



# **THE CONSTITUTION *of* THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT *of* THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY *of* AMERICA**

*We, the undergraduate students of The Catholic University of America, in order to form a more perfect university, uphold the rights of the individual, maintain the highest quality of education and development, provide for student cultural, social, physical and mental well-being, and represent the rights and responsibilities of the university to the students, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government.*

## **Article I – Name**

Section 1: The governing body and the official student voice of the undergraduate students shall be known as the Undergraduate Student Government, hereafter referred to as the "USG".

Section 2: The USG shall be composed of:

- A. The Executive Board
- B. The Academic Branch
- C. The Judicial Branch
- D. The Legislative Branch
- E. The Treasury Branch

Section 3: The USG shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, creed, sexual orientation or disability.

## **Article II – Executive Board**

The purpose of the Executive Board shall be to coordinate the duties and functions of all branches and other bodies of the USG, and to enact appropriate policy.

Section 1: The power of the Executive Board shall be vested in:

- A. The President of the USG, who shall vote only in the case of a tie
- B. The Academic Vice President as a voting member
- C. The Judicial Vice President as a voting member
- D. The Legislative Vice President as a voting member
- E. The Treasury Vice President as a voting member
- F. Two (2) non-voting members to be chosen by the Executive Board from a list of nominees. Each Branch of the USG shall make one nomination to comprise this list.
- G. The Secretary of the USG as a non-voting member.

Section 2: It shall be the duty of the Executive Board to:

- A. Appoint undergraduate representatives to the committees of the Board of Trustees. These appointees shall report to the Branches of the USG upon request.

- B. Act on an emergency on behalf of the USG. Any action taken in an emergency shall be reported to the appropriate Branches of the USG at the next regular meeting of these Branches to be sustained or overruled, except in the case of the committal of funds by the signing of contracts. In such a case, the Executive Board shall be empowered to act provided every reasonable attempt has been made to contact all the members of the Treasury Branch for their consultation.
- C. Approve the final form of the Operating Budget request, before the President submits it to the Treasury Branch.
- D. Determine the recipients of the annual student government awards.
- E. Choose from among its members an official liaison to the Graduate Student Association.

Section 3: The Executive Board shall have the power of committee.

- A. Application for membership on an Executive Board committee shall be open to all undergraduates. The chairpersons and each member of the Executive Board shall be appointed by the USG President, subject to simple majority approval by the Executive Board.
- B. Executive Board committees shall report to the Executive Board and shall be responsible to that Board. Executive Board committees shall report to any Branch upon request of that branch, but shall not be responsible to it.

Section 4: The President of the USG shall:

- A. Serve as the official representative of all undergraduate students, and have the ultimate authority of and responsibility to those students.
- B. Serve as the official liaison between the students and the administration of the University, except where such a duty is delegated to another member of the USG by this Constitution.
- C. Serve as the chairperson of the Executive Board.
- D. Have the power to appoint members to committees, Branches, Boards and other bodies of the USG, unless such power is delegated to another member of the USG by this Constitution. Members appointed by the President shall be subject to the advice and approval of a simple majority vote of the Branch, Board or body upon which that member shall have a vote. In the case of a non-voting position, advice and approval shall be required from the Branch, Board or body upon which that member will sit.
- E. Have the power to remove any such appointee of the President of the USG, subject to the approval of a simple majority of the Branch, Board or body upon which that member holds a vote. In the case of a non-voting position, approval for removal shall be required from the Branch, Board or body upon which that member sits.
- F. Have the power to veto any proposal, resolution, submission or decision of any Branch, Board or body of the USG, except for constitutional decisions of the Judicial Branch. The President must exercise his/her veto power within five (5) days of the passage of the such proposal, resolution, submission or decision and must, within that time, issue a notification of veto along with a list of reasons for such action to the Branch, Board or body which passed such proposal, resolution, submission or decision. Every Branch, Board or body of the USG shall have the power to override a Presidential veto of

an action of that Branch, Board or body. Override shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority, unless specified otherwise in this Constitution.

G. Be bound to any and all legislation passed by any Branch, Board or body of the USG.

H. Have the power to call special meetings of the undergraduate student body, the Executive Board, or any Branch of the USG.

I. Report at least once a month during the Fall and Spring semesters to all Branches and Boards of USG on all relevant University matters.

J. Be required, at the end of his/her term, to make available to the students a report of the activities, projects and proposals of the USG.

K. Prepare the Operating Budget request of the USG, present such a request to the Executive Board for approval and submit such a request to the Treasury Branch.

Section 5: The Academic Vice President shall:

A. Call and preside over all regular meetings of the Academic Branch. He/She shall have a vote on the Academic Branch only in the case of a tie.

