



# Constitution

Updated April 11, 2018

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## [The Preamble to the Constitution](#)

We, the students of Goucher College, in an effort to foster a sense of inclusion, equality, and fairness on campus, do hereby establish a student government endowed with the power and the responsibility to promote all aspects of student life and to unite the student body with every component of the Goucher Community. In fulfilling these

responsibilities, Goucher Student Government shall serve as a coordinator of student activities and an advocate for student interests, promoting an open and equitable dialogue among the student body, alumnae/i, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees.

## Article I. Electoral Procedures

### Section 1: Elections Commissioner

It shall be the mission of the Elections Commissioner to ensure fair, efficient, and democratic elections for Goucher Student Government.

#### **1.1.1: Powers and Responsibilities**

The Elections Commissioner shall: Conduct and administer all elections and referendums throughout the school year, ensure that all election timelines allow equal and fair participation by the entire student body, announce and publicize all upcoming elections and election-related events and deadlines, publish both online and in-print on designated Goucher Student Government boards, a list of available positions with their powers and responsibilities, and organize and publicize a public forum for candidates to address the student body.

#### **1.1.2: Selection of the Elections Commissioner**

An apolitical Elections Commissioner shall be selected through blind applications reviewed by the Club Administrator and President. An Elections Commissioner will be selected at the end of the Fall semester and will serve until the next selection occurs. In the event that the Elections Commissioner cannot continue to fulfil their responsibilities a new Elections Commissioner would be selected.

#### **1.1.3: Compensation of the Elections Commissioner**

As compensation for their work, the Elections Commissioner shall receive a stipend of \$125 for each seven weeks of the semester during which they fulfill their responsibilities, amounting to \$500 per academic year. The Elections Commissioner must complete a pay period in its entirety in order to be eligible for compensation.

### Section 2: Candidacy

#### **1.2.1: Qualifications for Candidacy**

All undergraduate students of Goucher College are qualified to run for and hold positions regardless of race, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and/or gender identification. Some positions may only be available to members of a specific class. In order to be eligible to run for and hold a position, candidates must be enrolled as a full-time student at Goucher College. The Elections Commissioner is ineligible to run for any Goucher Student Government office during the duration of their term. Students may run for elected office from abroad. Only one elected position may be held by any individual student at one time.

#### **1.2.2: Letters of Intent**

Letters of intent must be submitted to the Elections Commissioner by the deadline set by the Elections Commissioner. Letters of intent shall be posted publicly immediately following the deadline for submission and at the polling place(s) on the day of election.

### **1.2.3: Write-in Candidates**

If a candidate does not submit a letter of intent before the deadline they can run in the election as a write-in candidate. Write-in candidates may campaign but may not participate in the candidates' forum, nor shall they have their name on the ballot.

## **Section 3: Elections**

### **1.3.1: The November Election**

The November Election shall take place no more than six and no fewer than three weeks prior to the end of the Fall semester. This shall be the process for electing four Senators from each of the First Year, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior classes and electing the Senate President. Candidates may run from abroad. In order to be eligible to run for a position, candidates must be enrolled in Goucher College when Goucher is in session for the length of their term.

### **1.3.2: The April Election**

The April Election shall take place no more than six and no fewer than three weeks prior to the end of the Spring semester. It shall be the process for electing the Club Council Administrator and Treasurer. Candidates may run from abroad. In order to be eligible to run for a position, candidates must be enrolled in Goucher College when Goucher is in session for the length of their term.

The selection process for the Appointed Members shall take place as soon as possible within one week of the election of the Club Council Administrator.

### **1.3.3: Election Procedure**

The Elections Commissioner and the Goucher Student Government staff advisor, or another staff or faculty member, shall tally the votes. Elections shall be decided by Simple Plurality. Voters will choose their two favorite candidates. In the event of an absolute tie, the Elections Commissioner shall flip a coin to determine the winner. Elections with a margin of less than 5% will automatically trigger a recount. An electronic voting service that meets the aforementioned election needs may be implemented by the Elections Commissioner in place of a paper ballot.

### **1.3.4: Contesting Elections**

An election may be contested if a candidate objects to the conduct of the election and is able to provide specific allegations, which, if proven true, would have a probable impact on the outcome of the election.

If a candidate wishes to contest the election, they must do so in writing within two days of the announcement of results. This objection must be submitted to the Elections Commissioner and the faculty or staff member who assisted in the tallying of votes. If an election is contested, each of the two branches of the Goucher Student Government shall randomly appoint three representatives that shall form a jury to hear the appeal case. The candidate contesting the

election shall be allotted a reasonable amount of time to speak. In order for this appeal to pass,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the jury must vote in support of the appeal. The Election Commissioner shall preside over the case but shall not have a vote as a member of the jury. This jury shall have the power to validate or invalidate election results, call for a recount, call for a special election and disqualify candidates.

