

CONSTITUTION
of the
NORTH DAKOTA STUDENT ASSOCIATION
(approved April 2021)

WE, THE STUDENTS OF NORTH DAKOTA, in order to establish a representative system of selfgovernment to ensure students have an effective role in the North Dakota University System, to include the North Dakota Student Association, the State Board of Higher Education, and the state government, to encourage the development of leaders and participants for the community and State of North Dakota, and to stimulate an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of students in relation to the higher education system in North Dakota, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution for the North Dakota Student Association.

ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION

- A. Name: The organizational name shall be the North Dakota Student Association (NDSA).
- B. Mission: The mission statement of NDSA shall be as follows:

The North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) is an organization that advocates for all students in the North Dakota University System. NDSA provides opportunities for student engagement, enhancement of the University System, and student education about higher education policy. NDSA facilitates inter-campus collaboration and communication to ensure that diverse student interests are represented in the formulation of higher education policy.

- C. Policies of NDSA: The policies of NDSA shall be defined as this Constitution, the Bylaws to this Constitution, and any supplemental policies adopted by the NDSA Assembly.
- D. Membership: Membership in NDSA shall consist of all students in all state institutions of higher education in the state of North Dakota.
- E. Independence: NDSA is not advised or counseled by, and does not report to, any individual or entity who is not a member.
- F. Governing Authority: The governing authority of NDSA shall be vested in the NDSA Assembly and the officers of NDSA, with their roles to be specified in the policies of NDSA.
- G. Equal Opportunity Policy: NDSA, in its programs, activities, and appointments, shall not discriminate against persons on the basis of race, religion, age, creed, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, veteran's status, or political belief or affiliation.

ARTICLE II: THE NDSA ASSEMBLY

- A. Definition: The NDSA Assembly is the ultimate authority of NDSA on all matters within the scope of the powers and duties granted to it by the policies of NDSA.
- B. Powers and Duties: The NDSA Assembly has the:
 - 1. Power to express opinions on the behalf of the NDSA membership through legislation, with the duty to follow a strong process in the formation of such opinions.
 - 2. Power to execute any provision granted directly to the NDSA Assembly by the policies of NDSA, with the duty of following the policies of NDSA as faithfully as possible.

3. Power to make interpretations of the policies of NDSA, with the duty to clarify language with proposed amendments.
- C. Membership: Membership of the NDSA Assembly will consist of delegates from each NDUS institution and any officers of NDSA. Specific membership policies must be specified in the Bylaws.
- D. Regular and Special Meetings: All meetings of the NDSA Assembly are to be open to the public, and at least one week's public notice must be given with the time, date, and location for all meetings. Additional procedures must be specified in the Bylaws.
- E. Quorum: Quorum is required for the NDSA Assembly to exercise any of its powers and carry out its duties. Quorum shall be met when at least thirty voting members are present and at least seven institutions are represented among those thirty voting members.

ARTICLE III: RELATIONSHIP TO THE SBHE

- A. It is from approval of the NDSA Assembly that the NDSA shall exist and operate as an independent body within the NDUS and under the auspices of the SBHE in accordance with SBHE Policy 515. As specified in SBHE Policy 515, the NDSA may at any time, by a three-fourths vote, withdraw itself from said policy effective the end of the then-current semester.

ARTICLE IV: THE OFFICERS OF NDSA

- A. Definition: The officers of NDSA are individuals granted powers and duties by NDSA that allow them to achieve the following ends:
 1. Represent the interests of the NDSA membership to various entities in the State of North Dakota.
 2. Provide leadership and advice to the NDSA Assembly as requested.
 3. Act on legislation passed by the NDSA Assembly.
 4. Complete tasks needed for the successful operation of NDSA.
- B. Membership: The officers of NDSA are the President and any other officers defined in the Bylaws.
- C. Powers and Duties of the Officers:
 1. The President shall serve as the Chief Executive Officer and Head Representative of NDSA, with the details of those roles, as well as any additional powers and duties, specified in the Bylaws.
 2. The other officers of NDSA must have their powers and duties specified in the Bylaws.
- D. Elections: Regular elections for the President and officers directly elected by the NDSA Assembly must be held before the end of April each year. All officers shall be elected by a majority vote and in accordance with any procedures in the Bylaws.
- E. Terms of Office: The term of office for each elected and appointed officer of NDSA shall be one calendar year starting with May 1 and ending on April 30.
- F. Vacancies: A policy regarding the filling of midterm vacancies in all elected and appointed positions must be specified in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE V: COMMITTEES AND BOARDS OF NDSA

- A. Standing Committees of the NDSA Assembly: Such committees are the primary committees of the NDSA Assembly, and they report directly to the NDSA Assembly. Such committees must have their names, and any powers and duties that they have, specified in the Bylaws.
- B. Special Committees of the NDSA Assembly: Such committees may be created and disbanded at will by the NDSA Assembly with a two-thirds majority vote. Any special committees created by the NDSA Assembly must have their names, and any powers and duties that may have, specified upon creation through legislation presented, and voted upon, by the NDSA Assembly.

C. Boards of NDSA: Boards may be created that can act on the behalf of the NDSA Assembly on certain matters.. Such boards must have their names, as well as any powers and duties that such boards have, listed in the Bylaws. One such board that must be specified in the Bylaws is an Executive Board chaired by the President or a designee of the President. Such boards can be granted any powers and duties of the NDSA Assembly so it can dutifully act on its behalf, with the exception of the following powers:

1. The power to elect and remove officers ordinarily elected by the full NDSA Assembly. Such boards can appoint officers and remove appointed officers if allowed to do so by the Bylaws.
2. The power to amend this Constitution or its Bylaws. Such Boards may adopt supplemental policies if allowed to do so, but such policies may not conflict this Constitution or its Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

The NDSA Assembly may remove any officers that it directly elects, or any officer directly appointed by another NDSA officer, with a two-thirds majority vote after all applicable procedures in the Bylaws have been satisfied.

ARTICLE VII: BYLAWS

As this Constitution only provides for the fundamental framework of NDSA, additional policies are required to allow for its successful operation. The Bylaws to this Constitution exist to meet this purpose. . No principle in the Constitution may be violated by the Bylaws, but principles of the Constitution may be expanded upon and further defined. In general, the NDSA Assembly should reflect any policy additions or changes in the Bylaws unless the NDSA Assembly is supremely confident that such changes should be incorporated into the fundamental framework of this Constitution. The policies for amending the Bylaws must be specified within the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Proposed amendments to the NDSA Constitution must be presented to the NDSA Assembly no later than one meeting prior to the meeting at which the vote takes place. Amendments shall be adopted by a three-fourths majority vote.