

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF HARDIN-SIMMONS UNIVERSITY

PREAMBLE

We the students of Hardin-Simmons University, being humbly mindful of the providence of God, and committed to facilitating efficient self-government, providing for and maintaining the welfare of the Student Body, and furthering the growth and development of the university, do hereby incorporate and establish this Constitution.

ARTICLE I – STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Title The official name of this organization shall be the Student Association of Hardin-Simmons University.

Section 2. Membership The Student Association shall be composed of all the students enrolled at Hardin-Simmons University.

Section 3. Purpose The Student Association as a whole shall encourage and support the development and further progression of every student's intellectual, spiritual, social, and physical growth. The Student Association shall also make every effort to aid the faculty and administration in maintaining and improving the university in order to make this institution an example of excellence in Christian education.

ARTICLE II – CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

This document shall be the supreme authority of the Student Association, but does not supersede the authority of the University Administration or the University Policies.

ARTICLE III – STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Investment of Governmental Powers The Student Congress shall be the governing body of the Student Association.

Section 2. Division of Powers The representatives of the Student Congress shall retain legislative interests and powers while the Executive Council shall possess the executive powers of Congress.

Section 3. Purposes The Student Congress shall promote the welfare and goals of the Student Association and foster mutual understanding between the faculty, administration, and the Student Body.

Section 4. Duties-at-Large The Student Congress shall supervise all school elections, and approve all constitutions, bylaws, or standing rules of student clubs and organizations on campus.

Section 5. General Composition

- a. The Student Body as a whole shall elect to the Student Congress eight (8) Representatives-at-Large and the four (4) Student Association officers to the Executive Council, namely, the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Business Manager.
- b. The Dean of each of the university's schools may appoint a student liaison from the respective school who shall represent that school's interests before the Student Congress.
- c. The classes shall each at appropriate times elect to the Student Congress a Class President and two (2) Class Representatives, plus an additional class representative for every additional hundred students in a class after the first one hundred (100) members of that class. These numbers shall be rounded to the nearest hundred and based on enrollment figures at the time of elections.
- d. The Student Congress shall appoint to its ranks two non-elected officers, who shall be the Chaplain and the Parliamentarian, respectively.

Section 6. Procedure

The Student Congress shall at all times have a document of Standing Rules, enacted by the Congress, to govern its operation. These Standing Rules shall include the standard order of business, method of procedure, and other standards enacted by the Congress.

Section 7. Meetings

- a. The Student Congress shall meet in regular sessions at a time and place determined by the Congress.
- b. Special sessions may be called by a majority vote of the assembly of the Student Congress during a regular session or called by the President or one-third (1/3) of the membership.

Section 8. General Qualifications

Student Congress representatives must be members of Student Association at the time of nomination and throughout the entire term of office. Qualification for Student Congress shall require that members be enrolled in classes totaling to no fewer than twelve (12) semester hours at the time of nomination and throughout their terms of office, excepting graduate students and seniors needing less than twelve (12) hours to graduate. Further, members shall attain at the time of nomination a minimum cumulative grade point average of two-point-zero (2.0). Continued membership in the Congress shall require the maintenance of the same grade point average as above, as well as fulfillment of additional duties of offices they may fill within Congress, which may be outlined either in this Constitution or the Standing Rules.

Section 9. General Duties of Members

Members of Student Congress shall, upon taking the oath of office, assume the basic, underlying responsibilities of representatives as well as any additional duties for offices and committees they participate in within the Congress. Representatives shall consider all proposals of the Student Body that are presented to the Congress and investigate matters pertinent to the Student Association, pursuing any actions deemed necessary, including, but not being limited to, making recommendations to the administration. In addition, members of Congress shall work to create all appointive offices and committees judged to be essential to the Student Association, and shall serve on one standing committee and one special committee, unless excused from this obligation by the President.

