



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT

The SPA Undergraduate Council Policy Book

Established: March 27th, 2022

In accordance with the bylaws outlined by the American University Student Government (hereafter AUSG), the School of Political Affairs Undergraduate Council (hereafter SPA UGC) has created a policy book that outlines the codes of conduct and procedures to which SPA UGC is required to adhere. The SPA UGC's purpose and responsibility as mandated by the AUSG Constitution and Bylaws. This policy book aims to summarize the high standards by which SPA UGC will abide in order to effectively and efficiently advocate and program for students at the School of Political Affairs (hereafter SPA).

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The SPA UGC is established by the AUSG Constitution to serve as a body to build community, advocate, and provide programming for the hundreds of bright and ambitious students in SPA. Through initiatives to improve professional skills to events that foster meaningful relationships among students, the SPA UGC works diligently to ensure a positive experience for our constituents. Our advocacy also includes holding the university accountable for the well-being and flourishing of SPA students, and we are committed to acting as a communicative, trustworthy liaison between students and administration.

ARTICLE II. ESTABLISHMENT:

Section 1. Establishment per the Constitution

There shall be established by election in the fall, one Undergraduate Council for each School, including the School of Public Affairs.

Section 2. Executive Board

Subsection i. The President

There shall be elected a President, who shall serve as the main oversight and administrative contact for the SPA UGC. The President shall oversee any and all Special Projects and for all other purposes.

Subsection ii. The Vice President

There shall be elected a Vice President who oversees the Department of Advocacy and requisite members.

Subsection iii. The Secretary

There shall be elected a Secretary who oversees the Department of Communications and requisite members, including but not limited to social media, email communications, and newsletters. The Secretary, alongside the IDEA Coordinator, shall also oversee the writing, amending, and enforcement of the SPA Undergraduate Council Policy Book.

Subsection iv. The Treasurer

There shall be elected a Treasurer, who will serve as the management of SPA UGC funds with AUSG. The Treasurer will oversee any and all finance requests and transactions between the SPA UGC, AUSG, and any other parties.

Section 3. Departments

The SPA UGC will be composed in part of at least four departments. These include Communications, Programming, Advocacy, and Special Projects.

Subsection i. Definition

For the purposes of this policy book and the SPA UGC, a department is defined as including an oversight role and additional staff. The oversight role may be fulfilled by either a member of the Executive Board or a defined Director. The defined Director shall be appointed by the Executive Board. Additional staff may include Assistant Directors, Fellows, and other roles.

Subsection ii. Communications

As outlined in Article I., Section 2, Subsection iii., The Secretary shall oversee the Communications Department. The Communications Department shall include a Director of Outreach and Engagement, and any other assisting roles determined by the Executive Board. The Department shall be responsible for all communications involving

Subsection iii. Programming

There shall be a Director of Programming who shall oversee the Programming Department. The Director of Programming shall be the designated “EMS Requester” for the SPA UGC. The Programming Department shall also include two Assistant Directors. The Assistant Director of Professional Development shall plan and execute events for the purpose of providing SPA students with the opportunity to network, skill-build, or provide any other opportunities. The Assistant Director of Social Events shall plan and execute events for the purpose of providing SPA students with fun community-building events and experiences.

Subsection iv. Advocacy

As outlined in Article I., Section 2, Subsection ii., The Vice President shall oversee the Advocacy Department. The Advocacy Department shall include the Director of Advocacy, Assistant Director of Community Engagement, and Assistant Director of Student/Administrative Relations, as well as any other assisting roles determined by the Executive Board. The Advocacy Department serves as the primary liaison between the SPA UGC, SPA students, SPA Administration, and the broader AU and DC communities on all advocacy issues.

Subsection v. Special Projects

As outlined in Article I., Section 2, Subsection i., The President shall oversee the Special Projects Department. The Special Projects Department shall include the President, Director of Programming, who will serve as Deputy Director of Special Projects, and any other assisting roles determined by the Executive Board. The Special Projects Department will house the Political Review Magazine and its staff, and may also include any working groups, temporary or long-term projects, and any other project that does not fall under any other Department as outlined in this policy book.

