SMU STUDENT SENATE

Legislative Number: S-103-16 Final Vote: Passed

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Dean of Student Life ad interim: Dr. Stephen Rankin Student Senate Chair: Will Stovall

A RESOLUTION ON AMENDING THE SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
STUDENT BODY CONSTITUTION TO IMPLEMENT SPECIAL INTEREST SEATS
AND REVISE LANGUAGE THROUGHOUT IN ORDER TO CLARIFY AUTHOR’S
INTENT AND LEGITIMIZE PREVIOUS LEGISLATION

WHEREAS the Southern Methodist University Student Senate passed resolutions S-103-07, S-103-08, and S-103-09 to establish positions within the Student Senate for the explicit representation of Special Interest groups within the Southern Methodist University community, and

WHEREAS the proposed constitutional amendments within the aforementioned resolutions were passed by the student body of Southern Methodist University by a 2/3 majority in a referendum vote requiring their implementation, and

NOTING the content of said constitutional amendments establish a range of contradictions within the Southern Methodist University Student Body Constitution, essentially invalidating the current edition of the document and thus compelling the Student Senate to utilize the version of the Constitution amended on April 2nd of 2015, and

MENTIONING grammatical and stylistic errors in recent editions of the Southern Methodist University Student Body Constitution that demonstrate a need for adequate correction, and

NOTING that there are several clauses and sections of the Student Body Constitution that would benefit from clarification,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Southern Methodist University Student Senate adopt the below version of the Southern Methodist University Student Body Constitution to remedy the aforementioned discrepancies, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Student Body Secretary initiate a University-wide student body referendum to adopt this version of the Constitution, the completion of which shall be no later than three (3) school weeks, as outlined in Article VII of the Southern Methodist University Student Body Constitution.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if any portion of the proposed Southern Methodist University Student Body Constitution is rejected by the voting Senate body or by the Southern Methodist University Student Body, the equivalent portion of the previous version of the Student Body Constitution shall be automatically inserted in its place, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon passage of any of the enclosed proposal, line 64 of this resolution be amended to read “(Amended [date of passage])”, where “[date of passage]” is to be replaced with the date of the conclusion of the referendum vote.

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
STUDENT BODY CONSTITUTION
(Proposed Spring 2017)

PREAMBLE:

We the students of Southern Methodist University adopt this Constitution to establish a student government to provide the means for discussion and action on any subject pertaining to the University by:

1) Establishing a forum to represent all students by enforcing the Constitution of the Southern Methodist University Student Body and the Student Senate By-Laws;
2) Acting as a communicative body among the students, administration and faculty;
3) Protecting the rights of students and ensuring a student voice in the decision-making process of the University;
4) Establishing policies which govern the actions of students; and
5) Promoting opportunities for intellectual growth.

ARTICLE I
THE STUDENT BODY

The Student Body shall consist of all currently enrolled students of Southern Methodist University. The Student Body may also be referred to as the Students' Association.

ARTICLE II
THE STUDENT SENATE

Section 1. Purpose
The Student Senate shall represent the interests of students to the entire University as the official student legislative body.
Section 2. Powers and Responsibilities

The Student Senate shall:

1. Initiate action on student concerns;
2. Allocate and withdraw Student Activity Fee funds;
3. Administer all Student Body elections;
4. Review the annual budget of the University;
5. Establish criteria for sanctioning and reviewing all student organizations;
6. Oversee and review the Student Code of Conduct;
7. Have the power to approve or reject all appointments made by the President of the Students’ Association; and
8. Have the power to remove any of its members from the Student Senate.

Section 3. Membership

Before each election, the Membership Chair of the Student Senate will verify enrollment figures with the University Registrar to determine the number of seats available for the coming election. The membership of the Student Senate shall consist of:

1. The President, the Vice-President, the Secretary of the Student Body, and the Graduate Affairs Officer, who shall be ex-officio, voting members;
2. Student Senate Officers, identified in the Student Senate By-Laws;
3. Committee Chairs, who shall have no vote; and
4. Senators from each school of the University.

