

Constitution for the Student Planning Association at Georgia Tech

Updated Aug 1, 2009

Revised March 30, 2018

Article 1 – Name

This organization will be known as the Student Planning Association at Georgia Tech, hereafter referred to as the Student Planning Association.

Article 2 – Purpose

Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of the Student Planning Association is to:

- A. Provide a student-focused organizational setting in which students may discuss and promote planning and related issues
- B. Serve as the liaison between students and the Department of City and Regional Planning
- C. Provide professional development opportunities for students through panels, workshops, and other skills-building events
- D. Facilitate student attendance at the American Planning Association and Georgia Planning Association annual conferences

Article 3 – Membership

Section 1: Eligibility

- A. Members of the Student Planning Association will be Georgia Tech students who meet the eligibility requirements for participation in extra-curricular activities as stated in the GT Catalog and SGA Policies. Only Georgia Tech students can vote and hold office.
- B. All full-time students at Georgia Institute of Technology are eligible for membership in the Student Planning Association regardless of their race, sex, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, class, physical disability, mental disability, age, or any other distinguishing characteristic.
- C. There will be no maximum number of members.

D. Membership will take effect when an interested party pays all dues set for the semester.

Section 2: Expiration of Membership

- A. Suspension of membership privileges will be enacted for any member unless dues are paid.
- B. All membership privileges will be reinstated as soon as membership dues are paid.
- C. Termination of membership privileges will occur upon an individual's graduation or withdrawal from the university.

Section 3: Policy Responsibility

- A. All members of the Student Planning Association are responsible for the knowledge and understanding of the chapter constitution, amendments, and chapter policies. Chapter policies may be found in the booklet of policies, which is a separate document from this constitution. Both documents will be located in the City Planning section of the Architecture library.

Article 4 – Officers

Section 1: According to the GT Catalog, students can only run for, and hold office if they are in good standing with the Institute (academically and non-academically).

Section 2: An Executive Board comprised of Officers will govern the activities of the organization, and the specific duties of the Officers will be as follows:

- A. President: The President shall [1] be the executive officer of the Executive Board and will have general supervision of the affairs of the Student Planning Association and will preside at meetings. The President will represent the organization at conferences, conventions and faculty or alumni meetings; [2] shall develop and maintain a working knowledge of chapter bylaws and operating procedures; [3] and shall chair the Professional Development Committee, as described in Article 7, Section 11.
- B. Vice-President: The Vice-President shall [1] be the junior executive officer and will act on the behalf of the President in the event of his/her absence; [2] shall carry out other duties as assigned by the President; [3] and shall coordinate and help to organize the chapter committee structure while action as the liaison between them and the rest of the chapter; [4] and shall chair the Governance Committee, as described in Article 7, Section 12.
- C. Secretary: The Secretary shall [1] record the proceedings of each meeting, distribute the minutes to the members, and maintain the membership roster; [2] shall keep accurate records, reports, and minutes of chapter meetings and other such meetings; [3] shall be

responsible for the accuracy and maintenance of the chapter files and records; [4] and shall chair the Publicity Committee, as described in Article 7, Section 6, and post notices about chapter meetings and events and communicating chapter information to written media, electronic media, and other academic departments.

