

North Hennepin Community College STUDENT SENATE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT SENATE

Presented on September 17, 2015

Ratified: [October 22, 2015]

History

Original Constitution: Ratified September 16, 1998 | Amended April 13, 2001 | Amended October 16, 2012

Presented November 27, 2012 | Ratified April 8, 2013

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Presented September 17, 2015 | Ratified October 22, 2015 | Amended March 31, 2016

Amended September 22, 2016

Amended January 25, 2018

Amended October 10, 2019

Preamble

The Student Senate is the ultimate arbiter of its ratified Constitution and Bylaws.

Article I – Name

- A. The name of this organization shall be the Student Senate of NHCC and hereafter referred to as the Student Senate.
- B. The Student Senate is a student organization at North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) and is affiliated with the LeadMN.

Article II – Purpose

- A. The Student Senate shall be the governing body of students at NHCC. As such, it will represent the student body 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. Code of Conduct Issues
 4. Personnel
 5. Curriculum
 6. Facilities
 7. General College Matters
 8. College Committees
 9. Student Life Clubs and Organizations

- 10. Diversity Initiatives
- 11. Amount and allocation of the Student Life/Activity Fees
- B. Student Senate has an all-comers policy. Consequently, all students who are registered and taking at least one credit at NHCC are allowed to participate regardless of their cultural or religious beliefs. The Student Senate shall be committed to reflect the diversity of the student body in its membership and policies.

Article III – Executive Board

- A. The Student Senate shall include six Student Executive Board members hereafter called the Executive Board. It shall be comprised of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Coordinator, Legislative Coordinator, and Diversity & Equity Coordinator. The officers will fulfill their responsibilities as defined in the Bylaws.

Article IV – -Senators at Large

- A. The Senators at Large will consist of five students unaffiliated with any club or org. They are voting members of the Student senate. Senators at Large will fulfill their responsibilities as defined in the Bylaws.

Article V – Club Representatives

- A. Up to ten clubs and organizations may designate an Executive Board member to be a voting member of Senate.
- B. All club representatives must be Executive Board members of an NHCC club recognized by Student Senate.
- C. All club/org representatives will fulfill their responsibilities as defined in the Bylaws.

Article VI – Indigenous Students and Students of Color Representative

- A. The Indigenous Students and Students of Color (ISSC) Representative will be a representative from the Indigenous Students and Students of Color Advisory Board and will be designated through the Advisory Boards own selection process.
- B. The ISSC Rep(s) are a voting Member of the Student Senate.
- C. The ISSC Rep(s) will fulfill their responsibilities as defined in the bylaws.

Article VII – Ombuds

- A. Two individuals will be identified to serve as Ombuds.
- B. The Ombuds will be non-voting members of Student Senate.
- C. The Ombuds will fulfill their responsibilities as defined in the Bylaws.

Article VIII – Terms

- A. All terms are one year in length. Terms start on July 1 and end on June 30.
- B. No member of Student Senate may serve more than two terms in the same position.

Article IX – Elections

- A. College-wide elections shall be conducted annually during the month of April for Executive Board members and Senators at Large.

