



NSCC Student Association Common Constitution

Ratified: April 11, 2003

Amended: Feb 17, 2005/Jan 11, 2007/March 29, 2008

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DEFINITIONS

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS: NSCC students who have paid their Student Association fee.

STUDENTS' COUNCIL: Executive Committee and Program Representatives.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: President, VP Finance, VP Communications, VP Services and VP Activities.

RESPONSIBLE STUDENT CONDUCT: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will enhance educational opportunities for themselves and for other students and is consistent with the norms of their chosen occupation and the guidelines of the College. We develop our working and learning relationships from a foundation of mutual trust and respect. We reward collaboration, diversity of expression, and decisiveness.

PREAMBLE

In the belief that a democratic student government is the best means for students to play a clearly defined role in the formation of policy affecting both academic and student affairs, we the students of Nova Scotia Community College hereby create the Nova Scotia Community College Student Association.

ARTICLE 1 – NAME AND PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of this organization will be the **Nova Scotia Community College Student Association**.

NSCC Student Association relies on College administration to collect and distribute student fees, as stated in Section 81 (2) (3) of the Community Colleges Act.

Individual campus Students' Councils support the NSCC Student Association. These councils celebrate individuality and encourage a positive student experience.

NSCC students provide input into the formation of policy by maintaining consistent contact with two student representatives on the NSCC Board of Governors. In addition, student executive teams at each campus are encouraged to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with their campus Leadership Team.

Service

The NSCC SA Students' Council works towards fostering mutual cooperation and understanding and is the core decision-making unit for NSCC students. The SA Students' Council will plan, organize or support activities, projects and services that support the growth and intellectual development of the student body and provide communication and understanding between the student body and the College. We will promote opportunities for participation and involvement, protect the individual rights of students and encourage responsible student conduct.

NSCC Students' Councils model responsible student conduct by supporting the values and mission of the College.

Representation

NSCC Students' Councils shall act in the best interests of its membership as a whole.

Leadership

All SA Students' Council functions shall be undertaken with full respect for human dignity and without discrimination.

ARTICLE 2 - MEMBERSHIP

All NSCC students who pay a Student Association fee (on an annual basis) are members of the Student Association for the given academic year.



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ARTICLE 3 – OFFICERS

NSCC Student Association is generally led by an Executive Committee which must consist of a *minimum of four (4) elected officers for each campus, two of which must be President and Vice President Finance.*

Executive positions are open to all NSCC students who pay a Student Association fee. A student is not eligible to run for office at a campus other than the one he/she is currently attending.

Each campus Student Association Students' Council, the governing body of the Student Association, shall be comprised of the following voting members:

1. President
2. Vice President Finance
3. Vice President Services
4. Vice President Communications
5. Vice President Activities
6. Two (2) representatives from each program, one (1) voting and one (1) alternate

The Executive Committee has the authority, with approval from Students' Council, to hire staff to assist them in their function. (e.g. bookkeeper, coordinators)

A Student Association (SA) Advisor is required and the Executive Committee is responsible for the appointment of that advisor. A maximum of two (2) SA Advisors may be appointed and must be in place within ten academic days of the fall election results. The SA Advisor(s) is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Students' Council.

Section 1 Maintaining Executive Status

Where the question arises as to whether an executive member is unwilling or unable to fulfill his/her duties or in the case of academic suspension or academic probation, communication between the executive and SA advisor(s) will take place. The student in question will have an opportunity to discuss circumstances and all efforts to support that student will be made by both advisors and student executives.

It should be noted that academics must be a priority and if executive responsibilities are hindering a student's academic progress, he/she will be encouraged to resign.

Criminal conviction will result in immediate ejection of an SA Students' Council member without the necessity of a vote.

Cause for removal: Cause for removal shall be defined as malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of assigned duties and/or being criminally convicted while holding office.

Process for removal: To begin the process of removal, another member of the Executive must communicate to the officer the reason(s) for his/her removal at a meeting of the Executive. The officer in question must be offered an opportunity at the meeting to defend his/her self and given a period of ten academic days to improve the situation. If the situation is of an extremely serious nature, the executive member in question may be removed immediately upon a majority vote of the SA Students' Council.