- D. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall [1] maintain records of all revenue and expenditures and ensure that generally accepted accounting practices and monetary controls are in place; [2] shall collect and preserve all monies due to the chapter and disperse money as needed for the payment or reimbursement of costs to the chapter; [3] shall prepare a chapter budget before the start of the academic year that is voted on by the executive committee; [4] shall insure that all dues and monies owed to the chapter are done so in a timely manner; [5] and shall chair the Fundraising Committee, as described in Article 7, Section 5.
- E. Social Chair: The Social Chair shall [1] present a timetable of social events at the beginning of term; [2] shall organize volunteers and manage the social events for the term including the Silent Auction; [3] shall endeavor to ensure healthy interaction within and outside the City and Regional Planning program; [4] and shall chair the Social Committee, as described in Article 7, Section 8.
- F. Social Justice Chair: The Social Justice Chair shall [1] organize chapter community service events; [2] shall choose with the executive board's permission a metro Atlanta neighborhood to perform at least two community service events a year; [3] Shall chair the Social Justice Committee, as described in Article 7, Section 9.
- G. Alumni Chair Georgia Planning Association /American Planning Association (hereafter "Alumni Chair GPA/APA") Representative: The Alumni Chair GPA/APA Representative shall [1] represent the chapter at all GPA/APA meetings; [2] shall report to the chapter important and pertinent information concerning planning and related issues; [3] shall serve as the primary lobbyist for the chapter and student interests on the state and national level; [4] shall act as a liaison between students and alumni; [5] and shall chair the Alumni GPA/APA Committee as described in Article 7, Section 7.
- H. Webmaster: The Webmaster shall [1] be responsible for the maintenance of the Student Planning Association website; [2] shall be responsible for publication of the organizational newsletter; [3] and shall chair the Public Relations Committee, as described in Article 7, Section 10.
- I. First-Year Representative: The main responsibility of the First-Year Representative is to act as a liaison between First-Year students and the Student Planning Association.
- J. PhD Representative: The main responsibility of the PhD Representative is to act as a liaison between PhD students and the Student Planning Association.

Section 3: Eligibility for Office

- A. The above list of elected officers can be added to by a two-thirds vote of the active chapter
- B. Eligibility for holding an elected office in the chapter shall require full time Masters or PhD student status with the City and Regional Planning Program and active membership of the Student Planning Association.
- C. PhD students taking full time course load are considered eligible for office provided they continue to maintain their full- time status for the course of their term.
- D. Eligibility for holding an elected office in the chapter shall require the complete payment of required dues.

Article 5 – Officer Elections

Section 1: Election of Officers

- A. Elections for the following positions shall take place in the Spring semester roughly one month before finals: [1] President; [2] Vice-President; [3] Secretary; [4] Treasurer; [5] Social Chair; [6] Social Justice Chair; [7] Alumni Chair Georgia Planning Association/American Planning Association Student Representative; [8] and Webmaster. The actual date, to be determined by executive council vote, should convene on a regularly scheduled meeting day.
- B. In the first two weeks of September (fall semester) of each academic year, elections for the following positions shall take place: [1] first-year representative and [2] PhD representative.
- C. The candidate for each office receiving a majority vote of members at the elections meeting will be considered the victor. If no candidate receives a majority vote, then there will be a run-off between the two candidates with the most votes. The candidate who receives the most votes will be the victor. If there is a tie, the highest ranking outgoing officer not involved in the run-off will make the final decision. No member can be elected to more than one position on the Executive Board at one time.
- D. Election of officers shall take place by written or electronic ballot only.
- E. Prior to voting for each office, the candidates shall give a written statement including: [1] an introduction of themselves; [2] reasons why they are suitable for the position; [3] and their goals for the upcoming year. Each of these areas shall be 1 paragraph and all statements are limited to 3 paragraphs.

- F. The out-going President will tally ballots with confirmation by the Vice-President.
- G. Election results will be posted no later than two days after the election with no prior notification to candidates.
- H. If a position remains unfilled after the elections process the President will appoint a member to the position or re-assign duties to another officer.

Section 2: Term of Office

- A. The term of office for elected chapter officers shall be for one (1) year from April to April of the next year. The term is effective two weeks following election results.
- B. Following each election, existing officers will inform and train incoming officers for a period of two weeks in April.
- C. Offices vacated for any reason, prior to the end of the one (1) year term shall be filled immediately according to Article 5, Section 1 of this constitution. The newly elected officer shall serve out the remainder of the one (1) year term.

Article 6 – Officer Removal

- A. If an officer fails to maintain Institute requirements as stated in the GT Catalog and Article 4 Section 1, they shall resign immediately.
- B. Any elected or appointed officer may be impeached for not fulfilling his/her duties as an officer, according to Article 4, Sections 1, 2 and 3 of this constitution.
- C. Any officer can be impeached by two-thirds vote of the active chapter only after formal charges have been presented against the officer, and the officer has been given a chance to respond to those charges.
- D. The charges of impeachment will be presented one chapter-meeting prior to the actual vote for impeachment.
- E. If the President is removed or resigns, the Vice-President will take his/her place in the interim until the next election cycle. All other officers will be nominated by the membership and voted on in accordance with Article 5 at the next meeting. In this case, the victor will take office immediately following election and will fulfill the term of the officer that he or she is replacing.

