

The Knox College Student Senate Constitution
Rev. Spring 2006

We, the students of Knox College, hereby assert our full membership in the community and as such our right to fully participate in the governance thereof.

I. Purpose of Student Senate

Section 1: General Powers

- A. The Knox College Student Senate shall be the supreme student governing body in matters related to non-academic student life on campus.
- B. The Knox College Student Senate shall preserve the rights of the students as outlined in the Knox College Student Handbook and in the constitutions of the various judicial bodies.
- C. The Knox College Student Senate shall be the official representative of the student body to the faculty, administration and staff.
- D. Any policy of Knox College is within the students' purview; Senate may make a recommendation concerning any policy or action.

Section 2: Powers Concerning Student Organizations

- A. Senate shall approve the formation of new clubs. Groups of students who wish to be recognized as an official college club shall submit a formal application to the Finance Committee. Official recognition requires Senate approval by a majority vote of the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Guidelines for new organization approval shall be contained in the Student Senate Finance Committee Guidelines. The New Campus Organization Guidelines may be amended by a majority vote of those Senators present at a meeting.
- B. A group of students who is not recognized as an official organization by the Senate may appeal to the Student Life Committee for recognition if the group feels the Senate has acted improperly. The Student Life Committee's decision shall be final.
- C. The Senate may revoke a student organization's recognition by a two-thirds vote of the entire Senate. Senate may also place organizations on probation. An organization which has its recognition revoked or which is placed on probation may appeal the decision to the Student Life Committee. The Student Life Committee's decision shall be final.
- D. Any group of students that feels it has been "harmed" (as consistent with the Harassment Policy) may petition Student Senate to have the accused organization's recognition revoked. If the Senate fails to revoke the accused organization's recognition, the harmed group may appeal to the Student Life Committee. The Student Life Committee's Decision shall be final.
- E. The Student Senate shall be responsible for allocating funds to campus clubs and organizations. Senate shall request a portion of the Student Activities Fee from the Student Life Committee for the purpose of distributing these funds. Senate will only allocate student activities fees to those clubs that have open membership to all students. The Senate Finance Committee shall review the annual budget applications and make a recommendation to the Senate. The Senate must approve the proposed budgets by a majority vote of those present. The guidelines for appropriation shall be contained in the Student Senate Finance Committee Guidelines. The Guidelines may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present at a general meeting.
- F. A club which feels it did not receive adequate funds for its annual budget may appeal to the Student Life Committee. The Student Life Committee's decision shall be final.
- G. The Student Senate shall have the power to allocate remaining additional funds to clubs throughout the year. The Finance Committee shall review these requests and make recommendations to the full Senate. Approval of the additional funds requires a majority vote of those Senators present.
- H. Senate shall oversee those expenditures of student organizations which were allocated from the Student Activities fee. Senate may pass all regulations necessary and proper to ensure the responsible use of student funds.

Section 3: Appointment Powers

- A. Pursuant to the student right “to be heard and considered at appropriate levels of the decision-making process about basic policy matters of direct concern,” the Student Senate shall be the primary organization that appoints student representatives within the college governance process.
- B. All appointments, unless otherwise stated, shall be made by the Executive Board and ratified by a two-thirds vote of the Senators present at a general meeting.
- C. The Senate shall appoint all the student members of the Faculty Committees of the College

Section 4: Housing Powers

- A. The Residential Quality of Life Committee shall, with the assistance of the Dean of Residential Learning, review applications for Special Interest Housing grants. This review must take place at least two weeks before lottery.
- B. Based on these reviews, the Student Residential Quality of Life Committee shall make a recommendation to the Student Life Committee, who will make the final decision on Special Interest Housing grants.
- C. At the same time that the Committee communicates its recommendations to the Student Life Committee, it shall also communicate its recommendations to those groups applying for Special Interest Housing Grants. The groups may then approach the Student Life Committee if they disagree with the Committee’s recommendation.
- D. The Knox College Student Senate shall develop criteria for the Housing Committee to use during the review process. Criteria for special interest housing approval shall be contained in the Special Interest Housing Criteria of the Knox College Student Senate By-Laws and shall be printed in the Knox College Student Handbook. The Special Interest Housing Criteria may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present at a general meeting.

