

## **Student Government Association Constitution – March 6, 2009**

### **Preamble**

Accepting the responsibility of citizenship, we, the students of Concordia College, do hereby establish the Concordia College Student Association, the Concordia College Student Government Association and the following Constitution, which shall govern our organization. The power and the provisions of the Constitution have been derived from and are consistent with the Concordia College Corporation Charter.

### **Mission**

To develop strong, viable relations and a strong sense of community between the faculty, the administration, and the students of the college community, to further enhance the quality of life and education of the college, and to act as the official representatives of the student body subject to the will of the students at large.

### **Article I. Name**

**Section 1.** The name of this organization shall be the Concordia College Student Association.

**Clause 1.** All members of the Concordia College Student Body carrying at least three full courses per semester are members of Concordia College Student Association and have the right to seek office within the Student Government Association, regardless of race, color, creed, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or religious affiliation.

**Section 2.** The elected and/or appointed student representative body shall be called the Concordia College Student Government Association (SGA).

### **Article II. General Powers and Responsibilities**

**Section 1.** The Student Government Association shall respect the college's mission, policies and actions, yet do all in its power to uphold and promote student life at Concordia College as follows:

**Clause 1.** The right to participate in the government of the college.

**Clause 2.** The right to participate in the formulation of policy affecting the education and welfare of the college community.

**Clause 3.** The right to be eligible to vote in any election or referendum conducted in accordance with this Constitution.

**Clause 4.** The right to form organizations and associations.

**Clause 5.** The right of expression and inquiry in the campus community.

**Clause 6.** The right to participate fully in the student community without being subject to discrimination or bias.

**Section 2.** The Student Association shall be the main liaison between the student association, faculty, staff and administration by serving on faculty and college committees.

**Section 3.** The Student Government Association shall be responsible for the formulation and maintenance of relations with student governments from other colleges and universities.

**Section 4.** The Student Government Association shall provide the means for carrying out duties assigned to it under the Student Rights and Responsibilities Document and of advancing and effecting student concerns.

### **Article III. Student Government Association Membership and Structure**

**Section 1. Membership:** Participation in the Student Government Association is open to all students who are members of the Student Association and carrying three (3) full courses per semester. Students need to have completed at least one (1) full semester at Concordia College (exception First Year Class Representatives) prior to his/her service as well as maintaining a Concordia College cumulative grade point average of 2.5. Failure to meet these guidelines will result in consequences as laid out in the By-laws.

**Section 2. Structure:** The following members shall be either Elected or Appointed as representatives of the Concordia College community. The Student Government Association shall be comprised of four offices: the Executive Office, the Student Involvement Council, the Elections and Credentials Council, and the Office of Class Representatives.

**Clause 1. Executive Office** Within this office, there shall be two elected positions as well as appointed positions as are established in the By-laws and approved by the Elections and Credentials Council (see Clause 1, A, 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet).

#### **A. President (Elected):**

- Shall be the official representative of the Student Association in all matters within the college and shall be the spokesperson of the ideas and plans of the Student Government Association.
- Shall be responsible for upholding the Student Government Association Constitution.
- Shall have the power to create necessary committees and task forces with the approval of the Elections and Credentials Council

#### **B. Vice President (Elected):**

- Shall assume the duties of the President in the instance of an absence or incapacitation of the President. In the instance of a permanent absence, incapacitation, or resignation of the President, the Vice President shall assume the office of President.
- Shall have the power to convene the Student Government Forum and serve as the Presiding Official during proceedings.

#### **C. Council of Commissioners**

Within this Council there shall be offices determined by the By-laws to serve the needs and interests of the Student Body.

- Shall be appointed by the Elections and Credentials Council to serve a term from April 1st to April 31<sup>st</sup> the following year.
- Shall be responsible for carrying out duties relevant to the Commission as established in the By-laws.
- In the instance of absence, incapacitation, or resignation of a Commissioner, the Elections and Credentials Council shall appoint a replacement.

### **Clause 2. Student Involvement Council**

The Student Involvement Commissioner will serve as Chair and the Council will consist of four Class Representatives, one Representative from Intercultural Affairs, one Representative from Residence Life, one Representative from Off Campus, and a representative of the LeadNOW Program.

- Shall serve the student body by actively pursuing the interests and concerns of students in order to involve them fully in college life as articulated in the By-laws.
- Shall be responsible for appropriating funds from the Student Activity Fee to designated bodies as established in the By-laws.

