# The Constitution of the

# Student Government Association

# of Lone Star College-CyFair

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# The Constitution of the Student Government Association

# of Lone Star College-CyFair

## Article I: Preamble and Mission

We the students of Lone Star College-CyFair, in order to provide an effective and representative student government, to promote leadership and unity among students, to foster active participation within the college community, and to create a passion for service and academic excellence, do hereby establish this constitution of the Student Government Association of Lone Star College-CyFair.

The Student Government Association provides equal opportunities to all students participating in SGA programs and activities regardless of race, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other protected status.

## Article II: Name of the Organization

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association of Lone Star College-CyFair, hereafter referred to as SGA.

## Article III: Purposes of the Organization

The purposes of SGA shall be to:

1. serve as a direct link between students and administration, to voice opinions and influence decisions that directly or indirectly affect students at Lone Star College-CyFair, and
2. assist Student Life in planning, scheduling, facilitating, and evaluating Student Life events and services for Lone Star College-CyFair.

## Article IV: Rules of Procedure

The SGA shall abide by the rules of order established in Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

## Article V: The Executive Council

## Section 1 Executive Council Membership Eligibility

The officers of the SGA shall make up the Executive Council. All SGA Executive Council members must:

* + 1. be currently enrolled in a minimum of three (3) credit hours at Lone Star College-CyFair;
    2. be a student with a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA, as defined by the college registrar;
    3. submit a completed SGA officer application within the application window; and
    4. be elected by the student body or, in filling vacancies, confirmed by the General Assembly; with the exception of the Vice-President of Student Life, who is selected through the established SAB election process.

## Section 2 Requirements of Executive Council Members

All Executive Council members shall:

1. represent themselves and the Lone Star College-CyFair student body in the most positive and professional manner possible and abide by Lone Star College-CyFair policy regarding student conduct;
2. abide by and support the SGA Constitution;
3. meet at least once per month during the fall and spring terms;
4. only hold one council position and be entitled to only one vote in SGA meetings (president only votes in the event of a tie);
5. be familiar with college policies, issues, and activities for proactive planning;
6. actively participate in team and skills development sessions as directed by the SGA President and/or Advisor(s);
7. attend all SGA General Assembly meetings unless noted and excused in advanced by the Permanent Advisor or in case of an emergency; and
8. represent or speak for the student body when required.

## Section 3 Executive Council Member Positions

The SGA shall have the following Executive Council member positions:

1. President
2. Executive Vice-President
3. Vice-President of Records and Finances
4. Vice-President of Student Outreach and Centers
5. Vice-President of Student Life
6. Historian

## Section 4 Duties of the Executive Council Members

The **President** shall:

* 1. abide by, enforce, and support the SGA Constitution;
  2. preside at all Executive Council and SGA General Assembly meetings;
  3. have one vote in Executive Council and SGA General Assembly meetings, but only in the event of a tie;
  4. coordinate and maintain communication between the SGA and the college administration and Advisors;
  5. serve in as a second in any Vice-President role as necessary;
  6. appoint committee chairs, as appropriate;
  7. serve as an ex-officio member of all committees;
  8. call special meetings of the Executive Council and/or the SGA General Assembly, as necessary;
  9. coordinate with Advisors the scheduling and content of officer training/leadership programs;
  10. assist other Executive Council members in their duties as needed; and
  11. serve in one of the two 1-year positions on the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC).

The **Executive Vice-President** shall:

A. serve as President in the absence of the President;

B. serve as Parliamentarian at all Executive Council and SGA General Assembly meetings;

C. coordinate and oversee all internal Executive Council affairs;

D. assist in coordinating and maintaining communication between the SGA, Advisors, and college administration;

E. assist in appointment of committee chairs, as appropriate;

F. help fill unexpected vacancies during the year; and

G. assist other Executive Council members in their duties as needed.

The **Vice-President of Records and Finances** shall:

A. be responsible for managing and maintaining all records pertaining to SGA;

B. record and distribute proceedings of all SGA Executive Council and General Assembly meetings (minutes) and agendas as necessary;

C. maintain Executive Council and General Assembly meeting attendance records;

D. prepare SGA correspondence as necessary;

E. serve in the role of the Treasurer, maintaining a record of SGA finances and reporting the SGA budget status at SGA General Assembly meetings;