II. Membership

Section 1: Term of Office

The Senate shall be fully elected by the student body.

Section 2: Qualifications for Office

- A. Members of the Student Senate must be enrolled in classes at Knox or participating in a Knox-approved off-campus program. Periods where classes are not in session shall not be construed as disqualifying students from membership.
- B. The Senate shall adopt an attendance policy that will be stated in the by-laws.

Section 3: Executive Officers

- A. The executive officers of the student body shall include a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Communications Officer. These positions shall be elected at-large by the student body in the spring and shall take office at the end of the academic year.
- B. The executive officers term of office shall be until the next Spring Term election.
- C. All executive officers must be enrolled in classes at Knox or enrolled in a Knox-approved off-campus program. In case of a vacancy, the Senate Executive Board will appoint an interim officer to be confirmed by a two-thirds majority of the Student Senate. An election for a permanent replacement officer must be held within two weeks of the office becoming vacant.

Section 4: District Representatives

Students shall be elected to Senate by districts, drawn according to residence by the Student Senate Executive Board.

- A. No district shall include both first year and upper class students.
- B. All students who do not live on campus shall constitute their own district.
- C. Each district shall be assigned a number of representatives proportional to the number of students living within that district.
- D. District elections shall occur in the fall of the academic year in which the elected students will hold office. Vacancies will be filled by mid-year elections held at the beginning of winter and spring terms, if necessary.
- E. District Representatives shall serve a term of one academic year.
- F. District representatives must be enrolled in classes at Knox or participating in a Knox-approved off-campus program. Periods where classes are not in session shall not be

construed as disqualifying students from membership.

- G. Any extended absence by a district representative shall constitute review by the Executive Committee.

Section 5: District Elections

- A. Students seeking positions as District Representatives must reside within the district they hope to represent.
- B. Students are only eligible to vote for those candidates running from within their district.
- C. Elections shall be conducted by the Senate Executive Board by the third full week of the term.
- D. The candidates who receive the most votes shall win the election. In case of tie, a run-off election will be held between the candidates who received an equal number of votes.

Section 6: Representatives to Faculty Committees

Immediately following the election of the senate, the Senate Executive Board shall appoint Senators to serve as representatives on College faculty Committees. These appointments must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the senate.

III. Student Senate Committees

Section 1: Senate Committees

- A. Below lists of responsibilities for the standing committees shall not be construed as exhaustive and all such committees may be delegated additional responsibilities pursuant to their general responsibilities by the Senate or on a voluntary basis of the chair or the entire committee.
- B. The Senate shall have the power to establish or abolish Senate ad hoc or special committees at any time by a majority vote of those present at a general meeting. A motion creating these special or ad hoc committees shall specify the charge of the committee, the duration of time that the committee shall exist and how the chair is to be selected.
- C. If a motion is moved by a standing, special, or ad hoc committee, it does not require a second in the chamber.
- D. The Executive Board shall have the power to create an ad hoc committee and to name its chair.

Section 2: Communications Committee

- A. The Communications Committee is responsible for informing the community of the actions of Student Senate and shall serve as the link between student views and Senate action. The Communications and Public Relations Committee shall also be responsible for facilitating internal Senate communication.
- B. Pursuant to Part A, the Communications Committee may use any means necessary and proper to inform the student body of Senate action.
- C. The Communications Committee shall work with the Vice President for the purposes of publicizing elections and position openings.
- D. The Communications Committee shall conduct any referenda initiated by the Senate.
- E. The Communications Officer shall be the chair of the Communications Committee

