

Constitution of the University Student Senate of The City University of New York

Preamble

We, the duly elected representatives of the student leadership of the City University of New York, in order to preserve the accessibility, affordability and excellence of higher education within the City of New York and to protect the rights of the student body and to inform when their rights are threatened, to further the cause of public higher education and to promote the general welfare of its student constituents and the University, do hereby establish and ordain this Constitution.

ARTICLE I. Name of the Organization

- 1.1 The name of this organization shall be the University Student Senate of the City University of New York, hereinafter USS.
- 1.2 The name, USS, shall not be lent to any political candidate, campaign or political organizations, student or otherwise, or any commercial enterprise, student or otherwise, for the purposes of funding or endorsing individuals or products, nor shall any title or position, elected or appointed, within USS be used for such aforementioned purposes.
- 1.3 The name of this organization USS shall stand to represent the principal organization for the students of the City University of New York, as defined and recognized by New York State Higher Education Law, Section 6204.

ARTICLE II. Purpose of the Organization

The purpose of this organization shall be to:

- a. Protect and defend the quality of education of the City University of New York for all students and to endeavor to maintain and enhance the accessibility of that quality education to the people of the City of New York; thereby upholding the University's policy of access and excellence and shall create its own policies to such effect.
- b. Represent the interests of the students of the City University of New York by communicating all student positions on all issues to the City University's campuses, faculty and administrators; Chancellery, Board of Trustees, New York City Legislature, Mayor, New York State Legislature, Governor, United States Congress, President of the United States and such other governmental and private agencies as shall be deemed necessary to effect this purpose and shall work effectively with all aforementioned entities to best serve this purpose. It shall serve as the principal lobbying organization for the students of the University and shall make public its position on any action for the purpose of informing its constituents and the general public of the City of New York.
- c. Serve as the liaison between the students of the City University and other State Student Associations and governmental and private groups and to inform students of the significant occurrences within those groups.
- d. Support, enhance, encourage and develop, by its own choosing and its own methods, the student leadership on the individual campuses for the purposes of strengthening student participation on all issues, at all levels throughout the University.
- e. Serve as an information network for its electorate with knowledge on all issues concerning the University. This information shall include, but is not limited to, academic program planning, tuition, budgetary matters, college services, scholarships and student governance.
- f. Appoint student representatives for all University-wide committees and task forces established by the Chancellery or the Board of Trustees for the purposes of serving the University.

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- g. Advise the Board of Trustees, the Chancellery, and all standing and subsequent Trustee Committees on all matters regarding the welfare of the students and the University including, but not limited to Academic Affairs, Fiscal Affairs, Student Affairs and Public Relations.
- h. Encourage, support and work with the individual campus governments to establish and maintain additional student support programs sponsored by the governments, such as campus emergency loan programs and scholarship programs.
- i. Assist the student governments in developing viable and steady working relationships with their campus officials, as well as identifying any possible hindrances to the goal of a productive collegiate environment.
- j. Promote and encourage the free and spirited interchange of ideas and methods of operations between the campus governments and, upon invitation, recommend to the campuses methods to improve their governance structures, to better serve the students on their campuses.
- k. Serve as the supreme student organization for implementing the objectives set forth in the Preamble, subject only to New York State Higher Education Law, Board of Trustees' By-Laws and the Fiscal Accountability Handbook. It shall govern itself based upon the structure and ideals expressed in its own Constitution and By-Laws.

By-Laws of the University Student Senate

ARTICLE I. Definitions

- Section 1.1 **The University** shall mean the City University of New York (hereinafter "CUNY") as defined in the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of the City of New York (hereinafter "the Board")
- Section 1.2 **A College** shall be an institution of higher education as defined in the Bylaws of the Board. A college shall include all units of CUNY which may be given the status and functions of a college by the Board, as well as the Graduate School, the Law School and Mount Sinai School of Medicine.
- Section 1.3 **A Division** shall mean either the day, evening or graduate session of a college.
- Section 1.4 **A Community College** shall mean a two-year college offering Associate Degrees as defined in the Bylaws of the Board.
- Section 1.5 **A Senior College** shall mean a four-year college offering Bachelor Degrees, the Graduate School, the Law School and Mt. Sinai Medical School as defined in the Bylaws of the Board.
- Section 1.6 **A Student Government** shall mean the individual student government from any division of any college comprising the CUNY system that elects a Delegate and/or Alternate to represent it as a member of the University Student Senate (hereinafter "USS"), and as further defined in the Bylaws of the Board.
- Section 1.7 **A Delegate** to USS shall mean a student representative elected by a student government or directly elected by their division of any college comprising the CUNY system. **Senator** shall be synonymous with **Delegate**.
- Section 1.8 **An Alternate** shall mean a student representative elected by a student government or directly elected by their division of any college comprising the CUNY system. An Alternate is a non-voting ex-officio member of USS when the Delegate is present, and becomes a voting member of USS in the absence of said Delegate.
- Section 1.9 **An Officer** of USS shall be elected to such position by a majority vote of the USS membership present and voting at a general election held at the regularly scheduled meeting of USS in October of each year, assuming a quorum has been established.
- Section 1.10 **A Plenary Session** shall mean a meeting of USS at which a quorum has been established.

