

Constitution and Bylaws of the Wisconsin Student Planning Association

Article I: Name

1.01

The name of the organization constituted hereunder shall be “Wisconsin Student Planning Association.” The organization may be referred to and is hereafter referred to by the moniker “WSPA.”

Article II: Mission

2.01

WSPA is hereby charged with representing the interests of current and future graduate students of the Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture, hereafter referred to as “DPLA” or “department,” at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, hereafter referred to as “University.”

2.02

WSPA shall provide students of the department with a welcoming social, professional, and academic network through which the free exchange of ideas, suggestions for the discipline and department, and the acquisition of opportunities for growth may flourish.

2.03

WSPA shall actively advocate for the interests of current and future students to the faculty of the department in a constructive, collaborative, synergistic manner.

Article III: Membership

3.01

Membership in WSPA is limited to DPLA graduate students enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While membership is limited to DPLA graduate students, meetings and events may be open to the public.

Article IV: Officers

4.01

The following officer positions shall constitute the executive board, hereafter referred to as “board,” of WSPA and be vested with the responsibilities prescribed in this constitution:

- a) Chair
- b) Finance Director
- c) Communications Director
- d) Professional Development Coordinator
- e) Social Coordinator
- f) Public Relations Director
- g) American Planning Association (APA) Liaison
- h) Faculty Liaison
- i) Alumni Liaison
- j) First-Year Representative(s)

4.02

The officer positions created under §4.01 may be held by more than one individual if deemed necessary by majority vote of existing board members. New officer positions may be created by majority vote of existing WSPA officers.

4.03

All officers must be members of WSPA and students at the University.

Article V: Powers

5.01

The officers of WSPA may exercise only those powers expressly granted in this article and those powers convenient for their fulfillment:

- a) Raise funds;
- b) Recruit volunteers;
- c) Buy or rent property;
- d) Impose membership dues;
- e) Serve as ex-officio members;
- f) Chair WSPA committees;
- g) Conduct workshops; and
- h) Necessary legislative powers.

Article VI: Elections

6.01

The person or persons to hold the officer positions created under §4.01 shall be elected in a democratic manner to be specified and conducted by the current board with input from the continuing students when necessary. Such a process shall occur annually between the twelfth and fourteenth weeks of the fall semester of each academic year of the university. The procedure for the transition year between the previous constitution's spring elections and the new fall timeline will be developed and carried out in a manner determined by the current board and approved by the chair.

6.02

If current officers elect to impose dues under §5.01(d), only those persons whose dues are paid in full are eligible for the election process under §6.01, excluding the first-year representative.

6.03

Any officer position enumerated under §4.01 which becomes vacant for any reason shall be filled in a manner to be chosen by the remaining board and approved by the chair.

Article VII: Procedures

7.01

All officers shall convene regularly at a common time and place chosen at their initial congress, at a time that does not conflict with DPLA core courses.

7.02

Meetings shall include:

- a) Quorum; and
 - a. Defined as 50 percent plus one board members in attendance
- b) Orders of business.

7.03

Any matter requiring a vote shall be voted on by the board members in person and only by those board members whose dues are paid in full if dues are elected under §5.01(d).

7.04

All meetings are open to the public except that the chair may entertain a motion to enter into closed session when matters of a secret nature are to be discussed.

7.05

Any meeting not in conformance with §7.01 shall be called only by the chair and must meet all requirements of §7.02.

Article VIII: Duties of Officers

8.01

All officers must attend meetings regularly. If an officer has three unexcused absences over the course of the academic year, they may be removed by a majority vote of the remaining officers during a congress fulfilling the requirements of §7.02. The removed officer may appeal to the students of the department and may be reinstated with the support of two-thirds of said students. An excused absence is defined as an absence that:

- a) received prior approval from the chair; or
- b) is considered a personal emergency.

In the event of the chair's absence, it will be approved by the finance director.

8.02

Officers may only be removed, for reasons other than those listed under §8.01, with both a majority vote of the current officers and approval by the chair of the department.

8.03

All officers leaving their positions due to elections held under §6.01 shall meet with, discuss, and present incoming officers with a document detailing their position, insights, and recommendations.

8.04

The document created under §8.03 shall be enduring, accessible in a common place. The chair reserves the right to review and modify these documents before dissemination.

8.05

The responsibilities of the chair are as follows:

- a) The chair shall schedule, convene and preside over all meetings under §7.01.