1. All currently enrolled students are eligible to vote in elections.
 2. Appeals for a recount may be made to the Student Senate. A final appeal may be made to the Student Senate Advisor, who shall determine if a recount is necessary.
- B. Only students who have completed one semester at NHCC and have a GPA can run for election.
1. Candidates shall be currently enrolled at NHCC with a minimum of six (6) credits.
 2. Candidates shall have a minimum 2.5 overall NHCC GPA to run for election. The GPA to run for election is higher than the GPA to maintain eligibility for office after election.
 3. No student who is currently on academic probation or suspension shall be eligible to run for Executive Board positions or Senator at Large.
 4. No student will be barred from running who meets the eligibility requirements above.
 5. Elections will be conducted by the Election Committee as defined in the Bylaws.
 6. A first semester student may not submit an application without completing the New Student Waiver Request. In order to be considered for the waiver, students must be enrolled in at least 6 credits in the current semester. Students will submit the New Student Waiver Form and then meet with the Director of Student Life (or designate Liaison) or the Student Senate Executive Board designated members to discuss their interest. The Executive Board would need full support with each eligible voting member to approve the application to move forward with the appointment or in the election process.
- C. Special Elections
1. Special Elections will be held as determined by the Elections Committee.
 2. Special Elections will follow the same procedures as Regular Elections with the following exceptions:
 - a. The date and timeline of the Special Elections will be determined by the Elections Committee.
- D. Vacancies
1. In the case of a vacancy in any of the offices, Student Senate will decide to fill or not fill the office.
 - a. If Student Senate decides to fill the vacancy, an announcement shall be made to the Student body.
 - i. A Special Election will be held if the vacancy was due to removal under Article IX.
 - ii. Under other circumstances, the vacancy may be filled with a majority vote of the present Student Senate at the following meeting.
 - b. If Student Senate decides not to fill the vacancy, the responsibilities of the vacant position will be redistributed among the remaining members of Student Senate.

Article X – Removal from Student Senate

- A. Student Senate members and Executive Board members will be removed from the Student Senate automatically by the Student Senate Advisor for failure to maintain academic eligibility (good academic standing of 2.0gpa, 67% Completion Rate, and enrolled in 6 or more credits).
- B. Student Senate members and Executive Board members may be removed from the Student Senate by the Student Senate Advisor in collaboration with the NHCC President for Code of Conduct violations.

- C. Student Senate members and Executive Board members may be removed from their positions by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Student Senate for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. Failure to perform duties and responsibilities, in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.
 - 2. Being placed on suspension due to Code of Conduct issues.
 - 3. Dishonesty or abuse of the position in accordance with the Code of Conduct of NHCC or the LeadMN.

Article XI – Committees

- A. Standing Committees
 - 1. The standing committees of the Student Senate are the Elections Committee and the Budget Committee.
- B. Ad Hoc Committees
 - 1. The Executive Board may establish ad hoc committees at any time deemed necessary.
 - 2. Student Senate will appoint members to all ad hoc committees as determined by the Bylaws.

Article XII – Student Senate Advisor and Student Senate Liaison

- A. The NHCC Student Senate shall choose their own advisor(s) in consultation with the NHCC President.
- B. The Student Senate Advisor(s) shall attend meetings and serve as a mentor to Student Senate. The Student Senate Advisor(s) will advise Student Senate on NHCC policy, Minnesota State Board Policy, State and Federal Statute, and Robert’s *Rules of Order*.
- C. The Student Senate Liaison will be appointed by NHCC to provide logistical support to Student Senate, clubs, and organizations. In practice, the Liaison will be a member of Student Life.

Article XIII – Operations

- A. Quorum: A simple majority (fifty percent plus one) 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 Executive Board and will be distributed in writing to all members. Meeting times will be published on the NHCC Calendar. Meetings shall be open to all students, faculty, administration, and staff.
 - 2. Any Executive Board may call emergency meetings for special circumstances.
 - 3. Any member of the NHCC community may bring matters to the attention of the Student Senate by making a request to be placed on the agenda. The request must be presented in writing to the Student Senate President at least three (3) working days before the next Student Senate meeting. All requests will be reviewed by the Executive Board.
 - 4. Agendas will be distributed to the NHCC community via email before 4:30 pm (1630 hrs) two (2) working days before the meeting.
 - 5. The conduct of business of the Student Senate shall comply with *Robert’s Rules of Order*.
 - 6. Where a potential conflict of interest exists, members of Student Senate will recuse

themselves from voting. The Executive Board will have the power to enforce this provision.

7. 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.
8. Student Senate members may proxy their vote once per semester. The Senate Secretary shall keep a record of all proxies.
9. No Student Senate member may hold more than one (1) proxy during a meeting.
10. The Student Senate may override a presidential veto with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Student Senate.

Article XIV – Ratification and Amendments

A. Ratification

1. The Student Senate of NHCC shall submit this constitution to the student body for review no less than two weeks before ratification vote. This constitution shall become effective upon a majority vote of the members of Student Senate.
2. The Student Senate shall annually review this constitution.

