



Cumberland University Student Government Association Constitution

Revision Date: August 2023

Arsheen Shroff, President

Austin Felts, Vice-President

Contents

1	Definition of Existence	1
1.1	Name	1
1.2	Purpose	1
1.3	Length of the Term	1
2	Powers	1
2.1	Bicameral Legislature	1
2.2	Conflict of Interest	2
2.3	Election/Appointment	2
2.4	Induction of the Powers	3
2.5	Addition of a Power	3
3	President	4
3.1	Qualifications	4
3.2	Powers and Duties	5
3.2.1	Veto Power	5
4	Vice-President	6
4.1	Qualifications	6
4.2	Powers and Duties	6
5	Secretary	7
5.1	Qualifications	7
5.2	Powers and Duties	8
6	Student Liaison	8
6.1	Qualifications	8
6.2	Powers and Duties	9
7	Treasurer	10
7.1	Qualifications	10

7.2 Powers and Duties 10

8 Senators and Representatives 11

8.1 Qualifications 11

8.2 Powers and Duties 12

9 Meetings and Attendance Policies 12

9.1 Meeting and Event Attendance 12

9.2 Excused Absence Policies 13

10 Governing Principles and Social Policies 14

11 Termination and Replacement 15

11.1 Termination 16

11.2 Replacement 16

12 Adoption of the Constitution 16

13 Amendments 16

14 Enactment 17

1 Definition of Existence

1.1 Name

The name of this organization shall be called, the Student Government Association of Cumberland University, hereafter referred to as the SGA.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this organization is as follows: to be the governing body of Cumberland University in matters involving the students of Cumberland University, to establish a close relationship between the students and the administration, to promote a spirit of community, to exchange constructive ideas, to discuss school problems, to promote and aid in student activities, and to represent the students of Cumberland University.

1.3 Length of the Term

1. The term of office for all SGA officers consists of one calendar year with the exception of the Freshmen Representative, who will serve a term of one semester.
2. With the verification of election results, the calendar year will begin at the Spring Commencement Ceremony with the exception of the Freshmen Representative, whose term will begin at the start of the Spring semester during the current term.
3. The calendar year will end at the following Spring Commencement Ceremony in which, upon the verification of election results, the newly elected SGA members will assume their positions.

2 Powers

2.1 Bicameral Legislature

SGA shall consist of two branches of power: the Cabinet and the Senate/Representatives. The composition, in order of power, of the Cabinet is as follows:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Student Liaison

The Senators and Representatives are all of equal power and consist of the following offices:

1. Senator of the Edward A. Labry; School of Science, Technology and Business
2. Senator of the School of Education, Humanities, and the Arts;
3. Senator of the Jeanette C. Rudy School of Nursing and Health Professions;
4. Residential Housing Representative;
5. Commuter Representative;
6. Athletics Representative;
7. Graduate Studies Representative;
8. Diversity Representative; and
9. Freshmen Representative.

2.2 Conflict of Interest

A student may only hold one position within the SGA during any given term, and the student may only serve in the office to which they were elected/appointed. The only exceptions are in the case stated in Section 3.2; Item 2, or Section 4.2; Item 3.

2.3 Election/Appointment

All cabinet members, senators, and representatives shall be voted on by the student body via a secret ballot no more than five weeks before the end of the Spring Semester. An exception to this is in the case of the Freshmen Representative who shall be elected in the Fall semester of the term. The SGA officers shall vote by secret ballot during an official meeting no more

than five weeks before the end of the Fall semester. Members will be appointed by receiving a majority vote from the participating student body.

2.4 Induction of the Powers

1. All SGA officers elected in the Spring semester shall be officially inducted into their positions sometime between the beginning of the calendar year and the first official meeting held by the officers in the Fall semester.
2. The Freshmen Representative shall be officially inducted into his or her office within a month of being appointed by the other SGA officers.
3. An induction ceremony shall be led by the President of Cumberland University, the Dean of Students, or the SGA Advisor.

(a) An exception to this is in the case of the Freshmen Representative, whose induction can be led by a cabinet member during an official SGA meeting.

