

CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

PREAMBLE

The Student Council of the American University of Armenia, as part of the greater academic community, is the representative voice of the students of the American University of Armenia.

Recognizing the centrality and importance of the students to the life and achievement of the American University of Armenia, hereinafter referred to as University; desiring to promote the general interest and welfare of the students; aiming to improve the quality of the student experience in the American University of Armenia; and believing that this goal can be served through an organization of students themselves,

We, the Students of the American University of Armenia, do hereby establish this Constitution of the Student Council of the American University of Armenia.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Student Council of the American University of Armenia, hereinafter referred to as the Student Council.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND DUTY

The purpose and duty of the Student Council are to

- represent the interests of the students in University and governmental affairs;
- maintain a forum for expressing student views and interests;
- initiate, coordinate, and guide student efforts aimed at improving student life and activities;
- keep the students informed of relevant issues;
- foster scholarship in an atmosphere of free and objective inquiry;
- insist upon academic freedom, responsibility, and excellence;
- promote cohesion within the student body, recognizing the rights and responsibilities of students from diverse backgrounds;
- obtain effective communication and relations within the University and with the external communities;
- develop and implement a comprehensive activities program designed to meet and supplement the social, cultural, recreational, and academic needs of the students;

- provide opportunities to develop student leadership qualities;
- ensure fair and democratic operations of this body;
- promote integrity and ethical behavior by all members of the University community.

ARTICLE III: AUTHORITY AND POWERS

The authority of the Student Council is derived from the democratically expressed will of the students of the University. In order to fulfill its purpose, the Student Council shall have the following powers.

Section 1 – Assembly and Communication

The Student Council shall have the power to call, hold, and direct meetings of the students and to initiate and receive communication within and on behalf of the students of the University.

Section 2 – Promotion of Student Activities

The Student Council shall have the power to organize, endorse, or otherwise promote organizations and activities of the students, as necessary and appropriate to provide opportunity and structure for Student interaction, endeavors, and welfare. The Student Council shall recommend allocation of funds, equipment, facilities, and other resources available for student use or provided by the student body.

Section 3 – Affiliation

The Student Council shall have the power to affiliate with or hold membership in other organizations outside the University which serve the interests of Students or which share other common interest or cause with the Student Council and Body. Such affiliation may not contradict or be in conflict with the rules and regulations under which the university operates in Armenia.

Section 4 – Organization and Self-Governance

We recognize that only students have the right to choose officers and representatives of Student Council. No Faculty or Administrative approval is needed to become an officer or representative of Student Council. The Student Council shall have the power to organize itself and conduct its business, as necessary and appropriate for its purpose. This power shall include the power to elect or appoint its officers to positions of leadership or responsibility within the Student Council and to form committees and working groups. The Student Council shall have Bylaws, and, as needed, also have operating policies, plans and procedures. The Bylaws and additional policies, plans and procedures shall not conflict with this Constitution in their purpose or in their particulars.

As a part of the power to organize itself and in order to promote its necessary and appropriate conduct of business, the Student Council shall also have the power to remove from the Student Council any officer for neglect of duties or activities inconsistent with this constitution. This officer shall be supplied with a written statement of the reasons for the vote and shall be allowed seven working days to reply. A vote by two-thirds of Student Council officers is required to remove an officer. This officer shall have a voice, but no vote in these proceedings. The officer

shall be removed and the seat shall be declared vacant if during the term of office his/her membership qualification is no more consistent with this Constitution.

Section 5 – Funds

Student Council has the right to have its own budget and to launch fund-raising campaigns, which may include contributions from the University, other universities, governmental, non-governmental organizations and individuals. The Student Council shall utilize facilities, equipment and technical resources of the University free of charge. Such activities must conform to any rules and regulations under which the university operates in Armenia.

Section 6 - Student Council Logo

Student Council has the right to have its logo, which shall be approved by the two-third votes of the Student Council officers.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Student Council Composition

The Student Council shall consist of all students elected to the Student Council by University students. There shall be total of nine (9) officers representing the students, including President and Vice-President.

