

# **Oakland University Student Congress Constitution**

Approved by the Board of Trustees on June 16, 1994\*

We, the students of Oakland University, in order to provide a central student government responsive to the needs of the students bring forth to the Board of Trustees of Oakland University, the following Oakland University Student Congress Constitution. The Student Congress, in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in this Constitution and the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Oakland University, shall maintain the integrity and individuality of students, advocate policies which shall best serve students, protect and defend the rights of students, and provide an official vote for all Oakland University students.

## **Article I. Membership and Election**

### **Section A. Legislative branch.**

- 1. The Legislative branch of University Student Congress shall initially be composed of thirty voting members as follows:
  - a. Twenty-five members elected at-large by the student body;
  - b. One faculty member selected by the University Senate;
  - c. One administrative professional selected by the AP Assembly;
  - d. The President of Residence Hall Council or his/her designee shall serve as an ex-officio member;
  - e. The President of Commuter Council or his/her designee shall serve as an ex-officio member.
  - f. A Multicultural representative, chosen by the Multicultural Advisory Board, shall serve as an ex-officio member.
- 2. Additional student members shall be non-voting, while retaining all other rights and responsibilities as Congress members, and shall be elected as stated in the Bylaws.
- 3. The University President or his/her designee shall serve as an ex-officio and non-voting member of University Student Congress.

### **Section B. Executive Branch**

- 1. The Executive branch of University Student Congress shall consist of:
  - a. One President and one Vice President elected as a ticket by a plurality vote of the students voting in the election;
  - b. A Cabinet, appointed by the President, consisting of:
    - ♣ (1) An Administrative Assistant;
    - ♣ (2) Student Activities Funding Board Chairperson;
    - ♣ (3) A Student Program Board Chairperson;
    - ♣ (4) A Financial Assistant;
    - ♣ (5) A Director of Student Services;
    - ♣ (6) One other position that the President shall so designate.
- 2. Each individual appointed to a Cabinet position must be approved by the Legislative branch.
- 3. Cabinet Members are to be appointed pursuant to the procedure outline in the University Student Congress Bylaws. A Cabinet Member must be an enrolled student with good academic standing. The duties of the Cabinet Members are defined in the University Student Congress bylaws and each Cabinet Member is required to comply with the duties of his or her position.

### **Section C. Elections**

- 1. Any enrolled student with good academic standing shall be eligible to seek and maintain membership or position in the Legislative or Executive branch. To maintain

such membership or position a student need not be enrolled during the Spring or Summer semesters.

- 2. Elections for the student-elected positions within the Legislative and Executive branches of University Student Congress shall be held every Winter semester.
- 3. Each student enrolled at the time of any election shall have the right to cast one vote for a Presidential slate and fifteen votes for Congress members.

## **Article II. Term of Office.**

The term of office for University Student Congress shall begin on the first day of Spring term and run through the last day of Winter term.

## **Article III. Legislative branch.**

The rights and responsibilities of the Legislative branch shall be to...

- 1. Initiate proposals or make recommendations to the University President or any other appropriate agency of the University on all matters relevant to the general welfare of the University;
- 2. Recommend University policy in areas of concern to students as well as disseminate and communicate information regarding University policies to students;
- 3. In consultation with appropriate University offices, determine policies and procedures regarding student events and activities sponsored through the Student Activities Fee;
- 4. Share with the University Senate the responsibility for consideration of University policy in areas which involve both academic and student life concerns;
- 5. Have the right to take formal notice of any action taken by the University or any representative thereof, and by resolution, to comment on any such action;
- 6. Appoint, select or otherwise elect student members to every University governance body and standing ad-hoc committee which provides for student representation as needed;
- 7. Have the right to override a Congress Presidential veto by a two-thirds affirmative vote of those members present and voting. This vote must take place at the next Congress meeting following the exercise of that veto;
- 8. Establish and maintain policies and procedures for the effective operation of all aspects of the University Student Congress;
- 9. Work with the Division of Student Affairs in developing procedures regarding student clubs and organizations;
- 10. Have the authority to investigate and review the non-conduct related actions and policies of student clubs and organizations;
- 11. Advise the University President on all issues, matters and/or concerns he/she wishes to bring before the University Student Congress;
- 12. Carry out the regulations and procedures of the University Student Congress in accordance with the Constitution, the By-Laws, and Oath of Office.

