



BAU
Bay Atlantic
University

**BAY ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY (BAU)
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)**

SECTION A: CONSTITUTION

1. PREAMBLE

Students have a right to play a clearly defined and significant role in the formation and application of institutional policy affecting both academic and student affairs. A democratic student government is the best means by which this role may be played. Therefore, we the graduate students of BAU hereby ordain and establish this Constitution for the Student Government Association (SGA) of BAU.

2. MISSION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

“Our mission is to empower students as the official voice of BAU’s student body. We aim to celebrate cultural diversity, protect the interests and rights of students, and further efforts to advance their development.”

This mission statement shall manifest itself through a spirit of cooperation and professionalism between the SGA and BAU. This mission statement shall also serve as the ideological foundation for all work done through committees.

SECTION B: GOVERNING BYLAWS

1. DUTIES OF REPRESENTATIVES

All Representatives, in order to discharge their duties, shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) The Voice of Constituents: Each Representative shall serve as the official voice of their constituents in issues affecting their constituencies and the student body as a whole.
- b) Attendance at Representative Meetings: Representatives shall be required to attend all meetings of the General Committee and any other committee(s) of which they are members.
- c) Ethics: All representatives shall serve as high examples of moral and ethical conduct and shall maintain professional conduct in all interactions with other SGA members and all members of the BAU community.



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2. ELECTIONS POLICY

Every student of BAU is eligible to run for Student Government. Elections shall be held during the fall semester of each academic year. Students can run in two capacities: either to become the SGA President or to become a general SGA Representative. Among the candidates for President, the student who receives the most votes will become SGA President. General SGA members will be chosen based on number of votes from the entire pool of student candidates. Upon completion of the election, the SGA President will nominate two members for Vice President, and the SGA members will vote to determine who will fill that role. That process will then be repeated to select a Treasurer. All SGA Representatives must be re-elected every voting cycle. There is no limit to the number of times a BAU student can run for or serve in any capacity within the SGA.

Assignment to Committee: The newly elected President of the SGA shall support the appointment of each Representative to a Representative Committee mentioned in Section 4.

If a seat is vacated by a Representative for any reason, the Internal Affairs Committee will conduct a special election among the BAU student body as expeditiously as possible to fill the vacated seat.



3. ATTENDANCE POLICY

A Representative may be excused from attending a meeting of the General Committee or any other committee in case of illness, a family or personal emergency, extreme and unforeseen circumstances, a test or other official academic commitment, or participation as an athlete in a scheduled intercollegiate competition. A representative may also be excused in the event that a meeting is scheduled during a known conflict for said representative. Social and extracurricular commitments shall not be considered legitimate reasons for a last-minute absence. The following criteria apply regarding attendance:

- a) **Timely Notification of Chair:** The Representative must notify the President (for General Committee meetings) or the Chair of any other committee of his or her absence at least twenty-four hours before the start of a meeting, or as soon as practically possible in the event of extreme and unforeseen circumstances.
- b) **Maximum Number of Excused Absences:** A Representative may not accumulate more than three (3) excused absences from all relevant meetings per semester.
- c) **Additional Excused Absences:** A Representative may petition the President to receive additional excused absences, which shall be granted at the President's discretion.
- d) **Unexcused Absences:** A Representative who is absent without meeting any of the criteria outlined in the policy above shall receive an unexcused absence.
- e) **Maximum Number of Unexcused Absences:** A Representative may accumulate no more than two unexcused absences per semester.
- f) **Consequences for Unexcused Absences:** A Representative who accumulates more than two unexcused absences in a single semester shall be considered to have resigned from office. The President shall declare the seat vacant by resignation, enter such declarations in the minutes of the next General Committee meeting, and begin the process for filling the open seat.
- g) **Late Arrival and Early Departures:** All SGA meeting must have explicitly identified start and end times. The Chair of a meeting shall have the discretion to record a one-half absence for any Representative who arrives conspicuously late to a meeting without prior notification of the meeting's Chair, or leaves a meeting while official business is still pending without similar prior notification; this one-half absence shall only be considered excused if it meets all of the criteria listed in Part 1.

4. REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEES

All Representatives, in order to discharge their duties, shall organize internal, external, and student concerns committees as follows:

- a) **Internal Affairs Committee (3 members):** Shall consider matters internal to SGA such as (a) management of SGA meetings and records; (b) SGA-internal activities and events; (c) maintenance of documents and transition binders; (d) SGA elections and special elections; and (f) other matters at the discretion of the Chair.
- b) **External Affairs Committee (3 members):** Shall consider matters external to SGA such as (a) public events; (b) media relations; (c) web management; (d) relations with other branches of student government, University administration, and outside organizations; and (e) other matters at the discretion of the Chair.



