

STUDENT SENATE CONSTITUTION AND BY- LAWS



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S:Student Life/Student Life Activity Guide/2011-2012/Individual Forms/Student Senate Constitution and By-laws

North Hennepin Community College
CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT SENATE

Presented on September 2, 1998

Ratified: September 16, 1998

Amended: April 13, 2001

Article I – Name

A. The name of this organization shall be North Hennepin Community College Student Senate.

B. The Student Senate is student organization at North Hennepin Community College and is affiliated with Minnesota State College Student Association (MSCSA).

Article II – Purpose

A. The purpose of the Student Senate shall be to represent the student body at North Hennepin Community College regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, political, religion, disability creed age, national origin, status with regard to public assistance, membership, or activity in a local commission as defined by law, and shall be committed to reflect the diversity of the student body in its membership and policies. The Student Senate shall keep itself informed of and act on issues of concern to the student body, especially (but not exclusively) in the following areas:

1. Legislation Affecting Students
2. Student Grievance and Complaint Procedures
3. Student Concerns and Affairs
4. Personnel
5. Curriculum
6. Facilities
7. Represent Student Life Organizations/clubs in regard to the allocation of funds
8. General College Matters

Article III – Membership and Eligibility

A. The Student Senate shall include six officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Coordinator, and Legislative Coordinator. These officers shall be elected in annual elections under guidelines stated in the Constitution. (Article V) and By-laws (Section V).

B. Each recognized Student Life organization/club must appoint a representative to the Student Senate in accordance with By-laws (Section (VII)).

C. Membership from the general student body population meeting the following criteria shall not be limited:

1. Prospective members and members shall be enrolled at North Hennepin Community College

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2. Prospective members and members must maintain a 2.0 semester GPA, must not be on academic probation, or must not have incomplete work.
 3. Prospective members and members may be granted a Waiver concerning the criteria stated in Article II, Section 3B, by the completion of a contract with Bridge to Academic Success program.
- D. The Student Senate does not discriminate on the basis race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, political, religion, disability, creed, age, national origin, status with regard to public assistance, membership, or activity in a local commission as defined by law.

Article IV – Officers

- A. The Student Senate shall include six officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Coordinator, and Legislative Coordinator. These officers shall be elected in annual elections under guidelines stated in Constitution (Article V) and By-laws (Section V).
- B. Eligibility
1. All officers must be in compliance with the Constitution. (Article 3)
 2. The term for executive Board Officers is one year beginning on July 1 and ending on July 1 of the following year.
 3. Executive Board Officers may run for and serve a second term. No one can serve as an officer of the Student Senate for more than two years.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities
1. All Student Senate Executive Board Officers must attend General Assembly meetings. Appeals can be made to the Student Senate Executive Board.
 2. The Chair (President) shall preside at Student Senate meetings represent the Student Senate to the college and others, and shall convene the Executive Board at least monthly during an academic term.
 3. The Vice President shall assume the duties and responsibilities during the President’s absence.
 4. The Secretary shall record the minutes Student Senate and maintain a permanent record of said minutes on the Student Senate computer along with a hard copy on file in the Student Senate office.
 5. The Treasurer shall keep all records of official and financial transactions. All requests for monies must be approved by the Student Senate President and also approved by the Student Senate Advisor.
 6. The Communications Coordinator shall be responsible for posting the agenda on the Student Senate bulletin boards two (2) days prior to a Student Senate meeting.
 7. The Legislative Coordinator shall be responsible for all legislative affairs of the Student Senate that shall be conducted in the best interest of North Hennepin Community College student body.

