

***The
Constitution of
The Student Government Association
of
Sam Houston State University***

Preamble

We, the Students of Sam Houston State University (SHSU) do hereby come together to establish this Constitution as the primary governing document of our Student Government Association (SGA). Within the boundaries established by the Regents of the Texas State University System (TSUS), we assert our rights to self-government, free association, free senate, and self-determination. We choose to govern ourselves, and to operate our Student Government Association in accordance with this Constitution, and with all other governing documents authorized by this Constitution.

Article I – The Authority of the Student Government Association

The Student Government Association of Sam Houston State University shall, as authorized by the Texas State University System (TSUS), be the sole, and official voice of the SHSU Student Body on all matters of interest to the Student Body with any and all agencies of SHSU, the TSUS, external organizations, and governmental bodies of all levels outside of SHSU. SGA shall exist to represent the Student Body through democratic elections, and other such instruments provided for in this Constitution. SGA shall consist of three distinct Branches of government – an Executive Branch, a Legislative Branch, and a Judicial Branch – which will be authorized by and operated according to this Constitution and any other applicable governing documents which are or will be established in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and of the TSUS. This Constitution is the primary governing documents, every other governing documents derives its authority from this Constitution. Nothing in any other governing documents can overrule or override this Constitution under any circumstances.

Article II – Purposes and Objectives

The purposes and objectives of SGA shall include, but are not limited to:

- 1) To speak as the sole official and recognized voice of the Student Body.
- 2) To act on behalf of the Student Body.
- 3) To democratically represent, as provided for in this Constitution, the Student Body.
- 4) To promote and encourage academic achievement in the Student Body.
- 5) To promote and ensure a strong and beneficial student life experience for the Student Body.
- 6) To promote and protect the general welfare of the Student Body.
- 7) To provide opportunities for civic engagement and citizenship for the Student Body.
- 8) To provide leadership development opportunities for the Student Body.
- 9) To investigate and develop political positions to be presented to any and all levels of government on behalf of the Student Body.
- 10) To participate in and work with external organizations, coalitions, and associations to further the collective goals of the Student Body.
- 11) To work with any and all appropriate SHSU and external agencies, personnel, entities, and organizations to develop policies and procedures that are beneficial to the Student Body.
- 12) To promote effective communication and understanding between the Administration, Faculty, and Staff, and the Student Body.

Article III – Membership

Membership in SGA shall be open to any and all full-time and part-time students of SHSU who are enrolled in any current Semester via any method or location of instruction as provided by in this Constitution.

1) **Non-Discrimination:**

Membership in SGA shall not be denied, restricted, or subjected to any form of discrimination based on race, gender, ethnic origin, physical challenges, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, and/or any other qualities that have no bearing on a Student's ability to function as a Student, and/or their right to be represented by SGA as a Student.

2) **Election of Members:**

Students shall be allowed to participate in the election of qualified and eligible students, as established in this Constitution and all other applicable governing documents, to serve in SGA on their behalf to represent, speak for, and act in their interests.

3) **Academic and Disciplinary Standing:**

To serve in SGA, in any capacity, a Member must, at all times, be in good academic and disciplinary standing within SHSU.

4) **Voting Privileges:**

All Students shall be allowed to vote in all matters placed before the Student Body by SGA or SHSU, regardless of their academic or disciplinary standing within SHSU.

5) **Members of More Than One Branch Restriction:**

Except as provided for in **Article IV, Section 6** of this Constitution, no Member can be a Member of more than one Branch at a time.

6) **Commissioner Restriction:**

No Commissioner of the Election Commission can be a part of the senate during their time as a commissioner.

Article IV – Executive Branch

All SGA Executive power and authority are vested in the Executive Branch. The Executive Branch is responsible for the administrative and executive functions of SGA. SGA Officers who are elected at-large by the entire SHSU Student Body are the Primary Members of the Executive Branch. The Executive Branch is also responsible for guiding and leading the Departments, Committees, and Commissions of SGA. The Executive Officers of SGA are:

1) **President:**

The President is the Chief Executive Officer of SGA. The President's powers and responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

A) **Advising Departments:**

The President serves *ex officio* in an advisory capacity to any and all Departments, Committees, and Commissions.

B) Agent of SGA:

The President shall have the power and authority to enter into agreements with agencies and organizations, within or outside of SHSU, with the approval of both the Senate, the Primary Advisor, and the SHSU President, or the SHSU President's designee.

C) Appointment Power:

The President shall appoint Students to fill any and all vacancies in or on any SHSU Branch, their cabinet, Department, Committee, and/or Commissions over which they hold appointment power.

D) Removal Power:

The President shall have the power to remove any appointed member of their cabinet and replace them as necessary.

E) Budget:

The President, with the assistance of the Treasurer, establish an outlined budget to be presented for the approval to the Senate as necessary to conduct all financial business and affairs of SGA.

F) Department Veto Power:

The President shall have veto power over all decisions and/or actions of any and all Departments, Committees, and Commissions.

G) Executive Authority:

The President shall have the power and authority to act or to designate another Executive Officer to act in the place of any Officer(s) who cannot, do not, and/or will not fulfill the duties and responsibilities of their Office(s).

H) Executive Orders:

The President can issue Executive Orders which regard or create policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of SGA which are not clearly provided for in any governing documents.

I) Executive Powers:

The President shall have the power and authority to assume such other executive powers not denied by the Constitution the consent of those Senators present and voting at an Senate Meeting.

J) Legislative Agenda:

The President shall present a Legislative Agenda to the Senate at the beginning of each long semester.

K) Oath of Office:

The President shall issue the Oath of Office to all Officers and Members upon their assumption of their Office or position within SGA.

L) Propose Legislation:

The President shall propose such legislation as they deem helpful and/or necessary to SGA. Such legislation can be reviewed by the Department of Rules & Regulation to recommend

format and language changes necessary to conform with standard templates but must be placed on the Agenda for any Senate Meeting requested.

M) Represent SGA:

The President shall represent SGA in or on any and all appropriate and/or required interactions with the SHSU Administration, Regents, and inter-school Coordinating Boards and/or Commissions. The President shall also represent SGA in or on any and all external Agencies, Committees, Commissions, and organization that SGA is a Member of.

N) Sign or Veto Legislation and Acts:

The President shall sign or veto all legislation, actions, and decisions of the Student Senate (Senate) within five (5) class days of their presentation to the Executive Secretary.

O) Signatory:

The President or Vice President and Treasurer shall be a signatory on all financial accounts.

P) Special Committees:

The President shall have the power and authority to establish special committees and appoint Members to Chair, and to serve on those committees.

Q) Special Meetings:

The President shall have the power and authority to convene Special Meetings of the Senate, as provided for in Article X, Section 3 of this Constitution.

R) Stipend:

The President shall receive a monthly stipend of \$900 or an amount specified.

2) Vice President:

The Vice President is the Chief Internal Officer of SGA.

- i) The Vice President shall Chair the Department of Internal Affairs; and
- ii) The Vice President shall serve as a Member of the Executive Board; and
- iii) The Vice President shall coordinate the Orange Tie Affair; and
- iv) The Vice President shall be a signatory on all financial accounts; and
- v) The Vice President shall be required to fulfill any duties assigned by the President; and
- vi) The Vice President shall receive a monthly stipend of \$750 or an amount specified.

