

Constitution of the Northern Virginia Community College Student Government Association

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Northern Virginia Community College Student Government Association, hereinafter referred to as NOVASGA.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The Student Body of the Northern Virginia Community College, in support of the institutional mission, establishes this student association to represent all students in voicing their concerns, promoting student interests, and advocating for student life and academic concerns.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section One. Composition.

Students matriculating at one or more of the Northern Virginia Community College campuses are members of NOVASGA.

Section Two. Rights and Privileges.

Membership in NOVASGA entitles the students to selected rights and privileges including:

1. Voting in campus elections and referendums.
2. Holding office within a Campus Student Council subject to stated eligibility requirements.

ARTICLE IV. ADVISORY BOARD

Section One. Duties.

The NOVASGA Advisory Board shall be responsible for reviewing and deciding upon issues and concerns that affect NOVASGA members at all six NOVA campuses. The NOVASGA Advisory Board shall nominate a student to serve on the NOVA Board to the College President.

Section Two. Composition.

The Advisory Board shall consist of two representatives from each campus, the Lead Dean for Student Life, and the NOVASGA Advisor.

Section Three. Representatives.

A. Representatives from Campus Student Councils.

1. On campuses hosting a Campus Student Council, the Student Body President shall serve as one of the campus representatives.
2. A second campus representative shall be appointed by the respective Student Body President with the approval of the Campus Student Council.

B. Representatives from "at large" campuses.

1. On campuses where no Campus Student Council functions, representatives shall be chosen through an application and selection process administered by the Office of Student Life.
2. The process of selecting representatives must conclude annually on or before April 15.

C. Term of Office.

Campus representatives shall serve a term of one (1) year, or until a successor is identified and installed. A term of office shall begin annually on May 1.

Section Four. Officers.

A. Composition.

The officers of the Advisory Board shall be a Chairperson and a Secretary.

B. Qualifications of Officers.

The Chairperson and the Secretary must be members of the Advisory Board and remain members of the Advisory Board throughout their terms of office.

C. Election of Officers.

1. The members of the Advisory Board shall elect by written ballot a Chairperson and a Secretary at its regular meeting in May. A majority vote shall elect.
2. If there is only one candidate for an office, the office shall be filled by acclamation.

D. Duties of Officers.

1. The Chairperson of the Advisory Board shall:
 - a. Chair regular and special meetings of the Advisory Board.
 - b. Serve as, nominate, or appoint a designee to serve as a student representative to committees as requested by the administration.
 - c. Prepare, prior to each meeting, an order of business to be distributed to members of the Advisory Board, showing the exact order, under the correct headings, matters known in advance that are due to come up and, if applicable, the times for which they are set.
 - d. Perform other duties as prescribed in this Constitution, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the NOVASGA.
2. The Secretary of the Advisory Board shall:
 - a. Maintain a record of the proceedings of the Advisory Board.
 - b. Maintain the Advisory Board's official membership roll and call the roll when it is requested.
 - c. Maintain digital copies of this Constitution, the Bylaws, minutes, and any other official documents, with any amendments to these documents properly recorded, and have the current digital copy on hand at every meeting.
 - d. Make the minutes and records available to members upon request.
 - e. Perform other duties as prescribed in this Constitution, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the NOVASGA.

E. Term of Office.

1. The Advisory Board Chairperson shall serve a term of one (1) year or until a successor is elected and installed.
2. The term of office shall begin at the conclusion of the meeting in which the officers are elected.

F. Resignation or Removal from Office.

1. Resignation. An officer may resign by submitting a request in writing to the Advisory Board Advisor. A resignation is effected upon receiving a majority of the legal votes cast in a regular Advisory Board meeting at which the request is considered.
2. Removal.
 - a. An officer may be removed as a result of successful disciplinary proceedings against them in which removal from office is the recommended sanction. Disciplinary proceedings may be brought against a student for failure to attend meetings, violation of the student code of conduct, neglecting to fulfill duties as outlined by the constitution, or other actions unbecoming of an officer.
 - b. Removal requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Advisory Board members present and voting at a regular or special meeting for which notice of the vote has been provided to members at least 72 hours in advance.