Article V – Elections

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- A. College-wide elections shall be conducted annually during the month of April for the Student Senate offices. The Student Senate shall include six officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Coordinator, and Legislative Coordinator. (By-laws Section V).
- B. All currently enrolled students who meet the following criteria are eligible to run for a Student Senate office:
 - 1. Candidates for Student Senate office shall be currently enrolled at North Hennepin Community College with a minimum of 6 credits.
 - 2. Candidates for Student Senate offices shall be in compliance with North Hennepin Community College academic standards
 - 3. Candidates for Student Senate office may be granted a waiver, concerning the criteria in (Article III, Section C3).
- C. Election and campaign procedures:
 - 1. If vacancies occur in any of the offices, new officers shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the members present at the meeting after the announcement of the vacancy.

Article VI - Removal from Office and/or Student Senate

- A. Student Senate members and officers may be removed from the Student Senate automatically by the Student Senate Advisor for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. Two (2) unexcused or more than three (3) excused absences from Student Senate meetings in a semester.
 - a. Executive Board meetings
 - b. Full Student meetings
 - 2. Dishonesty or abuse of position in accordance with the Code of Conduct of NHCC and MSCSA.
- B. Student Senate members and officers may be removed from the Student Senate by the Student Advisor or a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Student Senate for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. Failure to maintain a semester 2.0 GPA.
 - 2. Being on academic probation for more than one (1) semester.
 - 3. Failure to perform duties and responsibilities, in accordance with the By-laws. (Section II and Section III)
- C. Student Senate Senators may be removed from their positions by the Executive Board for failure to carry out their job responsibilities. Appeals may be made to the Full Senate.

Article VII – General Student Body Members (Senators)

- A. A vote on membership shall be taken at a Student Senate meeting in which there is a prospective Senator in attendance.
- B. A majority vote of the Student Senate is required for membership.
- C. Senators shall be in control of one (1) vote upon recognition as a Student Senate Senator.

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- D. At least one senator must attend the Executive Board meeting. They may rotate among senators.

Article VIII- Duties and Responsibilities as A Whole

- A. Senators must attend all regularly scheduled Student Senate meetings unless excused by the Student Senate President, designee or Student Senate Advisor, and they must assist the Student Senate as necessary.
- B. The Student Senate must appoint representatives to college and student committees. Committee representatives need not be Senators of the Senate.
- C. Senators must use parliamentary procedure during the meetings. This means acquiring a working knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order Revised to be used as a leadership tool.

Article IX – Committees

- A. Standing Committee(s)
 - 1. The Executive Board shall be comprised of the elected officers of the organization and shall meet to prepare agenda items and information reports, and to collaborate on the business of the organization. The Executive Board may, with a majority vote, authorize expenditures of up to \$100 for routine operational expenses.
 - 2. The Student Life committee shall be in accordance with the Student Life Policy (MnSCU, Chapter II; Section VIII; Part III, Sub-part C, Section VI), as determined by the Director of Student Life. At least one (1) Student Senate Executive Board member must be appointed to serve on the Student Life Committee by the Student Senate.
 - 3. The Welcome Week committee must consist of the Student Senate Executive Board. Other students are encouraged to participate.
- B. Ad Hoc Committees
 - 1. The (organization, Executive Board) may establish ad hoc committees at any time as deemed necessary. (By-laws section VI)
 - 2. The Student Senate President shall appoint members to the ad hoc committees.

Article X – Student Senate Advisor

- A. North Hennepin Community College student Senate Advisor is the Director of Student Life.
- B. All decisions on the Student Senate and Executive Board are subject to review by the Student Senate Advisor. If the Student Senate Advisor feels that a decision needs to be reevaluated, the issue will be brought to the full Student Senate meeting at which the Student Senate Advisor will present concerns.

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- C. The Student Senate Advisor shall attend meetings and serve as a liaison between the organizations/clubs and the college.