Article 7 – Committees

Section 1: Chapter Committees

- A. The chapter committees of the Student Planning Association are necessary for the general organization and operation of the chapter.
- B. The standing chapter committees of the Student Planning Association shall be: [1] Executive Committee; [2] Fundraising Committee; [3] Publicity Committee [4] Social Committee; [4] Social Justice Committee; [5] Public Relations Committee; [6] Alumni GPA/APA Committee; [7] Governance Committee; and [8] Professional Development Committee
- C. The chapter President can also create up to 10 ad-hoc committees that will meet for one year from April to April. The next President can disband several of these committees and choose his/her own committees. The maximum number of ad-hoc committees is limited to 10 at any time.

Section 2: Eligibility for Committees

- A. Eligibility for being a committee member shall require the complete fulfillment of all financial obligations to the chapter.
- B. Eligibility for holding a committee chair position shall require active knowledge of the bylaws and complete fulfillment of all financial obligations to the chapter.

Section 3: Term of Chair

- A. The term of each chair shall be until Spring elections. The term is effective immediately following the appointment.
- B. Following the appointment, existing chairs, if available, will inform and train incoming chairs.
- C. Offices vacated for any reason, prior to the end of the one (1) year term shall be filled immediately according to Article 4, Section 4 of this constitution. The newly elected chair shall serve out the remainder of the one (1) year term.

Section 4: The Executive Committee

- A. The Executive Committee of the Student Planning Association shall be composed of ten (10) members that will include the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Webmaster, Alumni Georgia Planning Association/ American Planning Association representative, Social Chair, Social Justice Chair, 1st year representative, and PHD representative.

- B. The chapter president shall serve as chairperson of the Executive Committee and oversee the operation of all Executive Committee meetings.
- C. All decisions by the Executive Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members. The president will only vote in the event of a tie.
- D. The Executive Committee is responsible for the organization and effective functioning of the chapter. It is the vehicle through which all chapter efforts, projects, decisions, meetings, and recommendations are discussed and carried forward for the general welfare of the chapter and its members. In regard to this, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to: [1] Develop and review chapter policies and bylaws, with ultimate approval and implementation subject to a two thirds vote of the active chapter; [2] Act on behalf of the chapter regarding questions and policies concerning the chapter when a chapter vote is not attainable; and [3] Act as the official governing body of the chapter whereas all bills, motions, and recommendations are subject to approval by the Executive Committee before being presented to the entire chapter for a vote.
- E. The Executive Committee can override a vote of any other committee by a majority vote.
- F. Any decision by the Executive Committee may be appealed only during a chapter meeting. The decision may be overruled by a two-thirds vote of the active chapter, a quorum must be present.

Section 5: Fundraising Committee

- A. The Fundraising Committee of the Student Planning Association shall include chapter Treasurer as a chair, and any volunteer members.
- B. The primary purpose of the Fundraising Committee shall be to develop and implement viable projects and activities that will eventually help to raise money for the betterment of the chapter.
- C. The Chairperson will oversee the operation of the Fundraising Committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by the committee
- D. All decisions made by the Fundraising Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members.

Section 6: Publicity Committee

- A. The Publicity Committee of the Student Planning Association shall include chapter Secretary as chair, and any volunteer members
- B. The primary purpose of the Publicity Committee shall be to produce announcements, papers, and electronic materials, including the weekly newsletter, detailing SPA business.
- C. The Chairperson will oversee the operation of the Publicity Committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by the committee.
- D. All decisions made by the Publicity Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members.

