Constitution of the Student Government Association of Thomas More University

Preamble

The students of Thomas More University, in order to form a proper organization to represent their interests and those of the University, do hereby establish this Student Government Association. This SGA shall represent and serve the Student Body, act as a channel between the student body and the faculty, school administration, and Board of Trustees, protect the rights of students, and promote the common good at Thomas More University. The Diocese of Covington, the Board of Trustees, and the University Administration shall recognize this SGA as the sole and official student government.

Section I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Student Government Association of Thomas More University, or simply the Student Government Association, abbreviated as SGA.

Section II. Purpose

The purpose of this SGA is: to represent and serve the students of the University; act as a channel between the student body and the faculty, school administration, and Board of Trustees; protect and promote the rights of students; foster a safe, fun, and intellectual environment on campus, and advance the common good at Thomas More University. Any undergraduate, graduate, professional, and post-doctoral students enrolled at the University is hereby represented by the SGA.

Section III. Supremacy of the Constitution

This Constitution is the governing document of the SGA and thus has supremacy over all other documents and legislation concerning the organization. Any action, legislation, or decision which contradicts or runs contrary to this Constitution shall be considered null and void.

Article I. Membership

Section I. Composition

A. The SGA shall be constituted by the following groups:
    a. The Executive Board
    b. Student Body Representatives
    c. The Student Activities Board
B. The following positions make up the Executive Board
    a. The President
    b. The Executive Vice-president
    c. The Vice-president of Finance
    d. The Vice-president of Records and Public Relations
    e. The Vice-president of Programming
    f. The Vice-president of Diversity and Inclusion

Section II. Term Length

A. All SGA members shall have a term of one academic year.
B. Terms begin upon being sworn in, and end after the members-elect are sworn in.

Article II. The Executive Board

Section I. Powers and Duties of the Whole Executive Board

A. The Executive Board shall:
    a. Serve as the central authority of the student government
    b. Pass extraordinary legislation during times of emergency or short notice
    c. Call and lead General Assembly Meetings
    d. Have the power to form committees when deemed necessary
    e. Oversee the day-to-day functions of SGA
    f. Plan and carry out elections.
    g. Hold regular Executive Board meetings
    h. Always abide by the Saints Community Standards and oath of office
    i. Have full voting privileges on all matters
    j. Create, plan, and manage SGA programs and events
    k. Oversee all financial matters of the SGA, determine club budgets, and manage SGA expenditures

Section II. The Duties of each Board Member

A. The President:
    a. Shall represent the SGA and act on its behalf to the faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees
    b. Serve as the Chief Executive of the Executive Board
    c. Have the power to veto legislation, except those involving impeachment and constitutional amendments
    d. Shall have the power to appoint students to fill any support staff roles deemed necessary by the President or E-board
    e. Have the power to issue executive orders (within the limits of the Constitution).
    f. Call and preside over E-board meetings or appoint another to do so
    g. Call and preside over General Assemblies and create their agenda
    h. Serve on the Board of Trustees and Board of Trustees level Committees
    i. Create and dissolve temporary committees and appoint members to them
B. The Vice-president
    a. Shall serve in place of the President in the event of an impeachment or absence of the President
    b. Shall assist the President in the administration of the SGA
    c. Shall coordinate and oversee all mandatory club service
    d. Shall enforce attendance requirements
    e. Shall preside over General Assemblies at the request of the President

   f. Shall conduct all impeachment proceedings except if the Vice-president is being impeached
   g. Shall be the primary liaison between SGA and clubs

C. The Vice-president of Finance
   a. Shall be responsible for the accounting of all monies, funds, and assets of the SGA
   b. Shall prepare regular financial reports for the E-board
   c. Shall maintain the files and records of all monthly budget reports of the SGA general account as presented by the Business Office
   d. Shall maintain the financial records submitted by clubs and other organizations under the authority of the SGA
   e. Keep clubs and their advisors informed on their finances and ensure they understand their finances and financial responsibilities