3) Secretary:

The Secretary is the Chief Administrative Officer of SGA;

- i) The Secretary shall serve as a Member of the Executive Board;
- ii) The Secretary shall keep record of all attendance taken at each meeting; and
- iii) The Secretary shall record and publish all minutes of the senate; and
- iv) The Secretary shall keep an accurate and up to date record of all legislation; and
- v) The Secretary shall receive a monthly stipend of \$425 or an amount specified.

4) Treasurer:

The Treasurer is the Chief Financial Officer of SGA.

- i) The Treasurer shall serve as a Member of the Executive Board; and
- ii) The Treasurer shall be in charge of processing all purchase requests; and
- iii) The Treasurer shall keep an accurate and up to date record of the budget; and

iv) The Treasurer shall receive a monthly stipend of \$425 or an amount specified.

5) **Chief of Staff:**

The Chief of Staff is the Chief Operations Officer of SGA.

- i) The Chief of Staff serves as a Member of the Executive Board.
- ii) The Chief of Staff shall keep an accurate and up to date of all office hours; and
- iii) The Chief of Staff shall be the direct supervisor of the Executive Student Assistants; and
- iv) The Chief of Staff shall receive a monthly stipend of \$425 **or an amount specified.**

6) **Executive Officer Stipends:**

The elected Executive Officers, **Article I, Sections 1 – 4** of this Constitution, shall receive stipends out of the SGA Budget (Budget) for each month that they are serving in their respective Offices.

A) **Stipend Amounts:**

The amount of the stipends shall be proposed and approved by the Executive Board and Senate before elections are held for the upcoming school year.

7) **Appointed Senate Positions:**

The following Officers are appointed by the President and are subject to consent by the Senate. They can be, but are not required to be Members of the Senate. These Officers cannot be given a stipend, per TSUS rules, guidelines, and procedures.

A) **Attorney General:**

The Attorney General (AG) is the Chief Constitutional Officer of SGA. The Attorney General represents SGA in all matters and/or hearings before the Judicial Branch and the Commission. The AG is the highest Officer of both the Executive and the Legislative Branches for interpreting the meanings of this Constitution and/or any other governing documents. The AG shall be supervised by and is answerable to the President.

- i) The AG shall serve on the Department of Rules & Regulations;
- ii) The AG shall be in charge of making sure that the Senate is following all parliamentary procedures; and
- iii) The AG shall serve on the Internal Affairs Committee.

B) **Director of Council:**

The Director of Training (DoC) is the Chief Training Officer of SGA. The DoC shall be supervised by, and is answerable to the Vice President.

- i) The DoC shall have the responsibility to create a training program for any and all Members of the Senate who have been in the Senate for less than three (3) months in a long semester; and
- ii) The DoC shall serve on the Internal Affairs Committee.

C) **Department Chiefs**

- i) The President shall appoint Department Chiefs for each Department as outlined in **Article VIII.**

8) **Executive Branch Paid Assistants:**

The following positions, if they are utilized, shall be paid an hourly rate out of the SGA Budget. They will be selected by the Vice President and Chief of Staff, subject to approval by the Executive Board and the Primary Advisor. These Assistants cannot be Members of the Senate. These

Assistants shall be scheduled, and supervised by the Chief of Staff.

A) Executive Student Assistant:

The Executive Student Assistant (ESAs) shall:

- i) Be responsible for operation, maintenance, and general upkeep of all SGA Office space(s);
- ii) Be responsible for reporting and, when necessary, getting approval for repairs of all office furniture and equipment, and for maintaining appropriate levels of general office supplies; and
- iii) Perform such administrative and/or secretarial tasks as necessary, subject to approval by the Vice President.

9) Eligibility to Hold an Executive Office:

At the time of their election, nomination, or appointment

A) Time at SHSU:

- i) Any Student serving as President or Vice President must have completed two long semesters at SHSU and be currently enrolled as a Student in the long semester in which they are elected or sworn in; and is open to any student.
- ii) Any Student serving as any other elected or appointed executive office must have completed one long semester at SHSU.

B) Other Requirements and Restrictions:

Any Student, at the time of their election or appointment to any Executive Office, must conform to any and all other requirements and/or restrictions established in this Constitution and/or any other governing documents.

10) Summary Removal of Executive Officers:

Any and all Executive Officers shall be subject to summary removal from their Office through the impeachment process and tried under the following conditions:

A) Executive Officer Expectations:

All Executive Officers are expected to fulfill all duties, obligations, and responsibilities assigned to them as provided for in this Constitution and/or any other governing documents. These duties include attendance at all except as outlined in Article 4.9(D) Meetings of the Senate, the Executive Committee, Departments they Chair, and/or any other functions of SGA which fall within their scope of duty and/or responsibility.

B) Executive Officer Grade Point Averages:

- i) In order to run for, or be appointed to any Executive Office, and for the entire duration of the time they serve in Office, all Executive Officers must maintain a satisfactory grade point average (GPA);
- ii) The minimum acceptable SHSU GPA for any and all Executive Offices shall be a SHSU GPA 2.5; and
- iii) If, at any time, an Executive Officer drops below a 2.5 SHSU GPA, they shall be considered to have resigned their Office immediately, pending any appeals they might file to challenge their SHSU GPA.

C) Executive Officer Probationary Status:

- i) In order to run for, or be appointed to any Executive Office, and for the entire duration of the time they serve in Office, an Executive Officer cannot be on any kind of academic or disciplinary probation; and
- ii) If, at any time, an Executive Officer is, for any reason, placed on any kind of probation

status, they shall be considered to have resigned their Office immediately, pending the outcome of any appeals or challenges they might pursue.

D) Executive Officer Absences:

- i) If any Executive Officer misses any of their Meetings in more than any three (3) unexcused weeks in a given Semester, they shall be considered as having resigned their Office immediately upon their fourth (4th) absence in a fourth (4th) week of that same given Semester; and
- ii) Missing Meetings because an Executive Officer is on or conducting official SHSU or SGA business shall not be counted as absences.

11) Voting Privileges:

Besides the President who shall only vote in case of a tie, each Executive Board member shall have one vote in decisions of the Senate including, but not limited to:

- Legislation;
- Censure and/or Impeachment actions;
- Filling Officer or Senate Member vacancies; and
- Officer nominations.

12) Executive Officer Impeachment:

Executive Officers can be impeached by the Senate and/or the Student Body for reasons, and by processes specified in the Bylaws.

13) Executive Officer Resignations:

In any case where any Executive Officer shall announce their resignation, or intention to resign to any Member of the Executive Board, in writing only, and it shall be effective after 5 business days have passed, and the process for replacing them will begin no later than at the first Executive Board Meeting at which it is announced.

1. **SGA Involvement After Resignations:**

An Officer who has resigned their Office shall be allowed to be a Member of and/or participate in the activities of SGA, including becoming and serving as a Senator, or holding a different Office.

14) Creating Other Executive Officers:

The Senate shall have the power and authority to create other such elected and appointed Executive Offices as they believe are necessary and/or beneficial to SGA.

- i) All such Executive Offices must be created through Bills which go through the Legislative Process, as described in the Bylaws;
- ii) All newly created Executive Offices can be added to the appropriate place(s) in this Constitution without being considered Amendments to the Constitution; and
- iii) All newly created Executive Offices must require the same applicable standards as other Executive Offices in this Constitution do.

15) Filling Vacancies:

When vacancies occur in any Executive Office, for any reason, the process for filling those vacancies shall be as follows:

A) Nominations by the President to Fill Vacancies for Elected Offices:

In the case of any vacancy in an elected Office, the President can nominate a person to fill that Office.