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ARTICLE II. Membership of University Student Senate

Section 2.1 Representation and Voting

Each Division of each College shall be entitled to representation in USS as follows:

- a. **Senior College** – One Delegate who shall be an undergraduate day session student; one Delegate who shall be an undergraduate evening session student; and one Delegate who shall be a graduate student. Where there is no differentiation between day and evening session undergraduate students, or where there is only one undergraduate government, there shall be one undergraduate Delegate designated as either day or full-time and one undergraduate Delegate designated either evening or part-time.
- b. **Community College** – One Delegate who shall be a day session student and one Delegate who shall be an evening session student. Where there is no differentiation between day and evening session undergraduate students or where there is only one undergraduate government, there shall be one Delegate designated as either day or full-time and one Delegate designated either evening or part-time.
- c. **All Other Colleges** – There shall be one Delegate from each other College of CUNY, as defined in Section 1.1, but which is neither a Senior nor Community College.
- d. Each Delegate shall be entitled to vote.
- e. Any Division of any College not represented at two (2) consecutive regularly scheduled Plenary Sessions (Unexcused absences) shall have its voting privileges suspended and both Delegate and Alternate positions deemed vacant immediately following the absence of both Delegate and Alternate at the Roll Call of the third meeting.
 - i. Said Delegate and Alternate, their Dean, and their Student Government shall be notified by the Vice-Chair for their Division immediately after the second unexcused absence from a regularly scheduled Plenary Session. Notice shall include process of suspension as outlined in this Article, and right of student government to replace delegate/alternate positions.
 - ii. Notice of suspension of voting privilege and vacancies shall be sent by certified mail to suspended Delegate and Alternate, their Dean and their student government no later than three days after the third unexcused absence. Failure to respond shall confirm removal.
 - iii. Suspended Delegate and/or Alternate may appeal in person, verbally or in writing, her/his/their suspension from USS. A majority vote of members present and voting shall be required for reinstatement of seat and privileges.

Section 2.2 Delegates

- a. No person shall be a Delegate who is not a duly registered student at the College and Division which he/she represents.
- b. Each Delegate shall obtain certification of his/her status through the office of the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs with a letter of election from the Dean of Students of his/her College prior to the first regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year. This certification shall be requisite to the seating of a Delegate.

Section 2.3 Duties of Delegates

- a. Each Delegate shall represent the interests of the students of his/her Division to USS.
- b. Each Delegate shall attend all regularly scheduled and/or unscheduled meetings of USS, or in the alternative shall designate his/her Alternate to attend such regularly scheduled and/or unscheduled meeting of USS in his/her stead.

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- c. Each Delegate shall serve on at least one USS Standing Committee other than the Steering Committee and shall attend all meetings of his/her Committee(s) and shall accept and execute the tasks assigned to him/her by his/her Committee(s).
- d. All full-time undergraduate Delegates shall carry a minimum of twelve (12) credits per semester (except in the case of a College on a quarterly system).
- e. All undergraduate delegates shall have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 in their current degree program.
- f. All graduate delegates shall have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in their current degree program.

Section 2.4 Alternates

- a. Each Division of each College may elect an Alternate to the USS. Each Alternate shall have the same qualifications and duties as a Delegate and shall be chosen in the same manner as the Delegate from his/her College and Division.
- b. An Alternate shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of USS, except in the absence of the Delegate from his/her College and Division, at which time(s) such Alternate shall exercise the duties of said Delegate.
- c. Except in the absence of a Delegate, an Alternate shall not be included in the consideration of a quorum.
- d. The term of the Alternate shall be identical with that of the Delegate from his/her Division and College.

Section 2.5 Officers

- a. All officers of USS shall be elected from the Delegate and Alternate members of USS in accordance with Section 3.3.
- b. Each Officer shall serve for a term of one year and shall remain in office until the fourth Sunday in October in accordance with Section 5.3.
- c. Any USS Officer, who has two consecutive unexcused absences from Plenary Sessions or four consecutive unexcused absences from regularly scheduled Steering Committee meetings, shall be considered to have resigned his/her office, and the vacant position shall be filled by special election at the next Plenary Session.
- d. All Steering Committee members, except for the Chair, shall be Delegates or Alternates for their entire term of office. Any member of the Steering Committee, except for the Chair, not fulfilling this requirement shall automatically be removed and be replaced at the first plenary that they are not in compliance with this article.

Section 2.6 Duties of Officers

All Officers of USS shall carry out their duties as outlined in Sections 4.2 through 4.10.

