

Chowan University

Student Government Association Constitution

Preamble

We, the students of Chowan University, recognizing that all powers and duties are our responsibility, and through appointments and elections certain privileges and powers have been delegated to officials, administration, faculty, staff, and students to further act on those responsibilities, do establish this Constitution for the Student Government Association of Chowan University.

Article I. Legislative

Section 1. Club Congress Composition

Membership in the Club Congress, the legislative body of the SGA, shall consist of one representative from each active club or organization. It is recommended that each club elects a non-officer representative at the beginning of the fall semester. If the club doesn't have enough members to have a non-officer representative, they have to get special consent. Club Congress representatives should be appointed by each club or organization no later than September 1 of each academic year. While all students are non-voting members of the SGA, the Club Congress is limited to one voting representative from each club. Voting privileges are limited to elected or appointed officials within the SGA.

- A. Vacancies in the Club Congress are to be reported to the SGA President and filled within a two-week period. All appointments by each club must be given to the SGA President immediately after their decision is made.
- B. Representatives in the Club Congress, at the time of their appointment/election and during their term of office, must adhere to the following:
 - a. Shall be a full-time student (taking at least 12 credit hours) at Chowan University.
 - b. Shall have a 2.5 GPA upon election. Elected and appointed representatives of SGA may remain in office if their GPA falls below a 2.5 if they submit an Academic Enhancement Plan that has been developed in consultation with the Director of Academic Assistance and submitted to and approved by the Vice President for Student Affairs.
 - c. Shall be in good disciplinary standing with the University.
 - d. Shall maintain an 80% attendance record at SGA meetings with permission by the SGA President.
 - e. No Executive Council member shall represent a club

Section 2. Legislative Powers

Legislative powers in the SGA shall be vested in the Club Congress, which possesses the following powers:

- A. To vote on all business matters brought before the SGA.
- B. To approve or reject by a majority vote all appointments made by the SGA President.
- C. To override a veto of the SGA President with concurrence from two-thirds of the voting membership.

D. To try impeachments of all student officers appointed or elected. No person shall be convicted of impeachment without concurrence from fifty-one percent of the membership. The SGA President, unless he or she is being tried for impeachment, shall preside in these cases.

E. To require oral reports from Executive Council members, chairpersons of standing committees, and the Student Court.

F. To propose and receive from members of the student body proposals for changes in rules and regulations which are necessary and proper to promote the general welfare of the student body. Upon approval, the SGA President will meet with the proper administrative official to discuss the proposal.

G. To appeal recommendations of the administration, faculty, or staff which the student body believes does not comply with the student agenda. Such an appeal requires a voting majority.

H. To regulate the functioning of all standing or special committees under its jurisdiction.

I. To formally invite a person or group of persons from the University community to meetings of the SGA.

J. To appoint ad hoc committees composed of members of the Club Congress and the student body.

K. To approve regulations governing student elections.

Section 3. Presiding Officer

The SGA President shall preside when the student government is in session. The SGA Executive Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President.

Section 4. Meetings

The SGA shall meet every other week on a day chosen by the Executive Council. If the SGA President feels necessary, he or she can convene the SGA at any time. The regular meeting time must be approved by the voting membership and requires a majority vote.

Section 5. Minutes

The SGA Vice President of Administration shall record minutes of all meetings of the SGA and Executive Council and present a formal, typed copy to the SGA President no later than five days following each meeting.

Section 6. Committees

The following standing committees shall be composed of members of the SGA who are appointed by the SGA President at the beginning of each academic year:

