

THE CONSTITUTION OF BIOLA UNIVERSITY

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

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# Preamble

We, the students of Biola University, aim to advance the interests and well-being of our student body. To this end, we entrust our power in chosen representatives. We seek to foster the growth of each individual within the Body of Christ, encourage community engagement and student participation, promote resources for spiritual development, represent the student body’s voice, and commit to academic excellence and intellectual growth. Thus, we do ordain and hereby establish this Constitution for the Student Government Association of Biola University.

# Article I: Name and Membership

## Section I: Name

1. This organization shall be called the Biola University Student Government Association, referred to as SGA.

## Section II: Membership

1. All undergraduate students currently serving in any paid or unpaid position within SGA.
2. The SGA Advisor shall serve both as a member of the SGA and as a staff member of Biola University.

# Article II: Purpose of Organization

## Section I: Purpose

1. The purpose of SGA is to serve and represent the student body, promote their welfare and interests, foster understanding within the Biola community, and cultivate a Christ-centered environment.

## Section II: Authority

1. The student body grants SGA the authority to govern and manage a percentage of the Student Fee, as well as to carry out the responsibilities outlined in this Constitution and its Bylaws.

## Section III: Structure

1. SGA is composed of the Cabinet, Senate, Coordinators, Administrative Assistants, and Mentees.
2. The SGA Advisor shall provide oversight over the entire SGA.
3. The President shall oversee the Cabinet.
4. The Senior Vice President shall oversee the Senate.
5. The Cabinet, including but not limited to the President and Senior Vice President, shall be responsible for overseeing the Mentees, should they be selected.

Section IV: Maintenance

1. The Senior Vice President shall be responsible for maintaining the Constitution and Bylaws, including correcting grammatical errors and adjusting spacing, whether by adding or deleting. However, the substance and wording of the material shall not be altered in any manner whatsoever.
   1. Minor formatting modifications, such as adjusting spaces whether by adding or deleting, modifying bullet points and lettered lists to ensure proper organization of clauses and points, and refreshing the Table of Contents to reflect these changes, do not need to be recorded in the Amendment and Revision Log.
   2. All maintenance activities, regardless of nature, must be reported to the Senate at the earliest scheduled Senate meeting following the completion of the adjustment.
   3. If the Senate finds the maintenance adjustments unsatisfactory, they may motion for a vote to rescind the adjustment, which will require a simple majority to pass.

# Article III: Communication with the Student Body

## Section I: Public Knowledge

1. All SGA legislation shall be considered public knowledge and will be made available on request. The process and manner in which this is accomplished shall be determined by the Bylaws.
   1. Legislation is defined as any proposal or matter that is brought before the Senate for a vote. In practice, legislation encompasses all formal actions taken by the Senate. Legislation is functionally equivalent to a Student Initiative Proposal, as both represent formal measures that require Senate approval to be enacted or adopted.

# Article IV: SGA Advisor

## Section I: Purpose

1. The SGA Advisor shall serve as the guide to the members of SGA and ensure that the SGA budget, hiring, and policies follow standard University and SGA procedure.
2. The SGA Advisor shall advise the SGA President in overseeing the organization's operations, with a focus on leadership, mentorship, and the professional development of all SGA members.

## Section II: Leadership

1. The SGA Advisor is a Biola staff member appointed by the Biola University Vice President of Student Development.

## Section III: Responsibilities

1. The SGA Advisor shall provide mentorship to SGA Cabinet members and engage with SGA staff as needed to foster leadership development, support conflict resolution, and ensure effective collaboration.
2. The SGA Advisor is responsible for offering accountability, oversight, and guidance to both the SGA President and Cabinet members. Serving as the liaison between SGA and the Biola University Administration, the SGA Advisor has the following responsibilities:
   1. Collaborates with SGA leadership to facilitate the Student Fee Audit.
   2. Advocates for the preservation of the student-led ethos of the organization, ensuring alignment with the Biola University mission statement and maintaining the integrity of student governance within the broader university structure and oversight.
   3. Acts as an advisor to the SGA President, providing guidance without managing the daily operations of the organization.
   4. Ensures oversight to safeguard the University from potential liability issues.
   5. Partners with the Vice President of Human Resources to ensure compliance with Biola University community standards during staff hiring.
   6. Holds final authority over SGA policies, budgets, and hiring decisions, always acting in the best interests of both the SGA as a governing body and the Biola University student body.