Section 2 – Qualification

All students

- in good standing (as defined in the current Catalog of the University),
- not in default of any financial or other obligation towards the University,
- enrolled in a degree or certificate program of the University, and
- currently registered in a course of study

shall have the right to fully participate in Student Council elections and serve as a Student Council officer.

Section 3 – Student Council Representatives

The Student Council has the right to elect Student Council Representatives from degree and certificate programs, as well as from Academic Preparatory Program. An affirmative vote by two-thirds of Student Council officers is required to approve the status of each representative. The representatives shall assume all duties of the Student Council officer as defined by this Constitution, but has no right to vote in Student Council discussions. The term of office of the representative shall be considered as the time left until the next regular Student Council election.

Section 4 – Student Council Advisors

There shall be one Faculty Advisor invited by Student Council to attend meetings of the Student Council but with no right to vote. S/he shall have the right to speak at all Student Council meetings or any other event organized by Student Council. S/he shall serve for as long as there is mutual consent.

Section 5 – President Emeritus

Once per five years Student Council has the right to elect its President Emeritus from the former Student Council Presidents who have contributed a lot during and after his/her period of presidency. Current President of the Student Council nominates the candidacy, providing written

statement of reasons for nomination. A vote by two-thirds of all currently seated officers is necessary to approve the status of President Emeritus. The President Emeritus shall have the right to attend and speak at all Student Council meetings but shall not vote. S/he may represent the Student Council in extra-campus capacities, as long as there is mutual consent.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

Section 1 –Officers

The Student Council shall have a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Elections Coordinator, Student Council Web Page Editor, Campus Wide Events Director, Public Relations Coordinator, and Academic Preparatory Program Coordinator.

Section 2 – Election of Officers

All the officers of the Student Council shall be elected by the University students in a general election organized according to the current document on election procedures.

Section 3 – Term of Office

Each officer shall serve a half-year term. Student Council officers may serve more than one term if re-elected. In the event that a candidate is advanced or elected to fill a vacancy the term of office shall be considered as the time left until the next regular Student Council election.

Section 3 - Vacancy

An office shall be declared vacant upon formal announcement to the Student Council of the removal or resignation of an officer. In the event an elected office is vacant the Student Council President may make a permanent appointment subject to a two-thirds vote of the Student Council officers within ten working days.

Section 4 - Election of Officers other than President and Vice President

- A. After the elections for the Student Council are held, the President of the outgoing Student Council shall call and preside over an organization meeting of the new Student Council.
- B. At this time, the outgoing President shall list the offices of the Student Council, briefly describe them and ask officers to nominate themselves for any of the offices.
- C. The outgoing President shall then adjourn the meeting and set a time for the next Council meeting to take place within one week (7 days), at which time the election of Student Council officers shall be held.
- D. The candidates for any of the offices shall submit a one-page written statement as to their qualifications for office. It shall be the responsibility of the outgoing President to supply copies of the statements for the Student Council sufficiently in advance of the second meeting.
- E. At this meeting, the outgoing President may request an oral presentation by the candidates as well as a question-and-answer period.
- F. At this Student Council meeting (the second of the new Student Council) the election of officers will be held in the following order: Secretary, Treasurer, Elections Coordinator, Public Relations Coordinator, Campus-Wide Events Director, Student Council Web Page Editor and Academic Preparatory Program Coordinator.
- G. Candidates nominated for an office, if defeated, may nominate themselves for any subsequent office for which they are eligible.

- H. A majority of those voting (including abstentions) is necessary and sufficient to elect an officer. If a majority is not obtained on the first ballot, a run-off election shall be held between the two candidates who receive the most votes on the first ballot.
- I. Upon completion of the elections of all Student Council officers, the outgoing President shall certify the elections within one week.
- J. The newly elected officers of the Student Council shall assume office upon certification of their election by the outgoing President. The old officers of the Student Council shall retain their office until such time as the newly elected President assumes office.
- K. In the event that certain positions of elected officers must be filled during the course of the term, the President of the Student Council shall conduct special elections in the Student Council, following the preceding guidelines for regularly elected officer elections. The President may vote or abstain from voting in these elections at his/her discretion.

ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1 - Composition

The Executive Committee of the Student Council shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Public Relations Coordinator, with President acting as Chairperson.

ARTICLE VII: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

Upon assuming the title of Student Council officer, each officer shall:

- attend regular Student Council meetings unless excused by the President; an officer may have no more than three unexcused absences during his/her term of office;
- be active on and attend the meetings of at least one Student Council Committee unless otherwise excused by the Committee chairman;
- voice the opinions of his/her constituents during Student Council discussions;
- inform constituents of the results of these votes;
- regularly report to inform constituents of issues and proceedings of the Student Council, campus-wide activities, referendums, and other issues affecting the students;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or Executive Committee may demand.

Section 1 – Duties of the President

The President shall be responsible for all actions of the Student Council and shall:

- hold full executive authority in Student Council;
- act as chairman at meetings of the Student Council, represent the student body in all intercampus and extra-campus capacities;
- report to the Student Council on intercampus and extra-campus issues;

- work in conjunction with the treasurer and members of Executive Committee to prepare Student Council's budget;
- have authority to authorize and sign for expenditures within the Student Council budget;
- see that the Constitution and Bylaws of the Student Council are followed;
- see that the other officers fulfill their responsibilities;
- see that the Student Council as a whole accomplishes its goals and fulfills its responsibilities and purposes;
- call special meetings of Student Council;
- appoint ad hoc Committees and executive positions as defined in the Bylaws, and
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or the Executive Committee may demand.

Section 2 – Duties of the Vice-President

The Vice President shall be responsible for all issues and affairs related to the internal and external workings of the Student Council and shall:

- act as chairman in the absence of or at the request of the President;
- be prepared to assume the duties of the President at any time;
- see that the students are represented and informed in campus decisions and affairs;
- report to the Student Council on campus issues;
- be responsible for publicity of issues and events outside of Student Council pertaining to Student Council or the University students;
- maintain channels for students to express opinions;
- coordinate, oversee, and recommend changes in the work of all external and internal Student Council committees;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the President, Bylaws, or the Executive Committee may demand;
- see that the Constitution and Bylaws of the Student Council are followed.

Section 3 – Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing all funding related to the Student Council and shall:

- see that all expenditures of Student Council funds, including expenditures of Student Council funds that have been appropriated to other organizations, are in accordance with University and Student Council Policy and do not conflict with any budgets approved by the Student Council;
- see that all financial transactions of the Student Council are executed in a timely fashion;
- use his or her signature to represent the Student Council on all financial documents affecting Student Council funds;
- see that Student Council officers and Student Council Committee officers understand the University accounting system and financial policies well enough to be able to properly carry out their responsibilities;
- report regularly to the President and to the Student Council on transactions involving the Student Council funds which have taken place since the previous report;
- recommend for Student Council approval any changes in the Student Council's approved budget or in the budget of any organization provided with Student Council funds, and
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or the Executive Committee may demand.

Section 4 – Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining all Student Council records and shall:

- record the minutes of all meetings of the Student Council;
- see that all minutes, agendas, and related materials are available to all Student Council officers early enough to allow officers to review them before the meeting to which the materials pertain;
- see that copies of the current Constitution and Bylaws are available to Student Council officers;
- maintain a file of actions and resolutions approved by the Student Council;
- maintain attendance records;
- maintain the Student Council's roster of officers and representatives;

- inform the Executive Committee when an officer or representative has failed to fulfill his/her duties;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or Executive Committee may demand.

Section 5 – Duties of the Campus Wide Events Director

The Campus Wide Events Director shall be responsible for organization of intra and extra campus events and shall:

- work in conjunction with the officers of Executive Committee to develop a comprehensive activities program designed to meet and supplement the social, cultural, and recreational needs of the students;
- see that the activities program is implemented in a timely fashion;
- work in conjunction with the Student Council Web Page Editor to develop a plan to publicize and support social, cultural and recreational events (e.g. making posters, etc.);
- contact University Administration whenever the Student Council has any events in which assistance is needed;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or Executive Committee may demand.

