

**CONSTITUTION OF THE HELENA COLLEGE**  
**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**  
**UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the Helena College Student Government Association, in order to encourage constructive relationships among the students, the faculty, and the administration; to supplement and compliment formal education on the Helena College campus; to represent students' interests, needs and welfare within the college campus; to provide for the expression of student opinions and interests to the community at large on issues affecting student life; and to protect the privileges and rights of students herein stated, do hereby establish and affirm this constitution for the Helena College Student Government Association.

**ARTICLE 1 – NAME**

Section 1. The name of this association shall be Helena College Student Government Association, hereinafter called HCSGA.

**ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE**

Section 1. The purpose of the HCSGA shall be to help develop attitudes of and practice for good citizenship, promote harmonious relations with the general public and throughout the school, provide a forum for students' expression, establish student activities, and to promote the general welfare of the school.

**ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. All registered students of Helena College enrolled in one (1) or more credits, and only such persons shall be members of the Association. These members are entitled to hold office in the Presidency or Senate, to participate in the programs and activities provided by HCSGA, and to exercise the various rights and privileges of membership. The structure will include: 1 senator per SGA recognized Club, 1 senator per program of study, 20 Senators 'at large' – to be pulled from any degree program decided by a senator drive, and no program of study or SGA-recognized club will be denied representation.

**ARTICLE 4 – MANAGEMENT & STRUCTURE**

Section 1. The HCSGA shall function through two branches:

- a. An Executive Branch in the form of an Executive Committee or Presidency
- b. And a Legislative Branch in the body of the HCSGA Senate.

Section 2. The Executive and Legislative Branches of the HCSGA shall have the primary duties of gathering and representing student opinions and executing appropriate action.

#### **ARTICLE 5 – EXECUTIVE BRANCH & TERMS OF OFFICE**

Section 1. Responsibilities and Definition

- a. The Executive Branch shall administer the affairs of HCSGA. It shall enforce and put into effect all statutes duly passed by the Senate.
- b. The Executive Branch shall consist of the following:
  - i. Officers:
    1. HCSGA President
    2. HCSGA Vice President
    3. HCSGA Business Manager
    4. HCSGA Secretary
  - ii. Advisory Staff:
    1. Faculty/Professional Staff Advisor to the HCSGA Senate

Section 2. All members of the Executive Branch shall serve with voice and vote, except the Advisor to the HCSGA Presidency and Senate, who shall serve with voice only.

Section 3. Qualifications and terms of Executive Branch Officers:

- a. The Officers shall be enrolled for six (6) semester credits at the time of their election and shall maintain (unless exempted by a 2/3 vote) at least twelve (12) credit hours during their term of office. The officers shall have at the time of their election a 2.5 Grade Point Average and maintain at least a 2.5 G.P.A. during their term in office.
- b. The President and Vice President shall at time they assume office have accumulated a minimum of eighteen (18) semester credits at Helena College University of Montana.
- c. The President and Vice President shall have been members of HCSGA Senate the semester immediately preceding assumption of office.
- d. The Officers' term of office shall begin the day following conclusion of spring semester of the year in which they are elected. The term of office shall end the last day of the next spring semester.

Section 4. Powers and Responsibilities of the HCSGA President. He/She shall:

- a. Act as official representative of HCSGA at all times during his/her term of office.

- b. Be the Representative for Helena College Student Government Association among The Montana Associated Students (MAS).
- c. Have authority to request and receive reports as necessary.
- d. Serve as chairperson of the Executive Branch.
- e. Act as the official HCSGA representative in all statewide student organizations.
- f. Uphold and enforce the constitution.

Section 5. Powers and Responsibilities of the HCSGA Vice President. He/She shall:

- a. Assume the duties of President in his/her absence, if said absence impairs the functioning ability of HCSGA.
- b. Take on duties of the Business Manager in his/her absence.
- c. Act as committee advisor, when necessary, and oversee all HCSGA Senate committees and make recommendations to the President.
- d. Aid the President in any matter that he/she deems necessary.
- e. Develop weekly agendas and call all meetings, regular or special. He/she must notify Senators two days prior to meetings except in the case of emergency/special meetings.
- f. Fulfill other duties as assigned by the HCSGA President.
- g. Be the representative for Helena College Student Government Association among the Montana Associated Students (MAS).

Section 6. Powers and Responsibilities of the HCSGA Business Manager. He/She shall:

- a. Assume the duties of the Secretary in the Secretary's absence.
- b. As needed, inform the HCSGA President, Vice President, Secretary, and Advisor of account balances.
- c. Work with the Advisor in maintaining records of receipts and expenditures of the HCSGA funds.
- d. Inquire with the school accountant in receiving and HCSGA account balance and transaction history.
- e. Perform other financial duties as needed.

Section 7. Powers and Responsibilities of the HCSGA Secretary. He/She shall:

- a. Take minutes of all official meetings of the SGA.
- b. Keep a written record of all meetings of the HCSGA.
- c. Keep a written record of all proceedings of the council.

- d. Receive and manage documentation of committee decisions.
- e. See that faculty advisor, and any other faculty who request it, receive a copy of official minutes.

Section 8. Leadership Training

Within one (1) month of the Assumption of Office by the newly elected Executive Cabinet, the outgoing and incoming Executive Cabinets shall meet under the rules of committee and conduct Leadership Training. During Leadership Training the roles, duties and responsibilities of the Executive Branch shall be presented and discussed with respect to each position of Authority (President, Vice-President, Business Manager and Faculty/Professional Staff Advisor).

- a. Leadership Training shall:
  - i. Not be conducted following the intra-term election of a single (1) Executive Committee member.
  - ii. Be conducted following the intra-term election of two or more (2+) Executive Committee members.
  - iii. Include a reading of this Constitution.

Section 9. Resignation and Impeachment.

Members of the Executive Branch shall be considered impeachable and/or be forced to resign based upon the following:

- a. Missing three (3) consecutive HCSGA Senate meetings unless excused by 2/3 vote of the HCSGA Senate.
- b. Not performing his/her duties as described above.
- c. Not maintaining a 2.5 G.P.A.

**ARTICLE 6 – THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

Section 1. HCSGA Senators shall be chosen from among The HCSGA and shall:

- a. Have either been elected to the position by the membership of their club or to have been appointed by the faculty of their given program (if no club shall exist) and,
- b. Agree to serve as Senator for their program/club for both Fall and Spring Semesters.

Section 2. Senators shall be dismissed from the Senate only after:

- a. Failing to perform his/her duties and a 2/3 majority vote of The HCSGA Senate.

Section 3.

- a. All senators are required to attend senate meetings and may not miss more than 3 meetings per semester; also not miss 3 or more consecutive meetings without the permission of the senate advisor or HCSGA President.
- b. All Senators are expected to participate on at least one committee per semester, attend and participate in two events per semester: fall and spring barbecue, fall and spring highway cleanup, holiday party, and other events which become scheduled throughout the year, e.g. Halloween, Valentines.
- c. If Senators complete their duties as Senator he/she will receive, \$50.00 gift certificate from Helena College Bookstore per semester.
- d. If during any semester there are no committees formed, or not enough committees formed, for all senators to participate in, the \$50.00 bookstore gift card may still be awarded to any senators participating in three events per semester instead of two events and one committee.
- e. Senators rights and privileges will be automatically revoked, including but not limited to, voting rights and the right to wear SGA cords at graduation, if the senator has three unexcused absences per semester.

Section 4. Senators shall attend HCSGA Senate meetings and report to the students of their respective clubs and programs what transpired at the meeting(s).

Section 5. Senators will bring all concerns and requests of students to the attention of the HCSGA Senate.

**ARTICLE 7 – RULES FOR CLUB RECOGNITION BY THE HCSGA**

Section 1. A group receiving HCSGA recognition shall:

- a. Have a faculty or staff advisor,
- b. Have a participating member in the student senate.
- c. If the club wishes to have dues, funds from HCSGA Senate, donations from other sources or fundraising monies, the club must have a financial account with the school to keep balances of money (may be opened before or after recognition at the request of the club advisor and HCSGA Senate advisor).
- d. Have elected officers.
- e. National or state affiliation preferred but not necessary.
- f. Have a Constitution to show structure of the group and the group's mission and purpose. The constitution must be written before recognition is given. The constitution must include the following language:

“Benefits of membership shall not be denied in any manner contrary to federal or state anti-discrimination laws. Organization members are entitled to the rights outlined in Title 49, Chapters One and Two, MCA.”

- g. Have a membership minimum of at least 5 participating members with 85% student membership
- h. Complete the “Application for Student Organization Recognition by HCSGA Senate”
- i. Re-apply for recognition each Academic year.

Section 2. Allocation of money from the HCSGA Senate budget to HCSGA recognized groups will be conducted on a case-by-case basis.

### **ARTICLE 8 – FINANCIAL POLICY**

Section 1. The Student Government Fee is the fee paid by all registered students of HCSGA for the financing of student activities and needs.

Section 2. Financial Regulations

- a. All student funds, those allocated or revenue made from student funds must remain in a student – controlled HCSGA account.
- b. All student organizations requesting funds must be recognized by the HCSGA Senate.
- c. All allocations must be approved by a majority vote of the HCSGA Senate and Executive Cabinet in attendance.

Section 3. Fiscal Authority

- a. HCSGA Senate:
  - i. Shall have authority to investigate, to oversee, and to allocate all Student Government Fee funds.
  - ii. Shall have access to pertinent financial information regarding any Student Government Fee funds.