B) Nominations by the Senate to Fill Vacancies for Elected Offices:

In the case of any vacancy in an elected Office, The President can choose to open the nomination process to the whole of the Senate at a regular Senate Meeting.

C) Senate Voting on Nominations:

For either Clause A or B above, the Senate shall have to power to accept or reject all such nominees.

- i. After a nomination by the President, the Senate shall approve the nominee;
- ii. For a nomination by the Senate, the Senate shall cast votes for all of the nominees in an election. The nominee who receives the most votes of all Members present and voting shall be elected; and
- iii. In either case, the nominations, and voting shall occur at the very first regular Senate Meeting after the resignation is given, unless the resignation is given on the day of, or the day prior to a regular Senate Meeting. In such a case, filling that Office can be postponed until the next regular Senate Meeting.

D) Senate Denial of Approval to Nominations:

In such cases where the Senate does not give their approval to an appointment by the President, nominations for that Office will immediately be open on the floor from any Member of the Senate.

E) Nominations to Fill Vacancies of Appointed Offices:

In the case of a vacancy in an appointed Officer position, the President shall have the right to appoint a replacement Officer under the same provisions as specified in Article III, Section 6 of this Constitution.

- i) Such an appointment shall take place no later than the second regular Senate Meeting after the resignation is made; and
- ii) The President can nominate the same person who resigned the Office.

F) Secret Ballot Voting to Fill Vacancies:

All voting in the Senate to fill Officer vacancies shall be done by secret ballot but is not mandated.

Article V – Legislative Branch

All SGA legislative and fiscal power and authority shall be vested in The Legislative Branch.

1) Student Senate:

The Student Senate (Senate) is the Primary legislative chamber of SGA. Its Membership shall consist of Senators and Representatives, as specified and defined within this Article.

2) Senators:

Senators represent the Students in each Academic College. The Senators from each Academic College are grouped together in Caucuses, as specified in Article VII of this Constitution.

A) Number of Senators:

- i) The number of Senators in the Senate shall be no more than fifteen (15) per caucus;
- ii) Every reasonable effort shall be made to keep all Senate Seats full at all times;
- iii) Should any Member of either the Executive or Legislative Branches not feel that every reasonable effort is made to keep all Senate Seats filled at all times, they may propose any

solution, or make any nomination they feel is appropriate; and
“Every reasonable effort” shall not mean that the Senate is obligated to fill a vacant Seat with any Student they do not feel is qualified, or who is objectionable to the Senate Membership simply to fill any such vacancy(ies).

B) Voting Rights:

- i) All Senators, once sworn in, and seated, and for the duration of their Term of Office (Term) while they are in compliance with all applicable provisions and guidelines in this constitution and in any and all other governing documents shall be entitled to one (1) vote in any and all applicable voting opportunities in the Senate, and in any and all Departments, Caucuses, Committees, and all other entities of SGA of which they are legitimate Members in good standing;
- ii) The right to vote shall only apply when a Member is present at the applicable Meeting(s) during which such voting opportunities occur. They shall not be entitled to cast a vote at any Meeting that they do not attend;
- iii) No Senator, regardless of how many Offices or positions they may hold in SGA shall be entitled to more than one (1) vote in either the Senate, and/or in any and all other entities of SGA; and
- iv) Should any Senator, for whatever reason, no longer be a Member of the Senate, they shall lose any and all voting rights they had, except as may otherwise be specifically provided for in this and/or any other governing documents.

C) Vacancies:

- i) If there no is qualified Student nominated, the Seat shall remain vacant until such time as a suitable replacement is nominated by the affected Caucus;
- ii) When any nomination is made to fill a vacant Senator Seat, the Senate shall have the right to approve or deny approval of the nomination.

3) Legislation:

Legislation is any of the possible types of written action that the Senate is authorized to take. These can include, but are not limited to:

A) Bills:

Bills initiate action on behalf of the Senate. Examples of the types of Legislation which can constitute Bills can include, but are not limited to:

- Allocating moneys;
- Authorizing expenditures;
- Creating or changing any governing documents;
- Revising standing Senate procedures; and
- Any other task the Senate shall deem necessary which is in its power to enact.

B) Resolutions:

Resolutions establish or state a fundamental policy, theory, or belief of the Student Government Association, on behalf of the Student Body. Examples of the types of Legislation which can constitute Resolutions can include, but are not limited to:

- Condolence or memorial resolutions;
- Letters to other legislative bodies;
- Student Government Association positions on important issues; and
- Support for an outside activity or organization.

C) Notices of Non-Compliance:

A Notice of Non-Compliance is to be used as a written notification that the recipient(s) has failed to adhere to, or is in violation of any obligations, policies, provisions, and/or requirements of the Constitution, Bylaws, and/or any other governing documents.

- i) All Officers and Members must comply with any and all provisions of any governing documents, as well as all applicable SHSU policies and/or regulations. Any disregard of, or failure to abide by any of those duties, requirements, or obligations, unintentional or deliberate, can subject an Officer or Member to removal from any and/or all positions within SGA in accordance with this Constitution and/or any other governing documents.
- ii) A Notice of Non-Compliance is only applicable for failure(s) to meet objective standards which are discoverable by reference to official records, including, but not limited to:
 - a) Attendance Records of The Senate;
 - b) Attendance Records of Departments, Committees, and/or Commissions;
 - c) Records of Office Hours; and/or
 - d) Records of events attended and/or activities performed in lieu of Office Hours.
- iii) The following Officers can issue a Notice of Non-Compliance:
 - a) The President;
 - b) The Vice President;
 - c) The Secretary;
 - d) The Chief of Staff;
 - e) The Attorney General.
- iv) Copies of all Notices of Non-Compliance shall be delivered to an accused Officer, Member, Organization, and/or group within two (2) class days of its issuance;
- v) The issuer shall ensure that all of the following Officers are provided with a copy of any and all Notices of Non-Compliance with two (2) class days of its / their issuance:
 - a) All Advisors, especially including the Dean of Students;
 - b) The President;
 - c) The Vice President;
 - d) The Secretary;
 - e) The Chief of Staff;
 - f) The Attorney General; and
- vi) Failure to comply with the demands of a Notice of Non-Compliance within one (1) week, or two (2) weeks in the case of a failure to maintain required office hours, of the issuance of the Notice of Non-Compliance shall subject the accused to repercussive actions, up to, and including removal from any and all Offices and/or positions they hold within SGA or, for an elected Executive Officer receiving a stipend, the loss of their stipend for a calendar month in lieu of removal from Office; and
- vii) A Notice of Non-Compliance shall be considered invalid, and unenforceable if it is issued more than twenty (20) class days after the alleged violation has occurred.

G) Senate Grade Point Averages:

- i) In order to run for, or be appointed to any Legislative position, and for the entire duration of the time they serve in their position, all Senators must maintain a satisfactory grade point average (GPA);
- ii) The minimum acceptable SHSU GPA for any and all members of the Senate shall be a SHSU GPA of 2.25; and
- iii) If, at any time, a Senator drops below a 2.25 SHSU GPA, they shall be considered to have resigned their Office immediately, pending any appeals they might file to challenge their SHSU GPA.

D) Articles of Impeachment:

The impeachment purposes, requirement, and process will be described in the Bylaws.

