

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Student Association

Constitution

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ARTICLE I – PURPOSE:

The purpose of this organization—the Student Association of Southern Adventist University (Southern) established by this Constitution—shall be as follows:

1. To promote Christian fellowship, unity, and a lifestyle of discipleship among the students, faculty, and staff of Southern, building on the foundation of the principles of God's Word and thus producing a community that shall graphically demonstrate through people the everlasting character of the infinite, personal God.
2. To bring together, under central leadership and direction, various co-curricular and extracurricular student activities that contribute to a healthy Adventist Christian collegiate community.
3. To use the physical, financial, and social potential of such a community to develop an individual and collective Christ-like ministry to others.
4. To represent our collective views to the administration, of Southern and to lobby for the interests of the students to the administration of Southern Adventist University.
5. To originate and appropriately fund student projects and activities and to discuss, propose, and initiate action on matters concerning student welfare.
6. To maintain a forum for expressing the views and interests of the students, and to promote and defend the rights of students.
7. Also, to inquire into, and be honestly informed of, the reasons for any Southern-policy affecting students, the process by which it was adopted, and the means by which it might be properly changed.
8. To provide opportunities for students to develop leadership qualities and standards.
9. To recognize such individuals, as deemed necessary, who go above and beyond the call of duty in service to their fellow students, their teachers, and their respective extra-curricular fields, whether on campus or in our region's communities.

Towards the realization of these goals, this organization dedicates its time and energies, following the standards of this Constitution.

ARTICLE II-NAME:

The name of this organization shall be the Student Association of Southern Adventist University which shall be hereafter abbreviated in this Constitution as SA. "Southern Adventist University" shall be hereafter abbreviated in this Constitution as Southern.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP:

Section 1 - Any undergraduate student of the University taking twelve or more hours of class work, shall be a voting member of this organization, and shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges thereof. Any graduate student who takes six or more hours of class work, and is willing to pay the amount of tuition equal to a full time undergraduate student entitles them to all said privileges of membership in the SA General Assembly.

ARTICLE IV - AUTHORITY:

Section 1 - The SA derives its authority, first, from the University; second, from the Seventh-day Adventist Church; and ultimately, from the Protestant Scriptures. The Vice President for Student Services shall serve as the Faculty Coordinator, who shall be an ex-officio member of the SA Senate, the SA General Assembly, and all SA Committees. The Faculty Coordinator shall have veto authority over all actions of the constituent bodies of the SA. The University President shall appoint all SA Faculty Advisors upon consulting with the SA Faculty Coordinator.

Section 2 - The SA Faculty Coordinator shall have veto power over any and all actions of the SA. This veto must be enacted within three days after the actions intended for annulment have been made and may be overruled by the University Student Services Committee by a simple majority vote.

Section 3 -The SA Faculty Coordinator shall be notified by the appropriate SA Officer(s) of any SA Branch meetings at least twenty-four hours in advance of any said meeting.

Section 4 - This Constitution, the Bylaws, and other related SA documents, may be changed at any time and for any reason by a two-thirds vote of the SA Senate membership. The University Student Services Committee, with a majority vote, may enact interim changes between meetings of the SA Senate.

Section 5 - *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority in all matters not defined by this Constitution and other SA documents.

Section 6 - This Constitution, the Bylaws, and other related SA documents shall have full authority to require and prohibit specific actions to be made by the Student Association.

ARTICLE V -THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Section 1 - The SA General Assembly shall consist of Undergraduate University students taking twelve or more hours of class work, per Article III.

Section 2 - Any University graduate student may join the SA General Assembly if he/she is willing to meet requirements in Article III. The said graduate student shall enjoy all the privileges and rights of a SA General Assembly member, except the right to seek election to the SA Offices of the Presidency, the Executive Vice-Presidency, and the Social Vice-Presidency.

Section 3 - When voting, SA General Assembly members must vote in person or through a designated online voting system. Without exception, proxy votes are not allowed in any SA voting action, including all SA elections. In the event that the margin of difference between the first and the second place candidates is within three percent, the candidate may request the Elections Taskforce to review the election results.

Section 4 - Meetings:

1. SA General Assembly meetings may be called by the SA President or by request of the SA Senate. There shall be a minimum of one meeting per semester specifically designated as a general business meeting.
2. A quorum shall consist of those SA General Assembly members present at a regularly scheduled designated business meeting.

Section 5- The voting membership of the SA General Assembly shall consist of undergraduate and selected graduate students of the university, per Article III, Section 1, who choose to participate in any SA Elections and other voting processes.

Section 6 - The voting membership of the SA General Assembly shall have the power to override any action taken by any SA Branch. Petitions for such overrides shall be validated by ten percent of the member's signatures from the SA General Assembly. Such an override shall occur only after a two-thirds majority of the participating members of the General Assembly vote for it.

Section 7 - Each member of the SA General Assembly, per Article III Section 1, shall have the right to express concerns on regulations and policies of the University, question decisions of SA, and access the SA budget, SA Constitution, and other related documents. Such concerns should be brought through the university committee process. For example, a concerned member may request that an item concerning his issue be placed on the agenda of the University Student Services Committee.

ARTICLE VI - THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH:

Section 1 - The powers of the SA Legislative Branch shall be exercised by a unicameral policy-making body known as the SA Senate,

Section 2 - Electoral Districts and Legislative Precincts shall be determined according to the following specifications:

1. The SA General Assembly membership shall be divided into the following specific Electoral Districts: Thatcher Hall, Talge Hall, Thatcher South, Southern Village Student Family Housing Community Students
2. Each Electoral District shall consist of multiple Legislative Precincts.

3. SA Senators must live in the Electoral Districts that contain their Legislative Precincts, but do not have to live in the Precinct they represent in that District, except as specified in Part D of this subsection. Precincts shall be drawn and Senators chosen according to the following specifications:
 - A. Each SA Legislative Precinct is entitled to one SA Senator for every ninety constituents rounded to the nearest whole number.
 - B. After determining the student population for each SA Electoral District, the SA Executive Vice-President shall equally divide the constituents into SA Legislative Precincts. Such SA Legislative Precincts shall be determined two *weeks* before the scheduled SA Senate elections.
 - C. SA Community-at-Large Legislative Precincts shall be determined after *the Senate elections* of the SA Senators-at-Large within the SA Community-at-Large Legislative District.
 - D. In the event that there is no Senator for a precinct, per Article VII section 6.4, after elections, and with no candidates willing to serve from the respective district for the said precinct, the SA Faculty Coordinator and the Executive Vice-President have the power to appoint a Senator from another district, subject to the new Senator's confirmation by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Senate per Article VII section 6.4.

Section 3 - The voting membership of the SA Senate shall consist of one SA Senator from each of the SASAV Legislative Precincts and the SA Executive Vice-President, who is the SA Senate Chairperson and votes only in the case of a tie. All voting actions shall adhere to parliamentary procedure unless otherwise noted.

Section 4 - The powers of the SA Senate shall be as follows:

1. To Revise and ratify the working policies of the SA.
2. To Pass any measures necessary for this Constitution to function, per Article XI, Section 2.
3. To Regulate the appropriations of all SA funds and ratify the annual budget as needed, with a two-thirds vote, per Article X, Section 2.
4. To Review and regulate the programs and stated objectives of the SA, its Constitution, and other SA documents.
5. To Approve or deny all SA Executive Appointments requiring a two-thirds vote.
6. To Override, with a two-thirds vote, any veto of the SA President.
7. To Exercise any constitutional power not specifically delegated to the SA General Assembly, or any other SA Branch.
8. To Special committees may be formed for special projects as deemed necessary by the SA Senate and Executive-Vice President.

Section 5 -The duties of the SA Senators and the descriptions of the SA Committees are more fully explained in Article XIII.

Section 6 - SA Senate Meetings:

1. SA Senate meetings may be called by the SA Executive Vice-President or by a petition signed by one fourth of the SA Senate members. In case of the latter, the sponsoring SA Senator shall notify the membership of the SA Senate and the SA Faculty Coordinator in

accordance with SA procedural guidelines.

2. At least two regular SA Senate meetings are to be held per month during the fall and spring semesters (vacations and test weeks excluded). The SA Executive Vice-President shall schedule these regular meetings in the spring of year that he was elected, prior to the term served. (Make Sure Page Break is right when printed.)
3. A quorum (*two thirds of the voting members*) of the SA Senate must be present at a duly called SA Senate meeting in order to conduct business.
4. All SA Senate meetings shall be open to the SA General Assembly, and notification of such meetings shall be posted in the proper locations and printed in the proper publications.
5. All SA Senate minutes shall be open for public inspection, after a written request by the specific parties involved.
6. All SA Senate meeting agendas must be set at least twenty-four hours in advance.
7. All SA Senate meeting minutes shall be posted on the SA web page within 48 hours of any SA Senate meeting.

Section 7 - The SA Senate's actions may be reviewed or ratified by the SA General Assembly at any time deemed necessary with a simple majority vote, per Article V, Section 6.

ARTICLE VII – THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH:

Section 1 - The powers of the SA Executive Branch shall be exercised by two operating bodies: the SA Cabinet and the SA Directorate.

Section 2 - Limitations:

1. No individual may run for and/or occupy more than one SA Office simultaneously during any given elective term. Nor shall a SA Officer be a SA Senator.
2. Any individual who holds a SA Executive Branch position must reside within thirty miles of Collegedale, Tennessee, during the school year.

Section 3 - The Membership of the SA Cabinet shall consist of the following SA officers:

1. The President.
2. The Executive Vice-President.
3. The Vice-President for Social Activities.
4. The Executive Secretary.
5. The Parliamentarian.
6. Public Relations Director
7. Executive of Finance
8. Associate of Finance
9. Accent Director
10. Memories Editor
11. Strawberry Fest Editor
12. Studio 4109 Representative

Section 4 - The SA Cabinet shall:

1. Act as the operations body to the SA General Assembly and the SA Senate.
2. Carry out specific courses of action as directed by the SA General Assembly and the SA Senate, including the Constitutional duties of the SASAU Executive Branch.
3. Establish the SA working policies for the current fiscal year, and present them to the SA Senate for its approval, *confirmed by two-thirds majority present*.

4. *Develop long range plans* for the SA General Assembly.
Carry out SA operations deemed necessary between meetings of the SA Senate and/or general business meetings of the SA General Assembly.

Section 5 - The duties of the SA Officers are more fully described in Article XIV, Section 3.

Section 6 - SA Executive appointments are made by the SA president and confirmed by a two thirds vote of the SA Senate, per Article VI, Section 4.5. The SA president shall seek consultation from other SA officers as such SA executive appointments warrant. The SA Executive Appointments shall be divided into the following five sections:

1. SA Cabinet Appointments shall consist of appointed SA Officers, as defined by the SA Bylaws, per Article XIV, Section 3 of the constitution. All SA Cabinet Appointments are confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Senate.
2. SA Directorate Appointments shall consist of all SA Representatives to different University Committees, Boards, Councils, and other similar bodies. Such SA Directorate Appointments are made by the SA President and *confirmed by two-thirds majority present of the SASA U Senate.*
3. SA Judiciary Council Appointments consist of four student members-at-large and two full time University faculty or salaried staff members who are appointed by the SA President, on the advice of the Parliamentarian, and confirmed by two-thirds majority present of the SA Senate.
4. SA Legislative Appointments shall occur when a SA Senate seat lacks a candidate during the SA Senate Elections or when a SA Senate seat becomes vacant during the academic school year. When such situations occur the SA Executive Vice President, in consultation with the SA President, shall appoint a replacement to the vacant SA Senate seat *confirmed by two-thirds majority of the SASA U Senate.*
5. SA Special Appointments shall occur when an elected SA Officer is unable to fulfill his/her duties and the SA President appoints a replacement, which must be confirmed by two thirds majority present of the SA Senate.

ARTICLE VIII - THE MEDIA BRANCH:

Section 1 - The powers of the Student Media Branch shall be exercised through the Student Media Board.

Section 2 - The Student Media Board shall perform the following duties:

1. *Every year, to evaluate Article IV of the SA Bylaws.*
2. To serve as the administrative-oversight body of the SA publications and productions.
3. To hire or fire the SA Editors and Producer, with a majority vote. This right is exclusive to the SA Media Board.
4. To intervene, if deemed necessary by the University Office of Student Services, with unethical and/or improper behavior of any member of the Student Media Branch. Likewise, *yearly to develop and enforce a code of professional ethics and standards upon the Student Media Branch.*

Section 3 - The duties of the SA Editors and Producer are fully described by Article XIV, Section 4.

Section 4 - The SA shall recognize the validity of an ethical and responsible free press and support the SA Media Branch in the distribution of informational materials to the SA General Assembly.

Section 5 - The four SA publications and productions shall be as follows: *The Southern Accent* (student newspaper), *The Southern Memories* (student yearbook), and *Festival Studios* (the production company of the annual Strawberry Festival).

ARTICLE IX - THE JUDICIAL BRANCH:

Section 1 - The powers of the SA Judicial Branch shall be exercised by the SA Judiciary Council.

Section 2 - The SA Judiciary Council shall have the following capabilities:

1. Rule on the constitutionality of any action taken by any official or working body of the SA, excluding the SA General Assembly.
2. Overturn said powers by its own free will, with a majority vote.
3. Rule in any SA Elections disputes, if requested to do so by the SA Elections Management Task Force.
4. Review this Constitution and make necessary recommendations to the SA Senate.
5. Serve as a court of arbitration, if called upon to do so.

Section 3 - Membership & Appointment:

The membership of the SA Judiciary Council shall be appointed, per Article VII, Section 6.3. The Faculty advisors shall be appointed by the SA President on the advice of the SA Parliamentarian.

Section 4 - Terms of Office:

Once approved and confirmed to office by the SA Senate, per Article VII, section 6.3, all SA Judiciary Council appointments are *irrevocable* until the end of the academic year. The student members• at-large shall serve until the end of the academic school year unless special circumstances do not permit them to continue their duties.

ARTICLE X - FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:

Section 1 - Appropriations, transactions and disbursements of the SA funds shall proceed in harmony with the current SA budget and the direction of the SA Finance Director of the SA Executive Branch, as defined per Article III of the SA Bylaws.

Section 2 - A budget committee composed of the SA Officers-elect, the SA Faculty Coordinator, and the SA Financial Advisor shall convene within two weeks following the SA General Elections. Within the following four weeks, this committee shall prepare and present a proposed SA general budget for the new fiscal year. The SA Senate shall ratify the said budget, with a modification deemed necessary, by a two-thirds vote.

Section 3 - Audits:

1. The financial records of the SAS AU shall be audited at least once each fiscal year.
2. The SA designated auditor who is auditing the SA financial records shall appear before the SA Senate to present in fill! *detail* the record of the findings.

ARTICLE XI - ELECTIONS:

Section 1 - The following officers shall be elected for a one year term:

1. President
2. Executive Vice President

3. Social Vice-President

Section 2 - Election procedures shall be described in the SA Elections Manual and shall be enforced by the Senate Elections Committee. Amendments to the Elections Manual shall be approved only by a two-thirds vote of the SA Senate.

Section 3 - The term of office shall run from noon on the day of spring commencement to noon on the day of the next spring commencement.

Section 4 - In the event that a vacancy occurs in an elective office, and less than 60% of the term has been served, a *special election* to fill the office will be held. If more than 60% of the term has been served, the SA president shall appoint an individual to serve out the remainder of the term; this individual must be confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Senate before assuming his office. As described in Article III, Section 1.2 of the SA Bylaws, if a vacancy occurs in the office of the SA President, the Executive Vice-President may become President.

