

# STUDENT BODY CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Student Assembly of the College of Medicine of the University of South Alabama, with the Executive Committee as its governing body.

## ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Student Assembly is for the students in the College of Medicine to formalize their interaction with the faculty of the College of Medicine, the remainder of the University, and the community at large.

## ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

The Student Assembly shall consist of all students seeking an M.D. degree, membership being automatically conferred upon matriculation, and the status of membership shall be changed only by action of the Executive Committee. In addition, each student will be assessed an annual fee, the amount to be determined by the Executive Committee with approval of the student body.

## ARTICLE IV: FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Section 1. The affairs of the Student Assembly shall be conducted by all of its members, each member having equal rights and authority through his/her representatives.

Section 2. The governing body of the Student Assembly shall be the Executive Committee which shall be composed of:

- a. Representatives from each class (President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer), and
- b. A President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer elected from the senior class.

Section 3. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be:

- a. To direct the general policy of the Student Assembly and transact other business as pertains to the welfare of the Assembly,
- b. To supervise all elections and votes concerning the government of the Student Assembly,
- c. To establish *ad hoc* committees,
- d. To meet on a monthly basis during the academic year,
- e. To pass by-laws as necessary,
- f. To conduct a referendum of the Student Assembly to decide an issue within two weeks of:
  - 1) A two-thirds decision of the Executive Committee that such a referendum is necessary, or
  - 2) Receipt by the President of written petition by ten percent of the Student Assembly requesting such a referendum,
  - 3) In the event a referendum is requested while a portion of the student body is unavailable or school is not in session and if two-thirds of the Executive Committee feels that the referendum will affect the unavailable students, the two-week limit of Section 3(f) shall become effective upon the return of the unavailable portion of the student body,

- 4) In the event an issue under consideration for referendum only affects a certain portion (e.g. COM I and COM II) of the Student Assembly, a motion may be made to limit the referendum to that portion of the Student Assembly with a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee required to pass the motion.
- g. To be directed by the results of students referenda,
- h. To uphold the standards of the Student Assembly and to carry out the duties listed in Article IV, Section 3.

### **ARTICLE V: RULES OF ORDER**

- Section 1. Unless otherwise specified, *Roberts Rules of Order* will be used in the conduction of Student Assembly business.
- Section 2. A quorum of all official meetings of classes or committees of the Student Assembly shall be defined as 50% of the membership.
- Section 3. In all votes, a quorum must be present. The number of votes required for passage shall be 50% of the votes cast plus one vote, unless otherwise specified herein. This number of votes shall be considered a majority.
- Section 4. In any vote to change the Student Assembly Constitution or spend class or assembly monies, the margin of approval shall be two-thirds of the votes cast.

### **ARTICLE VI: CLASS REPRESENTATIVES**

- Section 1. Three (3) members from each class shall be elected as Class Representatives: President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer. The election shall be within one month after the beginning of the year for the freshman class. Officers of the sophomore, junior and senior classes will be elected during the last month of the preceding academic year.
- Section 2. The procedure for election of Student Representatives shall be as follows:
  - a. Elections for the Freshman Class will be conducted by the Student Assembly President or his designee. Elections for other classes shall be conducted by the Honor Council Members of each class.
  - b. Nominations for President will be taken from the rising third year class until there is a motion, second and majority vote that nominations be closed. The number of candidates shall only be limited by a majority of the class quorum. The person receiving the majority of the votes will be elected President. If no candidate receives the majority, then there will be a run-off between the top two nominees. The nominee who receives the most votes in the run-off will be elected President.

The above procedure will be repeated for the elections of both the Vice President and the Secretary/Treasurer.

- c. Elections will be by secret ballot, unless two-thirds of the class present prefers use of a hand count.
- Section 3. To insure adequate representation, the Freshman Class will take a vote of confidence in January utilizing the following procedure:

- a. A secret ballot will be cast by each class member with the words “confidence” or “no confidence” listed next to the name of each of the three representatives.
- b. If one-third or more of the class members do not have confidence in a class representative, a new election will be conducted in the manner described in ARTICLE VI, Section 2. The current representative may be re-nominated and re-elected.
- c. A vote of confidence may be called by any COM class at any time by securing signatures of one-third of the class and presenting them to a class Honor Council member who will then schedule the vote.
- d. A confidence vote shall be conducted by the class Honor Council members.

