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Home (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg>) » Records (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/>) » Constitution

## Constitution

### The Constitution of the Vanderbilt Student Government

#### **PREAMBLE**

We, the undergraduate students of Vanderbilt University, in order to: form a cohesive and responsible student government, act on behalf of students needs and interests, establish partnerships with members of the faculty and administration, contribute to strengthening the bonds among members of the student body, improve the cultural, social, recreational, and intellectual character of the campus, and empower undergraduates to foster a living-learning community, do hereby establish this Constitution for the Vanderbilt Student Government of Vanderbilt University.

#### **ARTICLE I. Names, Powers, Objectives**

##### **Section I. The Name of the Organization**

The name of this organization shall be the Vanderbilt Student Government of Vanderbilt University, hereafter in this Constitution referred to as VSG.

##### **Section II. Purposes and Objectives**

The purposes and objectives shall be:

1. To empower the undergraduate student body;
2. To advise and make recommendations to the administration on policy matters;
3. To provide a forum for relevant campus issues that is accessible to student leaders;
4. To develop character and leadership aptitude within the body;
5. To contribute to the sense of community and connection across campus;
6. To engage students in the intellectual and social life of the University;
7. To promote the total well-being of each undergraduate student.

##### **Section III. Membership and Officer Eligibility**

###### Clause 1: Membership

All duly registered undergraduate students of Vanderbilt University shall be party to the Vanderbilt Student Government and shall be subject to this Constitution and its official documents.

###### Clause 2: Officer Eligibility

As a requisite to entering office, all duly elected or appointed officers shall be required to have a minimum 2.75 cumulative grade point average, and be a full-time student. All officers must maintain the minimum grade point average while serving their terms.

The term "officer" shall be reserved to refer to all elected and appointed members of VSG, regardless of position.

#### **ARTICLE II. Governmental Composition and Structure**

##### **Section I. Executive Board**

The Executive Board shall consist of:

1. Student Body President
2. Executive Vice President
3. Speaker of the Senate
4. Chief of Staff

The requirements of these offices are given in Article III of this document.

##### **Section II. The Senate**

The Senate shall be composed of the Speaker of the Senate, the elected Academic Senators, the elected Council Presidents and the elected Residential Senators. The powers of this body and the requirements of its members are given in Article IV of this document.

### **Section III. Committees**

There shall exist a body of committees overseen by the Executive Vice President.

The powers and compositions of these committees are given in Article V of this document.

### **Section IV. The Cabinet**

The Student Body President shall appoint a Cabinet to assist in the operation of the organization. The composition of the Cabinet is detailed in Article VI of this document.

## **ARTICLE III. The Executive Board**

### **Section I. The Student Body President**

#### Clause 1. Elections

The Student Body President shall be elected annually by the undergraduate student body by means of a simple majority vote. All fully enrolled undergraduate students of Vanderbilt University shall be eligible to participate in the voting process. The presidential candidate shall choose a running mate to serve as Executive Vice President.

#### Clause 2. Duties

The duties of the Student Body President shall be:

1. To have administrative responsibility for carrying out the agenda of VSG;
2. To serve as the official representative of VSG to University committees, student groups, and visiting dignitaries on campus;
3. To promote the interests of Vanderbilt students and the agenda of VSG at campus events and with University administrators;
4. To have executive oversight and veto power over all motions passed by the Senate;
5. To make all official appointments as outlined by the constitution to ensure the adequate and efficient administration of VSG related functions and institutions, to be confirmed by a simple majority vote of confirmation by the Senate;
6. To establish, under the auspices of VSG and with confirmation of membership by the Senate, *ad hoc* committees to address pressing student issues which may arise and do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Standing Committees herein established.

### **Section II. Executive Vice President**

#### Clause 1. Elections

The Executive Vice Presidential candidate shall run on a ticket with the Student Body Presidential candidate.

#### Clause 2. Duties

The duties of the Executive Vice President shall be:

1. To oversee and serve as an *ex-officio* member of the VSG committees;
2. To serve as a liaison between VSG Committee Chairs and the Executive Board;
3. To promote the agenda of VSG and the Student Body President at campus events and with University administrators;
4. To help establish and enforce guidelines for *ad hoc* committees;
5. To serve as Student Body President in the event that the President is unable to fulfill his or her duties or is removed from office.
6. To appoint a new Executive Vice President who shall be confirmed by the Senate in the event that the President leaves office before the end of his or her term.

#### Clause 3. Vacancy and Succession

Should the Executive Vice President resign or be unable to carry out his or her duties, the Student Body President shall nominate a new Executive Vice President subject to confirmation by the Senate.

### **Section III. Speaker of the Senate**

#### Clause 1. Elections

The Speaker of the Senate shall be elected by a simple majority vote by the standing Senate immediately following the election of the Student Body President and Executive Vice President of each year. The newly elected Speaker shall be a current member of the Senate.

