean-up detail, provided there is enough availability. The Executive Committee reserves the right to make any event mandatory, with reasonable notice. In addition, Representatives and Executive Officers will be required to complete at least 3 SGA-sponsored volunteer service hours per semester. These requirements will be written into an Oath of Understanding and will be signed by each representative.

Section 8

The Executive Committee (see Article III, Section 1) of the SGA has the right to dismiss a SGA representative from his/her position if any of the following conditions occur:

(1) the attendance policy (see Article II, Section 6) is violated, (2) the student withdraws or is dismissed from the University, (3) the student refuses to obey the rules of this Constitution, or (4) the Functions Policy is violated (see Article II, Section 7). The representative and the student government of the individual's college will be notified of this action. An SGA representative who is dismissed from his/her position may not run for re-election the following academic year.

Section 9

Meetings are open to all MUSC students; however, only representatives shall sit in the designated representative seats while non-representatives and substitutes (if designated representative is present) are asked to sit on the perimeter of the room. This allows all members to distinguish who has the ability to participate in voting issues brought before the SGA.

Article III. Officers

Section 1

The officers of the Student Government Association of the Medical University of South Carolina shall be the President, Academic Vice President, Program Vice President, Service Vice President, Communications Vice President, and Diversity and Inclusion Vice President.

Section 2

All SGA officers must be students who paid student activity fees and are in good standing at the Medical University of South Carolina as determined by the individual colleges under their respective grading systems and the Honor Code.

Section 3

The elections of officers shall be under the following conditions:

- The management of the elections shall be conducted by the Executive Committee.
- Elections shall be held in March and the newly elected officers are strongly encouraged to attend all executive and general SGA meetings on or after April 1. Upon May 1, the newly elected officers will assume active duties and powers.
- All candidates for Student Body executive offices shall be self-nominated in the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity, and upon such nomination, the candidate will sign a form stating that they have read the entire Constitution and agree to follow current stated regulations and amendments.

- The candidates will be given a filing period to present their candidacy form. The Executive Committee will determine the dates for this period, which will extend for a timeframe of between two to four weeks; the Executive Committee will publicize this period at least one week before the opening day. The final day of the filing period must be on a weekday and will end at 5:00 p.m. In the case of no candidates filing for a particular office, the filing period for such office will be extended for one-week periods repeatedly until at least one candidate presents.
- A plurality of the votes cast will be required to elect the officers. In the event of a tie, campus-wide, run-off elections shall be held for the tying candidates until one receives a plurality of votes in an election. The Executive Committee will determine the dates of the additional elections.
- Electoral disputes deemed significant by the Executive Committee shall be decided by a discussion and vote in the general SGA meeting. Candidates must file a written complaint within two working days of the closing of the elections.
- Campaign procedures and ethics will be stipulated to all candidates in writing from the Executive Committee, and the candidate will sign a form of consent to such regulation upon filing for candidacy.
- Elections will be held over a two-day period set by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may choose to use the assistance of the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity and voting members of the SGA for assistance of the online election process.
- Any officer running for re-election will not be able to participate in the election process.
- In the event that a new Executive Officer position is created outside of an election cycle, the general SGA may elect any current SGA member to the position based on plurality vote at a time agreed upon by the SGA. If reasonable, as determined by the current SGA and possible in a timely manner, a university-wide election may be held to fill the position.

Section 4

The President will abstain from voting on matters brought before the SGA, but they do reserve veto power. The Academic Vice President, Program Vice President, Service Vice President, Communications Vice President, and Diversity and Inclusion Vice President reserve the right to vote.

Section 5

In the event that an elected officer cannot fulfill his/her duties, (with the exception of the presidential succession outlined in Article III, Section 8), all SGA members will be asked to apply to the general SGA, which will elect a replacement based on plurality vote. If a candidate is disqualified from an election, the remaining candidates will be asked to apply to the general SGA, which will elect the officer based on a plurality vote.

Section 6

A recommendation for the removal of an officer may be submitted to the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity by the SGA or from the student body at large. The recommendation must be approved by three-fourths of the members of SGA, excluding the officer in question. Removal from office can be only on grounds of not fulfilling the duties of office as set forth in this Constitution or in the Oath of Understanding.

