

**YALE-NUS COLLEGE**

**STUDENT CONSTITUTION**

**Drafted 18 & 19 November 2014**

**Up For Ratification on 20 & 21 November 2014**

**Edited 15 March 2015**

**Amended 27 May 2015**

## **ARTICLE I: TITLE**

### **Section One:**

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

## **ARTICLE II: REPRESENTATION**

### **Section One:**

The Yale-NUS College Student Government will 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:**

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 Student Government shall have the responsibility to:

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

- G. 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**

The Government shall have the power to:

- A. Manage the budgets of college-wide events such as, but not limited to, welfare events, festival celebrations, and end-of-term celebrations. This does not include events created independently by student organisations.
- B. Formally recognize student organizations, but have no control over the budgeting or funding of student organizations.
  - i. The Student Government shall create and publish a set of guidelines and principles to be considered for the recognition of student organisations.

### **Section Three: Duties**

The Government must perform the following duties:

- A. Maintain an online platform that contains meeting minutes from weekly meetings, decisions made, and upcoming agendas. Minutes must include records of attendance.
- B. Meet with any concerned student upon request, within a reasonable timeframe.
- C. Respond in person or in writing to every student that provides feedback or raises a concern, within a reasonable timeframe.
- D. Hold, at least twice per semester, a non-mandatory General Assembly where students may provide feedback and raise grievances to the Government. The Government will channel feedback to appropriate administrative offices or respond to feedback directly.

## **ARTICLE IV: STRUCTURE OF THE GOVERNMENT**

### **Section One: Membership**

- A. The Government will consist of:
  - ii. Four Class Representatives; one for each class of students.

- iii. Three Residential College Representatives; one from each Residential College.
  - iv. Four Student Representatives-At-Large representing the general student body.
- B. Each Representative shall 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. Standing and Select committees will actively work to stay informed on student opinion of the issues the committee is concerned with and provide recommendations to the main body.
- C. *Standing committees* shall represent specific interest areas of the school, including, but not limited to: arts, athletics, academics, Double Degree Program (DDP), wellness, etc., and once created will remain in place unless dissolved by the Government.
- D. *Select committees* shall be formed for a specific purpose, with a specific duration, by the vote of the Government, and once created will remain in place until their purpose is fulfilled or when their term is completed.

## **Section Three: Terms of Office**

- A. Representatives of the Government shall 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 shall 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. Representatives of the Government will be removed from office if  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Yale-NUS student body signs a petition specifically calling for that representative's 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 must adopt or create a set of procedural rules to make sure that all deliberations are fair and equal.
- B. The Government must 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 must inform students that a contentious decision was made.
- B. If the Government cannot reach a decision by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority, they must 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**

If 10% of students sign a petition contesting a decision made by the Government, students must vote to either repeal or uphold this decision.

## **ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENT PROCEDURE**

**Section One: Amendment by Petition**

Any student can 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 have the option to call, via petition signed by 10% of the student body, for a 'Sunset Period' organized by the standing Government. During this period students must 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 must 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 shall be run by the Elections Committee.
- B. The Elections Committee shall be composed of Representatives of the outgoing Government.
- C. Members of the Elections Committee must 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 shall 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 shall be elected by their respective academic class only.
- B. RC Representatives shall be elected by their respective residential college only.
- C. Student Representatives-At-Large shall 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 will 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 will work with the Dean of Students Office in a timely manner to form a standing committee responsible for the allocation of funding for student organizations. This committee must be elected by students and can 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.