After a period of ten academic days, the issue will be discussed again and if the issue has not been resolved, the Executive member will be given the option to resign or be removed.



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The College's Coordinator, Student Life is available to intervene as a third party if *extreme* circumstances exist and further assistance is needed. He/she will ensure that due process takes place.

Section 2 Resignation of Executive Members

Resignation from an Executive position requires a formal letter. This letter is to be submitted to the Executive Committee, Campus Principal and Coordinator, Student Life.

If the President resigns, the VP Services will assume the President's post. The VP Services may be officially appointed as President upon a majority vote of the SA Students' Council.

Section 3 Executive Term of Office

The term of office for all Executive members shall be from May 1st or the date of election through April 30th of the following year.

ARTICLE 4 – ELECTIONS

Section 1 Election of Officers

Students will elect a minimum of four (4) Executive Officers as outlined in Article 3 and elections must be finalized within the second week of October.

Any student who has paid a Student Association fee may put his/her name on a ballot.

Campuses shall hold Spring Elections for the positions of President, VP Finance and VP Activities and Fall Elections for the positions of VP Services and VP Communications or for the entire Executive Committee.

All recognized members of the Student Association are eligible to vote in the election and each member shall be entitled to one (1) vote for each position.

Votes will be taken by ballot. In the event of a tie, students must be informed of the circumstances and the polling stations must be opened for an additional vote. Only the tied parties will be included on the second ballot. The person obtaining the greatest number of votes for their respective position will fill the office of the Executive member. In the event of one (1) candidate running for a position, a simple majority in a Yes/No ballot must affirm the candidate.

No student shall be allowed to place his/her name on the ballot if the student is not willing and able to assume the duties of the office being sought.

Recount: Candidates may request a recount in writing to the Elections Officer, no later than five (5) working days after announcement of election results.

Appeals: The terms and conditions of the election are not subject to appeal. However, the implementation of the election process may be subject to appeal. For purposes of these elections, an Elections Appeal Committee will adjudicate any appeals. The Committee will be composed of uninvolved representatives.

Program Representatives: Program representatives are selected among students of their own program. If a particular program has more than one class, a representative shall be appointed from each.



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ARTICLE 5 – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 Program Representatives

The Program Representative is primarily responsible to provide input on the mission, vision and mandate of the Student Association and to represent the issues and views of their respective program and its students on the SA Students' Council. This position is guided by a comprehensive job description as well as the constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Student Association and the Nova Scotia Community College.

Section 2 President

The President is ultimately responsible and accountable to the membership of the NSCC Student Association with respect to the day-to-day Services of the organization. A chief spokesperson for the SA, the President is responsible for ensuring the Student Association maintains a positive profile within the NSCC community as well as locally, provincially and nationally. This position is guided by a comprehensive job description as well as the constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Student Association and the Nova Scotia Community College and is subject to performance review at the end of each semester, or as deemed necessary, by the Students' Council.

Section 3 Vice President Finance

The Vice President Finance is primarily responsible to maintain a record of the financial standing of the Student Association and to oversee the financial management of the organization, in partnership with the Executive Committee. Furthermore, the Vice President Finance is responsible to ensure that the approved Student Association budget is adhered to all times. This position is guided by a comprehensive job description as well as the constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Student Association and the Nova Scotia Community College and is subject to performance review at the end of each semester, or as deemed necessary, by the Students' Council.

Section 4 Vice President Services

The Vice President Services is primarily responsible for ensuring that the Student Association services are meeting the needs of the student body and encouraging students to become actively involved in all Students' Council subcommittees as well as other campus clubs, committees and organizations. This position is guided by a comprehensive job description as well as the constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Student Association and the Nova Scotia Community College and is subject to performance review at the end of each semester, or as deemed necessary, by the Students' Council.

Section 5 Vice President Communications

The Vice President Communications is responsible for the development and execution of the Student Association's marketing and communications strategy as well as overseeing general advertising and promotions. Furthermore, the Vice President Communications is accountable for the general recruitment and management of the SA Students' Council as well as the preparation of monthly Council agendas and minutes. This position is guided by a comprehensive job description as well as the constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Student Association and the Nova Scotia Community College and is subject to performance review at the end of each semester, or as deemed necessary, by the Students' Council.

