

# **STUDENT SENATE CONSTITUTION OF HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## **Preamble**

We, the students of Hudson Valley Community College, want to promote the general welfare of the student body; to provide educational, cultural, recreational and social activities; to form an organization, through which the students may voice their opinions, concerns and suggestions to administration, faculty, and staff, and in doing so, establish this constitution of the Student Senate ("Constitution").

## **Article I – Definition**

The student body shall consist of all students who have paid the established student activity fee for that semester.

## **Article II – Name**

The governing organization of the student body shall be called the Student Senate of Hudson Valley Community College and be referred to as the Student Senate.

## **Article III – Governance**

The executive powers granted hereinafter are with the Student Senate. It shall be the responsibility of the Student Senate to implement the provisions of this Constitution and the Student Senate By-Laws.

### **Section One - Composition**

The Student Senate shall be comprised of the four elected officers and senators who are representatives of each academic division, including non-matriculated students. They will be known as Senators, and each class will elect a Class President. The number of Senators for each academic division is set in the Election By-Law. Each class shall vote for a Class President.

### **Section Two-Duties and Powers**

The Student Senate shall make all standing rules necessary to its operation with the approval of the Faculty Student Association of Hudson Valley Community College, Inc., Board of Directors, (FSA Board of Directors), and College Board of Trustees.

The Student Senate shall provide effective communication to the students of the College in regards to every facet of the College and the broader community.

The Student Senate shall review the policies and procedures of student-recognized clubs and Student Senate committees and shall have the authority to reject all policies and procedures which it deems inconsistent with the best interests of the student body or the Constitution or By-Laws.

The Student Senate shall determine the student activity fee and the athletic fee, subject to the approval of the FSA Board of Directors and the College Board of Trustees. The Student Senate shall pay the FSA for the cost incurred for the audit of Student Senate financial records.

The Student Senate shall charter student clubs and organizations.

The Student Senate shall provide for proper and just student body elections and tabulation of results.

When included in the annual budget, compensation may be made to Student Senate Executive Officers,

Senators, and The Hudsonian staff. When included in the annual budget, Student Senate Executive Officers and The Hudsonian staff may receive compensation if approved by the Director of Student Life or designee. No student shall be compensated beyond the amount they were billed for tuition.

Compensation levels shall be established and approved by the Student Senate and the Director of Student Life or designee, as part of the budget process.

## **Article IV – Executive Officers, Senators and Class Presidents**

The student body shall elect from its membership, by a majority vote of those casting votes in the election, a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary (Executive Officers). Each of the senior and freshman classes shall elect one Senator from each of the following academic divisions: School of Business and Liberal Arts, School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), School of Health Sciences, and including non-matriculated students. One Class President shall be elected by its representative membership from each of the freshmen class and senior class.

Student Senate Executive Officers, Senior Senators, and Senior Class President shall hold office from June 1st of the year elected until May 31st the following year. Freshmen Senators and Freshmen Class President shall hold office from the day that the election results are certified by the current Student Senate until May 31st of the following year. The period of time from the election or certification shall be known as the Term. Each office shall automatically become vacant at the end of the Term. If successors have not been chosen by the end of the Term, their duties shall be performed, and authority shall be exercised, as determined by a special election supervised by the Senate Election Committee, in the fall semester, in cooperation with the Director of Student Life (or designee).

## **Article V – Duties and Responsibilities of Executive Officers**

All Executive Officers shall abide by the College codes, rules, and regulations and shall uphold the Constitution and By-Laws. All Executive Officers shall attend the meetings of the Student Senate and his/her committees. Off-campus behavior shall conform to the Constitution, By-Laws, and the codes, rules and regulations of the College.

Executive Officers must be registered, fully paid, full-time matriculated students at Hudson Valley Community College, attending classes as of the first week of instruction during the fall and spring semesters, must maintain and successfully complete a full-time course load in both the fall and spring semesters, must maintain a 2.5 or above cumulative grade point average including non-credit remedial coursework, as determined by the Registrar of the College, including mid-term grades, and shall continue to meet the Student Senate eligibility requirements of their office throughout their Term. Any member of the Student Senate not fulfilling the duties and responsibilities prescribed in their job description will be investigated by the Student Senate Judicial Committee, established pursuant to Article 3, Judicial Committee By-Law. This committee will be formed by the majority of the Executive Officers, and it will determine compensation qualifications. Actions will be taken pending approval by the majority vote of the entire Student Senate.

