



**CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
OF VCSU'S STUDENT SENATE**

Revised by Student Senate: March 7, 2022

Approved by Student Body: May 9, 2022

CONSTITUTION

Article I

Name

This constitution shall be the governing document of the corporate Student Senate, Student Association of Valley City State University (VCSU) in Valley City, North Dakota.

Article II

Purpose of this Organization

- Section I Student Senate is the governing body for the Student Association. The Student Association includes all VCSU students.
- Section II Student Senate appoints numerous Student Senators to University and Student Senate administrative duties and committees.
- Section III All student organizations are directly or indirectly responsible to Student Senate.
- Section IV Student Senate, through the Student Senate Finance Commission, controls and administers a large portion of the student activity fee for other organizations on campus that request funds.

Article III

Purpose of this Constitution

- Section I As the governing document of the Student Body, this constitution shall promote development and protection of student rights, as designed by the VCSU manual and student handbook, of student participation in university activities, and of the coordination of all student activities.
- Section II Under the appropriate provisions of this constitution, Student Senate, representing the Student Body, shall act as a liaison body between the Student Body and the VCSU administration, VCSU faculty, State Board of Higher Education, North Dakota University System, North Dakota Student Association, and the city of Valley City and/or the state of North Dakota.

- Section III The interpretation of this constitution shall be left to the discretion of Student Senate members.
- Section IV To amend this constitution, a Constitutional Committee, appointed by the Executive Committee, will submit a typed revision to Student Senate. These amendments must be approved by 2/3 favorable vote of the Student Senate. Voting will be done by secret ballot, open ballot, or electronic means of either secret or open ballot. Following the approval of the amended document, this constitution will go into effect immediately.

Article IV

Membership

- Section I All members of Student Senate must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA from VCSU at the end of the semester prior to elections, with the exception of first-year student senators. All Senators must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA throughout their term year or relinquish their position.
- Section II Executive Team Officers of Student Senate shall consist of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) Head Delegate, and Public Relations Manager.
- Section III Officers of Student Senate shall meet the following qualifications:
1. Successful completion of 24 credit hours of study, including a minimum of 15 hours from VCSU.
 2. The candidates for President and Vice-President must have served on Student Senate for at least two full semesters prior to taking office.
 3. The candidates for Treasurer, Secretary, NDSA Head Delegate, and Public Relations Manager must have served on Student Senate for at least one full semester prior to taking office.
- Section IV All Officers shall be elected by April 16 of each year, on the basis of plurality vote. The administration of this election shall be the responsibility of the Student Senate.
- Section V All positions except Freshman and Transfer representatives will be elected in the spring following the elections for the Executive Officers. Freshman and Transfer Representatives and all other open seats will be elected at the beginning of fall semester. At the beginning of spring semester, an election may be held for any open seats. Elections shall follow the procedures as detailed in Student Senate Bylaws.

Section VI All Officers shall be elected for a term of one school year consisting of fall and spring semesters. Officers elected shall remain in their previous position until they are officially installed during the last Student Senate meeting of the term.

Section VII In the event that no qualified Student Senate member runs for a particular office position, that position will then be open to any VCSU student meeting all other minimum requirements previously mentioned in Article IV, Section III.

Section VIII In the case of the resignation or dismissal of the President:

1. The Vice President will assume the offices and duties of the President; or
2. A special election will take place to fill the position of Vice President; or
3. The position will be filled by a member already on Student Senate; or
4. If no member of Student Senate runs for the position, the election shall open up to the Student Body.

Section IX In case of resignation or dismissal of any other Officer position:

1. A special election will take place to fill the position; or
2. Position will be filled by a member already on Student Senate; or
3. If no member of Student Senate runs for the position, the election opens up to the Student Body.
4. Officers may not obtain a leave of absence.
5. Actions of the Officers are subject to Student Senate discretion. This includes the rules of the Student Code of Conduct. Infractions shall be brought before Student Senate for review. Officer impeachment may be achieved by a favorable 2/3 vote of Student Senate.

Section X Student Senators shall consist of the following positions that are voted upon by the VCSU Student Body:

1. Six offices, consisting of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, NDSA Head Delegate, and Public Relations Manager.
2. Ten at-large Student Senators, consisting of:
 - a. Three Student Senators of Freshmen status
 - b. One Student Senator of Transfer status

- i. Must have completed under 4 semesters at VCSU.
 - c. One Student of International status
 - d. Five Sophomore through Senior status
- 3. Nine Senators acting as departmental or group representatives, consisting of:
 - a. Athletics Representative
 - b. Viking Ambassador Representative
 - c. Viking Campus Activities Board (VCAB) Representative
 - d. Diversity & Inclusion Representative
 - e. Communication Arts & Social Science Representative
 - f. Fine Arts (Art, Music, Language & Literature) Representative
 - g. Math, Science, and Health & Physical Education Representative
 - h. Business, Computer Systems & Software Engineering, and Technology Education Representative
 - i. Elementary Education and School of Education and Graduate Studies Representative
 - j. Online Student Representative
 - i. Online student position is exempt from submitting fifty signatures.