E) Motions from the Floor:

Nothing in Article V, Section 5 shall be interpreted as eliminating or preventing the right of any Voting Member of the Senate from making such motions from the floor to create Legislation, or to initiate the Legislative Process to create Legislation.

4) Agents of the Senate

The following Agents of the Senate shall be appointed by the Speaker, subject to the consent of all Members of the Senate present and voting at the Meeting at which they are appointed. Any and/or all Agents of the Senate can be but are not required to be Voting Members of the Senate.

D) Sgt.-at-Arms:

The Sgt.-at-Arms shall control access to and maintain order in the Chamber at all Meetings of the Senate.

5) Voting:**A) Agents of the Senate:**

Any Agent of the Senate who is a Voting Member of the Senate shall have the right to vote in any and all actions, decisions, and legislative proposals in the Senate;

B) Right to Secret Balloting:

Any Voting Member of the Senate can ask for any vote of the Senate to be conducted by secret ballot, subject to the consent of the Senate;

C) Presidential Veto Override:

The Senate shall have the power to override any Presidential veto by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of all Members present and voting.

Article VI – Judicial Branch

All SGA judicial power and authority shall be vested in the Judicial Branch.

1) Composition of the Judicial Branch:

The Judicial Branch shall consist of a Supreme Court and any other Judicial Courts, Committees, and Commissions that the Senate shall create within the provisions of this Constitution and/or any other GD.

2) Judicial Power and Authority:

The Judicial Branch shall be the final and ultimate arbiter of any and all issues and/or challenges to any part or function of SGA as provided for in this Constitution and/or any other governing documents. Its decisions will be binding on any and all issues and challenges it rules on.

3) The Supreme Court:

The Supreme Court shall consist of 11 Members which consist of 6 students and 5 faculty/staff. Those Members shall be:

A) Chief Justice:

One (1) Chief Justice:

- i) The Chief Justice shall be a Member of the SHSU Administration, Faculty, or Staff and shall be considered a lifetime member;
- ii) The Chief Justice shall be nominated by the President whenever there is a vacancy in

the Office of Chief Justice;

- iii) The Senate shall have the right to approve or deny approval of the nomination of a Chief Justice with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of the Senate present and voting at the Senate at the Meeting at which the nomination is announced;
- iv) The Chief Justice shall serve at their own discretion for as long as they choose to hold the office, or until they are impeached and/or otherwise removed by the senate as provided for in the Bylaws;

The Chief Justice shall be responsible for training, scheduling, and supervising all Associate Justices;

- v) The Chief Justice shall have the power and authority to call for any Meetings and/or Tribunals of the Supreme Court they deem beneficial or necessary to SGA and/or the Judicial Branch;
- vi) When there are any vacancies on the Supreme Court, the Chief shall appoint the vacant spots at his or her discretion.

B) Student Associate Justices:

Six (6) Associate Justices from the Student Body:

- i) The Student Associate Justices shall be nominated by the President whenever there is a vacancy in the Office of Student Associate Justice;
 - ii) Nominees for the Office of Student Associate Justice can be either undergraduate or graduate Students enrolled either full-time or part-time at SHSU;
 - iii) Nominees for the Office of Student Associate Justice must be in good standing with SHSU;
 - iv) Should any Student Associate Justice be placed on either academic or disciplinary probation, they shall immediately lose their Seat on the Supreme Court, pending any appeals they might file to contest their probationary status;
 - v) The Senate shall have the right to approve or deny the nomination of an Associate Justice with a simple majority vote.
 - vi) A Student Associate Justice shall serve at their own discretion for as long as they chose to hold the Office, unless they are impeached and/or otherwise removed by the Senate, as provided for in the Bylaws, or until they are no longer enrolled as a Student at SHSU;
- The Senate shall have the right to approve or deny Student Associate Justices, such approval or denial shall be asked for no later than the third (3rd) Meeting of the Senate in each Fall Semester.

C) Faculty / Staff / Administration Associate Justices:

Five (5) Associate Justices from the SHSU Faculty, Staff, and/or Administration (FSA):

- i) The FSA Associate Justices shall be nominated by the President whenever there is a vacancy in the Office of Student Associate Justice;
- ii) Nominees for the Office of FSA Associate Justice can be either full-time or part-time, tenured, tenure track, or adjunct with SHSU;
- iii) Nominees for the Office of FSA Associate Justice must be in good standing with SHSU;
- iv) The Senate shall have the right to approve or deny the nomination of an FSA Associate Justice with a simple majority vote of the Members present and voting at the Senate Meeting at which the nomination is announced;
- v) An FSA Associate Justice shall serve at their own discretion for as long as they chose to hold the Office, unless they are impeached and/or otherwise removed by the Senate, as provided for in the Bylaws, or until they are no longer employed as FSA at SHSU;
- vi) The Senate shall have the right to approve or deny the continued service in Office of any and all FSA Associate Justices, such consent shall be asked for no later than the third (3rd) Meeting of the Senate in each Fall Semester;

4) Full Occupancy of the Supreme Court:

The President, and the Senate shall make every reasonable effort to keep the Supreme Court fully staffed at all times.

A) Notice to the Senate About Vacancies:

If a vacancy is created, the President shall inform the Senate of any such vacancy at the first Senate Meeting after the vacancy has been reported.

B) Failure to Fill Vacancies:

If the President does not make any nominations to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court within two (2) Senate Meetings after the vacancy has been reported, Members of the Senate shall have to right to make nominations from the floor, and to have their nominee(s) voted on during that Meeting in accordance with the procedures established in this Constitution.

5) Judicial Secretary:

The Chief Justice can appoint a Member of the SHSU community, Student or FSA, to serve as the Judicial Secretary.

6) Quorum:

Quorum for any Meeting or Tribunal of the Supreme Court shall be four (4) plus the Chief Justice.

7) Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court:

The Supreme Court shall have the following Jurisdiction:

A) Original Jurisdiction:

The original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court shall include, but is not limited to:

- i) Disciplinary Action in accordance with this Constitution and/or any other GD;
- ii) Any issue directly remanded by the Dean of Students, and/or any other FSA; and
- iii) Impeachment trials of any Officers or Members.

B) Appellate Jurisdiction:

The appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court shall include, but is not limited to:

- i) Determining proper compliance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and/or any other GD;
- ii) Final interpretations of the Constitution, Bylaws, and/or any other GD; and
- iii) Any and all election issues including, but not limited to:
 - a) The Election Code;
 - b) Referendums; and
 - c) Election challenges and controversies.

C) Decisions of the Supreme Court:

Decisions of the Supreme Court shall be:

- i) Delivered in writing to SGA President and SGA Advisor(s) outlining their constitutional interpretation, reasons, and opinions.

D) Refusal to Hear a Case or Appeal:

The Supreme Court shall have the right to refuse to hear a case or an appeal on any issue and for any reason they choose;

- i) If the Supreme Court refuses to hear a case or an appeal, they can, but are not required to provide a written statement giving the reasons for their decision;

If the Supreme Court refuses to hear a case or an appeal, whatever the highest and/or most recent ruling or decision has been made on that case or appeal shall stand;

- ii) If there is any question about what decision prevails in any case that the Supreme Court has refused to hear, the Supreme Court shall answer that question; and
- iii) If the Supreme Court refuses to hear a case or appeal, SGA shall consider the matter ended, and shall not reconsider the matter at any level or for any reason.