D. The Vice-president of Records and Public Relations
   a. Shall be responsible for the taking, publishing, and record keeping of the minutes of all SGA meetings and shall present a copy of such minutes as well as the meeting agenda to all present
   b. Shall be responsible for the roll call at all meetings and the noting and recording of meeting attendance. Any attendance violations shall be reported to the Vice-president
   c. Shall publicize meeting dates and locations and aid in other official SGA correspondence
   d. Shall responsibly and efficiently oversee all the files and records of the SGA.
   e. Shall coordinate with University publications and the administration to publicize important SGA information
   f. Shall oversee marketing material and event publicity in collaboration with the Vice-president of Programming
   g. Shall serve as the primary manager of the social media operations of SGA.

E. The Vice-president of Programming
   a. Shall work towards the development and management of new programming ideas for the SGA and broader community at Thomas More University
   b. Shall serve as the official liaison between the Student Activities Board and the SGA
   c. Shall plan and serve as the primary manager of the annual Winter Wonderland
   d. Shall plan and serve as the primary manager of the annual STAR Banquet
   e. Shall aid clubs in coordinating their service events if necessary
   f. Shall work with the Vice-president of Records and Public Relationsto create event publicity and marketing materials

F. The Vice-president of Diversity and Inclusion
   a. Shall work closely with the Dean, Student Diversity, Engagement, & Success to foster an environment that welcomes, celebrates, and promotes respect for all.
   b. Shall have a thorough knowledge of the Thomas More University Commitment to Diversity and uphold it
   c. Shall ensure that the SGA promotes Diversity and Inclusion through events, legislation, campaigns, outreach, and any other appropriate means

d. Shall work closely with any clubs that promote Diversity and Inclusion to help them thrive and carry out their events and functions
e. Shall serve as the chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee
f. Shall publish reports to the SGA on matters of Diversity and Inclusion on campus. These reports may be of positive or negative issues and may also include recommendations of how to act on such matters if deemed necessary by the Vice-president of Diversity and Inclusion

Section III. Attendance Requirements of E-board Members

A. E-board members are required to attend every meeting and event unless prevented from doing so. If they are unable to attend, they must provide notice.
B. If a lack of attendance becomes a problem, the E-board should reach out to that member.

Article III. Student Body Representatives and Support Staff

Section I. Powers and Duties of Student Body Representatives

A. Student Body Representatives:
    a. May attend all General Assemblies
    b. Shall vote on appropriate legislation and proposals at any General Assembly
    c. May be appointed to serve either as voting or non-voting members of committees
    d. May be appointed as support staff to SGA and the E-board
    e. Shall vote on Constitutional Amendments and new proposed Constitutions
    f. Shall vote on impeachments
    g. May petition the E-board
    h. May propose legislation
    i. Must be on at least one committee unless they choose to opt out

Section II. Attendance Requirements of Student Body Representatives

A. Student Body Representatives must attend at least 75% of General Assembly meetings throughout the first semester in order to retain their status as a representative.
B. Failure to attend at least 75% of General Assembly meetings in the first semester of their term shall result in an automatic termination unless the student can provide good reason for why they were unable to attend at least 75% of General Assembly meetings.
C. Examples of good reasons include doctors appointments, class conflicts, and emergency situations.
D. If, in the second semester, a representative has problems with attending meetings, the Eboard has the right to expel that member through a unanimous vote if it can show definitively that the representative has failed consistently to attend meetings and is having a detrimental effect on SGA. If the expulsion is felt to be unwarranted by SGA as a whole, a Representative may object, in which case the formal impeachment process outlined in Article VIII will be put into motion.

Section III. Support Staff

A. When deemed necessary by either the President or E-board, support staff positions may be created and filled. These positions may include, but are not limited to:
    a. Chaplain
    b. Assistant Secretary
    c. Sergeant at Arms
    d. Assistant of Marketing
    e. Photographer
B. Support staff may be appointed and dismissed at the will of the President and E-board.
C. Support staff positions may be filled by either Student Body Representatives or any other non-Executive Board student who is served by SGA or eligible to run for election.