Section XI Three excused absences will be permitted per semester. The penalty of any Student Senate member having three unexcused absences during a full academic year, excluding special meetings or academic related events upon the President's approval, the Senator will relinquish their position on Student Senate.

- 1. Senators must notify the Secretary for any and all absences.
- 2. The President of Student Senate shall be notified and will determine if the absences are excused or unexcused.
- 3. Members have the right to appeal any unexcused absence before the Student Senate meets at their next meeting date. Student Senate may change the absence by a 2/3 vote.

Section XII Student Senators may be impeached by a favorable 2/3 vote of Student Senate.

Duties of the Officers

Section I All Executive Team Officers are required to read the constitution and bylaws upon election and meet once prior to the following academic year in order to review it and discuss their obligations.

Section I The duties and responsibilities of the President shall be:

1. To serve as chairperson of Student Senate.
2. To preside at Student Senate meetings.
3. To notify the Vice-President, or the acting chairperson, prior to any missed meetings. The chairperson will then determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused.
4. To prepare the agenda and release it by noon on the day of each meeting.
5. To work with the five other Officers to appoint people to serve on standing and special committees of Student Senate.
6. To appoint the chairperson of any social committee.
7. To uphold and enforce the constitution of Student Senate at all times.
8. In general, within the limits of the constitution, do everything necessary to promote the welfare of Student Senate and the Student Body.
9. To cancel meetings by notification of members in a timely fashion.
10. The President may call special Student Senate meetings at their discretion.
11. To attend all Finance Commission meetings as a voting member.
12. The President shall not vote in Student Senate decisions except to break a tie.
13. The President shall request a list of GPAs and infraction of Student Code of Conduct of all Student Senate members from the Vice President of Student Affairs at the end of each semester. All personal information shall be kept confidential.
14. To attend all VCSU Executive Team meetings.
15. To attend all VCSU Strategic Planning meetings.
16. To chair the Judicial Council as a voting member.

17. Conduct a welcome at Opening Weekend and the Campus Convocation.

18. Present at the Senior Luncheon and the Faculty and Staff Appreciation Supper.

Section II The duties and responsibilities of the Vice President shall be:

1. To chair the meetings of Student Senate in absence of the President.
2. To perform such duties prescribed by the President.
3. To serve on the Student Relations committee.
4. To attend all Faculty Senate meetings and report back to Student Senate.
5. To coordinate and host the annual Shatter the Silence event around the month of October.
6. To oversee committees, communicating with committee chairs and checking in on their progress.

Section III The duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer shall be:

1. To serve as chairperson of the Finance Commission and notify all members of the Finance Commission of meeting times and locations.
2. To take over recording of the minutes in absence of the Secretary at general and Executive meetings.
3. To report to Student Senate all requests and allocations presented to the Finance Commission for approval.
4. To report the financial status of the Student Senate account.
5. To receive all financial commitments due to Student Senate.
6. To approve payment of all debts from the contingency fund incurred by Student Senate.
7. To request and receive all campus organizations and groups financial reports when deemed necessary and report to Student Senate.
8. To attend all Staff Senate meetings and then report back to Student Senate.
9. To oversee the dispersal of Student Senate stipends by managing W-9 and verification forms.

10. To work with the United States Census Bureau during a Census year and promote participation.

Section IV The duties and responsibilities of the Secretary shall be:

1. To keep an official record and distribute the minutes of Student Senate and Finance Commission meetings.
2. To notify the Treasurer prior to absence from a meeting.
3. To attend all Finance Commission meetings as a voting member and Secretary.
4. To keep an accurate record of all members' absences and weekly hours of service for Student Senate.
5. To keep an accurate record of all Student Senate members' NDSA attendance.
6. To keep a file of Student Senate correspondence.
7. To keep the Student Senate webpage up to date.
8. To attend all Staff Senate meetings and report back to Student Senate.