4. Upon induction, all elected/appointed SGA officers shall take and subscribe to the following oath:

I, name, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the constitution of Cumberland Universitys Student Government Association and that I will faithfully and diligently discharge the office of, appointed office, to the best of my ability.

2.5 Addition of a Power

A student or member of the SGA may propose the addition of a Senator or Representative for a group/organization at Cumberland University that they feel lacks representation. The addition must be approved through the following process.

1. The new position must first be presented to the SGA during an official meeting and be approved by the SGA officers in a 2/3 majority vote by secret ballot.
2. If approved by the SGA, the position must then be approved by the current SGA advisor and the Dean of Students.

3. Upon approval by the SGA advisor and the Dean of Students, the position must then be presented to and voted on by the student body by secret ballot. A 2/3 majority vote of the participating student body is required to instate the new position.

Should a new position be added to the Senate and/or Representatives, the position shall be filled in the following semester.

3 President

3.1 Qualifications

1. Students running for SGA President must have a cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average at the time of election. If the candidates GPA is lower than said requirement at the time of election, their candidacy must be approved by the current SGA Advisor and the Dean of Students
 - (a) A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher must be maintained throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
 - (b) Students running for President must not have been on probation or suspension the previous semester and shall remain in good academic standing with the University throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
2. Students running for SGA President must have successfully completed a minimum of 60 hours of college credit as a Cumberland University student and be considered a member of the Junior or Senior class at the start of the elected term.
3. Transfer students running for SGA President must have completed two semesters as a full-time students at the time of election.
4. The President must be registered as a full-time student at Cumberland University each semester during the term year.
5. The President must have held an SGA office for the entirety of the most recent term.

3.2 Powers and Duties

1. It shall be the duty of the President to preside over all SGA meetings in which he or she is present.
2. In the event of absence, termination, or resignation of another SGA officer, the responsibilities of such officer will fall onto the President until the officer returns from their absence or a replacement can be found.
3. The President shall not vote on official matters unless in the case of a tie.
4. The President will make appointments with the President of the University and meet with him a minimum of once each month to update him or her on legislation, meeting discussions, etc.
5. The President shall diligently strive to better the University. His or her efforts should be a constant complement to the goal of Cumberland and to the realization of individual betterment.

3.2.1 Veto Power

6. The President shall have the power to veto legislation in case of a 2/3 majority vote of the Student Government.
7. The President may only veto legislation if he or she truly feels that the new legislation will either harm any part of the student body in any way or does not benefit the student body as a whole.
8. In the event of a veto, the President shall give reasoning behind their decision, get approval from the Dean of Students or SGA Advisor, and offer potential solutions to the problem in question. If a solution can be met, the legislation shall be voted on again with the new changes. If no solution is met, the legislation will not pass.

4 Vice-President

4.1 Qualifications

Students running for SGA Vice-President must meet and uphold the following requirements:

1. Students running for SGA Vice-President must have a cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average at the time of election. If the candidates GPA is lower than this at the time of election, their candidacy must be approved by the current SGA Advisor and the Dean of Students.
2. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher must be maintained throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
3. Students running for Vice-President must not have been on probation or suspension the previous semester and shall remain in good academic standing with the University throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
4. Students running for Vice-President must have completed a minimum of 60 hours of college credit and be considered a member of at least the Junior class as a Cumberland University student at the start of the elected term.
5. Transfer students running for Vice-President must have completed two semesters at Cumberland University as full-time students.
6. The Vice-President must be registered as a full-time student at Cumberland University each semester during the term year.
7. The Vice-President must have held an SGA office for the entirety of the most recent term.

4.2 Powers and Duties

1. It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to preside over all meetings in the absence of the President.

2. The Vice-President shall act as Parliamentarian and have an updated copy of Roberts Rule of Order and the Cumberland Student Handbook at all official SGA meetings.
3. If the SGA President is at any time removed from office or unable to fulfill his or her duties, the Vice-President must be ready to preside as the new SGA President of Cumberland University.

