

Constitution

Approved by the Student Life Committee April 15, 1997
Approved by the University Faculty on April 15, 1997
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Preamble

We, the students of Ouachita Baptist University, in order to provide means for responsible and effective participation in the organization of student affairs; to investigate student problems; to provide activities for students; to initiate actions; to provide the official voice through which student opinion may be expressed; to encourage the responsible participation of the students in overall policy and decision making processes of the university community; to enhance the quality and scope of education, do establish this constitution for the associated students of Ouachita Baptist University.

Article I. Associated Students

This organization shall be known as the Student Senate of Ouachita Baptist University. It shall consist of two branches of government, the Executive and the Legislative, and shall have such duties and functions as are herein stated.

Article II. Executive

Section One – All executive power shall be vested in the President of the Student Senate, the Vice-President for Internal Affairs, the Vice-President for External Affairs, the Treasurer, and the Secretary.

Section Two – Executive Qualifications

1. Any candidate for the executive offices of President and Vice President(s):
 - a. Must have attended Ouachita Baptist University for at least two (2) consecutive semesters preceding the date of nomination.
 - b. Must have served in an elected office on the Student Senate as a voting member at Ouachita for at least one (1) semester prior to his/her election.

- c. Must be a full-time student during the semester of his/her nomination or be a part-time student and be approved by the existing Student Senate.
 - d. Must be a full-time student during his/her term of office.
 - e. Must have at least fifty-nine (59) credit hours on record in the Registrar's office at the completion of the semester of his/her election, and must have at least a 2.25 cumulative grade point average.
2. Any candidate for the executive offices of Secretary and Treasurer:
 - a. Must have attended Ouachita Baptist University for at least two (2) consecutive semesters preceding the date of nomination.
 - b. Must be a full-time student during the semester of his/her nomination or be a part-time student and be approved by the existing Student Senate.
 - c. Must be a full-time student during his/her term of office.
 - d. Must have at least twenty-nine (29) credit hours on record in the Registrar's office at the completion of the semester of his/her election, and must have at least a 2.25 cumulative grade point average.

Section Three – The powers of the President of the Student Senate shall be as follows:

1. To be the official representative of the student body.
2. To preside over all meetings of the Student Senate. He/she shall vote only to break a tie.
3. To call special meetings of the student body, the Executive Cabinet, and the Student Senate. Notification must be given in writing twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the time of the meeting.
4. To be responsible for the execution of all legislation enacted by the Student Senate.
5. To veto, as he/she sees fit, any statute, rule, or regulation adopted by the Student Senate, provided such veto shall be exercised in writing to the Executive Cabinet within seven (7) days after Student Senate's action.
6. To serve as ex-officio member of all the Student Senate committees.
7. To attend meetings of the Ouachita Baptist University Board of Trustees, and to give periodic reports to the Student Senate pertaining therein.
8. The option to appoint and/or remove, with a majority approval of the Student Senate, a Parliamentarian, and a Sergeant-at-arms.

Section Four – The powers and duties of the Vice-President of Internal Affairs shall be as follows:

1. To preside over Student Senate meetings in the absence of the President.
2. To attend all faculty meetings as the official representative of the Student Senate, and to make reports regarding the nature of those meetings.
3. To serve as chairman of the Internal Affairs Committee.

Section Five – The powers and duties of the Vice-President of External Affairs shall be as follows:

1. To preside over Student Senate meetings in the absence of both the President and the Vice-President of Internal Affairs.
2. To serve as chairman of the External Affairs Committee.

Section Six – The powers and duties of the Treasurer shall be as follows:

1. To supervise the financial affairs of the Student Senate.
2. To be a member of the Finance Committee of the Student Senate.
3. To be non-voting member of any financial ad-hoc committees.
4. To maintain detailed records of appropriations and expenditures of the Student Senate.
5. To prepare along with the Finance sub-committee a tentative budget for presentation and approval by the third Student Senate meeting of the Fall semester. This budget shall include (A) areas of expected expenditures of the Student Senate, (B) amount of surplus funds, and, (C) sources and expected amounts of income.
6. To make a comprehensive financial report in written form to the Student Senate at the last regularly scheduled meeting of each semester.
7. To sign all Senate appropriations and requisitions on the General Student Form and make a weekly report of any and all transactions.