Section 4. Directors & Coordinators

Subsection i. Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Coordinator

The Coordinator shall uphold and enforce the IDEA Guidelines & Ethical Standards & Ethical Standards as outlined in Article III. As outlined in Article II, Section 2, Subsection iii., the IDEA Coordinator, alongside the Secretary, shall also be responsible for amending and enforcing this policy book. The IDEA Coordinator may open and conduct investigations into potential violations of this policy book, as well as create and enforce any other policies meant to forward the IDEA ideals for the SPA UGC. The IDEA Coordinator may dismiss any un-elected officials

if the un-elected official is found to severely violate any IDEA Guidelines & Ethical Standards. The IDEA Coordinator may also make recommendations on behalf of the Council to the Undergraduate Senate to call for the impeachment/removal of an elected SPA UGC official in the case of a severe violation of the IDEA Guidelines & Ethical Standards. The IDEA Coordinator has full discretion to build out their team and hire additional staff to assist with advocacy, programming oversight, investigations, and for all other purposes.

Subsection ii. Director of Technology & Web Development

The Director of Technology & Web Development shall oversee and manage the SPA UGC website and provide any and all technological aid to the Programming Department, Special Projects, and for all other purposes.

Subsection iii. Director of Outreach & Engagement

As outlined in Article II, Section 2, Subsection iii., the Director of Outreach & Engagement shall serve in the Communications Department. The Director of Outreach & Engagement shall assist in the management of all social media platforms, compile a biweekly newsletter, produce graphics, and any other tasks needed for the Communications Department.

Subsection iv. Director of Programming

As outlined in Article II, Section 3, Subsection iii., the Director of Programming shall serve in the Programming Department. Additionally, the Director of Programming will serve as Deputy Director of Special Projects, as outlined in Article II, Section 3, Subsection iv. The Director of Programming is charged with submitting organizational event requests, overseeing the programming fellowship, liaising with the American University Center for Student Involvement and University Center, ensuring compliance with university event guidelines, managing the programming staff (Assistant Directors and Fellows), and working with the President on Special Projects and long-term events.

Subsection iv. Director of Advocacy

As outlined in Article II, Section 3, Subsection iv., the Director of Advocacy oversees the operations and staff of the advocacy department. The Director of Advocacy is responsible for leading community-building efforts for the undergraduate body of SPA, liaising with AUSG divisions to organize campus-wide advocacy campaigns and events, and working with the Executive Board of SPA UGC to release statements and initiatives of campus-wide support and large-scale efforts.

Section 5. Additional Positions, Departments, and Staff

Subsection i. Additional Departments

Additional Departments may be created at the discretion of the Executive Board with a majority vote.

Subsection i. Additional Staff

As outlined in Article II., Section 4, Subsection i., the IDEA Coordinator has the full authority to create additional IDEA positions for the purposes of forwarding IDEA ideals for the Council. For all other un-elected positions, including but not limited to, Directors, Assistant Directors, and Fellows, the Executive Board shall consult the Directors at the end of each semester and determine if additional staff is needed in that department. In the case of a Director vacancy, it is up to the sole discretion of the Executive Board to determine additional staff.

Section 6. Vacancies

Subsection i. Executive Board

In the case of a vacancy within the Executive Board, the remaining Executive Board members shall release an application open to current and non-current SPA UGC officials with at least one week in between the opening and closing of the application. Applicants shall be interviewed by

the entirety of the Council. In the event that members of the Council cannot be present at the interview, the interview shall be recorded and made available to view by the missing members of the Council. After each applicant has been interviewed, a rank-choice vote will be taken by the Council and the winner shall be nominated to be confirmed by the Undergraduate Senate in accordance with the AUSG bylaws.

Subsection ii. Directors

In the case of a Director vacancy, the Executive Board can *either* promote a current department staff member by majority vote *or* shall release an application open to current and non-current SPA UGC officials with at least one week in between the opening and closing of the application. Applicants shall be interviewed by the entirety of the Executive Board. In the event that members of the Executive Board cannot be present at the interview, the interview shall be recorded and made available to view by the missing members of the Executive Board. Applicable Department staff may be present at the interviews to provide additional insight. After each applicant has been interviewed, a Director shall be chosen by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Subsection iii. Additional Staff

In the case of additional department staff positions being vacant, the Executive Board shall release an application open to current and non-current SPA UGC officials with at least one week in between the opening and closing of the application. Applicants shall be interviewed by the Department's Director and their Executive Board oversight roles as outlined in Article II, Section 2. Upon interviewing all applicants, the Director and Executive Board members shall come to a mutual decision to choose the new staff member.