### **1.3.5: Special Elections**

A special election is necessary if a member of the Goucher Student Government is either vacates their position either through impeachment, resignation, or otherwise, or a ballot referendum is raised. The Elections Commissioner is responsible for setting a timeline and coordinating special elections. The Elections Commissioner must hold the special election within three weeks of notification that a position is vacant or a ballot referendum has been raised.

## **Article II. Ballot Referendums**

Referendums are plans of action that are voted on by the student body at-large. A successful ballot referendum shall be considered a mandate of the students of Goucher. Successful referendums shall be considered binding and second only to this Constitution. To pass, a referendum requires a 25% voter participation rate and the support of at least 75% of all votes cast. There are two routes a referendum may take to the ballot.

### **Section 1: Senate Referendums**

Any Senator may bring a referendum before the Senate. In order to pass the Senate, a referendum must be accepted with a  $\frac{3}{5}$  supermajority vote of the Senate. Upon passing the Senate, a referendum may then be presented to the Elections Commissioner and Senate President. It then proceeds to the student body at-large according to a timeline determined and published both online and in print on designated Goucher Student Government boards by the Elections Commissioner.

### **Section 2: Petition Referendums**

Any student may bring a referendum to the ballot with a faculty or staff co-sponsor, and 200 student signatures. Upon collecting a faculty or staff signature, as well as 200 student signatures, the referendum may then be presented to the Elections Commissioner and Senate President. It then proceeds to the student body at-large according to a timeline determined and published both online and in print on designated Goucher Student Government boards by the Elections Commissioner.

## **Article III. Senate**

It is the mission of Senate to represent the students of Goucher College in all school affairs; facilitate communication with the staff, faculty, alumnae/i, and administration on behalf of the student body, spread information between the various groups it communicates with, and take action to create the best possible environment for students.

## Section 1: Powers and Responsibilities

The Senate shall: Draft and approve resolutions, condemnations and commendations which represent the official position of the student body, draft and present ballot referendums for approval, appoint a Senator to assist in associated groups' committee formations, form and work in committees to respond to issues brought forward by students, review, modify, and approve the Student Bill of Rights and Senate budget, and alter the Senate constitution through a  $\frac{2}{3}$  supermajority vote.

## Section 2: Positions

The Senate shall be composed of 16 Senators elected in November from the First Year, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior classes as well as a President and a non-voting Secretary.

### **3.2.1.1: Senator Powers and Responsibilities**

Senators shall: Draft and vote on resolutions, draft and propose ballot referendums, approve appointments to Senate committee leadership, assign Senators to Senate committees at the first meeting of the session, liaise with members of the staff, administration, faculty, alumnae/i, and Board of Trustees, and serve on standing committee.

### **3.2.1.2: Senator Elections**

Senators shall be popularly elected by members of their respective classes during the November election to serve until the next November election. For more on election procedure, see [1.3.1](#).

### **3.2.2.1: Senate President Powers and Responsibilities**

The President shall: Schedule, attend, and preside over all meetings of the Senate, serve as the tie-breaking vote in the event of a tie, Correspond directly and regularly with the President of the college, serve with the Club Administrator to select the Elections Commissioner and Senate Secretary when there is an opening.

### **3.2.2.2: Election of the Senate President**

The President shall be popularly elected during the November election to serve until the next presidential election. For more on election procedure, see [1.3.1](#).

### **3.2.3.1: Senate Vice President Powers and Responsibilities**

The Vice President shall: Schedule, attend, and preside over all meetings of the Senate which the President cannot, assist the President in periodic campus-wide duties as they arise, serve as Acting President during a presidential vacancy, and take special care to assist the President's liaising with the Committee Chairs and other branches and affiliates of the Student Government.

### **3.2.3.2: Selection of the Senate Vice President**

The Vice President shall be elected via an internal Senate vote during the first meeting of a new presidential term. If the President fails to organize a meeting for two consecutive weeks prior to the appointment of a Vice President then any member of the Senate is eligible to call a special session wherein quorum can be met without the presence of a President or Vice President. The first motion of the agenda will be the appointment a Vice President.

### **3.2.4.1: Senate Secretary Powers and Responsibilities**

The Senate Secretary shall: Record the minutes of Senate meetings, publish the minutes online within three days of the meeting, maintain a public record of all Goucher Student Government Bylaws and publish online any alterations, keep a log of resolutions and motions, call roll, keep records of attendance, and ascertain quorum when requested by a Senator.

