

**Nursing Student Council of the College of Nursing
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University
Constitution and Bylaws**

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Nursing Student Council of the College of Nursing, State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate Health Sciences University. The organization is hereinafter referred to as "Council".

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council shall be to promote the interests and welfare of the students in the College of Nursing.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1: Membership is open to all matriculated College of Nursing students of the SUNY Health Sciences University who have paid a Student Activity fee.
- Section 2: Voting Representatives: All authority and powers granted by this constitution and all responsibilities delegated to the Council by SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University shall be vested in a student council to be composed of voting representatives selected by the undergraduate and graduate student body, and non-voting representatives from recognized student council organizations.
- Section 3: The Council shall have nine (9) voting members: four (4) executive officers including President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary; two (2) from undergraduate programs including RN-BSN Representative and ABSN Representative; three (3) from graduate programs including Family Nurse Practitioner Representative, Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Representative and DNP Representative.
- A. A faculty advisor shall be appointed by the Dean of the College for a term of one academic year beginning on May 31st of each year and is a member of the Council, expected to attend all Council meetings in a non-voting capacity. The faculty advisor works closely with the Council President and is available to help the Council. The Faculty advisor is the liaison between the Council and the College leadership and faculty. The Faculty Advisor shall not have voting privileges.
- Section 4: Each College of Nursing student club or organization with five or more members recognized by the Council, as provided in this constitution under Article XI, shall select one (1) of its members to represent the organization as a non-voting member of the council in the manner provided for in this constitution.

ARTICLE IV: FUNCTION AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COUNCIL

- Section 1: The function and responsibilities of the Council are:
- A. To determine, coordinate and direct all activities for the student body.
- B. To plan and approve by a majority vote, an annual budget for the expenditures of the Student Activity Fee pursuant to Article XI, Section 4.
- C. To submit the approved annual budget to the Faculty Student Association (FSA) for campus certification. Once certified, the annual budget shall be made available to the student.
- D. To serve as a liaison between the students and the administration and faculty on pertinent matters provided that nothing in this responsibility shall prevent or impede individual contacts between the officers on pertinent matters and the faculty of the college providing instruction to that class.
- E. To ensure that a Council representative attends meetings of other campus wide student organizations, including the Student Center Governing Board and University Council.
- F. To bring the concerns of the student body to the attention of the administration and/or faculty.
- G. To supervise in an advisory capacity all publications edited in the name of the student body.
- H. To inform the administration of the Council's business and social activities.
- I. To assist and facilitate the coordination of social activities among all authorized Council Organizations.

ARTICLE V: ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL

- Section 1: All elections of the officers and representatives of the classes shall be conducted within the first 30 days following the start of each Fall semester.
- A. Nominations: The Secretary shall issue a call for nominations for each Officer and Voting Representative to all eligible students during the first two weeks of the start of each Fall semester, requesting any student

who wishes to nominate themselves or another eligible student to submit the nomination to the SUNY-Health Sciences University Student Life office or designee no later than seven (7) days before the formal election.

- B. Voting: All nominations shall be placed on a voting ballot with the nominee's college and made available to all eligible students for voting for period of at least two (2) days during the fourth week of September. Elections shall take place by a ballot method on campus either in person or a campus electronic system with the appropriate voting controls to assure integrity. Elections shall be subject to such regulations the Council may prescribe which are consistent with this constitution and supervised by the SUNY-Health Sciences University Office of Student Life or designee.

- i. Elections will be by majority vote of the member of the nursing student body.
- ii. In the event of a tie, a separate run-off election will be held to eliminate one candidate.

Section 2: Term of Office: The term of office for each member elected in accordance with the above process shall begin upon election and continue to the date of the next election.

Section 3: Vacancies:

- A. Succession: If the office of President becomes vacant, until the Voting Representatives of the Council meet to elect a successor, the Vice President shall assume the position of President, and if vacant shall be succeeded by the Treasurer, and if vacant shall be succeeded by the Secretary.
- i. Should ALL Council Officers become vacant prior to the expiration of their term of office due to their planned graduation, prior to their departure, the President shall schedule an election meeting of the Council for the purpose of electing interim officers prior to their graduation.
- B. Term of said successor shall become effective immediately upon election and expire upon the next following annual election.

ARTICLE VI: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Section 1: Voting Representatives shall attend Council regular and special meetings.