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ARTICLE III. Election Guidelines

Section 3.1 Nomination Guidelines

Officers of USS shall be nominated in the following order:

1. Chairperson
2. Vice-Chair For Legislative Affairs
3. Vice-Chair For Fiscal Affairs
4. Vice-Chair For Graduate Affairs
5. Vice-Chair For Senior College Affairs
6. Vice-Chair For Community College Affairs
7. Vice-Chair For Evening and Part-time Affairs
8. Vice-Chair For Disabled Student Affairs
9. Vice-Chair For International Student Affairs

Section 3.2 Nomination Procedures

For each Officer position, as stated in Section 3.1 above, the following shall be the procedures followed during nomination of Officers of USS, which shall take place at a regularly scheduled meeting to be held in the month of September of each year:

- a. Nominating speeches for all Officer position shall be limited to two (2) minutes each.
- b. Upon nomination, nominees' responses shall be limited to five (5) minutes each.
- c. Questions for candidates shall be limited to one (1) minute each.
 - i. Each College shall be permitted to "pass" their opportunity to question candidates if said College has not yet formulated its question, or in the alternative, has not yet decided which Delegate or Alternate shall ask the question. Said College shall then be given one (1) additional opportunity to question candidates after all other Colleges have had their opportunity. Once a candidate has been asked a question, no other College shall be permitted to ask the same question of the same candidate.
 - ii. With respect to the Officer positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs, Vice-Chair of Fiscal Affairs, Vice-Chair of Disabled Student Affairs and Vice-Chair of International Students Affairs, each College shall be permitted to ask one (1) question of each candidate.
 - iii. With respect to the Officer positions of Vice-Chair for Community College Affairs and Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-time Student Affairs, only Colleges with a Delegate or Alternate from the above-mentioned Divisions may ask a question of the candidates for the Officer position for their respective Divisions.
- d. Responses by candidates shall be limited to two (2) minutes each.
- e. Within ten (10) days following the regularly scheduled meeting at which nominations are held, each candidate shall provide a Campaign Statement to the University Student Senate Elections Review Committee (USSERC) for distribution to all Delegates and Alternates. Each Campaign Statement shall contain the candidate's name, school affiliation, information as to where they can be contacted and a personal statement.

Section 3.3 Election Procedures

The following shall be the procedures followed during election of Officers of USS, which shall take place at the regularly scheduled meeting in the month of October of each year in accordance with Section 5.3:

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- a. A Roll Call shall be taken for the purpose of identifying certified voting members of USS. A document shall be provided for control purposes and each Delegate Or Alternate casting a vote shall, in the presence of a designee of USS for such purpose, sign next to his/her printed name indicating that he/she has received a ballot. A separate Roll Call may take place for the collection of ballots after voting has been completed. No Delegate or Alternate will be permitted to leave the voting area with a ballot.
- b. The election shall be conducted by an impartial third-party organization. The votes shall be counted in the presence of at least two (2) designees of USS, who shall then verify the results of voting.
- c. In order to be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of all ballots cast, including blanks and abstentions.
- d. In the event that no candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot (including blanks and abstentions), the candidate receiving the fewest votes (ALL candidates receiving the fewest votes in the case of a tie) shall be removed from the ballot, except when doing so would leave only one (1) candidate on the ballot. This process of elimination shall continue until a majority vote has occurred in accordance with Section 3.3.c above.

Section 3.4 Special Elections

- a. Special Elections may be held at Plenary Sessions or unscheduled meetings called for the purpose of replacing officers that have been removed by resignation, impeachment, incapacitated beyond forty-five (45) days or death. Offices filled in this manner at Special Elections are only for the remaining, unexpired portion of the removed Officer's term.
- b. Nomination procedures for Special Elections may be determined by a majority vote of the USS membership present and voting.
- c. Election procedures for Special Elections shall be in accordance with Sections 3.3.a through 3.3.d, with the exception of the requirement of a third-party organization. Special Elections will be conducted within the USS membership, with two (2) designees counting and verifying the votes cast. Upon the close of a Special Election, all ballots will be entrusted to a representative of the office of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs for final certification of results by the USS Elections Review Committee.

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ARTICLE IV. Leadership of the University Student Senate

Section 4.1 Officers

The officers of USS shall be the Chairperson, the Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs, the Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs, the Vice-Chair for Graduate Affairs, the Vice-Chair for Senior Colleges, the Vice-Chair for Community Colleges, the Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-time Affairs, the Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs and the Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs. No persons shall hold more than one office at any time. The Vice-Chairs for Graduate, Senior College, Community College and Evening and Part-time Affairs must be, at the time of election, duly registered students at a CUNY Graduate, Senior College, Community College and Evening or Part-time course of study, respectively. Candidates for the position of Vice-Chair for Disabled student Affairs shall provide to the Chair certification of their status as a disabled student from their campus Office of Disabled Student Affairs prior to accepting the nomination for this position.

Candidates for the position of Vice Chair for International Student Affairs shall provide to the Chair a copy of their permanent resident alien card, their student visa, or equivalent documents proving that they were born outside of the United States of America or USA territories/possessions, and that they are not currently citizens of the United States prior to accepting nomination to this position. These documents may be personal and should only be used for the purpose of establishing and certifying candidate eligibility.