B. Amendments

1. Any NHCC student may submit an amendment in writing for the consideration of Student Senate.
2. Any proposed amendment must be emailed by the Legislative Coordinator to the NHCC community at least one (1) week prior to the Student Senate meeting in which the amendment will be voted upon.
4. Amendments will be passed by a three-fourths (3/4, 75%) majority vote of the Student Senate.
5. Newly enacted amendments will take precedence over this Constitution, if conflict between such an amendment and this Constitution should arise.

NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE BYLAWS OF THE STUDENT SENATE

Ratified: [October 22, 2015]

History

Presented on October 16, 2012

Original Constitution ratified September 16, 1998 and amended April 13, 2001

Section I – Composition and Responsibilities of Student Senate

- A. Student Senate consists of the Executive Board, Senators at Large, Student Club/Org Representatives, and Ombuds.
- B. All members of Student Senate shall maintain a minimum 2.5 cumulative NHCC GPA to remain in Student Senate. The GPA requirement to remain in Student Senate is lower than the GPA requirement to run for election.
- C. All members of Student Senate shall abide by the NHCC Student Code of Conduct.
- D. All members of Student Senate shall be familiar with *Robert's Rules of Order*.
- E. All members of Student Senate, except the Ombuds, shall serve on at least one of NHCC's committees.
 - 1. The Student Senate shall have available descriptions of all the campus committees upon request.
 - 2. Each member is responsible for choosing at least one committee according to interest and skills.
 - 3. Each member is responsible for presenting a written report to the Student Senate on the issues discussed during the committee meetings.
 - a. Reports must be at least one hundred words and no more than 250 words.
 - 4. All members must attend all regularly scheduled Student Senate meetings unless excused by the Executive Board.
- F. All members are allowed two absences per semester.
- G. All members of Student Senate will support the Ombuds.

Section II: Executive Board

- A. The Executive Board shall consist of the President, - Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Coordinator, Legislative Coordinator, and Diversity & Equity Coordinator.
- B. Responsibilities of the Executive Board:
 - 1. The Executive Board shall require all members of Student Senate to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with their job descriptions.
 - 2. The Executive Board shall discuss and set the agenda for Student Senate meetings.
 - 3. The Executive Board is authorized to conduct any emergency business between Student Senate meetings. All such decisions made by the Executive Board must be reviewed by the Student Senate at the next Student Senate meeting.
 - 4. The Executive Board must recognize all clubs and organizations. Recognition is granted when all Executive Board members sign the club's appropriate documentation.

5. The Executive Board members shall present separate written officer reports at all regularly scheduled meetings.
 - a. Reports must detail how the Executive Board member has fulfilled the duties of his/her office since the last meeting.
 - b. Reports must be at least one hundred words and no more than 250 words.
 6. The Executive Board will appoint a Senator to work closely with the Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Coordinator, Legislative Coordinator, and Diversity & Equity Coordinator.
 7. Each Executive Board member shall hold at least one (1) regularly scheduled office hour per week in the Student Senate office.
 8. The Executive Board Members shall understand and abide by the LeadMN Working Documents.
 9. The Executive Board shall decide as a whole which member(s) of Student Senate shall attend each of the monthly LeadMN Governing Council meetings.
 10. The Executive Board must approve student representatives to college and student committees.
- C. Should an Executive Board member be temporarily unable to fulfill his/her responsibilities, the other members of the Executive Board will assume their responsibilities.

Section III – Executive Board Members

- A. The President
 1. The President shall preside at Student Senate meetings and represent the Student Senate to the college and others.
 2. The President shall coordinate discussion among the Executive Board on a bi-weekly basis.
 3. May only vote to break a tie.
 4. Shall understand *Robert's Rules of Order*.
 5. Shall understand and abide by the North Hennepin Community College Student Code of Conduct.
 6. Shall call special meetings of the Student Senate as deemed necessary, giving a minimum of two (2) days notification.
 7. Shall appoint ad hoc committees and chairpersons. All appointments must be approved by the Student Senate
 8. Has the ability to veto any measure passed by the Student Senate by submitting a formal letter to the Student Senate within one (1) week of passage, stating the reason for the veto.
 9. Shall meet regularly with the Deans and the NHCC Executive Team.
 10. Shall work with the Public Relations Coordinator to liaise with all clubs and organizations not represented on Student Senate.
 11. Shall appoint all students members to all NHCC committees that have student representation.
- B. The Vice President
 1. Shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the President in the event of the

President's absence.