Section 3: Finance Committee

- A. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for guaranteeing the responsible use of student funds by student organizations.
- B. The Finance Committee shall review the individual clubs' and organizations' annual budget requests. Based on these reviews, the Finance Committee shall recommend to the Senate the amount of each club's budget for final approval. Each organization shall be notified of this Finance Committee recommendation at least one week prior to the general Senate meeting at which the budgets are considered. Final approval of the budgets requires a majority vote of those Senators present at a general meeting.
- C. The Finance Committee shall accept and review all requests from organizations for additional funds and formulate a recommendation to the Senate. Senate shall have final authority on the appropriation of additional funding to organizations.
- D. The Finance Committee shall review the proposals for the formation of new clubs. It shall make its recommendation to Senate based on criteria established by the Senate and contained

in the Student Senate Finance Committee Guidelines. For a club to be officially recognized and enjoy the privileges thereof, (See “clubs” Article I, Section 2) the Senate must approve the proposal by a majority vote of those Senators present at a general meeting.

- E. The Finance Committee may review any financial policy that affects students and introduce motions and/or recommendations to the Senate based on those policy reviews.
- F. The Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee.

Section 4: Dining Services Committee

- A. The Dining Services Committee shall represent student views on all matters relating to the Dining Services of Knox College.
- B. The Dining Services Committee may review any Dining Services policy that affects students and introduce motions and/or recommendations to the Senate based on those policy reviews.
- C. The chair of the Dining Services Committee shall be an Executive Officer of the student body and shall be elected in the Spring Term campus-wide elections.

Section 5: Residential Quality of Life Committee

- A. The Residential Quality of Life Committee shall represent student views on all matters relating to the Campus Life Office of Knox College and will, assist the Office in identifying programmatic, developmental and operational deficiencies within the residential environment, and work collaboratively with this office to identify solutions and assist in their implementation.
- B. At least two weeks before the annual housing lottery, the Residential Quality of Life Committee shall, with the assistance of the Associate Dean of Students for Campus Life, review applications for Special Interest Housing grants. Using criteria established and approved by the Senate, the committee shall make a recommendation to the Student Life Committee, who will formally approve grant selection. Grant selection must also be approved by the full Student Senate.
- C. The Residential Quality of Life Committee may review any Residential Learning Policy that affects students and may introduce motions and/or recommendations to the Senate based on those policy reviews.
- D. The chair of the Residential Quality of Life Committee shall be an Executive Officer of the student body and shall be elected in the Spring Term campus-wide elections.

Section 6: Safety and Services Committee

- A. The Safety and Services Committee shall represent the students’ views on all matters concerning issues of safety and services on the Knox College Campus.
- B. This committee may review any policy of the safety and services departments which affects students and introduce recommendations and/or motions to Senate based on those policy reviews.
- C. The chair of the Safety and Services Committee shall be an Executive Officer of the student body and shall be elected in the Spring Term campus-wide elections.

Section 7: The Technology Committee

- A. The Technology Committee shall be responsible for best utilizing the technological resources at the college’s disposal to best serve students in both academic and residential life.
- B. The Technology Committee may review any policy of the College that pertains to the use of technology on campus.
- C. The chair of the Technology Committee shall be an Executive Officer of the student body and shall be elected in the Spring Term campus-wide elections

IV. Officers of Student Senate

Section 1: The Executive Board

- A. The Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Communications Officer, Safety and Services Committee Chair, Technology Committee Chair, Dining Services Committee Chair, Residential Quality of Life Chair and the First-Year counselor, who shall be ex officio, non-voting.
- B. The Executive Board shall provide general leadership to the Student Senate and shall oversee and coordinate the activities of the standing, special, and ad hoc Senate committees as well as meet with the college administration periodically.
- C. The Executive Board shall interpret this Constitution. Interpretations shall be final and

determined by a majority of the entire Executive Board.

- D. The Executive Board shall have the power to act for the full Senate at times when the Senate is not in session.