#### Clause 2. Duties

The duties of the Speaker of the Senate shall be:

1. To preside over the Senate legislative sessions.
2. To coordinate and set the agenda for all Senate meetings.

3. To maintain accountability for individual Senators and their performance academically, socially and in respect to his or her office.
4. To serve as chief representative of the Senate to the Executive Board.
5. To vote on senatorial resolutions in the event of a tie.

#### Clause 3. Vacancy and Succession

Should the Speaker of the Senate resign, be removed from office, or be unable to carry out his or her duties, the Student Body President shall nominate a current member of the Senate to the position of Speaker of the Senate, subject to a simple majority vote of confirmation by the Senate.

### **Section IV. Chief of Staff**

#### Clause 1. Appointment

The Chief of Staff shall be appointed by the Student Body President. The Senate shall confirm this appointment by a simple majority vote. The appointed Chief of Staff shall have served no less than one complete term as an officer of VSG.

#### Clause 2. Duties

The duties of the Chief of Staff shall be:

1. To oversee the VSG cabinet.
2. To manage and oversee the VSG budget.
3. To serve as the chief representative of the Cabinet on the Executive Board.

#### Clause 3. Vacancy and Succession

Should the Chief of Staff resign, be removed from office, or be unable to carry out his or her duties, the Student Body President shall appoint a new Chief of Staff. This appointment shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the Senate.

## **ARTICLE IV. The Senate**

### **Section I. Composition**

The composition of the Senate is set by the criteria for Senate Membership enumerated in the VSG Statutes, 2.1

### **Section II. Elections**

The Speaker of the Senate shall be elected according to Article III, Section 3, Clause 1 of this document.

The Senators shall be elected by the undergraduate student body in a simple majority vote during the first six weeks of the Fall term. The Attorney General and Student Body President shall set the date of the election by the end of the preceding spring term.

All members of the Senate shall be elected on the same day.

There shall be no more than thirty voting members of the VSG Senate.

The Speaker of the Senate shall ask the Honor Council to appoint a non-voting representative prior to the VSG Fall Election.

### **Section III. Duties**

The duties of the Senate shall be:

1. To represent the best interests of the undergraduate student body.
2. To voice student concerns regarding academic affairs.
3. To vote on all resolutions presented to the Senate.
4. Senators shall serve on a VSG committee or School Council.
5. The Senate must maintain a quorum of no less than 2/3 of its members present in order to vote on any matter.

## **ARTICLE V. VSG Committees**

### **Section I. Composition**

The VSG Standing Committees shall be determined by the Statutes to the Constitution.

Additional ad hoc committees shall be created as the President deems necessary. The leadership of an ad hoc committee shall be appointed by the Student Body President and confirmed by a simple majority vote of the Senate.

Each Committee shall consist of:

1. Two co-chairs
  1. One Senator, whose placement shall be determined by the Executive Board.
  2. One undergraduate student to be appointed by the Student Body President and confirmed by a simple majority vote of the Senate.
  3. The Executive Vice President as an *ex-officio* member
  4. Additional committee members, who shall be appointed by the Executive Board.

**Section II. Duties**

The duties of the Committees shall be:

1. To seek student input from constituents falling under the jurisdiction of their respective committee.
2. **b.** To continually improve student and campus life through the resources and appropriate channels of their committee.
3. **c.** To assist in advancing the agenda of VSG as set by the Student Body President falling under the jurisdiction of their respective committee.

**ARTICLE VI. The Cabinet****Section I. Composition**

The Cabinet shall be composed of the following officers:

1. Chief of Staff
2. Treasurer
3. Attorney General
4. Other offices shall be determined by the Statutes to this document

All Cabinet members shall be appointed by the Student Body President and confirmed by the standing Senate.

**Section II. Duties**

The duties of the Chief of Staff are outlined in Article III, Section IV, Clause 2 of this document.

The duties of the Treasurer are to administer and maintain the budget and oversee all VSG spending transactions.

The duties of the Attorney General shall be:

1. To act as chief parliamentarian of VSG.
2. To oversee all VSG elections.
3. To be responsible for ensuring the legality of VSG activities with respect to all VSG and University policies.
4. To initiate investigative procedures for removal from office in accordance with Article VIII.
5. To maintain a complete and accurate record of all resolutions which are formally considered by the Senate.
6. To appoint and oversee an Election Commission prior to each VSG Election. In addition to the duties of the Election Commission, criteria for selection and membership are enumerated in the VSG Statutes, 5.1

**ARTICLE VII. Residential Representation.**

Students are to be represented by House Advisory Councils and Residential Senators residing in their respective residential areas. The composition and function of these bodies are enumerated in the Statutes 2.1.

**ARTICLE VIII. Vacancies and Removal From Office****Section I. Removal of Elected Officials****Clause 1. Petitions of Removal**

Upon receipt of a petition containing the signatures of ten percent of an elected official's constituency, the Attorney General shall begin an investigation into the questioned affairs of the official and shall report his or her findings to the Senate.