Section V The duties and responsibilities of the NDSA Head Delegate shall be:

1. To represent VCSU at all NDSA meetings.
2. To keep in contact with the NDSA Executive Team.
3. To lobby in favor of the VCSU Student Body in state-wide settings.
4. To be in contact with local and state officials about student concerns.
5. To plan transportation and hotels for Student Senate to attend NDSA meetings.
6. To inform students of state-wide issues concerning VCSU.
7. To report relevant information from NDSA conferences back to Student Senate after each gathering.

Section VI The duties and responsibilities of the Public Relations Manager shall be:

1. To monitor Student Senate's email and all social media accounts.
2. To keep record of all accounts' login information.
3. To frequently post content related to Student Senate on all social media.

4. To coordinate an annual event promoting Student Senate's social media to the community to increase engagement.
5. To disseminate communication on behalf of Student Senate to relevant parties.
6. To attend all Marketing Committee meetings and then report back to Student Senate.
7. To update the display case outside of the Student Senate office.
8. To organize all awards' processes, which shall include acquiring of plaques for both Senators of the Semester, the Student Advocate of the Year, and the Teacher of the Year, and the Viking Pilot(s).

Article VI

Funding

- Section I Student fees paid each semester fund Student Senate.
- Section II Funding awarded to clubs and organizations must first be brought to the Student Senate Finance Commission (SSFC).
1. The SSFC will operate within the boundaries of the authority delegated to them by Student Senate.
 2. Student Senate will receive recommendation in the best interest of the university from the SSFC for the disposal and use of paid funds.
 3. Student Senate still maintains full decision-making power independent from the SSFC.
- Section III Clubs and organizations on campus may request payment of registration fees to attend conferences with the following stipulations:
4. Funds provided will not exceed \$300 per person attending or \$1,500 overall, though this can be appealed to the Senate.
 - a. Any funds exceeding the aforementioned amount will be the responsibility of the club or organization.
 5. Funds may only go towards covering registration and may not be applied to any other conference-related cost.
- Section IV Clubs, organizations, and departments on campus may request annual funding at the end of each academic year for the following year.
1. An Annual Request Form must be filled out by the final SSFC meeting of the year and emailed to the Treasurer, advisor, and student.senate@vcsu.edu

2. A representative from the club, organization, or department must be present at the final SSFC meeting of the year to make a pitch for funding.
3. This process can be appealed by a club, organization, or department seeking funding if exceptional circumstances or opportunities arise.

Section V North Dakota Student Association-related travel and accommodation expenses incurred will be considered necessary allotment of fees.

Section VI All campus organizations and groups that receive funds are responsible for submitting financial reports to the Treasurer when deemed necessary. These reports are due at the end of each semester. Reports should detail the specific use of funds received from Student Senate. Failure to give report(s) as required by Student Senate, may result in loss of future funding or in extreme cases, repossession of funds.

Article VII

Senator Stipends

Section I Student Senators at the end of each semester will receive stipends based on their position.

Section II The Executive Team shall receive the following amounts:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| 1. President: | \$250 |
| 2. Vice President: | \$150 |
| 3. Treasurer: | \$150 |
| 4. Secretary: | \$150 |
| 5. NDSA Head Delegate: | \$150 |
| 6. Public Relations Manager: | \$150 |

Section III All other Senators shall receive the following amount: \$50.

Section IV Executive Team Officers shall only receive stipends if they meet the following qualifications:

1. Successful completion of 40 hours of senate work per semester.
2. Attendance of three NDSA meetings per year.
 - a. Failure to attend three NDSA meetings will make the Executive team member subject to review by Student Senate.

Section V All other Senators shall only receive stipends if they met the following qualifications:

1. Successful completion of 18 hours of senate work per semester
2. Attendance of two NDSA meetings per year.
 - a. Failure to attend two NDSA meetings will make the senator subject to review by the Executive Team.

Section VI Both Executive Team Officers and all other Senators have the right to appeal hourly requirements and reviewal decisions with a 2/3 vote from Student Senate.

BYLAWS

Article I

Quorum & Proceedings

Section I The quorum of Senate shall be two-thirds of the elected members.

Section II All proceedings during meetings shall follow parliamentary procedure, as detailed in Robert's Rules of Order.

Article II

Elections & Voting

Section I The election and voting procedures for Executive Team Officers shall be:

6. Petitions consisting of 50 signatures should be submitted by students wanting to run for one of the Student Senate Executive Officer positions.
7. The petitions must be submitted one week in advance of Officer elections.
8. Officer elections will be held one week in advance of senator elections.
9. Candidates may only run for a single position in a given election.
10. Those members who are not elected to the position to which they ran for are allowed to run for At-Large senator positions. The petition submitted for the purpose of the Officer election will be sufficient for the At-Large senator election.
11. The following campaign guidelines shall be followed by all the candidates for Executive Officer positions:
 - a. All campaigning materials will be taken down by 10 P.M. on the night before elections. This is the responsibility of the candidates.
 - b. Candidates may use signs, word of mouth, and social media to promote their campaign.
 - c. All signs, posters, etc., can be affixed to the general use bulletin boards in all campus buildings. These materials may not be affixed to walls, doors, railings, and windows. Signs

may be affixed to the doors of students residing in residence halls with their permission.

