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# Preamble

*With this Constitution, the students of the State University of New York at Cortland do hereby establish an organization of self-government to represent and advocate on behalf of the students of this college, so as to advance their general welfare, ensure academic and social freedom and success, provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and protect the rights of the student body.*

# Article I: Opening

## Section 1: Title & Membership

This organization shall be called the Student Government Association of the State University of New York, College at Cortland, hereafter known as the Student Government Association, or the Student Government. All students, both full-time and part-time, of the State University of New York, College at Cortland, hereafter SUNY Cortland, are its members, hereafter the student body. This constitution shall be the highest authority within the Student Government Association. Any policies or bylaws adopted by the Student Government Association must not contradict with any provisions within this document, and any such actions shall be null and void. Any part of this constitution, or any rule or bylaw adopted by this association that contradicts the policies of the State University of New York or SUNY Cortland or any State and Federal laws shall be null and void.

# Article II: The Executive Branch

## Section 1: The Executive Board

The powers of the executive branch of the Student Government Association shall be vested in the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall be chaired by the President. The Executive Board shall have the power to create and amend its own rules by a 2/3rds majority and to form lesser offices or boards in order to assist the Executive Board in the performances of their duties. Quorum shall require all members of the Executive Board to be present. The default rules of the Executive Board shall be the latest edition of Robert’s Rules of Order; however, the bylaws of this association and the rules voted on by the Executive Board shall have precedence. The Executive Board shall meet at least once a month during the spring and fall semester and shall uphold and enforce the constitution and bylaws of this association.

## Section 2: Officers of the Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of the President, the Vice President, and the Chief Financial Officer. All members of the Executive Board must be a member of the student body, and none may hold an executive position in any Student Government Club. Appropriations shall be made for fair compensation of every Executive Board member. The Executive Board shall be elected by the student body in the spring semester of each year, no later than five weeks before the last day of classes. The term for the Executive Board, and the standard term for any office within the Student Government unless otherwise specified, shall begin on June 1st of the year of their election and end on the following May 31st.

## Section 3: The President

The duties of the President are as follows but are not limited to: to serve as the Chair of the Executive Board and set the Executive Board schedule and agenda; to serve as the Chair of the Cabinet and set the Cabinet schedule and agenda; to serve as the representative of the student body and the Student Government Association on Faculty Senate, or to any other outside body, or to appoint a representative in their stead; to report any decisions of importance made by any of the bodies the Student Government has a seat in to the Executive Board and Senate in a timely manner; and to uphold and enforce the constitution and bylaws of this association.

## Section 4: The Vice President

The duties of the Vice President are as follows but are not limited to: to serve as the Chair of the Senate; to set the Senate agenda and schedule; to serve as the chief liaison between the Student Government Clubs and the Executive Board; to coordinate with, and provide support for all Student Government Clubs; and to uphold and enforce the Constitution and bylaws of this association.

## Section 5: The Chief Financial Officer

The duties of the Chief Financial Officer are as follows but not are limited to: to oversee, steward, and scrutinize all Student Government finances; to ensure financial stability and compliance of the Student Government; to advise the Senate, the Executive Board, and the Student Government Clubs on financial activities and policies; to administer the executive budget in consultation with the other officers of the Executive Board; to give regular reports of SGA financial matters to the Executive Board and Senate; and to uphold and enforce the constitution and bylaws of this association.

## Section 6: The Cabinet

The Cabinet shall consist of all staff who report directly or indirectly to all or part the Executive Board. When a Cabinet position is proposed, the proposal must contain guidelines for the duties of that office and suggestions on how to properly execute that office.

The Executive Board shall have the power to create and amend Cabinet structure unanimously; appoint candidates to paid cabinet positions by a 2/3rds majority, with majority approval from Senate; and appoint students to unpaid cabinet positions by a 2/3rds majority, without any need for approval from Senate.

# Article III: The Legislative Branch

## Section 1: The Senate

The legislative powers of the Student Government Association shall be vested in the Senate. The Senate shall have the power to amend the bylaws of the Student Government Association by a majority vote, subject to the consent of the Executive Board. If the Executive Board vetoes an amendment to the Bylaws, the Senate has the power to override the veto and amend the bylaws by a 2/3rds majority.

The Senate shall also have the power to form Senate committees, and to set their own rules by a 2/3rds majority. The default rules of the Senate shall be the latest edition of Robert’s Rules of Order; however, the bylaws of this association and the rules voted on by the Senate shall have precedence.

The Senate shall meet at least once per month during the spring and fall semesters, and work to facilitate and improve the functioning of the Student Government and SUNY Cortland.

## Section 2: Members of the Senate

The Senate shall consist of a Senator representing each Student Government Club, At Large Senators, a faculty representative, the Student Government Association Advisor, and all members of the Executive Board. All officers of the Senate, except for the Student Government Advisor and the Faculty Representative, must be members of the student body. Every officer of the Senate shall uphold and enforce the Constitution and bylaws of this association.

## Section 3: Club Senators

Each Student Government Club must nominate a representative to serve in the Senate, in accordance with their own constitutions, and the bylaws of this association. Club Senators shall be full, voting members of the Senate and shall serve as the liaison between each club and the larger Student Government. There shall be no more than 100 clubs, and thereby 100 Club Senators. No Club Senator can represent more than one club. The formation or dissolution of any Student Government club must be approved by Senate.

## Section 4: At-Large Senators

There shall be Senate seats apportioned to the campus community at-large. At-Large Senators shall enter office through the processes outlined in the bylaws. Senators shall be elected by the students. No At-Large Senator may vote on behalf of a club or serve as a Club Senator. Any Senator that has not attended enough Senate meetings in a semester, as specified by the bylaws, shall be eligible for removal from office. At-Large Senators must sit on at least 1 committee.

## Section 5: Faculty Representative

The Faculty Representative shall be selected by SUNY Cortland, from their current faculty. The Faculty Representative shall be a full, voting member of the Senate.

## Section 6: Student Government Advisor

The Student Government Advisor shall be appointed, per the State University of New York Guidelines, as a designee of the President of SUNY Cortland. The Student Government Advisor shall not be voting member of the Senate and may not introduce resolutions or motions. The Advisor may participate in the Senate only in an advisory capacity. The Advisor shall also be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Executive Board, Judicial Board, and all other bodies within the Student Government.

## Section 7: The Executive Board in Senate

Executive Board members shall have the power to introduce resolutions and make motions in Senate. Executive Board members shall not have a vote in the Senate, except the Vice President, who may vote only in order to make or break a tie. The Vice President shall have the power to call a special session of the Senate if there is sufficient reason to do so.

# Article IV: SGA Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees

The standing committees within the Senate shall be the Advocacy Committee, Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee, the Review Committee, and the Finance committee. Each standing committee shall consist of at least three and no more than five members, all of whom must be members of the Student Body. At Large Senators can sit on one standing committee.

Section 2: Ad Hoc Committees

The Senate may establish as many ad hoc committees as it may deem necessary to fulfill its duties. Ad hoc committees include Judicial Board and Bylaw Committee. The membership of each ad hoc committee shall be voted on by the Senate, and any member of the student body shall be eligible. No ad hoc committee may have more than 12 members. The chair of each ad hoc committee shall be elected by the membership of the committee at the first committee meeting of the academic year. The Chair of Senate shall serve as the chair of any ad hoc committee until the new chair is elected.

Section 3: Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy Committee shall work to research student concerns, develop potential solutions, work with the Executive Board and all relevant parties on addressing such concerns, conduct oversight of the Executive Board’s advocacy operations, and review any resolution relating to advocacy, or the S.G.A.’s positions on any given issue before any such proposal is presented to Senate. The Advocacy Committee shall be chaired by the Coordinator of Student Advocacy, and the members of the Advocacy Committee shall be the president and students nominated by the Chair with approval from the Senate. The Advocacy Committee will have 4 members.

Section 4: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity Board shall be responsible for finding areas of potential improvement within the area of diversity, equity and inclusion, and advocating for such improvement. The Diversity Board shall be chaired by the Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, or, if designated, the Deputy Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. The members of the board shall be students nominated by the Chair with approval from the Senate. The Diversity Board must have 4 members. The Diversity Board must lead the organization, maintenance, and celebration of the annual Abraham Lincoln DeMond Day event.

Section 5: Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the oversight of S.G.A.’s financial operations, creation of the S.G.A. budget, and the allocation contingency funds. The Finance Committee shall be chaired by the C.F.O. or their designee, and the members of the Finance Committee shall be nominated by the Chair with approval from the Senate. The Finance Committee must have 5 members. If a member of the Finance Committee has a conflict of interest, such as membership in a relevant organization or personal relationship with any relevant person, they may not take part in the proceedings of the Finance Committee.

Section 6: Review Committee

The Review Committee shall set the timeline for elections, review any proposal to create a new club, reactivate inactive clubs, dissolve a club, or amend a club’s constitution, as well as any proposals to amend the Student Government’s constitution or bylaws before any such proposal is presented to the Senate. The Review Committee shall be chaired by the Vice President or their designee, and the members of the Review Committee shall be nominated by the Chair with approval from the Senate. The Review Committee must have 5 members. If a member of the Review Committee has a conflict of interest, such as membership in a relevant organization or personal relationship with any relevant person, they may not take part in the proceedings of the Review Committee.

# Article V: Removal from Office and Succession

## Section 1: Removal

The Senate shall have the power to remove from office any officer within the Student Government that has been found to be in violation the policies of this association, of any club of which they are an officer, or of SUNY Cortland by a 3/5ths majority vote.

## Section 2: Recall

Any Student Government Association officer may be subject to removal from office by recall by the Senate for any reason the Senate may deem reasonable. The Senate may be forced to vote on the removal of an officer by a petition of ten percent of the Student Body. Upon a 2/3rds majority vote of the Senate in favor of removal, the officer shall be deemed removed from office, and the office shall be considered vacant.

## Section 3: Executive Removal

Paid officers of the Cabinet may be removed from their post by a unanimous vote of the Executive Board members. Unpaid officers of the Cabinet may be removed by a 2/3rds majority of the Executive Board.

## Section 4: Presidential Vacancy

In the case of the vacancy of the office of President, or the absence of the President for any reason, the Vice President shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the Presidency until the President can resume their duties or a new President is elected. In the case of the vacancy of the office of President, the election of a new President shall take place in the Senate within one month of the vacancy of the office of President.

## Section 5: Vice Presidential Vacancy

In the case of the vacancy of the office of Vice President, or the absence of the Vice President for any reason, the President shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the Vice Presidency until the Vice President can resume their duties or a new Vice President is elected. In the case of the vacancy of the office of Vice President, the election of a new Vice President shall take place in the Senate within one month of the vacancy of the office of Vice President.

## Section 6: Chief Financial Officer Vacancy

In the case of the vacancy of the office of Chief Financial Officer, or the absence of the Chief Financial Officer for any reason, the Executive Board shall appoint an interim replacement who shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the position of Chief Financial Officer until the Chief Financial Officer can resume their duties, or a new Chief Financial Officer is elected. In the case of the vacancy of the office of Chief Financial Officer, the election of a new Chief Financial Officer shall take place in the Senate within one month of the vacancy of the office of Chief Financial Officer.

## Section 7: Summertime Vacancies & Interim Officers

In the event that an Executive Board position is vacant with the commencement of a new board’s term (i.e. June 1st), the outgoing Executive Board shall appoint an interim officer to serve until an election can be held within the Senate. Such an election must occur within one month of the first day of classes of the fall semester.

## Section 8: Other Cabinet Vacancy

In the case of the vacancy of any appointed officer of the Cabinet, a new candidate shall be nominated by the Executive Board according to the standard procedure for Cabinet appointments.

## Section 10: Club Officer Vacancy

In the case of the vacancy of any Club executive officer, a new officer shall be selected in accordance with that club’s bylaws and constitution.

# Article VI: Rights & Restrictions

## Section 1: General Restrictions

There shall be no bylaws passed that retroactively prohibit or mandate any action, and no sanctions levied more than once for the same incident in violation of any policy.

## Section 2: Rights of the Student Body

All meetings of the Senate shall be open to any member of the student body, and all members of the student body shall have the right to vote in all Student Government elections and referenda.

## Section 3: An Equal Student Government

The SUNY Cortland Student Government Association shall not discriminate on the basis of and shall advocate for the elimination of any discrimination on the basis of: race, color, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex, age, national origin, or disabilities.

# Article VII: Amendment

## Section 1: Amendment

An amendment to the Constitution may be placed on the ballot by written petition of ten percent of the Student Government Association members or by a 2/3rds vote of the Senate. Any amendment shall be ratified through referendum by an 11/20ths majority the of Student Body voting.