Section 2: Members shall inform the Council at a regular or special meeting of resignation. This must be followed by a letter of resignation to be forwarded to the Secretary to be kept in the Council files.

Section 3: Elected student representatives are liaisons for the students of their class. They are to bring the students' concerns and problems to the Council.

Section 4: Any material and/or announcements shall be emailed to the council three (3) days prior to the intended meeting in which the council will decide to address the issue in the meeting.

Section 5: The representatives must sit on one of these committees, one undergraduate, and one graduate representative: (1) Education Policy Committee; (2) Curriculum Development Committee; and (3) Admission and Recruitment (4) Nominations, Elections, and Ballots and Bylaws. Student representatives are also responsible for assisting the President with the formation and recruitment for subcommittees for major events (such as decorating, hostess).

ARTICLE VII: REMOVAL OF STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

Section 1: Any Nursing Student Council officer or representative in violation of the organization's purpose or Constitution may be removed from office by the following process:

- A. A written request detailing a justification/ basis must be signed by at least three members of the Student Body and delivered to all Council representatives.
- B. Written notification of the request must be provided to the Council officer or representative requesting his/her presence at the next meeting prepared to speak on his/her own behalf. The matters in question shall be fully discussed, appropriately investigated to the extent possible and practical by the Nursing Student Council prior to a vote being conducted.

C.A two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Council is necessary to remove the officer.

ARTICLE VIII: OFFICERS OF STUDENT COUNCIL

Section 1: Officers of the Nursing Student Council selected from among members of the student body shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, each of whom shall discharge the duties and responsibilities usually assumed by the office.

Section 2: **President:** Serves as chief spokesperson for the Council, and as such, shall act as liaison between the students, faculty, and administration, as well as lead major College of Nursing student events. In addition:

- A. Shall preside as chairperson at all meetings, setting the agenda for Council meetings.
- B. Serves as the student representative of the College of Nursing on the Faculty Student Association Board of Directors.
- C. Establishes subcommittees as needed and appoints members to these committees.
- D. Ensures that a Council representative attends University Council, Student Center Governing Board, and College of Nursing Faculty Assembly meetings, etc.
- E. Calls special meetings with the Executive Committee as needed.
- F. Recruits undergraduate and graduate student participation.
- G. May delegate responsibilities as needed, to the Vice President and Council members.

Section 3: **Vice-President:** The Vice President:

- A. Assumes the President's duties in the President's absence.
- B. Assists the President in carrying out his/her duties, as assigned by the President.
- C. Is familiar with this constitution and ensures its requirements are upheld.

Section 4: **Treasurer:** The Treasurer is responsible for preparing, processing, maintaining and reporting on all finances of the Council, and

- A. Prepares and presents of the annual budget to the Council,
- B. Attends or otherwise provides for Council participation at annual budget planning meetings as detailed in Article XI.4.A.
- C. Cosigns payment requests in accordance with the certified budget of the Council.
- D. Assumes the President's duties in the absence of both the President and Vice-President.

Section 5: **Secretary:** The Secretary is responsible for the records of all Council meetings in accordance with DMC Guidelines for Meeting Minutes, including recording of attendance at all meetings. In addition,

- A. Distributes copies of all NSC meeting minutes to the voting members of the Council, Dean of College of Nursing, Faculty Student Association, the AVP for Student Life, and the Director of the Student Center.
- B. Sends notification of all meetings to the entire student body at least 5 business (Mon-Fri, excluding holidays) days in advance.
- C. Assumes the President's duties in the absence of the President, Vice-President, and Treasurer.

ARTICLE IX: MEETINGS OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL

Section 1: Meetings of the Council shall be held on SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University property and shall be open to all members of the student body in a nonvoting capacity.

Section 2: Special meetings may be called by the President or required when petitioned by any voting member of the Council.

Section 3: **Quorum:** A quorum of four (4) voting members is required to conduct business, provided, however that there is at least one voting member of both the undergraduate and graduate programs in attendance.

- A. Proxies: Voting members unable to attend a specific meeting may designate another voting member as their proxy for attendance and voting purposes. Said proxy must be issued to the Secretary in writing or via eMail prior to the meeting and must specify the meeting date and name of the voting member being designated.

Section 4: All Council decisions shall be approved by majority vote unless otherwise noted in this constitution.

Section 5: All meetings of the Council shall proceed in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order if not specifically provided for in this constitution.