Article XI – Organizational Representatives

- A. Appointments from Student Life organization/clubs to the Student Senate shall be made by their respective Student Life organizations/clubs. Organizations/clubs must submit a form designating who their representative (and alternate) will be. Said representative and alternate must then apply to the Student Senate for membership. To confirm membership, the Student Senate will the vote on said representative (and alternate). The application must be signed by the organizations/clubs President and Advisor. Disregarding proxies, only their recognized representatives may vote in their behalf on matters before the Student Senate.
- B. Student Life organizations/clubs with Student Senate meeting time conflicts must designate one (1) representative to attend Student Senate meetings. Student Life organizations/clubs must also designate an alternate to provide for attendance and participation due to the absence of the official Student Life organizations/clubs representative.
- C. Student Life organizations/clubs representatives cannot have more than two (2) unexcused or three (3) excused absences per semester from Student Senate meetings. Failure to be represented will result in loss of Student Life organizations/clubs recognition, membership and budget.
- D. To be recognized a Student Life organizations/clubs and obtain a budget said organizations/clubs and obtain a budget said organizations/clubs must complete the necessary paperwork. (By-laws Section VII)

Article XIII – Operations

- A. Quorum
 - 1. A quorum consisting of at least three (3) members is required for Executive Board meetings.
 - 2. A majority of the total of Student Senate shall constitute a quorum for Student Senate meetings.
- B. Meetings
 - 1. The regular meeting schedule of the Student Senate shall be determined by the second meeting of each semester and will be distributed in writing to all members.
 - 2. General meetings shall be held on dates fixed by the Student Senate and are open to all students, faculty, administration, and staff. The first full Student meeting will be held during the second week of fall semester. Meeting times shall also be published in the E-News.
 - 3. The Executive Board for special circumstances may call emergency meetings.
 - 4. Any person who has a matter they wish the Student Senate to address may gain permission to present their issue before the Student Senate with approval from the Executive Board. The matter in question must be presented in

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writing two (2) working days before the next Student Senate Executive Board meeting.

5. The conduct of business of the Student Senate shall comply with Robert's Rules of Order Revised.
6. The organizations/clubs shall comply with sound practices of financial management. All funds shall be maintained in accounts maintained by the college business office.
7. Should this organizations/clubs disband, the Executive Board shall disburse the assets to the Student Life contingency account. Should no officers be available, the Director of Student Life of North Community College shall be authorized to make the disbursal.
8. Any Student Senate member unable to be in attendance and who is excused from attending a Student Senate meeting may proxy their vote after submitting a written notification prior to the meeting in which a proxy is given.
9. Student Senate members may proxy their vote once per semester. The Senate Secretary shall keep a record of all proxies.
10. No Student Senate member may hold more than one (1) proxy during a meeting.
11. The Student Senate may override a presidential veto with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Student Senate.

Article XIII – Ratification and Amendments

- A. The Student Senate of North Hennepin Community College shall submit this Constitution to the student body for ratification. This Constitution shall become effective upon a majority vote of the initial membership and chartering of the organizations/clubs by the college Student Senate.
- B. Any North Hennepin Community College student may submit an amendment for consideration by the Student Senate Executive Board.
- C. The Student Senate shall periodically review this constitution and by three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Student Senate make amendments.
- D. Any North Hennepin Community College proposed amendment must be posted in each campus building at least two (2) weeks prior to the Student Senate meeting in which the amendment will be voted upon.
- E. Any North Hennepin Community College student who wishes to have a proposed amendment voted upon by the student body may submit written requests to the Student Senate Advisor. Upon receipt of twenty-five (25) requests, the Student Senate shall comply with the requests.
- F. Newly enacted amendments will take precedence over former legislation if conflict between such an amendment and former legislation should arise.

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NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BY-LAWS OF THE STUDENT SENATE

Presented: September 2, 1998

Ratified: September 16, 1998

Amended: November 5, 2002

Section I- Membership and Eligibility

- A. Prospective members, members, and organizational/club representatives must fill out a Student Senate Membership Application and give it to the Secretary of the Student Senate to be filed in the Student Senate office.