- c) **Student Concerns Committee (3+ members):** Shall consider matters related to the welfare of the BAU student body such as (a) constituent outreach (organization of town halls, etc.), (b) advocacy for student rights and support for student activism; (c) the development of collaborations with the University's Student Services Office; and (d) other matters at the discretion of the Chair. Non-SGA-member graduate students may petition to serve on this committee, and up to 8 may do so solely with the express consent of both the Chair of the committee and the President of the SGA.

SGA Representatives shall serve as Chairs of representative committees on a rotating basis for a third of each regular semester or summer session.

A representative may file a motion to amend these committees and subsequent responsibilities at any time to best reflect the goals of the SGA, provide the best outcome for active assignments, and represent the student body.

5. MEETINGS AND MEETINGS PROCEDURES

a) General Rules for Meetings:

- I. When discussing SGA matters, only SGA members may be allowed to enter the meetings.
- II. A motion for a non-representative to enter a meeting may be made at any time by any Representative, and shall require the majority approval of all Representatives present.

6. VOTING

- a) **Types of Voting:** Votes within any committee may be taken by voice, show of hands, or by a calling of the roll; no votes shall be taken by secret ballot.
- b) **Tie Votes:** In accordance with standard parliamentary practice, a tie vote shall be considered a failing vote; all votes must achieve a numerical majority in order to be considered passing, except for such procedural motions and situations explicitly stated in these Bylaws.

7. MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

The purpose of General Committee meetings shall be for the Representative Body to hear updates from the different committees and the VP.

- a) **Schedule of General Body Meetings:** General Committee meetings shall be held two times per regular semester.
- b) **Agenda:** All regular meetings shall proceed according to the order of business as stated in the agenda distributed by the President. Once meeting has started, its agenda may be altered with the consent of two-thirds of all Representatives present.

8. DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT

- a) **Representing the Entirety of the Student Body:** The President shall represent the Student Body of BAU at official functions and ceremonies. If a representative is needed at an event and the SGA President cannot attend, first the Vice President and then any other SGA member



may attend in the President's place.

- b) **Liaison to Administration:** The President shall meet with senior members of the administration to bring issues of concern to their attention, and provide input into University governance.
- c) **Creation of Policy:** The President, along with the rest of the SGA Representatives, shall be responsible for formulating and implementing policies to improve the quality of life of students at BAU.
- d) **Supervision of Representative Committees:** The President shall, with the assistance of the rest of the SGA representatives, oversee the Representative Committees and the Vice President's oversight of them.
- e) **Attendance at General Committee Meetings:** The President shall attend and participate in all meetings of the General Committee.
- f) **Resignation of President:** Should the President decide to abdicate the Presidency, the Vice President will become the President. Should the Vice President decline the position, there will be an internal vote to fill the role.

9. DUTIES OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT

- a) **Oversight of SGA Representative Committees:** The Vice-President shall be responsible for overseeing all internal operations of the various Representative Committees, including their finances, documentation and record keeping, publicity, and programs throughout the school year.
- b) **Attendance at Representative Meetings:** The Vice-President shall attend and participate in meetings of the General Committee.

10. DUTIES OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER (TREASURER)

- a) **Oversight of SGA Budget:** The Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer) shall balance and reconcile the SGA budget on a monthly basis and inform all SGA members of the current budget status.
- b) **Management of Additional Revenues:** The Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer) shall receive and account for all moneys raised by SGA Representatives of other BAU students for the purposes of funding programs affiliated the SGA.
- c) **Disbursement of Payments:** The Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer) shall be responsible for making all disbursements of SGA funds.
- d) **Attendance at General Committee Meetings:** The Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer) shall attend and participate in all meetings of the General Committee.

11. BUDGET POLICIES

- a) **Fiscal Year:** The SGA shall have an annual budget provided by the University. The fiscal year, like that of the University, is July 1 to June 30.
- b) **Oversight of the Budget:** The budget shall be monitored as follows:
 - I. **Balancing of Budget:** The Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer) shall balance and reconcile the SGA budget on a monthly basis.
 - II. **Procedure for Irregularities:** If the Chief Financial Officer discovers any serious irregularities, he or she shall bring them to the attention of the Vice-President.