B. Serve as official spokesperson for the Academic Branch.

C. Serve as undergraduate student representative to the University Academic Senate.

D. Appoint the student representatives to the Committees of the Academic Senate.

E. Serve as the liaison between the Academic Branch and the faculty.

Section 6: The Judicial Vice President shall:

A. Call and preside over all regular meetings of the Judicial Branch. He/She shall have a vote on the Judicial Branch only in the case of a tie.

B. Serve as the official spokesperson for the Judicial Branch.

C. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee on the Student Judiciary.

Section 7: The Legislative Vice President shall:

A. Call and preside over all regular meetings of the Legislative Branch. He/She shall have a vote on the Legislative Branch only in the case of a tie.

B. Serve as the official spokesperson for the Legislative Branch.

C. Serve as the chairperson of the Executive Board, in the absence of the President of the USG.

Section 8: The Treasury Vice President shall:

A. Call and preside over all regular meetings of the Treasury Branch. He/She shall have a vote on the Treasury Branch only in the case of a tie.

B. Serve as the official spokesperson for the Treasury Branch.

C. Serve as the official liaison between the Treasury Branch and the financial officers of the University.

D. Have the power to sign monetary requisitions.

E. Oversee the Operating Budget account of the USG.

Section 9: The non-voting members of the Executive Board shall:

A. Have the right to attend all meetings of the Executive Board.

B. Have the right to participate in all ways in the debates at Executive Board meetings.

- C. Have the power to introduce motions, proposals and resolutions at meetings of the Executive Board.
- D. Not have the power to vote upon any motion, proposal, resolution or any other item subject to a vote at the meetings of the Executive Board.

### **Article III – The Academic Branch**

The branch responsible for all academic affairs of USG shall be officially known as the Academic Branch. The purpose of the Academic Branch shall be to serve as liaison for the student body in all academic affairs of the University concerning undergraduate students. It shall work with the administration; the University Academic Senate; the Graduate Student Association; and other bodies of the Undergraduate Student Government, on all academic concerns and on the implementation of proposals. The Academic Branch shall also serve as a line of communication between the students and the University Academic Senate.

#### Section 1: Membership.

- A. The Academic Branch of the USG shall consist of the following voting members:
  - 1. The Academic Vice President (AVP), who shall vote only in the case of a tie.
  - 2. The First Academic Senator.
  - 3. The Second Academic Senator.
  - 4. Three (3) representatives from the school of Arts and Sciences.
  - 5. One (1) representative each from the Schools of Engineering, Architecture, Nursing, Music, and Philosophy.
  - 6. Two (2) representatives elected at-large.
  - 7. Four (4) Class Vice-Presidents, one from each of the Senior, Junior, Sophomore, and Freshman classes.
- B. Each member designated as a voting member, with the exception of the AVP, shall be given exactly one (1) vote in all matters before the Academic Branch. The AVP shall exercise his/her vote only in the case of a tie.
- C. Non-voting members of the Academic Branch may be appointed by the AVP, subject to two-thirds (2/3) approval by the Academic Branch. These non-voting members shall be entitled to all privileges and rights of voting members, with the exception of casting a vote.

Section 2: The decisions of the Academic Branch shall be the official policy of the USG in all academic matters, unless vetoed by the President of the USG.

#### Section 3: The First Academic Senator shall:

- A. Serve as one of the undergraduate student representatives to the University Academic Senate.
- B. Serve as the Vice-Chairperson of the Academic Branch.
- C. Assume the duties of the Academic Vice President in the event of his/her absence.

#### Section 4: The Second Academic Senator shall:

- A. Serve as one of the undergraduate student representatives to the University Academic Senate.
- B. Serve as liaison between the Academic Branch and the Legislative Branch.

Section 5: The representatives from the six (6) undergraduate schools shall:

- A. Serve as liaisons and representatives to their respective bodies.
- B. Meet regularly with representatives from their respective schools and departments including:
  - 1. Students of particular schools or departments.
  - 2. Departmental Undergraduate Coordinators or chairpersons.
  - 3. Respective academic organizations, professional societies and honor societies.

Section 6: The Academic Branch shall have the power of committee.

- A. All Academic Branch Committees shall have at least one (1) member who is also a voting member of the Academic Branch.
- B. Application for membership on Academic Branch committees shall be open to all undergraduates. The chairpersons and each member of the Academic Branch committees shall be appointed by the AVP, subject to simple majority approval by the Academic Branch.

#### **Article IV – The Judicial Branch**

The purpose of the Judicial Branch shall be to protect the judicial rights of the undergraduates and to enforce and interpret the provisions of the USG Constitution and of the By-Laws of the Executive Board and Branches of the USG. The Judicial Branch shall oversee the Undergraduate Student Government and all University clubs recognized by the said government. It shall settle disputes between undergraduate students, undergraduate organizations and bodies of USG.

Section 1: The members of the Judicial Branch shall consist of:

- A. The Judicial Vice President (JVP), who shall vote only in the case of a tie.
- B. Twelve (12) active Branch members, one of whom may be designated secretary of the Branch. If no Branch member is available or willing to serve as secretary, then a non-voting student, who may or may not be a work-study student, may fill this role.