Section II- Executive Board Whole

- A. The Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Coordinator, and Legislative Coordinator.
- B. The Executive Board shall appoint Student Senate Senators from the various other members to help carry out the work of the Student Senate each academic year subject to approval of the Student Senate. (By-Laws Article VI)
- C. The Executive Board shall require its officers to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with their job descriptions. (By-Laws Section III)
- D. The Executive Board shall compose the agenda and complete any pressing business between Student Senate meetings. All decisions by the Executive Board are subject to subsequent review by the full Student Senate.
- E. The Executive Board officers shall serve on at least one of North Hennepin Community College committees and report back to the Student Senate on the issues discussed during the committee meetings.
- F. Present separate officer reports at all regularly schedule meetings.
- G. Maintain at least two (2) hours per week in the Student Senate office
- H. Decide as a whole which Executive Board member(s) shall attend each of the monthly MSCSA Governing Council meetings. (Look to By-Laws Section III, A-9)

Section III – Executive Board By Office

- A. President:
 - 1. The Chair (President) shall preside at all Student Senate meetings, represent the Student Senate to the college and others, and shall convene the Executive Board at least monthly during an academic term.
 - 2. May only vote to break a tie.
 - 3. Have a working knowledge of Robert’s Rules of Order Revised. Have a working knowledge of the MSCSA Constitution and By-Laws and North Hennepin Community College’s rules and regulations, and must abide by them.
 - 4. Call special meetings of the Student Senate as deemed necessary, giving a minimum of two (2) days notification.
 - 5. Have authority to make emergency decisions, to be submitted to the Student Senate at the next regularly scheduled Student Senate meeting for approval.
 - 6. Appoint special committees and chairpersons subject to approval by the Student Senate and appointees.

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7. Have the ability to veto any measure passed by the Student Senate by submitted a formal letter to the Student Senate within one (1) week of passage, stating the reason for the veto. (Constitution, Article XII, Section B-11)
8. Shall represent the Student Senate at new student orientations and other official functions involving North Hennepin Community College or appoint an alternative representative.
9. Shall attend all MSCSA Governing Council meetings and General Assembly meetings, or appoint such a representative.

B. Vice President

1. The Vice President shall assume the duties the responsibilities during the President's absence.
2. Have working order knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order Revised and of all committees of the Student Senate.
3. Maintain files on all current projects, committees, and policies.
4. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate, excluding meetings when presiding as President.

C. Secretary

1. The Secretary shall record the minutes of the Student Senate meetings and maintain a permanent record of said minutes on the Student Senate computer along with a hard copy on file in the Student Senate office.
2. Conduct a verbal roll call and maintain attendance at the Student Senate meetings.
3. Distribute copies of the current Student Senate minutes to members and organizations/clubs and post them on appropriate boards within two (2) days following the Student Senate meetings.
4. Maintain a current directory of the Student Senate members' addresses, telephone numbers, classes, and work schedules, as well as a record of attendance at Student Senate meetings of all active members.
5. Perform all secretarial duties according to Robert's Rules of Order Revised.
6. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

D. Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall keep all records of the Student Life budget and approved financial transactions.
2. Shall be responsible for requests to the college for all monies dispersed from the Student Life organizations/clubs accounts.
3. Shall maintain the status of the Student Life organizations/clubs accounts and shall report monthly an oral report as well as a written report.
4. The Student Senate President and the Student Senate Advisor must approve all Student Senate requests for monies.

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5. Shall balance books with the Student Senate Advisor and the Student Senate President monthly.
6. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

E. Communications Coordinator

1. The Communications Coordinator shall be responsible for posting the agenda on the Student Senate bulletin boards two (2) days prior to a Student Senate meeting.
2. Be responsible for submitting the agenda to the Student Bulletin.
3. Be responsible for distributing the agenda to Student Life organizations/clubs two (2) days prior to Student Senate meetings.
4. Act as Secretary in the absence of the Secretary during all Student Senate meetings.
5. Shall be responsible for open communications between all MSCSA colleges.
6. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

