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University of Southern California Undergraduate Student Government

Constitution

Preamble

We, the undergraduate students of the University of Southern California, in order to encourage freedom of scholarship, preserve and encourage student rights, promote a unified and cohesive student body, and maintain forums to discuss our views and rights do hereby form and establish the University of Southern California Undergraduate Student Government.

Purpose Statement

We, the University of Southern California Undergraduate Student Government, are the representative voice of the undergraduate student body. We serve the following purposes:

- to foster scholarship in an atmosphere of free and objective inquiry;
- to insist upon academic freedom, responsibility, and excellence;
- to assume responsibility for exercising and preserving student rights;
- to promote cohesion within the student body;
- to maintain a forum for expressing students’ diverse views and interests;
- to initiate, coordinate, and guide student efforts aimed at improving student life and activities;
- to seek and obtain effective communication and relations within the University and external communities;
- to insist upon quality education at an affordable cost, thereby providing educational opportunities for persons of all economic strata;
- to provide opportunities to develop student leadership qualities;
- to facilitate the individual and collective welfare of the undergraduate student body.
- to uphold in highest regard the Undergraduate Student Government and University Code of Ethics

We serve these aforementioned purposes via advocacy, programming, and representation of the student views and needs to the administration, the faculty, and the community.

THEREBY, this Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government is affirmed and established.
Article I: Framework and Eligibility

I.1 The body established herein shall be known as the University of Southern California Undergraduate Student Government.

I.1.A This organization will use the name or its shortened form, USG, in all publicity materials and correspondence.

I.2 The Undergraduate Student Government shall consist of the Legislative Branch, Executive Branch, Judicial Branch, and Programming Branch.

I.3 All registered undergraduate students at USC shall be members of the Undergraduate Student Government and shall be subject to this Constitution, Bylaws, and Code of Ethics.

I.4 Officer Eligibility: As a prerequisite to run for and hold office, all elected or appointed officers shall be full-time students in good standing as defined by the Registrar, and are required to maintain a cumulative 2.50 minimum G.P.A.

I.4.A: Spring semester seniors who maintain at least 8 units during their final semester at USC would be exempt from the full-time requirement.

I.4.B: Under special circumstances, part-time students may run for and hold office with the consent and approval of the Office of Student Affairs.

Article II: The Legislative Branch

II.1 The Legislative Branch, in accordance with this Constitution, shall:

II.1.A Act as the representative and decision-making body for the undergraduate students in any university or local community issue.

II.1.B Create and amend the Bylaws of the Undergraduate Student Government.

II.1.C Create or sponsor Resolutions as defined in the Bylaws.

II.1.D Hold the Executive and Legislative branches accountable to uphold all federal, state, university, and Undergraduate Student Government policies and procedures.

II.1.E Approve the annual budget, which shall be made public.

II.1.F Approve all appointments made to the Executive Cabinet in accordance with the process outlined in the Bylaws.

II.1.G Approve certain expenditures as outlined in the Bylaws.
II.1.H Stay informed of university issues and policies by attending meetings, performing research, contacting members of the USC community, and any other means that are necessary to carry out this responsibility.

II.1.I Perform all other duties that may be assigned by the Constitution or Bylaws.

II.1.J The Senate shall not vote on anything subject to Senate approval unless it was presented to the Senate previously or tabled at a prior Senate Meeting.

II.1.J.1 The Senate shall have the power to add an item to the agenda subject to a Senate vote without having previously been presented or tabled only with a 5/6 majority vote.

II.2 All legislative powers of the Undergraduate Student Government shall be vested in the legislative body, or “Senate.”

II.3 The legislative body shall be composed of Senators.

II.3.A The Senators represent the constituencies as defined in the Bylaws.

II.3.A.1 Each Senator shall have one full vote.

II.3.A.2 One Senator shall serve as the Speaker Pro Tempore.

II.3.B Reapportionment shall be taken up and completed by the last Senate meeting of the fall semester as outlined in the Bylaws.

II.3.C Senators who move out of their constituencies must immediately resign from their position.

II.4 The USC Undergraduate Student Government Vice-President shall serve as Speaker of the Senate.

II.4.A The Speaker of the Senate shall chair the Senate during its meetings.

II.4.B The Speaker of the Senate shall cast a vote only to break a tie.

II.5 Senatorial elections shall be held in accordance with the Bylaws.

II.6 The term of office of Senators shall be one year. They may serve up to two terms as Senator.

II.6.A If a Senator is unable to finish the term, a new Senator shall be sworn in as soon as possible, in accordance with the Bylaws.
II.6.B Currently seated Senators shall be ineligible to serve on the Executive, Programming, or Judicial Branches.

II.7 Senators may be removed from office in accordance with the process outlined in the Bylaws.

Article III: The Executive Branch

III.1 The Executive Branch, in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws, shall:

III.1.A Meet regularly to discuss problems, plans, and goals of the Undergraduate Student Government.

III.1.B Ensure all pertinent issues are being addressed by the Undergraduate Student Government through an elected or appointed officer.

III.1.C Communicate and interact with university organizations and administrators to carry out goals set forth by the Undergraduate Student Government.

III.2 All executive powers of the Undergraduate Student Government shall be vested in the Executive Branch, which is composed of the Student Body President, the Student Body Vice President, and the Executive Cabinet.

III.3 The President and Vice President shall be directly elected by the USC undergraduate student body.

III.3.A The President and Vice President shall obey constituency guidelines as defined in the Bylaws.

III.3.B The President and Vice President shall be elected in accordance with the Bylaws and on the same ballot as the Senators.

III.3.C The term of office shall be one year. The President may serve only one term in that office. The Vice President may not serve more than two terms in this capacity.

III.3.D If the President is unable to finish the term, the Chief Justice shall swear in the Vice President as the new President and the Speaker Pro Tempore as the new Vice President at the next Senate meeting. This partial term shall not count against the one term limit.

III.3.E If the Vice President is unable to finish the term, the Chief Justice shall swear in the Speaker Pro Tempore as the new Vice-President at the next Senate meeting.
III.3.F If the Speaker Pro Tempore is unable to finish the term, The Senate shall elect a new Speaker Pro Tempore as outlined in the Bylaws.

III.3.G In the event that there are concurrent vacancies in the Presidential and Vice Presidential positions, the matter will be moved to the Undergraduate Student Government Advisor to meet with representatives from each branch of Undergraduate Student Government to determine the proper course of action.

III.4 The President may veto resolutions passed by the Senate. Constitutional and Bylaw amendments and confirmations of personnel are not resolutions, and thus are not eligible to be vetoed.

III.4.A The Senate, with a two-thirds affirmative vote, may override the President's veto.

III.5 The Executive Cabinet shall exist to assist the President and Vice President in the management of the Undergraduate Student Government.

III.5.A The Executive Cabinet of the Undergraduate Student Government shall include the Chief of Staff, Treasurer, Secretary, Parliamentarian Senior Director of Communications, Directors, Deputy Directors, and Assistant Directors.

III.5.A.1 Director, Co-Director, Deputy Director and Assistant Director positions may be added or removed as outlined in the Bylaws.

III.5.A.2 An Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee shall exist each year to advise the President-Elect on all matters of appointment to the Executive Cabinet.

III.5.A.2.a The Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee shall consist of the one Program Board member, President-Elect or his/her chosen representative, one Senator-Elect, the President-Elect’s nominee for Chief of Staff, and one outgoing member of the Executive Cabinet. The Vice President-Elect may sit in on all Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee meetings.

III.5.A.2.b The Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee shall be coordinated by the President-Elect.

III.5.A.2.c The Senate Advisor may sit in on all meetings to serve in an advisory capacity.

III.5.A.2.d The Senators-Elect, and outgoing Executive Cabinet shall be responsible for choosing their representative to serve on the Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee.
III.5.A.3 The Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee shall propose an ideal slate to the President and Senators.

III.5.A.3.a After receiving ideal slate from the Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee, the President shall make the final nominations for the Executive Cabinet to be confirmed by the Senate.

III.5.A.3.b The Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee shall submit a report on the selection process to the Senate prior to confirmation of the nominees.

III.5.A.3.c All correspondence regarding the proposed slate shall be confidential between the President-Elect, the Vice-President-Elect, Senators-Elect, and Executive Cabinet Advisory Selection Committee between the time that the ideal slate is proposed to the President and the time that the Senate makes the final confirmation of candidates.

III.5.A.4 If a person chooses not to accept a position, that position shall be filled as deemed necessary by the President and Vice President.

III.5.A.5 Directors may serve a maximum of two terms in the same capacity.

II.5.A.6 The President shall sit on the committee to select the Program Board Executive Director, which must present a report to the Senate prior to the confirmation of the nominee for Executive Director of Program Board.

III.5.B The President shall chair the Executive Cabinet, or designate a member of the Executive Cabinet to chair it. The Chair may vote only to break a tie.

III.5.C The Executive Cabinet shall be selected in accordance with the Bylaws.

III.5.D The Executive Cabinet shall meet weekly during the fall and spring semesters unless deemed otherwise by the Undergraduate Student Government President.

III.5.E Attendance at Executive Cabinet meetings is mandatory unless otherwise excused by the Chief of Staff.

III.5.F Executive Cabinet members may be removed from office in accordance with the process outlined in the Bylaws.

Article IV: The Judicial Branch
IV.1 The Judicial Branch, in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules, shall:

   IV.1.A Adjudicate all cases where the constitutionality of an act by the Legislative, Executive, or Programming Branches, or any member of these branches, is called into question.

   IV.1.B Discuss and adjudicate cases that fall under their jurisdiction in accordance with the procedures in the Bylaws.

IV.2 All judicial powers of the Undergraduate Student Government shall be vested in the Judicial Council, or “Council,” unless the Council cannot form a quorum.

IV.3 There shall be seven justices. Of these, six shall be Associate Justices and one shall be the Chief Justice.

IV.4 Justices of the Council shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Legislative Branch in accordance with the Bylaws.

IV.5 Justices serve as long as they are full time undergraduate students, as defined by the Office of the Registrar, but for a maximum of forty-eight calendar months.

   IV.5.A Justices may not be concurrently seated in the Legislative, Executive, or Programming Branches of the Undergraduate Student Government.

   IV.5.B Vacancies on the Council shall be filled within three weeks. If a Justice takes a leave, temporary or otherwise, he or she removes himself or herself in fact, if not in body, from the Judicial Council. This vacancy must be filled according to the Bylaws.

IV.6 Judicial Council members may be removed from office in accordance with the procedures in the Bylaws.

IV.7 In cases where a court makes a ruling regarding constitutionality, the Senate must make legislative changes to respond to the decision by resolving the conflict between the written legislation and the interpretation of the Council.

Article V: The Programming Branch

V.1 The programming responsibilities of the Undergraduate Student Government shall be vested in the Program Board.

V.2. The Executive Director of Program Board (herein Executive Director) and the Finance Director of the Program Board (herein Finance Director) shall be selected by the Executive Committee of Program Board and then confirmed by the Senate in accordance with the Bylaws.
V.3. The Program Board shall include the Executive Director, Finance Director, Programming Committees, Assemblies, Public Relations Director, Graphic Designer, Production Manager, and Web Developer.

V.3.A. Each Programming Committee and Assembly outlined in the Bylaws shall have a Director or Co-Directors.

V.3.B. All Directors or Co-Directors of Program Board shall be appointed by the Executive Director of Program Board and the Finance Director and then confirmed by the Senate in accordance with the Bylaws.

V.4. The Directors of the Assemblies, elected by their respective groups, shall serve as elected members of the Program Board.

V.4.A. The Assembly Directors must be elected in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Undergraduate Student Government, those of the Program Board, and those of the respective Assembly.

V.5. Additional Programming Committees and Assemblies may be incorporated as outlined in the Bylaws.

V.6. The term of the Directors of the Program Board shall be one year and concurrent with the respective Senate term. Directors may serve a maximum of two terms in the same capacity.

V.6.A. The Directors of the Program Board may be removed from office in accordance with the Program Board Programming Manual for violations of the Constitution or Bylaws of the Undergraduate Student Government or those of the Program Board.

V.6.B. The Program Board Programming Manual shall take precedence over the Constitution and Bylaws of each of the assemblies. The Undergraduate Student Government Constitution and Bylaws shall supersede both in areas of difference.

V.6.C. The Program Board Directors may not be currently seated Senators, Executive Officers, Directors, or any stipend position in the Legislative of Executive Branch.

Article VI: Faculty/Staff Advisor

VI.1 The Undergraduate Student Government shall have an official advisor from the USC faculty and/or staff.

VI.1.A Other persons may serve as special advisors as needed.
VI.2 Executive Branch, in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws, shall:

VI.2.A The Advisor is expected to actively monitor the policies, actions, and behavior of the Undergraduate Student Government and its members.

VI.2.B The Advisor shall guide USG members and provide mentorship, leadership training, and structure to the organization.

VI.2.C The Advisor is expected to help create the environment and provide resources for student leaders in the Undergraduate Student Government to successfully serve undergraduate students’ needs and interests.

VI.3 The Advisor may not vote on any Senate business or unduly influence decisions of the Undergraduate Student Government.

Article VII: Affiliations

VII.1 The Undergraduate Student Government is a recognized student organization at the University of Southern California, but is not part of the University itself. In all correspondence and business transactions, it may refer to itself as an organization at USC, but not as part of USC itself.

VII.2 The Undergraduate Student Government agrees to abide by all pertinent USC policies and regulations. Where USC policies and regulations and those of the Undergraduate Student Government differ, the policies and regulations of USC will take precedence.

VII.3 The Undergraduate Student Government recognizes and understands that the University assumes no legal liability for the actions of the organization, and that the University is not providing blanket indemnification insurance coverage for any activities of the organization, unless those activities expressly benefit and further the goals of the University, and have received prior review, approval, and consent of Campus Activities, Risk Management, and/or General Counsel.

VII.4 Relations with Student Affairs

VII.4.A Prior to the first Senate meeting of fall semester, the Undergraduate Student Government President shall develop a document, called the "Collaborative Working Agreement," with the Director of Campus Activities.

VII.4.B The Agreement shall contain the following elements.

VII.4.B.1 A clear description of how members of the Undergraduate Student Government and members of Student Affairs will work collaboratively during the upcoming year.
VII.4.B.2 A clearly articulated understanding of the relationship between the Undergraduate Student Government and Student Affairs.

VII.4.B.3 An outline of Senate involvement in decision-making processes including, but not limited to, hiring of Student Affairs administrators, financial decisions and processes, and programming issues.

VII.4.B.4 An understanding of the relationship between the Undergraduate Student Government and Program Board Advisors and Student Affairs.

VII.4.B.5 Any other issues that either party may care to address.

VII.4.C The USG President, on behalf of the Undergraduate Student Government and undergraduate students, and the Director of Campus Activities, on behalf of the University and Student Affairs, shall sign the Agreement on behalf of the students and the administration at the first Senate meeting of the fall semester. The Agreement will be circulated to all members of the Undergraduate Student Government and Student Affairs by the Undergraduate Student Government Secretary General.

Article VIII: Amendments

VIII.1 Any proposed changes to this Constitution must go through a one week grace period before it is introduced to the Senate as an item of new business.

VIII.1.A During the one week grace period, the Parliamentarian shall look over the proposed amendment(s) to ensure that there is no conflict with any other standing documents in the form of, but not limited to: contradictions, inconsistencies, etc.

VIII.1.B During the one week grace period, the Parliamentarian shall present the proposed amendment(s) to the Director of Campus Activities for approval.

VIII.1.C If the steps listed above are not taken, no changes to the USG Constitution can be made.

VIII.2 Amendments to the Constitution must be approved by a five-sixth majority of The Senate.

VIII.3 If a proposal to correct cosmetic changes, such as numbering and spelling, to this Constitution receives approval by a majority of the Senate, the Constitution shall be declared duly amended.

Article IX: Bylaws

IX.1 This Constitution shall be interpreted in conjunction with the Bylaws of the Undergraduate Student Government. This Constitution supersedes the Bylaws in cases of conflict.
IX.2 The Bylaws shall include the duties of the members of the Legislative Branch, the conditions of their offices, the constituencies that the members represent, and the rules of the Senate.

IX.3 The Bylaws shall include the duties of the members of the Executive Branch, the conditions of their offices, and the constituencies that the members represent. Additionally, the Bylaws shall define the duties of the members of the Executive Cabinet.

IX.4 The Bylaws shall include the duties of the members of the Judicial Branch and the conditions of their offices.

IX.5 The Bylaws shall include the duties of the members of the Programming Branch and the conditions of their offices.

IX.6 The Bylaws shall include the process for appointments and elections of all internal officers.

IX.7 The Bylaws can be amended by a 2/3 majority vote by the Legislative Branch.

Article X: Enactment

X.1 This Constitution shall be in full force and effect following a positive vote by two-thirds of the Senate. In all cases of discrepancy regarding policy, procedure, Judicial Council rulings or any other Undergraduate Student Government business, this Constitution shall take precedence.