- d. Candidates may NOT use campus wide e-mails. Any other campaign promotions must be discussed with the election and polls committee to be approved. Any e-mails candidates wish to send must be approved by the Election and Polls Committee.
- e. There will be no campaigning on Election Day, not even verbal. This includes the candidates and current senate members.
- f. Student Senate At-Large and Executive Officer candidates will be notified of election outcomes by acceptable means as soon as results are counted.
- g. Anyone who is running for an executive office position has the option of moving their name to the senator At-Large ballot without completing another petition. This decision must be made either verbally or by e-mail to the current President of Student Senate within 48 hours after announcement of the Executive Officer election results.
- h. To fill an Executive position for which no one ran, or one which becomes available in the midst of a given semester, nominations would be sought during the general assembly meeting immediately following realization of the absence. Nominees would be compiled in an individual survey and sent to the student body to be voted upon before the meeting thereafter, with the winner receiving a simple majority vote.
- i. Any infraction of the guidelines stated above will result in a hearing consisting of the Election and Polls Committee, a current Student Senate Executive Officer, and a senator At-Large (none of which are involved in the election).

Section II The election procedures for Student Senators shall be:

1. Petitions consisting of 50 signatures must be submitted one week in advance of the elections by students wanting to run for Student Senate, unless they served on Senate the previous semester.
2. The petitions must be submitted one week in advance of General elections.
3. Advertisement for these open positions shall be done in a timely fashion and the Student Senate shall be responsible for these advertisements.

4. Election guidelines must be followed by all of the candidates for returning students and freshmen.
5. In case of an uncontested election, the President has the power to cast unanimous ballot for the candidates.
6. General elections will be held one week following Executive elections.
7. Candidates may only run for a single position in a given election.
8. Open positions for the Spring semester shall be advertised and an election will follow in the beginning weeks of the semester.

Section III The election procedures for freshman and transfer Student Senators shall be:

1. Elections for freshman and transfer Student Senate members shall be held in the Fall within the month of September of the current academic year.
2. First-year students wanting to run for the position of Freshman Representative, or transfer students seeking to run for At-Large or other positions, should submit petitions consisting of 50 signatures and fill out an application, both of which shall be turned in at the information Desk or emailed to student.senate@vcsu.edu.

Section IV The elections for Student Senate Officers and Senators will be held by secret ballot, open ballot, or by electronic means of either secret or open ballot.

Article III

Committees

Section I Any senator can motion for the creation of a committee, and if the motion is passed, shall be a member of the committee.

Section II The senator who motions for the creation of a committee shall be the chair by default, unless otherwise requested or decided during the motion's discussion.

Section III The duties and responsibilities of a committee chair shall be:

1. To organize the date, time, and location of committee meetings.
2. To delegate responsibilities to committee members as necessary.

3. To keep the Vice President updated on committee activities.
4. To report to Student Senate during the general meeting each week the committee remains active.

Section IV The duties and responsibilities of committee members shall be:

1. To attend committee meetings.
2. To participate and complete tasks assigned by the committee chair.

Section V Special committees created by Student Senate shall be dissolved once their goal has been accomplished or no further action can be taken.

Section VI The President may serve on committees or entertain motions to create committees, but cannot chair them. The chair of a committee created at the President's suggestion is decided by Student Senate through discussion.

Section VII Members of Student Senate may be appointed to any one of a number of university governance committees. The President of the University and the President of Student Senate will regularly appoint students to Administrative Committees, Faculty Constitution committees, or various task forces.

Section VIII Hiring committees for positions which majorly affect or interact with the Student Body shall have a Student Representative on them appointed by Student Senate, as chosen by the Executive Team.

Section IX Committees include Library, Curriculum, Athletic, Financial Aid, Technology Advisory, Marketing, Faculty Senate, Judicial, Student Grievance, University Hearings and Appeals Board, Institutional Improvement, Food Service, Retention, Wellness Center, and various other committees as appointed by the President of the University.

