



Constitution of the Student Body of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg

We, the Student Body, of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, in order to provide effective student representation before all vested bodies of influence, for the purpose of giving guidance and stewardship concerning the allocation and expenditure of our student finances to serve in the best interest of our student body; and to provide ourselves with the highest caliber of enriching and educational activities and services do hereby establish and ordain this Constitution.

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP AND RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

SECTION I: All students by virtue of their home campus registration at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg are members of the St. Petersburg Campus Student Body and are granted all the rights and privileges of this Constitution. The Student Body shall establish a Student Government Association which shall govern and represent the interests of the Student Body. The Student Government Association shall be governed, accountable to, and maintained by the Student Body. The Student Government Association hereinafter may be referred to as “Student Government” or “SG.”

SECTION II: Student Government shall be comprised of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches; in addition to functional groups and entities defined within the Student Body Constitution and Student Government Statutes. The powers and responsibilities of Student Government shall be promulgated by the Constitution of the Student Body and the Student Government Statutes (hereinafter may be referred to as the “Statutes”) which shall not conflict with University Regulations or any other municipal, state, or federal law.

SECTION III: The Executive Cabinet, consisting of the Student Body President, Vice-President, and Department & Agency Directors, together with the Student Senate and Student Supreme Court, are charged to collaborate with one another and with the student body to ensure that students' voices are heard

and effectively communicated and whose interests are known throughout the University. This process shall be facilitated by several means, including through the Judicial, Executive, and Legislative ("J.E.L.") Commission; detailed under the SG Statutes.

SECTION IV: The differential treatment of a student based on factors including, but not limited to, race, creed, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, parental status, disability, personal wealth, or any combination thereof, is deemed unacceptable. The denial of due process or the infringement of the substantive rights of any student will not be tolerated.

SECTION V: All members of Student Government shall maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA. All undergraduate members must be enrolled for a minimum of six (6) credit hours as degree seeking students and all graduate members shall be enrolled for a minimum of four (4) credit hours during the Fall and Spring semesters, unless otherwise provided by the Constitution or Statutes. Summer semester requirements shall be provided by the Statutes.

SECTION VI: Members of Student Government must be students in good academic standing, according to the University Code of Conduct, and may not be under suspension or expulsion.

ARTICLE II: THE EXECUTIVE

SECTION I: The Executive Branch shall consist of the Student Body President; Student Body Vice President; all department, office, agency and bureau employees; and all executive appointees; hereinafter may be referred to as executive officers. No executive employee may hold an office in any other branch of Student Government during his/her term of office in the Executive Branch, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or Statutes.

SECTION II: All executive powers of the Student Body shall be vested in the Student Body President. The Student Body President shall have the power to nominate and, with the advice and consent of the Student Senate (hereinafter may be referred to as the "Senate"), appoint all department, agency and bureau directors. All other members of the Executive Branch may be appointed by the Student Body President without the advice and consent of the Senate, unless otherwise provided by the Constitution or Statutes.

SECTION III: The Student Body President shall be responsible for the oversight of all departments, agencies, offices and bureaus of Student Government. The Student Body President may delegate any duties and responsibilities he/she deems necessary to the Student Body Vice President.

SECTION IV: The Student Body President shall nominate, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint justices to the Student Supreme Court.

SECTION V: The Student Body President shall recommend students for appointment to, or removal from, university-wide councils, committees and boards with the advice and consent of a Senate committee, as outlined in the Constitution or Statutes.

SECTION VI: The Student Body President shall sign or veto, within ten (10) academic days, all constitutional amendments, statutes and appropriations passed by the Senate. The President's failure to act during this specified time shall be deemed approval of such legislation and appropriations. The Senate may override, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, a veto by the Student Body President.

SECTION VII: The Student Body President shall address the Senate at least once each semester and on other occasions at the invitation of the Senate President.

SECTION VIII: The Student Body President may call for a referendum of the Student Body, subject to approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

SECTION IX: The Student Body President shall initiate the annual budget process by issuing an official executive budget proposal to the Senate.

SECTION X: No candidate shall be elected or appointed to any executive office until a certification from the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services, attesting that the candidate has met all of the qualifications for that office, has been filed with the Election Rules Commission.

SECTION XI: In the event the Student Body President resigns, is impeached, or is unable to perform the powers and duties of the office, the Student Body Vice President shall become the President.

