

Northland Community and Technical
College
Thief River Falls,
Minnesota

Student Senate Constitution

Preamble

We, as representatives of the student body of Northland Community and Technical College, in order to present the needs and view of the students of this college to further scholastic goals as well as the social interests to promote the growth and development of the college, do hereby establish this constitution.

ARTICLE I. NAMES AND OBJECTIVES

- Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the Northland Community and Technical College Student Senate. Hereafter, this organization shall be referred to as the Student Senate.
- Section 2. The school colors shall be scarlet and navy.
- Section 3. The objectives of the Student Senate shall be:
- A. To represent the student body and affiliated organizations in all matters of mutual concern.
 - B. To approve social, recreational and cultural activities for the student body.
 - C. To establish a calendar of events to act as a guide for student activities throughout the school year and to establish a budget for Student College Center and Student Senate activities.
 - D. To act as an advocate between the administration and student body.
 - E. To act as the final authority in disputes between students and student organizations on matters pertaining to the general welfare of the student body.
 - F. To insure student representation on all committees in which, by their purpose, will affect students at Northland Community and Technical College. Hereafter, referred to as NCTC.
 - G. To help insure Student Life and all MnSCU policies are followed by NCTC.
 - H. To foster connections between NCTC and the local communities of Thief River Falls, Pennington County, and the state of Minnesota.
 - I. To award Student Stipends as decided upon by the Executive Board and

as nominated by Faculty, Staff and Administrative of NCTC.

ARTICLE II.
DELEGATED POWERS

- Section 1. The Student Senate shall retain the right to regulate its own affairs, as represented by the objectives of this organization, in cooperation with the advisor as assigned by the NCTC college president.
- Section 2. The Student Senate shall revise the budget within general college policies, as prepared by the Student Life Committee or Advisor. The Student Senate, as a whole, through their involvement on the Student Life Committee will recommend budgeted activity expenditures to the President and Senate Advisor of the college.
- Section 3. The Student Senate shall have the right to approve the formation of all college sponsored student organizations.
- Section 4. The student senate shall act as the voice of the student body in matters affecting student or curricular activities.
- A. Coordinate student activities and events and help insure the proper supervision is provided.
 - B. Establish minimum participation numbers for clubs and activities in cooperation with Student Life Committee and Advisor to the Senate.

ARTICLE III.
MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. Any student who is enrolled and has paid the activity fee is eligible to be an active member of this organization of the student body.
- Section 2. The membership of the Student Senate shall consist of but not exceed one Student President and **up to** nineteen elected representatives of NCTC. Of the nineteen senators four Executives/Officers will be elected by members of the senate.
- Section 3. Eligible candidates for student senate shall be selected by a valid endorsement outlined in Section 8 of Article III. Endorsements must be recognized by the current Student President or Senate Advisor given the absence of an elected Student President. Given an excess of nineteen candidates a general election will be held, outlined in Section 9 & 10 of Article III

Section 4. The Student Senate shall elect Executives via closed ballot vote of simple majority of senators present. The need for diversity on the Student Senate is noted.

- A. The Student Senate shall elect/select a President-elect from its current membership during the academic year in the month of May.
 - 1. Student Senate members interested must express their interest in this position in May, and the current senate membership will select the President-elect at its last meeting in May to hold office as a President during the following school year.
 - 2. After being selected/elected by membership of the Student Senate, the President-elect shall make every effort to attend the MSCSA General Assemblies and to learn more about the process of being involved in a statewide and local organization.
 - 3. If the President-elect is for any reason unable to return to office the following year, a new President-elect will be voted into office during the Executive election period in September

Section 5. Qualifications for Student Senators shall be as follows

- A. Candidates for Student Senate must have a 2.3 cumulative GPA or better
- B. Candidates must be students of four (4) credits or more
- C. Candidates must be able to devote the necessary time to assist the Senate to fulfill its responsibilities and follow the constitution
- D. Candidates must agree to serve on committees as assigned by the Senate.

Section 6. The Student Senate shall contact the Presidents (or other duly constituted representatives) of various student organizations for consultation when considering matters of vital concern to these organizations. Student organizations or clubs shall always be amenable to the Student Senate.

