

# **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF FREED- HARDEMAN UNIVERSITY**

## **PREAMBLE:**

It shall be known that we, the members of the Student Government Association of Freed-Hardeman University, in accordance with the central mission of Freed-Hardeman University, hereby strive to improve the quality of life of the student body represented herein. To accurately represent the student body at large, the Student Government Association of Freed-Hardeman University shall serve as its central governing body. Neither an individual nor group shall be allowed to infringe on the independence of this organization. It is the responsibility of the Student Government Association to assert the desires of the student body whenever necessary, to whomever it may concern, with boldness. It is behooved upon the Student Government Association to ensure quality leadership; a sense of innovation, and an accurate representation benefiting all areas of student life, the Student Government Association will serve as an example to all students. Notwithstanding any adversity, the implementation of this mission will be realized through ongoing initiatives and continuous support from the student body. This Constitution shall serve as the definitive governing document of the Freed-Hardeman University Student Government Association.

## **I - LEGISLATIVE**

### **A. LEGISLATIVE POWER**

1. The legislative power of the Student Government Association shall be vested in a Student Senate.
2. No legislation enacted by the Student Senate may be in conflict with current federal, state, or local laws.
3. All legislation enacted must be in accordance with the text and spirit of the Freed-Hardeman University Student Handbook and other governing documents of the University.
4. All legislation of the Freed-Hardeman University Student Government Association shall serve to advocate for the student body, ensure that their rights are respected, act as the official voice of the student body, and represent the students' interests in all matters pertaining to the Student Government Association (SGA).

## B. MEMBERSHIP

1. It shall be the responsibility of every member of the Student Government Association to abide by the Freed-Hardeman Student Handbook, as well as the provisions of this Constitution and the rules, expectations, and bylaws of the Student Government Association.
2. Membership of the Student Senate shall be composed of students of the undergraduate population of Freed-Hardeman University.
3. Freed-Hardeman undergraduate organizations may have an undergraduate student apply as a representative of their organization.
4. The number of the Student Government Association Senate may not exceed:
  - a. Ten representatives per class
  - b. Representation proportional to the constituents of the SGA.
    1. Constituents here are campus undergraduate groups.
5. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required by the Student Government Association for eligibility of senators of general representation.
6. The Student Government Association reserves the right to dismiss any member of general representation due to any violation of this Constitution at their discretion.

## C. OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

1. By yearly election, in accordance with the bylaws of the Student Government Association, the Senate of the Student Government Association shall elect a Treasurer, a Historian and a Secretary for the Student Government Association of Freed-Hardeman University.
2. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording and archiving the minutes of all Student Government Association Senatorial convocations. In addition, the Secretary shall record attendance of Student Government Association convocations, as well as ensure presidential requests for a reservation of a time and place for the Student Government Association convocation.
3. The Historian shall be responsible for presiding over the Legislative Committee, as well as clarifying and interpreting the Student Government Association Constitution.
4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for collecting the dues of the Student Government Association, as well as presiding over all fund-raising events initiated by the Student Government Association. Additionally, the Treasurer shall account for and archive all expenditures made by the Student Government Association.

#### D. INTERNAL POWERS OF THE STUDENT SENATE

1. The Student Senate shall orally submit proposals to the Student Government Association Legislative Committee.
2. The Student Senate shall have the power to propose amendments to this Constitution to the Legislative Committee, to be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Student Senate.
3. The Student Senate shall have the power to override the veto of the President of the Student Government Association by a two-thirds majority vote.
4. The Student Senate shall have the power to deny appointments for ad hoc positions and ad hoc committees by a two-thirds majority vote.
5. The Student Senate shall have the power to remove any officer of Student Government for malfeasance by a two-thirds vote.
6. The Student Senate shall have the power to propose and enact by a majority vote bylaws concerning the operation and affairs of the Student Government Association.