- A. The Constitution Committee, composed of the SGA Executive Council and chaired by the SGA President, shall review and make recommendations for revising and amending the SGA Constitution before April 5 of each year.
- B. The Elections Committee, composed of the SGA Executive Council and chaired by the SGA President, shall have the responsibility of handling all elections as defined in Article IV.
- C. The Campus Life Committee, composed of appointed officials and chaired by the Vice President of Campus Life, shall deal with issues such as food service, residence halls, campus improvements, and other issues concerning students.
- D. The Academic Life Committee, composed of appointed officials and chaired by the Vice President of Academic Life, shall deal with issues concerning academic policies and in-class occurrences. They also have to keep track of the plagiarism committee lead by the Faculty Senate.
- E. The Finance Committee, composed of the Executive Vice President, shall deal with the appropriations of funds to student groups, clubs, and organizations and other budget ordeals.
- F. The Religious Life Committee, composed of appointed officials and chaired by the Vice President of Religious Life, shall deal with issues concerning religious life such as campus worship, community service, and mission-based activities.
- G. The Athletic Life Committee, composed of appointed officials and chaired by the Vice President of Athletic Life, shall deal with issues concerning NCAA and CIAA athletics as well as club and intramural sports. They also should be involved in the Faculty Athletic Committee.
- H. The Programming Committee, composed of Executive Council members and chaired by the SGA President, shall plan and organize SGA-sponsored events and programs.
- I. The Senior 48 Committee, composed of appointed officials and chaired by the Senior Class President, shall plan and organize the Senior 48 week.
- J. The Snowball Committee, composed of appointed officials and chaired by the Junior Class President, shall plan and organize Snowball, the premiere SGA-sponsored dance at Chowan.
- K. The Harvestfest Committee, composed of appointed officials and chaired by the Sophomore Class President, shall plan and organize Harvestfest, a community-wide event for children in the local area during Halloween.
- L. The Go Green Committee, composed of elected members and chaired by a member appointed by the SGA President, shall plan and organize any events or programs that have to do with bettering the Earth and Chowan's environment.
- M. The Food Committee, composed of twelve elected members of the student body and chaired by a member appointed by the SGA President, shall plan and organize any ideas and programs from the student body to better our Hawk's Nest and Thomas Cafeteria food.
- N. Ad Hoc Committee(s) shall be:

- a. Composed of members approved by the Executive Council and chaired by an appointed individual of the committee members placed by the SGA President.
- b. The chairperson of each committee, if not already a voting member of the SGA, will have and maintain voting privileges throughout their term as chairperson of a respective Ad Hoc Committee.

Section 7. Club Proposals

Club proposals of all new organizations shall be reviewed and approved through the following steps. First, the club must get a new club proposal form from the Vice President of Student Affairs. Next, they must set up an appointment the Vice President of Student Affairs to explain their proposal and get his signature for the club proposal form. Upon getting signature, the club must then get the signature from the SGA President and give the club proposal form to the SGA President. At the next available SGA meeting, the proposal will be brought to the Club Congress by a representative(s) of the organization to explain their proposal to include why, what they can bring, etc. Club Congress may ask questions, but shall not vote at that time. The next step is that the representative(s) must then meet with the SGA Executive Council during their next available EC meeting. EC has the right to ask financial, fundraising, and etc. questions. The EC will then vote for approval after dismissing the representative(s) during the same EC meeting. Based on the majority vote from the EC members, the next step is to present the vote on this club proposal to the Club Congress at the next SGA meeting. Representative(s) must be present, but do not have to present again. Must be approved by 2/3 the vote of the Club Congress. If voted with approval, the new club must go to the Business Office to set up a club account as soon as possible and elect a non-officer representative who will serve as a voting member of the Club Congress. This representative must be approved by the SGA President following the one in which the organization became official.

Section 8. New Club Finances

Upon approval of the new club from the Club Congress, at the next EC meeting the Executive Council will discuss and vote on how much started money SGA will award the new club. The maximum of this financial started shall be \$150. It is at the EC's choosing to how much finances this new club receives from SGA. After the majority vote made from the EC, the Executive Vice President will transfer the funds only after the new club has set up their account with the Business Office.

- A. Greek sororities and fraternities, unless chartered out of Chowan University, shall not receive a financial starter due to them being chartered out of a separate entity.

Section 9. Club Financial Requests

Any club financial requests are to be turned in by the first of the month to the Executive Vice President. At the Executive Council meeting immediately following the request turned in, a representative from the club shall present the request and explain the details. EC will vote on it and at the next SGA meeting it will be brought to the Club Congress. If there is an emergency request that cannot wait until the first of the month, EC will meet at their earliest convenience.

Section 10. Veto Power

The SGA President shall have veto power over SGA decisions. The veto can be overturned with support of 2/3 percent of the voting membership.

Section 11. Advisors

The Vice President of Student Affairs shall serve as the SGA advisor.

Section 12. Quorum

Fifty-one percent on the voting members of the SGA shall constitute a quorum.

Article II. Executive

Section 1. Executive Council Composition

The Executive Officers shall consist of the President, Executive Vice President, Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Academic Life, Vice President of Campus Life, Vice President of Religious Life, Vice President of Programming, Vice President of Athletic Life, and Senior, Junior, Sophomore, and Freshman class presidents. They shall be known as the Executive Council.

