



NASSGAP

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF THE**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF
STATE STUDENT GRANT
AND
AID PROGRAMS**

Revised December 2014

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**CONSTITUTION
and Bylaws**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE STUDENT GRANT AND AID PROGRAMS

**ARTICLE I
NAME OF ORGANIZATION**

The name of this organization shall be the "National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs." The acceptable acronym shall be "NASSGAP."

On May 11, 1994 NASSGAP became a recognized tax exempt, non-profit organization incorporated in Helena, Montana with the tax exempt number 71-0569634.

For purposes of the association, the term "state" shall include the individual states, the District of Columbia, and the territories of the United States of America.

**ARTICLE II
OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

Section 1. To promote, strengthen, encourage and enhance high standards of performance in administration and operation of government-sponsored postsecondary student financial aid, access, and/or completion programs to the end that the benefits of these programs shall be available to students in all the states for the purpose of expanding and furthering postsecondary educational opportunities.

Section 2. To provide a forum for the development and exchange of information, ideas, policy positions, procedures and needs for student financial assistance for the benefit of member agencies and other organizations.

Section 3. To facilitate the development and exchange of information about state student employment programs.

Section 4. To establish and act as a collective voice of reasoned opinion before state, regional and national councils with respect to student financial aid, access, and/or completion programs whose objective is the furtherance of postsecondary education in the United States, including grants, scholarships, loans, college work-study, and other forms of government-sponsored assistance to students. To consider, debate, decide positions, make recommendations and otherwise act as an advising body on such matters as, in the judgment of the Association, shall serve the objectives set forth in this Article.

Section 5. To collaborate with other associations, councils and agencies in the interest of effective implementation of various federal, state and institutional student financial assistance programs.

Section 6. To work with other associations, councils and agencies to design, implement and operate simplified student application procedures for student financial assistance and design a uniform method of determining the ability of the family to pay the costs of postsecondary education.

Section 7. To conduct research, publish reports, hold conferences and otherwise engage in activities which: (1) help existing programs to become more responsive to federal, regional and state public policy goals and objectives; (2) encourage the development of new programs as the need arises; (3) work toward the prevention and elimination of fraud and abuse in student financial aid programs; and (4) enable the organization to accomplish the objectives set forth in this Article.

Section 8. The financial goal of NASSGAP is to have sufficient funds in an available, otherwise unencumbered account to cover all contractual agreements. Any funds in excess of that amount shall be placed in low-risk investment vehicles in order to receive the maximum return possible on said funds. The value of the reserve will be calculated annually by the Treasurer and recommended to the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1. The Association shall have the following classes of membership:

- a. Voting Membership: Voting membership shall be extended to a single agency from each state, which is legally responsible to administer an operational program of student aid which has been established by the legislature, designated by the Governor, or otherwise authorized by state policymakers and which is a funded state program. Such agency shall designate a single representative to exercise that voting privilege whether at meetings of the Association or on ballots and shall provide the name of that person to the Association Secretary. In the event the voting designee is unable to exercise that voting privilege, the designee may identify a voting proxy from the same Voting Member agency and shall provide the name of that individual to the Association Secretary.

- b. Associate Membership: Non-voting associate membership shall be open to any agency which does not qualify as a Voting Membership or any organization or individual associated with an organization whose interests are in concert with the goals and objectives of existing State Student Aid programs and the objectives expressed in Article II.

- c. Friend of NASSGAP: An individual who has made significant contributions to NASSGAP or its objectives or goals (including all past Presidents) and who is no longer an active participant in the NASSGAP community and is not employed by a NASSGAP member agency may be eligible for designation as a Friend of NASSGAP. Any NASSGAP member may recommend an individual for Friend designation. To be designated a Friend, a recommended individual must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Any Friend of NASSGAP is invited to be NASSGAP's guest for one meal at any NASSGAP conference or may attend NASSGAP conference sessions at the prevailing Conference member rate. Friends of NASSGAP are non-voting members and are not required to pay annual dues. All benefits will be suspended if the Friend attends a conference representing an organization with a professional interest in NASSGAP.

- d. Authority to determine eligibility for any class of membership shall be vested in the Executive Committee established in Article VI. In cases where more than one agency from a single state may claim Voting Membership privileges, the Executive Committee shall determine the process for identifying the Voting Member agency.

