

**CONSTITUTION OF
CT STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE NORTHWESTERN
STUDENT SENATE
PREAMBLE**

We, the Students Senate of CT State Northwestern, in order to promote the general welfare of the student body, represent the student body by communicating effectively with faculty, staff, and administration to stimulate interest in activities contributing to our improvement, direct and promote student involvement in campus activities, and to provide every student with training and experience in democratic government. We, the students of CT State Northwestern, do hereby establish this Constitution as the official Constitution of CT State Northwestern

ARTICLE I – TITLE, MEMBERSHIP, PURPOSE- THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the CT State Northwestern Student Senate.

Section 2. All registered students in good standing with the college shall be eligible for consideration to join the student senate. Members of the student senate must be registered in and actively seeking at least one credited class and remain such in order to maintain a seat. Students who fail to meet these requirements, determined by the Director of Student Activities, will result in immediate disqualification of the seat.

Section 3. The Student Senate shall be composed of fifteen (15) voting members: the Three (3) members of the Executive Branch, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, (President is a non-voting member of the senate) and 12 senators.

Section 4. Each Senator shall have one vote with the exception of the President who shall vote only in the case of a tie.

Section 5. The Student Senate is the sole government and official voice of the student body and other student organizations at NWCC.

Section 6. The Student Senate is established to promote and protect the student body's rights, interests, and general welfare. The Senate shall be regarded as the official representative body of the students at CT State Northwestern and, in this capacity, shall have the authority to consult with and make recommendations to the faculty and administration regarding matters affecting student welfare.

Section 7. The Student Senate shall advise the Student Activities Director on procedures on how clubs are created.

ARTICLE II- POWERS AND DUTIES

The powers and duties of Senators shall include the following:

Section 1. Senators may introduce any motions or resolutions which will advance the purposes of the Student Body or better enable the Senate to achieve its stated goals.

Section 2. Senators are obliged to keep themselves fully informed of the needs and interests of the general Student Body.

Section 3. The student Senate President shall miss no more than two (2) meetings per semester regardless of the reasons, their seat may be revoked at the discretion of the Senate. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Senate membership is required to remove the President for lack of attendance.

Section 4. The Student Senate will uphold and act in accordance with any local, state, or federal laws & statutes, and the policies of the Board of Regents of the Connecticut State Colleges and University System.

Section 5. The Student Senate shall have the authority to create Ad-Hoc Committees as deemed necessary for matters not related to the Standing Committees.

Section 6. Grant itself authority by amending the Student Senate By-Laws as needed and other governing documents.

Section 7. The Senate shall have the power to enact such legislation as deemed necessary or advantageous for the proper functioning of its committees. In matters of procedure not regulated by the Constitution, the Senate and its Committees shall be governed by the latest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order*.

Section 8. The Executive Board shall consist of the Student Senate President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary. The authority is limited to only those made allowable through the official Student Senate Governing Documents.

Section 9. The Senate shall administer the Student Activity Fund and other sources of income attributed to or raised by the senate or student clubs who receive any funds allocated to them by the student senate or chartered/sanctioned by the student senate and shall be responsible for maintaining accurate records of income, expenditure, and current balances. Monies from the Student Activity Fund may be used only for purposes consistent with the interest of the Student Body as deemed appropriate by the Student Senate or the Director of Student Activities. In the administration and use of monies from the Student Activity Fund and other sources, the Senate and student clubs/organizations shall be governed by the policies of the State of Connecticut, the Senate Governing Documents, or other superseding organizations as they pertain to student clubs/organizations.

Section 10. The Senate shall, with approval of the President of the College, have the power to charter student clubs and organizations and to allocate funds to them in accordance with the Student Senate Governing Documents.

Section 11. The Senate shall be responsible for the promotion of mutual understanding and cooperation between the College and the general community.

Section 12. The Senate shall, with the approval of the College President, have the power to enter intercollegiate student associations and organizations to promote the general interests of the College and the Student Body.

Section 13. The Senate may undertake or support any projects or activities that will serve the general interests of the College, the Student Body, or the community. Any such projects or activities shall be subject to the approval of the President of the College.

Section 14. Student members who hold vested interest in decisions of the Senate will be excluded from voting on those matters. Questions concerning conflicts of interest shall be decided by the President of the College or their delegated subordinate.

Section 15. The Student Senate President and Treasurer shall not serve as the President or Treasurer permanently or acting as the same of any College club or organization.