F. serve in one of the two 1-year positions on the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC); and

G. assist other Executive Council members in their duties as needed.

The **Vice-President of Student Outreach and Centers** shall:

A. coordinate publicity, via appropriate channels, for the SGA through preparation and distribution of flyers, banners, signs, articles, reports, and classroom presentations at LSC-CyFair and its associated centers;

B. coordinate outreach efforts by soliciting student input through various sources (e.g. town meetings and student surveys);

C. document SGA and Student Life events through taking pictures and/or videos and sharing through appropriate means, such as social media;

D. Chair the Events Committee; and

E. assist other Executive Council members in their duties as needed.

F. serve as an advocate for the interests and needs of students at the centers associated with Lone Star College-CyFair;

G. coordinate student outreach efforts at the centers by soliciting student input through various sources (e.g. town meetings and student surveys); and

H. assist Student Life with student events at the centers.

The **Vice-President of Student Life** shall:

A. serve as President of the Student Activities Board (SAB) and meet all duties and obligations associated with that position;

B. serve as a liaison between SAB and SGA;

C. work closely with the Director of Student Life to publicize and recruit students for committee positions and orientate new student representatives to the SGA General Assembly and their responsibilities;

D. keep SGA General Assembly representatives informed of SAB and Student Life events;

E. ensure that student committee representatives keep appropriate records and make regular reports to the Executive Council;

F. ensure that student committee representatives attend SGA General Assembly meetings and meet committee obligations; and

G. assist other Executive Council members in their duties as needed.

The **Historian** shall:

A. manage and document all events coordinated by or associated with SGA;

B. assist the Vice-President of Student Life and Vice-President of Outreach in recording, via photos, videos, or other media, all SGA events;

C. be available for all events of SGA to take photos and document events;

D. be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of scrapbooks, historical documents, or otherwise historically significant SGA items; and

E. capture and record culture, history, and growth of the SGA.

## Article VI: SGA General Assembly

## Section 1 Composition of the SGA General Assembly

The SGA General Assembly shall be comprised of the following: Executive Council Members, RSO Representatives, and At-Large Representatives.

A. Executive Council Members – Defined in Article V.

B. RSO Representatives – Each RSO shall nominate one representative to fill the RSO Representative position for their respective organization, along with an alternate representative to fill the position in the event of absence. The representative shall represent only one organization.

C. At-Large Representatives - An At-Large Representative may be any student attending credit classes in the current term at Lone Star College-CyFair.

## Section 2 Duties and Rights of the SGA General Assembly

General Assembly meetings are intended to facilitate communication with and among RSOs and the student body about happenings at the college. Students shall be allowed opportunities to voice opinions through appropriate channels in the meeting, using established meeting procedures. To that end:

A. all RSOs are required to have an RSO Representative at all General Assembly meetings;

B. non-RSO students are encouraged to attend General Assembly meetings to be informed and voice their opinions;

C. all representatives shall have one vote, except the President, who shall only vote in the event of a tie; and

D. any funds needed to carry on the business of the SGA General Assembly shall be taken from the SGA budget.

## Article VII: Committees and Appointments

Section 1 Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees shall be established, directed, and retired as needed by the President, with approval of the Executive Council.

## Section 2 Standing Committees

The Standing Committees of the SGA shall be:

1. Election Committee
2. Events Committee
3. Judiciary Committee
4. Student Fee Advisory Committee

## Section 3 Membership and Duties of the Election Committee

The Election Committee shall be appointed by SGA Advisors and comprised of any three students, not running for office, and one current SGA Advisor. The duties of the Election Committee shall be to:

A. coordinate with the Director of Student Life to schedule the dates and times of the election;

B. publicize the election date and deadline to submit an application, ensuring that information and applications are made available at least thirty (30) school days prior to the election;

C. meet or correspond with candidates to ensure their understanding of the rules and regulations of campaigning;

D. mediate any disputes that occur during the nomination, campaigning, and voting periods of the election process;

E. recruit qualified students to assist in conducting the voting polls throughout the election;

F. prepare ballots and supervise ballot distribution and collection on election days;

G. count ballots and maintain completed ballots on file for a period of one week; and

H. notify the candidates and the college community of election outcomes.

The Director of Student Life shall reconvene the Election Committee, should any of the election results be contested.