# Article V: The Cabinet

## Section I: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Cabinet is to provide leadership and direction to the SGA and assist in executing its responsibilities and initiatives.

## Section II: Authority and Function

1. Cabinet members shall oversee their respective departments and serve as liaisons between SGA and both the administration and the student body.

## Section III: Leadership

1. The Cabinet shall fall under the authority of the President.

## Section IV: Offices

1. The Cabinet shall consist of the following offices:
   1. President
   2. Senior Vice President
   3. Vice President of Marketing and Communications
   4. Vice President of Finance
   5. Vice President of Administration
   6. Vice President of Intercultural Development and Representation
   7. Vice President of Human Resources

# Article VI: The Senate

## Section I: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Senate is to represent, inform, and empower students by providing various tools and resources. This includes, but is not limited to, managing the student fee through proposals, utilizing Senators' discretionary funds, effectively collaborating with administrative partners, engaging with students through advocacy initiatives, and participating in SGA committees.

## Section II: Authority

1. The Senate shall hold legislative and representative authority within SGA. It has the power to vote on amendments to the SGA Constitution and Bylaws, ensuring decisions align with the interests of the student body, upholding transparency and authority.

## Section III: Leadership

1. The Senate operates under the guidance and oversight of the Senior Vice President, who provides leadership and support to ensure its effective functioning.

## Section IV: Offices

1. The Senate shall consist of the following offices:
   1. Alpha Senator
   2. Blackstone Senator
   3. Block Senator
   4. Bluff Senator
   5. Commuter Senators (2)
   6. Hart Senator
   7. Hope Senator
   8. Horton Senator
   9. Sigma Senator
   10. Stewart Senator

# Article VII: Marketing and Communications Department

## Section I: Purpose

1. The Marketing and Communication Department is responsible for overseeing strategic communication, creative services, video marketing, branding, photography, web strategy, and public relations. It also manages SGA brand marketing and handles all internal and external communications related to SGA.

## Section II: Offices

1. The Marketing and Communications Department consists of the following offices:
   1. Vice President of Marketing and Communications
   2. Media Coordinator

## Section III: Leadership

1. The Marketing and Communications Department shall fall under the authority of the Vice President of the Marketing and Communications

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## Section IV: Hiring, Function, and Responsibilities

1. The hiring, functions, and responsibilities for all offices within the Marketing and Communications Department are outlined in the Bylaws.

# Article VIII: Finance Department

## Section I: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Finance Department shall be to oversee all SGA finances. It shall facilitate consistent financial transparency and literacy in SGA.

## Section II: Offices

1. The Finance Department consists of the following offices:
   1. Vice President of Finance
   2. Financial Controller

## Section III: Leadership

1. The Vice President of Finance shall preside over the Finance Department.

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## Section IV: Hiring, Function, and Responsibilities

1. The hiring, functions, and responsibilities for all offices within the Finance Department are outlined in the Bylaws.

# Article IX: Administration Department

## Section I: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Administration Department is to create a welcoming and supportive environment, provide information, and maintain organization.

## Section II: Offices

1. The Administration Department consists of the following offices:
   1. Vice President of Administration
   2. Administrative Assistant (A minimum of two Administrative Assistants is required.)

## Section III: Leadership

1. The Administration Department shall fall under the authority of the Vice President of Administration.

## Section IV: Hiring, Function, and Responsibilities

1. The Vice President of Administration enforces office policies and manages the SGA office space and the Student Union Building (SUB).
2. Further hiring, functions, and responsibilities for all offices within the Administration Department are outlined in the Bylaws.

# Article X: Intercultural Development and Representation Department

## Section I: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Intercultural Development and Representation Department is to provide leadership and direction to SGA regarding topics of diversity that impact the student experience at Biola as it relates to Biola’s mission, vision, and aspiration statements. The department also exists to be a liaison between the student body, SGA, and administration in the areas of Intercultural Development and Representation.

## Section II: Offices

1. The Intercultural Development and Representation Department consists of the following offices:
   1. Vice President of Intercultural Development and Representation.
   2. Intercultural Development and Representation Coordinator.
   3. Any unpaid volunteer staff deemed necessary by the Vice President of Intercultural Development and Representation.

## Section III: Leadership

1. The Vice President of Intercultural Development and Representation shall oversee the Intercultural Development and Representation Department and act as the Chair of the Student Committee of Diversity Affairs (SCDA).