Section 4. In the event a Class Representative resigns or is otherwise unable to fulfill his/her duties, a replacement shall be elected at the next scheduled vote of confidence or election, whichever is sooner. A new election should be held, as previously described in ARTICLE VI, Section 2.

Section 5. Duties of Class Representatives shall be:

- a. To represent their class in the Executive Committee,
- b. To act as liaison between their class and the faculty and administration of the University,
- c. To keep their respective classes informed of decisions of the Executive Committee,
- d. To transact such business that concerns the welfare of their class.
- e. The duties of the class President shall be:
  - 1) conduction of class meetings,
  - 2) to act as class spokesperson or delegate this role,
  - 3) to consult with the other class representatives prior to decision making,
  - 4) make decisions affecting the class when the other class representatives are unavailable for input,
  - 5) explain the workings of Student Assembly Government.
- f. The duties of the Vice President will be:
  - 1) to act in the absence of the President,
  - 2) coordinate special class projects.
- g. The duties of the class Secretary/Treasurer shall be:
  - 1) to coordinate all fund-raising activities,
  - 2) control of class funds,
  - 3) act as class correspondent.

#### **ARTICLE VII: STUDENT ASSEMBLY OFFICERS**

Section 1. The officers of the Student Assembly Executive Committee shall be elected from the sophomore class during the latter part of the sophomore year.

Section 2. The procedure for election of President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer shall be as follows:

- a. The election shall be conducted by one or more of the current Student Assembly officers.
- b. Nominations for President will be taken from the rising third year class until there is a motion, second, and majority vote that nominations be closed. The President of Student Assembly is required to have either previously served on

Student Assembly or to have attended three (3) Student Assembly meetings. The number of candidates shall only be limited by a majority of the class quorum. The person receiving the most votes will be elected President. If no candidate receives the majority, there will be a run-off between the top two nominees. The nominee who receives the most votes in the run-off will be elected President.

The above procedure will be repeated for the elections of both the Vice President and the Secretary/Treasurer.

- c. Elections will be by secret ballot, unless two-thirds of the class present prefers use of a hand count.
- d. These officers will assume office on graduation day of the year in which they are elected and will remain in office for one (1) year.

Section 3. The duties of the President of the Student Assembly shall be:

- a. To be the voice and official representative of the Student Assembly,
- b. To preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and of the Student Assembly,
- c. To have and exercise the authority to:
  - 1) call special meetings of the Executive Committee,
  - 2) appoint committees subject to the approval of the Executive Committee
  - 3) perform such other duties delegated to him/her by the Executive Committee,
  - 4) vote to break a tie.
- d. Explain Student Assembly Constitution and “workings” for the Freshman Class and new Executive Committee members,
- e. Assure elections and votes of confidence are held as scheduled.

Section 4. The duties of the Vice President shall be:

- a. Act as President in the event the President is incapacitated or unable to perform his/her duties,
- b. Perform other duties as delegated to him/her by the President.

Section 5. The duties of the Secretary/Treasurer shall be:

- a. Maintain the checking and saving accounts of the Student Assembly in auditable form,
- b. Assure assets are properly invested,
- c. Give financial reports as necessary to Executive Committee meetings,
- d. Serve as correspondent for the Student Assembly,
- e. Receive the Student Assembly Record of Action and disperse a copy of the resolutions and the appendix of the Student Assembly Record of Action to all class Secretary/Treasurers at the first Executive Committee meeting each year,
- f. Update the Student Assembly Record of Action throughout the year and give the updated version to the Secretary/Treasurer for the following year and to place a copy in the Biomedical Library.