A. Executive Officers, at the time of their election or appointment and during their term of office, must adhere to the following:

- a. Shall be a full-time student (taking at least 12 credit hours) at Chowan University with at least one semester of academic work at Chowan completed. The only exception to having at least one semester of academic work at Chowan completed is the Freshman class president, who still must maintain full-time status.
- b. Shall have a 2.5 GPA upon election. Elected and appointed representatives of SGA may remain in office if their GPA falls below a 2.5 if they submit an Academic Enhancement Plan that has been developed in consultation with the

Director of Academic Assistance and submitted to and approved by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

c. Shall be in good disciplinary standing with the University.

d. Shall maintain an 80% attendance at SGA meetings and programs with permission by the SGA President.

B. Executive Officers also may be entitled to a one time stipend at the end of the legislative year limited to a maximum of one hundred dollars, except for those already receiving stipends. Eligibility is determined by the SGA Advisor and the President and then taken to the Student Court for approval. It merits on the quality of work the officer has done and if there are funds to allow it.

C. Executive Council members are required to post a schedule on the SGA Career Center with the hour(s) that each EC member will be available each week in the SGA Career Center. These scheduled hours will change every semester due to the change in class schedule. It is required to have these posted at least two weeks after the semester classes have begun.

Section 2. Executive Council Members

A. The President shall:

a. Represent the student body of Chowan University.

b. Convene and preside over meetings of the Executive Council and SGA, which shall meet regularly or when deemed necessary.

c. Appoint individual members of the SGA, with their consent, to standing committees which function under the jurisdiction of the SGA.

d. Appoint members to ad hoc committees as deemed necessary.

e. Make appointments to fill vacancies in the Executive Council which occur between elections. Such appointments must be approved by the Executive Council.

f. Chair the SGA Constitution Committee.

g. Administer and enforce regulations enacted by the SGA.

h. Veto an act of the SGA within seven days after approval of a recommendation.

i. Require oral reports from student committees which function under the SGA.

j. Call and preside over meetings of the student body at such that have been approved by a voting majority of the SGA and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

k. Make a report to the Board of Trustees of Chowan University when and if requested to do so by the President of Chowan University or his/her designee.

l. Attend, at his/her pleasure, meeting of SGA standing committees.

m. Present a written report to the student body at the beginning in the Student Handbook and end of the academic year in the last SGA meeting.

n. Keep at least three office hours per week.

o. Perform other duties incident to the office.

p. Must be of Junior status in the academic year becoming the SGA President.

q. Chair the SGA Programming Committee

r. Chair the Elections Committee

s. Must have been involved in the previous year of SGA through being a club representative, committee member, student court, or executive council. They also must have had a 80% or better attendance record in the previous year.

t. Shall receive a stipend of \$800 per semester upon completion of each.

B. The Executive Vice President shall:

- a. Serve as a non-voting member of all SGA committees except when there is a tie vote among members of the SGA.
 - b. Exercise the duties and assume the responsibilities of the SGA President in his/her absence.
 - c. Assume the office of President in the event the position becomes vacant between elections.
 - d. Keep at least two office hours per week.
 - e. Perform all other duties incident to the office.
 - f. Chair the Finance Committee and report when asked on business matters of the SGA.
 - g. Shall forward copies of SGA financial reports to the SGA President and SGA advisor.
 - h. Shall forward budgets to the EC for approval.
 - i. Assist in the handling of business transactions of the SGA.
 - j. Shall receive a stipend of \$400 per semester upon completion of each.
- C. The Vice President of Administration shall:
- a. Take minutes of all SGA and Executive Council meetings.
 - b. Send out emails and ads campus-wide regarding SGA meetings and Executive Council meetings.
 - c. Update and maintain the TV student reminder screen in the Thomas Cafe
 - d. Keep at least two office hours per week.
 - e. Perform all other duties incident to the office.
 - f. Shall receive a stipend of \$200 per semester upon completion if each.
- D. The Vice President of Academic Life shall:
- a. Be the chair of Academic Life committee.
 - b. Address issues concerning academic policies and in-class occurrences.
 - c. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - d. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - e. Appoint students for the Plagiarism Committee when asked by the Faculty Senate and get approval from the SGA President.
 - f. Keep at least two office hours per week.
- E. The Vice President of Campus Life shall:
- a. Be the chair of the Campus Life committee.
 - b. Be a Resident Assistant for at least one year prior to taking office and will still be a RA going into the next year.
 - c. Address issues such as food service, residence halls, campus improvements, and other issues concerning students.
 - d. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - e. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - f. Keep at least two office hours per week.
- F. The Vice President of Religious Life shall:
- a. Be the chair of the Religious Life committee.
 - b. Address issues concerning religious life such as campus worship, community service, and mission-based activities.
 - c. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - d. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - e. Keep at least two office hours per week.