Section 7. Removal and Vacancies:

- A. The Student Senate or Senate Advisor may remove any member of this organization for scholastic reason, school disciplinary reasons, or violation of the Student Senate Constitution.
- B. A member or officer will be removed from the senate if they do not maintain a 2.3 cumulative GPA, or drops below 4 credits enrolled during any semester.
- C. A member or officer may be removed from the senate by a simple majority of the senate membership for one or more of the following reasons:
 - 1. Two unexcused absences from official meetings.
 - 2. Absences, excused or unexcused, of 25% of regular order meetings per semester or 4 meetings, whichever is fewer.
 - 3. Disciplinary action taken by school officials
 - 4. Improper, inappropriate, or conduct not becoming of a Student Senate member representing students at NCTC as determined by

a simple majority of Student Senate. Violations of any part of the NCTC Student Handbook.

5. Behavior that is contrary to the best interests and/or good order of the student body
- E. The members of the student body may with just cause remove a representative by presenting a petition with 15% of the current semester enrolled student's signatures.
- F. Any vacancies within the Executive Committee shall be filled within two weeks following the vacancy occurrence by the full senate

Section 8. Nominations for Student Senate elections must be made by a petition containing the signature of the enrolled student wishing to be a candidate along with the signatures of students enrolled at NCTC and one faculty member and one staff member.

Section 9. All general elections will be decided by a closed ballot of the enrolled students, a winner being declared if he or she received the greatest number of votes cast for each position. When multiple positions are indicated, the winners shall be those receiving the greatest number of votes. If there are less than 19 petitioners for membership, a vote by affirmation will be conducted to confirm the membership of the Student Senate. Once 19 valid members are confirmed no further members may be accepted.

Section 10. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates, a run-off election between these candidates will be held.

Section 11. However, newly elected Student Senate members shall assume power on the first day following the election or appointment during the school year.

Section 12. Student Stipends shall be paid to the President at 100.00 a semester, not to exceed 200.00 a year. Stipends shall be paid to all other executive members at 75.00 a semester, not to exceed 150.00 a year. Non executives, who participate actively in student senate events, as decided by the executive board; shall be paid 70.00 a semester, not to exceed 140.00 a year. In the event that there is less than 12 non-executive student senate members, the remainder (overflow stipends) shall be awarded as 70.00 stipends per semester to non-student senate members, as nominated, and then decided upon by the executive board. No Student Senate member may be awarded a stipend in addition to the Student Senate Stipend. If any member aside from the President is nominated for a stipend other than the Student Senate Stipend, that member may choose between the two. Any member not found actively participating in student senate, as decided by the executive board, and/or as determined by Article III, section 5 of the Constitution, shall not be awarded any part of a stipend for that semester. Any student who is removed the Student Senate shall not be eligible for an overflow stipend or any stipend awarded out of student senate or student life funds for the semester, unless otherwise decided upon by the Executive board.

ARTICLE IV.
OFFICERS

- Section 1. The officers of the Student Senate shall consist of one (1) President, one (1) Vice President, one (1) Secretary, and one (1) Treasurer. These four (4) officers shall constitute the Executive Committee, selected/elected by those senators in September, by a majority attending the selection/election meeting. Officers shall serve as the primary attendees of all conferences, conventions, or statewide meetings related to Senate business. Note: See Article III for election of President.
- Section 2. Executive Committee members must be enrolled in at least six (6) credits per semester, and can hold a particular office for no more than two years.
- Section 3. The duties of the President shall be:
- A. To enforce this constitution
 - B. To preside at the meetings
 - C. To endorse all measures passed by the Student Senate.
 - D. To call special meetings of the Student Senate when needed
 - E. To serve as the State Association contact on issues regarding the MSCSA. MN State College Student Association- Hereafter named MSCSA.
 - F. To guarantee nominations for chair persons of student committees with a simple majority approval by the Student Senate, and to reserve the power to appoint chairpersons if no nominations are submitted.
 - G. To serve as ex-officio member of all student committees.
 - H. Provide an agenda at the start of each meeting, which may include:
 - 1. Call to order
 - 2. Roll call of attendance as needed
 - 3. Call for the reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting.
 - 4. Officer reports/Advisor report
 - 5. Committee reports.
 - 6. Old business.
 - 7. New Business.
 - 8. Consideration of oral and written communications/announcements
 - 9. Adjournment
 - I. Make sure the Advisor's signature is on all requests. Grant excused absences from official meetings.
 - J. Forward all meeting minutes to the appropriate party as needed or requested.
- Section 4. The duties of the Vice President shall be:
- A. To assist with the coordinating of activities associated with Advocacy Days and Legislative issues.

- B. To develop political contacts
- C. Create positive relationship with local legislators.
- D. To handle all official correspondence of the Student Senate in conjunction with the Senate Advisor.
- E. To preside over meeting if President is absent
- F. To serve on the Technology Committee.
- G. To act in conjunction with a Student Life Committee to coordinate all college-sponsored student activities and work with the Dean of Students.