Section 2: The various offices of the Judicial Branch shall be filled as follows:

- A. The JVP shall be elected as provided for in Article VII of this Constitution.
- B. All other members of the Judicial Branch shall be appointed by the Judicial Vice President, subject to simple majority approval of the returning Judicial Branch members.

Section 3: The powers and duties of the Judicial Branch are as follows:

- A. The Judicial Branch shall, in case of a question of the USG Constitution, be the final interpreter of the said Constitution.
- B. The Judicial Branch shall have jurisdiction over all matters involving constitutionality, breach of USG regulations, and conflict between undergraduate students and student organizations, except in cases involving violation of University regulations.

Section 4: The Student Judiciary.

- A. The Judicial Branch shall act in accordance with the Constitution of the Student Judiciary.

B. The Constitution of the Student Judiciary must conform to this Constitution of the USG.

C. The Constitution of the Student Judiciary shall be reviewed by the parties to it.

D. The Judicial Vice President will appoint undergraduate students to the student judiciary and the Board of Appeals as outlined in the Student Judiciary Constitution.

Section 5: The following guidelines are to be adhered to for a ruling of the Judicial Branch to be considered valid in terms of its authority:

A. No vote shall take place unless a quorum of one-half (1/2) of the standing voting members of the Judicial Branch is present during the vote.

B. For a vote to become policy, it must be agreed upon by a simply majority of a quorum of the Judicial Branch.

C. All voting members of the Judicial Branch shall be entitled to exactly one (1) vote on all issues brought before the Branch, except for the JVP, who shall vote only in the case of a tie.

Section 6: When the Judicial Branch rules on matters relating to constitutionality, a formal majority opinion of the Branch shall be written by a Branch member voting in the majority in accordance with Judicial Branch By-Laws.

A. Any member of the Judicial Branch may submit his/her own opinion, subject to the following conditions:

1. The member's opinion may either agree or disagree with the decision of the Judicial Branch.

2. When entered into the record, the member's opinion shall be clearly marked as his/her opinion. Only the approved opinion shall be considered "the opinion of the Judicial Branch."

3. The member's opinion shall be submitted to the JVP or the Secretary of the Judicial Branch no later than two (2) meetings following the approval of the majority opinion.

4. The submission of the member's opinion shall be announced by the JVP at the meeting immediately following its submission.

5. It is not necessary for the Judicial Branch to approve the member's opinion, nor shall the Judicial Branch have the power to amend the wording of the member's opinion.

G. The Secretary of the Judicial Branch shall keep a permanent record of all opinions and make them available to any person upon request.

1. This record shall be kept from year to year.

2. Once the Judicial Branch has approved the wording of the majority opinion, the Branch shall not have the power to amend that wording.

Section 7: The Judicial Branch shall have the power of committee.

A. All Judicial Branch committees shall have at least one member who is also a member of the Judicial Branch.

B. Application for membership on Judicial Branch committees shall be open to all undergraduates.

C. The Judicial Vice President shall have the power to appoint committee members (including committee chairs), subject to approval by a majority of the Judicial Branch.

### **Article V – The Legislative Branch**

The purpose of the Legislative Branch shall be to concern itself with all non-academic matters affecting student life. It shall preserve, protect and defend the rights, welfare and interests of all undergraduate students of the University.

#### Section 1: Voting Members.

- A. The voting members of the Legislative branch shall consist of:
  - 1. The Legislative Vice President (LVP), who shall only vote in the case of a tie.
  - 2. Four (4) Class Presidents, one from each of the Senior, Junior, Sophomore, and Freshman classes.
  - 3. Sixteen (16) Class Senators, four (4) from each of the four (4) classes.
- B. Each member designated as a voting member will be given exactly one vote in all matters before the Legislative Branch, with the exception of the LVP who shall vote only in the case of a tie.

#### Section 2: Non-Voting Members

- A. The non-voting members of the Legislative Branch shall include the following:
  - 1. The Rules Committee Chairman, who shall:
    - a. Be an undergraduate student at the Catholic University of America.
    - b. Be responsible for assisting the LVP in matters of parliamentary procedure.
    - c. Act as the LVP in the event of an absence of the LVP.
    - d. Act as Legislative Branch liaison to the Judicial Branch.
    - e. Be appointed by the LVP and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Legislative Branch.
  - 2. The Secretary of the Legislative Branch, who shall:
    - a. Be an undergraduate student of the Catholic University of America.
    - b. Assist the LVP in the facilitation of the Legislative Branch meetings.
    - c. Be appointed by the LVP and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Legislative Branch.
  - 3. The Second Academic Senator
  - 4. A Representative from the Resident Hall Association (RHA)
- B. Non-voting members shall be entitled to all privileges and rights of voting members, with the exception of casting a vote.