- f. Have a very good relationship with the staff of Religious Life.
- G. The Vice President of Athletic Life shall:
 - a. Be the chair of the Athletic Life committee.
 - b. Address issues concerning University athletics and athletic clubs, teams, and events.
 - c. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - d. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - e. Be involved with the Faculty Athletics Committee.
 - f. Shall be a Chowan University Athlete.
 - g. Keep at least two office hours per week.
- H. The Vice President of Campus Programming shall:
 - a. Address on-campus programming and organize events sanctioned by the CPB.
 - b. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - c. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - d. Shall receive a stipend of \$800 per semester upon completion of each
 - e. Keep at least two office hours per week.
 - f. Must work well with the Campus Programming Director.
- I. The Senior Class President shall:
 - a. Chair the Senior 48 Committee.
 - b. Advise the Freshman Class President.
 - c. Represent his or her fellow class members.
 - d. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - e. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - f. Keep at least one office hour per week.
- J. The Junior Class President shall:
 - a. Chair the Snowball Committee.
 - b. Represent his or her fellow class members.
 - c. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - d. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - e. Keep at least one office hour per week.
- K. The Sophomore Class President shall:
 - a. Chair the Harvestfest Committee.
 - b. Represent his or her fellow class members.
 - c. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - d. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - e. Keep at least one office hour per week.
- L. The Freshman Class President shall:
 - a. Be advised by the Senior Class President.
 - b. Represent his or her fellow class members.
 - c. Offer a report of committee activities at each SGA and Executive Council meeting.
 - d. Perform duties incident to the office.
 - e. Keep at least one office hour per week.

Section 2. Impeachment

An officer shall be tried for impeachment according to the guidelines provided in Article I, Section 2D. Impeachment can result from neglect of duty, and in such cases, a motion and second shall be made by voting members of the SGA. At such time, the floor will open for discussion, after which a

secret ballot will be taken and a simple majority will determine the verdict. If the President is tried for impeachment, the Executive Vice President shall preside.

Article III. Judicial

Section 1. Honor Code

The Chowan University Honor Code is, "We will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate it among us those who do."

Section 2. Campus Code

The Chowan University Campus Code is, "We are bound by our responsibilities as ladies and gentlemen to conduct ourselves as such at all times."

Section 3. Membership

Membership of the Student Court, the judicial body of the SGA, shall consist of seven elected officials who will serve as judges on a court designed to protect the Constitution. The court

members will be elected to review actions of all officers throughout the SGA and will also be voting members of the SGA. Student court members shall also be placed on any committee at any time of need.

A. Student Court members, at the time of their election and during their term of office, must adhere to the following:

- a. Shall be a full-time student (taking at least 12 credit hours) at Chowan University with at least one semester of academic work at Chowan completed.
- b. Shall have a 2.5 GPA upon election. Elected and appointed representatives of SGA may remain in office if their GPA falls below a 2.5 if they submit an Academic Enhancement Plan that has been developed in consultation with the Director of Academic Assistance and submitted to and approved by the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- c. Shall be in good disciplinary standing with the University.
- d. Shall maintain an 80% attendance record at SGA meetings with permission by the SGA President.
- e. Shall serve in the SGA only as a judge on the Student Court. The only exception is that the judge can also serve as chair of an ad hoc committee, can be appointed to help with a committee, or they can be a club representative.

Section 4. Jurisdiction

The Student Court shall have jurisdiction over all SGA officers' actions. If an individual or a group's actions within student government violate the SGA Constitution, the court can issue a decision against the individual or group and the actions must be overturned. The court can review any case in which they believe is a violation of the Constitution. A majority vote is necessary for all decisions. Once decided, the remaining members of the voting student body can vote at the following SGA meeting to overturn the court's decision if they feel necessary. A majority vote is required for the court's decision to be overturned.

