

# LSSA Constitution

## Constitution of the La Follette School Student Association

Amended April 23, 2019

### **Article I – Name and Definitions.**

#### *Section 1. Name.*

The name of this organization is the La Follette School Student Association.

#### *Section 2. Definitions.*

1. “Association” means the La Follette School Student Association.
2. “Executive Board” means all of the officers of the association.
3. “Member” or “student” means a student enrolled in any of the degree programs of the La Follette School.
4. “Officer” means the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Program Liaison, Fundraising Coordinators, Community Service Coordinators, Social Coordinators, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinators, and Graduation Coordinators.

### **Article II – Purpose.**

The purpose of the association is to maintain and improve the academic, social, and professional qualities of life for students of the Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs.

### **Article III –Membership.**

The association may not require payment of dues as a condition of membership.

### **Article IV – Officers.**

*Section 1.* The officers of the association are the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, two Diversity and Inclusion Coordinators (one representing first-year students and one representing continuing students), two Fundraising Coordinators (one representing first-year students and one representing continuing students), two Community Service Coordinators (one representing first-year students and one representing continuing students), two Social Coordinators (one representing first-year students and one representing continuing students), and two Graduation Coordinators (one representing first-year students and one representing continuing students).

*Section 2.* Except for the first-year officers, officers shall be members who have completed at least nine credits of La Follette School coursework. The first-year officers shall be members in their first year of study of La Follette School coursework.

*Section 3.* All officers shall attend full membership and Executive Board meetings; inform the President of planned absence from an Executive Board meeting at least one day in advance; and meet with their successors to discuss their responsibilities and transfer records, no later than fourteen days after the graduation ceremony.

*Section 4.* The President shall preside over meetings and chair the Executive Board; attend La Follette School faculty and staff meetings; gauge and communicate the opinions of students, representing their interests to faculty and staff; communicate the perspectives, initiatives, and priorities of faculty and staff to students; coordinate the association's participation in the La Follette School Welcome Day and Visit Day; develop the budget for the following school year with the Treasurer; and excuse the absence of officers.

*Section 5.* The Vice President shall gauge and communicate the opinions of first-year students, represent their interests before the Executive Board and, in collaboration with the President, represent their interests before the La Follette School administration; lead Executive Board initiatives not included in officer duties; and support the activities of other officers. The Vice President shall preside over meetings or chair the Executive Board in the absence of the President and temporarily assume the duties of the President if the President is unable to do so.

*Section 6.* The Secretary shall conduct association elections, coordinate monthly events for students to interact with La Follette School faculty and staff, create agendas for full membership and Executive Board meetings, reserve meeting spaces, record and distribute meeting minutes, maintain the association's mailbox and email account, and create and maintain the La Follette School student directory.

*Section 7.* The Treasurer shall maintain the association's financial records, provide monthly printed financial reports at Executive Board meetings, develop and maintain the annual budget with the President, and make expenditures as directed by the Executive Board.

*Section 8.* The Fundraising Coordinators shall raise funds in support of association activities. These funds will be raised through various means at the discretion of the Fundraising Coordinators.

*Section 9.* The Graduation Coordinators shall plan the La Follette School graduation ceremony, including selection of a venue, choosing a speaker, and distributing tickets. The Graduation Coordinators shall also solicit input from graduating members regarding the graduation ceremony and conduct the election for student and staff speakers at graduation.

*Section 10.* The Community Service Coordinators shall connect members with service opportunities on the UW-Madison campus and throughout the Madison area, promote the service of students through La Follette School faculty and staff, and maintain student participation records for service recognition at graduation.

*Section 11.* The Social Coordinators shall organize extracurricular activities to promote the development of personal and professional relationships among members. Such activities will be identified at the discretion of the Social Coordinators.

*Section 12.* The Diversity and Inclusion Coordinators shall head the association's diversity and inclusion efforts; serve as standing members of the La Follette School Student Working Group; coordinate the annual La Follette School climate survey; maintain the association's Resource

Guide; engage and work with La Follette School students, staff, and faculty to further these goals; and participate in La Follette School student, staff, and faculty efforts to this effect.

## **Article V – Officer Transitions.**

### *Section 1. Election of Officers.*

1. An election shall be held for all officers except the first-year officers during the spring semester, beginning no earlier than March 1 and concluding no later than fourteen days before the date of the graduation ceremony.
2. An election for the first-year officers shall be held during the fall semester. The nomination process for first-year officers shall begin no later than fourteen days after the first day of the semester. The final election shall be held no later than twenty-eight days after the first day of the semester. If no first year student accepts a nomination for an open first-year position before the twenty-eight day deadline, any current officer may nominate a first-year student for an open position. Any first-year student that accepts a nomination will be voted on by members during the subsequent Executive Board meeting. Nominees win the position by plurality vote.
3. Special elections shall be held as provided by this article.
4. Candidates for first-year officers may be nominated and voted upon only by first-year members.
5. The Executive Board shall establish policies for the conduct of elections. These policies shall be consistent with this constitution.
6. For an office with one holder, members may cast one vote, and only one person may be elected. For an office with multiple holders, members may cast as many votes as there are individuals to be elected.
7. Officers shall be elected by plurality vote of the members continuing the following year. Unopposed candidates shall be automatically elected.
8. In the event that an election ends in a tie, an immediate runoff will be held between the tied candidates. If top candidates remain tied after the runoff, the candidates may serve as co-officers of the position at the discretion of the Executive Board.