SECTION XII: In the event that the office of Student Body Vice President becomes vacant for any reason, the Student Body President shall nominate and, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint a new Vice President.

SECTION XIII: In the event of vacancy in the office of Student Body Vice President at the time of vacancy of the office of Student Body President, the order of succession shall be the Senate President, followed by the Senate President Pro-Tempore; should this occur, a special Presidential/Vice Presidential election shall be called by the Senate to fill the succeeded office(s), such that Senate officers forced to change branches may take back their previous position within the Senate.

SECTION XIV: The Student Body President shall represent the Student Body before the Campus Board and/or similar representative bodies.

ARTICLE III: THE LEGISLATIVE

SECTION I: The legislative authority of the Student Body shall be vested in the Student Senate.

SECTION II: The Senate will be composed of student representatives who shall be members of the Student Body at USF St. Petersburg. The number of seats shall be outlined within the Statutes. Any changes to this number will not take effect until the following general election.

SECTION III: No student may be a candidate for election to the Senate until a certification from the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services, attesting that the candidate has met all of the qualifications for office, has been filed with the Election Rules Commission.

SECTION IV: The Senate shall have the authority to enact, amend or repeal statutes of Student Government by a majority vote. The Senate shall also have the authority to enact non-binding resolutions, conclusions, memorials, and its own Rules of Procedure.

SECTION V: The Senate shall have the authority to enact, and repeal, by two-thirds (2/3) vote, statutes governing the election of all Student Government officers.

SECTION VI: The Senate may propose, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, any constitutional amendment.

SECTION VII: The Senate may approve, by a majority vote, executive appointees of the Student Body President. The Student Body President must inform the Student Senate President in writing within one (1) academic day of making any appointment. Failure to act on any executive appointment within ten (10) academic days shall be deemed approval of such appointment.

SECTION VIII: The Senate may override, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, a veto by the Student Body President.

SECTION IX: The Senate shall have the authority to approve and allocate all Activity & Service Fee appropriations by a majority vote, unless otherwise specified within the Constitution or Statutes, and shall have the authority to formulate policy and procedures pertaining to all student activities, services and benefits funded by Activity & Service Fee funds, in accordance with Activity & Service Fee guidelines dictated by the Florida State Legislature and other regulatory bodies.

SECTION X: The Senate shall have the power to impeach any member of Student Government, as outlined within the Statutes. Senate Impeachment proceedings are subject to review by the Student Supreme Court.

SECTION XI: The Senate shall establish its own meeting times, rules and procedures. The Senate shall assemble in open meetings at frequent intervals for the deliberation of legislation and the business of the Student Body. No officer may hold an office in any other branch, agency, or department of Student Government during his/her term of office in the Legislative Branch.

SECTION XII: The Senate shall provide for the compilation and publication of all legislation.

SECTION XIII: The Senate shall establish means through which the Student Body can actively participate in the formulation of policies that affect them.

SECTION XIV: The Senate shall elect a Senate President and Senate President Pro Tempore at the beginning of each term as provided by Statute. Both positions shall be subject to a vote of confidence at the first general meeting of the Fall and Spring semesters. The duties of the Senate President, the highest elected official in the Senate, and all other Senate officers, shall be detailed by the Statutes and the Senate Rules of Procedure.

SECTION XV: The Senate President shall have the authority to create any committee necessary to the operation of the Senate, and to appoint and remove any committee chair. No member of the Senate may chair more than one (1) standing committee.

ARTICLE IV: THE JUDICIAL

SECTION I: The judicial power of Student Body shall be vested in the Student Supreme Court, hereinafter may be referred to as the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court shall have jurisdiction over all cases and controversies, excluding those delegated to other entities by the University Board of Trustees, involving the Student Body and Student Government, including the power to declare any act of Student Government unconstitutional. Any decision or ruling made by the Supreme Court may be appealed, according to Habeas Corpus, only by the involved parties in the particular controversy or case, to the Regional Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services, who shall have the authority to make all final decisions.

SECTION II: The Supreme Court shall try all cases of impeachment brought by the Senate.

SECTION III: The Supreme Court shall adopt rules for its practice and procedure, including the time for seeking appellate review. These rules may be repealed by statute enacted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

SECTION IV: The Student Supreme Court shall have the power to subpoena any member of the Student Government with a majority vote.

