

# **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS**

## **PREAMBLE**

As the student body of Mount Wachusett Community College, hereinafter, MWCC, we recognize the commitment to quality education for all students. While a cooperative venture concerning all sectors of the college and society is important, the growth of the individual student depends on the participation of that student in the educational process.

These By-Laws should, therefore, be in the spirit of any organization within this college to be of service to the students, to maximize the student's opportunities for meaningful involvement in all activities, and to encourage the free investigation and expression of all thought.

To that end, these By-Laws shall guide our efforts. It is our hope that through service to the college and the community our own lives might be enriched as well as the lives of those around us.

## **ARTICLE I-NAME**

This organization shall be known as the MWCC Student Government Association, hereinafter, SGA. SGA will be the official initials of this body.

## **ARTICLE II-MISSION STATEMENT**

We, the SGA, intend for this organization to act responsibly and beneficially towards all issues pertaining to the MWCC student body. As representatives of this student body, we will:

- represent the student body to the faculty, staff and administration;
- increase and promote communication between students, faculty, staff, administration and the SGA;
- establish and protect the student needs and rights; and,
- foster a positive campus environment that encourages student involvement in all events, activities and programs.

## **ARTICLE III-THE COMPOSITION OF THE SGA**

### **Section 1: Members**

The SGA shall consist of no more than eighteen (18) members, who will serve one-year terms concluding at Commencement. No student may serve on the SGA for more than seven semesters total. The division of powers will be as follows:

- Student Trustee elected by his/her peers in April/May of each year to serve for a one-year term and registered for a minimum of 12 credits and has completed at least one semester at MWCC
- (6) Sophomore representatives with 31 or more credit hours earned/in progress at the time of the election
- (6) Freshmen representatives with 0-30 credit hours earned/in process at the time of the election
- (4) At large representatives with either freshmen or sophomore status
- Evening student representative with either freshmen or sophomore status.

### **Section 2: SGA Executive Council Composition and Function**

The SGA Executive Council will consist of five members: the four elected officers and the Student Trustee. The four officers will consist of the president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. The council will be responsible for:

- Setting goals to accomplish for the given term
- Mediating concerns of the SGA
- Acting on behalf of entire SGA in an emergency
- Making recommendations to the SGA

### **Section 3: Facilitators**

The SGA will have four facilitators as follows:

- Student Government Adviser to exist as the link between the SGA and the faculty and administration
- Parliamentarian to assist the SGA in following and learning appropriate procedures based on Robert's Rules of Order
- Vice president of student services or designee to guide and assist students in all areas related to student life on campus
- Student Life representative to assist in the administration of finances and procedures.

## **ARTICLE IV-SGA REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES/REQUIREMENTS**

### **Section 1: Code of Ethics**

As members of the MWCC SGA, representatives will exhibit social skills appropriate to professional interactions. All representatives must comply with the MWCC academic and non-academic policies. Any violations of this article will be grounds for review and dismissal from the SGA.

### **Section 2: Academic Requirements**

- Members must maintain a minimum of 2.0 GPA
- Members are expected to attend classes
- Members must be registered for a minimum of six credits with at least three credits taken between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at any MWCC campus
- Evening student representatives must be registered for a minimum of six credits after 4:00 p.m. which can be taken at any of the MWCC campuses

### **Section 3: Responsibilities**

- Members must belong to one standing committee and attend all SGA meetings
- Members shall be directly responsible to the needs of the student body and shall regularly consult with the students on all matters
- Members are expected to participate in all SGA sponsored events
- Members must be available to work one hour shifts at the SGA booth
- Members must be available to serve on ad hoc committees as appointed by the SGA president
- Members must be available to attend meetings between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Gardner campus during scheduled academic calendar days as long as the meetings do not conflict with class commitments

## **ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF SGA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### **Section 1: President**

- Preside over all meetings of the SGA
- Plan the agenda for every meeting and make it available in representative's mailboxes one school day prior to the meeting
- Be responsible for SGA ad hoc committee appointments
- Have the power to excuse SGA meeting absences with written reason in advance of the meeting
- Serve as the SGA representative to the president and the president's Executive Council
- Keep record of all SGA absences