## **Article IV. Executive branch.**

### **Section A. The President.**

The rights and responsibilities of the Student Body President shall be to...

- 1. Serve as the chief spokesperson of the student body of Oakland University;
- 2. Carry out the policies and measures of the University Student Congress in accordance with the Constitution, the By-Laws and Oath of Office;
- 3. Make recommendations to the Legislative branch of the University Student Congress;
- 4. Vote at meetings of the University Student Congress to break a tie vote;
- 5. Have the right to veto any Congressional legislation, subject to the following provisions: legislation approved by Congress shall become official when signed by the President. The President may veto any piece of legislation and must present his or her veto in writing to the Steering Chair within one week of the legislation's adoption.

- 6. Appoint members to positions within the Cabinet subject to approval of the legislative branch of University Student Congress;
- 7. Have non-voting status on all Congressional committees;
- 8. Oversee and report on the fiscal solvency of the University Student Congress;
- 9. Call and coordinate an all-campus meeting to be held early during the fall semester, at which time he/she shall report on all actions and/or goals of the University Student Congress and his/her comments and proposals;
- 10. Represent the University Student Congress and the student body at all appropriate forums and functions, including all Board of Trustee meetings;

### **Section B. The Vice President**

The rights and responsibilities of the Student Body Vice-President shall be to...

- 1. Assist the President in carrying out policies and measures of the University Student Congress;
- 2. Assume the office of University Student Body President in the event that the position of President becomes vacant;
- 3. Serve as chairperson of all University Student Congress meetings;
- 4. Represent University Student Congress at the state and national levels in conjunction with the President;
- 5. Create a Legislative Affairs Committee as he or she deems necessary;
- 6. Represent the President in his or her absence.

## **Article V. Committees.**

### **Section A. Standing Committees.**

The University Student Congress shall have the following Standing Committees:

- 1. A Student Allocation Funding Board;
- 2. A Student Program Board;
- 3. An Elections Commission;
- 4. A Steering Committee;
- 5. A Disciplinary Committee;
- 6. A Research and Review Committee.

### **Section B. Requirements**

- 1. Congressional Standing Committees 1 through 3 shall be chaired by a member of the Executive Cabinet and need not be exclusively composed of members of the Legislative branch.
- 2. The Legislative branch shall elect a Steering Chairperson. The chairperson must be a member of the Legislative branch of University Student Congress and shall be a non-voting member of the Steering committee. The committee shall be exclusively composed of five (5) Legislative branch members.
- 3. The Legislative branch of University Student Congress shall elect chairpersons for Congressional standing committees 5 and 6. Each shall be exclusively composed of five (5) Legislative branch members.
- 4. The duties of the committee members are defined in the Bylaws of the University Student Congress and each committee member is required to comply with the duties of his or her position.

## **Article VI. Meetings.**

### **Section A. Quorum.**

- 1. The quorum requirement for meetings of Congress shall be satisfied when a simple majority of seated members of the Legislative branch are present;
- 2. Congress members shall not be required to remain for a meeting if after thirty minutes quorum has not been established. If quorum is not established, those members not present shall be charged with an absence.

### **Section B. Conduct of Congress meetings.**

- 1. Congress meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent official edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except as this Constitution may otherwise provide;

- 2. The Student Body Vice-President shall preside over all meetings of Student Congress, and be charged with interpreting and enforcing orderly parliamentary procedure. In the absence of the Vice- President, the Steering Chair shall preside over the meeting and have all the duties and powers of a chairperson, while retaining all duties and powers of a Congress member.
- 3. Unless otherwise stipulated by this Constitution, all votes of the Legislative branch shall require majority approval of those members present and voting.