Section Seven – The powers and duties of the Secretary shall be as follows:

1. To keep minutes of the meetings of the Student Senate and Executive Cabinet, and to have those minutes in written form at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
2. To supply Student Senate members with the agenda at the discretion of the President.
3. To aid the President in notifying the student body, the Executive Cabinet, or the Student Senate of any specially called session.
4. To handle all correspondence and paperwork for the Student Senate or to delegate such responsibility to assistants appointed or hired by the Student Senate.
5. To verify the legitimacy of signatures on an amendment petition.

Section Eight – The powers and duties of the Executive Cabinet shall be as follows:

Clause A: There shall be an Executive Cabinet composed of the following:

1. President of the Student Senate (shall be non-voting member who shall preside over the meetings.)
2. Vice-President for Internal Affairs
3. Vice-President for External Affairs
4. Treasurer
5. Secretary
6. Class Presidents

Clause B: Responsibilities

1. To suggest and draft legislation for proposal to the Student Senate.
2. To aid the President of the Student Senate in all matters of legislation and administration.

3. To create, update, and distribute a job description for each Student Senate position.
4. To appoint a committee at least every three (3) years to review and, if necessary, recommend changes to this constitution.

Clause C: Meetings

The Executive Cabinet shall meet twice a month, at a time to be set by the Vice-President for Internal Affairs. Special meetings may be called by either the President or the Vice-President for Internal Affairs. A quorum shall consist of five (5) voting Executive Cabinet members. All meetings shall be open to any person unless closed by request of five (5) voting members.

Section Nine – Succession

1. In the event that the office of President of the Student Senate is vacated, it shall be filled immediately by the Vice-President for Internal Affairs.
2. All other Student Senate vacancies shall be filled by nominations from the floor, followed by majority approval of the Student Senate.
3. For any position filled by Student Senate appointment, the appointee shall serve until the next general election. At that time, that Student Senate position will be vacated and up for election.

Article III. Legislature

Section One – Student Senate Membership and Qualifications

Clause A: Membership – The Student Senate shall be composed of the following:

1. Student Senate President
2. Vice-President for Internal Affairs
3. Vice-President for External Affairs
4. Treasurer
5. Secretary
6. Four (4) senators elected at large to represent the student body
7. Four (4) senators elected from each class
8. Class Presidents
9. Class Officers
10. One (1) faculty member elected by the Student Senate to serve as sponsor of the Student Senate

Clause B: Qualification

1. Candidates for the Student Senate must have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point average at the time of their nomination. High school transcripts shall be used for determining grade point average of first semester freshmen.
2. Candidates must be full-time students during the semester of their election or be part-time students, approved by the existing Student Senate. They must be full-time students during their term of office.

3. Candidates who are elected to represent a particular class in the Student Senate must be members of that class at the time of their election.
4. Candidates may not be on disciplinary probation during the semester of their election or during their term of office.

Section Two – Disqualification

1. If during a Student Senate member's term of office, his/her grade point falls below the minimum requirement for his/her respective office he/she will automatically be removed.
2. University policy will be incurred whenever a student is in violation of a school rule or regulation.
3. If a Student Senate member is absent during a term for (2) meetings, the Secretary of the Student Senate will send a warning of removal to the member advising him/her of their absences.
4. If a Student Senate member is absent a third time during a term then removal is automatically enforced unless the Executive Cabinet deems the absence excused.

Section Three – Election and Term of Office

Clause A:

1. Each class shall elect four (4) representatives to the Student Senate. These persons shall be known as the class senators. They shall be elected by the student body at the second general election of the Spring semester, and their term of office shall be one (1) year. These representatives take office at the first Student Senate meeting following their election.
2. There shall be four (4) at-large representatives elected to represent the student body on the Student Senate. These persons shall be known as at-large representatives. They shall be elected by the student body at the second general election of the Spring semester, and their term of office shall be one (1) year. These representatives take office at the first Student Senate meeting following their election.

Clause B:

The Freshman class shall elect four (4) representatives at the Freshman elections which are held at the beginning of the Fall semester.

Clause C:

As the classification of the represented class changes, so does the title of those Student Senate members who represent that particular class.

Section Four – Meetings

1. The Student Senate shall meet weekly, unless the President deems otherwise.
2. Members are subject to call for special meetings when they are contacted at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of such a meeting.

3. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum for transacting business.
4. All Student Senate meetings shall be open to any person unless declared closed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present.
5. No other student organization in which Student Senate members are participants, may meet during the time set aside for Student Senate meetings.

Section Five – Absences

1. For an absence to be excused, a written excuse must be submitted to either the President or the Secretary by the next meeting. The excuse is subject to the approval of the Executive Cabinet.
2. In order to be counted present at any Student Senate meeting, a senator must remain present until all business has been conducted and adjournment has been called.

Section Six – The powers and duties of the Student Senate shall be as follows:

1. To consider all legislation.
2. To act on suggested appointments by the president of the Student Senate.
3. To pass a measure over a presidential veto by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote.
4. To allocate all funds with a majority vote of the Student Senate.
5. To establish committees of its membership.
6. To use *Robert's Rules of Order* as the sole authority in questions of procedure.
7. To review appeals by any student or group of students and take whatever action the Student Senate deems necessary.
8. To call by a majority vote a hearing to consider possible removal of a Student Senate member from office.
9. To remove any senator from office by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Student Senate membership. Such a vote shall not be taken until after a hearing in which the Student Senate sits as court, with the faculty sponsor presiding.
10. To act on proposed amendments, with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote being needed for approval. (Not necessary if a student initiated petition is filed.)
11. To over-rule or approve any decisions made by a committee of the Student Senate by a majority vote.
12. To appoint or hire assistants upon request of the Student Senate Secretary.

Article IV. Oath of Office

Section One – There shall be an Oath of Office which shall be administered to all Executive Officers and Student Senate members.

Section Two – The President-elect of the Student Senate shall be administered the Oath of Office by the President of the University at the first Student Senate meeting following the second general election of the Spring semester. The President-elect shall administer the Oath of Office to all newly elected or appointed Student Senate members.

Section Three – The Oath of Office shall be:

"I do solemnly swear/ that I will support the Constitution/ of the Associated Students of Ouachita Baptist University/ and I will faithfully discharge/ the duties of my office."

Article V. Funds

There shall be a General Student Fund, consisting of all money allocated thereto by the Board of Trustees of Ouachita Baptist University, and all other money collected by or donated to the Associated Students. This fund may be expanded under authorization of an appropriation by the Student Senate in compliance with the University audit regulations governing the General Student Fund.

Article VI. Elections

Section One – The Student Senate shall determine all rules and regulations governing elections which are provided for in this constitution. The Election Sub-Committee shall supervise all Student Senate elections.

Section Two – Filing Procedures

There shall be a minimum filing period of five (5) school days in which to sign for a position on the ballot.

Section Three – General Elections

There shall be two (2) general elections each school year.

1. The first general election shall be held during the first full week of April for the Student Senate Executive Cabinet positions of President of Student Senate, Vice-President for Internal Affairs, Vice-President for External Affairs, Secretary, and Treasurer for the following school year.
2. The second general election shall be held the third full week of April for all other Student Senate Positions.

Section Four – Freshman Class Elections

Freshman class elections shall be held within five (5) weeks (the fourth full week) of the beginning of the Fall semester. At that time, freshmen shall elect a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and four (4) senators.

Section Five – Rules Governing Ballots

1. A candidate position on the ballot shall be determined by the order in which his/her name was submitted for nomination, i.e., the first person nominated shall be first on the ballot, the second person nominated shall be the second on the ballot, etc.
2. In the election of class officers, and senators from each of the classes, only students in the class from which the candidate is to be elected may vote for the candidate.

Article VII. Class Officers

Section One – The power to determine in what classification a student is placed is vested solely in the University Registrar. His/her signed statement, a copy of which shall be on file in his office as a public record, as to the classification of a student shall be final and not subject to appeal.

Section Two – Duties

1. The Class President shall be in charge of calling all class meetings and presiding over such meetings.

Article VIII. Committees

Section One – Committees and their Membership

There shall be two (2) standing committees of the Student Senate: Internal Affairs Committee and External Affairs Committee.

1. Membership of these committees shall be confined to voting members of the Student Senate.
2. Each committee shall have several sub-committees.
3. Each sub-committee decision may be over-ruled by a majority vote of the standing committee under which they serve.
4. Any standing committee decisions may be over-ruled by a majority vote of the Student Senate.
5. A majority vote of a standing committee shall be sufficient to create an ad hoc committee, which shall perform a function not already performed by a standing sub-committee.
6. Any committee chairperson has the freedom to appoint whomever appropriate, outside the Student Senate, to serve on their committee in a non-voting capacity.
7. All committees and sub-committees shall meet according to the schedule set by the Internal Vice-Presidents, and report to the Student Senate.
8. Committee membership shall be determined by nomination from the floor of the Student Senate, followed by majority approval.
9. All subcommittee members shall be notified twenty-four (24) hours in advance of a subcommittee meeting.
10. Attendance at subcommittee meetings is required. Absences from a subcommittee meeting shall count the same as half ($\frac{1}{2}$) absence from a regular Student Senate meeting. Excuses for absences must be submitted to the Executive Cabinet within one week of the subcommittee meeting missed.

Article IX. Special Representation

Following Student Senate elections, if any category of students, such as a particular sex or minority group, commuter students, members of a particular club, or students who do not belong to a club, feels it has been unreasonably excluded from proportional representation in voting membership on the Student Senate, it may present a petition to the Student Senate bearing the names of at least 15% of the student body, acknowledging that the affected group was unreasonably excluded from the Student

Senate. After the signatures are verified by the Student Senate Secretary, a special election by the student body shall be held to determine if the group was unreasonably excluded.

If unreasonable exclusion is found to exist, the group shall submit to the Student Senate nominations from the members of the affected group. The affected group shall determine appropriate procedures for securing nominations, but in no case shall the number of persons nominated be less than twice the number, nor more than four (4) times the number to be elected from any group. At least one (1) person shall be selected by the Senate from the affected group, and the groups shall be as proportionately represented as is possible. However, at no time shall the special representation of all groups exceed a combined total of four (4). The voting members of the Student Senate still take the list of nominations and determine which of the nominations shall serve on the Student Senate. Special representatives shall have all the rights, privileges, and powers of regular Student Senate members. Special representatives shall serve a one (1) year term.

Article X. Amendments

Amendments to this constitution may be placed on the ballot by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Student Senate or by a petition signed by 20% of the student body. All amendments, to become effective, shall require a majority vote of the total number of students voting in the election. No amendment shall be voted on until thirty (30) days, but not more than sixty (60) days, after Student Senate approval or after the filing of the amendment with the Student Senate Secretary. Proposed amendments must be publicized at the earliest possible date following Student Senate approval and the publication shall contain that portion of the constitution to which the proposed amendment pertains, both in its unamended state and as it would read if amended.

Article XI. Definitions and Appeals

Section One – Definitions of terms, phrases, and clauses as included in the constitution shall be decided by a majority vote of the Student Senate.

Section Two – Any students or group of students shall have the right to appeal any matter concerning this constitution. The Student Senate will hear the case of the student or group and a two-thirds majority vote will be required for change.

Article XII. Enactment of this Constitution

Section One – Enactment of this constitution shall require the approval of a majority of those voting in a special election called by the Student Senate.

Section Two – With the enactment of this constitution, all other student documents in conflict herewith shall be automatically declared null and void. This constitution shall go into effect immediately after its approval by the Student Life Committee, the Faculty, the President of the University, and the Board of Trustees.

Section Three – Amendments deemed by the President of the University to involve matters of special concern to the total welfare of the University shall require enactment according to Article XII, Section Two.