### *Section 2. Term of Office.*

1. The term of all officers except the first-year officers begins with the conclusion of the previous term and spans the following academic year.
2. The term of the first-year officers begins with their election.
3. The term of all officers concludes no later than fourteen days after the graduation ceremony, on a date determined by the Executive Board; notwithstanding the definition of “member” provided in article I, officers remain members until that date.

*Section 3.* No member may hold more than one office at a time.

*Section 4. Vacancy of Office.*

1. Offices are vacated by removal or resignation.

2. If the office of President is vacated, the Secretary shall temporarily assume the office of the President until a new President is elected by the continuing students from among the continuing students.

3. An office vacated during the summer or fall semester shall be filled by a special election, held along with the election for first-year officers for summer vacancies, or beginning no later than fourteen days after the date of vacancy for fall vacancies, except that a special election for vacancies occurring less than twenty-one days before fall exams shall be held within fourteen days of the start of the spring semester.

4. An office vacated after the fall semester shall be filled on a temporary basis until the next regular election. The Executive Board shall select a member to fill the office.

5. Members elected to fill a vacancy shall serve the remainder of the term of office.

*Section 5. Removal.*

1. Excessive absence from Executive Board meetings, ineligibility to hold an office, or loss of membership shall result in automatic removal from office. "Excessive absence" means five or more excused absences, two or more unexcused absences, or three consecutive absences.

2. Officers may be removed with cause under the procedure described below.

3. Any member may petition for removal of an officer. Petitions shall be in writing and shall include justification for removal. Petitions shall be submitted to the President, except that petitions for removal of the president shall be submitted to the Secretary.

4. Within three days, the President or Secretary shall accept the petition, or deny it for insufficient cause. A denial shall be presented to the petitioner in writing within three days. A majority of the Executive Board, not including the officer who is the subject of the petition, may override a denial by agreeing in writing to accept the petition.

5. Accepted petitions shall be presented to the officer who is the subject of the petition within three days and considered by the Executive Board at its following meeting. The President or Secretary may not preside over a meeting which is to consider a petition for his or her removal.

6. Petitions shall be considered in executive session with only the Executive Board and petitioner present. Both the petitioner and officer who is the subject of the petition may present their case. Petitions may not be acted upon in executive session.

7. The Executive Board shall vote on adopting the petition immediately following the executive session in which it is considered. An officer who is the subject of the petition may not vote on the petition. A two-thirds vote of the Executive Board is required to adopt the petition, which results in removal of the petitioned officer.

*Section 6. Resignation.*

1. An officer wishing to resign shall submit his or her resignation in writing to the President, except the President shall submit his or her resignation to the Vice President and the Secretary.

2. The President or Secretary shall inform the Executive Board of the resignation within three days.

3. The resigning officer shall continue to serve until a replacement is elected under Section 4, Subsection 3 or selected under Section 4, Subsection 4, or for no more than fourteen days, whichever is later.

**Article VI – Full Membership Meetings.**

*Section 1.* The Executive Board may call a meeting of the full membership when it deems necessary to involve the full membership in a vote. The Executive Board shall specify the items of business for such meetings in writing. Such a meeting may be conducted via email, and is limited to items of business contained in its call.

*Section 2.* Quorum for meetings held under this article is one-third of the membership. A majority vote of those voting shall decide.

**Article VII – Executive Board Meetings.**

*Section 1.* The Executive Board shall meet at least once a month during the fall and spring semesters, or no less than nine times during the academic year. Members shall be informed of any Executive Board meetings at least one day in advance of the scheduled meeting time.

*Section 2.* A special meeting may be called by the President. Officers may request the President to call a special meeting. Notice of the special meeting shall be distributed to members at least one day in advance of the meeting.

*Section 3.* Quorum for meetings held under this article is two-thirds of the Executive Board.

*Section 4.* The Executive Board may adopt policies further governing the association. Except as provided in Article X, policies adopted by the Executive Board may not conflict with this constitution.

**Article VIII – Email Voting Procedures.**

*Section 1.* Should the need for an Executive Board vote arise between Executive Board meetings, the LSSA President may authorize an email vote.

*Section 2.* An online vote must include an announcement of the motion with 24 hours of email discussion, followed by a 24 hour voting period. LSSA members may choose to vote aye, nay, or abstain and shall reply all when casting their vote. Members may request a closed ballot vote prior to the start of the voting period. After the end of the 24 hour voting period, the President will send an email to LSSA members announcing the result of the vote.

*Section 3.* If the vote is related to an expenditure, the original email announcing the vote shall include a financial statement from the Treasurer.

#### **Article IX – Committees.**

*Section 1.* Any officer may create a committee on an ad hoc basis.

*Section 2.* There are no restrictions on members' participation on committees.

#### **Article X - Spending Procedures.**

*Section 1.* While the Executive Board is encouraged to follow the approved annual budget, it is understood that unanticipated expenditures may arise. If there is need for an unanticipated expenditure, the Executive Board shall vote on the matter at its next meeting.

*Section 2.* Prior to discussion, the board member requesting the additional funding shall provide a detailed request of the funds needed and the treasurer shall provide an updated financial statement.

*Section 3.* The expenditure will be approved by a majority vote of members present.

#### **Article X – Parliamentary Authority.**

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised governs this association to the extent it is applicable and consistent with this constitution and other rules or policies adopted by the association.

#### **Article XI – Amendment.**

This constitution may be amended by majority vote at an Executive Board meeting, where any member present may vote. The meeting shall be announced with at least seven days' notice to all members.