There shall be one representative per three hundred currently enrolled students, excluding first-year students as defined in Article II Section 3(5), with a minimum of two representatives per school. If the number of currently enrolled students in a school is at least one-hundred-fifty-one in excess of any multiple of three hundred, then that school shall receive one additional representative.

a. For the purposes of Senate representation under this document the Pre-Major population of the student body will be treated as if it were a school.

b. The Student Senate shall reserve one seat for a graduate representative, as well as reserve one seat for an undergraduate representative, of each academic school in which both population types are present.

i. In those schools with mixed graduate and undergraduate populations, if at the time of the spring general election it emerges that only one eligible undergraduate or only one eligible graduate student has applied to run for a
representative position that student shall be considered
dully elected.

ii. If multiple graduate students or multiple undergraduate
students apply to run in the election to represent a school
with a mixed graduate and undergraduate population the
graduate student and undergraduate student who
respectively receive the most votes shall be dully elected.

iii. If none of the undergraduate students in a school apply
for their school’s reserved representative seat then that seat
will be opened up to those graduate students who have
applied to run to represent to that school in the Senate, and
alternatively, if none of the graduate students in a school
apply for their school’s reserved representative seat then
that seat will be opened up to those undergraduate students
who have applied to run to represent to that school in the
Senate.

iv. Any additional representative seats beyond the two
reserved to the undergraduate and graduate populations of
the schools in question to which the school in question is
entitled shall be filled by those students who received the
highest number of votes for the school representative seats
in question without regard to their status as undergraduate
or graduate students.

v. If a vacancy occurs in a reserved senate seat, the
Membership Committee, though encouraged to seek out
and interview qualified students from the graduate or
undergraduate population who had held the reserved seat
before the vacancy in question occurred, shall not be
required to recommend to the Senate a replacement from
the graduate or undergraduate population who had held the
reserved seat before the vacancy in question occurred.

c. Students in their second semester of study in their current
academic program at SMU who have completed at least the
minimum number of credit hours required for one semester of
study in their current academic program and met all other
requirements for a school senator seat may apply to fill a vacant
seat for the current year.

d. Any student in the process of completing at least the minimum
number of credit hours required for two semesters of study in their
current academic program is eligible in the General Election for a
school senator seat for the school in which they belong at the time
of the election.

i. If the minimum credit hour requirements are not met, a
student will forfeit his or her seat.
5. First-year Student Senators

There shall be one representative per three hundred currently enrolled undergraduate full-time and part-time first-year students. First-year students are defined as individuals in their first or second full semester at Southern Methodist University who do not meet the definition of transfer students. If the number of currently enrolled first-year students is one-hundred-fifty-one in excess of any multiple of three hundred, then the first-year class shall receive one additional representative.

6. The Transfer Senator

Transfer students are defined as individuals who have attempted 30 or more credit hours at any institution other than Southern Methodist University after graduating secondary school. There shall be one senator elected to represent the transfer student population of the university. The transfer Senator shall be elected according to the procedure laid out in Article IV Section 2 of this constitution.

7. Special Interest Senators

In order to ensure the preservation of the best interests of the students of Southern Methodist University, the Student Senate shall devote Special Interest Senator positions to represent pertinent issues of minority students. Among these, the Student Senate shall reserve positions for qualifying Ethnic Minority Senators.

a. The Ethnic Minority Senators must represent an ethnic group as recognized by the Office of the Registrar. There will be only one Special Interest Senator Seat per ethnic or special interest group. Candidates must be a member of their representative constituency as verified by the Office of the Registrar. Each Ethnic Minority Senator shall have a vote.