Section 5. The duties of the Secretary shall be:

- A. To keep accurate computer records and printed hard copy of all sessions of the Student Senate.
- B. Maintain minutes in electronic format which is the official record of Student Senate meetings. It shall include:
 - 1. A copy of the Student Senate Constitution and By-laws
 - 2. The approved schedule or regular meetings.
 - 3. The exact wording of motions and resolutions
 - 4. Name of marker and second of all motions
 - 5. Attendance of members present and absent
 - 6. The individual vote of all motions
 - 7. Original copies of all reports.
 - 8. A copy of each meeting's minutes will be given to the members and the faculty Student Senate Advisor
- C. Keep thorough record of attendance of all members.

Section 6. The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- A. To keep accurate records of the financial transactions of the Student Senate and college center accounts.
- B. To be prepared to submit an accurate report of the financial status of the Student Senate at all meetings of the Student Senate and maintain a permanent record thereof.
- C. Give a brief budget report at each meeting or upon request of the Senate President.

Section 7. Role of Senate Advisor

- A. To assist with the coordination of campus and Student Senate activities on campus
- B. To analyze given information and present the Student Senate with direction on key issues that affect students at Northland.
- C. To assist with the development of political contacts
- D. Sign all requisitions and give authority for commitments on behalf of the college.
- E. Act as the parliamentarian when needed and approve final schedule of all activities established by the Student Senate.
- F. Assist with elections and qualifications for all Student Senate candidates and

members.

- G. To help coordinate summer activities of the Student Senate and planning and preparation for the upcoming school year.
 - a. Recommend that the Advisor attend either the fall or spring Delegate
 - b. Assembly and is encouraged to attend both, if possible with their schedule.

ARTICLE V.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION

- Section 1. An executive board will be elected as stated in Article IV.
- Section 2. It will be comprised of five (5) Student Senate members and one (1) Senate Advisor
- Section 3. The Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer are all members of the Executive Board along with the Student Senate President and Senate Advisor who, has voice without vote.
- Section 4. The Executive Board often has direct dealing with Administration, Faculty and Staff.
- Section 5. Student Senate President will chair the Executive Board

ARTICLE VI.

QUORUM AND VOTING

- Section 1. A quorum shall be a one-third of the Student Senate members.
- Section 2. All members of the Student Senate shall have one vote, except the President who may only vote in the case of a tie.
- Section 3. A simple majority of the Student Senate votes cast is required to pass all non- specified measures within the framework of the Constitution.
- Section 4. Voices votes will be taken on all issues unless one member requests a show of hands vote, a roll call vote, or a secret ballot.
- Section 5. Quorum shall not exist without the Dean of Students, or designee (i.e., Student Senate Advisor, Assistant to the Dean of Students) present upon the Call to Order.

ARTICLE VII.

MEETINGS

- Section 1. The Student Senate shall meet **at least** two times per month unless

otherwise decided by the Student Senate and at a specified time designated by this organization during the regular school year.

- Section 2. Emergency meeting of the Student Senate may be called by the President of the Student Senate. Emergency meetings may also be called by the Student Senate Advisor or any member of the Executive Committee, provided that the matter is of grave urgency and an attempt has been made to contact the President or Vice- President.
- Section 3. Meetings of the Student Senate should be conducted following a modified version of Robert's Rule of Order.
- Section 4. An agenda will be available to all Senate members at the beginning of each meeting. Minutes of each meeting will be made available to the NCTC student body via the Student Senate Advisor. Requests for time on the agenda will be made to the President or the Advisor 24 hours before a scheduled meeting.
- Section 5. Executive Committee will meet at least once (1) a month on a regular basis or at the call of the Chair and/or Advisor.

ARTICLE VIII.
STUDENT SENATE POLICY FOR CLUBS

- Section 1. Any group of students wishing to start a club for any purpose must secure approval from the Student Senate before this organization can be recognized as an official club of Northland Community and Technical College.
- Section 2. Any approved club shall exist, in accordance with the other criteria listed, until the expiration of the academic year; upon expiration of the academic year, the club shall re-submit all necessary documentation at the beginning of the next academic year, or therefore be dissolved.
- Section 3. To secure approval for a charter, a group of students must meet the following requirements:
- A. Have a purpose for the Club which will benefit the college in some manner
 - B. Must have an Advisor
 - C. Include a proposed written constitution to the Student Senate
 - D. The organization must have fifteen (15) active members in the group at the time of petitioning.
 - E. A representative of the group must appear before the Student Senate and petition orally for the charter.
 - F. Clubs must present reports to the Student Senate. Club representatives shall have voice without vote, unless the representatives are also members of the Student Senate itself.