## Section 4 Membership and Duties of the Events Committee

The Events Committee shall be comprised of the Vice President of Student Outreach (committee chair) and a minimum of four (4) representatives appointed by the President with approval of the Executive Council. The duties of the Events Committee shall be to:

A. assist in the planning and scheduling campus-wide SGA events, including General Assembly meetings. The Committee shall approve or disapprove, by majority vote, the time, date, and location of all SGA campus-wide events.

B. act as an information body, coordinating SGA and RSO events with the College calendar; and

publicize any events using Student Life resources after the event has been approved by Student Life.

## Section 5 Membership and Duties of the Judiciary Committee

The Judiciary Committee shall be comprised of the SGA President (committee chair) and four other members appointed by the SGA President and approved by the Executive Council. The duties of the Judiciary Committee shall be to:

1. receive and hear all complaints and charges of acts not in accordance with the SGA constitution, neglect of duty, or improper conduct that constitutes just cause for investigation, disciplinary action, and/or removal from office of an SGA officer, SGA General Assembly Representative, or committee member;
2. receive, hear, and review all complaints concerning the procedures and/or decisions of the Election Committee and shall present their findings to the SGA for final disposition; and
3. report any charges against an SGA officer, General Assembly Representative, or committee member, to the Executive Council. Charges must be in writing and be specific and must be signed and dated by the complainant.

No SGA Officer, General Assembly Representative, or committee member in the process of impeachment may serve on the Judiciary Committee. If the Chair of the Judiciary Committee is brought under violation charges of any kind, the Executive Vice President shall serve as or appoint a new chair. In the event of a vacancy, the President may re-appoint a new member to the Committee upon approval of the Executive Council.

After deciding on a complaint received, the Judiciary Committee reports their decision to the Executive Council. Once the vote on the issue is certified by the Executive Council, the decision of the Judiciary Committee shall then be recognized as final by a vote of the General Assembly, and be recorded and filed by the SGA Secretary.

The Judiciary Committee shall work closely with the SGA Advisors in order to provide fair judgment regarding complaints and misconduct of SGA members.

## Section 6 Student Fee Advisory Committee Appointments

The Student Government Association is responsible for appointing student positions on the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC). The SFAC is comprised of four (4) LSC-CyFair employees (appointed by the College President) and five (5) student representatives: two (2) positions with a 1-year term and three (3) positions with a two-year term. Student representative positions are appointed in the following manner:

1. The 1-year term positions are automatically filled by the SGA President and the SGA Vice-President of Records and Finances.
2. The 2-year positions are filled by a vote of the SGA General Assembly, with one of the positions elected in odd years and two positions elected in even years. Information about the positions will be shared at the first General Assembly meeting in the fall semester, with nominations and elections being held in the second General Assembly meeting in the fall semester. In the event of vacancy, open position will be filled by a vote by the General Assembly.

## Article VIII: Advisors

## Section 1 Composition of Advisors

There shall be a maximum of four Advisors to the SGA.

A. One Advisor shall be the Director of Student Life, who shall serve as a Permanent Advisor to the SGA.

B. Other advisors shall be selected by SGA from either the faculty or administration of Lone Star College-CyFair. At least one of the additional advisors must represent one of the centers of Lone Star College-CyFair.

## Section 2 Duties of Advisors

The duties of SGA Advisors shall be to:

1. be familiar with the Constitution and By-Laws of the SGA;
2. explain college policies and procedures as they relate to a particular discussion;
3. express opinions and suggestions during SGA meetings and also act in an advisory capacity, but without the right to vote;
4. attend at least one SGA General Assembly meeting per semester, but encouraged to attend all; and
5. attend at least one Executive Council meeting per semester, but encouraged to attend all.

The SGA reserves the right to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the Advisors at any given time.