ARTICLE III. IDEA GUIDELINES & ETHICAL STANDARDS:

Section 2. Confidentiality

All councilors are required to maintain the confidentiality of SPA UGC affairs. This will ensure that confidential materials and information provided by the School are handled with discretion. Additional NDAs may be issued for the purpose of maintaining confidentiality with ongoing projects with the School of Public Affairs or American University.

Section 3. Inclusion Statement

The SPA Undergraduate Council shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, economic status, language, or disability status. The SPA Undergraduate Council will thoughtfully and intentionally act to include all students without obstacles, and will collect and apply community feedback to better itself on a regular basis.

Section 4. Programming Requirements

Any department that plans and executes an event must abide by the guidelines laid out in this section. It is up to the discretion of the IDEA Coordinator to create or abolish any guidelines.

Subsection i. Inclusivity

Every event conducted either solely by or in conjunction with the SPA UGC must be inclusive to all SPA and AU students. In the case that an event must have a maximum attendance, the SPA UGC is required to live stream, record, and publicly store the event virtually unless restricted by the University.

Subsection ii. Diversity

Every event conducted either solely by or in conjunction with the SPA UGC must be done with intentional thought and consideration of who will benefit from the event. SPA UGC must strive to have a diverse array of speakers, event styles, and partnerships with other organizations.

Subsection iii. Equity

Every event conducted either solely by or in conjunction with the SPA UGC must be equitable to all SPA and AU students. Events may not have a cost associated with them that falls onto the students, including direct costs or the necessary purchasing of any supplies required for the event.

Subsection iv. Accessibility

Every event conducted either solely by or in conjunction with the SPA UGC must include proper accommodations for all SPA and AU students. All event venues must be ADA accessible. All events with an expected attendance of over 100 students must include an ASL interpreter, or if otherwise requested at any event. All Engage requests made to CSI must include an RSVP question asking if students need any accommodations. All virtual events must be conducted with closed captioning and any recorded event must also include a transcript when posted for viewing. All SPA UGC elected and appointed officials present at SPA UGC events will be required to follow and enforce any and all public health guidelines.

Section 5. Communications Requirements

Subsection i. Accessibility

Any and all social media posts made by SPA UGC must include alt-text and image descriptions. All alt-text must be ensured that the correct language and punctuation is being used, and that the language is not offensive. Graphic colors and fonts must also be reasonably easy to read.

Subsection ii. Equity

All Communications staff must strive to have event announcements posted at least one week in advance to ensure proper notice for students and be in accordance with CSI's five day timeline for any accommodations needed from CSI.

Subsection iii. Representation

All Communications staff must strive to have a diverse array of content and types of students, faculty, guests, or events that are displayed on SPA UGC social media pages.

Section 6. Enforcement of the IDEA Guidelines and Ethical Standards

The IDEA Coordinator shall be responsible for enforcement of this Article and may create and abolish guidelines as they see fit. To ensure accountability, all SPA UGC elected and appointed officials will be required to sign a copy of these guidelines upon taking their positions. The IDEA Coordinator shall keep a record of all signed guidelines.

ARTICLE IV. COOPERATION:

All SPA UGC elected and appointed staff are required to comply with all of the rules and regulations outlined in this policy book. As the responsibilities and priorities of the SPA UGC may evolve, such rules and regulations may be subject to change as the body sees fit. There will be an open line of communication between the Undergraduate Senate, AUSG Executive, and the SPA UGC; however, the SPA UGC will function independently in order to maintain confidentiality, independent organization, and policy priorities, and an ideal working relationship with the SPA administration. All elected and appointed officials will be required to not only abide by the guidelines set out in this policy book, but all other relevant AUSG Governing Documents.