

# **Illinois Wesleyan University Student Senate Constitution**

*Ratified: December 2, 2012*

*Amended: April 24, 2020*

## **Preamble**

*We, the students of Illinois Wesleyan University, in order to promote student welfare, to strengthen ties between the faculty, the administration, and the student body, and to encourage student leadership in University activities, do hereby adopt this Constitution of the Illinois Wesleyan University Student Senate.*

## **Mission Statement**

*It is the mission of Student Senate to act as the primary facilitator between the student body and the University so that students may pursue their passions while experiencing a unique education that promotes civic engagement, social justice, diversity, and environmental sustainability. This will be accomplished through Senate's role as a governing body, a provider of programming, and a forum for dialogue with University administration, faculty, and staff.*

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## **Article I. The Illinois Wesleyan University Student Senate**

### ***Section 1. Powers***

- A. The Student Senate shall be governed by this Constitution as well as by the Bylaws, the Code of Elections, and Code of Finances; the preceding documents shall not conflict with this Constitution.
- B. The Student Senate shall receive and appropriate the annual student activity fee and disburse it accordingly.
- C. The Student Senate shall retain any surplus funds and use them as it sees fit.
- D. The Student Senate shall enumerate specific suggestions for action in regards to issues of campus-wide concern.
- E. The Student Senate shall either commend or condemn specific actions taken by any member(s) of the IWU community as these issues may relate to an issue or issues of campus-wide concern.
- F. The Student Senate shall serve as a formal expression of the opinions of the student body in regards to issues of campus-wide concern, including but not limited to such issues as may arise in times of crisis.
- G. The Student Senate shall make statements of policy as these may relate to issues of campus-wide concern.

### ***Section 2. Composition***

- A. Any student in good academic standing with the university will be eligible to become a member of the Student Senate.
- B. The Student Senate shall be composed of an Executive branch and a Legislative branch.

### ***Section 3. Parliamentary Procedure***

- A. The most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the official parliamentary authority of the Student Senate in all cases to which it is applicable and in which it does not conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws.

## **Article II. The Executive Branch**

### ***Section 1. The Executive Officers***

- A. The Executive Branch shall consist of the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Comptroller, the Chief of Staff, the Director of the Campus Activities Board, and all standing Commissioners.

- B. The Officers shall be non-voting members of the General Assembly. The Presiding Officer may only vote in the case of a tie.
- C. The Executive Branch shall be responsible for the administration of Student Senate policies and the implementation of the authorities of the Student Senate.
- D. The elected members of the Executive Branch are the President and the Vice President.
- E. The other members of the Executive Branch shall be nominated by the President, with the consultation of the Vice President, and be approved by the General Assembly with a majority vote.
- F. The Officers will each be required to report to the Student Senate on days of General Assembly meetings.
- G. Only the President and the Vice President may speak on behalf of the Student Senate. The President may authorize other members to speak on behalf of the Student Senate.
- H. The Executive Officers shall take the following oath: "I solemnly swear that I will fulfill my duties as [insert title] of the Illinois Wesleyan Student Senate to the best of my abilities while adhering to the high standards of ethics and leadership which the student body expects of those representing its collective interests."

### ***Section 2. Senate Staff***

- A. The Senate Advisor will be the Assistant Director of Student Involvement

### ***Section 3. Senate Advisor***

- A. The President shall nominate an advisor who shall then be approved by the Senate with a majority vote.
- B. The Senate Advisor must be an employee of the University.

### ***Section 4. Compensation***

- A. Members of the Executive Branch shall receive compensation as determined by the Bylaws.

## **Article III. The Legislative Body**

### ***Section 1. The General Assembly***

- A. The General Assembly shall consist of thirty-six elected Senators. Senators shall be elected at the beginning of each academic year.
- B. There shall be nine Senators per graduation class. Students will be eligible to run in their class based on their cohorts. If a student is at the university for longer than four years, then they shall be considered in the most senior graduation class.

## ***Section 2. Committees***

A. The powers, duties, makeup, and structure of Standing Committees, Sub-Committees, All-University Committees, and Faculty Committees shall be outlined in the Bylaws.

## ***Section 3. Voting***

- A. Each Student Senator shall have one vote and may only hold one seat.
- B. Senators may send a designee in their place to a General Assembly, at which the designee shall have full voting rights.
- C. In order to vote on an item, a Student Senator, or their designee, must be physically present at the time of the vote.
- D. Recorded votes may be accepted either through the use of an electronic voting system or by roll call at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. The method of voting can be ordered by a majority vote of the Assembly.
- E. A motion must achieve a majority vote of affirmation of the members present to pass, unless otherwise stated in the Governing Documents.