G. Filling Vacancies.

An officer vacancy shall be filled by election at the regular meeting of the Advisory Board in which removal or the acceptance of resignation occurs.

Section Five. Meetings.

A. Regular Meetings.

1. Regular meetings of the Advisory Board shall be held on the first Thursday of each month at a time specified by the Chairperson, unless otherwise decided by the membership.
2. At least five (5) regular meetings per year shall be conducted in-person.

B. Special Meetings.

Special meetings of the Advisory Board may be called by the Chairperson or upon the written request of five (5) Advisory Board members. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency authorized by the college-wide Director of Student Life, at least five (5) days' notice shall be given to members by telephone, in writing, or electronic means.

C. Electronic Meetings.

Regular and special meetings of the Advisory Board may be held by electronic means, such as email, video conferencing, phone conferencing, etc. subject to the following:

- a. The technology used for the electronic meetings shall allow the members full access and full participation in all meeting transactions either continuously or intermittently throughout the specified time of the meeting.

- b. All Advisory Board members shall have access to the appropriate electronic media. The number of people actually responding to a call for any particular meeting must meet or exceed the quorum of more than half the members. These responders shall be assumed to be present until the meeting is adjourned; however in meetings where members are expected to be continuously present (e.g., telephone or video conferences) the quorum of members who respond must remain connected during the course of the business portion of the meeting.
- c. Procedural rules related to the conduct of electronic meetings shall be established in the NOVASGA Bylaws.

Section Six. Committees.

A. Special Committees.

Special Committees shall be appointed as deemed necessary by the Advisory Board. Special Committees shall consist of a chairman and at least two (2) other members approved by the Advisory Board.

B. Powers.

Committees are not authorized to act on their own will. Committees shall make recommendations to the Advisory Board for any action that is to be taken on behalf of the organization. Committees shall report as required or when requested by the Advisory Board to do so.

Section Seven. Advisor.

The advisor to the Advisory Board shall be the college-wide Director of Student Life or designee. The advisor shall attend Advisory Board meetings and participate in discussion and debate subject to the adopted rules of order. The Advisor shall not count toward quorum requirements, may not vote, make motions, or second motions.

ARTICLE V. CAMPUS STUDENT COUNCIL

Section One. Name.

Each Northern Virginia Community College campus may maintain a local governance body referred to as the [Campus Name] Student Council. Campuses choosing not to maintain a Campus Student Council shall be referred to as "at large" campuses.

Section Two. Structure.

Each Campus Student Council shall operate under the organizational rules established in the NOVASGA Bylaws.

Section Three. Purpose.

Each Campus Student Council shall have complete control in addressing matters of concern specific to those students matriculating on that campus, subject only to such restrictions as may be imposed by this Constitution and related Bylaws. In no case may such local power be exercised in a way contrary to the ideals and purposes of the NOVASGA as set forth in this Constitution and related Bylaws.

Section Four. Members.

The Campus Student Council shall consist of its officers, an advisor, and one (1) elected Senator for every 1,000 FTE students, rounded up to the nearest integer, based off the previous Fall term.

Section Five. Officers.

The officers of each Campus Student Council shall be a Student Body President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section Six. Advisor.

The advisor to each Campus Student Council shall be the campus student government advisor appointed by the institution (MEMBER OF STUDENT LIFE OFFICE). The advisor shall attend Campus Student Council meetings and Executive Board meetings and may participate in discussion and debate subject to the adopted rules of order. The Advisor shall not count toward quorum requirements, may not vote, make motions, or second motions.

ARTICLE VI. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)* shall govern the NOVASGA in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution, related bylaws, or special rules of order the NOVASGA may adopt.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENT

Section One. Amendment Process.

Amendment of this Constitution may be proposed by a member of the NOVASGA Advisory Board.

1. The motion to amend shall be automatically postponed until the next regular meeting or a special meeting called for the purpose of considering the amendment to the Constitution.
2. Between meetings, each Campus Student Council shall take up the issue of the amendment in its regular business. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting shall be required to approve the amendment.
3. The decision of each Campus Student Council shall be offered at the specified NOVASGA Advisory Board meeting when the amendment is again taken up. A majority of the Campus Student Councils must have approved the amendments for it to be adopted.

Section Two. Adoption.

The adoption of this Constitution and any amendments to it, must be ratified by the NOVA Board. Unless otherwise specified in the motion, amendments to the Constitution take effect at the conclusion of the meeting of the NOVA Board in which they are adopted.

Bylaws of the Northern Virginia Community College Student Government Association

ARTICLE I. [CAMPUS NAME] STUDENT COUNCIL BYLAWS

Section One. Name.

The name of this organization is identified in the NOVASGA Constitution, Article V. Section One.

Section Two. Purpose.

The purpose of the [Campus Name] Student Council is identified in the NOVASGA Constitution, Article V. Section Three.

Section Three. Members.

A. Composition.

The composition of the membership of the [Campus Name] Student Council is identified in the NOVASGA Constitution, Article V. Section Four.

B. Senators.

1. Qualifications. Senators must:

- a. Be students at [Campus Name], taking at least three credits, and paying the Student Activities fee as verified by the Controller's Office.
- b. Maintain at least a 2.25 cumulative grade point average.
- c. Not be serving disciplinary suspension, probation, or expulsion.
- d. Consent to the release of campus judicial and grade information to the [Campus Name] Student Council Advisor to determine continued participation in [Campus Name] Student Council, and acknowledgement that removal for unsatisfactory reports may mean that other members of the Student Council or the NOVASGA Advisory Board may be generally aware of the student's eligibility for membership. Information may only be disclosed to Council Officers relevant to any proceedings by the Advisor.
- e. Participate in a minimum of one NOVASGA and/or [Campus Name] Student Council Training Workshops, Conferences, and/or Retreats – one to be held upon their election, one at the start of the fall semester, and one at the start of the spring semester.

4. Election.

- a. Senators shall be elected at large from the [Campus Name] student body by electronic ballot and shall utilize Instant Run-Off Voting (IRV).
- b. Elections shall be held annually on the third full week in March. A number of candidates equivalent to the number of [Campus Name] Student Council seats

(based upon FTE) receiving the largest number of legal votes cast shall be declared the winners.

5. Term of Office.

Senators shall serve a term of one year or until a successor is elected and installed. A term of office shall commence annually on the second Friday of April. There is no limit to the number of terms that a student may serve as a Senator.

6. Removal and Resignation.

a. Removal. A Senator shall be removed for the following reasons:

- i. Failing to attend four (4) regular meetings of the [Campus Name] Student Council.
- ii. Failing to maintain status as a matriculating student at Northern Virginia Community College.
- iii. Failing to maintain a minimum 2.25 cumulative grade point average, as verified by the [Campus Name] Student Council Advisor.
- iv. As a result of successful disciplinary proceedings against a Senator in which removal from office is the recommended sanction.

b. Resignation. A representative may resign by submitting a signed printed request to the [Campus Name] Student Council Secretary. A resignation is effected upon receiving a majority of the legal votes cast in a regular meeting at which the request is considered.

7. Vacancies.

Vacancies shall be filled by the candidate receiving a majority of the legal votes cast in an election at a regular or special meeting of the [Campus Name] Student Council for which at least fourteen (14) days' notice of the election has been given to the campus Student Body.

C. Advisor.

The advisor to the [Campus Name] Student Council is described in the NOVASGA Constitution, Article V. Section Six.

Section Four. Officers.

A. Composition.

The officers of each [Campus Name] Student Council shall be those identified in the NOVASGA Constitution, Article V. Section Five.

D. Qualifications.

1. Student Body President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall:
 - a. Be a student at [Campus Name], be taking at least six (6) academic credits, and paying the Student Activities Fee as verified by the Controller's Office.
 - b. Maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative grade point average.
 - c. Not be serving disciplinary suspension, probation, or expulsion.

- d. Consent to the release of campus judicial and grade information to the [Campus Name] Student Council Advisor to determine continued participation in [Campus Name] Student Council, and acknowledgement that removal for unsatisfactory reports may mean that other members of the Student Council or the NOVASGA Advisory Board may be generally aware of the student's grade or judicial status. Information may only be disclosed to Council Officers relevant to any proceedings by the Advisor.
 - e. Participate in at least three [Campus Name] Student Council Training Workshops, Conferences and/or Retreats – one to be held upon their election, one at the start of the Fall semester, and one at the start of the Spring semester.
2. Other officers shall be currently serving a term of office as a Student Senator.
 - a. Officers in NOVA Campus Council shall not serve as an Executive Officer in another college club or student organization.

E. Election of [Campus Name] Student Council Officers.

1. Election of the Student Body President.
 - a. The Student Body shall elect by electronic ballot the Student Body President. Instant Run-off Voting will be utilized. A majority vote shall elect.
 - b. Elections shall be held annually on the third full week in March.
2. Election of the Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
 - a. The membership of the Campus [Campus Name] Student Council shall elect by written or electronic ballot the Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer at its first regular meeting in April. A majority vote shall elect.
 - b. Elections shall be conducted in the following order: Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
 - c. If there is only one candidate for an office, the office may be filled by acclamation.

F. Duties.

1. Student Body President. The student body president shall:
 - a. Chair regular and special meetings of the [Campus Name] Student Council.
 - b. Chair regular and special meetings of the Executive Board.
 - c. Prepare, prior to each meeting, an order of business to be distributed to members of the [Campus Name] Student Council, showing the exact order, under the correct headings, matters known in advance that are due to come up and, if applicable, the times for which they are set.
 - d. Serve as, or appoint a designee to serve as, a student representative to campus boards and committees as requested by the administration.
 - e. Serve as an ex officio member of the NOVASGA Advisory Board.
 - f. Appoint, with approval of the [Campus Name] Student Council, a student from campus to serve as the second representative to the NOVASGA Advisory Board.

- g. Perform other duties as prescribed in the [Campus Name] Student Council Bylaws, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the NOVASGA.
- 2. Vice President. The vice-president shall:
 - a. In the absence of the Student Body President, chair regular and special meetings of the [Campus Name] Student Council and the Executive Board.
 - b. Serve as an ex-officio member of [Campus Name] Student Council committees.
 - c. Succeed to the office of Student Body President should the Student Body President vacate the office.
 - d. Notify officers, committee members, and delegates of their election or appointment; furnish committees with whatever documents are required for the performance of their duties, and have on hand at each meeting a list of existing committees and their members.
 - e. Perform other duties as prescribed in the [Campus Name] Student Council Bylaws, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the NOVASGA.
- 3. Secretary. The secretary shall:
 - a. Maintain a record of the proceedings of the [Campus Name] Student Council and the Executive Board.
 - b. Maintain the [Campus Name] Student Council's official membership roll and call the roll when it is requested.
 - c. Document absences and report them to the body for action.
 - d. Maintain digital copies of this Constitution, the Bylaws, minutes, and any other official documents, with any amendments to these documents properly recorded, and have the current digital copy on hand at every meeting.
 - e. Make the minutes and records available to members upon request.
 - f. Be responsible for conducting official email correspondence on behalf of the [Campus Name] Student Council.
 - g. Perform other duties as prescribed in the [Campus Name] Student Council Bylaws, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the NOVASGA.
- 4. Treasurer. The treasurer shall:
 - a. Chair the [Campus Name] Student Council Finance Committee.
 - b. Maintain a record of the [Campus Name] Student Council funds and accounts.
 - c. Oversee the distribution of funds and shall make financial reports at each regular meeting of the [Campus Name] Student Council.
 - d. Perform other duties as prescribed in the [Campus Name] Student Council Bylaws, or in the parliamentary authority adopted by the NOVASGA.

