

## **Campaign Selection Criteria for Students Association of Michigan**

**Background:** The Students Association of Michigan is a statewide student organization representing the students of all 15 of Michigan's public institutions. SAM's mission is *"To advance higher education by empowering current and future students to advocate on their own behalf for the accessibility, affordability and quality of the public institutions of higher education in the state of Michigan."* Furthermore SAM seeks to *"Provide a forum for idea-sharing and collaboration to connect Michigan's institutions of higher education and to provide a platform for common-ground advocacy on behalf of students, dealing with issues that affect all of us."*

**Why run a campaign?** The problems facing students in Michigan are increasingly severe and profound. From skyrocketing tuition and debt, to budget cuts that undermine the quality of our institutions, higher education seems to be on a downward trajectory for many students.

As the community most affected by these problems students have not traditionally had much power in Lansing to change or adopt policies they would like to see. Its unlikely that action from any one campus, or one event on its own will change that political reality.

A campaign is a coordinated, long-term effort following a specific strategy to achieve a tangible goal (e.g. the passage of legislation, a favorable budget appropriation, a specific % of students registered and voting).

By running a campaign an organization like SAM can achieve specific and tangible policy victories. And by coordinating across campuses, involving large numbers of students, working with other groups in the state, and building relationships with legislators, SAM can use a campaign as a vehicle to build power for students to win more victories.

**Why use criteria?** There are a lot of issues facing students this year. As with all organizations SAM has limited resources and can only make a meaningful difference on so many of them. Obviously different students and different campuses are going to have different priorities that meet SAM's mission to varying degrees.

Criteria are a useful tool to help evaluate proposals and determine which ones SAM should prioritize. They ensure that everyone is on the same page about what SAM hopes to accomplish through a campaign, and provide a common language for people to evaluate and discuss proposals.

Not all campaigns are going to meet every criteria. While they should guide the conversation they should be thought of as guiding principles instead of binding rules. Furthermore criteria help craft a balanced mix of campaigns by giving a framework to analyze their strengths and weaknesses.

### **Sample Criteria:**

- 1. Is it within SAM's mission?** Does the proposal either involve the "accessibility, affordability and quality of public institutions of higher education in Michigan," or represent an issue that affects students across Michigan? Is it a non-partisan issue?
- 2. Is it of statewide or profound importance?** Does the issue affect students on multiple campuses across the state or does it just impact students on one campus or region? If it is confined to a small number of campuses, is the issue of profound importance? Could it have implications on more students?
- 3. Can SAM make a difference on this issue?** Is this an issue that SAM has the resources or support to make a tangible difference on? Is there a decision

being made? For example, if the decision is going to be made in the courts, we don't have much capacity to influence that decision. If there are already 10 organizations doing a ton on the issue, what would we add that's not already there?

4. **Will we be able to recruit a lot of students to work on this issue?**  
Bottom line—if you want to build a movement, you've got to get a lot of people in the door! Will there be lots of students on campuses across the state that will want to be involved in this campaign?
5. **Does it build support for SAM on campus?** Will this campaign build support for SAM on campus? Can we use it to raise SAM's profile on campus? Are there opportunities to work with other student orgs, faculty, administrators?
6. **Does it position SAM to be able to take on more -does it build access and influence with power-players, State Legislators, VIPs?** If we're going to tackle the issues students face we need to not only win next year's campaign, but be setting up SAM to do more. How will this campaign build support with all the power-players, legislators and VIPs SAM will need to win year after year? Working on an issue that everyone in power would consider to be a fringe thing may hurt our ability to be taken seriously by those folks on future campaigns.



**STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN**

2011-2012 Academic Year

*A resolution to adopt the Student Association of Michigan (SAM) Campaign Selection Criteria as a governing document wherein SAM will evaluate the merits of a proposed initiative or campaign*

Presented on Sept 24th, 2011

Adopted on [                    ] [                    ], [                    ]

Sponsor: Lake Superior State University

Co-sponsors: [                    ], [                    ], [                    ]

**Whereas,** the Student Association of Michigan (SAM) has the ability to take on many different initiatives throughout the course of an academic year, yet there are some initiatives that would be more effective than others.

**Whereas,** it is critical that the Association be able to take educated positions and steps to serve our constituents the students of Michigan by actively engaging in the implementation of initiatives and campaigns that SAM can have an effect on.