Article IV. Student Activities Board

The Student Activities Board (SAB) is a mostly independent branch of Student Government. They provide programming for the entire community of Thomas More University. They shall be governed by their own Constitution. They have the power to amend their Constitution as necessary, but must seek approval if they are replacing it entirely. The President of SAB or an appointed representative shall report to SGA on SAB activities on a monthly basis, detailing the events and expenditures of SAB.

Article V. Committees

Section I. Standing Committees

A. Academic Affairs Committee
    a. The Academic Affairs Committee conducts business relating to the academic interests and concerns of all students represented by SGA.
    b. Serves as the liaison between SGA and the Academic Affairs departments of the University Administration.
    c. The Academic Affairs Committee Chair is appointed by the President.
    d. The Academic Affairs Committee shall be made up by the E-board and up to four (4) Student Body Representatives appointed by the President.
B. Buildings and Grounds Committee
    a. The Buildings and Grounds Committee seeks to obtain and advocate for student opinions regarding the physical campus itself, whether that be the lawns, the residence halls, classrooms, the dining hall, lounge areas, etc.
    b. The Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair shall be appointed by the President.
    c. The Buildings and Grounds Committee shall be made up by the E-board and up to four (4) Student Body Representatives appointed by the President.
C. Philanthropy Committee
    a. The Philanthropy Committee shall pursue ways to increase charitable giving among students, faculty, staff, and alumni.
    b. The Philanthropy Committee shall oversee charitable fundraising events organized by SGA.

c. The Philanthropy Committee Chair shall be appointed by the President.
d. The Philanthropy Committee shall be made up by the E-board and up to four (4) Student Body Representatives appointed by the President.

D. Diversity and Inclusion Committee
   a. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall pursue ways to increase diversity and inclusion on campus.
   b. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall especially represent minority populations on campus and their interests.
   c. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall coordinate with clubs which deal with diversity and inclusion.
   d. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall be Chaired by the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator.
   e. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall be made up of the E-board, up to four (4) Student Body Representatives appointed by the President. Presidents and officers of clubs deemed as dealing with the issue by the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator shall have the right to attend committee meetings as participating, non-voting members.

E. The Election Commission
   a. The Election Commission shall be responsible for the promotion of the annual E-board election, collecting of candidates, creation of ballots, distribution of ballots, and setting the time and mode of elections.
   b. The Election Commission shall determine the time and mode of the election no later than April 1st. It must have an election plan ready by this time.
   c. The Election Commission shall take care to ensure elections are free, fair, and open.
   d. The Election Commission shall be responsible for counting the votes and informing Student Life of the winners. An audit by Student Life of the results may be conducted if there is doubt as to the legitimacy of the results.
   e. The Election Commission shall be made up of all E-board members not running for re-election, any SGA members not returning the following school year, and Student Body Representatives not running for E-board positions. There is no maximum limit to the number of members on the Commission, and membership on the Commission will be volunteer based. There must be at least 5 members.
   f. In the event that there are not at least 5 members meeting the above requirements, the SAB Eboard shall step in to fill the Election Commission

Section II. Temporary Committees

A. The President has the power to create and dissolve temporary committees. Temporary committees may be created for any reason, whether it be dealing with a specific issue or to carry a certain workload. Temporary committees may exist for up to ninety (90) days by order of the President. After ninety (90) days, temporary committees shall either be dissolved automatically or be continued by a vote of the General Assembly. Such committees may not replace or take the roles of any standing committees.

Article VI. Meetings

Section I. Conduct and Quorums

A. The order of E-board meetings shall be determined by consensus among the board, and they shall have the power to conduct their meetings as they see most appropriate.
B. General Assembly meetings should generally follow standard parliamentary procedure in a way that allows for business to be done professionally and efficiently while not being a burden or overly rigid. If it is necessary to adopt or to appeal to formal rules and procedures, Robert's Rules of Order should be used.
C. For any vote to occur at either an E-board meeting or a General Assembly meeting, there must be a quorum.
D. A quorum shall consist of no less than 51% of the members of the respective meetings.
E. The necessity of a quorum at a General Assembly may be overridden in extraordinary circumstances if the whole E-board, present at the meeting, unanimously votes to suspend the need for a quorum.

