Constitution for the Board of Student Publications at Georgia Tech

Created June 1944
Revised March 21, 2017

Article 1 – Name

This document defines the Board of Student Publications at Georgia Tech, hereafter referred to as “the Board”.

Article 2 – Purpose

The Board is a student-led body that provides shared representation, advocacy, and governance for its member publications. These responsibilities include at a minimum, but are not limited to:

1. Requesting and managing Student Government allocated funds on behalf of the member publications.
2. Holding regular meetings to discuss the status of the member publications and any issues those publications are facing.
3. Promoting advocacy and awareness of issues affecting its member publications before campus governing bodies, the administration, and the greater student community.
4. Conducting editor elections for its member publications, and ensuring that its member publications are being run in accordance to their respective constitutions.
5. Reviewing changes to member publications’ constitutions and ensuring these constitutions remain aligned with the Board constitution.

The Board shall work with the Office of Student Media to ensure publications have the necessary resources to operate effectively on a daily basis.

Article 3 – Membership

The Board consists of member publications, each of which contributes a voting member to the Board. This individual shall be the Editor in Chief, or equivalent chief executive position within the publication. If a co-editorship has been established, one editor must be designated the voting member at each meeting and only that member will count for the purposes of quorum determination.

Throughout this document, the term “Editor” will be used interchangeably to refer to voting members of the Board. The term “members” shall refer to the group of Editors unless explicitly
stated to include the member-at-large (defined below) or members of the Advisory Board (defined in Article 4).

Editors must be Georgia Tech students who meet the eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities as stated in the GT Catalog and SGA policies.

Editors shall serve on the Board from the end of the Spring term through the following Spring term, even if the officer position in their respective publication ends before that.

**Member-at-Large**

A single member-at-large is also elected separately. The member-at-large must be a member of one of the member publications. The member-at-large can only vote in the event of a tie among the board members. The member-at-large also fulfills several organizational responsibilities as defined in Article 5.

The member-at-large must be a Georgia Tech student who meets the eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities as stated in the GT Catalog and SGA policies.

**Member Publications**

The Board consists of six (6) member publications, as listed below:

- *The Technique*
- *The Blueprint*
- *Erato*
- *The North Avenue Review*
- *The Tower*
- *T-Book*

The addition or removal of member publications shall require a constitutional amendment following the procedures defined in Article 16.

In addition to being listed in this document, member publications shall include the following provisions in their individual constitutions:

- The publication shall participate in and be bound by the editor selection process, as defined in Article 8. This includes defining a procedure for recommending a candidate to the Board.
- The Board may remove and replace the chief executive officer of the publication, following procedures in Article 11. If the publication defines additional officer positions, they must serve at the will of the chief executive officer.
- The Board may submit yearly budget requests on behalf of the publication.
• The Board shall review and approve any changes or amendments to the publication’s constitution.
• Any appointment to the publication’s faculty advisor position shall be approved by majority vote of the Board.
• Any amendments to the publication’s constitution shall be approved by majority vote of the Board.

Article 4 – Advisory Board

The Board also consists of an Advisory Board, members of which are expected to regularly participate in Board meetings. Advisory members cannot vote or hold an officer position.

The Advisory Board members are as follows:

• The faculty advisor of the Board, as defined in Article 13.
• The Director of Student Media
• The individual faculty advisors of every member publication

Article 5 – Chair and Officer Roles

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). The Chair and Member-at-large are considered to be officer roles.

Chair

The Chair is selected from one of the Editors following the procedures defined in Article 9.

The Chair serves as the primary point of contact for the Board. The Chair is responsible for calling board meetings, as well as representing the board before faculty, SGA, and alumni.

The Chair shall designate a person to record the proceedings of each meeting, distribute the minutes to each member, and maintain a membership roster; optionally, the Chair may perform those duties his or herself.

The Chair shall preside over meetings by default, but he or she may choose to assign another Editor or an advisory board member to preside on a per-meeting basis. The Chair is responsible for ensuring the orderly conduct of meetings and ensuring every member publication has an equal opportunity to voice their concerns during deliberation.

Member-at-large

The member-at-large shall be responsible for preparing budget requests and representing the Board before SGA budget hearings. The member-at-large will review records of all revenue and
expenditures in coordination with the Office of Student Media. The final forms of any budget requests and bills must be approved by majority vote of the Board.