### **3.2.4.2: Selection of the Senate Secretary**

A Senate Secretary shall be selected through blind applications reviewed by the President. A Secretary will be selected at the end of the Fall semester and will serve for one year.

### **3.2.4.3: Compensation of the Senate Secretary**

As compensation for their work, the Secretary shall receive a stipend of \$125 for each seven week period of the semester during which they fulfill their responsibilities, amounting to \$500 per academic year. The Secretary must complete a pay period in its entirety in order to be eligible for compensation.

## **Section 3: Standing Committees**

### **3.3.1: Senator Committee Relationship**

The 16 Senators shall be organized into standing committees. Each Senator shall serve on at least one, but no more than three, standing committee(s) and may serve on ad-hoc committees as needed. Each committee shall be lead by one Chair.

### **3.3.2: Standing Committees**

These committees shall include Constitutional/Legal, Community Relations, Food Services, Administrative Relations, and Student Life. These committees are viable to change.

### **3.3.3: Committee Chair Powers/Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the Committee Chairs include facilitation of committee meetings, creation of committee briefings, and presentation of their committee agendas, accomplishments, objectives during general meetings. Committee Chairs do not possess unilateral power within their committees and can be removed from their Chair position by unanimous agreement by the remaining members of the committee and Presidential approval.

### **3.3.4: Food Services Committee Powers**

The Food Services committee is responsible for ensuring the dietary needs of Goucher students are adequately met by the food service provider(s), establish a relationship between student interests/concerns, the food service provider and Goucher Administration, and negotiate to provide students fair, equal, and affordable access to the meal plans.

### **3.3.5: Administrative Committee Powers**

The Administrative Committee is responsible for coordination between student needs and the administrative process of Goucher, aid in the creation of a positive academic

environment for students, and creating relationships with the administration in order to establish a conduit for student driven solutions for administrative and academic issues

### **3.3.6: Community Relations Committee Powers**

The Community Relations committee is responsible for publicising Goucher Student Government created or sponsored accomplishments/events, management of social media platforms related to Goucher Community, and the creation and distribution of electronic and physical media to enhance community engagement with campus opportunities.

### **3.3.7: Student Life Committee Powers**

The Student Life committee is responsible for fostering student-driven decision making and engagement on campus, use best practices to ensure and improve the physical, emotional, and social health of the Goucher students and community, and coordinate with other entities including the Goucher administration, clubs and organizations, faculty, and any other pertinent entities capable of increasing student engagement with the Goucher community.

### **3.3.8: Constitutional/Legal Committee Powers**

The Constitutional/Legal committee is responsible for reviewing and updating the constitution, writing briefings, letters, or other correspondence on behalf of the Senate, and, if called upon, draft or edit legislation/bylaws on behalf of other committees or Goucher Student Government in totality.

## Section 4: Senate Procedure

### **3.4.1: Meetings**

Senate must begin meeting within the first two weeks of each semester and at least twice every month Goucher is in session thereafter. General Senate meetings are open to students of the Goucher community. Senate Committee meetings can be open or closed at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

### **3.4.2: Quorum**

Quorum is defined as  $\frac{3}{4}$  of occupied Senate seats and the President or Acting President. In the absence of quorum, Senate may not hold a vote. At any point a senator may request a quorum call. This action requires a second. See [3.2.3.2](#) and [6.4](#) for an instance where Quorum can be met without the presence of the President or Acting President.

### **3.4.3: Bylaws**

Senate Bylaws shall be posted publicly and outline Senate protocol not otherwise listed here.

## Section 5: Senate Budget

The Senate shall communicate with Club Council when a need for funding arises.

## Article IV: Impeachment Procedures/Vacancy of Office

### Section 1: Grounds for Impeachment

A member of the Goucher Student Government may be impeached on the grounds that they are not fulfilling their obligations as enumerated in this constitution, or they are no longer eligible to hold office in Goucher Student Government. A motion of impeachment must clearly state the reason for the impeachment and illustrate why such an impeachment is necessary.

### Section 2: Senators

To impeach a member of the Senate, a written motion of impeachment must be sent to the Goucher Student Government Staff Advisor. The motion of impeachment will be heard during the next regularly scheduled meeting or the Staff Advisor may call a special session to hear the case. If the scheduled time cannot be met by the member against whom the motion of impeachment was filed then that member has a maximum of three days to provide an available time. If the member against whom the motion of impeachment is filed fails to appear at their impeachment proceedings the proceedings shall continue without hearing a defense. The person(s) filing for impeachment and the person being impeached, provided that they are present, shall each be allotted a reasonable amount of time to speak. If two or more Senators corroborate in wrongdoing then the accused senators will not be eligible to vote in any related impeachment proceedings and all cases shall be heard independently. No person may be removed from office without 2/3 of the Senate in favor of removal.