In Addition, **Permanent Advisor** duties shall be:

A. to work in conjunction with the President to plan leadership skills workshops as necessary;

B. to coordinate and facilitate an annual meeting between the President of Lone Star College-CyFair and the Executive Council; and

C. to call Executive Council meetings as necessary.

## Section 3 Selection of Advisors

A. Each member of the Executive Council and General Assembly shall have one vote in the selection process of an Advisor.

B. A 2/3 vote of a quorum meeting of the General Assembly shall be required to approve the selection or removal of an Advisor.

C. If an advisor resigns mid-term, the Executive Council may vote on the replacement of the Advisor.

## Article IX: Meetings

## Section 1 Guidelines for all Meetings

1. All meetings shall be conducted and minute in accordance with the abbreviated Robert's Rules of Order.
2. In addition to the agenda, the Executive Vice-President may supplement additional material for discussion as necessary.
3. Additional meetings may be called as necessary by the Executive Council, Advisor(s), and/or General Assembly in order to conduct proper business.
4. Anyone wishing to raise an issue or a concern in any of these meetings must submit a proposal with the Executive Vice-President prior to the meeting.

## Section 2 Executive Council Meeting Guidelines

1. Members of the Executive Council are required to attend each meeting.
2. The Executive Vice-President shall serve as parliamentarian during meetings.
3. Meetings shall be at least once a month as agreed upon by the members of the Executive Council during the first meeting of their term.

## Section 3 SGA General Assembly Meetings

1. All Executive Council members are required to attend.
2. At least one representative from each RSO is required to attend. Failure to attend or represent at the General Assembly will result in a financial penalty to the RSO account.
3. At-Large Representatives are strongly encouraged to attend and have an equal voice at meetings.
4. Meetings shall be at least once a month as agreed upon by the members of the Executive Council during the first meeting following the last general election.

**Article X: Election Code**

Section 1 Voter Qualifications

Students enrolled in at least one credit course offered by Lone Star College-CyFair shall be eligible to vote. In order to vote, the student must present his/her Lone Star College student identification card.

Section 2 Election Committee

* + 1. An Election Committee shall be appointed in accordance with Article VII, Section 3 of this Constitution.
    2. Members of this committee will be ineligible for candidacy for any position where the election process was coordinated by the SGA Election Committee during the semester in which they have served as member of the Election Committee.
    3. The Election Committee call special elections as necessary.
    4. The Election Committee shall coordinate candidate debates as necessary.

Section 3 Order of SGA Elections

1. Selection of election-related dates and deadlines
2. Announcement of elections within the first week of the academic semester in which the election is to be held
3. Filing period
4. Qualifying
5. Active campaigning
6. General election
7. General election results and validation of results

Section 4 Campaigning

1. Active campaigning shall be defined as:
   1. Distributing campaign materials other than private distribution to immediate campaign staff
   2. Posting any campaign materials
   3. Announcing or discussing candidacy in print, broadcast, or any other media
   4. Seeking endorsement or voter support for a campaign at a gathering of a recognized campus organization
2. Active campaigning does not include:
   1. Designing, ordering, or receiving campaign materials and private distribution to campaign staff
   2. Private discussions, not at a gathering of a recognized campus organization, concerning candidacy or prospective candidacy
   3. Discussion of candidacy for the purpose of campaign formation at gatherings of recognized campus of recognized campus organizations
3. Candidates may display campaign materials only during the dates established by the Election Committee and as approved by the Election Committee.
4. Posters are limited to no more than twenty-five (25) per candidate. Posters are defined as any campaign material larger than 8.5 x 14 inches but smaller than 2 x 3 feet. Banners shall be limited to no more than two (2) per ticket. Banners shall be defined as any campaign material larger than 2 x 3 feet. There is no limit on the amount of any campaign materials which are less than equal to 8.5 x 14 inches.
5. Defacing, removing, demolishing, or otherwise tampering with any other candidate’s election materials is prohibited. Upon the filing of a written complaint, within forty-eight (48) hours of the alleged infraction, a hearing shall be called before the Election Committee to determine the responsibility and if penalties shall be necessary.
6. All campaign material must be removed within forty-eight (48) hours after the close of the campaigning period.
7. Campaign materials shall contain only accurate and truthful information.
8. All campaign materials are subject to Lone Star College signage policies and must be pre-approved before being displayed.
9. There shall be no active campaigning prior to the qualifying of candidates.
10. Endorsements - Any Lone Star College-CyFair student organization may publicly endorse a candidate for office providing that it is not on any type of probationary or provisions status with the college and it has the prior approval of the candidate to be endorsed.