Section 16. The Student Senate shall hold regular meetings of the Student Senate. Meetings shall be held weekly during the regular academic year when the College is in session. Special meetings shall be called by the President of the Senate or by the request of four (4) of the voting members of the Senate with at no less than forty-eight (48) hours' notice and may be held outside the regular academic year.

Section 17. All Senate meetings shall be on the College campus, and all meetings, regular or special, must be posted in a publicly available location as determined by the Student By-Laws at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. The Student Senate shall allow their Advisor and/or the Director of Student Activities to permit a special meeting of the Student Senate to take place virtually in the event of states of emergency, campus closures or other circumstances deemed necessary by the Director of Student Activities or their appointee.

Section 18. Senate meetings must achieve quorum in order to transact business. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of voting members of the Senate. The President of the Senate is not considered a voting member of the Senate; therefore, the President is not included when deciding quorum.

Section 19. All meetings of the Student Senate shall be open to members of the Student Body unless otherwise specified. The full privileges of discussion at a Senate meeting may be extended to members of the Student Body at the direction of the Senate but voting privileges shall at all times be reserved for the Senators.

Section 20. Further authority governing the Student Senate, student clubs, the student activity fund may be enacted through governing documents in addition to this Constitution. No rules in any other governing documents shall conflict with the constitution. This constitution supersedes all other governing documents or Bylaws of the Student Senate.

Section 21. All members of the Student Senate must show respect to all members of the school community.

ARTICLE III - SENATE OFFICERS (Executive Board)

Section 1. All Senate Officer Candidates must have a combined grade point average (GPA) of 2.0, and served at least one semester as a Senator to be eligible for the spring election ballot. Waivers for these requirements must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Senate membership before any election petitions are required to be submitted. Service time as a Senator need not apply to appointments of vacancies for Officer positions.

Section 2. The President

The executive officer of the Student Senate shall be President of the Student Senate. The President of the Student Senate upon being sworn in shall be elected by the Student Body, and they shall exercise the following duties:

- a. The President shall preside over Senate Meetings.
- b. The President shall represent the members of the Student Body at official College ceremonies and/or meetings.
- c. The President will act as the liaison between the Student Senate and the rest of the College community and will report all pertinent information and requests to the Student Senate.
- d. The President may participate in debates at Senate meetings.
- e. The President may vote only in the case of a tie vote.
- f. Have the authority to veto legislation within three (3) business days of it being approved by the senate.
- g. The President shall, with advice and consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Senate membership, have the power to appoint students to fill vacancies occurring between regular elections for elected posts.
- h. The President appoints members of all standing committees and ad-hoc committees in accordance with all sections of the governing documents or where otherwise specified. The President will also appoint the chair of committees. The President is not excluded from being chair of standing or ad-hoc committees unless otherwise violating eligibility to serve on a committee.
- i. The President shall have the power to investigate any expenditures or allocations from the Student Activity Fund and must report these findings to the Senate within thirty (30) days.
- j. The President shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of all standing committees.
- k. Shall over have powers granted to them in the "Governing Documents."
- l. The President shall have the authority to sign any financial documents required by the Director of Student Activities as they related to student activity fund or club expenditures and the Student Senate Treasurer will be notified.
- m. In the event that both the Recording Secretary and the Corresponding Secretary are unable to attend a meeting, the President shall appoint a senate member to take the require minutes for the meeting and submit them to the Recording Secretary.

Section 3. The Vice President

The Vice President upon being sworn in shall exercise the following duties:

- a. The Vice President shall preside over the Senate meetings in the absence of the President.
- b. The Vice President shall preside over all Judiciary Committee and Election Committee Meetings except in cases where conflict of interest exists.
- c. In the event that the Presidency falls vacant between elections, the Vice President shall assume the office of President for the remainder of the elected President's term. The Student Senate shall then elect, by a simple majority vote of those members present, a Vice President who shall assume the office for the remainder of the term. In cases of the withdrawal or removal from office of both the President and Vice President, the Student Senate shall elect these officers from the Senate, by a simple majority vote of those members present, to carry out the duties of the President and the Vice President for the remainder of the term.
- d. The Vice President shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of all standing committees.