Section 4.2 Duties of the Chairperson

- a. The Chairperson shall be the chief executive officer of USS and its Steering Committee. As such he/she shall be responsible for implementing the policies of USS and the decisions of its Steering Committee.
- b. The Chairperson shall convene and preside at all Executive Sessions of USS and its Steering Committee, and shall be entitled to vote at Plenary Sessions of USS if he/she is also a Delegate, but shall not vote at Executive Sessions of the Steering Committee, except in the case of a tie vote.
- c. The Chairperson shall report to USS all affirmative action he/she has taken to implement the resolutions of USS, the Steering Committee and Committees of USS.
- d. The Chairperson shall, as part of his/her responsibility for the protection of USS and the CUNY student community-at-large, be the principal spokesperson for USS in its dealings with the Board, the Administration of CUNY, the City, State and Federal Governments, all other organizations, and the community-at-large.
- e. The Chairperson shall forward to the appropriate bodies, all appointments made by USS to committees of the Board, CUNY, the City, State, and Federal Governments and all other organizations. The Chairperson may present his/her appointee preferences, however, such appointments may be removed by a majority vote of USS.
- f. The Chairperson, in conjunction with the Steering Committee, shall conduct research and other functions necessary to formulate proposals pertaining to the overall policies of USS with respect to the Board, CUNY, the City, State, and Federal Governments, other organizations, and student welfare generally.
- g. The Chairperson shall develop and maintain good public relations on behalf of USS and the students of CUNY. In this connection he/she shall maintain and support the University Student Press Service.
- h. The Chairperson shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate listing of names, addresses and certification of all Delegates to USS. This listing shall be available to all Delegates and Officers for review.

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- i. The Chairperson may answer, on behalf of USS, any communications addressed to himself/herself in his/her official capacity. All such correspondence shall be reported to all members of USS at the next regularly scheduled meeting, and shall be considered public record.
- j. The Chairperson shall execute all documents, receipts, releases or other instruments requiring the signature of an authorized representative of USS. With respect to financial expenditures, two signatures, that of the Chairperson and that of the Vice-Chair of Fiscal Affairs, shall be required to execute all such documents which shall be in accordance with fiscal guidelines established by the Board.
- k. The Chairperson may appoint a Parliamentarian whose appointment shall be approved by the USS. Any proposed appointment twice failing such approval, must be withdrawn by the Chairperson.

Section 4.3 Duties of the Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs shall keep himself/herself and USS informed of Legislative proceedings, whether City, State or Federal, which may affect the CUNY and the college community in general.
- b. The Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs shall be the principal spokesperson for USS before legislative bodies as directed by the Chairperson and USS, and in accordance with the policies made by USS and the decisions of its Steering Committee.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson, or the Steering Committee may direct.

Section 4.4 Duties of the Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs shall maintain the financial records of USS.
- b. The Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs shall be signatory for all USS financial expenditures in conjunction with the Chairperson, and in accordance with fiscal guidelines as established by the Board.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs shall make a full financial report to USS quarterly in September, December, March and June. Copies of quarterly reports shall be made available to all CUNY media, i.e., each school newspaper.
- d. The Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs shall also make a full financial report to USS, the Steering Committee, the Audit Committee or the Chairperson upon request.
- e. The Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs shall prepare all budget requests in cooperation with the Chairperson, the Executive Director, and the Steering Committee. Maximum allocations as percentage of total Annual Budget request shall be enforced in these budget lines:
 - i. Personnel not to exceed 30%
 - ii. Travel not to exceed 15%
 - iii. Conferences, seminars & rallies not to exceed 25%

However, it may be changed with a request from the Chair or Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs and a majority vote at a Plenary Session of USS.

- f. The Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs shall make available the financial records and other fiscal information, at regularly scheduled meetings of the Audit Committee, and to any Delegate or Officer making a formal request through the Audit Committee in accordance with Section 6.4.
- g. The Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson, or the Steering Committee may direct.

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Section 4.5 Duties of the Vice-Chair for Graduate Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for Graduate Affairs shall keep USS informed of events and policies within CUNY and the community, in general, which affect graduate student interests. In informing USS of such events and policies, the Vice-Chair for Graduate Affairs shall issue a written report to all Delegates of USS once a semester.
- b. The Vice-Chair for Graduate Affairs shall be the principal spokesperson for the interests of CUNY's graduate students to USS.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Graduate Affairs shall provide leadership in the representation of graduate student interests to those Delegates charged with that responsibility.
- d. The Vice-Chair for Graduate Affairs shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson or the Steering Committee may direct.

Section 4.6 Duties of the Vice-Chair for Senior College Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for Senior Colleges shall keep USS informed of events and policies within CUNY and the community, in general, which affect senior college students interests. In informing USS of such events and policies, the Vice-Chair for Senior College Affairs shall issue a written report to all Delegates of USS once a semester.
- b. The Vice-Chair for Senior Colleges shall be the principal spokesperson for the interests of CUNY's senior college students to USS.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Senior Colleges shall provide leadership in the representation of senior college interests to those Senators charged with that responsibility.
- d. The Vice-Chair for Senior Colleges shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson, or the Steering Committee may direct.

