

## **Perkins Student Association By-Laws**

### **Article I. Name**

The name of this Organization shall be the Perkins Student Association

### **Article II. Purpose**

The purpose of the Perkins Student Association Constitution and By-Laws are to help the organization run according to the purpose of the organization mentioned in the Constitution (Const. Art. I, Sec A).

### **Article III. Membership**

#### **Section A: Requirements of Membership**

The members of the Perkins Student Association shall consist of all students officially enrolled in Perkins School of Theology of Southern Methodist University. All Ph.D. students in the Graduate Program in Religious Studies are to be included as authorized members of the Student Association.

#### **Section B: Leadership**

The leadership of the Student Association shall be the Perkins Student Association Council, which includes the following:

- a. Executive officers (refer to Const. Article III, Sec. A);
- b. Representatives of Organized Interest Groups or OIGs (refer to Const. Art. IX, Sec. C);
- c. First, Middle, and Graduating Year Representative officers elected from the respective members of each academic class as determined by academic hours (refer to Const. Article V, Sec. A.2);
- d. Student Senators as allocated by the SMU Student Senate who shall represent the Student Association on the Senate and report the activities of the SMU Student Senate to the Student Association;
- e. A maximum of six seats to be designated to other groups (i.e. ethnic, gender, MSM, H/G, HPDS, MTS, Ph.D.) as deemed appropriate by 2/3 vote of the PSA Council; and:
- f. One representative for the Houston-Galveston extension program who shall represent the concerns of its students to the PSA Council.
- g. One Hybrid Program Degree Student Representative who shall represent the concerns of its students to the PSA council.

#### **Section C: Term Length**

All terms expire on graduation of the spring semester. Newly elected or appointed positions take office that same day.

### **Article IV. Membership Meetings**

**Section A.** The business meetings of the membership will be held monthly during the academic year.

**Section B.** The President of the organization may call other meetings.

#### **Section C. Quorum**

- i. At all meetings of the organization, a quorum shall consist of the members present in regard to voting.

#### **Section D. Procedures of PSA Council in Exercising its Legislative and Judicial Functions**

- i. A quorum of the PSA Council shall be constituted by a majority of its members as listed in Article I, Section B. Unless otherwise provided by this Constitution, all legislative actions and judicial decisions of the PSA Council shall be decided by a majority of the PSA Council members listed in Article I, Section B present and voting. The Council shall determine at its first meeting each semester the dates and times of its meetings during months for which there are classes. The President when presiding or any other member presiding shall only vote in case of a tie. The agenda for any PSA Council meeting shall be set by the President and shall consist of at least any item submitted in writing to the President as well as any other item deemed appropriate by the President in consultation with the Executive Council. The agenda of a PSA Council meeting must be distributed by the Secretary no later than 24 hours prior to a PSA Council meeting.

## **Article V. Officers**

### **Section A. Titles:**

The Executive Officers of the PSA shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Life Chair, Justice in Action Chair, and Chaplain.

### **Section B. Qualifications:**

1. All officers shall have been elected by the organization and serve for one school year
2. All officers must be current members of the organization.

### **Section C. Duties of Officers:**

#### **1. President**

- A. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the PSA and responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization;
- B. The President shall preside over the Council as Chair and shall have the power to call meetings of the Council outside of its regularly scheduled meetings.
- C. The President shall participate in committees of Perkins School of Theology as so designated by the Dean and the Associate Dean of the school, and the Associate Dean of Student Life.
- D. The president shall oversee the creation of an ad-hoc Bylaw revision committee.

#### **2. Vice President**

- A. Shall fill the remaining term of President, should the Presidency become vacant for any reason;
- B. Shall be responsible for administering elections of the Association;
- C. Shall be responsible for issues relating to the sale and promotion of PSA merchandise.
- D. The Vice-President shall participate in committees of Perkins School of Theology as so designated by the Dean and the Associate Dean, and the Associate Dean of Student Life.

3. **Secretary**
  - A. The Secretary shall be responsible for the maintenance of meeting minutes.
  - B. Shall be responsible for the planning and distributing meeting agendas.
  - C. Shall be responsible for the communication aspects of the organization including social media and/or technology representation of the organization.
1. **Treasurer**
  - A. The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the PSA and responsible for the presentation and maintenance of the budget, oversee the financial accounts of the organization and its transactions;
2. **Social Life Chair**
  - A. The Social Life Chair shall preside over meetings of the Social Life Committee;
  - B. The Chair shall report to the PSA Council regarding the activities of the Social Life committee;
  - C. The Social Life Chair shall coordinate approximately one Social Life event a month during the school year for the SMU Perkins students, faculty, and staff. It is recommended to plan a variety of events and on different days of the week in order to get more people at Perkins involved.
  - D. it is the role of both the Social Life Chair and Secretary to promote the events via social media, Perkins news, flyers, and announcements in classes.
3. **Justice in Action Chair**
  - A. The Justice in Action Chair shall preside over meetings of the Justice in Action Committee;
  - B. The Chair shall report to the PSA Council regarding the activities of the Justice in Action committee;
4. **Chaplain**
  - A. The Chaplain shall be the chief spiritual officer of the PSA and responsible for maintaining the organization's focus on the work of God in the Perkins community and the work of the PSA.
  - B. The Chaplain shall pray at the start and end of all PSA meetings