#### Section 3: The Legislative Branch shall:

- A. Have the power to make legislation, resolutions, recommendations and endorsements as are deemed necessary to carry out the purpose of this Branch.
- B. Have the power to recognize undergraduate student organizations.
  - 1. An organization desiring recognition shall have undergraduates as members.
  - 2. An organization desiring recognition shall present a written constitution to the Legislative Branch.

3. The Legislative Branch shall establish reasonable guidelines for the recognition of undergraduate student organizations.
- C. Have the power to review periodically any recognized undergraduate student organization.
1. The Legislative Branch may, if it deems necessary, revoke the recognition of any undergraduate student organization.
  2. Revocation of recognition for any undergraduate student organization shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Legislative Branch.
  3. Any organization which loses its recognition may appeal that decision to the Judicial Branch.
- D. Have the power to vote on the approval or denial of Treasury Branch funding.

Section 4: The first meeting of the Legislative Branch shall:

- A. Be called by the Legislative Vice President no later than the second week of the academic year following the General Elections.
- B. Have as its first order of business the swearing in of the Legislative Branch members who have not yet taken their oath of office.
- C. Require the approval of the Secretary of the Legislative Branch, as recognized by this Constitution. If the Branch votes to reject the appointment of the Secretary, the LVP will present a different appointee until such approval is obtained.

Section 5: Attendance of the Legislative Branch meetings.

- A. Each member of the Legislative Branch shall be informed, as the last new item of new business, the time, date and place of the next meeting of the Branch.
- B. Each member of the Legislative Branch shall be required to attend all the meetings of the Branch or to send a proxy representative.
  1. Proxy representatives shall be entitled to all privileges and powers of the member they represent for the duration of the meeting, subject to guidelines present in the Legislative Branch By-Laws.
  2. A proxy representative may be any undergraduate student at The Catholic University of America.

Section 6: The Legislative Branch shall have the power of committee.

- A. All Legislative Branch committees shall have at least one (1) member who is also a voting member of the Legislative Branch.
- B. Membership on Legislative Branch committees shall be open to all undergraduates at The Catholic University of America.
- C. The Chairpersons of the Legislative Branch committees shall be appointed by the LVP, with the advice and consent of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Legislative Branch.

Section 7: The following Legislative Branch committees shall be appointed, by the LVP:

- A. The Rules Committee: The Rules Committee shall be responsible for review of all constitutions submitted by groups applying for recognition by USG and the maintaining of a collection of current constitutions for all groups recognized by USG.



B. The Elections Committee: The Elections Committee shall be responsible for the oversight and execution of all USG elections, as provided for in Article VII of this Constitution.

C. The Administration Committee: The Administration Committee shall be established to provide for the undergraduate student body in all aspects of the university that fall under the Office of the Vice President of Administration. The committee will be responsible for the areas of the university including but not limited to: Facilities, Maintenance, Physical Plant, Postal Services, and Public Safety.

D. The Student Life Committee: The Student Life Committee shall be established to provide for the undergraduate student body in all aspects of the university which fall under the Office of the Vice President of Student Life. The committee will be responsible for the areas of the university including but not limited to: Athletics, Health Service, Housing and Residential Services, and Wellness.

### **Article VI – Treasury Branch**

The Treasury Branch shall be responsible for all monetary affairs of the USG and shall advise the USG on all fiscal policies.

Section 1: The Treasury Branch shall consist of:

- A. The Treasury Vice President (TVP), who shall vote only in the case of a tie.
- B. One (1) Branch Assistant as a voting member.
- C. One (1) Secretary as a non-voting member.
- D. Four (4) Class Treasurers, one from each of the four (4) classes as voting members.
- E. Three (3) At-large voting members.

Section 2: The various offices of the Treasury Branch shall be filled as follows:

- A. The TVP shall be elected as provided for in Article VII of this Constitution.
- B. The three (3) At-large voting members and the Branch Assistant shall be appointed by the TVP, subject to simple majority approval by the newly elected Class Treasurers
- C. The four (4) Class Treasurers shall be elected as provided for in Article VIII of this Constitution.

Section 3: Funding by the USG shall be governed by the following regulations:

- A. Neither the Treasury Branch nor the Catholic University of America shall be held responsible for any debt incurred by an organization above and beyond its allocation for a set year. Neither the Treasury Branch nor the Catholic University of America shall be held responsible for any debts incurred before an organization has received a budget allocation. Whenever an organization accepts USG recognition and/or support, it and its representatives acknowledge these facts.
- B. The Treasury Branch By-Laws shall include guidelines with which each organization must comply. Failure to comply with these guidelines shall render an organization liable to a freezing of their budget allocation:
  - 1. Freezing of the budget allocation shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Treasury Branch.