Section 4.7 Duties of the Vice-Chair for Community College Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for Community Colleges shall keep USS informed of events and policies within CUNY and the community, in general, which affect community college student interests. In informing USS of such events and policies, the Vice-Chair for Community College Affairs shall issue a written report to all Delegates of USS once a semester.
- b. The Vice-Chair for Community Colleges shall be the principal spokesperson for the interests of CUNY's community college students to USS.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Community Colleges shall provide leadership in the representation of community college interests to those Senators charged with that responsibility.
- d. The Vice-Chair for Community Colleges shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson or the Steering Committee may direct.

Section 4.8 Duties of the Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-Time Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-time Affairs shall keep USS informed of events and policies within CUNY and the community, in general, which affect evening and part-time student interests. In informing USS of such events and policies, the Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-time Affairs shall issue a written report to all Delegates of USS once a semester.
- b. The Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-time Affairs shall be the principal spokesperson for the interests of CUNY's undergraduate evening students to USS.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-time Affairs shall provide leadership in the representation of evening undergraduate interests to those Senators charged with that responsibility.
- d. The Vice-Chair for Evening and Part-time Affairs shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson or the Steering Committee may direct.

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Section 4.9 Duties for the Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs shall keep USS informed of events and policies within CUNY and the community, in general, which affect disabled student interests. In informing USS of such events and policies, the Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs shall issue a written report to all Delegates of USS once a semester.
- b. The Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs shall be the principal spokesperson for the interests of CUNY's disabled students to USS.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs shall provide leadership in the representation of disabled student interests to those Senators who are concerned with the rights of the disabled.
- d. The Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs, or his/her designee, shall inspect all sites proposed for use for USS conferences, plenaries and all other USS activities prior to approval of the site. No site that is deemed by the Vice-Chair, or his/her designee, as being inaccessible to students with disabilities shall be used.
- e. The Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson or the Steering Committee may direct.

Section 4.10 Duties of the Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs

- a. The Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs shall keep USS informed of events and policies within CUNY and the community, in general, which affect international student interests. In informing USS of such events and policies, the Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs shall issue a written report to all Delegates of USS once a semester.
- b. The Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs shall be the principal spokesperson for the interests of CUNY's international students to USS.
- c. The Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs shall provide leadership in the representation of international student interests to those Senators who are concerned with the rights of the international students.
- d. The Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs shall assume such other duties as USS, the Chairperson or the Steering Committee may direct.

Section 4.11 Exemptions

- a. A Delegate, upon election to any of the above offices, shall not vacate his/her USS seat before his/her term of office expires and shall be exempt from Section 2.3.c. Section 2.3.a shall not interfere with his/her duties as an Officer or in connection with any vote in the Steering Committee.
- b. An Officer, other than the Chairperson, who graduates may continue to hold office until February 1, for the Fall Semester, or September 1, for the Spring Semester, following which date the Office shall be deemed vacant, unless the student has enrolled in another degree program at the University prior to applicable date.

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ARTICLE V. Meetings of the University Student Senate

Section 5.1 Meetings

- a. Regularly scheduled meetings of USS shall be held once a month during the academic year on the Sunday prior to the fourth Monday of the month unless USS, by majority vote, establishes another date and time, or as outlined below.
- b. Regularly scheduled meetings shall be convened by the Chairperson, or the Interim Chairperson if one has been so elected. In the case of an absent Chairperson, the regularly scheduled meeting shall be convened by the first Vice-Chair present of the Officers of Legislative Affairs, Fiscal Affairs, Graduate Affairs, Senior College Affairs, Community College Affairs, Evening and Part-time Affairs, Disabled Student Affairs or International Student Affairs.

Section 5.2 Nomination Meeting

The first regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year shall take place no later than September 30th and its main purpose shall be the identification of all new Delegate/Alternate members of USS, the nomination of Officers of USS, and elections of representatives to USSERC. Notice of date, time and place of Meeting shall be sent by certified mail to the entire USS membership.

Section 5.3 Election Meeting

The second regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year shall take place no later than ten (10) days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board for the month of October, and its main purpose shall be the election of Officers of USS. Notice of date, time and place of Meeting shall be sent by certified mail to the entire USS membership.

Section 5.4 Unscheduled Meetings

An unscheduled meeting may be called by the Chairperson, and shall be called upon the written request of one-fourth (1/4) of USS membership, or by three members of the Steering Committee.

Section 5.5 Notice and Purpose of Unscheduled Meetings

The Chairperson shall notify the membership of USS of the date, time, place and purpose of any unscheduled meetings, either by mail or fax, a minimum of three (3) days prior to meeting.

Section 5.6 Location of Meetings

- a. The location of the Nomination Meeting shall be determined by the presiding officer, either the incumbent Chairperson or an Interim Chairperson or Officer as determined by order in Section 5.1.b.
- b. The location of all other meetings shall be determined at the close of the prior meeting, by a majority vote of USS members present. The USS membership present at the prior meeting may, upon unanimous consent, set the location of two or more subsequent regularly scheduled meetings.