G. Term of Office.

- 1. Student Body President.

The Student Body President shall serve a term of one year or until a successor is elected and installed. A term of office shall commence annually on the second Friday in April.

2. Other Officers.

The Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall serve a term of one (1) year or until a successor is elected and installed. The term of office shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting in which they are elected.

3. Limitations.

- a. No individual may serve more than two consecutive terms in any office.
- b. No member may concurrently occupy the office of more than one [Campus Name] Student Council officer.

H. Removal and Resignation.

1. Removal. An officer shall be removed for the following reasons:

- a. Failing to attend four (4) regular meetings of the [Campus Name] Student Council.
- b. Failing to maintain status as a matriculating student at Northern Virginia Community College.
- c. Failing to maintain the required minimum cumulative grade point average, as verified by the [Campus Name] Student Council Advisor.
- d. As a result of successful disciplinary proceedings against an officer in which removal from office is the recommended sanction.

2. Resignation.

An officer may resign by submitting a request in writing to the [Campus Name] Student Council Secretary. A resignation is effective upon receiving a majority of the legal votes cast in a regular meeting at which the request is considered.

I. Vacancies.

An officer vacancy, with the exception of Student Body President, shall be filled by election at the next regular meeting of the [Campus Name] Student Council after the meeting in which the office is declared vacant.

Section Five. Meetings.

A. Regular Meetings.

Regular meetings of the [Campus Name] Student Council will be held bi-weekly each semester on Fridays at noon, unless otherwise ordered by the membership. The first meeting of each semester shall occur by the first of May.

J. Special Meetings.

Special meetings of the [Campus Name] Student Council may be called by the Student Body President or upon the written request of at least 25% of the members of the [Campus Name] Student Council. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of

emergency authorized by the [Campus Name] Student Council Advisor, at least five (5) days' notice shall be given to members by telephone, in writing, or electronic means.

K. Training Workshops.

Training Workshops, Conventions, and/or Retreats shall be held within the first eight weeks of the fall and spring semesters, and upon the election of each new member. Notice of the dates for Training Workshops/Conventions/Retreats should be provided to candidates running for elected office and for candidates filling vacancies in offices.

L. Quorum.

The quorum for regular and special meetings of the [Campus Name] Student Council shall be a majority of the membership. There shall be no quorum requirement for training workshops to be conducted.

ARTICLE VI. EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Composition.

The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers of the [Campus Name] Student Council and the Advisor.

Section Three. Meetings.

1. Regular Meetings.

The Executive Board shall meet weekly at a time and place designated by the Student Body President. Members must be provided with at least 24 hours' notice by telephone, in writing, or electronic means.

3. Special Meetings.

Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President, upon the request of two (2) members of the Executive Board, or upon the request of the Advisor. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency authorized by the [Campus Name] Student Council Advisor, at least two (2) days' notice shall be given to members by telephone, in writing, or electronic means.

4. Quorum.

The quorum for regular meetings and any special meetings of the Executive Board shall be a majority of the members.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

A. Standing Committees.

1. Committees.

There shall be a [Campus Name] Student Council Activities Committee (SSAC).

2. Duties.

The [Campus Name] Student Council Activities Committee shall plan and conduct social and educational activities for the campus student body. The committee shall be comprised of six (6) members including a chairperson who shall be appointed by the Student Body President with the approval of the [Campus Name] Student Council.

M. Special Committees.

Special Committees shall be appointed as deemed necessary by the [Campus Name] Student Council. Special Committees shall consist of a chairman and at least two (2) other members, nominated by the Student Body President and approved by the [Campus Name] Student Council.

ARTICLE II. ELECTRONIC MEETINGS RULES

Section One. Asynchronous Meetings.