#### E. PROPOSALS

1. The chief responsibility of the Student Government Association is to enact legislation in the form of proposals, as drafted by the Legislative Committee, that pertain to any facet of Freed-Hardeman University, in the manner dictated by the bylaws of the Student Government Association.
2. Proposals enacted by the Student Government Association bear the weight of a recommendation from the assembled representatives of the student body of Freed-Hardeman University.
3. Any proposal of the Student Government Association that is passed on to the administration of Freed-Hardeman University is in no way binding to the administrators to which it pertains.

## II – EXECUTIVE

### A. DERIVATION OF POWER AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. The President of the Student Government Association shall derive authority from this Constitution and from the governing documents of Freed-Hardeman University. The following requirements of this Constitution are to be met before the term of Presidency in order to be considered, as well as maintained during the term of Presidency.
  - a. To be considered for the office of President, candidates must meet all the requirements of the Senate Members and these requirements must be maintained during their term.
  - b. To be considered for the office of President, candidates for President must have served for at least one full year in the Senate of the Student Government Association.
  - c. To be considered for the office of President of the Student Government Association, candidates must be considered upperclassmen by the beginning of their office term.
  - d. The President of the Student Government Association may not serve as the President of any other collegiate organization of Freed-Hardeman University.
2. The Vice-President of the Student Government Association shall derive authority from this Constitution and from the governing documents of Freed-Hardeman University.
  - a. To be considered for the office of Vice-President, candidates must meet all the requirements of the Senate, and these requirements must be maintained during their term.
  - b. To be considered for the office of Vice-President, candidates must have served for at least one full semester in the Senate of the Student Government Association.
  - c. To be considered for the office of Vice-President of the Student Government Association, candidates must be considered upperclassmen by the beginning of their office term.
  - d. The Vice-President of the Student Government Association may not serve as the President of any other collegiate organization of Freed-Hardeman University.
3. The President and Vice President of the Freed-Hardeman Student Government Association shall be bound by an oath of office preceding their term.
  - a. The oath of office shall read, “I, [NAME], affirm that I shall, to the best of my ability, fulfill the duties and responsibilities of [TITLE OF OFFICE] of the Student Government Association of Freed-Hardeman University, and shall act in such a manner as to uphold the honor of that office and abide by the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Freed-Hardeman University.”
    - i. This oath shall be administered by the sitting President of the Freed-Hardeman Student Government Association before the student body.

4. The Secretary of the Student Government Association shall derive authority from this Constitution and from the governing documents of Freed-Hardeman University.
  - a. To be considered for the office of Secretary, any candidate must meet all the requirements of the Senate and these requirements must be maintained during their term.
  - b. To be considered for the office of Secretary, any candidate must have served for at least one full semester in the Senate of the Student Government Association.
  - c. The Secretary of the Student Government Association shall be sworn by his or her oath of office during the first senatorial meeting, by the Vice-President, after which they shall assume their new role.
    - i. The oath of office shall be the same as the President and Vice-President's oath of office.
5. The Treasurer of the Student Government Association shall derive authority from this Constitution and from the governing documents of Freed-Hardeman University.
  - a. To be considered for the office of Treasurer, candidates must meet all the requirements of the Senate and these requirements must be maintained during their term.
  - b. To be considered for the office of Treasurer, candidates must have served for at least one full semester in the Senate of the Student Government Association.
  - c. The Treasurer of the Student Government Association shall be sworn by his or her oath of office during the first senatorial meeting, by the Vice-President, after which they shall assume their new role.
    - i. The oath of office shall be the same as the President and Vice-President's oath of office.
6. The Historian of the Student Government Association shall derive authority from this Constitution and from the governing documents of Freed-Hardeman University.
  - a. To be considered for the office of Historian, any candidate must meet all the requirements of the Senate and these requirements must be maintained during their term.
  - b. To be considered for the office of Historian, any candidate must have served for at least one full semester in the Senate of the Student Government Association.
  - c. To be considered for the office of Historian the candidate must have served at least one term on the Legislative Committee.
  - d. The Historian of the Student Government Association shall be sworn by his or her oath of office during the first senatorial meeting, by the Vice-President, after which they shall assume their new role.
    - i. The oath of office shall be the same as the President and Vice-President's oath of office.