2. Shall maintain files on all Student Senate current projects, committees, and policies.
3. Shall be responsible for writing up the agenda as set by the Executive Board.
4. Shall be responsible for posting the agenda on the Student Senate bulletin boards and the website two (2) days prior to a Student Senate meeting.
5. Shall be responsible for submitting the agenda to the Student Bulletin.
6. Shall be responsible for distributing the agenda to Student Life clubs and organizations two (2) days prior to Student Senate meetings.
7. Shall be responsible for ensuring that a copy of all Student Senate meeting minutes are submitted to Student Life for permanent storage after they are posted to the web by the Secretary.
8. Shall meet regularly with the local leadership of the following bargaining units: AFSCME, MAPE, MMA, and MSCF.
9. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate, excluding meetings when presiding as President.

C. The Secretary

1. Shall record the minutes of the Student Senate meetings and maintain a permanent record of said minutes on the Student Senate computer and post minutes no later than 24 hours after Student Senate Meetings on the Student Senate web page.
 - a. Minutes shall include the following:
 - i. Roll call.
 - ii. All motions and resolutions.
 - iii. Any other official business conducted by Student Senate.
 - iv. General summaries of discussions and presentations.
2. Shall work with the Vice President to ensure that a copy of all minutes are submitted to Student Life as a permanent record.
3. Shall maintain a current directory of all the Student Senate members.
 - a. The directory must include the names, offices, telephone number and email contact information.
4. Shall conduct a verbal roll call and maintain attendance records of the Student Senate meetings.
5. Shall communicate absences in excess of two to the Student Senate President.
6. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

D. The Treasurer

1. Shall understand all Minnesota State Board Policies related to Student Life expenditures and budgeting.
2. Shall co-chair the Student Life Budget Committee.
3. Shall monitor all records of budgets and approved financial transactions relating to Student Life, Student Senate, and clubs and organizations.
4. Shall work with Student Life to ensure financial records are balanced.
5. Shall ensure that all funds are dispersed to the Student Life organization's/club's accounts according to the approved Student Life budget.
6. The treasurer shall be responsible for the disbursement of disbanded clubs or

organizations funds. Should any clubs or organizations disband or lose recognition from Student Senate the treasurer shall disburse those club/organization funds into the Student Senate New Initiative Fund account.

7. Shall work with Student Life in regards to the approval of all requests for funds.
8. Shall work with clubs and organizations about available monies and best practices to spend down available monies.
9. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

E. The Public Relations Coordinator

1. Shall act as Secretary in the absence of the Secretary during all Student Senate meetings.
2. Is responsible for ensuring that the Student Senate brochure is up to date and sufficient copies are available at all NHCC New Student Orientations.
3. Shall be responsible for open communications between all LeadMN colleges.
4. Shall act as a liaison between the Student Senate and the general student body.
5. Shall work with Student Life and all clubs and organizations to coordinate all campus-wide events planned as part of Student Life.
6. Shall assist clubs and organizations with publicity relating to their events.
7. Shall develop and implement strategies to improve coordination and communication about campus events.
8. Shall be responsible for maintaining all social media regarding the Student Senate and the Executive Board.
9. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

F. The Legislative Coordinator

1. Shall be responsible for all legislative affairs of the Student Senate and shall see that those affairs are conducted in the best interest of the NHCC student body.
2. Shall work with the LeadMN Regional Governing Council and Platform Reps in the best interest of the NHCC student body.
3. Shall serve on the NHCC Policy Committee.
4. Shall sign up for email and/or social media reports issued by state and federal legislators who represent NHCC.
5. Shall keep Student Senate apprised of local legislators' activities.
6. Shall be a voting member of the Student Senate.

