

# **Luther College Student Senate Constitution**

## **Preamble**

In order to enhance the student community at Luther College, and recognizing that the responsibility of organized student governance at Luther currently rests with the Student Senate and its officers, we hereby establish this constitution for the Luther College Student Senate. Student Senate is the primary means for student participation in the governance of the Luther College community.

## **Student Senate Mission Statement**

Our mission is to serve Luther students and student organizations by providing them with resources to achieve their goals, and to support the wider college community as it fulfills its mission.

## **Article I: Definitions**

A. Luther College Student Senate (also known as Student Senate and/or Senate): The body consisting of Senators representing all students.

B. Student: Any person enrolled in courses at Luther College, either full-time or part-time.

C. Senator: A full-time student elected, selected, or appointed to the Senate, in accordance with the constitution and bylaws.

D. Officers: The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

E. Executive Board: The four above-mentioned officers plus the standing committee chairs.

F. Luther community: The group comprised of Students, faculty members, and staff members at Luther College.

G. Student Body: The body composed of all Students at Luther College.

H. Chair: Any Senator elected, selected, or appointed to lead a Standing Committee.

I. Standing Committee: Any committee of the Luther College Student Senate appointed a long-term, specific task in the Bylaws.

J. Luther College: A residential liberal arts college located in Decorah, Iowa.

## **Article II: General Duties and Responsibilities of the Luther College Student Senate**

A. Serves as a diverse body that addresses student concerns and opinions.

B. Holds, at its discretion, forums addressing issues of interest to the Student Body. These shall be open to the entire Luther Community. At least one must be held per semester.

C. Makes recommendations to the Campus Life Committee on changes in the Luther Code of Conduct. Selects six of its members to serve on the Campus Life Committee; serves as a consulting body for that committee.

D. Serves as a consulting body to Student Life Staff members, administrators, and faculty committees on

matters affecting students.

E. Invites the Luther College President to a regularly scheduled Senate meeting at least twice per year to discuss important college-wide issues.

F. Approves expenditures from the Senate account.

G. Approves appointment of Standing Committee Chairs, the composition of Standing Committees and takes action on the proposals of Standing Committees.

### **Article III: Membership**

A. The Senate shall have four elected officers: The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Other members shall be elected, selected or appointed to represent the Student Body as defined in the Bylaws.

B. The Senate shall have at least two advisors, including the Vice President and Dean for Student Life, and one of the Assistant/Associate Deans for Student Life. These advisors serve as ex-officio, non-voting members. The Senate may also appoint additional advisors to provide assistance and support.

C. All members, excluding the advisors, must be full-time students in good academic standing as defined by the Registrar.

D. Students running for the officer positions should intend on serving for fall and spring semesters.

E. All members must serve on at least one Standing Committee.

F. All Senators are expected to abide by Luther College's non-discrimination statement and code of conduct.

### **Article IV: Meetings and Procedures**

A. The Senate shall, to the best of its ability, meet weekly (and at a minimum two times every month) during the months of September, October, November, December, February, March, April, and May, and at other times on the call of the College President or by petition of ten or more Senators.

B. A quorum shall be necessary to conduct business; a simple majority of the Senate constitutes a quorum. The Senate may meet if a quorum is not present to discuss issues, but may not take an official vote on business before the Senate.

C. All Senate meetings shall be open to the Luther Community and time should be allowed for any guests who wish to speak on topics relating to items relating to the Student Senate.

D. The minutes of each meeting shall be made available to the Luther Community.

E. The Senate may form ad-hoc committees at its discretion.

F. Standing Committees and the responsibilities of these committees are specified in the Bylaws.

G. Senators are required to attend all Student Senate meetings. In such cases when a member is unable to attend a meeting, that member is required to notify the Secretary of their absence before the meeting. If a

Senator has accrued an excessive number of absences, which is to be determined by the Secretary with the assistance of the Executive Board, the Executive Board may propose action, including removal, to the Senate as a whole.

#### **Article V: Resignation, Vacancies, and Recall**

A. If a Senator decides to resign his or her position, the Senator shall submit a letter of resignation to the Senate President. The President will announce the resignation at the next Senate meeting. All resignations take effect immediately upon submission of the formal letter of resignation.

B. In the case of a vacancy in the position of President, the Vice President shall assume the duties and responsibilities of that office. Another Senator may then fill the role of the Vice President; a simple majority vote of the Senate is needed for approval.

C. In the case of a vacancy in any other position, the Senate may appoint an eligible Student to fill the vacancy; a simple majority vote of the Senate is required.

D. If any Senator fails to meet the duties and responsibilities of his/her position, he/she may be recalled by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. The recall may be initiated by any Senator after he or she submits a written petition bearing the signatures of at least one-fifth of the Senators supporting the recall. The recall petition will then be added to the agenda of the next Senate meeting, at which time both the Senator drafting the recall petition and the Senator identified for recall will have a chance to share their observations and insights. At the conclusion of the discussion, Senators will vote by anonymous paper ballot, with a two-thirds vote of the Senate necessary to affirm recall.

#### **Article VI. Amendment Procedures**

A. The Constitution may be amended by two methods: an ad-hoc constitutional review committee appointed by the Senate to periodically review the entire constitution and by-laws or ten members of the Senate who formally propose an amendment.

B. Any proposed amendments must be publicized for one week following their first reading at a Senate meeting. Senate may take action upon proposed amendments at the first regularly scheduled meeting following a full week of public notice. Possible methods of publicizing include a public forum and publication through Chips newspaper.

C. Amendments to the Student Senate Constitution shall be accepted by a three-fourths vote of the entire Senate, not just three-fourths of a quorum.

D. Any amendment must follow the steps outlined above and then be sent to the Campus Life Committee for approval before it becomes an official part of this document.