## B. SECTION II: EXPLICIT POWERS OF OFFICES

1. The President shall have the power to preside over and call for meetings of the Student Government Association.
  - a. The President shall have the power to call a quorum and thus allow voting procedures to proceed among the Senate.
  - b. The President shall have the power to call a revote in order to allow for expanded deliberations on points of extreme contention among the Senate.
  - c. The President shall have the power to veto any proposal or legislation passed by a majority vote.
    - i. Presidential vetoes must be administered within forty-eight hours of the official vote count.
  - d. The President shall have the power to place a proposal before the Student Senate for the purpose of creating new standing committees or dissolving existing standing committees.
    - i. A standing committee is an appointed body whose function is to inquire upon, resolve, or address concerns of perceived or actual importance.
  - e. The President shall have the power to appoint ad hoc positions to be renewed each semester by the President.
    - i. An ad hoc position is a body, appointed solely by the president, whose function is to fulfill a specific role in the government that is deemed by the president to require specific talents that could not be performed by an appointed committee.
2. The Vice-President shall serve as the Speaker of the Senate.
  - a. All votes shall be conducted by the Speaker of the Senate, in accordance with the bylaws of the Student Government Association.
  - b. In the event that the Vice-President should present legislation for the Student Senate, the Historian shall be appointed by the President to preside as Speaker of the Senate for the duration of that vote.
  - c. In the event that the President cannot fulfill his or her duties, the Vice President shall assume the role of the President until the President is able to resume his or her office.
3. The Secretary shall have an accurate record of all minutes of each meeting, as well as the collection of all documents pertaining to the work of the Student Government Association.
4. The Treasurer shall have the power to request funds from the Vice-President of Student Services upon the approval of a sponsor.
  - a. In the event that the Student Government Association possesses a budget, it will be the responsibility of the Treasurer to keep track of all expenditures, and the Treasurer, with the consent of the president, shall approve or deny any requests for spending.
5. The Historian shall have the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of the Constitution of the Student Government Association.
  - a. At the beginning of each new term, the Historian is responsible for making the contents of this Constitution known in whatever manner is deemed most efficient by the Historian.

- b. The Historian shall be responsible for proposing amendments to this Constitution in the event that it no longer reflects the workings of the Student Government Association.

### III – INTERNAL FUNCTIONS

#### A. BYLAWS OF THE SENATE BODY

1. Committee chairs may receive proposals for Senate bylaws, and they are expected to place these proposals before the Legislative Committee for approval.
2. Bylaws are considered binding for the remainder of the academic school year in which they are passed.
3. Bylaws must be renewed by a majority vote of the Student Senate of the Student Government Association at the beginning of each academic school year.
  - a. A unanimous vote of renewal by Senate officers—here being the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian—can exempt a bylaw from the yearly review vote to continue the bylaw into the next year without majority vote of the Student Senate.

#### B. COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

1. The various responsibilities of the Student Government Association shall be divided into committees comprised of members of the Student Senate who shall oversee the fulfillment of the responsibilities within their jurisdiction.
2. The number of committees, as well as the title, jurisdiction, and responsibilities of each, shall be determined according to the bylaws of the Student Government Association.
3. A Chair shall lead each committee.
  - a. Committee chairs, by virtue of their office, shall adhere to the bylaw of the committee over which they preside and seek to provide direction and guidance for their committees in order to better achieve the stated purpose of that committee.
  - b. Committee chairs are to be appointed from the Student Senate by the President and serve at the pleasure of the President, who may dismiss them at any time with consent of the Vice-President, or majority vote of the Senate.
  - c. Co-chairs shall be appointed and removed based upon the discretion of the committee chair.

#### C. MEETINGS

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Student Government Association to meet on a regular basis as decided by the President.
  - a. Voting on any legislation must take place during a meeting of the Student Government Association, the conduct of which shall be in accordance to the bylaws of the Student Government Association.
  - b. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the President in order to vote on any legislation.