G. The Diversity & Equity Coordinator

1. Shall work with clubs and organizations to provide diversity and equity trainings, to promote educational opportunities, and/or support their needs in this area as requested.
2. Shall be responsible for staying informed of the contents of and progress on NHCC's Diversity Plan.
3. Shall meet or communicate regularly with Diversity & Equity Center, Access Services, Veterans Affairs, Community Connections, and the Associate Director of Student Life.
4. Shall regularly consult with the ISSC Board and support the efforts of the Diversity student-led initiatives as able.
5. Shall serve on the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee as a student representative.

6. Shall conduct campus climate polling/surveys to find student's needs.
7. Shall work with the LeadMN Manager of Equity and Inclusion on the LeadMN initiatives related to diversity and equity issues.

Section IV – Senators at Large

- A. Each Senator at Large will work closely with one of the Executive Board members to assist with the performance of their job responsibilities.
- B. Senators at Large shall be voting members of the Student Senate.

Section V – Club Representatives

- A. Responsibilities
 1. Club Representatives will serve on hiring search committees, in compliance with the appropriate contracts of the relevant bargaining unit. Club Representatives are not required to serve on other NHCC committees.
 2. Shall determine among themselves a schedule to make sure that all AASC (Academic Affairs and Standards Committee) meetings are attended by at least two Club Representatives. All Club Representatives must attend a minimum of one AASC meeting per semester.
 - a. Written reports of all AASC meetings will be provided to Student Senate.
 3. Shall work with clubs, organizations, Student Life, and Student Senate to coordinate campus student activities.
- B. Selection
 1. At the first meeting of the academic year, executive board members of clubs or leaders of organizations will declare their desire to serve as Club Representatives. If more than ten people wish to serve, the Executive Board and Senators at Large will vote to select the ten Club Representatives.

Section VI – Indigenous Students and Students of Color Representative

- A. Responsibilities
 1. An ISSC Rep will serve on the ISSC Advisory Board and related committees.
 2. Shall work with Student Senate to provide a diversity and equity lens to Student Senate discussions and decision making. The representative will provide regular updates on the ISSC Advisory Board Work and bring forth issues of concern regarding equity or inclusion to Senate as appropriate.

Section VII – Ombuds

- A. Two Ombuds will be appointed by the current Student Senate to serve the following academic year. The Ombuds will not identify with the same gender.
- B. The Ombuds will advocate for students who have issues related to, but not limited to:
 1. Code of Conduct Issues.
 2. Student Grievance Procedures.
 3. Other issues of student advocacy.
- C. The Ombuds may bring issues of concern to the Student Senate.
- D. The Ombuds will serve as a check on Student Senate. Complaints against Student Senate shall be

brought to the Student Senate Advisor and the NHCC President.

- E. The Ombuds will not discriminate based on race, gender identity, religion, or any protected class.
- F. The Ombuds will maintain confidentiality.
- G. The Ombuds will work closely with the NHCC Code of Conduct Officer. The Code of Conduct Officer will provide training to the Ombuds on legal data privacy obligations.
- H. The Ombuds will keep Student Senate informed of current issues of concern while preserving legal privacy obligations.
- I. The Ombuds will be exempt from the requirement of all Student Senate members to serve on NHCC committees.
- J. The Ombuds can be removed from office only by the Student Senate Advisor in consultation with the NHCC President and only for the following reasons:
 - 1. Failure to maintain academic eligibility.
 - 2. Failure to perform duties and responsibilities, in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.
 - 3. Being placed on suspension due to Code of Conduct issues.
 - 4. Dishonesty or abuse of the position in accordance with the Code of Conduct of NHCC or the LeadMN.