## **Article IV. Elections and Vacancies**

### ***Section 1. Elections***

A. The Code of Elections shall govern the process of elections for the Student Senate.

### ***Section 2. Resignation***

- A. The resignation of a member of the Student Senate is subject to the following regulations:
- 1. An Executive Officer, other than the President, may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the President and Student Senate.
  - 2. The President may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the Student Senate, the Vice-President, and the Dean of Students.
  - 3. A Student Senator, committee member, or committee chair may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the President.
  - 4. A Senator may resign as a Committee Chair and stay on the Committee from which he or she is resigning the Chairmanship.

### ***Section 3. Removals***

- A. Student Senate shall have the power to remove from office, or withhold the salary of, any Officer, Senator, Committee Chairperson, or Committee Member who fails to fulfill the duties outlined by the Constitution and Bylaws.

- B. For a member of the Student Senate to be removed from a position, they must have failed to fulfill their duties or have displayed conduct that is unbecoming of a member of the Student Senate.
- C. The removal of an Officer, Senator, Committee Member, or Committee Chairperson shall be conducted using the following procedures and regulations:
- a. Any Senator or Executive Officer may initiate the removal process.
  - b. The individual who initiates the removal process shall do so by notifying the Senate President who shall then notify the Senate Advisor and the Dean of Students. Should the removal process be initiated for the President, the Vice President shall be notified instead of the President.
  - c. The individual who is being impeached shall be notified by the Senate Advisor within six business days of initial notification about the removal process.
  - d. A meeting to discuss the allegations shall be scheduled within five business days of the notification of the individual being impeached, barring extenuating circumstances. This meeting will include the President, Advisor, the Dean of Students, the individual who initiated the removal process, and the individual who is being impeached. If a resolution is reached at this meeting, the removal process may end.
  - e. If an agreement is not reached at the above meeting, the individual who initiated the removal process may move to begin hearings at the next General Assembly meeting; this must also be seconded by a Senator.
  - f. Discussion on the impeachment proceedings must occur at the meeting following the motion to begin proceedings. Discussion of impeachment shall be conducted in closed session. A special meeting may be called if necessary.
  - g. The President shall preside for any removal except in the impeachment of the President. The Vice President shall preside over the removal process if said action is being taken against the President.
  - h. During discussion of the impeachment, the individual who made the motion shall make their claim first. This shall be followed by the defense of the individual that is being impeached. After both sides have made their case, an orderly open discussion shall be conducted.
  - i. A vote for impeachment shall be taken after discussion has completed. Such a vote shall be conducted by identified secret ballot and must occur in open session. Ballots shall be maintained by the Senate Advisor for a minimum of two semesters.
  - j. The removal of an individual from their position on the Senate requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all Student Senators present.
  - k. A Senator loses his or her voting right in a vote to remove his or herself.

1. The Presiding Officer of the removal process shall notify the subject and Dean of Students of the result of the vote, in writing, within twenty-four hours of the vote.

#### ***Section 4. Officer Vacancies***

- A. In the event of the resignation or removal of the President, the Vice President shall assume the role of Student Senate President for the unexpired term.
- B. In the event of the resignation or removal of the Vice President, the student body shall elect a Vice President from those petitioning from the student body for the unexpired term. The Code of Elections shall govern this process.
- C. In the event of the resignation or removal of both the Student Senate President and Vice President, the Student Senate shall elect a Vice President and a President from those petitioning from the student body for the unexpired term.
- D. In the event of the resignation or removal of the Treasurer, the Comptroller, Chief of Staff, the Campus Activities Board Director or Commissioner, the President shall nominate a person to fill that position. This person must then receive approval from the General Assembly with a majority vote.

#### ***Section 5. Senator Vacancies***

- A. In the event that there is a vacancy in a Senate seat, the members of the respective class may submit their names to the Internal Affairs Committee who shall then make a recommendation to the General Assembly for a vote of confirmation.
- B. A vote of confirmation requires a majority vote by the General Assembly.
- C. If the vacancy occurs in the fall semester, the seat will be up for election in a special election at the beginning of the spring semester.

### **Article V. Meetings of the Student Senate**

#### ***Section 1. General Provisions***

- A. In all meetings of the Student Senate, quorum shall consist of a majority of voting members.
- B. If it is determined during any meeting that a quorum is not present, all outstanding items of business will be added to the next agenda.
- C. Any member of the IWU community may address the Senate at a General Assembly meeting during discussion of an item or during open forum.

- D. Meetings may not be scheduled during a University holiday, a reading day, a vacation period, a final examination period, or the summer interim.

### ***Section 2. General Assembly Meetings***

- A. Written agendas and minutes shall be kept for all General Assembly meetings and must be provided upon written request by any member of the IWU community.
- B. An agenda shall be made available to the General Assembly at least twenty four hours in advance of any meeting.
- C. General Assembly meetings shall be held, at a minimum, seven times during the spring and fall semesters; specific dates shall be set by the President.