2. An organization which has its budget frozen may appeal that action to the Legislative Branch.
  3. Upon appeal by an organization which has had its budget allocation frozen, the Legislative Branch shall have the power to override this action by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.
  4. Budget allocations may be unfrozen by a simple majority vote of the Treasury Branch.
- C. If an organization loses recognition by the USG, assets of that organization revert to the USG.

Section 4: To petition the Treasury Branch for funds, an organization must:

- A. Be registered with the Office of Campus Programs.
- B. Be recognized by the Legislative Branch of the USG.
- C. Have a current constitution on file with the Rules Committee of the Legislative Branch.
- D. Adhere to the guidelines for student organizations as directed by the Student Organizational Manual and other established guidelines of the Office of Campus Programs.
- E. Be active during the current academic year.
- F. Have cleared all past debts.
- G. Not charge dues, unless such dues go directly to a parent organization.

Section 5: The Catholic University of America shall collect an activity fee from the undergraduate students. Changes in the magnitude of this fee shall require a student referendum.

Section 6: The Treasury Branch shall propose a budget distributing the activities fee to recognized student organizations, subject to the two-thirds (2/3) majority approval of the Legislative Branch and the approval of the USG President.

- A. The Treasury Branch shall require all recognized organizations of the USG desiring funds from the USG to submit:
  1. An itemized budget requesting funds for the forthcoming year.
  2. A copy of their present operating budget and receipts for the money spent to date.
- B. The Treasury Branch shall provide each organization with a hearing to explain its request.
- C. The Treasury Branch shall present a budget, which has been approved by four-fifths (4/5) of the Branch, in an open hearing of the Legislative Branch for approval or rejection.
- D. If the Legislative Branch approves the Treasury Branch budget by a two-thirds (2/3) majority, the budget shall be sent to the USG President for approval.
- E. If the Legislative Branch does not approve the Treasury Branch budget by a two-thirds (2/3) majority, the second phase of budget hearings, involving both Branches, shall occur.

Section 7: In the event that the Legislative Branch does not accept the Treasury Branch Budget for the forthcoming year, the following procedures shall be followed to determine the USG budget:

- A. The TVP shall write a schedule for particular clubs requesting USG funding and submit this schedule to the LVP. In the event that the LVP rejects this schedule, the TVP and the LVP shall work together to decide on a schedule acceptable to both.
- B. The USG shall provide the student body, if requested, with the details of the schedule.
- C. The Legislative Branch and the Treasury Branch shall meet, in accordance with the approved schedule, in a joint meeting of the USG. During this meeting, the following guidelines shall exist:
1. The Legislative Branch shall attempt to approve the budget for the particular club being discussed, during the duration of the time allotted.
  2. After approving a budget for the particular club, the Treasury Branch shall either accept or reject the Legislative Branch recommendation.
  3. In the event of rejection of the Treasury Branch, the Legislative Branch shall continue discussing the particular club's budget until the time expires.
  4. If, after time expires, no compromise is reached, the Legislative Branch shall vote on whether the budget is debatable or not.
    - a. If the Legislative Branch votes with a two-thirds (2/3) majority that the budget is un-debatable, the Treasury Branch must approve that motion with a two-thirds (2/3) vote. If this motion is approved, the particular un-debatable budget shall go to the President of the USG. The President shall have two (2) days to write a budget for that particular club. The President's budget shall be approved by a simple majority of both the Treasury Branch and the Legislative Branch. If the President's budget is rejected, he/she shall receive a listing of grievances with the budget, and the USG President shall re-write the Presidential recommendations. This process shall continue a total of three (3) times, until which the President shall write the particular budget along with the LVP and the TVP. This will be the final itemized budget for that particular organization.
    - b. If the Legislative Branch does not vote with a two-thirds (2/3) majority that the budget is un-debatable, or the Treasury Branch rejects the Legislative Branch's motion, that particular budget shall be tabled.
    - c. Tabled budgets shall automatically be moved to the end of the schedule, unless time constraints allow the Legislative Branch to remove the particular budget from the table.
  5. If the Legislative Branch passes a budget with time remaining, they may remove a budget from the table with a simple majority vote of both Branches, or move on to the next budget.
- D. At the end of the agreed schedule of the budget hearing process, the TVP and LVP will reschedule a specific day and time within a two (2) week period for the re-evaluation of all unresolved budgets.
- E. The Treasury Branch shall then review, revise and re-submit these budgets to the Legislative Branch on the day agreed upon by both Branches.
- F. The entire process shall continue until said budgets are formed which are agreeable to the Treasury Branch and the Legislative Branch. In the event of an impasse between the Branches, both Branches may send the unresolved budget to the President, following the conditions listed in Section 7, Subsection C, 5. a. of this Article.