Section 10. The Executive Council

- a. The Executive Council shall be the executive branch of the Student Congress and the chief authority of the Student Association.
- b. Qualifications Officers of the Executive Council shall fulfill the same requirements as all members of Congress, with the distinction that they must have attained at the time of nomination and maintain throughout their terms of office a minimum cumulative grade point average of two-point-five (2.5). Executive Council officers shall also have attended Hardin-Simmons University for at least two (2) semesters preceding election. Further, the officers shall have completed sixty (60) hours of class credit by the end of the spring semester of their terms of office, with the exception of the President, who shall have obtained ninety (90) hours of class credit by the same time period.
- c. General Duties Each officer of the Executive Council shall be a member of the Finance Committee and an ex-officio member of a number of the standing and special committees of the Congress. The Vice-President, Secretary, and Business Manager shall share the common duty of advising the President on appointments under his jurisdiction. Executive Council officers shall also fulfill additional duties for their individual offices and other responsibilities provided for in the Standing Rules.
- d. The Executive Council officers shall not have voting privileges under ordinary circumstances. In the situation of a tie vote, however, the President or the presiding officer shall cast the tie-breaking vote.
- e. *The President* shall be the chief executive officer of the Student Association as well as the official representative of the Student Association before the administration, faculty, and public. The President shall be responsible for coordinating all functions and activities of the Student Congress, and making appointments in certain situations of vacancy on the Congress.
- f. *The Vice-President* shall assist the President in fulfilling the executive responsibilities, and assume the duties of the President in the event of the absence,

resignation, or impeachment and removal of the President. The Vice-President shall also have oversight authority over the proceedings of elections and the committees of the Congress.

g. *The Secretary* shall be responsible for recording and posting minutes from all Student Congress meetings as well as posting copies of all resolutions and letters signed by the Congress, both in a manner proscribed by the Standing Rules. The Secretary shall also be responsible for all Student Congress correspondence, keeping a roster for attendance purposes, and notifying members of meetings.

h. *The Business Manager* shall be the financial officer of the Student Congress, and as a primary responsibility keep accurate, complete records of all expenditures of the funds of the Student Congress.

Section 11. Representatives-at-Large At-Large representatives shall be obligated to fulfill all the general qualifications and requirements of Student Congress members. The President may assign to these representatives additional duties relating to issues arising on campus.

Section 12. School Liaisons

The liaisons shall not be required to fulfill the obligations and qualifications of members of Student Congress. Any requirements for the liaison position shall be at the discretion of the Deans of the individual schools. Further, the liaisons shall not have voting privileges.

Section 13. Appointed Officers

a. *The Parliamentarian* shall be responsible for facilitating the enforcement and application of procedural and constitutional rules for the operation of the Student Congress. The Parliamentarian shall meet all the requirements of the elected members of Student Congress. However, the Parliamentarian shall not be obligated to fulfill the committee requirements of members of Congress and shall be a nonvoting member. The Parliamentarian shall serve from the time of appointment to the spring election subsequent to his or her appointment and may be re-appointed at that time.

b. *The Chaplain* shall be responsible for promoting the spiritual wellbeing of the Student Congress and shall meet the requirements for elected members of Congress. The Chaplain shall deliver a weekly devotional to the assembly of the Student Congress. The Chaplain shall serve from the time of appointment to the spring election subsequent to his or her appointment and may be re-appointed at that time.

Section 14. Class Presidents

Class Presidents shall attain and maintain the same general requirements as all members of the Congress. The Class Presidents shall oversee all class functions and meetings,

appoint officers and vacant positions within their classes, and shall be accountable to any additional rules provided by the Standing Rules.

ARTICLE IV – ELECTIONS

Section 1. Ordering of Elections

- a. In accordance with the official duties of the Student Congress, the Congress shall order all elections, including those pertaining to the Congress and honorary elections.
- b. A special election shall be ordered by the fourth week of classes of each fall semester for the purpose of electing a Freshman Class President, Freshman Class Representatives, and other class officers and representatives to fill any vacancies that may exist.
- c. A general election shall be ordered every spring semester for the purpose of electing class officers, representatives. The officers of the Executive Council shall be elected prior to the general election at a time determined by the Student Congress.
- d. The Student Congress may order other elections when necessary.

Section 2. Method of Voting

A ballot vote shall be utilized in all elections of the Student Association. Student voters shall sign a poll list of voters when voting in Student Association elections. Absentee ballots shall be available in the Student Development office three days prior to general, specific, or special elections and two days prior to runoff elections.

Section 3. Posting of Results

All election results shall be posted in areas where Congress minutes are posted, while the actual voting counts shall be available for viewing in the Student Development office. The voting counts for all honorary positions, including University Queen shall be withheld.

Section 4. Rules Specifically Concerning Student Congress Elections

- a. Only members of the Student Association may vote in Student Congress elections.
- b. Nominations
 1. Any person wishing to hold an elected position in the Student Congress shall present a petition to the Congress announcing his or her intention to run for that office. The deadline for returning those petitions shall be at least seven (7) days before the election date and only then will be valid for eligibility approval by the Student Development office.