### ***Section 3. Special General Assembly Meetings***

- A. A Special General Meeting may be called by the President with the consent of a majority of the Executive Officers.
- B. In the event of a Special General Assembly meeting, the President shall notify the General Assembly that such a meeting has been called at least forty-eight hours prior to the scheduled date of that meeting.
- C. Special General Meetings shall only address the item(s) of business for which they were called. Public comment unrelated to the item(s) of business for the meeting shall not be allowed.

## **Article VI. Authorities of the Student Senate**

### ***Section 1. General Provisions***

- A. The Student Senate shall be the primary representative of the student body.
- B. The Student Senate shall present student problems and suggestions to the faculty, administration, and other groups, and provide programming designed to enhance the welfare of the student body.
- C. The Student Senate shall work to implement motions which are passed by the legislative branch.

### ***Section 2. Resolutions***

- A. Resolutions shall address one or more of the following:
  - a. Enumerate specific suggestions for action in regards to issues of campus-wide concern.

- b. Either commend or condemn specific actions taken by any member(s) of the IWU community as these issues may relate to an issue or issues of campus-wide concern.
  - c. Serve as a formal expression of the opinions of the student body in regards to issues of campus-wide concern, including but not limited to such issues that may arise in times of crisis.
  - d. Make statements of policy as these may relate to issues of campus-wide concern.
- B. There shall be two forms of Resolutions; an Executive Resolution and a General Assembly Resolution.

### ***Section 3. Executive Resolutions***

- A. An Executive Resolution may be passed by a unanimous vote of all Executive Officers and shall be an expression solely of the Executive Officers.
- a. An Executive Resolution shall only be passed in the form of a congratulatory or an in memoriam resolution.
  - b. Executive Resolutions must be read at the General Assembly immediately following its passage.

### ***Section 4. General Assembly Resolutions***

- A. General Assembly Resolutions shall be referred to the Internal Affairs Committee Chairperson by the author.
- B. Upon referral, the Internal Affairs Committee shall consider, and may amend, the Resolution. The Internal Affairs Committee must approve the Resolution for action with a majority vote before it may go to the Assembly.
- C. All Resolutions must be submitted in writing to the members of the General Assembly at least 72 hours before the Assembly may consider it for action at a General Assembly Meeting.
- D. For a General Assembly Resolution to pass, it must achieve a 2/3 vote.

### ***Section 5. Reports***

- A. Reports shall inform the General Assembly of an issue researched by an Executive Officer, a Standing Committee, a Sub-Committee, an Ad-Hoc Committee, a group of members, or an individual member; Reports may make recommendations.

## **Article VII. Governing Documents**

### ***Section 1. General Provisions***

- A. The Governing Documents shall be the Bylaws, the Code of Elections, and the Code of Finances.
- B. The Governing Documents shall be as equally binding as the Constitution.
- C. Amendments to Governing Documents shall follow the same procedure as amending the Constitution, with the exception that a 2/3 threshold must be met.
- D. None of the Governing Documents may contradict each other or the Constitution. Should any of the Governing Documents contain contradictions, the order of precedence is as follows: the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Code of Elections, and the Code of Finances.
- E. A 3/4 vote is required to suspend the Governing Documents or the Constitution.

### ***Section 3. Code of Elections***

- A. The Code of Elections of the Student Senate shall govern election procedure for all Student Senate elections and shall not conflict with any of the other Governing Documents.

### ***Section 4. Code of Finances***

- A. The Code of Finances of the Student Senate shall govern fiscal policy procedure for the Student Senate and shall not conflict with any of the other Governing Documents.

## **Article VIII. Amending the Constitution**

### ***Section 1. Amendments***

- A. Any motion to amend the Constitution must first be introduced in writing for information at a General Assembly Meeting.
- B. Any such proposed amendment shall then be referred to the Internal Affairs Committee.
- C. A proposed amendment referred to the Internal Affairs Committee may only be considered for action by the General Assembly at a General Meeting after the Committee has both approved the item for action and submitted written recommendations.
- D. Amendments to the Constitution require a 2/3 affirmative vote for passage.

## **Article IX. Ratification and Enactment**

### ***Section 1. Ratification of the Student Senate Constitution***

- A. This Constitution and the attached Bylaws shall be ratified upon 2/3 vote of the General Assembly.

***Section 2. Enactment of the Student Senate Constitution and Bylaws***

- A. This Constitution and the attached Bylaws shall supersede all previously existing constitutions and Bylaws.
- B. All provisions of this Constitution and the attached Bylaws shall become effective December 3, 2012.