F. Legislative Coordinator

1. The Legislative Coordinator shall be responsible for all legislative affairs of the Student Senate that shall be conducted in the best interest of the North Hennepin Community College student body.
2. Facilitate a monthly legislative report to the Student Senate, as well as semester wrap-up.
3. Work with the MSCSA legislative team in the best interest of the North Hennepin Community College student body.
4. Obtain subscriptions to and maintain a file of all relevant legislative mailings (i.e. Senate Briefly and House Weekly).
5. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

Section IV – Senators

- A. Senators will assist the Student Senate by attending meetings, by serving on at least one (1) committee (standing or ad-hoc), and by helping with various other events and activities.
- B. Senators cannot have more than two (2) unexcused absences per semester from Student Senate meetings. Failure to be represented will result in loss of Student Senate recognition and membership.

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Section V – Elections

- A. Early in the spring semester, the Student Senate shall appoint an Elections Committee, which shall be overseen by the Student Senate Advisor.
- B. The Elections Committee shall publicize the elections, solicit candidates for the various offices, schedule the election date in accordance with the constitution (Article V), determine if criteria for each candidate has been met, appoint election judges, determine voting procedures, and be the final vote counter and arbiter of appeals.
- C. Each candidate for office shall submit an application for verification that meets the eligibility requirements. Each candidate must also submit a petition with a minimum of 25 signatures from currently enrolled students.
- D. The Election Committee members, along with the Student Senate Advisor are responsible for counting ballots and certifying the winners. Ballots cast in the election will be kept on file in the Student Senate office for a period of one (1) year.
- E. Appeals for a recount may be made to the Student Senate. A final appeal may be made to the Student Senate Advisor, who will recount the votes.
- F. In the event no one chooses to run for an office, the Election Committee will have one (1) week following election day to determine which one of the following methods is appropriate to fill the vacancy:
 - 1. Hold a special election before the end of the current semester, or
 - 2. Allow the vacant office to be filled by a majority vote of the Student Senate.
 - 3. The vacant Student Senate officer position is opens to all students meetings the eligibility criteria, excluding newly elected members of the Student Senate. This only applies to the official spring elections.
- G. All currently enrolled students are eligible to vote in the Student Senate elections.

Section VI – Ad Hoc Committees

- A. The (organization, Executive Board) may establish ad hoc committees at any time as deemed necessary.
- B. The Student Senate President shall appoint members to the ad hoc committees.
- C. The ad hoc committees are as follows (subject to change):
 - 1. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - 2. Child Care Advisory Committee
 - 3. Community Advisory Board (Student Senate President only)
 - 4. Diversity Council
 - 5. Enrollment Project Team

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6. Food Service Committee
 7. Graduation Committee
 8. Safety and Security Committee
 9. Student Awards Day Committee
 10. Exchange of Views Committee
 11. Construction Committees
 - a. Building Committee
 - b. New Science Building committee
 - c. New General Education building committee
 12. Transition Committee
 13. Coordinating Committee
- D. The Student Senate shall have available descriptions of the above named committees upon request.

Section VII – Organizational Representatives

- A. Must submit a planned budget to the Student Senate according to the College’s fiscal schedule. All organizations/clubs must be present at the meetings at which their budget is presented. Failure to attend this meeting results in no budget.
- B. Must submit a syllabus or planned calendar for their organization/club no later than the second scheduled full Student Senate meeting. The student organizations/club planning calendar must include a planned on Campus event.
- C. Student Life organization/club representatives cannot have more than two (2) unexcused absences per semester from Student Senate meetings. Failure to be represented will result in loss of Student Life organizations/clubs recognition, membership, and budget.

Section VIII – Meetings

- A. Meeting times must be arranged to provide for a quorum.
- B. A quorum consisting of at least three (3) members is required for Executive Board meetings.

Section IX – Ratification

- A. The Student Senate of the North Hennepin Community College shall submit these by-laws to the student body for ratification. These by-laws shall become effective upon a majority vote of the initial membership and chartering of the organizations/clubs of the college Student Senate.

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