Section 6 Vice President Activities

The Vice President Activities is primarily responsible for the development and delivery of student programming at the campus level, including social, awareness, cultural and other special events as well as sports, recreational and wellness activities. This position is guided by



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a comprehensive job description as well as the constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Student Association and the Nova Scotia Community College and is subject to performance review at the end of each semester, or as deemed necessary, by the Students' Council.

Section 7 Student Association Advisor

The Student Association Advisor is primarily responsible to help student leaders create an environment within their organization that is productive, safe, enjoyable, educational and student-centered by providing advice and support to Student Association Services and activities. This position is guided by a comprehensive job description as well as the constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Student Association and the Nova Scotia Community College and is subject to Executive Committee approval.

ARTICLE 6 – SIGNING AUTHORITY

All cheques authorized by the Students' Council must have two signatures, one being that of the VP Finance or President.

ARTICLE 7 – REPORTS

Financial Report: Provide, no later than October 15th in any given academic year, all students at the specific campus with an operating budget and explanation of how fees will be spent and deliver the same information by October 15th to the Campus management team and to the Coordinator, Student Life.

Follow accepted accounting practice in receipting, accounting for, and reporting cash flow and expense related to social events, fundraisers, and all other SA sponsored events.

Agree to respond in a timely, "open books" manner to reasonable requests from members of the Students' Council to name, clarify and, if necessary, justify the expenditure of Student Association money on particular items.

Present a full financial statement at the end of both the Fall and Winter semesters to the Coordinator, Student Life and the Manager of Administrative Services for the campus.

Provide, no later than May 31st in a given year, the membership and the Campus Management team with an independently audited statement of accounts.

Accept, in principle, and agree to verify on request, the practice that as a matter of fiduciary trust, a timely and duly approved motion of the Students' Council and passed by a majority vote must cover every expenditure of student fees.

Annual Report: The final report to be given to the Campus Principal and the Coordinator, Student Life will include the following: Activities report; Financial report; Minutes report; and Committee reports

ARTICLE 8 – COMMITTEES

Section 1

No Student Association shall continue to be recognized by the College if it is in violation of College values or student welfare, as determined by a hearing of the Council established for this purpose. The organization in question must be informed of the specific nature of the alleged violation ten academic days in advance of the hearing date to provide the organization the time to justify their actions. An extension of the hearing date may be granted at the discretion of the Council.



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Section 2 Ad Hoc Committees

The Student Association will have the power to set up committees, as necessary, as long as these committees do not overlap into the jurisdiction of a standing committee. Rather than establishing a new committee that may overlap the jurisdiction of an existing committee, the existing committee may be given additional responsibilities.

Section 3 Chartering

The Student Association shall have the power to issue charters to clubs and organizations for the purpose of promoting extra curricular activities and to prevent the misuse of College facilities.

Any group of Student Association members deciding to organize a committee must apply to the SA Students' Council for a charter.

At the time of application, the group must state goals and explain ways of accomplishing them. If the Students' Council approves, a charter will be issued and valid until the next academic year.

ARTICLE 9 – REFERENDA

Each referendum question shall deal with one (1) issue. The question must be clear, concise and not violate the Constitution and By-Laws (unless they are proposed amendments to these documents).

Any student may initiate a referendum with a petition requiring the signatures of a least 10 percent of the student body. The petition must clearly state the resolution, as it is to appear on the referendum ballot.

The referendum shall be held within ten academic days of receiving the referendum petition and balloting for the referendum shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined above.

A referendum resolution shall pass if at least one third of the student body votes in the affirmative but no referendum resolutions, regardless of voting outcome, may supercede this Constitution.

ARTICLE 10 – PUBLICITY

Within the jurisdiction of the Student Association, no notices shall be accepted for commercial, religious or political purposes without consulting with the SA Advisor.

ARTICLE 11 – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

All minutes and documents of the Students' Council and the Student Association shall be public documents, except for minutes and documents of confidential sessions. The President shall not be obliged to release information, documents or minutes concerning ideas, actions, or motions that were not acted upon.