E) Summary Removal of Judicial Branch Members:

Any and all Members of the Judicial Branch shall be subject to be impeached from their Office through the impeachment process written in the Rules and Procedures.

F) Judicial Branch Member Expectations:

Any and all Members of the Judicial Branch are expected to fulfill all duties, obligations, and responsibilities assigned to them in this Constitution and/or any other GD. These duties include attendance at all Meetings and Tribunals of the Supreme Court and/or any other functions of SGA which fall within their scope of duty and/or responsibility, and to any obligation they volunteered for or accepted.

G) Student Associate Justice Grade Point Averages:

- i) In order to be nominated for, or appointed as a Student Associate Justice, and for the entire duration of the time they serve in Office, all Student Associate Justices must maintain a satisfactory grade point average (GPA); and shall be a student in good standing with the university.
- ii) The minimum acceptable SHSU GPA for any and all Student Associate Justice shall be a 2.50; and
- iii) If, at any time, a Student Associate Justice drops below a 2.50 SHSU GPA, they shall be considered to have resigned their Office immediately, pending any appeals they might file to challenge their GPA.

H) Student Associate Justice Probationary Status:

- i) In order to be elected to, nominated for, or appointed as a Student Associate Justice, and for the entire duration of the time they serve in Judicial Branch, a Student Associate Justice shall be a student in good standing with the University; and
- ii) If, at any time, a Student Associate Justice is, for any reason, placed on any kind of probation status, they shall be considered to have resigned their Office or Seat immediately, pending the outcome of any appeals or challenges they might pursue.

Article VII – Caucuses

The Caucuses shall be the Primary grouping of Members within the Senate, which include Members from the same Academic College or constituency. There shall be a Caucus to represent every Academic College within the University.

1) Definition:

A Caucus is a grouping of Senators and/or Representatives in the Senate. Caucuses shall exist for:

- i) Each Academic College (at all times);
- ii) Graduate Studies (if there are any Graduate Students).

2) Caucus Membership:

Membership in a Caucus is automatic for all Senators:

- i) All Senators shall be Members of an Academic College Caucus;
- ii) Vacancies in any Academic College Caucuses can be filled with existing

Representatives, as appropriate, if there are any;

- iii) Unless the appropriate Academic College Caucus has a full membership, all Senators must be in the Caucus that represents their Academic Major;
- iv) If the appropriate Academic College Caucus that represents their Academic Major is full, a Member can be in the Caucus that represents the Academic College for their Academic Minor, if that their Academic Minor is in a different Academic College;
- v) At all times, a Member of any Caucus must be a currently enrolled Student in the appropriate Academic College or special constituency that they represent; and
- vi) No Member can belong to more than one (1) Caucus at a time.

3) Caucus Chair:

Each active Caucus shall, at all times, have a Caucus Chair;

- i) Selection of a Caucus Chair is solely the responsibility of each individual Caucus;
- ii) To select a Caucus Chair requires a majority vote of all Members of that Caucus; and
- iii) The Members of a Caucus can remove, and replace their Caucus Chair at any time and for any reason they choose;

4) Caucus Meetings:

- i) Each Caucus must hold no less than one (1) Caucus Meeting a month at a time and place of their choosing;
- ii) Caucus Meetings must be held separately from any regular Senate Meeting; and
- iii) Unless they go into Executive Session, all Caucus Meetings shall have minutes recorded, and sent to the Executive Secretary.

Article VIII – Departments

Departments shall be the Primary grouping of Members for all operations of the Senate. Every Officer and Member of the Legislative Branches must be an active member of a Department.

1) Definition:

A Department is a division of SGA that is tasked to fulfill specific operational duties and responsibilities of SGA.

2) Classification:

For the purposes of parliamentary rules and operations, Departments shall be classified as committees.

3) Branch:

For the purposes of organizational structure, and lines of authority, Departments are part of the Legislative Branch;

4) Meetings:

Departments shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill their functions and to operate effectively. They shall meet no less than three (3) time per month, but no more than two (2) times per week.

5) Minutes:

Unless, and only excepting when, they are in Executive Session, all Committee and Commission Meetings shall have minutes recorded, and sent to the Secretary.

6) Department Directors:

Each Department shall have a Department Director to be in charge of its operations and meetings.

- i) Directors shall be a voting member of the Senate, as provided for in this Constitution;
- ii) Directors shall be appointed by the President, subject to the consent of the Executive Board, and such appointments shall be made as a first order of business of each Session;
- iii) Each Director shall appoint a member of their department to serve as Secretary of their department.

7) Department Members:

Every Officer and Voting Member of the Legislative Branches must be an active member of a Department:

- i) At the Fall Semester, prior to the first Senate Meeting of the Session, each Director will meet with the Executive Board to determine an average number of members each Department will need;
- ii) As vacancies occur over the course of each session, Senators who would like to change their Department assignments can make their preferences known to the President.

8) Departments:

The Departments shall be as follows:

A) External Affairs:

The Department of External Affairs (EA) shall be responsible for representing Students to the City of Huntsville, Walker County, the Texas Legislature, the United States Congress and other outside entities. The President shall appoint a Voting Member to Chair EA.

B) Internal Affairs:

The Department of Internal Affairs (IA) shall be responsible for the day to day operations of SGA.

- i) The Vice President shall Chair IA;
- ii) The Secretary shall be the Secretary of IA; and
- iii) The Members of IA shall be:
 - a) Vice President;
 - b) Secretary;
 - c) Treasurer;
 - d) Chief of Staff
 - e) Attorney General;
 - f) Director of Training;
 - g) All Caucus Chairs; and
 - h) All Department Directors.
- iv) IA Meetings shall not be open to non-Members except as may be necessary to conduct Departmental business.

C) Public Relations:

The Department of Public Relations (PR) shall be responsible for all publicity, promotion, marketing, and communications between SGA and the Student Body.

- i) PR shall be responsible for the design, creation, and/or purchasing of any and all appropriate posters, flyers, promotional items, T-shirts, give-away items, etc.;
- ii) PR shall be responsible for all contact with on and off-campus media;
- iii) PR shall be responsible for the content of any and all SGA websites, webpages, and social media; and
- iv) The President shall appoint the director of (PR).

D) Rules & Regulations:

The Department of Rules & Regulations (R&R) shall be responsible for insuring the effectiveness of all governing documents and Legislation.

- i) The AG shall be the chair of R&R;
- ii) R&R Meetings shall not be open to non-Members except as necessary to conduct Departmental business, and/or as provided for in the Bylaws.

E) Student Affairs

The Department of Student Affairs (SA) shall be responsible for interaction with, and activities in support of the Student Life of the Student Body. The President shall appoint the director of (SA).

F) University Affairs:

The Department of University Affairs (UA) shall be responsible for representing issues of general concern of the Student Body with the university administration. The President shall appoint the director of (UA).

9) Adding Other Departments:

The Senate, with approval of the president, shall have the power and authority to create and define any other such Departments as it shall determine is necessary and/or beneficial to SGA.

Article IX – Committees and Commissions

Other Committees and Commissions have been, or will be created and defined by the President as necessary and/or beneficial to SGA to facilitate its operation and effectiveness as an organization.

1) Definitions:

Committees and Commissions are smaller working groups that exist to focus on more narrow, specialized, and or limited operational functions of SGA. They are not expected to meet except as necessary to fulfill their duties and responsibilities.

i) Committee / Commission Chairs:

Unless specified in this Constitution or in any other governing documents, each Committee and Commission shall be Chaired by an Executive Officer or Voting Senate Member appointed by the President, subject to the approval of the Senate.