Section 6 – Duties of the Public Relations Coordinator

The Public Relations Coordinator shall be responsible for obtaining effective communication and relations with the external communities and shall:

- inform the Executive Committee on the extra campus events;
- interact with external communities and organizations on joint projects or campaigns to benefit the University students;
- participate in all fund raising activities;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or Executive Committee may demand.

Section 7 – Duties of the Student Council Web Page Editor

The Student Council Web Page Editor shall be responsible for the accuracy of the published information on the Student Council Web Page and shall:

- regularly collect and provide information for update of the Student Council Web page content;

- inform constituents of issues and proceedings of the Student Council, campus-wide activities, referendums, and other issues affecting the students, using Web resources;
- see that these activities are in accordance with University Policies, Rules, Regulations and Student Council Bylaws;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or Executive Committee may demand.

Section 8 – Duties of the Elections Coordinator

The Elections Coordinator shall be responsible for organization of elections in accordance with this Constitution and shall:

- develop a list of students eligible to vote during Student Council Elections;
- work in conjunction with the Elections Commission to prepare and post the Elections Code;
- assume the responsibilities of the member of Elections Commission as defined by this Constitution;
- see that the Article XIV of this Constitution and Bylaws of the Student Council are followed by all members of Elections Commission;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or Executive Committee may demand.

Section 9 – Duties of the Academic Preparatory Program Coordinator

The Academic Preparatory Program (APP) Coordinator shall be responsible for integration of APP students into the student body and shall:

- voice the opinions of APP students during Student Council discussions;
- inform APP students of the results of these discussions;
- regularly report to inform APP students of issues and proceedings of the Student Council, campus-wide activities, and other issues affecting the University students;
- assume any additional responsibilities that the Bylaws or Executive Committee may demand.

ARTICLE VIII: DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Section 1 – Disciplinary Actions Regarding Officers and Representatives

A. An officer or representative who misses three regular Student Council meetings shall be scheduled for a hearing by the Student Council, which will have the authority to remove an

officer or representative from office, or dismiss the charges against the officer. For the purposes of this provision, tardiness or an early departure shall be counted as one-half of an absence. The Student Council Secretary shall immediately notify, in writing, an officer or representative of his/her suspension.

- B. Any student who believes that an officer or representative has neglected his/her duties may file a complaint, in writing, with the Executive Committee urging that the officer or representative be removed from office. The Secretary shall immediately notify, in writing, an officer or representative of the fact that a complaint has been filed against him/her and the nature of that complaint. A copy of such notification shall be forwarded to all the officers of the Student Council.
- C. Following a hearing under either above-mentioned paragraph A or B, the Student Council, by two-thirds of votes of all officers, shall have the authority to remove an officer or representative from office, dismiss the charges against the officer. The officer shall have a voice, but no vote in these proceedings.

ARTICLE IX: STUDENT COUNCIL MEETING

Section 1 – Meeting Times

- A. The Student Council shall hold regular meetings at least once a month during the academic year and, in addition, when the President deems it necessary to call a meeting.
- B. The Student Council's agenda shall be fixed two working days prior to the meeting and shall be distributed to all officers two working days prior to the meeting.
- C. A special meeting of the Student Council may be called by the President provided that the entire Student Council membership has been notified by e-mail or by telephone two days in advance.
- D. Each officer of the Student Council shall have one vote in the Student Council.

Section 2 – Quorum

- A. A quorum is necessary for the Student Council or any of its subsidiary Committees to pass a decision.
- B. A quorum is defined as a majority of all currently seated officers in order to conduct regular business.

Section 3 – Open Meetings

- A. All Student Council regular meetings shall be open to the University students, faculty and staff.
- B. Notification of such meetings shall be available at the Student Council Web Page and be posted on the Student Council's Bulletin Board.
- C. Minutes and agendas of those open meetings shall be available at the Student Council Web Page.
- D. Students, Faculty and Staff shall have open access to all resolutions that have been passed by a regular session of the Student Council.

Section 4 – Parliamentary Procedures

- A. The President of the Student Council, or the person acting as chairperson of any Committee meeting, shall make the rulings on all parliamentary questions.
- B. The President shall consult with the officer as necessary and appropriate on the parliamentary questions.