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Section 5.7 Agenda of the Meeting

- a. The Chairperson, after consulting with the Steering Committee, shall prepare an agenda for each meeting.
- b. The Chairperson shall transmit the agenda, either by mail or fax, to the entire membership of USS no later than ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- c. Proposed items for inclusion on the agenda shall be submitted to the Chairperson in writing no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- d. The Chairperson may amend the agenda to include emergency matters and shall make every effort to notify the entire USS membership of the addition(s) to the agenda no later than two (2) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Section 5.8 Minutes of the Meeting

A Secretary shall be named by the Chairperson and confirmed by the voting members for the purpose of taking and transcribing the Minutes.

Section 5.9 Roll Call of the Meeting

A Roll Call shall be initiated at the beginning of each meeting to ascertain whether a quorum of USS membership is in attendance, and the result of said Roll Call shall then be entered into the Minutes of the meeting. At the request of any voting member, a Roll Call of the vote on any question before USS shall be called and shall then be entered into the Minutes of the meeting.

Section 5.10 Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern USS in all cases to which they are applicable during Plenary Sessions of USS, Executive Sessions of the Steering Committee and meetings of all other Standing Committees of USS and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

Section 5.11 For the purposes of Article V, the following terms shall mean:

- a. **A Quorum** shall be one Delegate member more than one-half (1/2) of the certified membership of USS with respect to a regularly scheduled meeting.
- b. **An Excused Absence** shall be an absence from any regularly scheduled meeting and/or Steering Committee Meeting in the case of an Officer other than the Chairperson, for which the Delegate/Officer has served proper written notice to the Chairperson five (5) days in advance of said regularly scheduled meeting and/or Steering Committee Meeting. In the case of the Chairperson, said proper written notice shall be served to the entire USS membership, in accordance with Section 9.2.c, five (5) days in advance of said regularly scheduled and/or to all other Officers five (5) days in advance of any regularly scheduled Steering Committee Meeting. In the event of an emergency absence that precludes a Delegate/Officer from serving proper written notice five (5) days in advance of said regularly scheduled meeting and/or Steering Committee Meeting, said Delegate/Officer must telephone the Chairperson or a Vice-Chair if it is the Chairperson who shall be absent, twenty-four (24) hours prior to said regularly scheduled meeting and/or Steering Committee Meeting. Proper written notice shall then be submitted to the Chairperson, or the Vice-Chairs if it is the Chairperson who has been absent, within two (2) days after the missed regularly scheduled meeting and/or Steering Committee Meeting.

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ARTICLE VI. Committees of University Student Senate

Section 6.1 Standing Committees

The standing committees of USS Shall be the Steering Committee, Ethics Committee, Audit Committee and Academic/Scholarship Committee, as well as such other standing committees as may be established by USS. All such committees shall report to the full USS membership of their activities twice each semester.

Section 6.2 Steering Committee

- a. The Steering Committee shall consist of the Officers of USS.
- b. The Chairperson of USS shall preside at all Executive Sessions of the Steering Committee.
- c. The Steering Committee shall conduct the business of USS during intervals between USS Plenary Sessions, acting in accordance with the policies formulated by USS, implementing said policies.
- d. Unless otherwise so ordered, regularly scheduled meetings of the Steering Committee shall be held twice a month; one, the week before each regularly scheduled meeting of USS and one the week after each regularly scheduled meeting of USS.
- e. Special meetings of the Steering Committee may be called by the Chairperson upon the request of two Vice-Chairs.
- f. The Chairperson shall notify the Steering Committee members of the date, time and place of all meetings at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
- g. The Steering Committee shall be subject to the orders of USS and none of its actions shall conflict with those actions taken by USS.
- h. The Steering Committee may call unscheduled meetings of USS; review the structure and operations of USS; advise the Chancellor, the University Administration, and the Board on all matters of interest to USS and the students of CUNY.
- i. All decisions of the Steering Committee, and all actions taken by the Chairperson in their implementation, shall be included in the Steering Committee Minutes to be presented by the Chairperson at the next regularly scheduled meeting of USS.
- j. For the purposes of this Section 6.2 a **Quorum** shall mean one member more than one-half (1/2) of the membership of the Steering Committee.

Section 6.3 Ethics Committee

- a. The members of the Ethics Committee shall be elected to said committee by the Senate at the meeting following the completion of the election of officers to the Steering Committee of USS. No member of the Steering Committee or the Audit Committee may serve on the Ethics Committee.
- b. The Ethics Committee shall hear and investigate all complaints of misconduct it receives from any Delegate, Alternate or Officer of USS.
- c. Upon full investigation, the Ethics Committee shall implement either disciplinary or impeachment procedures in accordance with Article VII and Article VIII, respectively.
- d. The Ethics Committee shall also perform periodic reviews of the USS Bylaws in light of possible abuses or misuses of authority and examinations for conformance with Board policy.
- e. The Ethics Committee shall also assume such other duties as USS may, from time to time, direct.
- f. Membership of the Ethics Committee shall be limited to seven (7) including the Chair.