**Section C. Submission of Congressional legislation.**

- 1. Bills, amendments, charges, and resolutions may be introduced for Congressional action by a Congress member, and should be submitted to the Steering Chair in writing prior to the approval of the agenda.
- 2. All items concerning Congressional finances or the By-Laws shall have two readings, at least seven days apart, before being put up for a final vote of the University Student Congress.

**Section D. Special meetings.**

- 1. A special meeting of the University Student Congress may be called by the Steering Committee for one stated purpose, and must be given at least two (2) days public notice.
- 2. The newly-elected Congress shall hold at least two (2) meetings prior to the end of the Winter term.

**Article VII. Termination of Office.**

**Section A. Removal due to absence.**

Any congress member who receives three absences from meetings of University Student Congress during each Fall and Winter term shall be removed.

**Section B. Impeachment.**

Any elected member of University Student Congress may be impeached based on charges of violation of this Constitution or its By-Laws. The charges must be presented to the Disciplinary Committee. To remove a member of University Student Congress shall require a two-thirds vote of the total voting membership. The person being charged shall not receive a vote on his or her removal decision.

**Section C. Resignations.**

Any resignation written by a member of University Student Congress shall take effect immediately, unless otherwise stipulated by the resignation letter.

**Section D. Dismissal of appointed positions.**

Any student appointed to a paid position by a member of cabinet may be removed for the reasons set forth in the bylaws of the University Student Congress. The procedure for removing students in appointed positions is set forth in the University Student Congress Bylaws.

**Article VIII. Vacancies.**

When a Student Congress member position becomes vacant due to resignation or removal, the Research and Review committee shall submit appointees to Student Congress to fill those vacancies. Congress shall approve the appointments.

**Article IX. Referenda.**

**Section A.**

University Student Congress shall hold a campus-wide referendum following authorization by the Legislative branch. A majority vote of congress must approve the creation of the referendum question.

**Section B.**

The student body may initiate a referendum, to be carried out by congress, by filing a petition to congress totaling at least one-third of the number of valid ballots cast in the previous general election.

**Section C.**

Questions submitted to referendum shall be adopted by University Student Congress if approved by a majority of those voting on the question.

**Article X. Amendment Procedure.**

### **Section A**

Amendments to this Constitution may be enacted by:

- 1. The University Student Congress by:
  - a. Conducting a first and second reading of the proposed amendment at publicly announced meetings of the University Student Congress at least seven days apart, and;
  - b. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership of the University Student Congress, and;
  - c. A majority vote of those students voting in a student referendum, and;
  - d. Obtaining ratification by the Board of Trustees.
- 2. The Student Body by:
  - a. The collection of petition signatures totaling two-thirds of the total number of votes cast in the previous presidential election, and;
  - b. A majority vote of those students voting in a student referendum, and;
  - c. Obtaining ratification by the Board of Trustees.

### **Section B.**

Amendments to this Constitution's By-Laws may be enacted by:

- 1. A first and second reading of the proposed By-Laws or amendment at publicly announced meetings of the University Student Congress at least seven days apart, and;
- 2. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership of the University Student Congress.

### **Section C.**

Any amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval or amendment. Any amendment to the Bylaws must be written within the scope of authority set forth in this Constitution.

### **Section D.**

Amendments which change or remove any position within Congress will not take effect until such time as that position becomes vacant.

[Editor's note: This constitution was originally approved by the Board of Trustees with amendments through March 4, 1993. On June 16, 1994, this revised constitution was approved as it appears above.]

\*Changes to Article I, Section A.1. were made through a referendum vote during the close of the Winter semester of 1995 and subsequent approval by the Board of Trustees at their April 11, 1996 meeting.