Section II. Voting; Meetings and Electronic Voting

A. Each member shall have one vote.
B. Absentee voting is not allowed, however, a member may appoint a proxy.
C. At in-person meetings, voting shall be done by a simple voice-vote of yea and nay. When the vote is not immediately obvious, the chair shall call for a showing of hands and count the exact number of votes. Any member may challenge the calling of a voice-vote by the chair and may request the vote by counted exactly. Challenges of this nature should be handled like any other procedural motion.
D. When it is not possible to vote in person, whether it be due to extenuating circumstances, lack of a quorum, or the meeting itself being held electronically, then the vote shall be held via a secure and verifiable medium such as Google Forms, and published for all to see when finished. When an electronic vote occurs, the vote must be open at least 24 hours to allow all members to vote.

Article VII. Elections, Vacancies, and Seat Requirements

Section I.The requirements to run for E-board

A. E-board candidates must have a 2.5 GPA or higher, except for the President, who must have a 3.0 GPA or higher.
B. E-board candidates may be of any class, except for the President, who must be a Junior or higher, and the Vice-president, who must be a sophomore or higher.
C. E-board candidates must be in good standing with the University.
D. E-board candidates must be full-time students.
E. Candidates for President must have served at least one full year on the E-board prior to running. Candidates for Vice-president must have served at least one full year as a Representative prior to running.

Section II. E-board Vacancies

A. If the position of President becomes vacant, the Vice-president shall assume that position.
B. If any other E-board seat becomes vacant, the President has the power to appoint a student to that seat so long as the student meets the requirements in Section I. The appointment must be ratified by a simple majority of the Student Body Representatives and other E-board members at a General Assembly.

Section III. Student Body Representative Requirements

A. Student Body Representative candidates must be enrolled as either a full or part time student.
B. Representative candidates must be in good standing with the University.

Section IV. The E-board Election Process

A. All elections shall be decided by a single-ballot popular vote with the exception of the situation described in subsection E.
B. The election for E-board members must take place no later than one week before finals in the spring semester.
C. Students must be given at least two weeks before the election takes place to declare their candidacy for E-board positions
D. The election commission shall be responsible for collecting candidates, creating the ballot, and distributing it to the student body.
E. Student Life and the faculty advisors of SGA shall oversee the process in an advisory manner, ensuring no fraud takes place, and helping Election Commission members if necessary. In the event the election commission does not have enough people to operate, Student Life shall step in to fulfill its role.
F. E-board members shall serve their term until the newly elected members take the Oath of Office, upon which their term shall end and the new term for new members shall begin.

Section V. Becoming a Student Body Representative

A. Each August, the newly elected E-board shall be responsible for creating and disseminating Student Body Representative applications to the student body.
B. All students eligible to be a Student Body Representative under Article VII Section III may apply.
C. The application may contain questions regarding the status of students at the University (such as their year) and questions pertaining to the motivations of students to become Student Body Representatives. This may include, but is not limited to, questions asking why a student is applying, what ideas they have for the University, and what issues they want to address.
D. The application should be accessible to all students, being neither burdensome nor overbearing in its length and in the questions being asked.
E. These applications must be created, disseminated, collected, and reviewed no later than September 15th.

F. Students should only be rejected in extreme circumstances. For an application to be rejected, it must be reviewed and voted upon by the whole E-board. For the rejection to succeed, a 2/3rds vote is necessary.
G. Students who have been accepted shall be informed of their acceptance and invited to the next planned General Assembly to be officially sworn in. They shall be given ample notice. This is mandatory to become a member.
    a. In the event an accepted applicant cannot attend the meeting, they must provide due notice to the Vice-President of Records and Public Relations.
    b. Upon notice of their inability to attend, the Vice-president of Records and Public Relations shall present their name at the General Assembly, and they shall be sworn in *in absentia*.
    c. Failure to provide notice of an inability to attend will result in that student's application being rejected automatically, unless their failure to provide notice was due to extreme circumstances (such as a family emergency).
H. The Eboard may allow students to apply to be a Representative outside of the specific time set above on a case by case basis.

