

STUDENT GOVERNING BOARD OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Student Governing Board (SGB) is to represent and serve the needs of Columbia University student organizations whose concerns are religious, spiritual, political, ideological, activist, humanitarian or identity-conscious in nature. Established on January 10, 1969 from a student caucus led by the University Chaplain and later affirmed by a mandate from the University Trustees, the Student Governing Board is dedicated to the principle of community self-government, and believes that students' needs are best evoked, defined and articulated by the students themselves. In order to accomplish this important mission, the Executive Board of the Student Governing Board oversees and provides support to its student organizations. In addition, the Executive Board of the Student Governing Board works closely with the Division of Student Affairs, College Activities Office, Office of the University Chaplain and SGB student organizations to create a dynamic sense of community that is widely recognized within the Columbia student body by facilitating multi-faith, inter-group and community building programming and dialogue.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNING BOARD OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY (Last amended at March 30th, 2009 SGB General Body Meeting)

PREAMBLE

The Student Governing Board of Earl Hall was first established January 10, 1969 from a Student Caucus called into being by University Chaplain John D. Cannon on November 8, 1968. Later on January 16th, 2007, the Student Governing Board was relocated to the Division of Student Affairs of Columbia College and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Article 103 of the Statutes of Columbia University, adopted by the Trustees November 6, 1972, mandates the following:

"There shall be established a Student Governing Board consisting of representatives of the various student groups participating in the activities of the Earl Hall Center."

DEFINITIONS:

The Student Governing Board shall be referred to as the "SGB". The Executive Board of the Student Governing Board shall be referred to as the "SGB Executive Board". The collection of the representatives of all the various groups shall be referred to as the "SGB General Body." A group shall be considered "Active" if it has submitted the most recent cover sheet of the SGB budget packet listing up-to-date contact information for the group's President and Treasurer.

ARTICLE I: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. The task of the SGB is to serve the needs of the Columbia University community in all its diversity, sharing University donor William Earl Dodge's hope "that religion and learning may go hand in hand and character grow with knowledge." The mission of the Student Governing Board is to represent and serve the needs of Columbia University student organizations whose concerns are religious, spiritual, political, ideological, activist, humanitarian, or identity-conscious in nature. Humanitarian groups under the SGB shall not have as their primary mission conducting community service in the neighborhoods of Morningside Heights, Harlem, or Washington Heights, New York.
2. Dedicated to the principle of community self-government, and believing that in the final analysis, those students' needs can best be evoked, defined and articulated by the students themselves, the Student Governing Board has the function of representing its member groups.
3. The member groups are composed of independently organized voluntary student groups, whose representatives act through a democratic governing body. In accordance with the principles

- outlined above, the Student Governing Board is organized in the manner outlined by the Constitution and approved by the By-Laws.
4. In addition to the responsibilities relative to the University and the greater community, the Student Governing Board has the responsibility of direct supervision over its member groups. The SGB shall also oversee the allocation and distribution of undergraduate Student Activities funds, as well as the recognition and discipline of member groups.
 5. The SGB recognizes an obligation to foster dialogue and cooperation among its member groups by encouraging joining SGB-sponsored activities, while also recognizing an obligation to work towards meeting the need of students not organized into formal groups.

ARTICLE II: COMPOSITION OF THE STUDENT GOVERNING BOARD GENERAL BODY

1. The composition of the SGB General Body shall consist of one delegate from each of the recognized member groups. The delegate may be any member of the member group, as assigned by the leadership of that group. However, The Columbia/Barnard Hillel shall have five delegates, each delegate present receiving one vote.
2. Designation of delegates is the prerogative of the member groups. The delegate chosen must be a full time undergraduate Columbia University student. No person shall represent more than one group at any given meeting of the SGB.
3. A majority of the Active membership shall constitute quorum

ARTICLE III: EXECUTIVE BOARD SELECTION, PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Executive Board shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and seven Representatives-At-Large.