G. In the event the proposed budget should be vetoed by the President, it must be returned to the Legislative Branch and the Treasury Branch within five (5) days of its submission, accompanied by specific reasons for its rejection. The Legislative Branch and the Treasury Branch may submit an amended version of the budget to the President, or the Legislative Branch and the Treasury Branch may override the Presidential veto by a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

#### Section 8: Contingency

A. Each year the USG budget shall contain a contingency fund.

B. Allocations from the contingency fund must be allocated by the Treasury Branch with the approval of the Legislative Branch and the USG President.

1. The Treasury Branch, after meeting with those persons requesting a portion of these funds, shall recommend an amount for allotment. This recommendation shall then be submitted to the Legislative Branch for acceptance or rejection.

Should the recommendation be rejected, the request shall return to the Treasury Branch with the reasons for the rejection. The Treasury Branch shall then review, revise and resubmit the request to the Legislative Branch for its approval.

2. If, after a period of three (3) weeks from the submittal of the original request to the Legislative Branch, no accord can be reached between the Legislative Branch and the Treasury Branch by means of the above procedure, the final decision shall rest with the President of the USG with the advice and consent of the Executive Board.

### **Article VII – Elections and Appointments**

The election and appointment to office of the USG officials shall be governed by the following procedures:

Section 1: The Elections Committee of the Legislative Branch shall establish operational procedures for nomination and election of elected members of USG. The Elections committee shall organize, supervise and compile the results of all elections for the offices of the USG.

#### Section 2: Terms of office for USG officials.

A. Members elected in General Elections and members appointed at the time of General Elections shall begin their official duties at noon on the fourteenth (14th) day of April, following their election. Their term shall consist of that summer, the following Fall semester and the following Spring semester, and shall terminate with Spring Inaugurations.

B. Members elected in the Fall Elections and members appointed at the time of the Fall Elections shall begin their official duties no later than one week following their election or appointment. Their term shall consist of that Fall Semester and the following Spring Semester, and shall terminate with Senior Graduation Day.

C. Members appointed/elected to fill a vacancy shall serve until the time that the office would normally terminate. Their term consists of the remainder of the term of that office.

D. Members of committees shall serve from the time of their appointment until one of the following conditions are met:

1. The work of the committee and the results reported by the body originally appointing the committee. (This applies only to ad-hoc committees.)
  2. The body originally appointing the committee votes by a simple majority to remove a member.
  3. The Fall Semester begins. (Note that the body originally appointing the committee may re-appoint its members at the start of each Fall semester.
- E. Each semester shall be considered one "session" of the USG.

Section 3: USG members shall meet the following eligibility requirements:

- A. No person who is on disciplinary probation shall be eligible to hold any USG office. No person on disciplinary probation shall be eligible for election or appointment to any USG office. Any USG member placed on disciplinary probation shall immediately be removed from office.
- B. Only undergraduate students of The Catholic University of America shall be eligible to hold any USG office or seat.
- C. Only persons in good academic standing (as certified by the Dean of Students) shall be eligible to hold any USG office.
- D. Offices on the Executive Board shall be open only to students who have attained Sophomore academic status.
- E. No person may fill more than one voting position on more than one Branch.

Section 4: General Elections for USG positions shall be governed by the following considerations:

- A. All elected members of USG shall be elected during General Elections, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution.
- B. A forum for nomination of candidates for General Elections shall be held on the second (2nd) Wednesday following Spring Break. Nominations shall be open for five (5) days following the day of the Nominations Forum.
- C. The election of members nominated by this process shall be called General Elections and shall take place on the fourth (4th) Wednesday following Spring Break.
- D. The positions elected during General Elections include but are not limited to:
  1. The President of the Undergraduate Student Government.
  2. The Vice Presidents of each branch.
  3. All positions on the Academic Branch, as listed in Article III, Section 1 (A) of this Constitution.
  4. The Presidents and Vice Presidents of the upcoming Senior, Junior and Sophomore Classes.
  5. The Class Senators of the upcoming Sophomore, Junior and Senior Classes.
  6. The Commuter Representatives of the upcoming Senior, Junior and Sophomore Classes.
  7. The Class Treasurers of the upcoming Senior, Junior, and Sophomore Classes.

Section 5: Fall Elections for USG positions shall be governed by the following considerations:

- A. Fall Elections will be held on the last Wednesday of September.
- B. Nominations of candidates for elected positions of the USG which are elected during the Fall Elections shall not be accepted later than five (5) days prior to election day.

- C. The positions elected during Fall Elections include but are not limited to:
1. The President and Vice President of the Freshman Class.
  2. The four (4) Class Senators of the Freshman Class.
  3. The Commuter Representative of the Freshman Class.
  4. The Freshman Class Treasurer.

Section 6: Since the power of the USG ultimately resides in the undergraduate student body and is delegated through the electoral votes of that body, the appointed members of the USG shall require approval by those members of the USG elected by the students.