Section VI. Oath of Office

A. The Oath of Office must be taken by the newly elected E-board members at STAR Banquet and administered by the outgoing President or someone of their appointment. It shall also be used at the swearing in of Representatives.
B. The Oath of Office -- **"I solemnly affirm that I shall preserve, protect, defend, and execute the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Thomas More University and will do so to the best of my abilities, so help me God."**

Article VIII. Discipline, Impeachments, and Removals

Section I. Discipline

A. In the event that a member of SGA is not fulfilling their duties properly or is causing trouble, they should be contacted privately, informed of the concerns surrounding their behavior and actions or lack thereof, and given advice on how to resolve their issues.
B. If those issues should continue, they should be given one formal warning and told that persistence will result in impeachment.
C. Continuing bad behavior or failing to fulfill duties and obligations should then result in charges being brought against a student, but only after a formal warning.

Section II. Impeachment

A. Charges may be brought against an SGA member by either 5% of the student body via a petition or by any E-board member or Representative if they:
    a. Have not fulfilled their obligations to an extreme or problematic degree
    b. Are harmful to the organization as a whole in their actions
B. In the event that charges are brought against a member, the Vice-president shall be responsible for organizing an impeachment proceeding. The proceedings must take place

no later than two weeks after the charges were submitted. If the Vice-president is being impeached, the President shall organize the proceedings.

C. The impeachment proceedings shall be conducted like a trial, with the charges being brought against them by a member or group of members acting as the prosecution. Evidence should be presented. The student being charged must be allowed to defend themselves and provide evidence in their defense. Witnesses and testimonies should be allowed if requested.
    a. The exact order of the trial is up to the president (in this case meaning the person presiding over the impeachment).
D. When the proceedings have ended, a General Assembly meeting must be convened. A generous period of debate shall take place, unless the members vote to bypass debate.
E. If an E-board member is being impeached, the General Assembly shall decide whether to remove them from the board but allow them to remain a Representative, or whether to remove them from SGA altogether.
F. The member being impeached may not attend this meeting nor vote.
G. In order for any SGA member to be impeached, a 2/3rds vote in favor of impeachment is necessary.
H. The impeached member must be notified of their impeachment and removal from office. They shall be banned from being an SGA member in the future if they were fully impeached and not just demoted as outlined in Article VII Section II subsection E.

Section III. Automatic Removal

A. Members shall be automatically removed if they:
    a. Have engaged in conduct that violates Saints Community Standards or University Policy
    b. Violated the law
    c. Have been put on academic or disciplinary probation
B. This may not be appealed.

Article IX. The Amendment Process

Section I. Amending the Constitution

A. Amendments may originate from:
    a. The Executive Board
    b. A majority of the Student Body Representatives
    c. A petition containing the signatures of at least ten percent (10%) of the whole student body.
        i. In this case, the petition must either be written or in a digital format which confirms the unique and personal signature of each signee.
B. When an amendment has been proposed, it must be considered at the next General Assembly meeting.
C. To be ratified, an amendment needs approval by 2/3rds of the whole SGA.
D. In the case of a number of amendments, each amendment shall be considered and voted upon separately. Multiple amendments may not all be voted on at once.

E. If the amendment is ratified, it will take effect immediately.
F. The Vice-president of Records and Public Relationsshall make the revision and provide the most up-to-date Constitution to all SGA members and clubs as soon as possible.
G. When ratified, an amendment shall be placed at the end of this document in an Article entitled "Article IX. Ratified Amendments." Lines which have been struck or altered should have a line put through them, indicating they have been nullified (Example: ~~nullified~~). Amendments shall be placed in chronological order.

Section II. Replacing this Constitution

A. In order to replace this Constitution, a new constitution must be proposed and must be approved by a 3/4ths vote of the entire SGA.

Article X. Effectiveness of this Constitution

A. This Constitution shall take effect immediately after ratification.