## Section IV: Hiring, Function, and Responsibilities

1. The hiring, functions, and responsibilities for all offices within the Intercultural Development and Representation Department are outlined in the Bylaws.

# Article XI: Human Resources Department

## Section I: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Human Resources Department shall be to streamline SGA's hiring process and to ensure efficient internal practices.

## Section II: Offices

1. The Human Resources Department consists of the following offices:
   1. Vice President of Human Resources.

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## Section III: Leadership

1. The Vice President of Human Resources shall preside over the Human Resources Department.

## Section IV: Hiring, Function, and Responsibilities

1. The hiring, functions, and responsibilities for all offices within the Human Resources Department are outlined in the Bylaws.

# Article XII: Elections

## Section I: Elections and Terms of Office

1. The SGA elections shall be conducted during the Spring semester and held no later than seven weeks prior to the end of the semester.
2. The term of office for elected positions shall be one academic year, unless otherwise specified by the Bylaws.
3. Guidelines on Elections and Terms of Office are outlined in Bylaw VIII: Elections and Terms of Office.

# Article XIII: Recall

## Section I: Recall Petition for President and Senior Vice President

1. The President or Senior Vice President currently holding office may be subject to a recall vote by a petition signed by members of the Student Body.
   1. A recall petition requires signatures from 10% of the student body and must be verified by the Chair of the Elections Committee. Verification involves cross-checking each signature to ensure it aligns with the corresponding name and student identification number of current students before a vote can be called.
   2. The Chair of the Elections Committee will assume the sole responsibility of verifying the signatures.
2. Recall Vote for SGA President or Senior Vice President
   1. After the recall petition is verified, the Chair of the Elections Committee shall oversee a recall vote.
   2. The recall vote shall occur within one week of the verification of signatures and shall have at least ten percent (10%) of the total Student Body’s participation.
   3. A simple majority of the votes cast shall be necessary in order for the recall to pass.
   4. In the case of a passed recall vote, the SGA President or Vice President position shall be declared vacant and filled according to the Bylaws.
   5. If the Chair of the Elections Committee is unable to perform these duties for any reason, the SGA Advisor will assume these responsibilities.
3. Recall Petition for Senators
   1. Any Senator currently holding office may be subject to a recall vote by a petition signed by members of their constituency.
   2. A valid recall petition requires signatures from ten percent (10%) of their total constituency.
   3. Before a recall vote may be called, the signatures included with the petition shall be verified by the Chair of the Elections Committee.
4. Recall Vote for SGA Senators
   1. After the recall petition is verified, the Chair of the Elections Committee shall oversee a recall vote.
   2. The recall vote shall occur within one week of the verification of signatures and shall require at least ten percent (10%) of their total constituency.
   3. A simple majority of the votes cast shall be necessary in order for the recall to pass.
   4. In the case of a passed recall vote, the senator's office shall be declared vacant and filled according to the Bylaws.
   5. If the Vice President of Human Resources is unable to perform these duties for any reason, the SGA Advisor will assume these responsibilities.

# Article XIV: Impeachment

## Section I: Impeachment Defined

1. Impeachment is the process by which a member of the Senate, President, Senior Vice President, or a member of the Cabinet can be removed from office. Impeachment may occur through a unanimous vote of the Senate or by a written article of impeachment.

## Section II: Grounds for Impeachment

1. One should be able to discern the appropriate course of action based on the individual committing the violation and the specific circumstances involved.
2. Guidance for what counts as grounds for impeachment may be determined by Bylaw VIII: Employee Conduct.

## Section III: Impeachment Process

1. A motion to impeach may only be introduced during an official Senate meeting and must meet the quorum requirements specified in Bylaw IV: Procedure of Senate.
2. Impeachment shall be carried out either through a vote in the Senate or by means of a written article of impeachment, as detailed below:
   1. The President, Senior Vice President, members of the Cabinet, and Senators currently holding office may be subject to removal from office, otherwise known as impeachment, by a unanimous vote of the Senate.
      1. If a Senator makes a motion to impeach another member of the Senate, a unanimous vote must be reached without including the proposed Senator's vote and the vote against whom the impeachment motion is directed.
      2. To determine unanimity, abstentions do not count as dissenting votes and will not prevent unanimity. However, if all Senators abstain, the motion will fail for lack of sufficient support.
      3. If two-thirds (⅔) of the Senate abstains from voting, the motion will fail for lack of sufficient support.
      4. All Senators must be present if a motion to impeach is made.
   2. The sitting President, Senior Vice President, and members of the Cabinet may be subject to impeachment upon receipt of a written article of impeachment, signed by all Senators, submitted to the SGA Advisor.
      1. Senators may be subject to impeachment upon receipt of a written article of impeachment, signed by all Senators with the exclusion of the Senator against whom the article of impeachment is written, submitted to the SGA Advisor and Senior Vice President.

# Article XV: Referendum

## Section I: Referendum Defined

1. Referendum is a process through which the Student Body can overturn any legislation passed by the Senate, or any motion or article of impeachment. This occurs through a petition, verification, and a referendum vote by the Student Body.

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## Section II: Referendum Process

1. Referendum Petition
   1. Any legislation passed by the Senate can be overturned by a referendum vote of the Student Body.
   2. Any motion or written article of impeachment can be overturned by a referendum vote of the Student Body.
   3. A written petition for a referendum vote shall be created and signed by members of the Student Body. To validate a referendum vote petition, the number of signatures necessary shall be ten percent (10%) of the Student Body and must be submitted within two weeks of the official passing of the legislation.
   4. Before a referendum vote is called, the petition and signatures shall be verified by the Vice President of Human Resources.
      1. If the Vice President of Human Resources is unable to perform these duties for any reason, the SGA Advisor will assume these responsibilities.
2. Referendum Vote Process
   1. After the referendum petition is validated, the Vice President of Human Resources shall oversee a referendum vote. This vote will occur within one week of the verification of the petition signatures.
   2. The number of signatures required to validate the vote for referendum shall be ten percent (10%) of the Student Body.
   3. A simple majority of the votes cast shall be necessary in order for the referendum to pass.

# Article XVI: Amendments to the Constitution

## Section I: Approval

1. A constitutional amendment shall become effective upon its ratification.

## Section II: Process of Amending

1. Any member of the Student Body may propose an amendment to the Constitution by submitting a written proposal to the Senate.
2. An amendment may also be proposed by submitting a petition, signed by at least 10% of the Student Body, to the Senior Vice President. The Senior Vice President will verify the signatures before calling for a vote on the amendment.
3. Once the petition is verified, the Senior Vice President will oversee a vote on the amendment. This vote will take place within one week of the petition’s verification.  
   To validate the vote, at least 10% of the Student Body must participate in the vote. A ⅔ supermajority of the votes cast is required for the amendment to be ratified.
4. Instead of a Student Body vote, the amendment may be ratified by a ⅔ supermajority vote of the Senate.
   1. Senators are required to vote on constitutional amendments unless they are absent.
   2. Abstentions due to absence will not affect the required voting threshold. Members who are unable to attend a meeting may request to have their concerns about the proposal recorded.
5. If the Senior Vice President is unavailable to carry out these duties, the President or a designated appointee will assume these responsibilities.
6. All constitutional amendments must be documented in the SGA Amendment and Revision Log. The record shall include the amendment number, the specific section(s) amended, a description of the amendment, the reason for the change, the name of the proposer, and the date of approval, including the month, day, and year.

# Article XVII: Constitutional Ratification

## Section I: Process of Proposal

1. Constitution Revision Proposal
   1. Any member of the Student Body may propose a new draft of the Constitution by submitting it in writing to the Senior Vice President for consideration in the Senate.
      1. Any proposal for a revised Constitution submitted by a student body member must be accompanied by a petition. The petition must include signatures from at least 10% of the Student Body. The Senior Vice President will verify the signatures before proceeding to introduce the revision for consideration within the Senate.
   2. Any Senator or Cabinet member may propose a new draft of the Constitution by submitting it in writing to the Senior Vice President for consideration in the Senate. The Senior Vice President will verify the proposed revision before proceeding to introduce the revision for consideration within the Senate.
      1. Verification will be determined by the Senior Vice President’s discretion.
      2. If the proposed revision is not verified and introduced for consideration, the Senior Vice president must:
         1. Distribute the denied proposal to the Senate with a clear reason for rejection.
         2. Ensure distribution occurs within 24 hours of the Student Initiative Proposal deadline.
         3. Senators may motion to reconsider the denied proposal at the next Senate meeting, requiring a second.
         4. If the motion is granted, the Senate will vote with a simple majority to hear the proposed Constitution in the form of a written Student Initiative Proposal the following week.
         5. If a new Constitution is being proposed through a written Student Initiative Proposal, the proposer can use the proposed Constitution itself as the official written form of the proposal.
         6. If the motion fails, the proposal will not be heard.

## Section II: Consideration

1. Consideration of a verified proposed revision to the constitution will undergo the process of a Student Initiative Proposal.

## Section III: Process of Ratification

1. Upon consideration within the Senate, a ¾ supermajority vote of the Senate will ratify the Constitution.
2. The Constitution shall become effective upon its ratification by the Senate and a signature of approval from the SGA Advisor.
3. If at any time the Senior Vice President is unable to perform these duties, the SGA Advisor or their designated appointee may assume responsibility.
4. All constitutional ratifications must be documented in the SGA Amendment and Revision Log. The record shall include the amendment number, the specific section(s) amended, a description of the amendment, the reason for the change, the name of the proposer, and the date of approval, including the month, day, and year.

# Article XVIII: SGA Amendment and Revision Log

## Section I: Purpose and Documentation Requirements

1. The SGA Amendment and Revision Log is a record of all amendments and revisions made to the Constitution and Bylaws of SGA. This log shall serve as a transparent, accessible document for the Student Body, reflecting the evolution of SGA's governing documents.

## Section II: Updates to the Log

1. All constitutional amendments must be documented in the SGA Amendment and Revision Log. The record for each amendment shall include the following details:
   1. Amendment number (e.g., Amendment #1, Amendment #2, etc.).
   2. Specific section(s) amended in the Constitution or Bylaws.
   3. A description of the amendment.
   4. The reason for the change.
   5. The name of the proposer(s).
   6. The date of approval (month, day, and year).
2. The log shall be updated promptly following any amendment, revision, or ratification of the Constitution or Bylaws.

## Section III: Revision of the Log’s Format and Content

1. In the event that the format or content of the SGA Amendment and Revision Log needs to be changed or corrected (for clarity, structure, or accuracy), such changes must be proposed and voted on by the SGA Senate. A two-thirds majority vote is required to approve any change to the log's format or content.
2. Corrections to inaccuracies in the information recorded (such as errors in dates, names, or descriptions) may be made by the Senate upon a motion to correct the log. Any corrections made will be clearly noted, and the reason for the change will be documented.

## Section IV: Log Maintenance

1. The SGA Amendment and Revision Log shall be maintained and regularly updated by the Senior Vice President or their designated appointee. The Senior Vice President, or the designated appointee, is responsible for ensuring that the log is kept accurate and up-to-date whenever changes, revisions, or amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws occur. This includes making necessary updates promptly and ensuring that the log remains publicly accessible.

## Section V: Public Access

1. The SGA Amendment and Revision Log shall be publicly available to all members of the Student Body and shall be posted on the official SGA website alongside the SGA Constitution and Bylaws.

# Article XIX: Record of Establishment, Ratification, and Revisions

## Section I: Constitution Review and Revision

1. A comprehensive review of the Constitution and Bylaws shall be conducted every two years, and any necessary amendments or updates must be implemented.
2. All revisions or ratifications to the Constitution or Bylaws require formal endorsement through the signatures of the SGA Advisor, President, Senior Vice President, and all members of the Senate, which must be affixed on the final page of the document.
   1. Signatures are only required for ratifications of the Constitution, not for constitutional amendments. To record amendments and revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws, use the SGA Amendment and Revision Log.

## Section II: Record of Establishment, Ratification, and Rewrite

1. Established and Ratified October 17, 1975
2. Rewritten March 18, 2014
3. Rewritten January 24, 2025

## Section III: Record of Revisions

1. Revised April 25, 1980
2. Revised November 1, 1982
3. Revised March 7, 1991
4. Revised December 4, 1992
5. Revised March 2, 1995
6. Revised April 30, 2004
7. Revised April 19, 2005
8. Revised October 17, 2006
9. Revised March 27, 2007
10. Revised May 9, 2007
11. Revised December 4, 2007
12. Revised April 27, 2011
13. Revised June 19, 2013
14. Revised March 2, 2016
15. Revised March 3, 2017
16. Revised April 27, 2023

OFFICIAL SIGNATURES OF RATIFICATIONS AND APPROVAL