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Section 6.4 Audit Committee

- a. The members of the Audit Committee shall be elected to said committee by the Senate at the meeting following the completion of the election of officers to the Steering Committee of USS. No member of the Steering committee or the Ethics Committee may serve on the Audit Committee.
- b. The Audit Committee shall receive a full financial report from the Vice-Chair of Fiscal Affairs upon request.
- c. The Audit Committee shall also entertain requests from any Delegate/Officer of USS to receive a full financial report and shall obtain said financial report from the Vice-Chair of Fiscal Affairs for said Delegate/Officer.
- d. The Audit Committee shall also assume such other duties as USS may, from time to time, direct.
- e. The Audit Committee shall be limited to seven (7), including the Chair.

Section 6.5 Academic/Scholarship Committee

- a. The members of the Academic/Scholarship Committee shall be appointed to said committee by the newly elected Chairperson upon her/his assumption of office.
- b. The Academic/Scholarship Committee may function as a single unit, or in the alternative, as two separate subcommittees.
- c. The Academic/Scholarship Committee shall have as its primary goals:
 - i. Identify and formulate solutions to problems of admission, curriculum, examinations, graduation, accreditation and other related problems faced by a group of students, a single campus or group of campuses of CUNY.
 - ii. Investigate ways and means of establishing new, or reinstating previously suspended, academic programs at CUNY.
 - iii. Interact with each student government at each of the CUNY Colleges to hear complaints and problems students at said Colleges are having with their College's academic programs and to seek ways and means to improve the quality of education at CUNY.
 - iv. Develop a relationship with one or more corporate entities with a view toward raising funds to establish a USS Scholarship Fund.
 - v. Investigate academic areas in which a scholarship could be established.
 - vi. Develop a method of determining criteria necessary for awarding scholarships to deserving CUNY students.
- d. The Academic/Scholarship Committee shall also assume such other duties as USS may, from time to time, direct.

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ARTICLE VII. Delegate Disciplinary Procedures

Section 7.1 Offenses Occurring During a Meeting

- a. Any Delegate/Alternate exhibiting disorderly conduct during a Plenary Session of USS, i.e., continuous disregard to attempts by the Chairperson to call the Delegate to order, may be reprimanded, or in the alternative if the offense is serious, may be asked to leave the meeting hall.
- b. The Body, and not the Chairperson, shall decide whether the offending Delegate is to be reprimanded or asked to leave.

Section 7.2 Offenses Occurring Outside a Meeting

- a. Any Delegate that engages in any actions that injure USS, disturb the well-being of any other member of USS, or hamper any on-going projects of USS, may be penalized by reprimand, suspension, or recommendation for replacement by the appropriate College governance bodies.
- b. Any knowledge of an offense by a Delegate outside a Plenary Session may be presented to the Ethics Committee for review and investigation. If the Ethics Committee has found sufficient evidence of misconduct by the offending Delegate, the Ethics Committee shall then make its report to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall then notify the offending Delegate of the charges. A hearing shall be held no earlier than fourteen (14) days after the offending Delegate has been notified, but no later than thirty days (30) thereafter.
- c. The Steering Committee shall set a date for the hearing and the date, time and place of the hearing shall be sent to all members of USS by certified mail, no later than fourteen (14) days prior to said hearing. Said hearing shall be closed to the general public.
- d. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of all voting members of USS shall be needed to find the offending Delegate guilty of the charges against him/her, and penalty shall be limited to: reprimand, censure or recommendation for replacement by the appropriate College governance bodies. No portion of the hearing shall be made public by any member of USS.

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ARTICLE VIII. Officer Impeachment

Section 8.1 Reasons for Impeachment

- a. An Officer shall be impeached if he/she fails to execute the duties of his/her office in accordance with Sections 4.2 through 4.10.
- b. An Officer shall be impeached if he/she has more than four excused absences or three unexcused absences, from regularly scheduled Executive Session of the Steering Committee.

Section 8.2 Articles of Impeachment

Articles of Impeachment specifying the charges against the impeached Officer shall be presented by the Steering Committee to the full membership of USS. Acceptance of said Articles of Impeachment shall be by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the full voting membership of USS.

Sections 8.3 Impeachment Proceedings

- a. Upon acceptance of the Articles of Impeachment, the Steering Committee shall notify the impeached Officer of the impending impeachment proceedings. Said impeachment proceedings shall be held no earlier than fourteen days after the impeached Officer has been notified, but no later than thirty days thereafter.
- b. The Steering Committee shall set a date for the impeachment proceedings and the date, time and place of the impeachment proceedings shall be sent to all members of USS by certified mail, no later than 14 days prior to said proceedings.
- c. The Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs or the Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs in the formers absence, shall preside at such impeachment proceedings unless either of these Vice-Chairs is the impeached Officer. If neither of these Vice-Chairs is able to preside, the membership of USS shall elect the presiding officer. These impeachment proceedings shall be closed to the general public.
- d. The impeached Officer shall have the right to counsel and the right to confront any witness(es) against him/her. The membership of USS shall select from among the other members of the Steering Committee, one Officer to present the case against the impeached Officer. The membership of USS, sitting as a whole, shall constitute the Trial Committee and substantiation of the charges as enumerated in the Articles of Impeachment, shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all members of USS.
- e. Upon substantiation of the charges against an impeached Officer, penalty shall be limited to: reprimand, censure, or in the extreme, removal from office, and shall also be determined by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all members of USS. No portion of the impeachment proceedings shall be made public by any member of USS, except as to acknowledge the fact that the impeached Officer has been reprimanded, censured or removed from office.