**Now, therefore be it enacted by the member institutions of the Student Association of Michigan, for the betterment of the students it serves,**

That the Student Association of Michigan adopt and adhere to the Campaign Selection Criteria for the Student Association of Michigan as a directional document with which the various campaigns and initiatives discussed by SAM will be guided by.

The criteria there-in does not supersede any provisions of the Student Association of Michigan By-laws nor can it be used to inadvertently conflict with the letter or spirit of those same By-laws. In the event of a conflict, the Executive Board, in review of the Student Association of Michigan By-laws, will make the final decision on any proposal.

The Universities may reserve the right to petition to the Executive Board against, or refuse to participate in any initiatives or proposals that have been approved through these criteria if it is found to be in conflict with the values and goals of that Member University. In the event of a petition or a refusal to participate the Executive Board may request a written explanation from the Member Universities delegates, and SGA President.



## STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

2011-2012 Academic Year

*A resolution to encourage the creation of Student Action Committees on each Member Campus to aid in the creation, refinement, and implementation of policies and campaigns adopted by the Student Association of Michigan*

Presented on Sept 24th, 2011

Adopted on [                    ] [                    ], [                    ]

Sponsor: Lake Superior State University

Co-sponsors: [                    ], [                    ], [                    ]

**Whereas,**                    the Student Association of Michigan (SAM) represents approximately over 300,000 students

**Whereas,**                    These students working in unity on shared concerns can have a drastic and positive effect on issues, and can actively work on advancing the accessibility, affordability, and quality of the public institutions of Michigan

**Whereas,**                    It is within best interest of the Student Association of Michigan to offer a forum for any student from any of Michigan's Public Universities to become involved with and share ideas with their fellow students statewide.

**Now, therefore be it enacted by the member institutions of the Student Association of Michigan, for the betterment of the students it serves,**

That the Student Association of Michigan encourage the creation of Student Action Committees at each of Michigan's Public Universities to aid in the creation, refinement, and implementation of policies and campaigns with additional encouragement that the following provisions be included in the governing documents for the various committees.

Recommended provisions for By Laws:

1. **Membership and Leadership** These committees will be chaired by an elected or appointed member of the Student Government or the Student Body, and will be open to all students on campus.
  - a. The right to hold an election or to appoint a chair person is reserved by the respective Student Government.
2. **Responsibilities** To support the implementation and help in the creation of statewide, regional, or specific campus issues; to act as a statewide inter-university student support network, and to allow each and every student in Michigan access to become involved in the Student Association of Michigan.
  - a. The Chair will hold at least one meeting Bi-weekly to carry out the tasks of the committee and to discuss new initiatives. The Chair will then submit a report to the Student Government.
  - b. The creation of committees and subcommittees can be done at the request and subsequent approval of the Student Government.
  - c. Conference calls will be held between the various Chairs of each Student Action Committee and a delegated member of the SAM Executive Board

to share ideas and concerns, on a monthly basis, or at the discretion of the majority of the chairs.

3. **Oversight** The committee may submit proposals for new initiatives to both the Student Government and the Student Association of Michigan but will not formally act on any issue that is unapproved by the Student Government of their respective University.
  - a. The committee must be in full compliance with the constitution, bylaws, or any governing document by another name at their respective University.



## STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

2011-2012 Academic Year

*A resolution to amend the Student Association of Michigan (SAM) bylaws to allow member student governments to vote (as a whole) on SAM resolutions in between SAM assemblies in cases where immediate action is required.*

Presented on Sept 24th, 2011

Adopted on [                    ] [                    ], [                    ]

Sponsor: Grand Valley State University

Co-sponsors: [                    ], [                    ], [                    ]

**Whereas,** the Student Association of Michigan (SAM) has conferences once every month. It is only at these conferences that resolutions can be voted on.

**Whereas,** the policymaking process in both the Michigan Legislature and the United States Congress continues between SAM conferences, with legislation that could deeply affect the student welfare being deliberated and voted on between conferences.

**Whereas,** it is critical that the Association be able to take educated positions on important legislation and policies in an expedient manner and must have the authority granted by the member institutions to expend the resources necessary to achieve its legislative goals of improving the welfare of the students of the public institutions of higher learning in the state of Michigan via government policies.

**Now, therefore be it enacted by the member institutions of the Student Association of Michigan, for the betterment of the students it serves,**

That in between SAM conferences votes on resolutions can be made by each member student government if requested by the Executive Board by a unanimous vote in cases where authorization of SAM action is immediately needed to further the interests of the students of Michigan. These votes shall be dictated by the requirements of the following, and the text below shall be added to the bylaws of the Student Association of Michigan as Section 3 (titled "Emergency Non-Conference Voting") of Article VII with the requirements in 1 described in Subsection 1 of Section 3 ,2 in Subsection 2, and so forth.