A. At the time of General Elections, the Branch Assistant, the three (3) At-Large members, and the Branch Secretary for the following year's Treasury Branch shall be appointed as follows:

B. At the beginning of the Fall semester, any remaining vacancies in the five (5) appointed positions on the Treasury Branch shall be filled in the following manner:

C. Approval shall require a simple majority of this session.

D. Because this power stems from the fact of being elected, and not from membership on any particular Branch, each elected member of USG shall have exactly one (1) vote on each issue before the session, without regard to the Branch or Board upon which that elected member sits.

E. This approval vote shall be necessary only to confirm the initial members of each appointed Branch or Board for each year, or until a quorum of that Branch or Board is reached. Any vacancies arising subsequent to the approval session shall be resolved through the procedures outlined in Article VIII, Section 12 of this Constitution.

Section 7: Members of the USG shall be removed from office under the following conditions:

A. After three (3) un-excused absences from his/her Branch, Board or body, any member of the USG may be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of that Branch, Board or body.

B. Recall proceedings may be instituted against any member of the USG, including the members of the Executive Board.

1. A petition to recall must be presented to the Legislative Branch.

2. Petitions to recall shall contain a definition of the word "recall." Recall shall be defined as, "move to convene a vote to remove from office."

3. The petition for recall must have a minimum number of signatures.

a. A petition for recall of a member of the Executive Board, a member of the Treasury Branch, a member of the Judicial Branch, either Academic Senator or an Academic Branch Representative-at-Large shall require a minimum of one hundred (100) signatures of undergraduate students.

b. A petition for recall of any other member of the US shall require the signatures of fifty (50) constituents of that member or of fifty percent (50%) of his/her constituency, whichever is less.

4. The Elections Committee of the Legislative Branch shall verify the signatures of each signer of the petition, in order to validate the petition.

5. The Elections Committee shall conduct a recall election, which shall be held no sooner than seven (7) school days and no longer than three (3) weeks after verification of the petition.
6. There shall be a minimum voter turnout required for the success of a petition for recall:
  - a. For recall of a member of the Executive Board, a member of the Treasury Branch, a member of the Judicial Branch, either Academic Senator or an Academic Representative-at-Large, the minimum turnout shall be twenty-five percent (25%) of the current undergraduate student body.
  - b. For recall of any other member of USG, the minimum turnout shall be fifty percent (50%) of the constituents of that member.
  - c. In order for an existing member to be removed, two-thirds (2/3) of the voter turnout as specified in Subsections a and b above must vote in favor of removing said member from his or her seat.

Section 8: Vacancies in USG positions shall be filled as follows:

- A. In the event of a vacancy in a position not seated on the Executive Board, a replacement shall be appointed by the head of the Branch, Board or body upon which the position holds a vote, or upon which the position sits if the position is a non-voting one. The replacement shall require approval of the Branch, Board or body upon which he/she shall hold a vote in the case of a voting position, or upon which he/she shall sit in the case of a non-voting position.
  1. Legislative Branch:
    - a. In the event of a vacancy for a class seat on the branch in a class which had more candidates than available seats at the time of the election, the candidate for that seat with the next highest total of votes shall be awarded the seat.
    - b. In the event that this candidate cannot fill the vacancy, the candidate with the next highest total shall be awarded the seat (this continues down the line of remaining candidates).
    - c. In the event that there are no more candidates from the original election to fill the seat, the LVP shall consult with the exiting class officer and appoint a replacement officer for that seat, to be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the branch.
- B. In the event of a vacancy in a voting position seated upon the Executive Board, which is not the Presidency, a replacement shall be appointed by the President, subject to the approval of a simple majority of the Branch or Board, which the replacement shall oversee. A vacancy in a non-voting position on the Executive Board shall be filled by a replacement named by the President of USG and approved by a simple majority of the Executive Board.
- C. In the event of a vacancy in the Presidency of USG, the Legislative Vice President shall take on the role of Acting President. The Elections Committee shall then hold a special election for the position no later than the fourth (4th) Wednesday following the vacancy.

Section 9: Referenda. The undergraduate student body shall have the power to call for referenda on USG policy, governed by the following procedures:

- A. A petition for referendum shall require the signatures of at least fifteen percent (15%) of the undergraduate body.
- B. The petition for referendum shall be submitted to the Legislative Branch.
- C. The referendum vote shall be run by the Elections Committee within six (6) weeks of the submission of the petition for referendum.
- D. Passage of a referendum shall require approval by a simple majority of the undergraduate students who vote in the referendum. A minimum voter turnout of twenty-five percent (25%) of the undergraduate student body shall be required for a valid referendum vote.
- E. Passage of a referendum requires the USG to adopt the policy obtained within the referendum.
- F. By USG policy, it is meant any questions under consideration and/or actions taken by the Legislative Branch and/or Academic Branch and/or Treasury Branch. Note that the actions of the Judicial Branch are not subject to referendum.
- G. By referendum, it is meant a singular question or proposition.

Section 10: Inauguration.