Article IV. Elections

Section 1. Jurisdiction

All student elections shall come under the jurisdiction of the Elections Committee which functions as a SGA standing committee. The chair of the Elections Committee will be the SGA President.

Section 2. Election Rules

The Elections Committee shall have the right to make additions and/or corrections to the following rules upon approval of a voting majority of the SGA:

- A. Elections shall be held by secret ballot and counted by the Elections Committee.
- B. Each candidate has the right to address the student body.
- C. There shall be no campaigning or campaign material inside the same room or around the same building where voting is taking place.
- D. Campaign expenses shall not exceed \$50 per candidate. Receipts must be presented to the Executive Vice President.
- E. All campaign speeches and campaign material shall be displayed in good taste.

Section 3. Installation of Officers

The Elections Committee shall arrange for all SGA officers to be installed. SGA President, Executive VP, VP of Administration, and class presidents are to be voted on by the student body. Any other EC member is to be appointed by the SGA President. Appointees filling vacancies which occur between elections shall be installed at the next meeting of the SGA.

Section 4. Oath of Office and Signature Clause

SGA officers shall be bound by an oath to support this Constitution, promote the highest ideals of honor, and to fulfill to the best of their ability the duties of their office. All elected officers will be required to sign a statement which says they will adhere to the guidelines within the Constitution and their job responsibilities and swear in at the first meeting of the Fall semester.

Section 5. Runoff

If the leading candidate of an office does not obtain a majority of the votes, the two candidates receiving the highest votes in the election will automatically enter into a runoff. The candidate winning a majority in the runoff will win office.

Section 6. Recall

The student body shall have the power to recall any officer elected by that body under this Constitution. The petition to recall shall be presented to the SGA President within forty-eight hours after election results have been posted and shall not be valid unless it contains the signatures of at least fifty one percent of the student body according to enrollment figures obtained from the Registrar's office at the beginning of the semester. The SGA President shall, if he/she finds the petition complying with this Constitution, direct the Elections Committee to conduct a recall election of the office in question. The officer in question shall have the right to be a candidate.

Section 7. Initiative

The student body shall have the power to initiate an act within the power of the SGA, provided thirty percent of the student body, according to enrollment figures obtained from the Registrar's Office at the beginning of the semester, sign a petition calling for consideration of a bill which they shall submit in writing with the petition to the SGA President. The SGA President shall, if he/she finds the petition complying with the Constitution, direct the Elections Committee to conduct an election on the bill in not less than seven days nor more than fourteen days after receiving petition and the bill. Public notice of such an election must be given not less than four days prior to the election date. A majority of the votes cast at the election shall be sufficient to decide the issue.

Section 8. Review

The student body shall have the power to call for a vote on any act of the SGA, provided a petition calling for the vote and stating in writing the action which the referendum is to take shall be signed by thirty percent of the student body, according to enrollment figures obtained from the Registrar's Office at the beginning of the semester, and presented to the SGA President. The SGA President shall, if he/she finds the petition complying with the Constitution, direct the elections Committee to conduct a vote on the act in no less than seven days or more than fourteen days after receiving the petition. Public notice of such an election must be given no less than four days prior to the election date. A majority of the votes cast at the election shall be sufficient to decide the issue.

Article V. Amendment Procedure

Section 1. Proposal

Amendments to this Constitution must be proposed in the following method:

- A. By a written petition presented to the SGA President bearing the signatures of thirty percent of the membership of the SGA.
- B. By a proposal within SGA by voting members. No petition is necessary for voting members to propose an amendment.

Section 2. Published

Proposed amendments to this Constitution must be issued to the student body at least one week prior to the date on which a vote is taken by the student body.

Section 3. Approval

Proposed amendments to the Constitution must be approved by a majority of the voting membership and then approved by the SGA advisor.

Section 4. Enactment

Amendments to the Constitution shall go into effect upon the signature of the SGA President. Amendments which are additive shall be placed in additional sections or paragraphs, in the article to which they pertain.

Article VII . By-Laws

By-laws to this Constitution shall become valid after the motion has been tabled for two weeks and has been approved by a two-thirds majority of the SGA and the SGA President.

Article VII . Ratification

Section 1. Ratification

This Constitution shall be ratified by a majority of the voting membership. The ratification of this Constitution shall revoke all previous Constitutions of the Student Government Association.

Section 2. Operational

This Constitution shall go into effect immediately upon its ratification by the voting student body of Chowan University and approved by the SGA President and Advisor.