Section 7

The President:

- Shall be the chief executive officer of the SGA.
- Shall be the official representative of the student body of the Medical University of South Carolina, including attending meetings of the Board of Trustees, faculty/administration meetings, taking part in ceremonies and events, including speaking at MUSC Commencement on behalf of the student

body, and other responsibilities.

- Shall be responsible for the overall operation of programs, finances and continuity of the MUSC SGA.
- Shall chair the Executive Committee and preside over regularly scheduled meetings of the SGA.
- Shall chair the Student Welfare Committee.
- Shall oversee completion of a Campus Safety Walk in conjunction with Public Safety and Parking Management to be held every two years.
- Shall organize and chair at least one annual meeting of all MUSC campus-wide student organization presidents.
- Shall plan and conduct SGA elections as chairman of the Executive Committee, unless running for re-election.
- Shall draft swift public responses to notable public tragedies and have said draft reviewed and agreed upon by the SGA executive board before distributing it to the MUSC student body.
- Shall work closely with university representatives to make plans for, publicize, and coordinate Returning Student Parking Registration.
- Shall be in Charleston over the majority of the summer to make plans for the upcoming year.
- Shall maintain close contact with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity staff to assure proper organization of all procedures and activities.
- Shall have the power to veto any decision made by the SGA.
- Shall work closely with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity to assist with annual revenue generating fundraising for the SGA.

Section 8

The Academic Vice President:

- Shall assist the President in the execution of SGA policies and operations.
- Shall chair the Academic Affairs Committee.
- Shall plan and conduct a constitutional review and/or update every two years.
- Shall attend meetings and/or maintain contact with the administrations of the Offices of Enrollment Management and the Library and report any changes in policy to the SGA.
- Shall attend university-wide Academic Affairs committee meetings.
- Shall act as Parliamentarian to interpret and enforce “Robert’s Rules of Order.”
- Shall act in lieu of the President if the President is unable to perform the duties of the office and shall succeed the office if a vacancy occurs.
- Shall maintain close contact with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity staff to assure proper organization of all procedures and activities.

Section 9

The Program Vice President:

- Shall chair the Programs Committee.
- Shall be the official student representative of the Cultural Projects Council.
- Shall work closely with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity staff to assure that all SGA social, cultural, recreational, and educational programs are properly planned and organized.
- Shall help plan and manage Fall Retreat for all SGA Members.
- Shall maintain close contact with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity staff to assure proper organization of all procedures and activities. At certain times of the year, this will require daily communications.
- Shall be in Charleston over the majority of the summer to make plans for the upcoming year.
- Shall report on expenses incurred for all SGA social, cultural, recreational and educational programs on a monthly basis.

Section 10

The Service Vice President:

- Shall chair the Service Committee.
- Shall work closely with MUSC Gives Back to organize service projects and communicate volunteer opportunities to the SGA.
- Shall be involved in any fundraising for volunteer service projects or causes deemed desirable or necessary by the SGA.
- Shall maintain close contact with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity staff to assure proper organization of all procedures and activities.

Section 11

The Communications Vice President:

- Shall chair the Communications Committee.
- Shall maintain all official records of the SGA on the SGA's website, including membership, rosters, agendas, and minutes.
- Shall assist with the Returning Student Parking Registration process.
- Shall be responsible for the accuracy and effectiveness of SGA's website and all social media platforms.
- Shall notify SGA representatives of scheduled meetings.
- Shall take roll and manage the attendance policy.
- Shall handle all SGA correspondence and the posting of minutes.
- Shall maintain close contact with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity staff to assure proper organization of all procedures and activities.