### Section 3: Senate Secretary

If the Senate Secretary position becomes vacant, the President will appoint a Senator to temporarily fulfill the secretarial duties until a new Secretary is selected. The Acting Senate Secretary will receive \$10 compensation for each meeting that they work.

### Section 4: President

#### **4.4.1: Impeachment of the President**

To impeach the President, a written motion of impeachment must be sent to the Goucher Student Government Staff Advisor. The motion of impeachment will be heard the next regularly scheduled meeting or the Staff Advisor may call a special session to hear the case. If the scheduled time of the hearing cannot be met by the President then the President has a maximum of three days to provide an available time. If the President against whom the motion of impeachment is filed fails to appear at their impeachment proceedings then quorum is still met and proceedings shall continue without hearing a defense. The person(s) filing for impeachment and the person being impeached shall each be allotted a reasonable amount of time to speak. If the President and other members of Goucher Student Government corroborate in wrongdoing then the accused members will not be eligible to vote in any related impeachment proceedings and all cases shall be heard independently. No person may be removed from office without 2/3 of the Senate in favor of removal.

#### **4.4.2: Vacancy of the Presidential Office**

If the Senate President position becomes vacant, the Vice President will serve as Acting President until a new President is elected by special election.

## Section 5: The Elections Commissioner

To impeach the Elections Commissioner, a letter of impeachment must be sent to the the Club Administrator and the Senate President. The Club Administrator and Senate President shall appoint three representatives each that shall form a jury to hear the impeachment case involving the Elections Commissioner. The person(s) filing for impeachment and the Elections Commissioner shall each be allotted a reasonable amount of time to speak. In order for the Elections Commissioner to be removed from office,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the jury must vote for the Elections Commissioner's removal. The Goucher Student Government Staff Advisor shall preside over the proceeding and shall not vote as a member of the jury.

## Article V: Student Bill of Rights

### Right I: Free Speech

Students have the right to speak and express themselves freely. Students may congregate freely provided that college operations are not unreasonably obstructed. This right shall extend to all areas of student life and shall be protected in the utmost by the Student Government Association. Student media organizations, including but not limited to a school paper and radio station, are pillars of free speech that allow student voices to be represented both on and off campus. Student Government shall do everything in its power to protect and maintain these institutions. Harassment, slander, hate speech, and libel are not protected forms of speech.

### Right II: Equal Protection

Students have the right to equal protection under the rules and regulations of all campus institutions and departments. Students shall be free from discrimination, which includes but is not limited to discrimination based on race, religion, sex, ethnicity, age, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, political preference, and national origin.

### Right III: Academic Freedom

Students have the right to pursue intellectual discourse in and outside of the classroom which shall not be inhibited for reasons based on their views. Students may invite and hear any person of their own choosing, with the understanding that guest speakers do not represent the views of Goucher College. Students shall not be discriminated against based on their political beliefs.

### Right IV: Participation in Campus Governance

Students have the right, individually and collectively, to express their views and participate informing campus policy which affects students, staff, faculty and the community as a whole. Students are to be notified of new campus policies and or changes in existing policy within 5 days of administrative decisions. This is to ensure dialogue and community input in important campus wide decisions. Constructive student opinions may be represented student organizations that provide the opportunity for a public forum.

### Right V: Free Press

Students have the right to a free press. Student journalists are free to write critically without interference or fear of retribution. A journalist may not be forced to reveal any information about his/her sources, documents, conversations, written exchanges, notes, recordings, and methods, to the extent provided by the Maryland Shield Law.

**Right VI: Privacy**

Students have the right to privacy. Rooms shall not be entered without the occupying student's permission unless there is suspicion of serious illegal activity, or if there is a threat to the health and safety of members of the community. Community Living also reserves the right to check rooms during breaks, but shall only inspect items left in plain view.

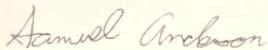
**Right VII: Appeals**

Students have the right to appeal any administrative, academic or disciplinary decision that affects them directly; including need based financial aid decisions and grades. All appeals are made in accordance with official college policy.

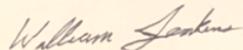
**Right VIII: Rights of the Accused**

Students accused of violations of the Code of Conduct have a right to a Judicial Board hearing, an Administrative penalty or an Administrative hearing.

Restructured in late February 2018 by the undersigned,



Samuel Anderson, Senator



William Jenkins, Senator