b. When the population of an unrepresented ethnic or special interest group reaches or exceeds 150 and desires to have a Special Interest Senator seat in the Student Senate, that group shall petition the Student Senate for a Special Interest Senator seat. For a petition to be considered, it must contain signatures from at least 1/3 of the students in the ethnic group. The petition must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Student Senate for the seat to be established. The Student Senate shall not initiate the petition process in any way.

c. Once a Special Interest Senator seat has been established, it will remain until that Senator’s special interest group makes up at least 15 percent of the total student body for at least two consecutive years, or by means described in the Student Senate Bylaws. It will then be eliminated at the end of the term.
The Student Senate shall communicate the provisions of this section to any and all pertinent special interest groups that approach adequate population to qualify for a special interest seat in order to provide information regarding the option of establishing a Special Interest Senator seat. Groups shall not be required to have a special interest seat.

8. The Comptroller, who shall maintain all monies of the Students' Association and shall have no vote;

9. All committee members who shall have no vote.

Section 4.
The SMU Student Senate shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, veteran status, religion, political or social opinion, age, disability, or sexual orientation. The Office of Institutional Access and Equity has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy.

ARTICLE III
STUDENT BODY OFFICERS

Section 1. The President
The President of the Student Body shall:

1. Be the official representative of the Student Body as its liaison to the administration of Southern Methodist University;
2. Assist in the initiation of programs and legislation;
3. Assist Student Senate Officers in discharging their duties;
4. Assist all officers in overseeing the execution of all pieces of legislation passed by the Student Senate and all Senate business;
5. Serve as ex-officio voting member of the Student Senate;
6. Appoint the following, subject to majority Senate approval
   a) All members of Student Senate standing committees unless the Student Senate provides otherwise in its By-Laws;
   b) All members filling vacant Senate positions unless the Student Senate provides otherwise in its By-Laws;
   c) All student members of University-wide Governance bodies;
7. Call Special meetings of Senate upon his/her discretion;
8. Coordinate with the other officers and the Senate advisor the individual hired, subject to Senate approval, as Comptroller for the Students’ Association funds; and
9. Assist in planning of the calendar for the following year.
Section 2. The Vice-President

The Vice-President of the Student Body shall:

1. Serve as the coordinator of activities of the Student Senate;
2. Serve as an ex-officio voting member of the Student Senate;
3. Serve as the Presiding Officer of the Student Senate for the first meeting of the new term, voting only in case of a tie;
4. Assist all officers in overseeing the execution of all pieces of legislation passed by the Student Senate and all Student Senate business;
5. Prepare and present a Student Senate budget to that body for amendment and approval unless the Student Senate provides otherwise in its By-Laws;
6. Perform the duties of the President in the President's absence;
7. Succeed the President upon vacancy in office;
8. Assist in planning the calendar for the following year.

Section 3. The Secretary

The Secretary of the Student Body shall:

1. Serve as Secretary of the Student Senate, maintaining all records;
2. Serve as an ex-officio voting member of the Student Senate;
3. Assist all officers in overseeing the execution of all pieces of legislation passed by the Student Senate and all Student Senate business;
4. Assist officers in the planning of the calendar for the following year;
5. Review and compile changes to the Student Code of Conduct;
6. Serve as chairperson of the Student Senate Code of Conduct Revision Committee;
7. Interact with the Student Senate and university administrators in the presentation of all decisions of the Code of Conduct Revision Committee regarding proposed changes periodically throughout the year, as designated by the Senate calendar; and
8. Accept petitions of referendum.

Section 4. The Graduate Affairs Officer

The Graduate Affairs Officer shall:

1. Serve as Chairperson of the Graduate Advisory Council;
2. Serve as ex-officio voting member of the Student Senate;
3. Assist all officers in overseeing the execution of all pieces of legislation passed by the Student Senate and all Student Senate Business;
4. Communicate concerns and interests expressed by the members of the Graduate Advisory Council to the officers and members of the Student Senate;
Communicate relevant legislation and issues in the Student Senate to the Graduate Advisory Council; and

5. Represent the views and interests of graduate, doctoral, and professional students to the Executive Committee, Student Senate, Student Senate Committees, and the SMU Administration.