Section 4. The Treasurer

The Treasurer upon being sworn in shall exercise the following duties:

- a. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the administration of the Student Activity Fund in accordance with the policies defined by the State of Connecticut, the College administration, and the Student Senate.
- b. The Treasurer shall maintain accurate records of income, expenditures, and current balances of the Student Activity Fund and other sources of income.
- c. The Treasurer shall present a monthly Treasurer's Report to the Student Senate and shall also submit a mid-year report showing all income, expenditures, and current balances of the Student Activity Fund.
- d. The Treasurer shall report to the President any questionable expenditures or allocations from the Student Activity Fund.
- e. The Treasurer shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Budget Committee and shall preside over all meetings.
- f. The Treasurer shall sign any financial documents required by the Director of Student Activities as they related to student activity fund or club expenditures.

Section 5. The Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary upon being sworn in shall exercise the following duties:

- a. The Recording Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all regular and special meetings, including the attendance of Senators. Copies of all minutes shall be distributed, after approval by the Senate, to the President of the College and the Deans and shall be prominently posted.
- b. The Recording Secretary shall post announcements of all special meetings.
- c. The Recording Secretary is responsible for maintaining a file of Senate minutes. All minutes must be kept on file for a minimum of three (3) years.

Section 6. The Executive Board

The President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretaries shall form the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall set the Senate agenda with the aid of the Student Senate Advisor. All

agenda items must be submitted to the Executive Board no later than one (1) Day (24 Hours) prior to the Senate meetings. The President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretaries may be requested to perform certain duties other than those enumerated herein which the Senate President may deem necessary or advisable, provided such requests are consistent with this Constitution and with the by-laws of the Senate.

Section 7. In the event that any Senate Officer seat becomes vacant, the Student Senate shall, by majority vote of those members present, fill the seat for the duration of the term.

ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Section 1. The Senate shall maintain the standing committees noted below. The senate shall also appoint Ad-Hoc Committees as deemed fit by a simple majority of the senate. The Scope of responsibilities of standing committees shall be defined by the By-Laws. For the purpose of facilitating Senate work on matters that require close scrutiny or large amounts of time, the following standing committees of the Senate shall exist at all times. All committees will be formed within two (2) weeks following the fall elections. Quorum for standing committees shall consist of half its voting members plus one (1) unless otherwise specified. Actions taken by all committee meetings shall be reported to the Student Senate.

a. **The Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) Senators, including the chairperson who shall be the Treasurer.

The Election Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) Senators, including the chairperson who shall be the Vice President

c. **The Program Committee**

The Program Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) Senators, including a non-voting chairperson who will be appointed by the President.

d. **The Judiciary Committee**

The Judiciary Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) Senators, including the chairperson who shall be the Vice President. Quorum for this committee shall consist of all members.

Section 2. When the need arises, the Senate may create ad hoc committees.

ARTICLE V – ELECTION PROCEDURES

Section 1. Any member of the Student Body with a combined grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 is eligible to run for the Student Senate. The requirements for election of Senate Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Corresponding Secretary) are defined in ARTICLE II, Section 1. No student may simultaneously be a candidate for more than one Officer Position.

Section 2. Elections of all Student Senate Officers and Senators (whether in the general student body election or by presidential confirmation appointment) shall be by secret ballot. Any Student Body member is eligible to vote for any or all Student Senate Officers or Senators.

Section 3. Elections for Student Senators and Student Senate Officers will be held each Spring Semester by April 21 or prior business day. Senators and Senate Officers shall begin their terms on the first day of the Spring Semester Final Examination period, and their terms will expire one year later or immediately after a presidential appointment and senate confirmation.

Section 4. For an elected position, a candidate must file a nomination application with the Student Senate at least One) (1) weeks before an election. All applications must be endorsed by a minimum of twenty-five (25) members of the Student Body. This requirement may be waived by a Three-Fourth (3/4) majority for any one election cycle and must apply to all students considering running.

Section 5. The responsibility of conducting fair elections rests with the Election Committee. The Election Committee shall oversee the election returns and report the results to the Senate.

Section 6. The Judiciary Committee shall investigate complaints of voting irregularities, determine the recommended disposition of disputed ballots, and report its recommendations to the Senate. The Senate may declare an election null and void by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the entire Senate membership. The Senate will then determine a date for a new election. Any such election must be held no later than one (1) month after the original vote has been nullified.

Section 7. When election returns result in a tie vote, a one-day runoff election will be held no later than two (2) weeks after the initial election.

ARTICLE VI – IMPEACHMENT PROCEDURES & RESIGNATIONS

Section 1. Impeachment procedures shall be delineated by the Student Senate By-Laws.