### **Clause 3. Elections and Credentials Council**

The Elections and Credentials Commissioner will serve as Chair and be appointed by the exiting Elections and Credentials Council. In addition, there shall also be four Class Representatives and necessary student officials and staff advisors relevant to the position to be filled.

- Shall have sole authority to conduct elections according to the procedures defined in the By-laws
- Shall serve as an objective body to evaluate the necessary credentials needed for significant student leadership positions as defined in the By-laws.
- Shall have the power to select students to fill significant student leadership positions.
- Shall serve as the sole interpreter of the By-laws as determined by the Student Government Forum.
- Shall serve as an objective body to ascertain a breach of conduct or accusations thereof concerning elected Student Government Officials.
- Shall have the power to approve or disapprove committees or task forces as proposed by the President.

### **Clause 4. The Office of Class Representatives**

The Office of Class Representatives shall consist of two elected members from each class: First Year, including Transfer Students, Sophomore, Junior and Senior classes. A member from each class shall serve on the Student Involvement Council and the Elections and Credentials Council.

**A. Term of Office:**

- Class Representatives from the Sophomore, Junior, and Senior classes shall serve a 12 month term from April 1<sup>st</sup> until April 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.
- Class Representatives representing Freshman/Transfer students at large shall serve from the Sunday following their election through April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Clause 5. Student Business Office Treasurer**

- Shall be selected by the Cornerstone staff and the Chair of the Elections and Credentials Council and serve a term of office from April 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of election to April 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.
- Shall be responsible for the accounting of all Student Government Association funds and providing accurate reports.

**Clause 6. Student Advocate**

- Shall be selected by the Elections and Credentials Council to serve a term from April 1st of the year of the appointment to April 31st of the following year.
- Shall be selected to educate, advise, and represent members of the Student Body in matters related to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Document.
- Shall not have voting power in the Student Government Forum

**Clause 7. Student Government Forum**

The Student Government Forum shall serve as the legislative body of the Student Government Association. Its members shall include Executive Office, Student Involvement Council and Office of Class Representatives. The SGA Forum shall have sole power to approve additions or revisions of the By-laws.

- Shall have sole power to remove Elected Officials as defined in Article VI.
- Shall act on general resolutions on behalf of the Student Government Association.
- The Vice President shall have the power to convene the Student Government Forum once each block.

**Article IV. Activity Fee Policy**

**Section 1. Student Activity Fee**

**Clause 1.** The Student Activity Fee (SAF) shall include the payment of each member of the Concordia College Student Body set in conjunction with the Student Affairs Committee and approved by the Board of Regents.

**Clause 2.** The General Allocation Fund used by the Student Involvement Council will be a portion of the SAF according to procedures set by the Student Affairs Committee.

**Clause 3.** Shall be used to fund for capital expenditures and yearly operating budgets.

## **Section 2. Student Government Association Reserve Funds**

**Clause 1.** The Student Government Association Emergency Reserve Fund (ERF) shall be determined in the By-laws.

**Clause 2.** The Student Government Association Reserve Fund (SARF) will consist of all unspent Student Activity Fee allocations from the previous fiscal year and the previous SARF balance.

## **Section 3. Student Stipends**

**Clause 1.** The President and the Chair of the Elections and Credentials Council shall jointly examine the need for student stipend adjustments.

**Clause 2.** Adjustments shall be presented to the Elections and Credentials Council for consideration and recommendation to the Student Affairs Committee.

**Clause 3.** Approved adjustments shall be presented to the Student Affairs Committee for ratification.

**Clause 4.** The Student Affairs Committee's ratified budget (as outlined in the By-laws) shall be binding for the following academic year and distributed as determined in the By-Laws.

## **Article V. The Election and Appointments of Student Government Association Officials**

### **Section 1. Election Jurisdiction and Procedures**

**Clause 1.** The Elections and Credentials Commissioner, if not a candidate or potential candidate, shall serve as the Marshall for all elections.

**Clause 2.** In the event the Elections and Credentials Commissioner plans to run for Office, the Election and Credentials Council shall select the Elections Marshall.

**Clause 3.** The General Elections shall take place prior to spring break each year.

**Clause 4.** Elections for First Year Students/Transfer Students shall take place in September of each year.

**Clause 5.** All elections shall follow the policies and procedures laid out in the By-laws.

### **Section 2. Campaigning**

**Clause 1.** Candidates shall meet all requirements as determined by the Elections and Credentials Council in accordance with the By-Laws.