- A. All members elected in General Elections shall be inaugurated at a joint session of the Branches and Boards of USG. This joint session shall be known as Spring Inaugurations and shall take place at noon on the fourteenth (14th) day of April, following General Elections.
- B. The outgoing President of the USG shall present his/her final report to this joint session.
- C. The outgoing President shall then administer the following oath to the new President of the USG:

"I, n. n., do hereby promise to serve the undergraduate students to the best of my ability and to faithfully uphold the Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government of The Catholic University of America."
- D. The new President shall then administer the above oath to the newly elected members of the USG.
- E. Any member elected after General Elections shall take the above oath, administered by the head of the Branch or Board upon which that member shall have a vote, or upon which he/she shall sit if his/her position is a non-voting position. The member shall not assume the duties or privileges of his/her office until the above oath is taken.

### **Article VIII – By-Laws**

Each branch, board or other body of the USG shall have the power to establish By-Laws to aid and order the execution of its plan.

Section 1: By-Laws, to be established, shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the body in question.

Section 2: By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the body in question.



Section 3: By-Laws must be established or amended at a regular meeting of the body in question.

Section 4: Any undergraduate student may ask to see the By-Laws of any body of the USG. The head of that body shall be required to show the By-Laws to any undergraduate making such request.

Section 5: By-Laws of all Branches, Boards and bodies shall exist from year to year. Each branch, board or body shall review their By-Laws by the third regular meeting of each academic year.

Section 6: The head of any body of the USG shall be required to submit a copy of the body's current By-Laws to the Judicial Vice President at the start of the academic year and upon request.

Section 7: All by-laws must be consistent with the USG Constitution.

### **Article IX – Amendment**

The power to amend the Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government shall be vested in the Legislative Branch of the USG, subject to the following considerations:

Section 1: All amendments must originate in the Legislative Branch.

Section 2: The Legislative Branch shall vote upon an amendment no earlier than two (2) weeks from its submission. It shall vote on an amendment no later than six (6) weeks from its submission.

Section 3: For acceptance, an amendment shall require approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Legislative Branch

Section 4: For acceptance, an amendment shall require approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of each directly-affected Branch or Board, and a simple majority of all other unaffected Branches or Boards.

Section 5: A copy of the amendment must be given to the Judicial Vice President, who shall then give a copy to the head of each Branch and Board of the USG, as well as to the members of the Judicial Branch.

### **Article X – Ratification**

Section 1: Ratification of this Constitution shall take place as follows:

A. This Constitution shall be presented to the Legislative Branch at a regular meeting of that Branch.

B. The Legislative Branch will have no more than two (2) regular meetings to vote on ratification.

C. Ratification by the Legislative Branch shall be achieved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

D. No more than five (5) days after the Legislative Branch votes for ratification, the President of the USG shall call a special meeting of the USG to complete the ratification proceedings:

1. At this meeting, each of the voting members of the following bodies of the USG shall have exactly one (1) vote:

- a. The Academic Branch (excluding the AVP).
- b. The Judicial Branch (excluding the JVP).
- c. The Treasury Branch (excluding the TVP).
- d. The Executive Board of the USG.

2. Ratification of this Constitution shall be achieved after each of the above-mentioned bodies of the USG passes the Constitution by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

E. When this Constitution is ratified by the above mentioned procedures, it shall immediately nullify and replace the existing Constitution of the USG, ratified in January 1978, and this Constitution shall become the official Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government of The Catholic University of America.

F. Immediately following ratification of this Constitution, the Transitional Government procedures outlined in Article XI of this Constitution shall come into effect.

### **Article XI – Transitional Government**

Section 1: The following procedure shall be enacted immediately following the ratification of this Constitution:

A. The former USG shall be, except in situations explained below, instantly and permanently dissolved.

B. Emergency powers of each Branch shall flow to the former USG President, the former Vice Presidents and the former Chairpersons of each correlating Branch or Board.

1. Within three (3) hours of the ratification of this Constitution, the former President of the USG, each former Vice President and each former Chairperson shall be sworn in to protect and uphold this Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government. These persons shall be sworn in by the Dean of Students or his/her appointee.

2. In the two (2) hours following the swearing-in of the above mentioned persons, the newly sworn-in President of the USG shall administer the oath of office to uphold this constitution of the Undergraduate Student Government to all the members of the former Legislative Branch and all the members of the former Academic Branch except the Engineering and Architecture Representatives.

3. The former Academic Branch Representatives from the School of Engineering and Architecture shall be sworn-in under their new respective titles of School of Engineering Representative or School of Architecture Representative, in accordance to which school they represent.

C. Within twenty-four (24) hours of the ratification of this Constitution, a special elections committee shall form:

1. Members of this committee shall be chaired by the former chairperson of the former Legislative Branch Elections Committee, and shall consist of all former members of the former Legislative Branch Elections Committee, in addition to two (2) Constitutional Review Committee spokespersons.