2) Committee / Commission Duties and Responsibilities:

The specific authority, powers, responsibilities of each Committee and Commission will be specified in the Bylaws or defined by the President

3) Minutes:

Unless, and only excepting when, they are in Executive Session, all Committee and Commission Meetings shall have minutes recorded, and sent to the Secretary.

4) Standing Committees and Sub-Committees:

Standing Committees are those committees and sub-committees which will exist at all times during every Legislative Session. The Standing Committees are:

5) Legislation & Lobbying Sub-Committee:

The Legislative & Lobbying Sub-Committee (L&L) shall work on identifying areas of interests to the Student Body, as citizens of the United States and/or as resident of Texas and will formulate proposals and legislation that can be presented to any level of civil government in

the United States, either in writing or in person.

- i) L&L shall be a sub-committee of EA;
- ii) The director of External Affairs shall Chair L&L;

6) Other Standing Committees and Sub-Committees:

As additional needs arise, there may be times when it is determined that additional Standing Committees and Sub-Committees will be necessary and/or beneficial to SGA.

- A) Other Standing Committees and Sub-Committees can be created and defined by:
 - i) The President;
 - ii) The Executive Board;
 - iii) The Department of Internal Affairs; and/or
 - iv) The Senate.
- B) Other Standing and Sub-Committees shall be created as changes to the Bylaws, as provided for in Article XII, Section 1 of this Constitution.
- C) Although created through changes to the Bylaws, any and all new Standing and Sub-Committees shall be added to Article IX, Section 4 of this Constitution.

7) Special Committees:

Special Committees are those Committees that are created as needs arise to deal with specific tasks and/or issues or areas of concern to SGA.

- A) Special Committees can be created and defined by:
 - i) The President;
 - ii) The Executive Board;
 - iii) The Department of Internal Affairs; and/or
 - iv) The Senate.
- B) When a Special Committee is created, it shall be clearly laid out what its specific task(s) and/or timeframe is;
- C) When a Special Committee has completed its task and/or reached the end of its time frame, the Officer or body that created it will declare its work done, and dissolve it;
- D) Creating a Special Committee shall require the consent of the Senate;
- E) Dissolving a Special Committee before it has completed its task(s) and/or timeframe shall require the consent of the Senate.

8) Election Commission:

The Commission shall be a non-partisan body that conducts any and all elections, referendums, and other such opportunities for the Student Body, as a whole, to vote on.

- A) The Commission shall be a sub-committee of the Supreme Court;
- B) No Member of the Commission shall be a Member of the Executive and/or Legislative Branches, nor shall they otherwise be a Member of the Judicial Branch;
- C) The Chair of the Commission shall be the highest-level Executive or Legislative Officer who is not running in an election, subject to the consent of the Chief Justice. The order of Officer precedence shall be:
 - i) President;
 - ii) Vice President;
 - iii) Secretary;
 - iv) Attorney General;
 - v) Treasurer; and
 - vi) Director of Training.
- D) The President shall appoint four (4) Students to be Members of the Commission, subject to the approval of the Senate;
- E) Neither the Chair nor any of the Members of the Commission shall be objectionable to the

Chief Justice;

- F)** The Commission Chair and the DoT shall be responsible for any and all training of the Members of the Commission, with the advice and guidance of the Chief Justice and/or the Supreme Court;
- G)** The Members of the Commission shall serve at their own discretion for as long as they chose to hold the Office, unless they are impeached and/or otherwise removed by the Senate, as provided for in the Bylaws, or until they are no longer enrolled as Students; viii) The Senate shall have the right to consent or deny consent to the continued service in Office of any and all Members of the Commission, such consent shall be asked for no later than the third (3rd) Meeting of the Senate in each Fall Semester;
- ix) The authority, duties, powers, and responsibilities of the Commission shall be specified in the Bylaws.

Article X – Meetings and Events

The Senate and all Departments, Caucuses, Committee, Commissions and other bodies of SGA must meet at times and places specified and/or necessary to conduct its business:

1) Open Meetings:

- i) Unless, and except as specifically provided for in this Constitution or in the Bylaws, all meetings of SGA, its Caucuses, Departments, Committees, Commissions and other such entities and/or working groups shall be open to observers from the Student Body, Faculty, Staff, and the general public;
- ii) Unless specifically recognized, called on, or invited by the President to speak, or as otherwise specifically provided for in this Constitution or the Bylaws, observers shall not have speaking privileges except in the Open Forum part of the Meeting.

2) Regular Senate Meetings:

The Senate shall meet during Long Semesters at a regular time and place specified by the Executive Board at the beginning of each Long Semester;

- i) Regular Senate Meetings shall not be scheduled on Mondays or Fridays;
- ii) The day, time, and location of the regularly scheduled Senate Meetings for each Long Semester shall be determined no less that one (1) week prior to the opening of the campus in each Long Semester;
- iii) The Secretary shall inform all Officers and Members of the day, time, and location of the regularly scheduled Senate Meetings for each Long Semester as soon as that information is determined;
- iv) The Senate shall have no less than one (1) Meeting in every week in which normal class days are held at least four (4) days that week;
- v) If the regular day of a scheduled Senate Meeting falls on a holiday, or any other day in which classes are not held, for any reasons, the Senate shall not meet on that day;
- vi) The Quorum needed for business to be conducted at a regularly scheduled Senate Meeting shall be one (1) Presiding Officer and a majority (50% + 1) of all Senators;
- vii) Unless called into Executive Session, Senate Meetings shall be open to observers, spectators; and anyone who would like to speak to the Senate during Open Forums.

3) Special Senate Meetings:

Special Meetings of the Senate can be convened as necessary or beneficial to SGA.

- i) Special Meetings of the Senate (Special Meetings) can be called for by:
 - a) The President;
 - b) Twenty-five percent (25%) of the Members of EC;
 - c) Twenty-five percent (25%) of the Members of IA;
 - d) Twenty-five percent (25%) of the Voting Members of the Senate;
 - e) The Primary Advisor;
 - f) The SHSU Chief Student Affairs Officer; and/or
 - g) The SHSU President.
- ii) Special Meetings shall have a specific and stated reason to be called;
- iii) All Officers and Members of SGA shall be given no less than three (3) class days' advance notice of the date, time, location, and purpose of the Special Meeting;
- iv) The Quorum needed for business to be conducted at a Special Meeting shall be the Officer who called for the meeting, or one (1) Presiding Officer of the Special Meeting was called for by EC, IA, and the Senate, and one-third (33% + 1) of all Senators;
- v) Representatives who attend a Special Meeting shall be included in the number of Members in attendance at that Meeting and for determining a Quorum for that Meeting;
- vi) Representatives who are not in attendance at a regularly scheduled Senate Meeting shall not be included in counting Members in attendance, or in determining Quorum;
- vii) Unless called into Executive Session, roll will be called, and minutes shall be kept and published in the same way they would be for any regularly scheduled Senate Meeting;
- viii) Unless called into Executive Session, observers will be allowed to attend in the same way that they would be allowed to do in any regularly scheduled Senate Meetings as provided for in this Constitution.