- c. Committee meetings shall be called by either the Chair or Co-Chair of the given committee.
2. The conduct of Student Government Association meetings, as well as the conduct of committee meetings, shall be in accordance to the bylaws of the Student Government Association.

#### **IV – AMENDMENTS**

##### **A. AMENDMENT PROCEDURE**

1. A Student Government Association Senator shall propose amendments to the Legislative Committee.
  - a. Upon completion of the proposed amendment, the amendment proposition shall be given to the Speaker of the Senate to be voted on in accordance to the voting process expressed in the bylaws of the Student Government Association.
2. All amendments to this Constitution shall require a two-thirds majority vote by the Student Senate in order to be implemented.
3. If in the event a standing bylaw is in conflict with a newly implemented bylaw, the previous shall be considered null in all areas of contradiction, pending its removal or revision.
4. The Student Senate, whenever unanimous vote shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Student Government Association by unanimous vote.

#### **V – THE VOTING PROCEDURE**

##### **A. The procedure for voting during the presidential election will be as follows:**

1. The sitting president, in the month of April on the first Monday, shall allow for a day during chapel for the presidential and vice presidential candidates to address the student body at large.
2. Following the presidential and vice presidential candidate's addresses, fourteen days of campaigning will be allowed. During the fourteen-day period, the presidential candidates will be allowed to campaign, following the determinates set forth in the voting procedure bylaws.
3. The student body, during the third week of April, shall cast their vote for a presidential candidate.
4. At the end of the third week, the votes shall be tallied. The president shall, on the following Monday, announce and upon receiving their oath of office, confer all rights and powers to the presidential and vice presidential candidates who obtained the most votes from the student body.
5. All details regarding the voting procedure shall be enumerated in the bylaws at the beginning of the congressional session.



## **Rules Governing the Management of Student Government Association Meetings:**

### **Provisional Bylaw as of 2015**

In all proceedings of the weekly meetings of the Student Government Association, the rules listed below are to be considered binding:

a. The President of the Student Government Association shall be considered responsible for officiating all matters of the weekly meetings—to call the meetings to order, to create and circulate an agenda prior to the meeting, to hold members to the rules of order, to introduce guest speakers and visitors, and all other tasks by which a meeting must be facilitated according to the judgment of the President and the concerns of the sponsors.

b. The weekly meetings of the Student Government Association shall be considered an appropriate forum to conduct discussions and vote on measures pertinent to the student body of Freed-Hardeman University.

c. In order to gain a place on the weekly agenda, a Senator should approach the President with a proposal, with enough time as to give consideration to the planning and circulation of that week's agenda.

d. The rules of order shall always be observed during meetings of the Student Government Association—and observed to an appropriate degree during all functions of the Student Government Association. Failing to observe formality and decorum during a meeting of the Student Government Association is grounds for removal for the duration of that meeting or an alternate punishment as decided by the President with the consideration of the sponsors.

e. In order to move from one item on the agenda to another, there must be a motion to close from a member of the Student Senate, followed by a second by another member of the Student Senate. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sponsors, as well guests may not make motions to close.

e. The weekly meetings, unless closed for an expressed and clear purpose, are to be open to the student body and all interested observers. Guests and observers are expected to hold themselves to rules of civility and decorum.

f. Each meeting is to open with a prayer, in keeping with the spiritual orientation of Freed-Hardeman University and its associated organizations such as the Student Government Association.