- b) The chair shall collect items of business from the officers, draft an agenda and distribute agenda to all officers and distribute the agenda to the student body no later than 24 hours prior to a meeting.
- c) The chair (and/or the APA liaison) shall represent WSPA and the students of the department to the American Planning Association except that the chair may vest this responsibility in another officer subject to approval by majority vote of the board.
- d) The chair shall ensure the official designation of WSPA with the Associated Students of Madison, except that failure to do so may not constitute the sole reason for their removal from office.
- e) The chair shall preside over all elections and appointments and any amendments to this constitution.
- f) The chair shall have access to and assist the finance director to oversee the finances of WSPA.
- g) The chair will work with Department Chair to ensure students are represented on appropriate department committee.

8.06

The responsibilities of the finance director are as follows:

- a) The finance director shall have access to and oversee the finances of the board including the timely disbursement of funds for both debits and credits. Any fees resulting in the failure to disburse funds in a timely fashion if sufficient funds existed shall burden the finance director.
- b) The finance director shall keep current physical and electronic records of all board financial transactions and shall recommend approval or disapproval of any disbursement of funds to the chair.
- c) The finance director shall develop a draft budget for the academic year within the first thirty days for WSPA officer approval.

8.07

The responsibilities of the communications director are as follows:

- a) The communications director shall record minutes of all meetings of the officers and distribute them for approval to the remaining officers no later than seventy-two hours prior to a subsequent congress, where the minutes shall be approved. After approval of the minutes, the secretary shall post such minutes both physically and electronically in a place common to all students no later than twenty-four hours after their approval.
- b) The communications director shall disseminate WSPA related information to members on a regular basis.
- c) The communications director shall reserve space and necessary equipment as required for meetings.

8.08

The responsibilities of the professional development coordinator are as follows:

- a) The professional development coordinator shall propose, plan, and administer, in tandem with employees of the department if necessary, the following:
 - i. Professional improvement workshops;
 - ii. Networking opportunities with practitioners and/or academics and/or alumni; and

- iii. Departmental tours.
- b) The professional development coordinator shall only implement §8.08(a) with the approval of the board.

8.09

The responsibilities of the social coordinator are as follows:

- a) The social coordinator shall propose, plan, and administer, in tandem with employees of the department if necessary, the following:
 - i. Regular opportunities for social interaction for students of the department;
 - ii. Planning-related service learning in the greater academic, city, county, and state community; and
 - iii. Graduation ceremony.
- b) The social coordinator shall only implement §8.09(a) with the approval of the board.
- c) Any plans administered under §8.09(a) shall accommodate to the greatest extent practicable the diverse needs of the students of the department including religious and dietary needs.
- d) Alcoholic beverages shall not be the only beverage available to attendees of activities under §8.09(a) nor shall such an event be held in an environment not approved by the board.

8.10

The responsibilities of the public relations officer are as follows:

- a) The public relations officer shall manage the association's social media platforms and its content through innovating different ways to engage and excite the association's online and campus followers/audience.
- b) The public relations officer shall maintain creative system of gathering and analyzing member feedback.

8.11

The responsibilities of the American Planning Association (APA) liaison are as follows:

- a) The liaison shall represent WSPA and the students of the department to the American Planning Association in coordination with the WSPA chair.
- b) The liaison shall keep WSPA and the students of the department informed on APA conferences and workshops.
- c) The liaison may plan, propose, and administer, in tandem with employees of department if necessary, any activities or programs required to enhance relationships with the APA.

8.12

The responsibilities of the faculty liaison are as follows:

- a) The faculty liaison shall serve as primary liaison to DPLA faculty and staff and report their activities to the board.
- b) The faculty liaison should attend DPLA faculty meetings. When the faculty liaison is unable to attend a DPLA faculty meeting they are responsible for coordinating with WSPA officers to provide an alternate representative to attend the meeting.

- c) The faculty liaison may plan, propose, and administer, in tandem with employees of department if necessary, any activities or programs that enhance the climate within DPLA.

8.13

The responsibilities of the alumni liaison are as follows:

- a) The alumni liaison shall establish and maintain a strong relationship and line of communication with DPLA alumni, in coordination with department staff.

8.14

The responsibilities of the first-year representative are as follows:

- a) The first-year representative shall assist the board in carrying out any of their respective activities as directed by the chair and provide suggestions to improve cohesion among the student body.

Article IX: Miscellaneous

9.01

Documents created for board business must be affixed to official letterhead.

9.02

DPLA Committees

- a) WSPA officers traditionally serve as student representatives on various DPLA committees. In the past these have included committees focused on climate, facilities, recruitment, etc.
- b) The WSPA chair, in consultation with the executive board and DPLA chair, is responsible for coordinating student representative assignments to DPLA committees. Student representatives should be WSPA officers.