**Article 6 – Meetings**

The Board shall convene regular meetings a minimum of two times during each of the Fall and Spring semesters.

Meetings are to be called by the Chair of the Board. Any member of the Board including Advisory Board members may request the calling of a meeting. If presented with a request signed by the majority of Editors and/or the majority of Advisory Board members, the Chair must comply with the request.

**Article 7 – Quorum**

A minimum of two thirds of active Editors must be present to establish quorum. “Active” Editors include the Editors from all member publications whose chief executive position is currently filled. If a publication’s Editor position is unfilled due to extenuating circumstances, that publication and its corresponding Board seat are both declared as “inactive.”

Editors are expected to attend all meetings. If an Editor cannot attend a meeting, they may select a designee who is a member of their publication to attend in their place. If an Editor misses two consecutive meetings, or fails to provide a designee given two weeks’ notice, the Chair may elect to declare the member inactive and continue the meeting without their participation.

**Article 8 – Editor Selection**

Member publications must consent to electing their Editor in Chief (chief executive officer or president) through the Board process. The role of editor is a significant responsibility; the intent of the selection process is to ensure all candidates are thoroughly vetted and understand the significance of their role.

**Timelines**

The Board shall conduct interviews for Editors within the following timelines:

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<th>Timeline</th>
<th>No earlier than</th>
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<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>January 15th</td>
<td>March 1st</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>March 15th</td>
<td>the start of reading period (as defined by Institute calendar)</td>
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Each publication shall select one of the timelines above, which shall be specified in their individual constitution.

Application Process

Unless otherwise stated in the individual publication’s constitution, the availability of applications must be announced publicly no later than three weeks prior to the application due date selected by the Board. The announcement must be published in The Technique and on the Office of Student Media website. Editors shall be required to inform their respective bodies in compliance with their individual constitutions.

Any student who meets the qualifications for a position may apply to that position. Applying shall consist of completing an application form provided by the Board and submitting it via email or in person to the Director of Student Media. The Board shall provide applicants with a scoring rubric upon request.

Interviews

Once the application due date passes, the Board shall determine an interview date based on the availability of its members.

Applicants will be interviewed by the current Board membership, including Advisory Board members. Applicants may be questioned on their understanding of the role to which they are applying, their ability to fulfill the requirements of the role, as well as their understanding of legal issues pertinent to the student press.

Recommendation Process

Every member publication shall present the Board with a recommendation for single candidate among those who submitted applications. Optionally, the publication may chose to recommend no candidate. Each member publication’s constitution must define a process by which this recommendation is determined. The recommendation must be rendered prior to the start of interviews, but not before the posted application deadline.

The recommendation shall be presented to the Director of Student Media by members of the respective publication. The Director will present the recommendation during the election meeting after all candidates for the publication have been interviewed.

Voting

Following the conclusion of all interviews for a publication, the Board shall vote whether to accept the publication’s recommendation for Editor. Two-thirds of present members must vote in
opposition of the recommendation to overrule it. Unless the recommendation is overruled, the recommended candidate shall be awarded the position.

If there is no recommendation or the recommendation is overruled, any member of the Board may make a motion to elect another applicant. A simple majority of present members in favor is required to confirm the motion and elect the applicant.

The start date and length of the newly-elected Editor’s term shall be defined in each publication’s respective constitution.

**Article 9 – Election of Chair and Selection of Members-at-Large**

**Election of the Chair**

The chair of the Board will be determined by the outgoing Board after the conclusion of editor elections. Any member may make a motion to elect an incoming or returning member of the Board as the chair. A simple majority in favor is required to confirm the chair.

In the event no decision is reached, the new Board shall elect the chair during its first meeting after the start of the new term. The Director of Student Media shall call the first meeting, which must occur within the first month of the Fall term.

**Selection of the Member-at-Large**

The member-at-large will be a student who is involved in one of the Board’s member publications. The Board shall devise an application form for the position and Editors shall make it available to their members in compliance with their individual constitutions. Applicants must be on the roster of one of the Board’s member publications.

Applicants will be interviewed during the Spring editor selection meeting by the current Board membership, including Advisory Board members. The member-at-large will be selected by majority vote of the Board.

**Article 10 – Removal of the Chair or Member-at-Large**

If the chair fails to maintain the Institute requirements as stated in the GT Catalog, he or she shall resign immediately.