1. The Executive Board shall:
 - a. Work with the Chair to prepare an agenda for the meetings of the SGB, subject to amendment and approval of the SGB.
 - b. Maintain relations between the SGB, the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of the University Chaplain, Columbia College Student Council (CCSC), Engineering Student Council (ESC), Barnard's Student Government Association (SGA), General Studies Student Council (GSSC), other student governing bodies, and other University administration and officials.
 - c. Make recommendations to the SGB General Body, as it shall see fit.
 - d. Receive, review, and accept or reject applications for membership in accordance with this Constitution.
 - e. Inform all member groups in writing of its decisions at Board meetings, and inform any member group, upon request, of all pending Executive Board meetings.
 - f. Allocate undergraduate Student Activities funds to student groups
 - g. Advise on the raising and disbursement of funds from the SGB budget.
 - h. Recommend programming sponsored on a cooperative, inter-group basis.
 - i. Adjudicate disputes between groups, review complaints received in writing, and take disciplinary action when required.
 - j. Assume such other duties as the SGB may assign it.
 - k. The Executive Board may establish such standing and special committees, as it deems advisable, and elect their members and chairpersons or delegate this authority. Committees shall be accountable to the SGB for consideration and approval.
 - l. Compile and distribute a set of By-Laws governing group spending and administrative procedures. By-Laws shall be reviewed and renewed by the Executive Board annually.
2. All Executive Board members must:
 - a. Attend all Executive Board meetings.
 - b. Complete all tasks or responsibilities assigned or delineated in this Constitution or by the SGB Executive Board.
3. Election guidelines:

- a. All candidates must be members in good standing of a recognized group or be incumbents on the SGB Executive Board.
 - b. The incumbent Chair shall preside over the elections.
 - c. Only members of the incumbent Executive Board may run for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair, unless none of the Board members pursue the positions.
 - d. The incumbent Chair shall not be an eligible candidate for the position of Chair, Vice Chair, or Treasurer. In the event that the incumbent Chair declares candidacy for another position, the Chair elect shall preside over the election for all positions following Chair.
 - e. Absentee candidates are eligible. They shall issue a statement no longer than 500 words, to be read by the representative of their choice.
 - f. Order of elections shall follow as first the election for Chair, second that for Vice Chair, third that for Treasurer, fourth that for Secretary and finally the At-Large election for Representatives.
 - g. Elections shall be drop-down, such that losing candidates for earlier positions may declare candidacy for the positions that follow.
 - h. The incumbent Executive Board should transfer responsibility to the Executive Board elect no later than three weeks following the election.
4. Division of Responsibilities:
- a. The Chair shall:
 1. Assume ultimate responsibility for all Board decisions and statements.
 2. Facilitate Executive Board meetings by setting the time, place and agenda for each meeting and notifying the Executive Board and other necessary parties.
 3. Act as a liaison to the student council and class presidents, other governing boards, the Division of Student Affairs, the College Activities Office, the Earl Hall Center and University administration, or to appoint delegates from the E-Board to act on his or her behalf, at his or her discretion.
 4. Plan activities for the morale and professional development of the Executive Board.
 5. Not vote except to break a tie.
 6. Act as a liaison to the press.
 - b. The Vice Chair shall:
 1. Oversee special projects as assigned by the Chair.
 2. Be responsible for incoming and outgoing correspondence.
 3. Advise new or special groups.
 4. Serve as acting Chair when the Chair is either absent or recluses herself from a matter.
 - c. The Treasurer shall:
 1. Assume responsibility for the fiscal health of the Board.
 2. Maintain current records of all finances pertaining to the Executive Board and cosponsorships.
 3. Act as a liaison to the student council treasurers and the Student Affairs Central Business Office.
 4. Provide the Executive Board with regular written reports pertaining to Executive Board and member group spending.
 - d. The Secretary shall:
 1. Take minutes of all meetings and publish on the website regularly.
 2. Distribute a regular update of Executive Board happenings, dates and deadlines, and events to the General Body.
 3. Maintain a current contact list of Member Group presidents and treasurers.
 4. Organize each semester's General Body meeting.
 5. Maintain the SGB Archives.
 - e. The Representatives-at-Large shall:
 1. Advise a constituency of member groups as assigned by the Chair.
 2. Maintain active and consistent communication with the groups as necessary.
 3. Assist the Treasurer in budget matters pertaining to their constituency.
 4. Assist the Secretary in maintaining contacts for their constituency.

5. Assist the Secretary in maintaining the Archives for their constituency.
6. Conduct special projects as assigned by the Chair.