4) Executive Sessions:

Special Sessions of the Senate and/or of any Department or Committee can be called for at any time during any meeting of that body;

- i) Calling for an Executive Session requires a two-thirds (66%+1) majority vote of all Voting Members of that body present and voting;
- ii) Executive Sessions are closed to any and all persons except Members and, if applicable, any other person(s) who will be a party to, or speaking about the business of that Executive Session;
- iii) Minutes and other official recordings shall not be made about any Executive Session;
- iv) Any decisions made in Executive Sessions, or business to be conducted based on any Executive Session must be announced and/or conducted in an open and regularly Senate Meeting after the Executive Session is closed.

Article XI – Summer Senate

The Summer Senate is an Executive Board that guides and operates SGA during Summer Sessions, and helps prepare SGA to act and function immediately at the first Meeting of the next Academic Year.

1) Membership:

The Summer Senate shall act as a Committee of the Whole, composed of any and all Members who are able to attend any or all Meetings of the Summer Senate.

2) Meetings:

The Summer Senate will meet at least twice in each summer month (June, July and August), but no more than twice in any single week.

3) Chair:

The Summer Senate shall be Chaired by the highest-level Executive or Legislative Officer who will be available to serve as Chair at any given Meeting. The order of Officer precedence shall be:

- i) President;
- ii) Vice President;
- iii) Secretary;
- iv) Attorney General;
- v) Treasurer; and
- vi) Director of Training.

4) Quorum:

Quorum of the Summer Senate shall be a Chair and any five (5) Voting Members at a Meeting

5) Absences:

Attendance will be taken at all Meetings of the Summer Senate, but no penalties shall be imposed on any Member who misses any Summer Senate Meeting(s).

6) Powers and Responsibilities:

The powers, authority, and responsibilities of the Summer Senate shall include, but are not limited to:

- i) Take whatever actions are necessary to create and/or prepare legislation, proposed GD changes, research, and/or other action items to be presented to the Senate at its first Meeting of the Session;
- ii) Represent, and act on the behalf of SGA in any capacity necessary that arises between Sessions; and
- iii) Create and delegate any necessary power and authority to any such Special Committees it deems necessary. Such Special Committees can establish their own schedule, and frequency of Meetings.

Article XII – Advisors

SGA shall at all times have at least one (1) permanent professional Advisor to guide it, and help it to learn how to maximize its effectiveness as an organization.

1) Primary Advisor:

The Dean of Students and Associate Dean of Students shall serve as the Primary SGA Advisors.

2) Other Advisors:

The Dean of Students shall have the authority to appoint or authorize secondary Advisors as they believe would be necessary or beneficial to SGA.

3) Responsibilities of Advisors:

The Advisor(s) shall be responsible for:

- i) Ensuring that all Executive Officers are trained for their Offices;
- ii) Ensuring that Executive Officers comply with all legal and university policies, and procedures;

- iii) Ensuring that all applicants for any Office or position in SGA is in good academic and disciplinary standing with SHSU; and
- iv) Requesting and collecting necessary Student demographic information when needed for apportionment or other such SGA business.

4) Authority of Advisors:

The Advisor(s) shall, when necessary, have the authority to:

- i) Approve applications for Office or Membership in SGA for those applicants who are qualified for the Office or position applied for;
- ii) Approve or disapprove all purchasing authorizations;
- iii) Authorize temporary alterations to guidelines, and calendars established in any governing documents; and
- iv) Directly remand cases to the Judicial Branch.

5) Replacement of Advisors:

Should it become necessary for a new Primary Advisor to be chosen:

- i) The SHSU Vice President of Student Affairs shall have the power to name that replacement; and
- ii) The President shall have the right to give input to the selection.

Article XII – Other Governing Documents

In addition to this Constitution, SGA can create and define any other governing documents it deems beneficial and/or necessary to its ability to effectively function, and/or to serve the needs of the Student Body. Every other governing documents is subordinate to this Constitution. Nothing contained in any other governing documents change, overrule, or override any part of this Constitution. Other such governing documents shall include, but not be limited to:

1) Bylaws:

Bylaws are SGA's Rules about itself that are of such importance that changing them shall not be possible except as provided for in **Article XII, Section 1** of this Constitution.

A) Suspension or Waiver of Bylaws:

Bylaws cannot be suspended or waived.

B) Bylaws Content:

The Bylaws will be used to provide more detailed items regarding the function and operation of SGA, including but not limited to:

- i) Communication / cooperation with other on-and off-campus entities;
- ii) Impeachment;
- iii) Legislative process;
- iv) Meeting Agendas;
- v) Officer Duties;
- vi) Operative Parliamentary Reference / Authority; and
- vii) Special Events and Activities; etc.

C) Changes to Bylaws:

Any and all voting to make any changes to the Bylaws shall only be permitted at a regularly scheduled Meeting of the Senate.

D) Advance Notice:

Advance notice shall be given of any and all proposed changes to the Bylaws.

- i) Such notice shall be given in writing, and by announcement no less than at the regular Senate Meeting prior to the regular Senate Meeting at which the voting shall take place;
- ii) Advance written notice of proposed changes to the Bylaws shall also be required to be given to *The Houstonian* and to any and all other appropriate Student news, and information sources, including SGA and SHSU websites, webpages, and social media;
- iii) Advance written notice of proposed changes to the Bylaws shall also be required to be given to the SHSU President, the SHSU Chief Student Affairs Officer, the Dean of Students, and any and all other SGA advisors; and
- iv) Special Meetings cannot be used to give advance notice of proposed changes to the Bylaws.

E) Voting to Change the Bylaws:

Changing the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of all Members present and voting at the Meeting at which the voting takes place.

F) Approval of Bylaw Changes:

To become effective, any changes to the Bylaws approved by the Senate must also be:

- i) Reviewed by the Dean of Students;
- ii) Reviewed by the SHSU Chief Student Affairs Officer; and
- iii) Approved by the SHSU President.

G) Other Bylaw Approval:

No approval of any Bylaw change is needed from the Student Body.

H) Bylaw Changes Become Effective:

Upon Approval of the changes by the SHSU President and Chief Student Affairs Officer, the changes to the Bylaws will become effective immediately.

2) Election Code:

The Election Code (Code) shall be the Primary GD to establish the rules, guidelines, and procedures for all Elections and Referendums which require voting by the Student Body.

A) Completeness of the Election Code:

Any and all Elections and/or Referendums which require voting by the Student Body shall be described and provided for in the Code.

B) Authority of the Election Code:

Any and all Elections and/or Referendums that require voting by the Student Body must be conducted in compliance with the Code.

C) Judicial Authority of the Election Code:

Any and all challenges to the conduct or results of any Election or Referendum which required voting by the Students, or that are heard by the Commission and/or the Judicial Branch shall be ruled on in compliance with the Code.

D) Changes to the Election Code:

- i) The Commission shall have the right to suggest or request in writing any such specific changes to the Code that its Members believe would improve the election process, including the reasons they believe such changes would be beneficial or necessary;
- ii) Changes to the Code shall be made through Bills that are submitted, reviewed, and approved through the Legislative Process requiring a simple majority approval of the Senate to pass;
- iii) Changes to the Code that are not made during a “*campaign window*”, as defined in the Code, shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Senate;
- iv) Changes to the Code that are made during a campaign window shall not take effect until the following long semester.

3) Standing Rules:

Standing Rules (Rules) are adopted rules that establish SGA policy and/or detail any specific process, rule, or procedure that is unique to SGA and differentiating from standard parliamentary practice(s) as provided for in the Primary Parliamentary Authority or Reference.