If the Board determines the chair or member-at-large is failing to fulfill the responsibilities of their role as defined in Article 5, the Board may call for a removal hearing. A removal hearing may be called verbally by majority vote of the Board or by presenting a petition signed by a majority of members to the Board’s faculty advisor.
If a motion is passed or a valid petition is presented to the faculty advisor, the Board shall schedule a removal hearing at least two weeks from but no more than four weeks following the call for the hearing. If the chair refuses or is unwilling to schedule the hearing, the faculty advisor will take responsibility for scheduling the removal hearing.

If the subject of the hearing is the chair, the faculty advisor will preside over the removal hearing; otherwise, the chair may preside. After all arguments have been heard, a secret ballot vote shall be conducted. If at least two-thirds of Editors present vote for removal, the subject shall be removed immediately.

If the chair is removed or resigns, a new chair shall be elected at the next meeting following the procedures in Article 9. The Director of Student Media will call the meeting, no later than one month following the removal of the chair. If the member-at-large is removed or resigns, applications for a new member-at-large shall be circulated immediately and interviews will be conducted at the earliest opportunity following the procedures defined in Article 9.

Article 11 – Removal of Editors

If the Board determines an Editor is failing to fulfill the responsibilities of their role, the Board may call for a removal hearing. A removal hearing may be called verbally by majority vote of the Board or by presenting a petition signed by a majority of members to the Board’s faculty advisor.

If a motion is passed or a valid petition is presented to the faculty advisor, the Board shall schedule a removal hearing at least two weeks from but no more than four weeks following the call for the hearing. If the chair refuses or is unwilling to schedule the hearing, the faculty advisor will take responsibility for scheduling the removal hearing.

If the subject of the hearing is also the chair, the faculty advisor will preside over the removal hearing; otherwise, the chair may preside. After all arguments have been heard, a secret ballot vote shall be conducted. If at least two-thirds of Editors present (excluding the subject of the hearing) vote for removal, the subject shall be removed immediately from the Board and the corresponding officer position within their publication. The Board may appoint an interim Editor to run the publication by majority vote.

Should an Editor resign or be removed, the Board may call a special selection at its earliest discretion to fill the position. The procedures defined in Article 8 shall otherwise be followed in conducting the selection. Editors selected for an otherwise unfilled position take effect immediately and serve a term as defined by that publication’s individual constitution, as well as begin their Board term immediately.
Article 12 – Committees

Committees may be created by majority vote of the Board for specific projects or objectives, not to last longer than the current Board membership term.

Each committee will have a chair, appointed during the creation of the committee. The chair may be any active member of the Board.

Committees may consist of any number of members, including the member-at-large or Advisory Board members.

Article 13 – Faculty Advisor

A full-time, salaried Georgia Tech faculty or staff member will serve as faculty advisor to the Board.

Nominations for the advisor may take place annually during the Spring Editor Selection meeting. Any member may nominate an advisor, and the advisor shall be elected by majority vote. The advisor shall serve a one-year term.

The duties of the advisor include: attending regular Board meetings, reviewing the yearly budget, signing all required paperwork, and advising on issues of risk management, organization leadership, and Georgia Tech policy.

The advisor may be removed for not carrying out the duties and expectations as defined in this document. The Board shall express such concerns to the advisor and offer him/her an opportunity to speak to such concerns. The Board may remove the advisor with a majority vote.

If an advisor steps down, is removed, or leaves the institute, the Board shall elect a new advisor at its next meeting following the procedures defined above.

Article 14 – Parliamentary Procedure

Any instance not explicitly governed in this document shall conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order.

Article 15 – Bylaws

The Board may establish a set of rules, to be known as the Bylaws to the Constitution of the Board of Student Publications. The bylaws shall be of lesser authority than this document and shall serve to establish further guidelines regarding the operation of the Board.

The bylaws may be proposed to the Board and ratified with a two-thirds vote of all active members. Any changes thereafter to the bylaws shall similarly require a two-thirds vote.
The Board may, at any time, choose to temporarily waive the bylaws with a two-thirds vote of present members.

**Article 16 – Constitutional Amendments**

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by any member of the Board.

The proposed amendment must be presented to all members of the Board in writing at least two weeks prior to any vote conducted on the amendment. All members must be given an opportunity to voice their concerns on the amendment prior to a vote being conducted.

A unanimous vote of all active members is required to ratify the amendment.

Amendments are subject to the approval of the Student Government Association and the Student Activities Committee.