## **ARTICLE VIII: GUIDELINES FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

- Section 1. People invited to the Executive Committee meeting will include:
- a. Student Assembly officers
  - b. All class representatives
  - c. A representative of the Yearbook staff
  - d. A representative of the Skit Night committee
  - e. OSR representatives
  - f. A representative Ph.D. student
  - g. Any other student, faculty member, administrator, or staff person requested to attend by the President
  - h. The Executive Committee meeting will be open for any member of the Student Assembly to attend.
  - i. Immediate Past President
- Section 2. The voting members of the above committee will be the class representatives and the Immediate Past President. The presiding officer of the Student Assembly may cast a vote to make or break a tie. The presiding officer will be the Student Assembly President or in his absence, the Vice President or Secretary/Treasurer (in that order).
- Section 3. A quorum of two-thirds of the voting members of the committee and one Student Assembly officer must be present to conduct official business.
- Section 4. At the end of each Executive Committee meeting, representatives from each class will be given the opportunity to discuss problems or concerns with the officers of the Student Assembly. In the event that the class representatives do not want their problems discussed in the presence of the faculty or members of the administration, they should discuss these problems with Student Assembly officers and/or other class representatives prior to the Executive Committee meeting.
- Section 5. Suggestions for resolution of problems will be made by any persons present in the Executive Committee meeting with limits on discussion dictated by the presiding officer according to *Roberts Rules of Order* as appropriate.
- Section 6. Each class representative or Assembly officer shall have the right to introduce a resolution for approval by a quorum of the voting members of the Executive Committee. A written copy of the proposed resolution must be made available to the presiding officer of the Student Assembly prior to the meeting during which the resolution would be considered. The resolution should be a declarative statement of one or two sentences rather than an exposition. This means that explanations of the reasons why a resolution is needed should not be present in the actual resolution. While the resolution may be of any content, it should be able to stand on its own and make sense without further explanation. It should be nonspecific enough so that it is appropriate even after the stimulus that caused its drafting has disappeared. The Policy Compendium of the AMA is a good source for looking at examples of resolutions.
- Section 7. The margin of approval of resolutions will be two-thirds of the votes cast.
- Section 8. Upon passage, a letter explaining the resolution will be drafted and signed by the President of the Student Assembly and dispersed to its proper destination. Copies of the

resolution will be sent to the Associate Dean, posted in designated student areas and kept on file in the Associate Dean's office.

- Section 9. Each passed resolution will be added to a Student Assembly Record of Action, which will contain the official policies of the Medical Student Assembly and the date of their acceptance. The student Assembly Record of Action will also contain an Appendix A that will contain the letter written by the President of the Student Assembly (as per Section 8) explaining the resolution and will contain all official correspondence regarding the resolution and any research or ancillary materials the author of the resolution would like to add that might help explain the background of and purpose for the resolution.
- Section 10. At the first Executive Committee meeting of each year, the Secretary/Treasurer of the Student Assembly shall disperse a copy of the resolutions and Appendix A of the Student Assembly Record of Action to each class Secretary/Treasurer and an updated copy of the Record of Action in the Biomedical Library.
- Section 11. Each class representative or Assembly officer shall have the right to submit an alteration or deletion of any current resolution in the Student Assembly Record of Action for approval by a quorum of the voting members of the Executive Committee. A written copy of the proposed alteration or deletion of a resolution must be made available to the presiding officer of the Student Assembly prior to the meeting during which the proposed change would be considered. When a resolution has been altered or deleted, the original resolution will be kept in Appendix B of the Student Assembly Record of Action.
- Section 12. The margin of approval of alteration or deletions of resolutions from the Student Assembly Record of Action will be two-thirds of the votes cast.
- Section 13. The Secretary/Treasurer of the Student Assembly is responsible for keeping the Student Assembly Record of Action updated throughout the year and for giving the updated version to the Secretary/Treasurer-elect of the Student Assembly for the following year.

#### **ARTICLE IX: FINANCES**

- Section 1. All monies received by the Student Assembly will be placed in the Student Assembly Account, to be maintained by the Secretary/Treasurer (or a duly appointed replacement approved by the Executive Committee if he/she is unable to perform his/her duties), for the purpose of the betterment and enjoyment of the Student Assembly as a whole.
- Section 2. All checks from the Student Assembly Account greater than \$300.00 shall be co-signed by the President or Vice President (or their duly appointed replacements if they are unable to perform their duties). The two (2) replacements named above shall be selected from the Executive Committee and approved by a majority of the Executive Committee.
- Section 3. The Student Assembly Account may be audited by two members of the Executive Committee separate from the members of Section 2 above, selected by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The audit may be conducted at intervals not to exceed semi-annually, the results of which will be announced at the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting.

**ARTICLE X: AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION**

Section 1. Any member of the Executive Committee may propose an amendment and if a majority of the Executive Committee so decides, the amendment shall be submitted to the Student Assembly for ratification.

Section 2. Ratification of an amendment shall be effected upon approval of two-thirds of the student body.

**ARTICLE XI: HONOR SYSTEM**

Medical students at the University of South Alabama are expected to conduct themselves with high standards of professionalism and honesty. The honor system is a code demanding honest practices in examinations and in other areas, such as the learning and practice of clinical medicine.

Approved by Student Referendum, May 1978  
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