Section 2. Annual Membership Directory: The Secretary of the Association shall make available an annual directory of current members. Names of staff at the member agencies may also be listed at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Both Voting and Associate Membership shall be contingent upon the payment of annual dues. The amount of such dues shall be recommended annually to the Voting Membership by the Executive Committee. Adoption of any schedule of changed dues shall occur by ballot and require a majority vote of the Voting Membership. Such dues shall be effective the first day of the fiscal year as provided in Article VIII, Section 4, and payable not later than September 1 of each year. Voting Membership dues are paid in the name of the agency of the designated representative and Associate Membership dues are paid in the name of the institution, organization, agency or individual representing such entity.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Terms, Duties, and Method of Election

Section 1. The officers of the Association shall be President, President-Elect, Past-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Treasurer-Elect and two Members-at-Large. The offices of President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer-Elect and two Members-at-Large shall be elected from the Voting Membership and may be individuals other than an agency's voting designee.

Section 2. Terms and Succession of Officers:

- a. The President, President-Elect, and Past-President shall serve for a term of one (1) year. The Secretary, Treasurer and the two Members-at-Large shall be elected for a

term of two (2) years. The Treasurer-Elect shall be elected in alternating years and shall serve for a term of one (1) year concurrently with the second year of the current Treasurer. The two Members-at-Large shall serve staggered terms.

- b. The President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Members-at-Large may not serve successive terms in that office. A Member may serve successive terms in different offices.
- c. Upon expiration of their respective terms, the President-Elect shall automatically succeed to the office of President, the President to Past-President, and Treasurer-Elect to Treasurer.
- d. Vacancies occurring in the office of President or during the second year of the Treasurer's term between annual meetings shall be filled by the President-Elect and Treasurer-Elect respectively for the duration of the current term as well as the normal scheduled term for succession.
- e. Any vacancy occurring in the office of President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer (during the first year of the term), or Member-at-Large between annual meetings of the Association shall be filled, for the remainder of such term, by appointment by the Executive Committee.
- f. In the event of a vacancy of the office of Past-President, the office shall be filled by recommendation of the current President with concurrence from the Executive Committee, from a pool of persons who previously served as Past-President or on the Executive Committee.
- g. In the event the office of Treasurer-Elect is vacated due to that officer moving up to a vacated office of the Treasurer, the Treasurer-Elect office shall remain vacated for the remainder of the term. However, if the office is vacated between annual meetings of the Association, due to that individual's inability to serve, the office shall be filled by appointment of the Executive Committee.
- h. Appointment to a vacancy in the offices of President-Elect and Treasurer-Elect shall require ratification by a majority vote of the Voting Membership through a ballot conducted within 30 days of the appointment.

Section 3. The officers named in Section 1 of this Article shall perform the duties prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws adopted by the Association and by the parliamentary authority adopted in Article VIII of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 4. Officers shall be elected in the following manner:

- a. In the fall the Executive Committee shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of five individuals from the Voting Membership and chaired by the Past-President. This committee shall prepare a proposed slate of officers for the next fiscal year and will present that slate to the membership in the spring. No member of the Nominating

Committee shall be eligible to be named on the proposed slate; however, a member may be nominated by the Voting Membership or included as a write-in candidate on a ballot.

- b. The Voting Membership may nominate eligible candidates for any office so provided by the parliamentary authority of Article VIII.
- c. The Nominating Committee chairman shall determine the slate by means of a committee meeting, or by communicating with the committee members, and shall provide the names of the proposed candidates to the President no later than May 1 of the year following the fall annual meeting. Once the President has been notified, the Nominating Committee chair shall present the proposed slate to Voting Membership so that additional candidates may be nominated within 2 weeks. The Nominating Committee chair will validate the willingness to run with any candidates nominated from the Voting Membership.
- d. The President shall direct the Secretary to prepare ballots which shall contain the names of each candidate nominated according to Sections 4 a and b of Article IV. The Secretary will also provide a space for write-in candidates for each office. The Secretary shall make these ballots available to each eligible voting designee by July 1.
- e. Voting membership designees must return their ballots as directed by the Secretary.
- f. The person receiving the largest number of votes, whether or not a majority of the votes cast, shall be elected.
- g. The Secretary shall promptly notify the President and the membership of the results of the election. This must be done prior to the next fall meeting.
- h. The elected officers shall begin their terms at the conclusion of the fall business meeting.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS

Section 1. The Association shall hold a meeting (the annual meeting) at least once each calendar year at a time and place to be chosen by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The President shall have the power to call special meetings of the Association upon the occurrence of events which, in the President's judgment, warrant the consideration and attention of the Association. The agenda for such special meeting shall be confined to the principal business for which such special meeting was called. A quorum of the Voting Membership, as prescribed by the parliamentary authority of Article VIII, shall be required for any action taken at such special meeting.