Section 5 Solicitation of Polling Sites

No candidates or persons may post campaign materials or conduct campaigning actions within twenty-five (25) feet of established polling sites on Election Days.

Section 6 Election Returns

1. At the conclusion of voting in a general election, the Election Committee shall announce that the election polls are closed, and after which, shall:
   1. tabulate the voting results with SGA Advisor supervision;
   2. declare the candidates with the largest number of votes for their position “elected”;
   3. If applicable, refer any tied races to the Executive Council to put on the agenda for the next General Assembly meeting, where the decision will be made by a vote by written ballot.
   4. post the official results in the window of the SGA office and on the SGA website; and
   5. hold election returns for one (1) week in order that the election returns will be available in the event of a protest by any candidate.

Section 7 Appeals and Election-Related Conduct

1. The conduct of the election shall conform to principles of democracy and fairness. All participants, whether on committees, councils, election campaign groups, or otherwise involved, shall abide by these principles. These principles include the right of voter access to complete and accurate information; opposition's right of access to the voting community; guaranteed anonymity of each person's vote; honest campaigning free of intimidation, threats, pressure; equal opportunity for all to cast their ballots; and a complaint/grievance process with swift and impartial response.
2. Violations of the Election Code and acceptable election-related conduct shall be subject to an appeals process via the Election Committee.
3. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Election Committee within forty-eight (48) hours following the close of the polls. If the written appeal is not turned in within this time frame, the appeal shall be voided.
4. Any appeal that arises during an election period shall be directed to the Election Committee.
5. Once an appeal has been accepted into review the Election Committee shall convene no later than two days after the appeal was submitted, and will decide whether a formal inquiry is necessary.
   1. Should a formal inquiry be required the Election Committee shall immediately notify all parties involved, and shall conduct an inquiry lasting no longer than seven days.
   2. During the formal inquiry no involved party shall communicate with a member of the Election Committee, nor shall an Election Committee member communicate with an involved party, in regards to the ongoing investigation outside of a formal Election Committee meeting. The penalty for this infraction may include disqualification of the candidate from the SGA officer position or replacement of the Election Committee member, which will be decided by SGA Executive Council.
6. If any party is dissatisfied with the decision of the Election Committee, they may make a final appeal in writing to the Judiciary Committee within 48 hours of the Election Committee decision. The Judiciary Committee shall consider the facts of the situation and make a recommendation to the General Assembly, which will conduct a vote by secret ballot to determine the final decision on the matter.

Section 8 Executive Council Elections

1. General elections shall be held during the spring semester of each year, on two consecutive days decided by the Election Committee; dates not more than fifty (50) days prior to the last official day of the semester, but not less than thirty-five (35) days prior to the last day of the semester, hereafter referred to as “Election Days”.
2. The term of office for Executive Council officers is one year and shall begin on the day after the last day of spring semester.
3. All Executive Council positions are elected through the SGA election process, except the Vice-President, which is selected through the established SAB election process.
4. All candidates shall:
   1. maintain a minimum 2.5 cumulative and semester GPA, unless otherwise stated in the Constitution or Bylaws;
   2. have completed a minimum of 9 credit hours at Lone Star College-CyFair or one of its associated centers;
   3. not be on academic probation or suspension as specified by the College;
   4. obtain a copy of election regulations and filing form from the Election Committee or an SGA Advisor;
   5. submit the filing form, in its entirety, no later than 4:30 p.m. on the day of the close of filing;
   6. not file for more than one officer position in an SGA election;
   7. submit platforms to the Election Committee via e-mail and printed in hard copy no later than 4:30 p.m. on the day of the close of filing.
5. In the event there is no candidate for an office, the newly elected officers of the SGA shall appoint an individual to the vacant position(s). Appointments shall be confirmed at the next General Assembly meeting, with a 2/3 majority vote to approve.
6. Candidacy Application requirements
   1. Candidate applications for all positions shall open thirty-five (35) days prior to the first of the two Election Days.
   2. Candidate applications shall close twenty-one (21) days prior to the last Election Day. No applications shall be accepted after the deadline. No write-in candidates shall be allowed.
   3. Candidates for all Executive Council positions must complete the SGA Executive Council application form and be verified as eligible by SGA Advisors.
7. All candidates for Executive Council positions are strongly encouraged to attend the last General Assembly meeting prior to the election date.
   * 1. Candidates will be asked to make a two-minute speech regarding why they are running for office.
     2. A brief question-and-answer period for all candidates shall be held after the last candidate for a given position has completed his/her presentation.
8. Candidate expenditures:
   1. Total campaign expenditures for Executive Council Candidates shall not exceed one hundred dollars ($100.00) per candidate.
   2. Candidates shall not be allowed to receive donations in any form from persons, businesses, or organizations which are not current members of the Lone Star College-CyFair student body.
   3. No campaign funds may come from Student Activity Fee (SAF) funds, including funds granted to RSOs.
9. Once results of the elections have been validated for the current academic year, any person that is a member or officer-elect of the SGA shall have access to pertinent files of the SGA for the purpose of developing a working knowledge of the current affairs of the organization.