### **Section 2: Vice-President**

- Assume the duties of the president in his/her absence
- Assist the president in the coordination and running of all SGA meetings
- Serve as chairperson of the SGA Constitution Committee

### **Section 3: Treasurer**

- Render a report at SGA meetings when called upon to do so
- Assume the duties of presiding over the SGA meetings in the absence of both the president and vice-president
- Serve as chairperson of the SGA Ways and Means Committee
- Record minutes in the absence of the Secretary

### **Section 4: Secretary**

- Keep a record of attendance and proceedings of each meeting
- Prepare minutes of the SGA meetings and file them in representatives' mailboxes within one week following the meeting.
- Be responsible for correspondences and notices of the SGA
- Deposit a copy of each set of minutes and other correspondence with the student life office within one week following the meeting.
- Post all minutes for the student body review

### **Section 5: Student Trustee**

- Complies with all MWCC Board of Trustee By-Laws
- Attend all Trustee meetings and functions
- Render a report of all items that relate to the student body
- Member of the Ways and Means Committee

### **Section 6: Election of Officers**

All officers will be elected in late April or early May by the SGA body for the following term. Nomination procedures must comply with Robert's Rules of Order. The president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary will be elected by a majority vote of the SGA representatives. All SGA officer positions may be held by any seated SGA representative.

### **Section 7: Resignations from Office**

- Resignations must be submitted in writing to the president
- The president must submit his/her written resignation to the vice-president
- All resignations will be announced promptly to the SGA body.
- Open officer seat/s shall be filled at the meeting following the announcement of the resignation

### **Section 8: Resignation from SGA**

- Resignations must be submitted in writing to the president
- Seats will be filled according to Article IX Section 8
- All resignations will be announced to the SGA body

## **ARTICLE VI-SGA COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1: Ways And Means Committee**

The committee will consist of the treasurer as the chairperson and three appointees. They will be responsible for all fiscal matters, including but not limited to the disbursement of funds. All fiscal matters are required to come before the Ways and Means Committee for review and recommendation to the SGA body.

### **Section 2: Constitution Committee**

The committee will consist of the vice-president, as the chairperson, and a minimum of three appointees. The committee will be responsible for all elections. Furthermore, the committee will be responsible for reviewing the SGA By-Laws and making recommendations of changes to the SGA body for approval. All club By-Law changes are required to come before the Constitution Committee for review and recommendation to the SGA body for final approval.

### **Section 3: Ad Hoc Committees**

Ad hoc committees will be formed at the discretion of the SGA board and the chairperson will be appointed by the president of the SGA as necessary.

## **ARTICLE VII-MEETINGS**

### **Section 1: Regular Meetings**

Regular meetings of the SGA shall be held no less than twice a month at an agreed upon time and place on the MWCC Gardner campus. The time and dates of these meetings will be posted on the SGA announcement board. All meetings are open to the general student body unless an executive session is called according to procedures found in Robert's Rules of Order.

### **Section 2: Parliamentary Law**

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the final authority on all questions of procedure and parliamentary law not covered by these By-Laws.

### **Section 3: Official Meetings**

A quorum (one more than half of the current members) of the SGA must be in attendance for an official meeting to be held.

### **Section 4: Meeting**

Each committee will meet at least once per month while classes are in session. The committees' meeting schedules will be established by the committee chairperson at the second SGA meeting of each semester.

## **ARTICLE VIII-REMOVAL FROM SEAT/OFFICE**

### **Section 1: Removal**

If a representative is found not to comply with all requirements, responsibilities, duties and/or ethics found within these By-Laws, a two-thirds vote of the SGA may be used to remove said party.

### **Section 2: Absences**

- Two (2) absences in a semester shall warrant notification in writing by the SGA president and announcement of the situation will be made to the SGA body and recorded in the minutes
- A third absence shall constitute immediate dismissal from the SGA

## **ARTICLE IX-ELECTION PROCESS**

### **Section 1: Position Elections**

All SGA representative position elections shall be held by secret ballot and supervised by the Constitution Committee who will report to a representative from the student services office. Student elections will be in April for the following positions: three freshmen, six sophomores, one Student Trustee, two at-large, and one evening position. An election will take place in September for the remaining positions.