For electronic meetings held using asynchronous communication (e.g., email) the following rules apply:

1. An e-meeting shall extend for no more than two weeks.
2. There shall be at most three main motions considered during a given e-meeting, not counting the approval of minutes. Two motions shall be set out in the notice to the meeting, prepared by the Advisory Board Chairperson after prior informal discussions with interested members; the third may be introduced by any member under new business after the first two are disposed of. The two motions prepared in advance may include motions coming from committees or postponed from the previous meeting. Seconds are not required. The notice of the meeting may also include informational reports from appropriate resources.
3. The minimum time span for consideration of motions, amendments and other secondary motions shall be two academic days from the time of posting. The minimum time span for voting shall be two days from the time requesting the vote, with the announcement of results immediately following.
4. If a quorum, as defined in the Constitution, is not established by members responding within two academic days of the sending of the notice, the meeting shall be canceled. Once established, the quorum is presumed present for the remainder of the meeting. The listserv or grouplist constructed from the responding members shall define the membership present and attending the meeting. Additional members may be added to the listserv or grouplist at any time at their request and will be entitled to a copy of all transactions to date. The Advisory Board Secretary shall administer this aspect of the e-meeting documentation as well as construct formal minutes at the conclusion of the meeting.
5. The two pre-prepared motions may be considered simultaneously although any one email message shall deal with only one motion. The identifying "Date" on each message, in the form of YYMMDD (year-month-day, two numbers each) shall be the date of sending the initial notice to the meeting.

6. Secondary Amendments are not permitted. A Motion to Adjourn shall be out of order except within a previously adopted extension of the original specification of the time span of a meeting.
7. The subject line of email messages will identify the date (as previously described), main motions, debate, and any secondary motions as follows (**boldface** indicates keywords that must be used; *italics* indicates text that varies from motion to motion):
 - e. To introduce a main motion: Date **Main Motion#1** Title: *proposal*
 - f. To offer debate on a motion: Date **Debate (pro/con) on MM#1**
 - g. To amend a motion: Date **Amendment#1 to MM#1**
 - h. To offer debate on an amendment: Date **Debate (pro/con) on A#1 to MM#1**
 - i. To refer the motion to a committee: Date **Refer MM#1**
8. For any email to be considered an official part of the meeting, it must be addressed solely to the Chairperson. No “recognition by the chair” is required for a member to initiate an email related to the pending matter. The Chairperson shall re-send the emails to the attending members via the listserv or grouplist as appropriate for the parliamentary situation at the time.
9. The internet supplied time of transmission imbedded in the email header shall serve to order email messages as to priority and precedence of consideration.
10. If, in the judgment of the Chairperson, matters get too complex or too confusing, the Chairperson may exercise a preemptive postponement – without debate, vote, or appeal – of the pending main motion, and all adhering motions, to the next regular or special in-person meeting.
11. Because of the difficulty in making a point clearly in writing, there are no limitations to the number of debate messages an individual can post on a given issue.

Section Two. Synchronous Meetings.

For electronic meetings held using synchronous communication (e.g., telephone call conferencing, video conferencing) the following rules apply:

1. All votes shall be by roll call, unless otherwise ordered by the membership.
2. Each person shall identify him- or herself every time he or she speaks.
3. The Chairperson has the right, and the duty, to interrupt at any time to assure coherence in the call, including telling members to quiet background noise at their respective end of the line.

ARTICLE III. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The standard order of business for regular meetings of the Advisory Board and each Campus Student Council shall be:

- A. **Roll Call**
- B. **Approval of the Agenda**
- C. **Approval of Minutes**

D. Officer Reports

1. Vice President
2. President
3. Executive Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Recording Secretary

E. Reports of Committees

1. Standing (in order by Bylaws)
2. Special (in order by creation)
3. Campus

F. Constituency Comments

G. Unfinished Business

H. New Business

I. Adjournment

ARTICLE IV. AMENDMENT

Section One. Amendment Process.

Amendment of these Bylaws may be proposed by a member of the NOVASGA Advisory Board. Approval of an amendment requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Advisory Board members present and voting.

Section Two. Adoption.

Unless otherwise specified in the motion, amendments to the Bylaws take effect at the conclusion of the meeting in which they are adopted.