ARTICLE IV
STUDENT BODY ELECTIONS

Section 1. First-year Student Senators

First-year Student Senators shall:

1. Be elected only by currently enrolled full-time and part-time first-year undergraduate students. A first-year student is defined under Article II, Section 3(5) of this document.
2. Be elected before October 1 of each year; and
3. Serve from the next meeting of the Student Senate after their election through the annual Spring inauguration of the following year.

Section 2. Transfer Senator

The Transfer Student Senator shall:

1. Be elected only by currently enrolled full-time and part-time transfer graduate and undergraduate students of the university. Undergraduate transfer status shall be determined via the definition in Article II Section 3(6) of this document and graduate transfer status shall be based on the definition used by the individual graduate programs and the university registrar.
2. Be elected before October 1 of each year; and
3. Serve from the next meeting of the Student Senate after their election through the annual Spring inauguration of the following year.
4. There shall be only one transfer Senator seat.

Section 3. Other Senators

All other Senators shall:

1. Be elected only by the currently enrolled full-time and part-time students of their respective schools or special interest groups, as defined by the University Registrar.
2. A student may only run for one senator seat per election.

Section 4. Officers

a. The President, Vice-President, and Secretary of the Student Body shall:
1. Have previously served as a Senator or Chair of a standing committee within the Student Senate, as defined by Article II of this document.

2. Be elected only by the currently enrolled full-time and part-time students.

3. Serve from their inauguration to the annual Spring inauguration of the following year; and

4. Be elected:
   a. By the majority in a general election; or
   b. By the majority in a run-off election between the candidates receiving the two largest amounts of votes cast in the general election.

b. The Graduate Affairs Officer shall:

1. Be a full-time or part-time student seeking a graduate, doctoral, or professional degree, including students completing a graduate dissertation or thesis, from a program offered by Southern Methodist University;

2. Not be required to have previously served as a member of the Student Senate, as defined by Article II of this document;

3. Be elected only by currently enrolled full-time and part-time graduate, doctoral, and professional students and students completing a graduate dissertation or thesis;

4. Serve from their inauguration to the annual Spring inauguration of the following year; and

4. Be elected by:
   a. a majority of eligible voters as defined above in Subsection (b)(3), in the general election;
   b. a majority in a run-off election between the two candidates who received the two largest amounts of the votes of eligible voters, as defined above in Subsection (b)(3), in the general election.

Section 5. Requirements for Office

All students elected under this Constitution, unless another article or section of this Constitution provides otherwise, shall:

1. Be: 1) SMU students enrolled full-time in a university degree granting program, or 2) students who are enrolled in a co-op program, or 3) those students with minimum hours to graduate, or 4) a full-time or part-time student seeking a graduate, doctoral, or professional degree, including students completing a graduate dissertation or thesis;

2. Be enrolled in the school from which elected at least one-half of the term;

3. Have at least a 2.5 semester and cumulative GPA if an undergraduate, or be in academic good standing with his or her respective graduate, doctoral, or professional degree program if a graduate student;

4. Complete required training before being sworn into office. The required training and election dates will be determined by the outgoing officers and
advisor and be included in the calendar for the following year; and

5. Meet all other certification requirements as set by the Student Senate.

Section 6. Special Elections

1. Initiative and Referendum

A referendum to initiate new legislation or to repeal existing legislation may be called:

a. By a two-thirds vote of the Student Senate; or

b. By a petition containing the signatures and student identification numbers of three percent of the currently enrolled full-time and part-time students. Signatures and student identification numbers may be submitted electronically through a student’s official University e-mail account only if the student making an electronic submission is studying abroad, including attendance at all satellite campuses.

Election on a called referendum shall take place within three school weeks of the date of the Student Senate vote or within three weeks of the verification of the petition presented to the Secretary of the Student Body. The referendum will then be approved by a majority vote of the voting student body.