ARTICLE IV: RECALL AND REPLACEMENT

1. All elected or appointed officials of the SGB Executive Board may be recalled/expelled for either:
 - a. Missing any three meetings during a year, which they are required to attend, as defined in Article III, Section 2a, without appropriate excuse and arrangements.
 - b. Failing to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in Article III, Section 2b of the SGB Constitution.
2. The Executive Board by a majority of 2/3 may vote to expel an Executive Board member if she or she fails to meet the responsibilities outlined in Article III, Section 2. Upon recall or expulsion of an Executive Board member, the member in question has the right to appeal the decision of the executive board before a meeting of the SGB General Body, to be called within one week of the vote. At this SGB General Body Meeting the Executive Board's decision to expel an Executive Board member must be ratified by a two-thirds vote.
3. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice-Chair shall become the acting Chair, until the next regular meeting of the SGB, at which time a vote of confidence shall be necessary for his/her continuation as Chair.
 - a. Vacancies in any other offices shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Board.
 - b. Candidates for vacancy must be eligible for election to their position of appointment.
 - c. Vacancy appointments must be filled after thorough review of all interested candidates.
 - d. Vacancies for appointment must be advertised to the General Body soliciting candidates at least twice, with no less than two weeks passing between first notice and the appointment.
 - e. In the event of a vote of no-confidence in the continuation of the Vice-Chair as acting Chair, a general election shall be held among the SGB General Body for the position of Chair at the same meeting as the vote of no-confidence.
 - f. Candidates for vacancy in the position of Treasurer must be treasurer's trained before taking office.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS OF THE STUDENT GOVERNING BOARD

1. Times and locations for SGB General Body meetings shall be set by the Executive Board and publicized through effective means to the member organizations of the SGB. Seven days advance notice shall be considered sufficient notice for such a meeting.
2. Special meetings may be called by the members of the Executive Board, or ten or more member groups of the SGB. Should ten or more member groups request a meeting, a representative of each group shall contact the SGB Secretary with notification of their request. Membership must be given 48 hours notice of the meeting. A quorum, however, may waive the notice requirements in an emergency.
3. The SGB General Body shall meet at least twice per year.
4. The Executive Board shall meet at least biweekly to conduct SGB business, as decided by the Chair.
5. The SGB General Body may revoke any decisions of the Executive Board, effective immediately, with a two-thirds majority of all fully recognized member groups of SGB.

ARTICLE VI: MEETING PROCEDURES

1. The SGB may adopt any format of meeting procedures by a two-thirds vote. At all other times, when applicable, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedures shall apply.
2. Minutes shall be kept by the Secretary and distributed to the Executive Board. The unanimous vote of the Executive Board shall strike any remark or issue from the record.
3. Minutes shall be made available upon request.

4. Within two weeks following the elections, the former Secretary shall compile all minutes from all meetings and present them to the Secretary-elect. The Chair and Treasurer shall present written reports to the Chair-elect and Treasurer-elect, respectively.
5. All meetings shall be open, and non-members shall be heard, unless two-thirds of all fully recognized member groups vote to limit the meeting to those entitled to vote, with the addition of the Chair and guests specifically invited by the Chair or Vice-Chair. The minutes of such a closed session shall be handled as determined by those present at that meeting.

ARTICLE VII: MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To be a member of the SGB, a group must:
 - a. Have a primary mission that is religious, spiritual, political, ideological activist, humanitarian, or identity-conscious in nature.
 - b. Have at least ten undergraduate degree candidates of Columbia University in the City of New York (Barnard College, Columbia College, Fu Foundation for Engineering and Applied Science, or the School of General Studies) as members.
 - c. Be willing to participate in community governance of the SGB.
 - d. Be willing to assume financial responsibility for damage caused by that group to any space or equipment in any University facilities.
 - e. Have a designated representative present at every SGB meeting. A member group which is unrepresented at any two meetings of the SGB during the academic year may, at the discretion of the Executive Board, lose its voting privileges, space allocations, and/or other membership privileges. Reinstatement of these lost privileges shall be at the discretion of the SGB Executive Board.
 - f. Provide the Executive Board any information requested with regards to the group's sources of funding.
 - g. Be willing to accept this Constitution and By-Laws and decisions made by the SGB in accordance with them.
 - h. Have as its President and Treasurer and more than one-half of its executive board undergraduate degree candidates at Columbia University in the City of New York (Barnard College, Columbia College, Fu Foundation for Engineering and Applied Science, and School of General Studies).
2. A group may not become a member, or a member group may be expelled from membership, if that group:
 1. As its main purpose actively engages in lobbying for legislation pending in any governmental body.
 2. As its main purpose is actively involved in the campaign of any person running for public office.
 3. Has any outstanding financial obligation to the SGB or other University body, unless a plan is agreed and adhered to for settlement of the obligation.
 4. Engages in, sponsors, or threatens physical violence or destruction of property. Permits itself to be used to cover or obscure the activities or objectives of another group or persons for the use of the University's name or facilities.
 5. Intentionally mislead or misrepresent its intentions to the SGB, Executive Board, or any officer of the University. Such attempts shall be grounds for immediate suspension or termination of a group voting privileges, space allocation and/or other membership privileges within the SGB, at the discretion of SGB Executive Board.
 6. Has been inactive and/or dormant for four consecutive academic semesters.
 7. Fails to fulfill its membership responsibilities as outlined above.
3. Any member group that does not meet its financial or other responsibilities as outlined in the SGB discipline policy available on the SGB website shall have a hearing before the Executive Board. Such a hearing shall be held upon receipt of a written complaint or allegation of failure to comply with the obligations of membership from any member group, counselor or staff member. Such a