### **Section 2: Candidate Requirements**

A candidate must comply with all requirements and responsibilities contained within these By-Laws. Additionally, a candidate must agree in writing to uphold these By-Laws and all they entail. Once elected onto the SGA, failure of the newly elected member to attend at least one of the first two meetings after being voted in will result in his/her removal from the SGA.

### **Section 3: Nomination Process**

Nomination papers will be available three weeks before elections and must be signed out of the student life office and returned one week before the election with twenty-five valid student signatures in order for the candidate's name to appear on the ballot.

### **Section 4: Ballot Writing**

The Constitution Committee shall prepare the ballot with candidate's names appearing on the ballot in alphabetical order. Incumbent candidates will be so designated.

### **Section 5: Ballot Tallying**

- Each ballot cast shall be filled out by an MWCC student registered for one or more classes for the current semester.
- An entire ballot will be disqualified if the student voter has voted for more than the number of seats available for any position
- Any selected candidate, who is also a write-in candidate for the same position, on the same ballot will be counted only once
- The names of non-students and students whose names appear more than once on a ballot (write in or checked) in areas for different positions, shall disqualify the entire ballot
- Any defacement of a ballot will disqualify the entire ballot
- All disqualified ballots will be tallied as blank ballots cast

### **Section 6: Number of Vote Requirements**

One vote is all that is required for a ballot candidate to fill the position of SGA Representative. Write-in votes will also be accepted. Twenty-five votes will be required for a write-in candidate to be voted into office. The largest number of votes will decide who receives any position. A tie for any position will be broken by calling an emergency SGA meeting within a week of the election to hold a majority vote to break the tie. The SGA president will only vote in case of a tie occurs in the SGA majority vote.

### **Section 7: Special Elections**

A special election or other means may be held at the discretion of the existing SGA to present the student body any proposed changes to the SGA's existing By-Laws.

### **Section 8: Vacancies**

Replacements for vacant seats shall be sought first from the list of candidates from the fall/spring election in order of most votes received. After this list is exhausted, replacements shall then be required to attend and participate as a nonvoting member in two consecutive SGA meetings; after which the SGA will vote on whether or not to make the candidate a SGA Representative. A majority vote of the representatives present is required. A special election may be held to fill vacancies upon a majority vote of the SGA.

## **ARTICLE X-STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Section 1: New Club/Organization**

The following steps are to be followed to form a new club or organization on the MWCC campus:

- The group must announce its intention to form a new club to the student life office or to a member of the SGA
- The group must hold a preliminary meeting and establish a tentative organization
- The group must submit to the SGA a petition letter with the following information:
  1. The name of the organization
  2. The purpose of the organization
  3. The benefits of the organization to the student body
  4. The name of the faculty adviser
  5. Twenty-five signatures of registered MWCC students
- The group must draft a Constitution or By-Laws and ratify this document with a vote of the majority of its members
- The group must submit its Constitution or set of By-Laws to the SGA for review by the Constitution Committee and ratification by the SGA after a recommendation for acceptance has been made by the Constitution Committee

### **Section 2: Funds for Club Activities**

All organizations requesting student funds for the ensuing academic year shall submit a proposed annual budget request to the SGA's Ways and Means Committee no later than October 15 of each year. Clubs or organizations seeking funding beyond this date may submit their request to the Ways and Means Committee for review after the committee has concluded its annual allocations in October of each year. All funds allocated to clubs and organizations by the Ways and Means Committee which are not expended at the end of the academic year (encumbered by June 1), will be reverted to the SGA's contingency account. Any income that a club has earned will remain in their club account. All budget requests should include a record of both the previous year expenditures and the earned income balance for that year. Failure to comply with budget regulations will be grounds for dissolving an organization's funding. Regulations regarding the use of student funds are outlined in the MWCC Student Club and Organization Handbook distributed through the student life office.

## **ARTICLE XI-FUNDS**

### **Section 1: Management**

The SGA shall work with the student life office in the management of the student activities accounts, which shall hold all moneys allocated from the college fee paid by students on a semester basis.