- i) Rules shall be used to modify, change, or exempt the Parliamentary reference source used by SGA from being applied to the specific policy, processes, or procedures;
- ii) Rules can be adopted or changed with approval of a simple majority vote by the Senate of all Members present and voting;
- iii) Creating or changing any and/or all Rules can be made without any advance notice, or multiple readings;
- iv) Specific Rules can be waived, with approval of a simple majority vote of all Members present and voting, for specific reasons or cases in any single Meeting; and
- v) Suspending the Rules for specific instances or for specific reasons at any particular Meeting shall not imply that those Rules are invalidated or automatically waived for any other times, reasons, or Meetings.

Article XIV – Elections and Referendums

1) **Referendums:**

Referendums are special elections of the Student Body held specifically to allow the Student Body to vote on any and all issues which require their consent, including, but not limited to:

- Constitutional Amendments;
- Constitutional ratifications; and
- Polling of the Student Body on issues of interest; and
- Proposed increases in student fees that require student approval by rule.

A) **Authorized Referendum Times:**

Referendums can, but do not have to be conducted at the following times:

- i) The last week in September;
- ii) Fall (Homecoming) Elections;
- iii) The last full week of classes before Fall Semester Final Exams begin;
- iv) The last week in January;
- v) Spring Elections;
- vi) The last full week of classes before Spring Semester Final Exams begin; and
- vii) Referendums cannot be held during any Summer Session.

B) **Referendum Notifications:**

If a Referendum is to be held, no less than a fourteen (14) day notice, including the date(s), issues, and content of such referendums must be given to or posted in/on:

- i) *The Houstonian*;
- ii) Any and all SGA websites, webpages, and social media;
- iii) *today@sam*;
- iv) The Dean of Students; and
- v) Any and all other Advisors.

Article XV – Amendments

The constitution can be amended per the following provisions:

1) **Amendments from the Senate:**

Any Senator or Representative in good standing in the Senate can propose one or more Amendments to this Constitution at any time.

A) **Amendment Sponsorship:**

Such Amendments must be sponsored or co-sponsored by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of all Voting Members of the Senate.

B) **Presentation of Proposed Amendments:**

Proposed Amendments with the necessary sponsorship must be presented to either the President, or to the AG.

C) **Legislative Process for Proposed Amendments:**

Once presented, proposed Amendments will immediately proceed to the R&R department to follow the Legislative Process.

- i) Proposed Amendments will automatically be placed first on any and all relevant agendas, taking precedence over any other new or old business during the course of the Legislative Process;
- ii) The primary author of any proposed Amendment will be granted full debate status in any Department or Committee which is handling their proposed Amendments for the portions

- of any and all Meetings that are processing or debating their proposed Amendment;
- iii) Once the proposed Amendment(s) have gone through the Legislative Process, IA shall put it / them on the Agenda for the next Senate Meeting. Any proposed Amendment(s) shall be placed first on the list of New Business items;
- iv) The proposed Amendment(s) shall be subject to full debate in the Senate;
- v) Proposed Amendments require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote to pass the Senate;
- vi) Once approved by the Senate, the proposed Amendment(s) shall be presented to the Student Body for their approval through the Referendum process, as provided for in **Article XV, Section 3** of this Constitution; and
- vii) To be approved by the Student Body, proposed Amendments shall require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of all Students voting in the Referendum.

2) Amendments from the Student Body:

Any and all Students shall have the right and power to propose Amendments to this Constitution.

A) Petition to the Senate:

Any Amendment(s) proposed by the Student Body must be submitted in writing with a supporting petition that has been signed by a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the Student Body.

B) Presentation of Proposed Amendments:

Proposed Amendments supported by the necessary number of Student Body signatures, sponsorship must be presented to either the President, or to the AG.

C) Legislative Process for Proposed Amendments:

Once properly presented, proposed Amendments will immediately proceed to R&R to follow the Legislative Process.

- i) Proposed Amendments will automatically be placed first on any and all relevant agendas, taking precedence over any other new or old business during the course of the Legislative Process;
- ii) The primary author of any proposed Amendment will be granted full debate status in any Department or Committee which is handling their proposed Amendments for the portions of any and all Meetings that are processing or debating their proposed Amendment;
- iii) Once the proposed Amendment(s) have gone through the Legislative Process, IA shall put it / them on the Agenda for the next Senate Meeting;
- iv) The proposed Amendment(s) shall be subject to full debate in the Senate;
- v) Proposed Amendments shall require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote to pass the Senate;
- vi) Once approved by the Senate, the proposed Amendment(s) shall be presented to the Student Body for their approval through the Referendum process, as provided for in **Article XV, Section 3** of this Constitution; and
- vii) To be approved by the Student Body, proposed Amendments shall require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of all Students voting in the Referendum.

3) Amendment Approval by SHSU Vice President of Student Affairs:

Any and all proposed Amendments that have been approved by the Student Body shall be sent to the SHSU Vice President of Student Affairs for their approval, modification, or rejection, as provided for in the System rules and guidelines.

4) When Amendments Become Operative:

Once any proposed Amendment has been approved by the SHSU Vice President of Student

Affairs, it shall immediately become operative, and shall immediately be incorporated into this Constitution.

5) Corrections to Governing Documents:

At any time, and without any advance notice, R&R shall have the power and authority to make any and all changes necessary in any GD to correct errors in:

- Capitalization;
- Definitions (including adding more, or improving existing definitions);
- Formatting;
- Grammar;
- Language;
- Numbering;
- Punctuation;
- Spelling;
- Titles; and/or
- Any other minor changes or corrections, as long as they do not change the meanings or intentions of any parts of the GD to which they are made.

A) Senate Notification of All Changes:

The Senate shall be notified in writing of any and all such changes and/or corrections at the first regular Meeting after the changes are made.

B) Senate Approval of Changes:

The Senate shall have the right of consent to any and all such changes and/or corrections.

Article XVI – Ratification

The ratification process for this Constitution as the Primary Governing Document of SGA shall be:

1) Ratification:

- i) Approval by a simple majority vote of all Members of R&R present and voting at the Meeting at which the vote is taken;
- ii) Acceptance as an Agenda Item by the Department of Internal Affairs for the Senate;
- iii) Approval by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of all Members of the Senate present and voting at the Meeting at which the vote is taken; and
- iv) Approval by a simple majority vote of all Students voting in the Constitutional Referendum in which it is presented to the Student Body;

2) Signatures:

Upon the final ratification of this Constitution by the Student Body, it must be presented to each of the following for their consent and signature:

A) Reviewed by SGA President:

David Eller

Date:

B) Reviewed by SHSU Dean of Students:

John Yarabeck

Date:

C) Reviewed by SHSU Vice President of Student Affairs:

Frank Parker

Date:

D) Approved by SHSU President

Dana G. Hoyt

Date:

3) This Constitution Invalidates All Other Constitutions:

When ratified and approved, as specified in Article XVI of this Constitution, any and all other Student Government Constitutions at SHSU, past and present, shall immediately be rendered null and void.

***Article XVII –
History***

This Constitution, and every other GD shall include the history of the Document. Such history shall include relevant dates, and descriptions of actions taken.

- 1) This Constitution was first presented to SGA on:.....March 28, 2017
- 2) This Constitution was ratified by SGA on:..... April 04, 2017
- 3) This Constitution was ratified by the Student Body on:.....April 14, 2017
- 4) This Constitution was approved by the SHSU President on:.....January 11, 2019