Section 2: Duties of the President of the Student Body/Student Senate

- A. The President will be one of the four student representatives on the Student Life Committee.
- B. The President is the spokesperson for the Senate to the community and is responsible for all the activities of Senate.
- C. The President shall have the executive power in terms of Senate resolutions and shall be the chief spokesperson for student rights and student empowerment on campus.
- D. The President shall chair the Executive Board of Senate and in such capacity oversee and coordinate the activities of other officers.
- E. The President may call special meetings of the Senate.
- F. The President shall serve as an ex officio, non-voting member on all Standing Senate Committees.

Section 3: Duties of the Vice President of the Student Body/Student Senate

- A. The Vice President will be one of the four student representatives on the Student Life Committee.
- B. The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in the President's absence.
- C. The Vice President shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of all standing Senate Committees.
- D. The Vice President shall be the administrator of all Student Senate elections.

Section 4: Duties of the Treasurer of the Student Body/Student Senate

- A. The Treasurer will be one of the four student representatives on the Student Life Committee.
- B. The Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate and of the student body and in such role, shall see that student funds are used responsibly.
- C. The Treasurer, with the assistance of the Finance Committee and the final approval of the Senate, shall formulate recommendations to the College concerning financial matters including, but not limited to, tuition increases, the budget of Union Board, the budgets of the student publications and the amount of money allocated to the Senate for appropriation to the various student clubs and organizations.
- D. The treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee and in such role be responsible for the committee's activities.
- E. The Treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing the funds of the student organizations on campus. In such role, the treasurer shall collect budget requests from clubs and distribute them to the Finance Committee for consideration.
- F. The Treasurer shall also collect additional fund requests and distribute them to the Finance Committee for consideration.
- G. Upon final approval of club budgets by the Senate, the Treasurer shall direct the Student Activities Office to deposit in each club's account the final amount approved by Senate.
- H. The Treasurer shall be an ex officio, non-voting member on all standing Senate committees.
- I. The Treasurer must have gone through the budget process prior to his/her term in office.

Section 5: Duties of the Communications Officer of the Student Body/Student Senate

- A. The Communications Officer will be one of the four student representatives on the Student Life Committee.
- B. The Communications Officer shall be responsible for informing the community about the decisions made by Student Senate as well as publicizing upcoming Senate meetings.
- C. The Communications Officer shall be responsible for facilitating all Senate sponsored forums.
- D. The Communications Officer shall be an ex officio, non-voting member on all standing Senate committees.

Section 6: The Duties of the First-Year Counselor

- A. The First-Year Counselor shall be elected by the Senators representing the first-year class after fall district elections.
- B. The First-Year Counselor shall serve as the liaison between the First-Year Senators and the Executive Board of Student Senate. The primary responsibility of the First-Year Counselor

shall be to work in conjunction with the Executive Board in order to integrate First-Year Senators into Senate's procedures and structures.

- C. The First-Year Counselor shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member on all standing Senate committees.

V. Meetings of the Student Senate

Section 1: Open Meetings

- A. Meetings of the Student Senate shall be open to all members of the community as well as to the press and their recording devices.
- B. Every general meeting of the Student Senate shall have a period of the meeting for "Community Business," at which time members of the community may address the Senate.

Section 2: Quorum

Quorum is required for any official Senate action. A quorum shall consist of one-half plus one of the total members of Senate. If quorum is not achieved at a regularly scheduled general meeting or is lost during a regularly scheduled meeting, the Senate may only hear community business, committee reports, officer reports, administrator reports or engage in informal discussion.

Section 3: Parliamentary Procedure

The Knox College Student Senate's Parliamentary Procedure as contained in the Knox College Student Senate By-Laws shall govern the Senate in all official meetings.

VI. Censure, Impeachment, and Removal

Section 1: Censure

A censure motion shall require a second and a two-thirds vote of those Senators present at a general meeting. The Senator in question shall have the right to make a final statement immediately prior to the vote. The censure motion shall be read as the Senator stands in front of the chamber and will be released to the media.