A resolution may be voted on by the student governments of member institutions according to the following criteria:

1. For a proposed resolution to be considered by the student governments of SAM member Universities, a resolution must meet the following criteria:

- a. The resolution must be submitted to the entire Executive Board of the SAM in writing.

- b. The executive board must vote unanimously that the resolution pertains to an issue that needs the immediate attention of the member schools.
  - c. The resolution must be circulated by the Executive Board to member schools in writing.
  - d. The Executive Board of SAM may not remove a resolution from consideration without a full vote unless the majority of member schools vote to not consider the resolution.
- 2. Voting on the resolution at the individual student governments will commence as follows:
  - a. Each student government shall deliberate and vote on a proposed resolution of SAM in accordance with their voting procedures.
  - b. Each Student Government must vote on the resolution in either their first or second assembly after the resolution has been circulated to them by the Executive Board for their vote to be counted.
  - c. Each student government may choose to vote to support or reject a resolution, or may vote to abstain.
- 3. Each member student government shall notify the President or Vice President of SAM of their vote no later than 3 days after the vote has been completed for the vote to be counted.
- 4. For a resolution to be passed in this method, it must meet the following requirements:
  - a. A simple majority of member institutions must have voted on the resolution for the vote to be effective.
  - b. The resolution must have garnered the support of the majority of participating member student governments.



## STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

[2011]-[2012] Academic Year

*A Resolution to increase the membership of the Legislative Research Committee from 5 members to 6 and to establish the Vice-Chair position within it.*

Presented on [September] [DAY], [2011]

Adopted on [MONTH] [DAY], [2011]

Sponsor: [Grand Valley State University]

Co-sponsors: [UNIVERSITY], [UNIVERSITY], ... [UNIVERSITY]

**Whereas,** Multiple perspectives add important viewpoints on legislation and issues that enhance an organization's understanding of these issues and the potential effects legislation may have on groups. Having as many individuals involved with legislative research will help us in reaching SAM's legislative goals.

**Whereas,** In the fast-paced world of politics it is important that committees like the Legislative Research Committee are able to keep up with its duties of legislative analysis even when adverse situations may inhibit its leaders from fulfilling their duties. A hierarchy should be in place to easily deal with these events.

**Now, therefore be it enacted by the member institutions of the Student Association of Michigan, for the betterment of the students it serves,**

To increase the membership of the Legislative Research Committee (LRC) by one member, setting the number of members at 6 (with a non-voting Chair) and creating the position of Vice-Chair. This shall be done by amending Article V, Section 1, Subsection a of the Student Association of Michigan Bylaws to read as follows:

### **1. Subsection a - Structure of the Committee**

i. The LRC will consist of four voting members, a non-voting chair, and a voting vice-chair. The non-voting chair of the committee will be nominated by any SAM delegate or executive board member, and then elected separately by a vote of the SAM member schools. Following the election of a chair the five voting members will be nominated by any SAM delegate or executive board member and then elected by a vote of the SAM member schools. The vice-chair will be elected from these five voting members by a majority vote of the voting members elected to the committee. The vice chair will take over the duties of the chair if the chair is unable to attend to those duties for however long the chair is unable to do so. If the chair resigns (formally or de-facto) or is removed from the position the vice chair will become chair until the membership elects a new chair for the remainder of the previous chair's term, or until the previous chair's term ends and new elections are called. While the vice-chair acts as chair he or she shall not vote on issues arising within the committee.



**STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN**

2011-2012 Academic Year

*A resolution to dedicate the Student Association of Michigan to advocate for the placement of students on crucial decision making bodies/committees throughout the Michigan University system*

Presented on Sept 24th, 2011

Adopted on [                    ] [                    ], [                    ]

Sponsor: Lake Superior State University

Co-sponsors: [                    ], [                    ], [                    ]

**Whereas,** Students are the primary persons affected by the decisions made by key committees/decision making bodies on campus; whether they be administrative or faculty based.

**Whereas,** It is the Student Association of Michigan's belief that not only would the students of Michigan's Universities benefit from enhanced involvement in the decision making process, but the campus as a whole would benefit from gaining greater insight into the opinions and ideas of those who are most affected.