- Section 4. The Student Senate shall determine, as part of the proposed club charter, the following privileges for each organization:
- A. Whether there are any restrictions for the particular club in any rights or privileges that apply to other organizations.
 - B. Whether they are entitled to any money from available funds.
- Section 5. The Student Senate shall notify the Dean of Students and Student Senate Advisor of NCTC of its approval for a charter to any club that successfully meets the above requirements. The Student Senate shall then issue the approval.
- Section 6. Each club should submit a semester report to the Student Senate, which includes its minutes the week before finals start.
- Section 7. The Student Senate, by a majority vote, may revoke any of the particular privileges or place on probation any organization or club for due cause, or by simple majority they fail to:
- A. If, in the Student Senate's judgment, for a two semester period, an organization has not actively attempted to fulfill its stated purpose.
 - B. If, in the opinion of the Student Senate, an organization has acted in a manner contrary to the stated purposes of NCTC.
 - C. Failure to submit constitution annually by a club.
- Section 8. Denial or revocation of a charter of probationary status for a club or organization shall not be used as a device for censorship. All standards established must be applied objectively and equally.
- Section 9. All clubs and/or activity groups must have approval of the Dean of Students prior to scheduling an activity.

**ARTICLE IX.
COMMITTEES**

- Section 1. Steering Committees are school wide committees in which students serve on. Additional committees can be added with approval of the Senate President upon written request from the Administration. Such committees may include, but not limited to:
- A. Vendor Contract
 - B. Technology
 - C. Facilities
 - D. Graduation
 - E. Retention
 - F. Diversity

ARTICLE X.
TRAVELING BY STUDENT SENATE MEMBERS

- Section 1. Any Student Senate member that is registered to attend a conference and cannot attend will be responsible for the bill if no one can be found to take their place. The only exception will be if an emergency happens, the Student Senate will vote to see who will pay the bill. A majority of the Student Senate members voting is needed for a decision.
- Section 2. Individual Student Senate members shall be responsible to pay for any damaged or stolen materials that are incurred at any Student Senate function that can be directly attributed to their actions or lack thereof.
- Section 3. Student Senate members are expected to attend all meetings at conferences which pertain to them unless they get permission from the chief delegate.
- Section 4. Student Senate members shall be bound by the NCTC student handbook on travel for student activities.
- Section 5. Any member of the Senate may be denied travel privileges if, in the judgment of the Senate Advisor, such travel would be to the detriment of the student's academic performance, or if the student has been subject to discipline by the Senate or by the School Administration.

ARTICLE XI.
AMENDMENT POLICY

- Section 1. The senate, by a two-thirds vote of its membership, shall have the authority to amend these rules.
- Section 2. Any member of the student body may submit a proposed amendment to these by-laws for consideration by the Senate upon presentation of a petition in favor or the amendment which contains student signatures of at least twenty of the qualified full time students of NCTC.
- Section 3. The proposed amendment shall be available to all qualified Student Senate members regularly enrolled, at least 7 days prior to the meeting at which the amendments will be voted on. The Advisor must also receive the amendment at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE XII.
STUDENT SENATE FUNDS

- Section 1. All Student Senate encumbrances shall have the authorization of the Student Senate or the President.
- A. All requests for funds in excess of \$1000 will be presented to the Senate and voted on at least **one Student Senate meeting** following the request.

Fund requests below \$1000 may be voted on the same day of a budgetary presentation.

- B. Campus Activities will be presented by the Student Life Committee or Student Advisor, in lieu of a Student Life Committee, with a budget for the event. Funds for events will be approved by a vote of 51% or greater in the Senate.

Section 2. Clubs recognized by the Student Senate shall be dispersed monies from the NCTC Club Fund.

- A. A model for disbursement will be formulated by the Treasurer and approved by a vote of 51% or greater in the Senate.
- B. Clubs in attendance, not yet recognized by the Senate, will not receive monies for attendance. The day of recognition marks the time at which a club may receive said funds on an attendance basis.

Section 3. All this shall be in accordance with the NCTC Business Office practices.

1st Reading
January 12, 1998
Semester Conversion
Adopted
May 15, 1998
Proposed Changes
March 15, 1999
Adopted
May 11, 1999
Amendments Initiated
December 22, 2003
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