Section X The Finance Commission Committee shall include:

1. Two Senators appointed to this committee by the Executive Officers.
2. Both the President and Secretary as members of the Finance Commission.
3. The Treasurer as the non-voting chairperson.
4. The Vice President of Student Affairs and Vice President of Business Affairs.
5. One faculty member and one staff member.

Section XI The Election & Polls Committee shall include:

1. Two Senators appointed to the committee by the Executive Officers, who shall coordinate all election procedures and see that elections are conducted in a proper manner.

Article IV

Legislative Process

Section I Any senator may submit a resolution or motion for the creation of a committee to author one.

Section II A resolution must be an agenda item and discussed at a minimum of two general assembly meetings before it becomes eligible to be voted on, after the discussion within the second meeting.

Section III A resolution must receive a two-thirds vote to be passed.

Section IV After being passed, a resolution will either be forwarded to the proper authorities for continued process, or posted to the Student Senate webpage, as well as printed and kept in the Student Senate Office.

Section V Resolutions shall be named thusly, with each part separated by hyphens:

1. For Valley City State University, shown in an acronym. (VCSU)
2. For their nature as a Student Resolution, shown in an acronym. (SR)
3. For the last two digits of each year in the academic year. (1920)
4. For the number of resolutions which have been passed in the current year. (01)

For example, the first resolution passed in the 2019-2020 academic year would be named VCSU-SR-1920-01

Article V

Honors & Recognitions

Section I Senator of the Semester (hereby referred to as SOS), Student Advocate of the Year (hereby referred to as SAOY), Teacher of the Year (hereby

referred to as TOY), and Viking Pilots are awarded through Student Senate and decided upon by its members.

Section II The details of the SOS award shall be:

1. Any Senator, other than the President, who exhibits exceptional service, goes above and beyond in the performance of their duties, and has met their semester stipend requirements shall be eligible for SOS.
2. Any Senator can nominate another Senator for SOS.
3. Senators may not win SOS during back-to-back semesters, though the award shall be given out for every semester.
4. Nominations and selection shall occur before the end of each semester.
5. The entire Senate shall discuss and vote on who will be SOS from among the nominees.

Section III The details of the SAOY award shall be:

1. Any individual or group from within the state of North Dakota who supports the success of, promotes the voices of, and influences the lives of the Student Body shall be eligible for SAOY. This includes faculty, staff, administration, and community members, but not students. Length of employment shall not be taken into consideration nor affect nomination eligibility.
2. Only someone who won the award within the past three academic years is ineligible for the award.
3. Any VCSU students, faculty, or staff may nominate someone for SAOY.
4. Only one person or entity can receive the SAOY award, which shall be given out annually.
5. Nominations shall be sought for and selection shall occur for SAOY during the month of April, and a winner must be announced in May, before the end of the term.
6. The entire Senate shall discuss and vote on who will be SAOY from among the nominees.

Section IV The details of the TOY award shall be:

7. Any faculty member who is always helping students, involved around campus, and/or educating outside of or beyond the classroom shall be eligible for TOY. Length of employment shall not be taken into consideration nor affect nomination eligibility.
8. Only a faculty member who won the award within the past three academic years is ineligible for the award.

9. Any VCSU student can nominate faculty for TOY, and more than one student can nominate a faculty member.
10. Only one faculty member may receive this award, which shall be given out annually.
11. Nominations shall be sought for and selection shall occur for TOY during the month of April, and a winner must be announced in May, before the end of the term.
12. The entire Senate shall discuss and vote on who will be TOY from among the nominees.

Section V The details of the Viking Pilot award shall be:

1. Any upperclassmen student (with a minimum of 75 credits) who shows a willingness to participate outside of academics or athletics, behavior that positively impacts the course of their interactions, and commitment to steering campus towards better horizons shall be eligible to receive this award, whose recipients are known as Viking Pilots. Pilots should be outstanding leaders in, make identifiable and meaningful contributions to, and be a recognized personality in many places of student and/or campus affairs.
2. Only first- and second-year students at VCSU are ineligible for the award, with the exception of junior transfers in at least their 4th semester at VCSU upon discretion of the selection committee.
3. Any VCSU students, faculty, or staff may nominate someone to become a Viking Pilot.
4. As many students as are deemed fit may be presented with the Viking Pilot award, which shall be given out annually.
5. Nominations shall be sought for and selection shall begin for Viking Pilots during the month of March, and winners must be announced in April.
6. A selection committee of students, faculty, staff, and administration shall be responsible for electing recipients of the Viking Pilot award.
 - a. The selection committee shall meet to discuss each of the individual nominees, before voting on each nominee, who may become a recipient of the reward by receiving a two-thirds vote.