hearing may also be held at the initiative of the Executive Board, Chair, or Vice-Chair. The Executive Board shall make any recommendations or take any disciplinary action in the spirit of the Constitution or the By-Laws that it deems necessary.

The Executive Board's decision to expel a member group must be ratified by majority vote at the next SGB General Body meeting.

All other recommendations and decisions of the Executive Board become effective immediately following the hearing. Groups may appeal the decisions or recommendations of the Executive Board at the next SGB General Body meeting, at which time decisions or recommendations may be overturned by two-thirds of the fully recognized groups of the SGB.

ARTICLE VIII: APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. All groups applying for membership in the SGB must submit a membership application to the SGB. This application must include a careful statement of purpose, showing particularly how it meets criteria for membership contained herein; information about the projected form of the group's program; designation with name and University Network Identification (UNI) of one eligible person as delegate (commonly President) and the name of an alternate delegate (commonly Treasurer). Eight additional eligible names (for a total of ten) must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Executive Board. Procedures for renewal recognition are outlined in the By-Laws.
2. A representative of the new applicant group must be present at the Executive Board meeting at which the application is considered and answer any relevant questions. The Executive Board must then vote on a recommendation to the General Body for or against recognition of the applicant group. At the next General Body meeting, the applicant group must present its application for membership to the General Body. A two-thirds majority vote of the General Body will overturn the recommendation of the Executive Board.
3. Unless a group can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Executive Board, that its application has undergone substantial revision, it may not reapply for membership within the SGB within the course of one academic year.
4. A group so approved is eligible to vote at the next meeting following the one at which its application was ratified and was therefore admitted to full membership.
5.
 - a) A group wishing to change its name must stipulate before the Executive Board that its purpose and general program will not substantially change, or it must submit a new application. In dispute over whether a new application is required, a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board is necessary. If the group's application is not approved, it may choose to retain its original name and mission.
 - b) In the case that a group's activity and character no longer reflect its mission statement, the group must submit a new application for membership. If the group's application is not approved, the group will be derecognized.
6. The meeting of the SGB Executive Board during which an application for membership by a previously unrecognized student group (within the SGB) is considered must occur no less than 48 hours prior to the next scheduled mandatory meeting of the SGB General Body, save for exceptions at the discretion of the SGB Executive Board.
7. If a new applicant group is recommended against for recognition by the Executive Board because it is significantly similar in character to an existing group, the Executive Board will mediate a meeting between the two groups. The Executive Board will encourage the applicant group to either join the existing group or to form a new joint group. If the joint group differs significantly in character from the existing group, it must apply for re-recognition. If the mediation fails, the applicant group may still present at the Town Hall for independent recognition.

ARTICLE IX: RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SGB

1. This Constitution shall govern the SGB upon ratification by a two-thirds majority of all recognized member groups of the SGB. Upon the ratification of this Constitution, they shall be reported to the University Senate as the "Constitution of the Student Governing Board".
2. Amendment of this Constitution shall require the approval of a majority of the fully recognized member groups of the SGB. Such amendments take effect on the first day of the semester following their adoption. However, a two-thirds majority vote of the full member groups may put amendments into effect immediately.
3. The SGB is continuing body, whose actions are valid unless subsequently repealed or modified.
4. On a bi-annual basis, the SGB shall convene a Constitutional Review Committee to conduct constitutional review and propose amendments, if necessary.¹
5. The Constitutional Review Committee shall consist of eleven members, including the SGB Chair, any non-senior Representatives-at-Large, and randomly selected non-senior Presidents of any SGB group that does not have the SGB Chair or non-senior Representatives-at-Large in its membership.

¹ Last constitutional review conducted in the spring of 2009.