- III. Carryover of Budget Surplus. Any surplus in the SGA's budget at the end of a fiscal year shall be carried over to the following fiscal year.
- IV. Misuse of SGA Funds: The deliberate use of SGA funds by any member for a purpose other than that specified in the SGA's annual budget, as approved by the General Committee, shall constitute grounds for impeachment.

c) Creation of the Annual Budget: The budget shall be created as follows:

- I. Initiation of Process: A budget may not be submitted to the Student Services Department at BAU until after the SGA Representatives are elected.
- II. Drafting of Budget: In consultation with the President, Vice President, and other SGA representatives, the Chief Financial Officer shall draft an annual budget for the coming year, based on anticipated revenues.

d) Format of Budget: The annual budget shall specify the following:

- I. Allocations to the SGA: The amount of money allocated to the various parts of the SGA.
- II. Discretionary Funds: The amount of any discretionary funds that may be spent under the authority of the SGA President, after the approval and vote of the General Committee.
- III. Reserve: The amount of money in a contingency reserve fund.

e) Approval of Budget: Within five weeks of the annual SGA elections, the General Committee of the SGA will approve a budget. The Treasurer will then submit that budget to BAU in the form of a bill. The SGA budget shall cover the current academic year and the part of the next academic year up until the next SGA elections.

f) Modification of Budget: If for any reason the SGA wants or needs to modify original, approved budget, it may do so by the following process: 1- the Treasurer, in consultation with SGA members, will draft a new budget; 2- the General Committee will vote to approve or disapprove the new budget. If the new budget is disapproved by the General Committee, the process repeats itself until a budget is approved.

12. RULES AND ETHICS BOARD POLICIES

a) Conflicts of Interest: SGA members shall refrain from exercising his or her official authority in cases where a conflict of interest would likely be perceived by an informed and neutral observer. Accordingly:

- I. Conflicts of Interest for Representatives: Representatives shall disclose any conflicts of interest regarding business pending before any committee, and abstain from voting or participating in debate on such business.

b) Use of Position for Personal Benefit: SGA members shall refrain from using their position in ways that would primarily benefit themselves or their associates at the expense of other students, such as:



- II. Appointments to Official Positions: Appointments to official positions shall be made according to qualifications only. Officers shall delegate decisions regarding the appointment of close personal friends to other representatives.
 - III. Handling of SGA Funds: SGA members shall ensure that all SGA allocated funds are spent in an impartial manner, solely for the benefit of SGA and the Student Body.
 - IV. Decisions about External Organizations: SGA members shall not participate in official decisions regarding external organizations in which they are actively involved.
- c) **Non-Discrimination:** Per the non-discrimination clause in its Constitution, members of SGA shall work to ensure that all members of the University community are equally eligible to participate on and benefit from the SGA, regardless of age, citizenship, color, disability, gender, race, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of any era.
- d) **Expectations of SGA Members as BAU Community Members:** SGA members are expected to be exemplary members of the BAU community. This entails following student guidelines as set forth by the university in the Academic Catalog. SGA members at all times make a conscious effort to embody the values of BAU.

13. ENFORCEMENT OF CODE OF ETHICS

- a) **Responsibility for Upholding Code:** All members of SGA, regardless of whether they are elected or appointed, shall be expected to uphold and enforce the SGA's Code of Ethics in the performance of their duties, and promptly address any reported violations. If knowledge of violations is discovered, then the person in question will be immediately suspended from all duties on SGA and reported to University's Student Services Department. Any action or lack thereof by the University shall not be construed to protect any individual from action by the SGA.
- b) **Hearings by Rules and Ethics Board:** Complaints regarding violations of the SGA's Code of Ethics may be directed to the Internal, which shall be empowered to conduct hearings and order appropriate corrective action.

14. MAINTANENCE OF DOCUMENTS AND TRANSITION BINDERS

In order to improve institutional memory, clarity, and enhance the efficiency of SGA transitions, each SGA committee is to maintain an official binder recording its activities for eventual handing over to its successor.

- a) The President shall note important agreements, communications, and initiatives undertaken publicly and privately for the benefit of his or her successor. Minutes of General Committee meetings and information pertaining to committee minutes as recorded by committee officials.
- b) The Vice-President shall maintain record of Committee meeting minutes and make records of attendance publicly available.
- c) Representative Committees shall maintain records of important communications and initiatives undertaken publicly and privately for the benefit of their successors.
- d) The President is to maintain a transition binder containing the following documents for use at all meetings:
 - a. The BAU GSA Constitution and By-laws;



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- b. Legislation currently in force, including that extended from previous Presidents and legislative terms;
- c. Written memorandums, records, and reports concerning previous rules' interpretations, including those made by previous Officers, unless overridden by subsequent ruling.
- d. Transition binders are not matters of public record except where specifically noted in this legislation.