Section 2. The Student Senate’s Judiciary Committee’s shall receive and hear any recommendations for impeachment and shall, carefully and fully, examine all evidence and testimony before making recommendations for impeachment to the full senate.

Section 3. In the event that the accused holds a seat on the Judiciary Committee, another Senator must immediately replace that committee member on the Judiciary Committee. (See ARTICLE II, Section 2, f.)

Section 4. Any senator that needs to resign for any reason shall provide the Student Government Advisor/ Student Activities Director with a written resignation letter or formal correspondence from their school email account.

Section 5. Impeachment shall be defined as: Charges against a member of the student senate or for misconduct. Upon the completion of an impeach investigation and hearing as conducted by the Student Senate in adherence of its government documents, the Student Senate member shall

be removed from office with an affirmative vote decided by the Student Senate Governing Documents.

ARTICLE VII- STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE

Section 1. Student Activity Fee shall be distributed through the Student Senate budget process as defined in the Governing Documents.

Section 2. Organizations that received Student Activity Funds allocated through the Student Senate are subject to the rules, regulations, and stipulations made by the senate and in accordance of the Office of Student Activities.

Section 3. The Student Senate shall have the authority to revoke Student Activity Fee funding from any club or organization and enforce sanctions that seem fit for violations of any the Student Senate Constitution, Governing Documents, in addition to any violations of local, state, federal laws and the policies of the Board of Regents.

Section 4. Student clubs/organizations must maintain at least four (4) active club members as determined by the Student Activity Director or their designee and a club advisor in order to receive funding from the Student Activity Fund.

Section 5. Clubs must complete all necessary forms deemed necessary by the Director of Student Activity or their designee before funds can be spent or encumbered to ensure compliance with any regulations, they deem necessary to properly dispense the Student Activity Fee.

Section 6. Further rules and regulations may be imposed by the Student Senate through their Bylaws or other legislative actions as needed as they relate to the use of Student Activity Funds for clubs/organizations and campus activities.

ARTICLE VIII – ADVISOR

Section 1. The Student Senate must have at least one (1) advisor and that advisor shall be the Director of Student Activities, unless otherwise appointed by the College President/ Campus CEO. Additional advisors may be appointed by the senate annually with a two-thirds (2/3) vote in the affirmative of the Senate members present and voting.

Section 2. The Advisor shall render advice to any and all members of the Student Senate.

Section 3. Shall have no voting rights.

Section 4. Has the authority to spend Student Activity Funds with the discretion of the Student Senate. The Student Senate may provide the Director of Student Activities with a discretionary fund that may be use at their disposal with only the approval of the Student Senate President or Treasurer.

Section 5. The advisor can appoint any faculty or staff member of CT State Northwestern to stand in their place if the need arises.

ARTICLE IX – PROCEDURES FOR AMENDMENT

Section 1. Any proposed amendment to this Constitution must be sponsored by one half (1/2) of all voting members of the student senate. The proposed amendment(s) will be introduced at a regular meeting of the Student Senate. Not vote shall be taken until the next regular meeting of the Student Senate.

Section 2. Copies of the proposed changes to this Constitution should be made available to the senators at the meeting and be available for all members of the student body before a vote is taken.

Section 3. At the second regular meeting of the Senate after introduction of the proposed amendment(s), the Senate shall vote to approve or reject it. Two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Senate membership must concur with the amendment for it to be passed. Before the end of the semester, the Senate must vote on all proposed amendments.

Section 4. Should there be more than one proposed amendment presented and/or considered at the same time, they must be voted on separately by the Student Senate and should they secure passage through the Student Senate, be voted on separately via Campus Wide Referendum.

Section 5. The proposed amendment(s) shall be presented to the members of the Student Body for a vote of approval (a campus wide referendum). A simple majority of the votes cast is required for ratification. With approval, the amendment immediately becomes part of the Constitution.

Section 6. Upon passage of any amendments to this constitution after a campus referendum, the College President shall consider the amendments for approval within two weeks. If the College President does not approve the amendments, the amendments fail.

Section 7. The Election Committee shall, with assistance from the Director of Student Activities or their designee, supervise the ratification process and report the results to the Senate. The Senate shall be the sole judge of the returns.

Section 8. If, at any point, the proposed amendment does not receive the required approval noted in this section, it shall be declared defeated and shall not demand further action.

Section 9. