

**Constitution of the
Policy Student Government Association (PSGA)**

**Initially Approved May 2005
Modified April 2006**

Article I. Name and Affiliation

This Constitution governs the affairs of the Policy Student Government Association (hereinafter: PSGA), which is the student government of the University of Maryland School of Public Policy (hereinafter: MSPP) at the University of Maryland at College Park (hereinafter: UMCP).

Article II. Purposes

The PSGA:

1. represents the needs and interests of all registered MSPP students before the administration and faculty of MSPP and UMCP;
2. works to create and enhance a sense of community among the students, faculty, administration, and staff of MSPP;
3. does not discriminate against any students on the basis of race, color, creed, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, disability, marital status, personal appearance, age, national origin, political affiliation, or the exercise of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
4. understands and is committed to fulfilling its responsibility to abide by all policies of MSPP and UMCP.

Article III. Membership

1. Membership in the PSGA is a privilege. All Members are responsible, collectively and individually, for implementing Article II. Failure to do so may result in removal according to the procedures described in Article VII.
2. Normally, the PSGA comprises ten (10) Members:
 - a. eight (8) elected Representatives;
 - b. the Chair of the Standing Committee on Student Diversity (hereinafter: SCSD); and
 - c. the President of Graduate Women in Public Policy (hereinafter: GWIPP).
3. Membership in the PSGA is open to all students currently enrolled in MSPP and is granted in the following manner:

- a. by election, according to the procedures described in Article IV;
- b. ex officio, according to the procedures described in Article V-A; or
- c. by temporary appointment, according to the procedures described in Article V-B.

4. All PSGA Members, with the exception of Emeritus Members, have full voting rights and equal standing within the PSGA.

5. Current PSGA Members may use the authorities described in Article IV-C, Article V-B, and Article VI to ensure that Membership include all of the following categories of MSPP student:

- a. at least one (1) Entering Master Student, defined as a student (i) who is currently enrolled in any MPM or MPP program at MSPP and (ii) who has been so enrolled for no more than ten (10) calendar months;
- b. at least one (1) Continuing Master Student, defined as a student (i) who is currently enrolled in any MPM or MPP program at MSPP and (ii) who has been so enrolled for at least ten (10) calendar months; and
- c. at least one (1) PhD Student, defined as any student (i) who is currently enrolled in the PhD program at MSPP, (ii) regardless of length of enrollment.

6. The eight (8) elected Representatives are appointed to the following offices and duties, according to the procedures described in Article VI:

- a. President. The President presides over Meetings and is normally the primary spokesperson for the PSGA.
- b. Vice-President. The Vice-President presides over Meetings in the absence of the President and normally serves as liaison to MSPP students serving on MSPP and PSGA committees.
- c. Treasurer. The Treasurer maintains the finances of the PSGA, including the preparation of budgets and funding requests, and gives a budget and funding report to the PSGA at least once per semester.
- d. Secretary. The Secretary keeps the minutes of Meetings and subsequently distributes them to Members.
- e. Two (2) GSG Representatives. The GSG Representatives will attend GSG meetings and assigned committee meetings and report to PSGA on upcoming and past actions undertaken during the last and upcoming GSG meetings. The GSG Representatives represent the interests of MSPP students as determined by the PSGA as a whole.
- f. One (1) Social Chair. The Social Chair is responsible for coordinating social functions for the student body. (S)he can delegate responsibility for specific functions to other Members and/or SPP students as necessary.
- g. One (1) Service Chair. The Service Chair is responsible for coordinating community service projects and identifying synergies with the greater College Park community.

Other duties of these offices may be assigned by the Members as needed.

7. Elected Representatives serve a term whose length is governed by Article IV.

8. Ex Officio Members serve a term whose length is governed by Article V-A.

9. Appointed Members serve a term whose length is governed by Article V-B.
10. Emeritus Members serve a term whose length is governed by Article V-C.

Article IV. Voting and Elections

PSGA Representatives are chosen during Elections in October and April.

A. October Election

1. All Entering Students are eligible to be nominated to serve as a Representative of the PSGA for a Half-Year Term.
2. An Entering Student is defined as a student (i) who is currently enrolled in any degree or certificate program at MSPP and (ii) who has been so enrolled for no more than ten (10) calendar months, beginning on the first day of classes during the semester in which the student first enrolled in that program.
3. A Half-Year Term is defined for the purposes of Article IV-A as a term that begins when October Election results are officially announced by the Election Proctor and ends when April Election results are officially announced by the Election Proctor, or upon the Representative's withdrawal from MSPP, whichever comes first.
4. All Entering Students are eligible to nominate one or more candidates to be PSGA Representatives. Nominations are submitted to a non-voting Election Proctor, appointed by the PSGA President, one week prior to the opening of the election polls.
5. Nominees are given the opportunity to accept their nomination and thereby become a Candidate, or to withdraw from consideration.
6. All Entering Students are eligible to vote. Each Entering Student gets one vote, and no Entering Student gets more than one vote.
7. Two (2) Representatives are chosen in the October Election. Each voter may therefore select up to two (2) Candidates per ballot.
8. Polls open on the Monday of the first full week of October and remain open for seven days. All voting is done by secret ballot, to be collected and tabulated by the non-voting Election Proctor. All votes are submitted in written format, by either paper or electronic ballot.
9. The two (2) Candidates receiving the highest number of votes win the election and become PSGA Representatives for a Half-Year Term. In the case of a tie among three or more first-place candidates or among two or more second-place Candidates, a run-off election between those Candidates takes place as soon after the regular election as practical, and the Candidate with the

higher vote count becomes a Representative. The Election Proctor announces the two winners within 48 hours of the close of the polls.

B. April Election

1. Two (2) Representatives are elected for a Half-Year Term and six (6) Representatives are elected for a Full-Year Term.

a. All currently enrolled MSPP Students who will not graduate from MSPP before the end of six (6) months following the April election are eligible to be nominated to serve as a Representative of the PSGA for a Half-Year Term.

b. All currently enrolled MSPP Students who will not graduate from MSPP before the end of twelve (12) months following the April election are eligible to be nominated to serve as a Representative of the PSGA for a Full-Year Term.

2. A Half-Year Term is defined for the purposes of Article IV-B as a term that begins when April Election results are officially announced by the Election Proctor and ends when October Election results are officially announced by the Election Proctor, or upon the Representative's withdrawal from MSPP, whichever comes first.

3. A Full-Year Term is defined for the purposes of Article IV-B as a term that begins when April Election results are officially announced by the Election Proctor and ends when the following April Election results, which take place twelve (12) months later, are officially announced by the Election Proctor, or upon the Representative's withdrawal from MSPP, whichever comes first.

4. All MSPP Students are eligible to nominate one or more candidates to be PSGA Representatives. Nominations are submitted to a non-voting Election Proctor, appointed by the PSGA President, one week prior to the opening of the election polls.

5. Nominees are given the opportunity to accept their nomination and thereby become a Candidate, or to withdraw from consideration. Candidates are required to specify whether they will run for a Full-Year Term or a Half-Year Term.

6. All MSPP Students are eligible to vote. Each Student gets one vote, and no Student gets more than one vote.

7. Eight (8) Representatives are chosen in the April Election. Each voter may therefore select up to two (2) Half-Year Term Candidates and six (6) Full-Year Term Candidates per ballot.

8. Polls open on a Monday in April and remain open for seven days. All voting is done by secret ballot, to be collected and tabulated by the non-voting Election Proctor. All votes are submitted in written format, by either paper or electronic ballot.

9. The two (2) Half-Year Term Candidates receiving the highest number of votes win the election and become PSGA Representatives for a Half-Year Term. In the case of a tie among three or more first-place candidates or among two or more second-place Candidates, a run-off

election between those Candidates will take place as soon after the regular election as practicable, and the Candidate with the higher vote count becomes a Representative.

10. The six (6) Full-Year Term Candidates receiving the highest number of votes win the election and become PSGA Representatives for a Full-Year Term. In the case of a tie among seven or more first-place candidates or among six or more second- or lower-place Candidates, a run-off election between those Candidates takes place as soon after the regular election as practical, and the Candidate with the higher vote count becomes a Representative.

11. The Election Proctor announces within 48 hours of the close of the polls.

C. Special Circumstances

1. If the list of Candidates for any election is such that the requirements of Article III Section 5 would not be met under any scenario of voting outcomes, current Members may modify the requirements of Article IV-A or Article IV-B to ensure the representation required by Article III Section 5 for that election only. Any such modifications must be minimal, and must be consistent with the letter and spirit of the remaining Articles of this Constitution.

2. If the outcome of any election is such that the requirements of Article III Section 5 are not met, current Members may use the authority granted in Article V-B to ensure the representation required by Article III Section 5.

3. If no PhD Student can be found who is willing to fill the position mandated by Article III Section 5, and current Members have made all reasonable efforts under Article IV-C Sections 1 and 2 to fill the position with a PhD student, then the requirements of Article III section can be considered satisfied until the next election.

4. If the number of nominees equals the number of open Representative positions, then the election shall proceed as designated in Article IV-A for an October election and Article IV-B for an April election. Any candidate that receives at least two votes is considered a winner and becomes a PSGA Representative for the designated term (Half-Year or Full-Year).

5. If the number of nominees exceeds the number of open positions by one (1), then current Members may, at their discretion but prior to voting, choose to allow any candidate that receives at least two votes to be considered a winner and become a PSGA Representative for the designated term (Half-Year or Full-Year). For purposes of this section only, Member discretion supersedes any run-off election provisions in Articles IV-A and IV-B. This increase in membership size is limited to the designated term and shall not be considered a violation of Article III Section 2. Any such allowance under this section must be consistent with the letter and spirit of the remaining Articles of this Constitution.

D. Contested Elections

1. The Election Proctor must keep all ballots for two months following the announcement of the results of the election.
2. If any candidate for any election wishes to contest the results of the election, that candidate may submit a protest in writing, within one (1) week of the announcement of the election results, to the current Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or the current Executive Dean, who will appoint an Election Auditor to recount the ballots within four (4) business days of the submission of the protest.