ARTICLE X: STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1: Individual nursing student organizations of five members may be recognized by the Nursing Student Council. The Council will provide a separate tab in budgeting and allocating funding to that set organization.

Section 2: An organization must be registered with the Downstate Health Sciences University Office of Student Life.

Section 3: Recognition of a student organization may be formalized at any regular meeting of the Council, provided that notice of the meeting states that recognition is to be acted on at that meeting.

Section 4: A student organization which has been recognized by the Council may have its membership revoked by a majority vote of the members voting present, provided that the organization is given a hearing at one regular meeting and a vote is made at the next regular meeting.

ARTICLE XI: STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE

Section 1: The student activity fee (SAF) rate shall be \$40.00 per year for all full-time students in the College of Nursing and is prorated for part-time students. This fee shall be billed and collected by the SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Bursar and deposited to the appropriate NSC account in the Faculty Student Association in accordance with SUNY Board of Trustee guidelines.

Section 2: Disbursements from the NSC accounts shall be made in accordance with the certified budget of the NSC in place at the time as well as under the policies and procedures established by FSA. All payment requests shall be co-signed by the Treasurer plus one other officer.

A. Should the Treasurer be unavailable for signature, another Council officer may co-sign a Payment Form, but in such cases the officer signing the form is responsible to provide a copy of the Payment Form to the Treasurer within seven (7) business days of having signed the payment form.

Section 3: Any changes to the student activity fee rate must be approved by a majority vote of the Council, subject to SUNY Board of Trustee guidelines and SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University procedures.

Section 4: The Annual Budget cycle shall coincide with the fiscal year of the FSA, currently from June 1st to May 31st of the following year.

A. During March of each year, there shall be a Budget Planning Meeting coordinated with other DMC campus wide student councils that provide funding to Clubs, Organizations and events that are open to Nursing students. The attendance of one Nursing Council Officer, preferably the Treasurer, is required at this budget planning meeting.

B. All students representing a Nursing related club or organization are welcome to attend the budget meeting to request SAF funds for the coming year. All clubs and organizations must be properly registered with the Office of Student Life before receiving SAF funding.

C. If any existing club or organization does not have representation at this annual budget meeting, its funds for the following year will be at the discretion of the Council.

D. Students requesting funds must submit a written budget, outlining expenditures for the fiscal year. These budgets must also contain the names and telephone of the students responsible for managing the club or organization.

- E. SUNY Guidelines require that a Reserve Fund be established to address unforeseen circumstances.
- F. If at the end of the budget request period, the Council will prepare a balanced budget and where necessary reassess the individual club and event requested budgets to present and approve a balanced budget at its April meeting.
- G. The Council approved budget for the next fiscal year beginning June 1st will be submitted to the FSA for campus certification in accordance with SUNY Board of Trustees Guidelines.

ARTICLE XII: DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of the organization provided for in this Constitution, the Board of Directors of FSA shall assume responsibility for the disposition of the unexpended funds which shall be distributed to any such successor campus wide student government organization, or if none, shall be distributed amongst the remaining Downstate Health Sciences University college student councils in the percentages based on the number of students each school has of the total student body at the time of dissolution.

ARTICLE XIII: BY-LAWS

- Section 1: Nursing Student Council shall adopt such by-laws and amendments as seem advisable, provided the original by-laws and all amendments are adopted at a regular meeting of which the notice states that this is an order of business, provided a copy of the by-laws or amendments thereto, are circulated to each member of the Nursing Student Council at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting.
- Section 2: This constitution and by-laws shall be in effect upon the majority vote of the student body referendum conducted in June 1998. Subsequent amendments may be approved by the Council at a meeting called for the purpose, providing that the meeting notice and agenda shall have been given to the members of the Council with the proposed amendment clearly expressed. All amendments approved by the Council shall be presented for certification to the President of the Faculty Student Association.
- Section 3: Any proposed amendment to this Constitution and by-laws which have a significant impact on a majority of the student body, must be advertised no less than one week in advance to the entire student body for the awareness of the student body. The Council shall provide to the student body an appropriate mechanism for the student body to express their opinions on the proposed revision to the voting members of the Council prior to the vote being taken by the Council.

This constitution was distributed to the CON and FSA via eMail for approval on July 7th, 2020 for a review period extending seven days until July 14th, 2020. The amendments were subsequently and unanimously approved by the Nursing Student Council at their July 14th, 2020 meeting called for its purpose.