9.03

WSPA Committees:

- a) Officers may form committees to assist in the business of the board with majority approval of the board.
- b) Committees may contain non-voting members and/or employees of the department. The chair is responsible for coordinating committee assignments.
- c) All policies and activities of the committees are subject to approval by the executive board and must be consistent with the WSPA constitution.
- d) The activities, accomplishments, and failures of committees created pursuant to §9.02(b) shall accompany said section's document to be updated regularly.
- e) The following are examples of committees that WSPA officers may choose to convene:
 - a. Constitution. The constitution committee should consist of at least two members including the WSPA chair. The committee should annually review the constitution and may propose such amendments as they deem necessary, shall draft amendments as may be proposed by the executive board, and review all proposed amendments submitted by any member for proper language and consistency with the remainder of the constitution. The committee should report a

recommendation on all proposed amendments to the executive board prior to a vote on the proposed amendment.

- b. Finance. The finance committee should consist of the finance director as chair, and at least one other WSPA officer. The committee should, in conjunction with the WSPA chair, prepare the annual budget and routinely review WSPA's financial status. The committee should keep the executive board informed of the organization's finances.
- c. Professional development. The professional development committee should assist the professional development coordinator in identifying professional development needs of DPLA graduate students and create a program of planning related workshops, lectures, discussions, and other professional development activities. The professional development coordinator should chair this committee and at least one first-year student should serve on the committee in order to provide for continuity.
- d. Social. The social committee should be responsible for planning and coordinating social activities such as happy hours, volunteer activities, holiday parties, and other group activities. The social committee also aids in creating a positive climate among the student body through the wide variety of the events offered. The social coordinator should chair this committee and at least one first-year student should serve on the committee in order to provide for continuity.
- e. Ad hoc. Ad Hoc committee(s) to address specific issues may be formed when needed.

9.03

Communication with the members:

- a) WSPA officers, individually or as a whole, shall not express opinions or make public statements with the explicit or implicit suggestion that they represent all member interests. If any statement is to be made on behalf of all the members, the WSPA officers will provide:
 - a. An electronic and physical draft of the statement for member review, allowing at least two weeks for member comment
 - b. At least two in-person opportunities for member comment, occurring at different days/times to allow for schedule conflicts.
 - c. Members will be provided the opportunity to comment anonymously, whether by physical comment box or online survey.

After appropriate edits have been made based on member feedback (this includes URPL masters students, LA masters students, and URPL PhD students), this process will be repeated until all members feel that they have been appropriately represented.

WSPA acknowledges that the needs and opinions of its members are diverse and that attempts to accurately represent them all are to be taken seriously and with due consideration.

9.04

Communication amongst officers:

- a) WSPA officers, individually or as a whole, shall not express opinions or make public statements with the explicit or implicit suggestion that they represent all officer interests. If any statement is to be made on behalf of all the officers, the officer(s) drafting such a statement will provide:
 - a. An electronic draft of the statement for officer review, allowing at least one week for officer comment
 - b. At least one WSPA meeting to discuss the draft statement, which will have been provided to the officers at least 24 hours before the meeting
 - c. Officers will be provided the opportunity to comment anonymously.

If there is a unanimous vote among officers to expedite this process due to time sensitive situations, the week comment period may be shortened or waived as deemed necessary by the WSPA board.

After these steps have been taken, a supermajority of WSPA officers (not just a supermajority of quorum at any one meeting) must approve the statement for distribution. If any officers remain opposed, they may choose to create their own independent statement to voice opposing viewpoints.

9.05

Constitutional changes:

- a) At any time, this Constitution may only be amended during the course of two subsequent meetings.
- b) The year meeting pursuant to §9.03(a) shall consist of the distribution of the proposed amendment to all officers along with a rationale as to why followed by debate. Introduction of the amendment described in this sub-section must be an item of business on the agenda.
- c) The board shall vote to approve the amendment for review at a subsequent meeting.
- d) The second meeting pursuant to §9.03(a) shall consist of amendments to the proposed amendment, debate, and either passage or failure of the proposed amendment to be approved by the students of the department. If the motion to approve the proposed amendment fails, an amendment of similar effect shall not be brought forth until two meetings have passed.

9.05

Dissolution:

- a) This constitution may only be dissolved if a replacement constitution is voted on by the board to go into effect the subsequent academic year.

9.06

Other:

- a) Cosmetic errors in this constitution shall not alter its force and effect.

Introduced: July 22nd, 2013

Ratified: July 26th, 2013

Updated: April 3rd, 2018