Section 9 Recall of SGA Officers

An elected officer can be recalled by a 3/4 majority vote of the General Assembly in the recall election.

## Article XI: Resignation or Removal from Office

## Section 1 Voluntary Resignation

In the event that an SGA Executive Council member is unable or unwilling to complete his or her term of office, he or she shall write a letter of resignation, addressed to the SGA Advisor(s) and to the members of the SGA Executive Council.

Section 2 Vacating of Office

If an Executive Council member ceases to communicate with an Advisor or other SGA officers after multiple attempts (10 attempts) via phone or LSC email, the officer will automatically be removed from office, with unanimous approval of the Advisors.

## Section 3 Removal from Office

In the event that an SGA Executive Council member fails to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of his or her office, he or she may be removed from office. The procedure for removal shall be the following:

1. A letter shall be written to the Executive Council member in question by the Judiciary Committee, and copies sent to each remaining Executive Council member and all SGA Advisors.
2. A meeting shall be held to discuss the matter and to allow the Executive Council member in question to refute any claims of failure to perform assigned duties. Those in attendance at this meeting shall be the Executive Council member in question, the Permanent Advisor, and the remaining SGA Executive Council members.
3. A decision shall be made within three days of this meeting, requiring a 2/3 majority vote to remove an officer from his or her position.
4. The Permanent Advisor shall notify the Executive Council member in question of the group’s decision to either remove or retain him or her.
5. All SGA Executive Council members shall be notified in writing of the Executive Council member’s removal.

Section 4 Filling of Vacancies

In the event of a resignation, vacancy, or removal of an SGA officer before the end of his/her term, the SGA President shall have the authority to appoint individuals to hold offices in these vacancies as determined by the constitutional requirements established for each position. The President shall confer with the Permanent Advisor to confirm that the appointee meets the minimum academic requirements. The appointment must be approved by 2/3 of the members present at the following General Assembly meeting, and if approved, the appointment will take full effect immediately.

## Article XII: Amendments

1. Any current student taking at least one credit class at Lone Star College-CyFair may propose an amendment to the Constitution by submitting a written petition to any member of the Executive Council.
2. The Executive Council shall review the proposed amendment to ensure consistency with other sections of the Constitution and with Lone Star College policies and procedures, and shall consider pros and cons of the proposed amendment.
3. If a member of the General Assembly presents a proposed amendment that does not move forward from the Executive Council, that General Assembly member retains the right to introduce the proposed amendment at the next General Assembly meeting.
4. The proposed amendment shall be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled SGA General Assembly meeting, where the proposed amendment shall be presented and discussed. The matter shall then be tabled until the next regularly scheduled SGA General Assembly meeting, or if time is of the essence, a special General Assembly meeting to consider the proposal may be scheduled.
5. A 2/3 majority vote of the General Assembly is required to pass an amendment to the Constitution.
6. Necessary minor changes to the Constitution that do not, in any way, alter it in principle, may be approved by 2/3 of the Executive Council and/or 2/3 of the Advisors.
7. Amendments to this constitution require approval from the Director of Student Life.

Amended 11/19/20