### **Section One – President**

The President shall be responsible for carrying out all actions taken by the Student Senate. The President shall preside over all meetings of the Student Senate, except as otherwise specifically provided. He/she shall vote only in the event of a tie vote. With the exception of the Student Senate Budget Committee and Student Senate Programming Board, the President shall nominate a chairperson for all Student Senate committees subject to the approval of the majority of the Student Senate. The President or three Executive Officers shall nominate candidates to fill any vacant senatorial position with the approval of the majority of the entire Student Senate. Any nominee must be from the academic division/class vacated. The President shall serve as an ex officio member of all Student Senate committees.

## **Section Two – Vice President**

The Vice President, in the absence of the President or at his/her request, shall preside over Student Senate meetings and assume all the duties and responsibilities of the President. The Vice President shall be an ex officio member of all committees. The Vice President shall preside over the Student Senate Programming Board as described in the By-Laws.

## **Section Three – Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be chairperson of the Student Senate Budget Committee as described in the By-Laws and submit financial reports to the Student Senate and FSA Board of Directors in December and May. The Treasurer shall work with the administration from the Student Activities Office to account for the balance of the budget. The Treasurer shall serve as one of the authorized check signers. The Treasurer shall make the status of the Student Senate budget available to any member of the student body, within a reasonable time of his/her request.

## **Section Four – Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all Student Senate meetings and prepare minutes and agendas for each meeting. The Secretary is responsible for keeping the minutes of each Student Senate session and publishing and distributing them to all members of the Student Senate at least one day prior to the next regular session. The Secretary shall be responsible for carrying out the correspondence of the Student Senate, including publishing and posting the calendar of meetings.

## **Article VI – Senators**

Senators shall attend the meetings of the Student Senate and their committee meetings. Senators shall represent the needs of their constituents. Senators shall uphold the Constitution and By-Laws of the Student Senate. Senators shall perform such duties as are assigned to them with regard to Student Senate committees in a responsible manner. Senators shall abide by the codes, rules, and regulations of the College. All Senators must be registered, fully paid, full-time matriculated students of Hudson Valley Community College, attending the first week of instruction in the fall and spring semesters and maintain and successfully complete a full-time course load in both the fall and spring semesters, must maintain a 2.0 or higher cumulative grade point average including non-credit remedial coursework, including mid-term grades, and continue to meet all student eligibility requirements of their offices throughout the term of their office. The exception is the Senators representing part-time, non-matriculated students. These Senators must maintain a part-time course load, but shall meet all other qualifications of a Senator.

## **Article VII – Presidents for Freshman and Senior Classes**

The Class Presidents shall attend the meetings of the Student Senate and their committees. Class Presidents shall represent the needs of their constituents. The Class Presidents shall uphold the constitution and By-Laws of the Student Senate. Class Presidents shall perform such duties as are assigned to them with regard to Student Senate committees in a responsible manner. Class Presidents shall abide by the codes, rules, and regulations of the College. Both Class Presidents must be registered, fully paid, full-time matriculated students of Hudson Valley Community College, attending the first two weeks of instruction in the fall and spring semesters and must maintain and successfully complete a full-time course load in both the fall and spring semesters, must maintain a 2.0 or higher cumulative grade point average including non-credit remedial coursework, including midterm grades, and continue to meet all student eligibility requirements of their offices throughout the term of their office.

## **Article VIII – Meetings**

The presence of one (1) more than half of the entire Student Senate shall constitute a quorum necessary for the transaction of any business. If a quorum is not present, the presiding officer may adjourn the meeting to a time fixed by him/her. Written notices of the rescheduled meetings shall be given to all Student Senate members by the Secretary of the Student Senate at least three (3) business days prior to the date of the rescheduled meeting. Each Student Senate member shall have one vote on all items of business. A majority vote of the entire Student Senate is required for the transaction of any business, unless otherwise prescribed in this Constitution or the By-Laws. The affirmative vote of the majority of the entire Student Senate shall decide any issue. The Student Senate shall have a meeting no later than ten (10) calendar days after the beginning of the academic school year. The Student Senate shall meet at least once a month during the academic school year at times and places to be determined by the Student Senate in cooperation with the College. Special sessions of the Student Senate may be called by the Student Senate President, or by a request signed by a quorum of the entire Student Senate, for purposes identified in the notice of meeting. Only such designated purposes shall be considered. All official meetings of the Student Senate shall be conducted during the fall and spring semesters. The official notice and calendar of meetings scheduled for the year shall be published and posted on the Student Senate web site by the first day of the fall semester. All meetings of the Student Senate shall be open to the College community and anyone present may be recognized at the discretion of the presiding officer. Every meeting of the Student Senate shall be conducted according to parliamentary procedure as stated in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article IX – Budget**

The Student Senate shall create a budget every year based on the upcoming projections of enrollment provided by the College. The Student Senate shall have a budget approved by the last Student Senate meeting in February and presented to the FSA Board of Directors for final approval. The budget and financial processes are outlined in the by-laws.