5 Secretary

5.1 Qualifications

1. Students running for SGA Secretary must have a cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average at the time of election. If the candidates GPA is lower than this at the time of election, their candidacy must be approved by the current SGA Advisor and the Dean of Students.
 - (a) A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher must be maintained throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
 - (b) Students running for Secretary must not have been on probation or suspension the previous semester and shall remain in good academic standing with the University throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
2. Students running for Secretary must have completed a total of 30 hours of college credit and be considered a member of at least the Sophomore class as a Cumberland University student.
3. Transfer students running for Secretary must have completed two consecutive semesters in attendance at Cumberland University as a full-time student.
4. The Secretary must remain a student at Cumberland University for the entirety of the term in which they will serve.

5.2 Powers and Duties

1. The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording of all minutes and correspondence for SGA as well as the SGA year log within a shared Google Drive which is to be placed in the library at the end of the term.
2. The Secretary shall document and track all legislation that occurs within the term.
3. The Secretary shall take roll and submit attendance to the Student Government Association Parliamentarian at the start of every official meeting.
4. The Secretary shall have the right to vote in matters brought before the Student Government Association. In order to maintain impartiality while still witnessing the groups votes, the Secretary shall exercise their voting privilege before any other members. Subsequently, the Secretary shall remain present to tally all other votes cast by the members of the Student Government Association. This process aims to ensure transparency and fairness in the decision-making procedures of the Association. The Secretary's vote shall carry the same weight as any other members.

6 Student Liaison

6.1 Qualifications

1. Students running for SGA Student Liaison must have a cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average at the time of election. If the candidate's GPA is lower than this at the time of election, their candidacy must be approved by the current SGA Advisor and the Dean of Students.
 - (a) A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher must be maintained throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
 - (b) Students running for Student Liaison must not have been on probation or suspension the previous semester and shall remain in good academic standing with the University throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.

2. Students running for Student Liaison must have completed a total of 30 hours of college credit and be considered a member of at least the Sophomore class as a Cumberland University student at the start of the elected term.
3. Transfer students running for Student Liaison must have completed two consecutive semesters at Cumberland University as full-time students.
4. The Student Liaison must remain a student at Cumberland University for the entirety of the term in which they will serve.

6.2 Powers and Duties

1. The Student Liaison will act as a liaison between the student body and the SGA officers by documenting and bringing forward any complaints, requests, and/or suggestions made by another on-campus organization or student to be heard by the SGA with the best interests of the student body as a whole in mind.
2. The Student Liaison will be responsible for the maintenance and management of SGA Media through all appropriate forms of media presented to and for the student body of Cumberland University. This includes, but is not limited to, the school newspaper, the Cumberland University website, and appropriate social media platforms.

(a) Important announcements involving the SGA include, but are not limited to, topics about voting, upcoming events, and recent accomplishments. These should be shared on multiple appropriate social media platforms including the SGA Instagram page and the Cumberland University app.

(b) All announcements, pictures, and other forms of media posted under the SGA name must either involve the SGA directly or promote/represent other organizations, events, or students that are part of Cumberland University.

(c) Posts should be made a minimum of twice per week during the academic year.

7 Treasurer

7.1 Qualifications

1. Students running for SGA Treasurer must have a cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average at the time of election. If the candidates GPA is lower than this at the time of election, their candidacy must be approved by the current SGA Advisor and the Dean of Students.

(a) A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher must be maintained throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.

(b) Students running for Treasurer must not have been on probation or suspension the previous semester and shall remain in good academic standing with the University throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.

2. Students running for Treasurer must have successfully completed a minimum of 30 hours of college credit and be considered a member of the Sophomore class at Cumberland University at the start of the elected term.
3. Transfer students running for Treasurer must have completed two full semesters at Cumberland University as full-time students.
4. The Treasurer must remain a student at Cumberland University for the entirety of the term in which they will serve.