**Section D. Election Procedures:**

1. All Elections shall be administered by the Election Commission. The Election Commission must be chaired by the Vice President and shall include two other persons from the Perkins Community appointed by the President with the confirmation of a majority vote of the PSA Council. Should a Commissioner decide to run for office in an election, that Commissioner, including the Vice President, shall relinquish their position as Election Commissioner. The Vice President is not required to

resign from office. The vacant Commissioner or the chairperson position shall be filled as soon as possible by the President with the confirmation of the PSA Council at its next meeting. If no meeting is scheduled before an election or called by the President, the President's interim appointment may serve as Commissioner and assist fully in the administration of an election. If the Vice President is required to relinquish their position as chair of the Commission, the President is required to call a meeting of the PSA Council to confirm the appointment of a new Chair of the Election Commission. The Election Commission no later than a week before nominations begin shall develop and distribute to the Perkins student body a list of the offices available for election, the requirements and job responsibilities of each position, and provide all rules and regulations governing candidates' and supporters' conduct during elections administered by the PSA. All members of the Commission shall serve as election judges and have responsibility for enforcing the Constitution's provisions regarding elections and any election regulations adopted by the PSA Council. The Chair of the Election Commission shall have primary responsibility working with the Commission to develop a ballot for elections administered by the PSA.

2. The Election Commission shall accept nominations from members of the PSA as defined in Article I, Section A for at least a week prior to the election. The election commission may take up to a week from the close of nominations to collect Declarations of Candidacy from nominees in a form approved by the Commission that includes at least the biographical and platform information from the candidates. This biographical and platform information should be distributed to all students eligible to vote at least 3 days before the election begins. Candidates are free to campaign personally with students so long as such campaigning complies with any election regulations adopted by the PSA Council. Candidates for any Student Senator positions to which Perkins is entitled shall be governed by these regulations and any additional, non-conflicting requirements adopted by the Student Senate.
3. Violations of the Constitution or Election Regulations should be referred in writing to the Election Commission. The Election Commission must hold a hearing and issue a ruling on every reported alleged violation no later than 48 hours after the allegations receipt in writing. Appeals of any decision of the Election Commission shall be heard by the PSA Council no later than 48 hours after the Election Commission's decision.
4. In elections for a single position, a majority of the votes cast is required for election. In the case that no one receives a majority, the two candidates with the most votes shall participate in a run-off election. The run-off election shall be conducted over a 3 day period no sooner than 4 days after the conclusion of the primary election and no later than 1 week after the conclusion of the primary election.
5. In elections for positions held by multiple persons (Class representatives, Student Senators, etc.), the candidates who receive the most votes are

elected. No run-off elections shall be held without an order of the PSA Council for positions held by multiple persons.

6. The Election Commission shall count the ballots and announce the election results within 24 hours after the election concludes. The Election Commission shall contact all candidates and personally notify them of the results prior to publishing the results to the entire Perkins community.

**Section E. Terms of Office:**

1. Officers shall be elected annually at the end of the Spring semester.
2. Elections shall be by ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.
3. Each officer shall take office and serve a one-year term.

**Section F. Vacancies and Removal:**

1. If the vacancy occurs following the Fall election, the Executive Council, after considering applications for the vacancy, shall create a list of three nominees for a replacement to the PSA Council to fill the vacancy. The three previously selected candidates will be presented to the PSA council shall be confirmed upon 2/3 vote of the PSA Council.

**Article VI. Committees**

**Section A.**

The Social Life Committee shall be chaired by the Social Life Chairperson. The Social Life Committee shall be comprised of at least 1 representative officer from first year and middle year as well as any other members of the Association desiring to serve on the committee. The Social Life Committee shall coordinate and fund, both individually as well as through co-programming with other student groups, activities that:

- i. Nurture the community and encourage fellowship amongst members of the Perkins community; voting
- ii. Provide for the holistic well-being of the Perkins Community; and
- iii. Assist with the welcoming of International Students into the Perkins Community.

**Section B.** The Justice in Action Committee shall be chaired by the Justice in Action Chairperson. The Justice in Action Committee shall be comprised of at least 1 representative officer from first year and middle year each academic class as well as any other members of the Association desiring to serve on the committee. The Justice in Action Committee shall coordinate and fund, both individually as well as through co-programming with other student groups, activities that:

1. Raise awareness and educate the Perkins community about social issues including, but not limited to,

racism, sexism, heterosexism, and environmental responsibility;

2. Participate in established community programs or events that seek to bring about a more just society;
3. Seek to change unjust social and systemic structures locally, nationally, and globally;
4. Enable theological reflection on an experience such that students may make connections between personal piety and social holiness in such a way that challenges them to integrate this into their academic work; and;
5. Advertise events, programs, educational sessions, or opportunities to the Perkins community.

#### **Article VII. Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws or the special rules of order of the organization.

#### **Article VIII. University Policies**

##### **A. OIG Budgets**

- a. All OIGs shall submit to the Treasurer their budget request for the upcoming academic year no later than the last regularly scheduled PSA Council meeting. The outgoing Executive Council shall prepare a spreadsheet detailing the total of each OIG's request to date and the amount budgeted and actually spent during the academic year to date at the time the outgoing executive officers' terms of office expire.

##### **B. Tentative Fall Budget**

- a. The incoming Executive Council shall propose a Tentative budget for the PSA that may be accepted by the Summer PSA Council pursuant to Article II, Section C.6. The Tentative budget must be approved prior to new student orientation to allow OIGs and PSA to provide programming at the start of the Fall semester. Funds may be limited until Final Budget is approved at the first PSA Council meeting in the Fall Term.

##### **C. Responsibilities of Incoming PSA Executive Council**

- a. The incoming Executive Council may amend the PSA's spending guidelines and restrictions on the Tentative budget by majority vote subject to compliance with SMU spending guidelines for the entire university.

#### **Article IX. Amendments**

**Section A.** These bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the organization present at any regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The membership shall be notified of adopted bylaw amendments by the most feasible means.

**Section B.** Each year a by-law revision committee of 2-4 members, which is appointed by the president, shall meet to discuss and update the bylaws in anyway necessary.

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