- C. Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution a majority of a quorum is needed to pass a motion.
- D. Student Council personnel matters brought before the Student Council for a vote must be voted on by a secret ballot.

Section 5 – Proxies

In the event an officer cannot attend a meeting, s/he may leave a written proxy with a designated officer. Such written authorization must be enveloped and must clearly state both the issue upon which the proxy bears and how the officer wishes to vote (affirmative, negative, abstention). Each officer may serve as the representative of only one other officer. However, the presence of a proxy will not prevent officers from being considered absent. In the event an issue undergoes change (e.g. division of the question, amendment) the proxy will not be considered valid unless it has made provision for those specific circumstances.

ARTICLE X: OATH

The oath of the President of the Student Council is made orally in a speech delivered to the University Community a week after the official results of elections are announced. Outgoing Student Council team shall inform the University Community about this event a week prior to the meeting and shall organize the meeting.

The text of the oath is the following:

“Dear Students, dear University community. It is an honor for me to be elected as a President of the Student Council. I promise to fulfill my duties in accordance with the general rules of professional and ethical conduct. I will show due respect to Students and Faculty. I will seek an opinion and advice of the community of American University of Armenia on important matters and decisions. In case a dispute arises, I will act according to the Rules and Procedures set forth in the Student Council Constitution. I will uphold the Student Council Constitution to the best of my ability.”

ARTICLE XI: BYLAWS

Bylaws of the Student Council shall be established by a simple majority at any official Student Council meeting. The Secretary shall update the Bylaws within one week after Bylaws are amended and shall maintain a current copy of the Student Council Bylaws in the Secretary’s permanent files at all times.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

If a proposal to amend this Constitution receives three-fourth of the votes of the current student body, the Constitution shall be declared duly amended.

ARTICLE XIII: ENACTMENT

This Constitution shall have full force and effect following passage by a three-fourth of the votes of the current student body.

ARTICLE XIV: ELECTION PROCEDURES

Section 1: Elections

- A. The elections will be run, monitored, and supervised by the Elections Commission. The Elections Commission will consist of one University Administrative Staff member, one Faculty, two students enrolled in the degree or certificate program of University and the Student Council Elections Coordinator. The University Administration appoints the Faculty and Staff member. The outgoing Student Council appoints one student and the other student is appointed by the mutual agreement of University Administration and outgoing Student Council.
- B. All officers will be elected in a general election. The officers to be elected by the students are the President, Vice-President, and seven (7) Student Council officers.
- C. There is no minimum number of votes required for election; a plurality of votes cast for the position is required.
- D. All deadlines regarding election procedures shall be set by the Elections Commission.

Section 2: Guidelines for Elections

- A. There shall be two elections of Student Council officers during a year. The method of election shall be by electronic voting. The location of electronic voting will be on the Student Council Web Page. The days and hours of operation, decided by the Elections Commission, shall be made public two full weeks prior to the start of voting period.
- B. Only students enrolled in a degree or certificate program of the University, and currently registered in a course of study shall have right to vote. Each student has right to vote only once during each election.
- C. The procedure for elections shall be as follows:
 - The voting period shall be three working days in June and in November.
 - There shall be two full weeks in which to campaign prior to voting period.
 - Students shall use their University Network usernames and passwords to vote.
- D. The eligibility of candidates is defined in Article IV, Section 2 of this Constitution.
- E. All candidates must fill out and sign a position paper, declaring their constituency, eligibility and desire to run, during a week prior to start of campaign. The form shall be designed by the Student Council Elections Coordinator and be made available at the Registrar's Office and on the Student Council Web Page a week prior to start of campaign. Both electronic and hard copy forms, as well as photos of candidates must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline set by the Elections Commission.
- F. The photos of candidates, their position papers shall be put on the Student Council Web Page under heading "Candidates for Elections."
- G. Each candidate must approve a proof of their position papers as placed on the Student Council Web Page and must sign a statement declaring his/her name and data to be correct during a week after the campaign started. Candidates failing to do so must accept any errors on the Web Page.
- H. Candidates for each seat shall be listed on the e-ballot in alphabetical order.
- I. If any candidate is disqualified after or during an election, votes cast for him/her shall be declared void.