ARTICLE XII - REMOVAL FROM OFFICE:

Section 1 - *Vote of No Confidence:*

1. Any *elected* SA Officer or SA Senator may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of *no confidence* by his/her voting constituents. A vote of *no confidence* is called when one of the following situations occurs:

- A. A petition for a vote of *no confidence* is signed by 10% of the voting constituents and presented to the SA Faculty Coordinator.
- B. The SA Senate calls for a vote of *no confidence* by a two-thirds majority vote.
- C. The University Student Services Committee deems such actions necessary. Procedures for the vote of *no confidence* are specified in the SA Elections manual.

Section 2 - SA Cabinet Appointments and SA Directorate Appointments may be revoked by the SA President. This power does not extend to SA Judiciary Council Appointments, SA Legislative Appointments and SA Special appointments.

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS:

Section 1 - Any proposed amendment to this Constitution, the SA Bylaws, and the SA election manual, must be presented at a duly scheduled SA Senate meeting after posting on the SA website. Voting on such an amendment shall take place at a subsequent duly scheduled SA Senate meeting and shall require a two-thirds majority to be enacted. All amendments are subject to two-thirds majority vote by the Student Services Committee of the University. Any SA amendments, once enacted, shall take effect within twenty-four hours, unless otherwise stated in the amendment. Such SA amendments shall only be overturned by a majority vote of the SA SAU General Assembly. Such amendments must be posted on the SA website within one week after the amendment has been enacted.

Section 2 - Convenient, working copies of this Constitution, the SA Bylaws, Election Manual, and of other related documents shall be made and updated as necessary after amendments to the original documents have been made.

Section 3 - Any SA Constitutional amendments may be overturned by a majority vote of the voting members of the SA General Assembly. Such a vote shall take place if a petition of 100 signatures is submitted by said members.

ARTICLE XIV - THE BYLAWS:

Section 1 - The Bylaws shall function within the SA in a working capacity that is in harmony with the constitution. The guidelines for the Articles of the Bylaws shall be established within 30 days of the SA General Elections by the respective SA Officers-elect; these guidelines shall be established in coordination with the University Office of Student Services. These Bylaws shall be subjected to approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the sitting SA Senate and by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Judiciary Committee. *These Bylaws and their related documents shall be considered constitutional in nature.*

Section 2 - The duties of the SA Senators and the oversight responsibilities of the SA Senate Committees shall be defined in Article II of the SA Bylaws. The SA Executive Vice-President• elect and the SA Parliamentarian-designate shall establish the guidelines for Article II of the Bylaws within 30 days of the SA General Elections, as mentioned in Section 1.

Section 3 - The duties of the SA President, the SA Executive Vice-President, the SA Social Vice-President and other SA Officers shall be defined in Article III of the SA Bylaws. The SA President-elect, the SA Executive Vice-President-elect, and the SA Vice• President-elect for Social Activities shall establish the guidelines for Article III of the SA Bylaws within 30 days of the SA General Elections, as mentioned in Section 1.

Section 4 - The duties of the **SA Editors and Producer shall be defined in Article IV of the SA Bylaws. The SA Media Board, per Article VIII, Section 2.3, shall establish the guidelines for Article IV of these Bylaws within 30 days of the SA General Elections, as mentioned in Section

1. The University Office of Student Services shall advise in such matters concerning the SA Media Branch.

ARTICLE XV - DOCUMENT OF FINAL PRECEDENCE:

This Constitution shall take precedence over its predecessors and other formerly used, associated documents by the authority of the SA General Assembly and/or the University Senate.

ARTICLE XVI - ENACTMENT:

This Constitution shall have full force and effect following passage, per Article IX, section 2.4, and after approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Senate.

ARTICLE XVII - CONCLUSION:

The Student Association of Southern Adventist University shall strive to uphold the ideals set forth by this Constitution and to carry out such duties as it is empowered to do.