Section 12

The Diversity and Inclusion Vice President:

- Shall chair the Diversity and Inclusion Committee.
- Shall maintain close contact with the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity staff to assure proper organization of all procedures and activities.
- Shall communicate with appointed diversity faculty within each college about college-specific issues.
- Shall sit on the board of the Student Diversity Advisory and Inclusion Council and be the SGA liaison.
- Shall coordinate at least one large-scale event among affinity groups.
- Shall be a point-person for issues and ideas brought forth by affinity group representatives.
- Shall coordinate semesterly town hall meetings among affinity groups and other college-specific minority organizations to voice any concerns or opinions about diversity and inclusion at MUSC.
- Shall plan at least one annual initiative focused on institutional change for Diversity and Inclusion on a campus-wide level.
- Shall plan at least one campus-wide program or event related to Diversity and Inclusion.
- Shall inform on SGA social, cultural, recreational and educational programs and ensure that they are inclusive.
- Shall implement a diversity training for all SGA members.

Article IV. Meetings

Section 1

Regular meetings of the SGA shall be held at least twice a month, or a minimum of six times per fall and spring semester. Special meetings may be called by the President as needed and also may be scheduled by

the SGA at a regular meeting.

Section 2

Questions concerning procedural matters shall be settled by reference to Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) except when covered by a specific provision of this Constitution.

Section 3

Decisions before the SGA can be made by a majority vote of the eligible members, provided that a quorum of at least 2/3 of the members is present.

Section 4

Designated substitutes may vote in the absence of representatives. Elected representatives are responsible for informing their substitute representative of upcoming votes and pertinent information relating to the issue to be voted upon.

Section 5

The proceedings of the SGA must be posted in minute-format or otherwise publicized promptly after approval. The Communications Vice President has the obligation to maintain communications between the SGA and the Student Body.

Section 6

The SGA may override a presidential veto with a 2/3 majority re-vote, provided that a quorum of members is present.

Article V. Committees

Section 1

With the exception of the Executive Committee, the membership of the standing committees should include at least one SGA representative from each of the six colleges and at least one affinity group representative on each committee, if possible.

Section 2

The SGA shall have the following standing committees: Executive Committee, Student Welfare Committee, Academic Affairs Committee, Programs Committee, Service Committee, Communications Committee and Diversity and Inclusion Committee. New committees may be formed by approval of the SGA.

(a) The President shall serve as the chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall include the President, Academic Vice President, Program Vice President, Service Vice President, Diversity and Inclusion Vice President, and Communications Vice President. The function of the Executive Committee is to oversee, plan, organize, and monitor the business of the SGA. In addition, they shall conduct elections in a timely and proper manner and encourage the highest level of student participation in candidacy and online voting. The Executive Committee, with the help of the SGA advisors, may make minor grammatical changes to sections of the Constitution as needed, so long as the changes do not change the language or intent of the sections to be changed.

The President shall serve as the chairperson of the Student Welfare Committee. The function of the Student Welfare Committee is to identify non-curricular student concerns and needs; explore the situation around these concerns and needs; take these concerns and needs to the appropriate

administrator/faculty members to reach a resolution or make change; and to communicate related information/action to the student body.

(b) The Academic Vice President shall serve as the chairperson of the Academic Affairs Committee. The Academic Affairs Committee is to assume student leadership in the promotion of the dynamic process of learning at MUSC. This includes striving to achieve highly qualified faculty and able students. In addition, this committee is to support any ideals or actions that will facilitate the acquisition and transfer of knowledge and skills amongst faculty and students. The responsibilities of the Academic Affairs Committee include conducting a constitutional review every two years. The recommendations and actions of the Academic Affairs Committee are to be exchanged with the MUSC Deans, the MUSC Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, the MUSC President and the Board of Trustees.

(c) The Program Vice President shall serve as the chairperson of the Programs Committee. The function of the Programs Committee is to schedule, plan, promote, manage, and evaluate a variety of social, cultural, educational, and recreational events and activities for MUSC students and the University community.

(d) The Service Vice President shall serve as the chairperson of the Service Committee. The function of the Service Committee is to plan, organize and manage service projects for the SGA membership. The Service Committee will also work in conjunction with MUSC Gives Back to communicate volunteer opportunities to the student government.

(e) The Communications Vice President shall serve as the chairperson of the Communications Committee. The function of the Communications Committee is to maintain and improve communication among SGA, the MUSC administrative staff, faculty and all students at MUSC. The committee also works on the contents of the SGA website and social media platforms.