## **Article X – Vacancies**

The hierarchy of the Executive Officers is: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. If there is ever a vacancy of the President, the Vice President automatically assumes the office of President with all of the rights and responsibilities of the position. If the vacancy is in any of the officer positions other than the President, the President shall nominate a member of the Student Senate who meets all of the requirements of an officer. The nomination shall be approved by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the entire Student Senate. If a three-fourths (3/4) vote is not achieved, the President shall continue to nominate candidates until a three fourths (3/4) vote is achieved. The nomination process shall be the first order of business. However, the failure to fill the vacancy shall not prevent the Student Senate from conducting other business.

For a vacancy of the Student Trustee position, the presiding officer shall nominate candidates, and continue to nominate candidates, until a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the entire Student Senate is achieved. The nomination procedures shall be the first order of business after the approval of the minutes. However, the failure to fill the vacancy shall not prevent the Student Senate from conducting other business.

Senatorial vacancies shall be filled by nomination process as described in Article V Section One, which is approved by a vote of the majority of the entire Student Senate. A student seeking a senatorial position shall submit a letter to the Student Senate President stating name, academic division and a brief description of why he/she is interested in the Student Senate. The student shall also present valid student identification. Each person shall attend at least one Student Senate meeting and have an interview with at least three (3) officers prior to being recommended for a vote. Each student must meet the requirements of a Senator.

## **Article XI – Removal**

The Student Trustee or any member of the Student Senate who is absent for two (2) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings or a total of four (4) regularly scheduled meetings during the academic school year without excuses deemed appropriate by the Student Senate shall be removed as the Student Trustee or expelled from the Student Senate by a majority vote of the entire Student Senate. Acceptable excuses include academic requirements, Academic Senate Committee meetings or the approval of three (3) officers given at least two (2) days before the meeting. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the College may also determine whether excuses are acceptable.

The Secretary shall provide the President of the Student Senate with notice when the Student Trustee or any member of the Student Senate has violated the attendance policy, whereupon the President shall bring the matter before the Student Senate for a vote to determine the appropriateness of the excuses.

The Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Development may remove the Student Trustee or any member of the Student Senate who has failed to meet, or has ceased to maintain, the eligibility requirements necessary to hold the position to which he/she has been appointed or elected.

An Executive Officer or any member of the Student Senate, removed from the Student Senate, immediately forfeits the position he/she occupied along with all the benefits associated with the position.

## **Article XII – Impeachment**

The members of the Student Senate have the right and responsibility to remove the Student Trustee or expel any member of the Student Senate if they decide he or she has violated any provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws in the following manner:

A majority vote of the entire Student Senate is necessary to establish a Student Senate Judicial Committee. The Student Senate Judicial Committee will be formed as described in the by-laws. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the entire Student Senate is necessary to expel any member. The resulting vacancy shall be filled according to the provisions of the by-laws. In the event that the President is the defendant in impeachment proceedings, the Vice President shall form the Student Senate Judicial Committee.

## **Article XIII – Create a New By-Law or Amend a Current By-Law**

A new by-law or an amendment may be proposed at any regular meeting of the Student Senate.

The proposed changes will be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled Student Senate meeting. A three fourths (3/4) vote of the entire Student Senate is required for a by-law to be adopted or amended.

All amendments must be approved by the FSA Board of Directors and the College Board of Trustees.

## **Article XIV – Constitution Ratification or Amendment**

This Constitution shall become operational immediately following its approval by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the entire Student Senate and the subsequent approval by the FSA Board of Directors and the College Board of Trustees. The College Board of Trustees may amend the Constitution and By-Laws except as to matters specifically reserved to the Student Senate by the Community College Regulations or the Education Law.

May 25, 2021 Approved by the Board of Trustees of Hudson Valley Community College

May 3, 2021 Approved by Board of Directors of the Faculty Student Association of Hudson Valley Community College, Inc.

April 19, 2021 Approved by the Student Senate of Hudson Valley Community College