### **Section 2: Expending Funds**

Funds in the student activities account shall be expended according to the following apportionment:

- \$400 Allocated annually in the fall semester to iPublications prior to any other allocations.
- 69.5% - College-wide services shall be made available upon request and shall be administered by the student life office and advised by the Ways and Means Committee.
  - 17% - Year-end activities (i.e. Awards Ceremony/Dinner, Spring Fling, etc.)
  - 16% - Orientation
  - 23% - Programming
  - 8% - Healthcare center
  - 4.5% - Student activities office
  - 1% - Student Government Association

- 23% - Clubs and organizations shall be available, upon request, for the budgetary requirements of general activities and curricular clubs of interest to student groups
- 3.5% - Contingency
- 4% - Student training and conferences shall be used to fund all SGA training, including leadership training workshops.

### **Section 3: Appropriations**

All appropriations for funds must be referred to the Ways and Means Committee for a recommendation. The SGA must approve all allocations by a majority vote.

### **Section 4: Allocations**

No student funds may be allocated to any club, committee, or group unless the following conditions are met:

- The members of said club, committee, or group must be students, unless the group expresses an interest in having faculty/staff as members. In this circumstance the allocation would be allowed on the condition that the faculty/staff member pays his/her own expenses for club activities. Club and organization advisers are exempt from paying their expenses as they are required to attend all meetings and events.
- Whenever programs are presented to the general public and admission is charged, said programs shall be offered to the student body, faculty and administration at a cost of 25% less than the cost to the general public.

### **Section 5: Allotments**

The allotment to a club or organization, made on an annual basis, shall be allotted half each semester. The second semester allotment is contingent upon the club earning an amount totaling 15% of their total allotment in the first semester and review by the Ways and Means Committee on the club's progress in January of each academic year. The club or organization must also earn 15% of the total allotment in the second semester to maintain good standing. The total percentage to be earned on an annual basis is 30% of the club or organization allotment.

### **Section 6: Events**

Anytime that the general public shall be admitted to an event, prior approval must be obtained from the Vice President of Student Services & Enrollment Management and the Executive Vice President.

### **Section 7: Donations**

No allocated student funds may be expended by student clubs or the SGA for any political, economic, social, or religious purposes external to the college. All expenditures are subject to approval by the president of the college or designee.

### **Section 8: Debt**

No person shall incur any debt in the name of the student body without first securing the approval of the SGA. Anyone disregarding this By-Law shall be held responsible for the amount of the debt incurred.

### **Section 9: Signatures**

By the law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the president of the college is responsible for association funds. The signature of the president or designee will be required for all expenditures along with the signature of the SGA treasurer or member of the SGA Ways and Means Committee.

### **Section 10: Inactive Clubs/Organizations**

An inactive club or organization, for purposes of this article, shall be defined as a club that performs no services or activities. After a club has been inactive for three consecutive semesters, a notice will be sent to the last known adviser, alerting her/him to the fact that after four consecutive semesters of inactivity the club's earned income will be reallocated. Reallocation of the earned funds will take place at the end of the fourth consecutive semester of inactivity prior to the end of the fiscal year. Earned monies from said club will then be transferred to the contingency account.

### **Section 11: Reallocation of Funds**

Funds in the Clubs and Organizations line item that have not been allocated to clubs and organizations by March 1 may be transferred to the programming account at the discretion of the Student Government Association.

## **ARTICLE XII-AMENDMENTS**

The By-Laws of the SGA may be amended by the following requirements:

- Any amendment must be approved by a two-third (2/3) vote of the seated SGA
- SGA approved amendments must be posted on the SGA announcement board at least two weeks prior to any election, announcing to the student body the proposed changes to the By-Laws
- At the election, the change or amendment is voted on and must be approved by the majority of the students voting to be adopted.

## **ARTICLE XIII: ADOPTION**

All acts of the SGA made under previous constitutions or By-Laws shall remain in effect unless specifically rescinded by the SGA.

*Approved by the SGA and the MWCC student body on April 6, 2011.*