**Clause 2.** Campaigns must be conducted in an ethical manner and in accordance with the Elections Rules as stated in the By-Laws.

**Clause 3.** Failure to conduct ethical elections, in accordance with the Elections Rules may result in disqualification.

### **Section 3. Appointment of Student Government Officials**

**Clause 1.** All appointments to Office within the Student Government Association must be made by the Elections and Credentials Council or special assembly sanctioned by the Elections and Credentials Commissioner in accordance with their term of office.

**Clause 2.** Appointment of the Chair of the Elections and Credentials Council shall be made by the exiting Elections and Credentials Council and shall serve a term from February 15 of the year of appointment to April 1 of the following year.

**Clause 3.** Appointment of the Chair of the Student Involvement Council shall coincide with the selection of Commissioners and shall serve a term from April 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of appointment to April 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year

### **Article VI. Removal of Student Government Officials**

#### **Section 1. Removal Criteria**

**Clause 1.** Any official may be removed from office for just cause – not fulfilling the duties of office, violating the Constitution, dismissal from the college, conduct unbecoming of a Student Government Official, or failure to maintain a Concordia College cumulative grade point average of 2.5.

**Clause 2.** Other policies and procedures regarding the removal of Student Government Association Officials can be found in the By-laws.

#### **Section 2. Removal of Elected Student Government Association Officials**

**Clause 1.** Elected Officials of the Concordia College Student Government Association may be impeached and/or removed by a 4/5 vote of the members of the Student Government Forum.

**Clause 2.** Student Government Forum shall be responsible for determining the culpability of elected officials under scrutiny.

#### **Section 3. Removal of Appointed Student Government Association Officials**

**Clause 1.** Appointed Officials may be removed from office by a majority decision determined by the Elections and Credentials Council according to procedure defined in the By-laws.

#### **Section 4. Appeals**

**Clause 1.** Impeachment and/or removal of either Elected or Appointed Officials may be appealed to the Student Affairs Committee within seven academic days of the determining body's decision.

**Clause 2.** The Appeals process shall be further defined in the By-laws.

**Clause 3.** The decision of the Student Affairs Committee shall be final and binding.

### **Article VII. Ratification of the Constitution**

**Section 1.** The Student Association Constitution shall become effective immediately upon its ratification by a 2/3 majority of the members of the Student Association voting in the Special Election.

**Section 2.** This constitution shall render null and void any preceding similar document intended for the purpose of governing Student Government Association and shall take precedence over any conflicting or contradictory By-laws.

**Section 3.** This document supersedes the authority of all Constitutions of student organizations on campus.

#### **Article VIII. Constitutional Review Board**

**Section 1.** The Elections and Credentials Council shall review the Constitution and recommend any changes to the Student Government Forum. Any proposed changes shall be brought before the student body through proper procedures as defined in the By-laws.

**Section 2.** The Constitution shall be evaluated in its entirety after one year and every three years thereafter by a committee consisting of five members: the Vice President, ranking member of the Student Involvement Council, ranking member of the Elections and Credentials Council. In addition, the review team will consist of a Commissioner at large and an individual of the student body at large as selected by the Elections and Credentials Council. Any proposed changes shall be brought before the student body through proper procedures as defined in the By-laws.

**Section 3.** The Constitution may receive inconsequential modifications that do not alter the meaning or intent of provisions previously ratified by the Student Association once a year by majority consent of the Elections and Credentials Council following the procedure described in the By-laws.

#### **Article IX. Amendments to the Constitution**

**Section 1.** Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by initiative or referendum; these amendments will become binding at the time when the Special Election results are presented.

**Clause 1.** Any member of the Student Body may propose legislation according to the procedure outlined in the By-laws.

**Clause 2.** Any measure passed by the Council of Commissioners, the Elections and Credentials Committee, Student Involvement Council, or the Student Government Forum by a majority of the total membership may be referred to the members of the Student Body for their approval or disapproval.

#### **Article X. By-laws**

**Section 1.** The Student Government Forum shall have the power to enact such By-laws, as it deems necessary to facilitate the operation of the Student Government Association by a 2/3 vote of the Forum.

**Section 2.** The Student Government Forum shall have the power to amend such By-laws by a 2/3 vote of the Forum.