## **Rules Governing the Proposal and Consideration of Bills:**

### **Provisional Bylaw as of 2016**

Standard Voting Procedure will be conducted as follows:

a. Unless otherwise stated, all votes shall require a majority vote to pass, and the votes shall proceed by a roll call vote, to which each senator must say Yea, Nay, or Abstaining. A fifty-percent rate of attendance among Senators is required for a quorum. The results of the vote shall be made public and circulated among members of the Student Government Association within 48 hours of the original vote.

b. For the entirety of the voting process and for all veto and repeal revotes, the Vice-President of the Student Government Association shall function as the *ex officio* President of the Senate, with the power to hold all Senators to the Rules of Order and remove any member of the body for acting in violation of the floor rules.

c. To put a vote before the floor, a Senator or individual must prepare a written proposal to the President, Vice-President, and Secretary one full week before a meeting of the Student Government Association—if the proposal is received less than one full week before a meeting, the vote will be delayed until the next meeting of the Student Government Association. After it is received, the proposal will be circulated among the Senators. Special meetings to process significant votes can be called by the President or sponsors, to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

d. During the one-week period between the proposal reception and the floor vote, individual Senators may make their intentions known for the purpose of an absentee vote. This vote must be for a legitimate absence from the Student Government Association meeting, and it must be made known to the President, Vice President, and Secretary. Preference is given to floor votes, for the purpose of obtaining a quorum.

e. During the voting meeting, the proposer of the bill must petition the President of the Senate—the Vice President—in order to make their initial presentation. The presentation must be made in its entirety by the proposer of the bill, for a time not to exceed ten minutes. If the presentation does not fill the allotted ten minutes, the Senator may cede their additional time or open the floor to receive non-debatable questions—i.e., questions that do not require discussion but are rather meant to clarify, usually only requiring a *yes* or *no* response. Following the original presentation, the floor will be opened for another ten minutes for the President of the Senate to call for and receive the concerns of the Senators and their constituencies, who are expected to condense their remarks to no more than two minutes. Following this, a final five minutes will be given to the proposer of the bill for the purpose of responding to the concerns of the Senators. (In all matters of time, concessions can be made by the President and Vice President to accommodate guest speakers, faculty members, or points of extreme contention. Unused time can be ceded by the speaker or the President of the Senate.)

f. Dissensions and defenses that are not voiced at the meeting can be given to the Secretary, who will circulate them among members of the Student Government Association within 24 hours of receiving them. Votes and dissensions given outside of these Rules Governing the Proposal and Consideration of Bills hold no weight in the Student Government Association and will not be considered.

## **Rules Governing the Establishment and Conduct of a Student Life Committee:**

### **Provisional Bylaw as of 2015**

**Purpose Statement:** The purpose of the SGA Senatorial Committee: **Student Life is to further the endeavors of the Student Life of its constituents.** To do so measures may be implemented that are deemed necessary and proper for the furtherance of the committee's specific goals. This Committee will have a member of the Senate serve as a Chair to preside over it, along with a Co-Chair to assist in leadership.

**Committee Opinions-** Members of committees do not represent the full opinions of the committee at large. However, the Chair of the Committee bears the full weight of the committee's opinion unless otherwise stated. (i.e. a proposal may be prefaced by the Chair of the Committee saying "the following statements are not reflective of the committee's official stance concerning the issue at hand")

**Committee Jurisdiction-** The committee has the jurisdiction to submit bills relevant to their specific purpose. If the specificity of the bill is under contention by another committee chair the President of SGA must then determine where the jurisdiction of the bill stands.

**Committee Voting Procedure-** Committee voting procedure is as follows:

1. The chair must call the committee meeting into order.
  - a. A committee may be called into order regardless of number of present committee members
  - b. The committee may only be called into order during the presence of a senatorial quorum
2. The chair may ask for proposals for the committee to consider
3. Proposals may only be acknowledged at the consent of the committee chair
4. Proposals are then made to the committee
5. The committee may then deliberate on said proposals discussing the merits and faults of the bill.
6. The Committee chair may call for an end to deliberations and any point during the deliberations process.
7. Proceeding deliberations, the committee chair must call for a vote concerning the bill
8. For the Bill to be passed for proposal to the Senate there must be a majority vote
9. Bill will then be assembled and presented by both the committee chair and proposing member
10. The Committee Chair reserves the right to veto any bill he deems unfit for submission to the Senate
  - a. Veto may be overridden by 2/3 majority of the committee
11. In the case of the Committee's absence the Co-Chair assumes the role of the Committee Chair

## **Rules Governing the Establishment and Conduct of a Spiritual Life Committee:**

### **Provisional Bylaw of 2015**

**Purpose Statement:** The purpose of the SGA Senatorial Committee: **Spiritual Life is to further the endeavors of the Spiritual Life of its constituents.** To do so measures may be implemented that are deemed necessary and proper for the furtherance of the committee's specific goals. This Committee will have a member of the Senate serve as a Chair to preside over it, along with a Co-Chair to assist in leadership.