Section 3: Campaign Policies

- A. Campaigning and electioneering shall be limited to University degree and certificate program students.

- B. No campaign materials shall appear before the beginning of the designated campaign period. Violation of this rule shall result in the candidate's disqualification.
- C. There shall be no campaigning outside of the University premises.
- D. All campaign materials must be removed within forty-eight hours of the time elections have been completed.
- E. Campaign materials and activities and their use shall be regulated by general University Policy and by Election Procedures of this Constitution. Posters may only be placed on bulletin boards. Posters found elsewhere shall be taken down by the Registrar's Office staff.
- F. The following are policies regarding campaign expenditures:
 - Candidates must submit a detailed plan of how they will run the campaign. This includes all financial statements. The plan should be submitted to the Elections Commission during a week prior to start of campaign.
 - A candidates' campaign plan must be approved by the Elections Commission.
 - All campaign materials shall have the stamp of approval of the Elections Commission before being distributed. Every piece of material must be stamped. Flyers not approved by the Elections Commission must be removed by the candidate and additional penalties, including possible disqualification for repeated violations, may be imposed.
 - Campaign materials (e.g. paper, printing services, paint brushes, etc.) shall be provided to each candidate by the Elections Commission after the approval of the campaign plan.
 - Available rooms, auditoriums, shall be provided to each candidate for campaigning following his/her request and after the approval of the campaign plan.

Section 4: Ballot Counting

- A. Ballots shall be counted automatically by a voting program placed on University Server.
- B. Ballots shall be stored in the program to which only the Elections Commission has access.
- C. It shall be the responsibility of the Elections Commission to ensure that the system is working properly before and during the voting process.
- D. The preliminary results of elections shall be announced within two working days after the close of elections.
- E. The final results of elections and the protocol of election results signed at least by three members of Elections Commission shall be made public on the seventh working day after the close of elections.
- F. The protocol of election results shall be kept by the Student Council Advisor and a copy of this document shall be kept in the Student Council office for five years.

Section 5: Sanctions

- A. A candidate shall be warned or disqualified for any infraction of the Election Procedures. The Elections Commission shall apply sanctions appropriate to the campaign violation. Violations that affect the outcome of an election shall result in a candidate's disqualification. Penalties for violations shall be applied uniformly for all candidates.
- B. A decision must be made within two working days on any complaint filed with the Elections Commission against a candidate.

- C. The candidate shall have the right to hear a full statement of the complaint against him/her and to know the identity of the complainant.
- D. The candidate shall have the right to speak in his/her own defense and to produce witnesses to speak on his/her behalf.
- C. A quorum is necessary for the Elections Commission to conduct business dealing with sanctions. A quorum is defined as a majority of all Elections Commission members.
- E. Any student who is eligible to vote may file an elections complaint.

Section 6: Protests and Appeals

- A. Protests will be accepted by the Elections Commission up to two working days after the close of the elections.
- B. When there is a protest made against a candidate, a complaint form must be completed and signed by the student making the complaint. There must be evidence of an infraction of the Election Procedures before the Elections Commission will accept it.
- C. Should the Elections Commission decide to hear the appeal, the Commission will have three working days to discuss the case. A written decision on the appeal must be delivered to the University Administration and outgoing Executive Committee within twenty-four hours after the decision has been made.

Section 7: Publication of Election Guidelines

The Elections Commission shall annually publish the current election guidelines. This publication called the Elections Code, shall include but not be limited to the following:

- A. Dates, times, electronic voting places, requirements for voting.
- B. Eligibility.
- C. Campaign regulation.
- D. Campaign materials and functions.
- E. Sanctions.
- F. Appeals Process.
- G. Rules regulating campaign statements.
- H. Provisions for announcements of results.

Section 8: Recall

Every elected officer of the Student Council shall be subject to recall. Upon the signing of a petition requesting recall by 30% of the students, a recall election shall be held. If a majority of the votes are cast for recall, that seat in the Student Council shall be vacant.