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ARTICLE IX. Filling Vacancies

Section 9.1 Delegates

In the event that a Delegate is incapacitated and unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting and otherwise carry out his/her duties as a Delegate, and his/her Student Government has not designated an Alternate, or in the alternative, the designated Alternate is unable, for whatever reason, to fill the vacancy of the Delegate, his/her Student Government shall provide a replacement to fill the vacancy for the remaining, unexpired portion of said Delegate's term.

Section 9.2 Officers

- a. In the event that an Officer, other than the Chairperson, is incapacitated and unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting and/or Steering Committee Meetings, and otherwise carry out his/her duties as an Officer for a period of more than forty-five (45) days, or in the alternative, owing to removal by impeachment in accordance with Section 8.2, or death, the vacancy shall be filled by special election.
- b. In the event that the Office of the Chair is vacated, another Officer shall become Interim-Chair, until a new Chairperson is elected by USS.
 - i. The order of succession among the Vice-Chairs of USS shall be: 1) Legislative Affairs, 2) Graduate Affairs, 3) Senior College Affairs, 4) Community College Affairs, 5) Evening & Part-Time Student Affairs, 6) International Student Affairs, 7) Disabled Student Affairs, and 8) Fiscal Affairs. But such succession shall occur only to the Office of Interim-Chair.
 - ii. The Interim-Chair shall serve as Chairperson for a period not to exceed 45 calendar days, or the unexpired portion of the term, whichever is shorter. At the end of the 45-day period, if USS has failed to elect a Chairperson, the Office of the Chair shall be vacant until it is filled by vote of the Body.

ARTICLE X. Charters

Section 10.1 Student Organizations

- a. Any group of students using the name of the City University of New York may form a University-wide organization, association, club or chapter which must first be chartered by the University Student Senate.
- b. Petition for Charter shall include: 1) the name and purposes of the organization, association, club or chapter; and 2) the names and addresses of its officers and members. Such names and addresses shall be held confidential by the University Student Senate.
- c. However, no group or organization with a program against the religion of a particular group or against a particular race or against a particular sex shall be permitted to charter by the University Student Senate. No organizations, military or semi-military in character, not connected with established school or college courses, shall be chartered by the University Student Senate without prior approval by the Board of Trustees.

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ARTICLE XI. Amendments to the Bylaws

Section 11.1 Amendment Proposals

Proposed amendments to these Bylaws shall be presented in writing to the entire USS membership for discussion and debate at any regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 11.2 Amendment Approval

After discussion and debate, proposed amendments may be presented in writing (full text/hard copy) to the entire USS membership for voting purposes at the next regularly scheduled meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) vote shall be necessary to approve any proposed amendments.

Adopted September 19, 1993

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PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF UNIVERSITY STUDENT SENATE BYLAW ON LEADERSHIP OF THE UNIVERSITY STUDENT SENATE

RESOLVED, that the University Student Senate Policy on Leadership of the University Student Senate, Article IV. Section 4.1 Officers, adopted on September 19, 1993 be amended as follows (matter in brackets to be deleted and replaced by matter underlined):

[Candidates for the position of Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs shall provide to the Chair certification of their status as a disabled student from their campus Office of Disabled Student Affairs prior to accepting the nomination for this position. Candidates for the position of Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs shall provide to the Chair a copy of their permanent resident alien card, their student visa, or equivalent documents proving that they were born outside of the United States of America or USA territories/possessions, and that they are not currently citizens of the United States prior to accepting nomination to this position. These documents may be personal and should only be used for the purpose of establishing and certifying candidate eligibility.]

Candidates for the position of Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs shall demonstrate to the plenary body that: a) they have extensive personal experience with disability; and b) they have experience exercising leadership and advocacy on behalf of CUNY students with disabilities. Candidates for the position of Vice-Chair for International Student Affairs shall demonstrate to the plenary body that: a) they have extensive personal experience with issues affecting international students and b) they have experience exercising leadership and advocacy on issues of importance to CUNY international students.

Explanation:

The University Student Senate Elections Review Committee (USSERC) has been informed by the CUNY Office of General Counsel and Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs, that the University Student Senate Constitution and Bylaws (Article IV Section 4.1 Officers) requiring documentation of status prior to nomination for the positions of Vice-Chair for Disabled Student Affairs and Vice Chair of International Student Affairs, does not conform with CUNY's non-discrimination policy and is inconsistent with notions of equality with respect to both disability and alienage/citizenship. Requirement for documentation for the position of Vice Chair of International Student Affairs, may also be incompatible with federal law, specifically, 42 U.S.C.A. Section 1981.