2. Recall

An election to recall a representative:

a. May be called by a petition containing the signatures and student identification numbers of ten percent of the representative’s constituency, which shall be defined as the eligible voters for the seat in question. Signatures and student identification numbers may be submitted through a student’s official University e-mail account only if the student making an electronic submission is studying abroad, including attendance at all satellite campuses;

b. Shall be voted upon within three weeks of the presentation of the petition to the Secretary of the Student Body; and

c. Shall pass by a two-thirds vote of the constituency.

3. Vacancy in the Office of Vice President or Secretary

Upon the vacancy in the office of Vice-President or Secretary:

a. The President of the Student Body shall appoint an interim Student Body Officer, with a 2/3 majority approval of the Student Senate; and

b. The currently enrolled full-time and part-time students shall elect a replacement within three school weeks of vacancy, who shall serve for the remainder of the term of office.

   a. If the interim Student Body Officer is running uncontested in the special election (as of the application due date, which is no less than two school weeks after the
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452 vacancy occurs), no election will be held, and the interim
453 Student Body Officer will assume the Student Body Officer
454 position for the remainder of the term of office.
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456 4. Vacancy in the Office of the Graduate Affairs Officer
457 Upon vacancy in the office of the Graduate Affairs Officer:
458 a. The members of the Graduate Advisory Council shall appoint an
459 interim Graduate Affairs Officer, with a 2/3 majority approval of the
460 Student Senate; and
461 b. The currently enrolled full-time and part-time graduate, doctoral, and
462 professional students, and students completing a graduate dissertation
463 or thesis, shall elect a replacement within three weeks of vacancy,
464 who shall serve for the remainder of the term of office.
465 a. If the interim Graduate Affairs Officer is running
466 uncontested in the special election (as of the application
467 due date, which is no less than two school weeks after the
468 vacancy occurs), no election will be held, and the interim
469 Graduate Affairs Officer will assume the Graduate Affairs
470 Officer position for the remainder of the term of office.

ARTICLE V
IMPEACHMENT

Section 1. The Student Senate may impeach any Student Body Officer,
Committee Chair, Student Senator, the Speaker of the Senate, the
Chief of Staff, or the Parliamentarian upon violation of rules and/or
neglected duties and responsibilities.

Section 2. Any Student Body Officer, Committee Chair, Student Senator, or the
Speaker of the Senate, the Chief of Staff, or the Parliamentarian may
introduce charges of impeachment. Upon a two-thirds vote, the Student
Senate shall conduct a hearing.

Section 3. No officer shall preside at a hearing if accused.

Section 4. Impeached members of the Student Senate shall be ineligible for the
office of any Student Body Officer or Student Senate Officer.

ARTICLE VI
CONSTITUTIONAL APPEALS

Interpretations of this constitution may be appealed or disputed:

1. By any Student Body Officer or Student Senator by the procedure outlined in the
Student Senate By-Laws; or

2. By any member of the Students’ Association with the signatures and student
identification numbers of three percent of the currently enrolled full-time or part-time students, by the procedure outlined in the Student Senate By-Laws.

ARTICLE VII
AMENDMENTS
This constitution may be amended:

1. By a three-fourths vote of the Student Senate. The amendment must:
   a. Be voted on by the Student Senate one meeting after its presentation to the chamber; and
   b. Be ratified within three school weeks of the Student Senate vote by two-thirds of the voting Student Body.

2. By a petition containing signatures and student identification numbers of ten percent of the currently enrolled full-time and part-time students. Signatures and student identification numbers may be submitted electronically through a student’s official University e-mail account only if studying abroad, including attendance at all satellite campuses. The amendment must be ratified by two-thirds of the voting student body within three weeks of the verification of the petition presented to the Student Senate Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VIII
RATIFICATION
This constitution and any amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Student Body.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Lucci
Lyle Senator