ARTICLE 12 – SUPERCEDING CLAUSE

This Constitution supercedes all previous constitutions of the Student Association.

ARTICLE 13 – AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

Any member may make a statement of some conviction that they feel the Student Association should discuss. The resolution will be adopted upon a majority of the voting members present



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at a regular meeting of the Student Association Students' Council. These resolutions are to be kept in the permanent Council files, maintained by the VP Communications.

Motions from the Students' Council for a constitutional amendment must be passed by a majority vote of the Council present and shall not go against the purpose of the Student Association.

In order for an amendment to be made, the proposed amendment must be communicated to all campuses. Each campus will have 30 days to post the proposed amendment and to obtain feedback from their Students' Council. A final vote will take place among a provincial group of representatives from each campus Student Association.

Upon passage, the group of representatives, with the assistance of the Coordinator, Student Life, will append the amendment to the Constitution and distribute to each Student Association.

ARTICLE 14 – STUDENT ASSOCIATION FEES

Section 1 Payment

Students shall pay an annual mandatory Student Association membership fee. Each campus Student Association shall determine and administer their own fee, according to Section 82 (c) of the Community Colleges Act.

Section 2 Process for Increasing Fees

If a campus Student Association chooses to increase student fees, there must be a majority vote of the Students' Council to do so. A letter must be submitted to the Principal and the Coordinator, Student Life, stating the new fee amount.

The new fee amount must be announced no later than April 15th.

ARTICLE 15 – FINANCE

Section 1 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Student Association shall be from the first day of May to the thirtieth day of April in the following year.

The SA Students' Council must approve the use of any funds and all cheques must have two (2) signatures, one being that of the VP Finance or the President.

A budget must be prepared by the Executive Committee and approved by the Students' Council prior to the organization and execution of events and activities. (See Article 7)

ARTICLE 16 – AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

Any member may make a statement of some conviction that they feel the Student Association should discuss. The resolution will be adopted upon a majority vote of the voting members present at a regular Student Association Students' Council meeting. These resolutions are to be kept in the permanent files, maintained by the VP Communications.

Motions from the Students' Council for an amendment to the By-Laws must be passed by a majority vote of the Council present and shall not go against the purpose of the Student Association.

In order for an amendment to be made, the proposed amendment must be communicated to all campuses. Each campus will have 30 days to post the proposed amendment and to obtain feedback from their Students' Council. A final vote will take place among a provincial group of representatives from each campus Student Association.



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Upon passage, the group of representatives, with the assistance of the Coordinator, Student Life, will append the amendment to the By-Laws and distribute to each Student Association.

ARTICLE 17 – PROCEEDINGS

Section 1 Parliamentary Authority

In all matters that are not specifically stated in this Constitution, the parliamentary authority shall be "Robert's Rules of Order", Revised. The SA Executive Committee will make appropriate interpretations. All decisions must be in keeping with the administrative jurisdiction of the College. Consultation with the SA Advisor and/or the Coordinator, Student Life is recommended.

ARTICLE 18 – MEETINGS

The first meeting of the Student Association's Students' Council shall be held in the fall of each year, as soon as possible following the results of the Fall elections.

The Executive shall meet a minimum of two (2) times a month from October to May, excluding the month of December in which one meeting is acceptable.

The SA Students' Council shall meet a minimum of once (1) per month, from October to May.

Section 1 Meeting Quorum

Quorum for a meeting of the NSCC Student Association Students' Council shall consist of 50% + 1 of **filled** voting representative seats and shall be a prerequisite to conducting any formal business.

Section 2 Voting Rights

Program representatives and Executives other than the Chair may vote on motions. The Chair may not vote, except in the case of a tie. Alternates attending meetings in place of their representatives may also vote. Those alternates whose representatives are also present may not vote.

ARTICLE 19 – RATIFICATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION

This Constitution was ratified by a majority vote of all NSCC campuses on April 11, 2003.

DEDICATION

This Constitution is dedicated to the memory of Natalie Charbonneau (1974-2003), whose leadership and vision guided its creation.

Where can I get more information on the Common Constitution and the Student Association?

For more information, you may visit the Student Association office at your campus or contact NSCC's Coordinator, Student Life at (902) 491-6745.