Article V. Ex Officio, Appointed, and Emeritus Membership

A. Ex Officio Membership

1. The President of GWIPP is an ex officio Member of the PSGA; her term of office in the PSGA coincides with her term of office as President of GWIPP. GWIPP is an MSPP student organization whose membership and internal governance is independent of the PSGA and whose President is chosen according to its own internal rules.
2. The Chair of the SCSD is an ex officio Member of the PSGA; the Chair's term of office in the PSGA coincides with his or her term of office as Chair of the SCSD. The SCSD is a permanent, PSGA-appointed committee of international, minority, and other interested students currently enrolled in MSPP. Appointment to the SCSD is open to all international and minority students who request it, and the PSGA may not deny any such requests. The Chair of the SCSD is chosen by the appointees of the SCSD according to the SCSD's own internal rules.

B. Appointed Membership

If, at any point after an election and before the start of the nominating period for the following election, there are fewer than six (6) Elected Members of the PSGA, or the requirements of Article III Section 5 are not being met, the current Members may, at their discretion and under the procedures described in Article VI, appoint a current MSPP Student to serve a temporary term of Membership that begins upon appointment and ends no more than six (6) months later or at the official announcement of election results, whichever comes first.

C. Emeritus Membership

All PSGA Members who have served a Full-Year Term, as defined in Article IV-B Section 3, are considered to be an Emeritus Member of the PSGA for the three (3) months immediately following the expiration of their Full-Year Term. Emeritus Members serve as advisers and may attend all PSGA meetings, but may not serve in the offices described in Article III Section 6 and do not have any voting or consensus rights as described in Article VI.

Article VI. Operating Procedures

1. The PSGA makes decisions by consensus to the extent possible.
2. If PSGA Members cannot reach consensus on any particular issue, the decision will be made by majority vote among the Members.
3. If a vote by Members on a particular issue results in a tie, the President of the PSGA may cast a second vote to break the tie.

Article VII. Removal

1. Under extraordinary circumstances, any PSGA Member who violates any term of this Constitution, who fails to carry out the responsibilities described in Articles II and III, or who disrupts the functioning of the PSGA may have their Membership in the PSGA revoked.
2. Membership is revoked if a super-majority of the Membership of the PSGA votes in favor of revocation at a meeting attended by a quorum.
 - a. A quorum is defined, for the purposes of this article, as all current Members of the PSGA except for the Member whose revocation is under consideration; that Member, however, retains full rights of Membership, including attendance and voting rights, at the meeting to discuss and vote on revocation.
 - b. A super-majority is defined, for the purposes of this article, as the total number of current PSGA Members, including the member whose revocation is under consideration, minus two (2): i.e., if more than two Members vote against revocation, the motion to revoke fails.

Article VIII. Finances

The PSGA seeks to independently finance its activities and events. Additionally, PSGA Members seek annual financial support from the MSPP Administration for general operating costs and for specific events.

Article IX. Amendments

1. This Constitution is binding to all Members of PSGA, as well as to Nominees to and Candidates for Membership in the PSGA.
2. Any currently enrolled MSPP Student may propose one or more amendments to the Constitution by submitting them in writing to the MSPP President, who will place them on the agenda of the next Membership Meeting.
3. Upon approval by the Members, under the operating procedures described in Article VI, the proposed amendment(s) becomes effective immediately.

Article X. Membership as of May 2005

1. The MSPP Students who are Officers or Representatives of the PSGA on the date of this Constitution's approval immediately become Members and Representatives of the PSGA, as defined according to the terms of this Constitution.
2. The terms of Jocelyn Lewis and Robert Lamb expire immediately upon the announcement of the results of the October Election of 2005, or upon their withdrawal from MSPP, whichever comes first, and immediately become Emeritus Members, as described in Article V-C.
3. The terms of Allison Albert, Bill Varettoni, Greg Ordun, and Joel Landry expire immediately upon the announcement of the results of the April Election of 2006, or upon withdrawal from MSPP, whichever comes first, and immediately become Emeritus Members, as described in Article V-C.
4. The MSPP Students who are GSG Representatives on the date of this Constitution's approval immediately become Members of the PSGA; the term of their Membership under this article expires immediately upon the announcement of the results of the October Election of 2005. This section does not apply to the persons listed in Article X Section 3.
5. Dana Coelho, who is President of GWIPP, on the date of this Constitution's approval immediately becomes an Ex Officio Member of the PSGA.
6. Immediately upon this Constitution's approval, Members must announce the creation of the SCSD and appoint current MSPP Students to sit on the Committee; those students will select the Chair of the SCSD, who immediately becomes an Ex Officio Member of the PSGA. This must be completed before May 15, 2005.
7. Article X remains in effect until April 30, 2006.

Article XI. April 2006 Changes

1. Articles III and IV were changed to reflect the addition of two (2) Full-Year Term Representatives to be chosen in the April election.
2. Article III Section 6 was amended to include two additional offices, Social Chair and Service Chair.
3. The word, "two" was dropped from Article IV-B Section 11, correcting an error.
4. In the interest of student morale and organizational flexibility, Sections 3, 4 and 5 of Article IV were added.