

# STUDENT ADVOCACY OFFICE CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

Since its inception in 2011, the Georgetown University Student Advocacy Office has proven an invaluable resource for students seeking individualized and confidential assistance in navigating the university disciplinary system. Now, five years later, it is time to formalize the structure that has managed hundreds of cases and initiated dozens of policy adjustments. This constitution will allow the Student Advocacy Office to continue its work well into the future, growing as an institution and earning its place as one of the greatest student-led initiatives in the history of Georgetown University.

In order to uphold the impartiality, integrity, and professionalism expected of advocates of the rights of students and necessary for the proper discharge of the duties pursuant thereto, the Student Advocacy Office is entrusted to disavow itself of the entanglements of politics and private interests. Rather, it is the unique province of this office to ensure that, above all else, fairness is done to Georgetown University, its constitutive community, and individual students.

Therefore, following the approval of this document by the President of the Georgetown University Student Association (herein referred to as GUSA), a majority of the GUSA Senate, and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of active advocates, we, the current members of the Student Advocacy Office, do hereby establish this constitution on February 20, 2017.

## ARTICLE I: NAME AND OBJECTIVE

1. The name of the organization shall be the Georgetown University Student Advocacy Office, herein referred to as the SAO or the Student Advocacy Office.
2. The SAO shall pursue the following objectives:
  - a. To help undergraduate and graduate students understand the Code of Student Conduct and navigate the Georgetown University disciplinary system, and;
  - b. To inform undergraduate and graduate students of the rights afforded to them by the Code of Student Conduct, and;
  - c. To advocate for changes to the Code of Student Conduct in order to ensure that individual rights are protected, and;
  - d. To work with off-campus students with the aim of promoting safety and an awareness of resources of the District of Columbia.
3. The objectives of the SAO shall not be limited to those listed herein.

## ARTICLE II: LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

1. The SAO shall be managed by a single Director.
  - a. The Director shall be chosen annually by a consensus decision of the incumbent Director and the GUSA President and Vice President.
  - b. The Director must be an active advocate at the time of his or her appointment as Director by the GUSA President.
  - c. The Director shall serve ex officio as a member of the GUSA Executive Cabinet, and be thus subject to the rules and expectations of each administration.
  - d. The Director must be able to serve the entire length of his or her term (one (1) year) and must remain a student on the Georgetown University main campus for the duration of his or her term.
  - e. The Director shall be responsible for attending regular meetings with the Office of Student Conduct and the Office of Neighborhood Life.
  - f. The Director shall represent ex officio the SAO at the Georgetown Community Partnership Safety and Student Life Working Group, if appointed by the GUSA President.
  - g. The Director shall serve as one of two GUSA-appointed representatives on the Disciplinary Review Committee (DRC), if appointed by the GUSA President.
  - h. If the Director fails to fulfill his or her duties, he or she may be subject to removal by either of the following two processes:
    - i. Termination by the GUSA President subject to the rules established by his or her administration.
    - ii. Termination by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  anonymous, in-person majority vote of no confidence by all active advocates, with the support of at least one (1) Deputy Director (See Article II, Section 2).
      1. The Director must be informed of any pending vote of no confidence at least three days prior to a meeting.
    - iii. Upon removal from office, the Director shall maintain membership in the SAO as an advocate, and may only be subject to further removal per Article III, Section 3.
  - i. If the office of the Director is vacated at any point throughout a single GUSA Executive term, the GUSA President shall have the obligation to appoint a successor subject to the qualifications listed above.
2. The Director shall have the ability to appoint no fewer than one (1) and no more than two (2) Deputy Directors.
  - a. Deputy Directors shall be appointed within three (3) weeks of the Director's own appointment, and shall be subject to removal at the Director's discretion.

- i. Appointments may only be made after the conclusion of a formal application and interview process open to all active advocates.
  - ii. Deputy Directors must have been active advocates for no less than one academic year at the time of their appointment and be active advocates during their appointments.
- b. Responsibilities will vary according to the intent of each Director, but should involve day-to-day management tasks and operations alongside active policy work.
- c. If two Deputy Directors have been appointed and the office of one is vacated, the Director may not appoint a second Deputy Director for the duration of his or her term of office.
  - i. If two Deputy Directors have been appointed and both offices are subsequently vacated, the Director may appoint one new Deputy Director.
    - 1. The three week requirement defined by Article II, Section 2(a) shall not apply.
  - ii. If only one Deputy Director has been appointed and the office is vacated, the Director shall have the power to appoint a new Deputy Director according to the process defined by Article II, Section 2(a).
    - 1. The three week requirement defined by Article II, Section 2(a) shall not apply.
- d. If more than one Deputy Director is appointed, a Principal shall be designated by the Director among them.
  - i. The Director may, at his or her discretion, confer or remove the designation of Principal among the Deputy Directors at any time, without conferring or removing the position of Deputy Director.
  - ii. When the office of Director is occupied, the responsibilities of the Principal Deputy Director shall include:
    - 1. Presiding over meetings of the SAO in the absence of the Director and with prior authorization from the Director.
    - 2. The responsibilities and rank of the Principal Deputy Director shall be equal to those of the other Deputy Director in all other regards.
  - iii. When the office of Director is vacant, the responsibilities of the Principal Deputy Director shall include:
    - 1. The Principal Deputy Director shall assume the position of Acting Director until a new Director is appointed.
    - 2. The Acting Director shall ensure effective day-to-day operations of the SAO, but shall refrain from initiating policy or other strategic decisions except those that are necessary to guarantee the smooth operation of previously ongoing policy initiatives.