Section VIII – Club and Organization Recognition

- A. Any group of current students may form a club and obtain a budget, as long as they have a minimum of six members who will meet at least once a month during the academic year.
- B. To form a club, interested students must complete the necessary documentation available from Student Life. Once the club has been approved by the Student Senate Executive Board, the club is eligible to apply for a budget and serve as a Club Representative to Student Senate.
- C. If the club is not approved by the Executive Board, the club may appeal the decision at a Student Senate meeting. The decision of the Executive Board may be overturned by a simple majority.
- D. Loss of Status
 - 1. Clubs and organizations that meet less than once a month during the academic year will lose their status.
 - 2. Clubs and organizations who have fewer than six active members will lose their status.
 - 3. Clubs and organizations who mismanage their funds will lose their status.
 - 4. Clubs and organizations that have lost their status will no longer have access to their budget. Unspent funds remaining in the budget will be returned to the Student Senate's New Initiative Fund account.
 - 5. Clubs and organizations that lose recognition, membership, and budget may reform the following academic semester by filling out the appropriate documentation and receiving the approval of the Executive Board.
 - 6. Student Senate may grant a one-month grace period to clubs that have lost their status if the club works with Senate to develop a plan to address the deficiency that resulted in lost status.

Section VIV – Committees

A. Elections Committee

1. By the end of February each year, the Executive Board members shall appoint an Elections Committee.
2. Committee Membership
 - a. The Committee will consist of at least five members, but no more than eleven members.
 - b. All members must be current NHCC students.
 - c. At least one member will be a current Executive Board member who is not running for election the following year.
 - i. In the case of Special Elections, the Executive Board member will be replaced by a representative from LeadMN or a former Executive Board member not currently in office or running for a position.
 - d. At least one member will be a current Club Representative.
 - e. The Executive Board will choose a current NHCC employee (administrator, faculty, or staff) to oversee the Elections Committee.
3. The Elections Committee shall publicize the elections, solicit candidates for the various offices, schedule the election date in accordance with this constitution, ensure that eligibility criteria for each candidate has been met, appoint election judges, determine voting procedures, and be the final vote counter.
4. 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 Life office for a period of one (1) academic year.
5. In the event that no student 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:
 - a. Hold a special election before the end of the current semester, or
 - b. Follow the procedure for Vacancies outlined in Article VII – Elections of the Constitution.

B. Budget Committee

1. During the Fall Semester, Student Senate will work with the President of the College to appoint members to the Budget Committee. In addition to selecting members, a list of potential alternates will also be identified.
2. All members will serve for a one-year term, with no term limits.
3. Membership will consist of nine total members from the following areas:
 - a. Student Senate Treasurer
 - b. Two representatives from Student Life
 - c. Three current NHCC students
 - d. One faculty member
 - e. One staff (who is not from Student Life)
 - f. One administrator/director
4. Alternates will be called upon in the case that a member is not able to fulfill his/her duties. Alternates will be identified from the following areas:

- a. Two students
- b. One staff
- c. One faculty

5. The Budget Committee will be co-chaired by the Student Senate Treasurer and the administrator/director (designee made by the college).
6. The committee will maintain open channels of communication with the College President, who is welcome to attend any and all committee meetings.
7. The committee will begin meeting at the start of Spring Semester. They will meet at least twice, but no more than eight times during the semester.
8. Members are responsible for attending all meetings. Each member may miss up to one meeting, but is responsible for sending a proxy.
9. Proxies may be handled by written instructions or by a substitute.
10. Committee Responsibilities
 - a. Review the Student Life budget for the current fiscal year
 - b. Provide recommendations about Student Life fees to Student Senate
 - c. Establish the Student Life budget for the next fiscal year
 - d. The Committee will strive to spend all monies in the budget with minimal carry-over.
 - i. In the event that Student Senate wishes sponsor a larger project (e.g. building renovations), sufficient carry-over is permitted. In this case, the purpose and amount of the carry-over must be identified as a budget line item until the funds are spent.
 - e. Have a working knowledge of Minnesota State and NHCC fiscal policies.

C. Ad Hoc

1. The Executive Board may establish ad hoc committees at any time deemed necessary.
2. The Executive Board shall appoint members to the ad hoc committees. These appointments must be approved by Student Senate by a simple majority.

Signatories: