

YALE-NUS COLLEGE

STUDENT CONSTITUTION

Drafted 18 & 19 November 2014

Up For Ratification on 20 & 21 November 2014

Amended 15 March 2015

Amended 27 May 2015

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ARTICLE I: TITLE

Section One: Yale-NUS College Student Constitution

This Constitution will be known as the Yale-NUS College Student Constitution, hereafter referred to as “the Constitution”.

ARTICLE II: REPRESENTATION

Section One: Yale-NUS College students, Student Government

The Yale-NUS College Student Government shall represent all matriculated Yale-NUS College students.

- A. Hereafter, matriculated Yale-NUS College students or any member(s) thereof will be referred to as ‘student’, ‘students’ or ‘the student body’ unless stated otherwise.
- B. Hereafter, the Yale-NUS College Student Government will be referred to as ‘Government’ or ‘the Government’, unless stated otherwise.

Section Two: Non-discrimination

Representation will not be subject to any form of discrimination on the basis of, but not limited to, race, religion, political views, nationality, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc., as per the Anti-Discrimination policies laid out by the Yale-NUS College Dean of Students’ Office.

ARTICLE III: RESPONSIBILITIES, POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Section One: Responsibilities

The Government shall:

- A. Act as the primary liaison between students and the Yale-NUS College administration, faculty, staff and other external parties.
- B. Actively gather and respond to feedback from students.
- C. Actively encourage and facilitate student dialogue on the future of the student body and the long-term goals of the College.
- D. Recognize the interests and welfare of students in all areas of student life such as, but not limited to, student organisations and events, residential life, dining, security, and community spirit.

- E. Represent — or advocate for representation of — students in administrative committees within the College such as, but not limited to, the Residential & Co-Curricular Life committee and the Moving-In committee.

Section Two: Powers

- A. The Government will have the power to manage the budgets of college-wide events such as, but not limited to, welfare events, festival celebrations, and end-of-term celebrations. The said events do not include those created independently by student organisations.
- B. The Government shall, in conjunction with the Dean of Students' Office and the student body, form a joint Student Organisations Recognition Committee in order to execute the Government's responsibility of managing recognition of student organisations.
 - i. The Student Organisations Recognition Committee shall create and publish a set of guidelines and principles to be considered for the recognition of student organisations.

Section Three: Duties

The Government shall perform the following duties:

- A. Maintain an online platform that contains meeting minutes from general meetings, decisions made, and upcoming agendas. Minutes must be indexed, made public, and include records of attendance.
- B. Meet with any student upon request, within a reasonable timeframe.
- C. Provide a response to every student that gives the Government feedback or raises a concern to the Government. The said response should be provided within a reasonable timeframe, and be delivered in writing, in person, or both.
- D. Hold General Assemblies.
 - i. The purpose of the General Assemblies is for students to provide feedback and raise grievances to the Government.
 - ii. The Government shall channel the feedback received at General Assemblies to appropriate administrative offices, or respond to the feedback directly.
 - iii. Student attendance at the General Assemblies should not be mandatory.
 - iv. At least two General Assemblies are to be held per semester.

ARTICLE IV: STRUCTURE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Section One: Membership

- A. The Government will consist of:
 - i. Four Class Representatives. Each Class Representative shall represent a different class of the student body.
 - ii. Three Residential College Representatives. Each Residential College Representative shall represent a different Residential College.
 - iii. Four Student Representatives-At-Large representing the general student body.
- B. Each Representative will have an equal vote on matters brought before the Government.

Section Two: Committees

- A. The Government shall create Standing or Select committees for the purpose of addressing particular issues, and appoint students to such committees as needed.
- B. The said committees shall actively work to stay informed on their respective specific interest areas and purposes as designated by Article IV, Section 2, Paragraphs C and D of the Constitution. To this end, the said committees shall actively gather, receive and take into account student opinion in carrying out their duties.
- C. Standing Committees.
 - i. Each standing committee shall carry out its appointed duties unless dissolved by the Government.
 - ii. Each standing committee shall represent a specific interest area relevant to students.
 - iii. The said interest areas include, but are not limited to: arts, athletics, academics, Double Degree Program (DDP), wellness, etc.
- D. Select Committees.
 - i. A select committee will be formed as and when determined necessary by the vote of the Government.
 - ii. Each select committee will be formed with a specific purpose and period of office.
 - iii. Each select committee shall carry out its appointed duties until the Government deems the said committee's designated purpose to be fulfilled or until its period of office expires.
 - iv. Should the Government deem the purpose of a select committee to be insufficiently fulfilled at the expiration of the said committee's period of

office, the Government may vote to extend the said committee's period of office.

Section Three: Terms of Office

- A. Representatives of the Government will hold office for a year-long term, starting from the date of their inauguration and continuing until the inauguration of the subsequent government in the following Academic Year.
- B. Members appointed to Standing committees of the Government will hold office for a one-semester term, and can be reappointed by the Government.
- C. Representatives of the Government may serve a maximum of two terms as part of the Government.

Section Four: Impeachment

- A. A Government representative will be removed from office if $\frac{2}{3}$ of the student body signs a petition specifically calling for their removal.
- B. The following actions qualify as grounds for removal:
 - i. Frequent absences from Government meetings
 - ii. Misappropriation of funds
 - iii. Breach of agreed-upon confidentiality
 - iv. Intentional deception of the student body
 - v. Breach of this constitution

ARTICLE V: LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE

Section One: Decision Making

- A. The Government shall adopt or create a set of procedural rules to make sure that all deliberations are fair and equal.
- B. The Government shall implement an online platform where students can vote on all preliminary decisions. If a majority of students vote against the decision within 48 hours, then that decision will be overturned.

Section Two: Majority Requirement

- A. If the Government does not make a decision by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority, they shall inform students that a contentious decision was made.
- B. If the Government cannot reach a decision by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority, they shall release the decision on the online platform where students may propose amendments which can be considered and voted upon by the Government at their next meeting.

Section Three: Student Petitions

- A. Any decision made by the Government can be contested by a petition written to that effect.
- B. The said petition must be signed by 10% of the student body.
- C. Should such a petition be submitted, the Government shall hold a formal vote of the student body to either repeal or uphold the contested decision.

ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Section One: Amendment by Petition

Any student may call for an amendment to the Constitution at any time by submitting a petition endorsed by at least 60% of the student body.

Section Two: Sunset Clause Amendment

At the end of every electoral term, students may call, via petition signed by 10% of the student body, for a 'Sunset Period' organised by the standing Government. During this period students shall review the Constitution as a whole and re-ratify each article. Any article which is not re-ratified must be revised and ratified, or removed.

Section Three: Amendment by Government

Representatives of the Government may amend the Constitution when there is a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote amongst Representatives for amendment.

- A. The Government shall notify students (through both the online platform and other mediums) of any such amendments and the rationale behind such amendments.
- B. Any student may veto the amendment by submitting a petition endorsed by at least 10% of the student.

ARTICLE VII: ELECTION PROCEDURE

Section One: Running of Elections

- A. The elections for Government positions will be run by the Elections Committee.
- B. The Elections Committee will be composed of Representatives of the outgoing Government.
- C. Members of the Elections Committee shall not be running for any Government position in the upcoming election.

Section Two: Election Timings

- A. The elections will be held at the start of Semester Two of each academic year.
- B. The Elections Committee shall publish a set of rules and guidelines governing the election four weeks before the start of campaigning.
- C. Candidates will be recognized three weeks before the start of the election and must confirm their candidacy at least two weeks before the start of the election.
- D. Campaigning may begin three weeks before the election.

Section Three: Voting Constituencies

- A. Class Representatives will be elected by their respective academic class only.
- B. RC Representatives will be elected by their respective residential college only.
- C. Student Representatives-At-Large will be elected by all members of students.

Appendix I: BYLAWS SET BY THE ELECTED STUDENT COMMITTEE

We, the Elected Students Committee, set these bylaws in place should the Yale-NUS Student Constitution be ratified, only to be effective in the first term of government, and only applicable to the first Government.

1. The first elections will be conducted under a committee appointed by the outgoing Elected Students Committee (ESC).
2. Before the start of Semester Two of Academic Year (AY) 2014/2015, the ESC shall hold an online referendum on what the school would like to name the first Government.
3. According to Article IV, Section One, Paragraph A, Clause i of the Constitution, there will be one class representative per class. For the first Government, there will be *two* class representatives elected for both Classes of 2017 & 2018.
4. The first Government is strongly encouraged to actively initiate and facilitate the school-wide discussion pertaining to the possible creation of a Student Charter or Honor Code.
5. As soon as the first Government is in office, the Body shall work with the Dean of Students Office in a timely manner to form a standing committee responsible for the allocation of funding for student organisations. This committee will be elected by students and may include but is not limited to Representatives of the Government.
6. The first Government must hold an amendment plenary in the final two weeks of March or the first two weeks of April in Semester Two of the AY 2014/2015, and must notify students three weeks in advance. Proposals for amendment of individual clauses must be submitted up to two weeks before the plenary.
7. There must be a sunset period at the end of the two-semester term, which will be during the first two weeks of November in Semester One of the AY 2015/2016. The sunset period will put the entire constitution up for open revision and re-ratification. This clause is independent of Article IV, Section Two of the Constitution.
8. The ESC will step down upon the inauguration of the first Government.