3. Once a new Director is appointed, the Acting Director shall return to the position of Principal Deputy Director.
      - e. The Director may remove a Deputy Director from office at his or her discretion.
        - i. If removed from office by the Director, a Deputy Director shall retain membership in the SAO as an advocate, and may only be subject to further removal per Article III, Section 3.
  3. The Director may, at his or her discretion and in consultation with the Deputy Director(s), create offices subordinate to the Deputy Director(s).
    - a. The responsibilities of these offices shall be defined by the Director.
    - b. Advocates shall be appointed to these offices by the Director in consultation with the Deputy Director(s).
    - c. These offices shall be occupied by active advocates.
    - d. Advocates may be removed from these offices at the discretion of the Director in consultation with the Deputy Director(s).
      - i. Advocates removed from these offices shall maintain membership in the SAO as advocates, and may only be subject to further removal per Article III, Section 3.
    - e. These offices may be abolished at the discretion of the Director in consultation with the Deputy Director(s).

## **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

1. The number of active advocates at any given time shall not exceed thirty-five (35) students at Georgetown University.
2. The process by which a student becomes an advocate shall be as follows:
  - a. A standardized, public application shall be prepared and released by the Director in consultation with Deputy Directors. This application will remain open for a period of at least two (2) weeks.
    - i. At minimum, an application shall be released once per academic year and no more than twice.
    - ii. Late applications shall not be considered under any circumstances.
  - b. Qualified applicants shall be invited to interview with the Director and Deputy Director(s).
    - i. Interviews shall be granted by the Director in consultation with Deputy Director(s).
    - ii. No person shall be granted an interview who is not a student at Georgetown University.
  - c. Hiring decisions will be made by the Director in consultation with the Deputy Director(s).



- c. Upon termination of the period of inactive membership, an advocate shall be automatically restored to active membership.
5. The SAO shall not discriminate in any of its practices on the basis of race, color, disability, sex, gender, ethnicity, national origin, political views or memberships, sexual orientation, religion, veteran status, or any other criteria prohibited by Georgetown University or applicable local, state, or federal statute.

## **ARTICLE IV: RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVOCATES**

1. Active advocates are responsible for:
  - a. Holding at least two (2) office hours per week during which they shall render advice and assistance to Georgetown University students on matters concerning the university disciplinary system, as scheduled by the Director and Deputy Director(s).
  - b. Attending office-wide meetings as scheduled by the Director and Deputy Director(s).
  - c. Completing a retraining session if an advocate has not assisted in a case for more than two (2) consecutive semesters.
  - d. Adhering to any further duties outlined and assigned by the Director and Deputy Director(s).
2. Inactive advocates are responsible for:
  - a. Receiving communications from the Director and Deputy Director(s) and responding when necessary.
  - b. Completing a retraining session if the advocate has not assisted in a case for more than two (2) consecutive semesters.
  - c. Adhering to any further duties outlined and assigned by the Director and Deputy Director(s).

## **ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS**

1. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by
  - a. The Director or Deputy Director(s).
  - b. Any active advocate in writing to the Director and Deputy Director(s).
2. Amendments shall be discussed at the soonest office-wide meeting.
  - a. Approval by vote by  $\frac{2}{3}$  of active advocates shall be sufficient to adopt amendments to this constitution.
    - i. For the purposes of amendments, the Director, Deputy Director(s), and subordinate officer(s) will have one (1) vote each alongside active advocates.
    - ii. Inactive advocates shall be ineligible to vote on amendments.
  - b. Once approved, amendments to this constitution shall take effect immediately.

## **ARTICLE VI: Bylaws**

1. Nothing in this constitution shall be construed to preclude the creation of additional bylaws so long as such bylaws do not violate any provision of this constitution.

## **ARTICLE VII: ENFORCEMENT**

1. Nothing in this constitution shall be construed to contravene any applicable Georgetown University policy, rule, regulation, or code.
2. If a provision of these constitution is invalid or unenforceable, that shall not affect the validity of any other provision of this constitution.

Adopted February 20, 2017.

Enushe Khan  
*GUSA President*

John Nalen  
*SAO Director*

Richie Mullaney  
*Speaker of the GUSA Senate*

Joseph DiPietro  
*SAO Deputy Director*