**Committee Opinions-** Members of committees do not represent the full opinions of the committee at large. However, the Chair of the Committee bears the full weight of the committee's opinion unless otherwise stated. (i.e. a proposal may be prefaced by the Chair of the Committee saying "the following statements are not reflective of the committee's official stance concerning the issue at hand")

**Committee Jurisdiction-** The committee has the jurisdiction to submit bills relevant to their specific purpose. If the specificity of the bill is under contention by another committee chair the President of SGA must then determine where the jurisdiction of the bill stands.

**Committee Voting Procedure-** Committee voting procedure is as follows:

1. The chair must call the committee meeting into order.
  - a. A committee may be called into order regardless of number of present committee members
  - b. The committee may only be called into order during the presence of a senatorial quorum
2. The chair may ask for proposals for the committee to consider
3. Proposals may only be acknowledged at the consent of the committee chair
4. Proposals are then made to the committee
5. The committee may then deliberate on said proposals discussing the merits and faults of the bill.
6. The Committee chair may call for an end to deliberations and any point during the deliberations process.
7. Proceeding deliberations, the committee chair must call for a vote concerning the bill
8. For the Bill to be passed for proposal to the Senate there must be a majority vote
9. Bill will then be assembled and presented by both the committee chair and proposing member
10. The Committee Chair reserves the right to veto any bill he deems unfit for submission to the Senate
  - A. Veto may be overridden by 2/3 majority of the committee
11. In the case of the Committee's absence the Co-Chair assumes the role of the Committee Chair.

## **Rules Governing the Establishment and Conduct of a Food Service Committee:**

### **Provisional Bylaw as of 2015**

**Purpose Statement:** The purpose of the SGA Senatorial Committee: **Food Services is to further the endeavors of its constituents.** To do so measures may be implemented that are deemed necessary and proper for the furtherance of the committee's specific goals. This Committee will have a member of the Senate serve as a Chair to preside over it, along with a Co-Chair to assist in leadership.

**Committee Opinions-** Members of committees do not represent the full opinions of the committee at large. However, the Chair of the Committee bears the full weight of the committee's opinion unless otherwise stated. (i.e. a proposal may be prefaced by the Chair of the Committee saying "the following statements are not reflective of the committee's official stance concerning the issue at hand")

**Committee Jurisdiction-** The committee has the jurisdiction to submit bills relevant to their specific purpose. If the specificity of the bill is under contention by another committee chair the President of SGA must then determine where the jurisdiction of the bill stands.

**Committee Voting Procedure-** Committee voting procedure is as follows:

1. The chair must call the committee meeting into order.
  - A. A committee may be called into order regardless of number of present committee members
  - B. The committee may only be called into order during the presence of a senatorial quorum
2. The chair may ask for proposals for the committee to consider
3. Proposals may only be acknowledged at the consent of the committee chair
4. Proposals are then made to the committee
5. The committee may then deliberate on said proposals discussing the merits and faults of the bill.
6. The Committee chair may call for an end to deliberations and any point during the deliberations process.
7. Proceeding deliberations, the committee chair must call for a vote concerning the bill
8. For the Bill to be passed for proposal to the Student Senate there must be a majority vote
9. Bill will then be assembled and presented by both the committee chair and proposing member
10. The Committee Chair reserves the right to veto any bill he deems unfit for submission to the Senate
  1. Veto may be overridden by 2/3 majority of the committee
11. In the case of the Committee's absence the Co-Chair assumes the role of the Committee Chair.