Section 4. Funding requisition procedure for HCSGA groups and individuals

- a. Groups and individuals applying for HCSGA funds must submit a typed or clearly written proposal, along with any required forms, containing the following:
  - i. Estimated cost(s) and how the funds will be spent.
  - ii. Number of students participating.
- b. Disposition of Funding Proposals

- i. Funding proposals shall be presented to a member of the Executive Branch prior to the weekly meeting of the Executive Branch. Upon reception of funding proposals and before the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting the Executive Branch shall determine, by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, the disposition of each proposal: Ordinary or Emergency.
- c. The HCSGA Senate shall resolve itself into a Quasi-Committee of the Whole to consider all Funding Proposals. Upon agreement or forwarding to a special committee the Quasi-Committee of the Whole shall be adjourned, whereupon:
  - i. Ordinary Funding Proposals shall be tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting,
    - 1. Unless the Senate shall decide by two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend the disposition of an Ordinary Funding Proposal(s) to Emergency,
  - ii. Emergency Funding Proposals shall be considered immediately actionable by the HCSGA Senate or,
  - iii. The HCSGA Senate shall await the findings of the special committee in order to vote.
- d. Following the tabled period for Ordinary Funding Proposals the HCSGA Senate shall:
  - i. Discuss the findings of any special committee and/or,
  - ii. Vote to approve, amend and approve or disapprove any Ordinary Funding Proposal.
- e. Requirements
  - i. Students or groups must return with receipts showing expenses.
  - ii. Students must prove that this event or organization will benefit students from an educational or developmental aspect.
  - iii. No group or individual will be excluded from consideration for funding by HCSGA based on race, religion, sex, physical or mental disability, marital status, or political belief.

**ARTICLE 9 – COMMITTEES**

Section 1. Standing Committees

- a. The Executive Committee: To be composed of the President, Vice President, Business Manager and advisor. The committee shall undertake proposals of money spent, make decisions concerning executive administration not provided for, and any other situation the HCSGA Senate may deem to come under executive control.

- Section 2. Special Committees
- a. May be formed as the need arises and exist until their mission is accomplished.

#### **ARTICLE 10 – Meetings**

- Section 1. Meetings will be presided over by the President.
- Section 2. The Order of Business will be conducted as the President deems necessary, but shall follow parliamentary procedure as outlined in the Robert’s Rules of Order.
- Section 3. Attendance
- a. Roll-call will be conducted by the Business Manager in a verbal manner.
  - b. Meetings will be open to the Student Body.
  - c. Any student having business to discuss may do so through his/her senator.
- Section 4. All meetings must contain a quorum in order to conduct business. A quorum shall consist of eight (8) senators and one (1) officer, or else two-thirds of the seated Senate and one (1) officer, whichever number is smaller.
- Section 5. It shall be the responsibility of all committees to prepare verbal and written minutes after each meeting.

#### **ARTICLE 11 – ELECTIONS**

- Section 1. Yearly elections will be held by the HCSGA.
- a. The elections shall be during the last month of the Spring semester.
  - b. Officers shall be nominated within the HCSGA Senate and elected by majority vote of the Senate and Executive Branch, a quorum being present.
  - c. The HCSGA Senate also has the authority, by majority vote, to transfer the electoral process to the broader Helena College student body, with any student contributing funds to HCSGA qualifying to cast a vote in the election of officers. This is an option the Senate may avail itself of, and not a requirement.
  - d. All qualifications and requirements of Article 5, Section 3 shall be satisfied in order for applications to be accepted and voting to proceed.

#### **ARTICLE 12 – OFFICER REMOVAL AND VACANCIES WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

- Section 1. If a vacancy occurs during the elected term:
- a. President: The Vice President will step into the President’s seat.
  - b. Vice President: The seat will be filled by election within the HCSGA Senate.
  - c. Business Manager: The vacancy will be filled by election within the HCSGA Senate.



- d. Any program not represented by its senator at three consecutive meetings shall elect a new senator.

Section 2. The HCSGA Senate shall have the right to remove any Officer by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote performed by secret ballot within the Senate. If so voted, the term of the Officer in question shall end immediately.

- a. Ballots wherein Senator(s) fail to vote either for or against the issue shall not be counted in the two-thirds (2/3) vote.
- b. Leadership training shall be accomplished, as necessary, according to Article 5, Section 7.

Section 3. Any student government officer or member of the Senate who feels they cannot fulfill their duties of office shall submit a written resignation to the President of the HCSGA.

### **ARTICLE 13 – AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended during the regular year at either a regular or special meeting.

Section 2. Amendments must be submitted in writing at a regular meeting. At the next regular HCSGA Senate meeting, the amendments may be discussed, and a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the HCSGA Senate is required for passage (a quorum being present).