Section 3. Meetings may also be called by majority vote of the Executive Committee or two-thirds vote of the membership. The specific purpose of the meeting shall be identified prior to the vote.

ARTICLE VI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Executive Committee of the Association shall be composed of the President, the President-Elect, the immediate Past-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Treasurer-Elect (when filled), and two (2) Members-at-Large.

Section 2. Duties of the Executive Committee:

- a. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Association between annual meetings, including fix the hour and place of meetings (Section 1 of Article V), except as provided in Sections 2 and 3 of Article V; present the Association budget; make recommendations for annual dues; responsibly represent the Association's concerns and goals; further the Association's objectives under Article II; develop Policies and Procedures in support of the Bylaws and the Association, determine the code of conduct for members, and make recommendations on national policy positions to the Association.
- b. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to suspend or remove from office an elected or appointed officer upon a finding of just cause which shall require five votes from the full Executive Committee. Such action by the Executive Committee will require a two-thirds vote of the Voting Membership of the Association to rescind by ballot or by floor vote at the next meeting of the Association. The membership shall be notified within five days of any action by the Executive Committee to remove or suspend an elected or appointed officer.
- c. The Executive Committee shall perform such other duties as are prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws or by consent of the Association. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the order of the Association and none of its acts shall conflict with actions taken by the Association.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. The following shall be standing committees of NASSGAP:

- Federal Relations Committee
- ED Technical Forms Committee
- Membership and Communications Committee

- Web Committee
- Conference Planning Committee

Section 2. The President shall, with the concurrence of the Executive Committee, create such other committees as are deemed to be in the interest of the Association as described in Article II, and set specific beginning and ending dates for those committees.

Section 3. The President shall have power to appoint persons representing any class of membership to any committee that shall be established under Section 1 of this Article. Associate Membership shall not constitute a majority of any committee appointed under this Article except by specific authorization of the Executive Committee. The terms and duration of such appointments shall be at the discretion of the President.

Section 4. The President shall appoint a Chair for each committee established under Sections 1 and 2 of this Article. Each Committee Chair shall be an employee of voting membership and shall serve a term of four consecutive years, renewable at the discretion of the President. Such terms shall be set so that terms for the Committee Chairs are staggered. The Chair shall then appoint a Vice Chair.

ARTICLE VIII RULES OF ORDER

Section 1. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Association in all applicable cases not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws and any special rules which may from time to time be adopted by the Association.

Section 2. The President-Elect will serve as a Parliamentarian whose duties shall be to advise the President on matters of orderly procedure as provided in Section 1 of this Article. The Parliamentarian duties will be provided by the President-Elect for any duly called meeting as provided in Article V at the discretion of the President.

Section 3. Forty percent of the voting membership or designated representatives of voting members shall constitute a quorum. If the absence of a quorum prevents a meeting of the Membership from acting on an item of business, the Executive Committee may submit the matter for the vote of the membership by ballot.

Section 4. The financial affairs of the Association shall be conducted on a fiscal year, beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

Section 5. Official communication such as, but not limited to ballots and Bylaw changes, may be sent and accepted via US Mail, fax, web interactive sites, or electronic mail.

ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be made by a majority vote of the Voting Membership participating in a meeting having a quorum, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at least 30 days in advance of the meeting at which such amendment is to be considered. Action taken during the meeting approving or rejecting such proposal shall be submitted for ratification by a majority vote using a ballot. Ratification by ballot shall occur within 30 days of the date such action was approved or rejected during the meeting where such vote was taken.

ARTICLE X
Awards and Recognition

Section 1. Distinguished Service Award:

- a. Given to individuals who have made significant contributions to NASSGAP through leadership, activities, and/or research in financial aid. Recognizes service to the Association over a period of professional involvement, not a single event or activity.
- b. Awarded at the annual meeting. Awarded only at such times as a suitable recipient is clearly identified.
- c. Nominations may be made by any member of the Association. Nominations are reviewed by the Executive Committee. Unanimous approval of the Executive Committee is necessary to give the award. (This award is not intended as recognition for NASSGAP officers for their service in office alone.)