2. A student submitting a petition for election to the Student Congress shall be required to obtain for the respective positions, from the general Student Body, fifty (50) signatures for a position on the Executive Council and twenty-five (25) signatures for a Representative-at-Large position. For a Class President or Class Representative position, a student shall obtain twenty-five (25) signatures from the respective class.
3. A student may sign as many petitions as he or she wishes, but may not sign any one petition more than once.
4. In the event that a candidate does not present his or her petitions to the Student Congress by the deadline, he or she may be elected as a write-in candidate.
5. The Student Congress shall determine all election and appointment procedures not provided by this document, which shall be included in the Standing Rules of the Student Congress.

c. Vote Requirements

1. Positions for which only one person is to be elected shall require a majority vote for election. Students may only vote for one candidate in such situations. If no one candidate receives a majority vote, a runoff election shall be held between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes.

2. For positions to which two or more persons are to be elected, the candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall fill the required number of positions. In such elections, students may vote for as many candidates as there are positions to fill. In the event that a tie occurs among any of the candidates, such that one or more positions are left contested by vote, a runoff election will be held to decide the winner.

d. Campaigning

All candidates must use campaign methods that are in accordance with current rules and regulations outlined by the Student Development office.

e. Term of Office

The term of office for all elected members of Student Congress, with the exception of freshmen representatives, and the officers of the Executive Council shall be from the induction date in the spring semester of their elections to the induction date of the subsequent spring semester. Freshmen representatives shall serve from the induction date of the fall semester of their election to the induction date of the spring semester.

f. Vacancies

1. In the event that any elected position should be vacated after the last Congress meeting of the spring semester, that position shall be filled in the fall election.

2. If a class representative becomes ineligible, resigns, or is removed from office after the fall election has occurred, the president of the class shall submit a replacement to the assembly of the Student Congress for approval.
3. If a Class President becomes ineligible, resigns, or is removed from office after the fall election has occurred, the representatives of the class in question shall submit a replacement to the Executive Council for review. The Executive Council shall in turn, present the candidate to the assembly of the Student Congress or request a new candidate.
4. In other situations of vacancy on the Student Congress, the Executive Council shall submit replacements to the assembly of the Student Congress for approval.

Section 5. Other Elections and Procedures

- a. Specific elections for other elective positions, such as honorary offices, shall be proscribed, defined, and regulated by the Standing Rules of the Student Congress.
- b. Write-in ballots may not be cast in honorary elections.
- c. The Student Congress may, at any time, adopt additional regulations for governing elections.

ARTICLE V – IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL

Section 1. Cause for Impeachment and Removal Any member of Student Congress may be impeached or removed from his or her position for violating the Constitution, Oath of Office, or a duty, or for abusing his or her discretionary power.

Section 2. General Process The Student Congress must first vote on whether to impeach or indict a member in question before any vote may take place on removal. Removal shall not be required to follow impeachment, but shall merely be an option for subsequent action.

Section 3. Special Circumstances No member shall face disciplinary action for failing to fulfill a duty in result of uncontrollable circumstances. The Executive Council shall have discretion over what constitutes uncontrollable circumstances, as well as the manner in which to proceed in such a situation.

Section 4. Additional Rules and Methods of Process All other details and procedures of the removal process shall be specified in the Standing Rules.

ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENT PROCESS

Section 1. Introduction Amendments to this Constitution must first be submitted to the Student Association by either a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Student Congress or by a petition signed by ten percent of the Student Body.

Section 2. Publication All amendments shall be published in the *Brand* at the expense of the Student Congress at a time no less than two (2) weeks prior to the election for ratification.

Section 3. Ratification An amendment shall be ratified after receiving a majority of affirmative votes from the ballots cast by the Student Association.

ARTICLE VII – RATIFICATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION

Section 1. Adoption This Constitution shall be ratified after the approval of amendment to the preceding constitution, which requires a simple majority of twenty-five (25) percent of the Student Association.

Section 2. Effective Date Any changes in policy and organization of the Student Association and student government from previous constitutions shall not take effect until the spring semester subsequent to the ratification of this document.

Drafted with the approval of the Spring/Fall 2002 Hardin-Simmons University Student Congress by,

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