**Clause 2. Votes of No Confidence**

If the Senate shall, by two-thirds vote, show no confidence in an elected official, the Attorney General shall begin an investigation into the questioned affairs of the official and shall report his findings to the Senate.

**Clause 3. Failure to Fulfill the Duties of Office or Requirements for Eligibility**

If an official is repeatedly absent from meetings, fails to fulfill his or her post, or becomes academically ineligible to serve in VSG, the Attorney General shall begin an investigation into the questioned affairs of the official and shall report his findings to the Senate.

**Clause 4. Removal from Office**

If two-thirds of the Senate shall decide after hearing the investigation report of the Attorney General that there shall be adequate grounds for removal from office, the elected official in question shall lose all rights, powers, and privileges of his or her office.

**Clause 5. Replacement of Elected Officials**

After an elected official has been removed by VSG, the Attorney General shall hold a special election for the vacant office.

**Section II. Removal of Appointed Officials****Clause 1. Votes of No Confidence**

1. If the Senate shall, by a two-thirds vote, show no confidence in an appointed official, the Attorney General shall begin an investigation into removal of the official and shall report his findings to the Senate.
2. Should the official in question be the Attorney General, the Executive Vice President shall conduct the investigation and report his or her findings to the Senate.

#### Clause 2. Failure to Fulfill the Duties of Office or Requirements for Eligibility

If an official is repeatedly absent from meetings, fails to fulfill his or her post, or becomes academically ineligible to serve in VSG, the Attorney General shall begin an investigation into the questioned affairs of the official and shall report his findings to the Senate.

#### Clause 3. Removal from Office

If two-thirds of the Senate decides after hearing the investigation report that there are adequate grounds for removal from office, the appointed official in question shall lose all rights, powers, and privileges of his or her office.

#### Clause 4. Replacement of Appointed Officials

After an appointed official has been removed by VSG, the position

shall be filled in the same way as the original appointment.

### **ARTICLE IX. Parliamentary Procedure**

#### **Section I. Roberts Rules of Order**

All legislative meetings of VSG shall be conducted under Robert's Rules of Order and the VSG Statutes.

#### **Section II. Quorum and Voting**

All voting members of VSG shall receive one vote.

In order to vote on a resolution, two-thirds of the elected officers must be present.

All resolutions must be passed by a simple majority vote in the Senate and be approved by the Student Body President.

The Attorney General shall review all resolutions passed by the Senate and advise the President on the legality of the resolution in regards to the VSG Constitution and University Policy.

If the Student Body President shall Veto a resolution, it may then be reintroduced in the Senate. If the resolution receives a two-thirds majority vote in the chamber, the veto may be overridden without the President's consent.

#### **Section III. Resolutions**

Resolutions may be initiated by any student or officer of VSG, but must be co-authored by a current voting member of the Senate or a member of the VSG Executive Board.

All resolutions passed must be signed by the Speaker of the Senate and the Student Body President to be valid.

#### **Section IV. Statutes**

The Senate shall have the power to enact and alter Statutes pursuant to this document by a simple majority vote.

### **ARTICLE X. Finances**

#### **Section I. VSG Budget**

The VSG Statutes shall govern the budget.

### **ARTICLE XI. Amendments and Revisions**

#### **Section I. Initiation of an Amendment to the Constitution**

Any member of the Senate or the VSG Executive Board may present an amendment to this Constitution.

#### **Section II. Ratification of the Amendment by the Senate**

In order to appear on the ballot for a referendum, any proposed amendment must receive a two-thirds majority vote by Senate.

#### **Section III. Ratification of the Amendment by the Student Body**

A proposed amendment shall appear in its complete written form in a referendum vote.

A simple majority vote by the undergraduates of the University shall be required for ratification of this Constitution or any proposed amendments.

[Last updated on September 6, 2011, by Attorney General Lucas Scholl]

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### Airport Express

Today **Tuesday, April 9**

Showing events after 4/9.

[Look for earlier events](#)

#### Tuesday, April 9

12:00pm **Free Cone Day at Ben &**

6:00pm **PSF Worship**

6:30pm **Vanderbilt Baseball vs. '**

7:30pm **International Lens Film '**

#### Wednesday, April 10

8:00pm **VU Harmonics First Cor**

10:00am **Fast fFAST**

Events shown in time zone:

Central Time



### Records

- Resolutions (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/resolutions/>)
- VSG Budgets- Current and Historical (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/2011-2012-budget/>)
- Historical Organizational Governing Documents (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/historical-record/>)
- History of VSG Student Body Presidents (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/vsg-student-body-presidents/>)
- Historical Election Records (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/historical-election-records/>)
- Minutes (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/minutes/>)
- Constitution (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/new-fall-2011-constitution/>)
- Statutes (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/statutes/>)
- 2012-13 Voting Records and Senate Attendance (<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg/records/voting-records/>)