SECTION V: The Supreme Court shall be comprised of five (5) justices. The Student Body President shall nominate and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint justices who shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive years from the day of taking the oath of office, unless re-appointed by the Student Body President. Judicial terms shall run concurrently with the terms of the other branches. No justice may hold an office in any other branch of Student Government.

SECTION VI: The Student Body President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint a justice each new term to serve as the Chief Justice for the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice shall serve for one (1) term, and may be appointed for additional terms.

SECTION VII: Cases of impeachment of a justice shall be tried by a Judicial Review Committee. The Judicial Review Committee shall be composed of five (5) students, three (3) appointed by the Student Body President and two (2) appointed by the Senate. A justice may not be removed from office except on a majority vote of the Judicial Review Committee, as defined in the Statutes.

SECTION VIII: The Supreme Court may hear and rule on violations of the Student Code of Conduct at the discretion of the Regional Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services.

SECTION IX: Justices of the Supreme Court, in order of succession, shall be charged with administering the oath of office to newly elected and confirmed Student Government officers. The Oath reads:

"I (state full name) do solemnly affirm that I will faithfully execute the Office of Student Government (state the office) of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, and will to the best of my ability abide by the Student Body Constitution, uphold the Statutes, and represent the Student Body."

SECTION X: In the event that no justice is present for the swearing in of newly elected or appointed Student Government officers, the oath shall be administered by one (1) of the following officers, in the following order:

1. Student Body President
2. Student Body Vice President
3. Senate President
4. Senate President Pro Tempore

ARTICLE V: THE ELECTION PROCESS AND VOTER RIGHTS

SECTION I: The Student Body at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg shall be entitled to vote in the general elections of Student Government. Any student has the right to call for a university-wide initiative/referendum election provided that a petition signed by at least 30% of the number of students that voted in the most recent general election is submitted as specified by the Statutes. Any student has the right to call for a university-wide senatorial recall election provided that a petition signed by at least 10% of the Student Body is submitted as specified by the Statutes; students that sign a senatorial recall petition must be from the respective college of the senator. Additionally, any student has the right to call for a university-wide Presidential recall election provided that a petition signed by at least 10% of the Student Body is submitted as specified by the Statutes. Student Body enrollment figures shall be determined by the Senior Director of Enrollment Services at the time of the initiative/referendum/recall.

SECTION II: All candidates for the offices of Student Body President and Student Body Vice President shall form joint candidacies so that each voter shall cast a single vote for a candidate for President and a candidate for Vice President running together. General elections shall take place four (4) consecutive days beginning on the Monday, fifteen (15) academic days after Spring Break. Run-off elections, if necessary, shall be held the following Tuesday and Wednesday. The President and Vice-President shall take office the first Monday following Spring Commencement. The President and Vice President shall serve a one-year term of office. No President or Vice President may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

SECTION III: The general election for the Senate shall take place four (4) consecutive days beginning on the Monday, fifteen (15) academic days after Spring Break. Run-off elections, if necessary, shall be held the following Tuesday and Wednesday. Senators shall take office the first Monday following Spring Commencement. Senators shall serve a one-year term of office.

SECTION IV: Interim elections for the Senate shall take place as deemed necessary in the Statutes, and the duration of the election shall be two (2) consecutive academic days beginning on the first Tuesday of the month.

SECTION V: If the election process enumerated in the Constitution and Statutes cannot select an official and sworn Student Body President and Student Body Vice President within ten (10) academic days prior to Spring Commencement, then the Senate shall select from the original pool of certified campaign tickets, by a majority vote among those voting, a joint Presidential and Vice Presidential ticket to be the President and Vice President. This shall occur, even if there is pending litigation or dispute. If the President and Vice President have been selected by the procedures in this particular section, then they shall be subject to a Student Body vote of confidence on the second Monday of the Fall semester. Should the President and Vice President be removed by a vote of confidence, then the order of succession shall determine the new officers.

ARTICLE VI: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SECTION I: Amendments to this Constitution must be approved by a supermajority vote in the Senate, followed by a supermajority vote of the Student Body among those voting. A town hall meeting conducted by representatives from the Senate shall be held two (2) weeks prior to the Student Body vote for the purpose of informing students of final proposed changes. Official Student Government meetings in which constitutional revisions are discussed shall be publicized to the Student Body at least five (5) academic days in advance.

SECTION II: Amendments to this Constitution shall be listed at the end of this document.