Section 7: Alumni Georgia Planning Association/ American Planning Association Committee

- A. The Alumni GPA/APA Committee of the Student Planning Association shall include chapter Alumni GPA/APA Representative as chair, and any volunteer members
- B. The primary purpose of the Alumni GPA/APA Committee shall be to act as a liaison between students and alumni and aid in conference participation, including travel, student presentations, and professional communication.
- C. The chairperson will oversee the operation of the Alumni GPA/APA Committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by the committee.
- D. All decisions made by the Alumni GPA/APA Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members

Section 8: Social Committee

- A. The Social Committee of the Student Planning Association shall include chapter Social Chair and any volunteer members.
- B. The primary purpose of the Social Committee shall be to organize, present, and implement social events for the chapter.
- C. The chairperson will oversee the operation of the Social Committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by the committee.
- D. All decisions made by the Social Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members.

Section 9: Social Justice Committee

- A. The Social Justice Committee of the Student Planning Association shall include chapter Social Justice Chair and any volunteer members.
- B. The primary purpose of the Social Justice Committee shall be to implement volunteer activities, ensure equality in the chapter, and conduct training when appropriate.
- C. The chairperson will oversee the operation of the Social Justice Committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by the committee.
- D. All decisions made by the Social Justice Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members.

Section 10: Public Relations Committee

- A. The Public Relation Committee of the Student Planning Association shall include chapter Webmaster and any volunteer members.
- B. The primary purpose of the Public Relation Committee shall be to update the website, social media outlets, and other platforms spotlighting current research and practice, news on Alumni, and upcoming events.
- C. The chairperson will oversee the operation of the Public Relation Committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by the committee.
- D. All decisions made by the Public Relation Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members.

Section 11: Professional Development Committee

- A. The Professional Development Committee of the Student Planning Association shall include the chapter President and any volunteer members.
- B. The primary purpose of the Professional Development Committee shall be to plan networking and career-focused events, establish correspondence with alumni, and facilitate joint programs with the City and Regional Planning Department and other organizations.
- C. The chairperson will oversee the operation of the Professional Development Committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by the committee.
- D. All decisions made by the Professional Development Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members.

Section 12: Governance Committee

- A. The Vice President shall chair the Governance Committee of the Student Planning Association.
- B. The primary purpose of the Governance Committee shall be to assess the manner in which the Executive Committee, Student Planning Association as a whole, and the School as a whole are run. This includes determining how each fit into the University as a whole. This position will coordinate with the Program Director.
- C. The chairperson will oversee the operation of the Governance committee and be held responsible for all actions and recommendations made by this committee.
- D. All decisions made by the Governance Committee must be passed by a majority vote of the members.

Article 8 – Meetings

Section 1: Chapter Meetings

- A. Regularly scheduled chapter meetings of the Student Planning Association shall be determined by a majority vote of executive committee subject to change by a majority vote of active members.
- B. Special chapter meetings may be called by the Executive Committee at any time it feels necessary to do so. A notice of 24 hours must be given prior to the scheduled meeting time for the special chapter meeting.
- C. A quorum must be present for the passage or defeat of any motion, recommendation, bill, or policy amendment. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the active chapter.

Section 2: Voting

- A. All active chapter members of the Student Planning Association shall have the ability to vote on issues raised in chapter meetings.
- B. All questions or decisions shall be decided by a chapter vote under the following conditions: [1] a majority vote of the chapter shall decide all questions or decisions; [2] All voting procedures, whether majority of two-thirds, shall take place using the number of active members present at the meeting, given a quorum is also present; [3] Any 5 (five) members may request a secret ballot vote, whereas all other voting shall be by show of hand, except when voting for elected offices; and [4] The President shall only vote to break a tie vote on a particular issue.

- C. There shall be no voting by proxy. All votes must be cast at the time of election by the person wishing to cast a vote on a particular issue.