(f) The Diversity and Inclusion Vice President shall serve as the chairperson of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The function of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee is to maintain and bolster the flow of communication between SGA, the Student Diversity Advisory and Inclusion Council, diversity faculty, and all students at MUSC. The committee will also collaborate with all SGA affinity groups and college-specific minority organizations to plan yearly events and enact yearly initiatives that focus on fostering diversity and inclusion at MUSC.

Article VI. Specific Functions

Section 1. Budget

(a) The SGA will establish a general balanced budget plan twice a year to include fall and spring semesters. The proposed budgets will be prepared by the Executive Committee and presented to the SGA at the first meeting of each semester. The spring budget will reflect any changes necessary due to actual fall expenditures. The budget may be approved by a simple majority vote at the next meeting provided that a quorum is present.

(b) Expenditures which are not included in the budget plan and which total \$1000 or more will be presented to the SGA for approval. Expenditures less than \$1000 may be approved by the Executive Committee.

(c) Any excess funds budgeted for appropriations in the Fall Semester will be added to the budgeted Spring Allocations and used only for this purpose.

Section 2. Relationship with other student organizations

The SGA is not authorized to determine the policies and business of other student organizations at the Medical University of South Carolina.

The SGA shall work to co-sponsor campus-wide programs with other student organizations. An organization wishing to co-sponsor an event with the MUSC SGA must agree with the currently outlined 'Allocations Guidelines' found on the organizations website. They must also share the related expenses and event assistance 50/50. The 'Allocations Guidelines' are attached as Appendix B in this constitution. For a detailed overview: Allocations Guidelines.

Requests for SGA funding of an event must be made with at least two regularly scheduled SGA meetings between the submission of the "SGA Funds Request Form" (Hereafter "Request Form") and the event.

The President shall chair an annual meeting of the presidents of all campus-wide student organizations. The function of these meetings is to encourage communication between leaders of University organizations and to more effectively plan University functions.

Section 3. Student Communications

Information sent via email to the Medical University of South Carolina student body will be disseminated through the Student Broadcast email system.

Article VII. Constitutional Amendments

Any MUSC student may introduce amendments to the SGA constitution to the Academic Affairs Committee. At the next meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee, the committee will discuss the proposed amendment and introduce the proposed amendment at the following meeting of the SGA along with their recommendation. The proposed amendment will be discussed by the SGA at that meeting and will be voted on in a timely manner. A two-thirds vote, provided that a quorum is present, will carry the amendment.

APPENDIX A

Each college and affinity group is limited to a specific number of representatives (see Article II – Section 1 for the number of representatives per college and affinity group). Additionally:

- 1) Each college, excluding the College of Health Professions, may not exceed more than two representatives per class in addition to two members at-large. In the event that no student from a college is available to serve, the reserved seat shall become an at-large seat for the college for that term.
- 2) Within the College of Health Professions, each degree-granting program of study is guaranteed to have at least one representative, while the remaining representatives will be determined by the College of Health Professions' SGA. In the event that no students from a certain program are available to serve, the reserved seat shall become an at-large seat for the college for that term.
- 3) Affinity groups only have one designated representative.

APPENDIX B

- 1) Student organizations may request any amount up to *50% of the total event cost. The SGA may vote to deny the request, approve the request in its full amount or approve an amount less than that which is requested.

*If the event itself is educational in nature (i.e. seminar, workshop, leadership series, etc.), an amount greater than 50% of the total cost may be requested. Additionally, if the SGA is asked and decides to officially co-sponsor the event, rather than simply financially support the event, an amount greater than 50% may be requested. A co-sponsored event means that the requesting student organization and the MUSC SGA would share not only the cost but also the promotion and management of an event.

2) All events or activities supported by SGA funds must be advertised and open to participation by the entire MUSC student body. Furthermore, the participation fee must be the same for all MUSC students.

3) SGA funds cannot be used to make a direct monetary donation, pay dues, or purchase individual memberships to professional organizations.

4) A group may only receive funds for a particular event no more than two consecutive years.