Section 2: Impeachment

- A. An individual may be impeached as a Senator or an Officer. Any Senator may propose an impeachment resolution and the resolution shall be considered a main motion and requires a second and a majority of the entire Senate for approval. Upon passage of the impeachment resolution, the Senator or Officer is officially "impeached."
- B. The student body may also present an impeachment resolution by presenting a petition to Senate bearing the signatures of twenty per cent of the full-time student body. Upon verification of the requisite twenty per cent of the student body, the Senator or Officer is officially impeached. The presiding officer may ask students who have signed the petition for verification of their signature.
- C. Any impeachment motion shall contain a detailed account and explanation of the charges and whether the Senator is being impeached only as an Officer or as a Senator.
- D. Following and impeachment, there shall immediately be an investigation of the charges by a special committee appointed by the non-impeached members of the Executive Board. The committee will report its findings to the full Senate no later than one week after the Senator or Officer has been impeached.
- E. Following the Judiciary Committee's report there shall be a special hearing of the full Senate to determine whether the Senator or Officer should be removed.

Section 3: Removal

- A. A presentation shall be made by the special committee listing their recommendation.
- B. The impeached Senator or Officer may make a statement and question those making the charges as well as members of the Special Committee. Other Senators may question the impeached Senator if and only if the impeached Senator agrees.
- C. Senators may also question the sponsors of the impeachment resolution.
- D. The impeached Senator or Officer shall then leave the room so that the Senate may privately deliberate and vote on the matter.
- E. In the case of an Officer being impeached as an Officer, a two-thirds vote of the entire Senate shall be necessary for removal from office. Upon this two-thirds vote, the Officer shall immediately relinquish his or her office and all the duties of that office.
- F. A Senator or Officer who is removed shall relinquish their position on any and all faculty committees.

- G. The procedures outlined in this article shall not apply if an officer leaves, or goes on an off campus study program for at least a term, or graduates.
- H. The Senate may establish an attendance policy with a removal component that would not have to be consistent with the above procedures.

Section 4: Recall Elections

During the course of an academic term, a district may recall its representative if they have grievances with the representative.

- A. To initiate a recall election, the members of the district must present the Student Senate with a petition that contains thirty-three percent of the district resident's signatures and a reason for attempting to initiate a recall vote.
- B. When this is accomplished, a special election will be held to determine whether or not that representative will be replaced by a different candidate.
- C. A majority of the district must vote to replace the candidate in order for the removal to take effect.

VII. Initiative and Referendum

Section 1: Initiative

The student body may initiate regular motions, amendments to the Senate Constitution, or amendments to any judicial bodies' constitutions in the Senate through a student petition bearing the signatures of at least twenty per cent of the number of full-time students. This requirement fulfilled, the Senate shall be obliged to debate the proposition and put it to a vote of the Senate within two weeks of it being presented to the Senate.

Section 2: Referendum

Any legislation may be presented to the student body for a referendum by a majority vote of the Student Senate or by a petition bearing the signatures of at least twenty per cent of the number of the full-time students. It shall be the responsibility of the Communications Committee to administer this referendum, the result of which will be obligatory upon the Senate provided that the at least fifty per cent of the number of students in full-time residence take part in the vote.

VIII. Amendments

Section 1: Proposal of Amendments

- A. Amendments to this Constitution can be suggested by any Senator.
- B. Prior to ratification, an amendment must be officially proposed. This can happen in two ways:
 - a. An amendment may be officially proposed through a majority vote of the Senate, or
 - b. An amendment may also be officially proposed by the student body through a petition bearing the signatures of twenty per cent of the student body . (See "initiative" Article VII, section 1.)
- C. Any proposed amendment may be debated for ratification immediately, but must be debated for ratification within two weeks.

Section 2: Ratification of Amendments

- A. After an amendment has been officially proposed either from the student body or the Senate, ratification shall require a two-thirds vote of the entire Student Senate and a majority vote of the Student Life Committee.
- B. Any amendment that proposes change in a college policy or faculty regulations must be approved by the appropriate faculty committee or by the entire faculty in the case of proposed changes to faculty regulations.

IX. Student Rights

The enumeration in this Constitution and in the Knox College Student Handbook of certain student rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the students.