**Whereas,** The Student Association of Michigan further believes that the State of Michigan as a whole would enjoy the benefits had by other States in which policies of this nature are in place; creating a better environment of economic growth, and academic excellence.

**Now, therefore be it enacted by the member institutions of the Student Association of Michigan, for the betterment of the students it serves,**

That the Student Association of Michigan dedicate its time and resources to the promotion and implementation of policies that would allow for students to serve on crucial decision making bodies/committees throughout the Michigan Public University system.

That the Student Association of Michigan develop a proposal to be introduced and discussed with members of the various campus administrations, and members of the Michigan Legislature.



## STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

2011-2012 Academic Year

*A Resolution to Seek 501(c)4 Status with the IRS for the Student Association of Michigan*

Presented on September 25, 2011

Adopted on September 25, 2011

Sponsor: Grand Valley State University

Co-sponsors: [UNIVERSITY], [UNIVERSITY], ... [UNIVERSITY]

**Whereas,** The Student Association of Michigan is tasked with the duty to advocate for pro-student legislation by lobbying the state legislature and Congress.

**Whereas,** Organizations with 501(c)3 status with the IRS have great limitations on how much of their resources can be used on lobbying.

**Whereas,** SAM has thus far attempted to achieve 501(c)3 status with the IRS so it can be tax-exempt with the IRS.

**Whereas,** Although 501(c)4 status with the IRS will not allow donors to SAM to receive a tax credit (like 501(c)3 allows), such a status would give the organization classification as a non-profit (and be tax exempt) as well as the right to use unlimited resources for lobbying.

**Now, therefore be it enacted by the member institutions of the Student Association of Michigan, for the betterment of the students it serves,**

That the Student Association of Michigan will amend its application for 501(c)3 status (if possible) with the IRS to apply for 501(c)4 (rather than 501(c)3) status. If amendment is not possible, the association shall rescind its previous applications and file a new one for 501(c)4 status.

Responsibilities for Executive Board

1. The task of applying and achieving 501(c)4 status with the IRS will be given to the Treasurer of the association, with the assistance of the Executive Board.

Time Frame

1. The Treasurer and the Executive Board of the Association will attempt to achieve this status by the end of this academic year (2011-2012) or the beginning of the next academic year (2012-2013).



**STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN**

2011-2012 Academic Year

*A Resolution for the Student Association of Michigan to Oppose House Bill 4980 of the Michigan Legislature*

Presented on September 25, 2011

Adopted on September 25, 2011

Sponsor: Grand Valley State University

Co-sponsors:

University of Michigan, Lake Superior State University, Michigan State University

**Whereas,** The Michigan Legislature has implemented a tuition restraint plan in Public Act 62 that awards public universities for keeping their tuition and fee rates below “the calculated average of annual statewide changes in tuition and fee rates for academic years 2006-2007 through 2010-2011, as determined by the state budget director” by providing additional state funds to the compliant university.

**Whereas,** Wayne State University and Michigan State University increased their tuition and fee rates for the year 2011-2012 under the understanding of the definitions of “tuition and fee rate” in Public Act 62 of 2011, described as “the average of rates for all undergraduate classes, based on the highest board-authorized rate for any semester during the academic year.”

**Whereas,** The past summer many in the legislature and a few universities have differed on their interpretation of terms used in describing how universities achieve these additional incentive funds. As a result multiple interpretations have developed of the wording used.

**Whereas,** House Bill strips WSU and MSU of 6-7% of their state allocation of funds. It is apparent from the legislation that the legislature seeks to impose a more stringent definition of the terms used in PA 62 and penalize MSU and WSU for using an interpretation other than their own, and under the legislature’s interpretation that made their increases in tuition over the rate allowed by the statute.

**Whereas,** The Student Association of Michigan supports the initiatives that have been put in place by the legislature to incentivize efficient use of funds and cost-cutting measures within the public universities. However, It does not believe that penalizing universities for honestly interpreting the vague language in PA 62 differently is justified. The association believes that the result of passing House Bill 4980 would simply be continued disinvestment in education at the expense of the students despite the legitimate confusion the

universities faced over the vague language describing the tuition restraint incentive funds.

**Now, therefore be it enacted by the member institutions of the Student Association of Michigan, for the betterment of the students it serves,**

That the Student Association of Michigan officially opposes House Bill 4980 and will invest the resources needed to effectively lobby against it for the prosperity of the students of the public universities of Michigan; whether it be the defeat of the bill, or an amendment to the negative supplemental preventing loss to the students of Michigan.