7.2 Powers and Duties

1. The Treasurer shall be responsible for presenting financial reports regarding Student Government Association funding at each official meeting of the SGA.
2. The Treasurer will help plan all SGA projects where financial funding is required in cooperation with the appointed advisor.
3. The Treasurer shall be responsible for presenting petitions of financial aid by other organizations to the SGA members at official meetings.

4. The Treasurer must honestly uphold the Bylaws of the Cumberland University SGA Treasury to the best of their ability.

8 Senators and Representatives

8.1 Qualifications

1. All students running for SGA Senate or Representative Positions must have a minimum cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average at the time of election. If a candidates GPA is lower than this at the time of election, their candidacy must be approved by the current SGA Advisor and the Dean of Students.
 - (a) A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher must be maintained throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
 - (b) Students running for Senate or Representative positions must not have been on probation or suspension the previous semester and shall remain in good academic standing with the University throughout the entirety of the term served to remain in office.
2. Students running for a Senate or representative position must have successfully completed a minimum of 30 hours of college credit and be considered a member of at least the Sophomore class at Cumberland University at the start of the elected term.
 - (a) The only exception to this is in the case of the Freshmen Representative, who must have successfully completed the previous Fall semester as a student at Cumberland University at the start of their elected term and be considered a member of the Freshman class for the entirety of their term to be served.
3. Transfer students running for Senate or Representative positions must have completed two full semesters at Cumberland University.
4. All Senators and Representatives must remain full-time students at Cumberland University for the entirety of the term in which they will serve.

(a) Representatives may go under the number of hours required to be full-time so long as they remain a student at Cumberland University and the students candidacy has been approved by the Dean of Students and the SGA Advisor.

5. Any student wishing to run for the office of Diversity Representative must be a member of at least one of the organizations represented by the Diversity and Inclusion Committee at Cumberland University. The student must also present a letter of recommendation from either the President or Vice President of the organization with which they are involved.

8.2 Powers and Duties

1. Every Senator and Representative shall maintain an open line of communication with the head of their school or group/organization, as well as the teachers and students from their school or group/organization.
2. Every Senator and Representative shall serve on advisory boards or organizations if appointed by the other officers of the SGA or by the head of their school or group/organization.
3. Every Senator and Representative must represent their school or group/organization at all times with the utmost decorum. These standards are outlined in Section 9 and Section 10.

9 Meetings and Attendance Policies

9.1 Meeting and Event Attendance

1. Official meetings shall be held on a biweekly basis throughout the term.
 - (a) Meetings will not take place during breaks or on holidays in which the University is closed.
 - (b) In the event of an unplanned university closure due to weather, widespread illness, or another unexpected event, alternative options for meeting, such as a virtual

session, should be attempted. However, a members lack of resources, such as internet connection, power, or the necessary equipment, should be taken into account in the case of an absence.

(c) Three or more unexcused absences within a semester can result in termination (See Section 11.1)

9.2 Excused Absence Policies

Attendance at biweekly official meetings and certain events is mandatory for all SGA members unless their absence is excusable and proof of excuse is provided if requested. Excusable absences include:

1. (1.) Class
2. (2.) A religious/cultural holiday or event that is observed by the member in question.
3. (3.) Unforeseen or extenuating circumstances including, but not limited to:
 - (a.) Illness
 - (b.) Serious illness or death of a friend or a family member
 - (c.) Car troubles/no means of transportation
4. (4.) School events that may be required for a grade or to maintain a scholarship such as:
 - (a.) Athletic events in which the member in question must participate
 - (b.) Meetings or events required for a PA, RA, and/or GA position that the member holds
 - (c.) Internships, field trips, presentations, etc. that may be required for a class or to graduate and are scheduled during a meeting or event and/or take place in a location that is too far to make it back in time for the meeting or event in question.
5. Absences may be excused for other reasons not provided in the previous section so long as both the President and the Vice-President are in agreement.

6. Failure to communicate an expected absence with either the President or Vice-President at least 24 hours in advance will result in an unexcused absence regardless of reasoning. If an absence occurs due to an unexpected event, the officer in question shall communicate with the President or Vice-President as soon as possible to avoid being considered unexcused.

10 Governing Principles and Social Policies

All Student Government Association officers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner representative of the high level of trust that the student body has placed in their leadership. Members shall constantly strive to follow our governing principles, which are as follows:

1. All Student Government Association officers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner representative of the high level of trust that the student body has placed in their leadership. Members shall constantly strive to follow our governing principles, which are as follows:

Honesty: All members shall uphold themselves to the highest level of honesty with their peers, the students and administration of Cumberland University, and the public at large.

Respect: All members shall at all times respect their peers, the students, the administration, and the property of Cumberland University, as well as the general public.

Academic Integrity: All members shall strive for academic excellence and at no times violate the Honor Code or their Oath of Office.

Recognition of the Bill of Rights: All students, faculty, and staff are deserving of equal treatment and service. No person shall ever be discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, age, sex, gender identity, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. The Student Government Association will not at any time violate these basic human rights.

Confidentiality: All members shall respect their position and the delicacy of the material with which they are dealing. At no time should a member repeat information discussed in official meetings and/or discuss voting, legislation, or the opinions of their peers outside of official meetings.

2. All SGA officers are to only represent/advertise the University in a positive outlet when speaking to others in person or on any form of virtual communication or social media platform.

(a) This law shall be enforced in both public and private social media accounts owned by the SGA officers as well as all Cumberland SGA-owned accounts including the CU App, the SGA Instagram page, and any other future accounts that may be created.

(b) Except in the case of necessary confidentiality, which shall be made clear by the President or Vice-President, Senators and Representatives may, and are encouraged, to advertise the progress on issues being resolved at Cumberland University to the student body.

3. All members shall hold their SGA peers in the highest regard while not participating in the slander of other officers to non-affiliated SGA members in regards to their ability to do their duties or take action on what they believe is best for the student body.

(a) If concern is raised about ones ability to do their duties, then let it be the business of the one troubled to bring the accused to the SGA advisor or Dean of Students.

4. Failure to uphold the Governing Principles listed above or to comply with the Constitution, will result in grounds for termination.

11 Termination and Replacement

Termination of an SGA member from their office may result from:

11.1 Termination

- (a) Withdrawal, dismissal, or suspension from Cumberland University
- (b) Failure to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
- (c) Three unexcused absences from official SGA meetings
- (d) Failure to comply with the duties set forth by the SGA as a whole
- (e) Failure to comply with SGA Governing Principles and social policies listed in Section 10.
- (f) Failure to participate in meetings and hosted events on a regular basis

11.2 Replacement

In the event of a vacancy, the President, with guidance from the SGA advisor and/or Dean of Students, shall appoint a nominee. In order for a nominee to assume office, the nominee must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the entire SGA.

12 Adoption of the Constitution

1. The Constitution shall be presented to the student body and Dean of Students. The Constitution shall be posted in three easily accessible locations on campus at least one calendar week before the Vote is to take place. For the constitution to take effect two-thirds of the participating student body must vote in favor of the constitution.
2. The participating student body is defined as any undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in the current election semester.

13 Amendments

1. Any student may present a proposal for an amendment to the constitution of the SGA. If such an amendment is approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the SGA, it shall

- be read to the student body or posted publicly.
2. Not less than one week or more than a month later the proposed amendment shall be voted upon by secret ballot and shall become effective upon a two-thirds majority vote of the participating student body.
 3. If the SGA disapproves of the proposed amendment, the student proposing it may present the amendment together with a petition containing signatures from a minimum of 10 percent of the student body to the President of the SGA. A minimum of three letters of approval from different full-time faculty members must also be presented.

(a) The student wishing to overturn a decision of the SGA must use an online petition form provided by the SGA. Failure to do so will make any signatures null and void.

(b) Should the student wishing to overturn a decision of the SGA obtain the necessary signatures and letters, the President shall present the amendment to the student body and proceed with the system laid out above in Section 2.

14 Enactment

Be it enacted by the Student Government Association of Cumberland University this constitution shall take effect August of 2023.