Article 9 – Advisor

- A. A full-time salaried GT faculty or staff member will serve as Advisor to the organization.
- B. Nominations for Advisor will take place within the Executive Board. An Advisor will be chosen within two weeks of a vacancy. The Executive Board will choose the Advisor by a majority vote and invite him/her to serve as Advisor for the next academic year.
- C. During officer elections, the organization will vote on whether to continue the Advisor appointment or not. The vote must be a majority of those voting in order to retain the Advisor for the next academic year.
- D. The duties of Advisor include: meeting with organization officers, reviewing the yearly budget, signing all required paperwork and advising on issues of risk management, organization leadership, and Georgia Tech policy.
- E. The Advisor can be removed for not carrying out the duties and expectations as defined in this document. Any member can bring concerns to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will meet with the Advisor to discuss the concerns. After this meeting, the Executive Board will vote on whether to remove the Advisor. If there is a majority vote, then the Advisor will be removed.
- F. If an Advisor steps down, is removed, or is not re-appointed, the Executive Board will follow the process stated in Article 9, B.

Article 10 – Finances

Section 1: Chapter Dues

- A. Dues will be determined at the beginning of the year by a majority vote of the Executive Board but will not be less than the required amount designated by the Student Government Association Joint Finance Committee Policy. Dues are to be paid by the third week of the semester or by the second week of membership.

Section 2: Assessments

- A. The chapter may assess each member, or participating member, in a particular event, project, or trip a like amount of money to help cover the costs of the event, project, or trip.

Section 3: Stipends

- A. The chapter may pay stipends in the following amounts to the following positions. [1] President-\$1000 [2] Vice President-\$600 [3] Treasurer, Secretary, Webmaster, Alumni Chair GPA/APA Representative, Social Chair, Social Justice Chair-\$300 each. [4] The First-Year Representative and PhD Representative -\$250 each.
- B. Stipends may only be paid if the chapter has at least \$5150 in the bank account with all monies paid at the end of the year. A minimum of \$1000 must be kept in the bank for the next academic year.
- C. Any increase in the payments or number of people receiving payment must be approved by an ad-hoc Stipend Committee.

Article 11 – Constitutional Amendments

Section 1: Amendment Procedure

- A. Amendments to the constitution shall be submitted by members of this organization to the Executive Board in writing for consideration.
- B. Written notification of the proposed amendment to all voting members must be made by mail or email, at least two weeks in advance of any vote on changes in the constitution.
- C. A two-thirds vote of members present will be required for adoption where a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the active chapter.
- D. Amendments are subject to the approval of the Student Government Association and the Student Activities Committee.

Section 2: Waving a constitutional statement

- A. This constitution may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the active chapter.
- B. A policy of this organization may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the active chapter.

Article 12 – Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules of Order will be used in instances not covered in this constitution.

Policies of the Student Planning Association

Article 1: Purpose

Section 1: Purpose

- A. The policies stated here are common practices that the chapter has observed but are subject to change.

Article 2: Finances

Section 1: Expenditures

- A. All expenditures exceeding the amount of \$10,000 will be voted on by SPA general membership (see voting section of the SPA constitution).

Article 3: Meetings

Section 1: General Meetings

- A. Regularly scheduled chapter meetings shall be determined at the start of each semester. Any deviation from this schedule shall be announced at least three days prior to the scheduled meeting time.

Section 2: Executive Committee Meetings

- A. Regularly scheduled meetings of the executive committee shall be held every other week. The regular meeting day and time shall be determined by the members of the executive committee based upon their availability.

Article 4: Newsletter

- A. The newsletter shall be written and distributed weekly by the chapter Secretary.

Article 5: Conferences

Section 1: APA National Conference

- A. For the APA National Conference, SPA may reimburse, partially or fully, travel and lodging fees for paid SPA members.
- B. To be eligible to receive monetary assistance for attendance at the national conference, all interested parties must be paid SPA members in good standing.

Section 2: Eligibility

- A. If an individual student in the planning department wishes to attend a conference (excluding the aforementioned national conference), SPA will assist that person in reducing their personal costs of attending the conference. This assistance may include looking for transportation, getting a volunteer/pay back position at the conference and the like.
- B. SPA will not donate money directly to individuals, regardless of SPA membership, to attend any conference.

Article 7: Amendments

Section 1: Date of Confirmation

- A. The last amendment to this document took place March 2018. The President was Rebecca Van Dyke, confirmed by Sigal Carmenate, Social Justice Chair.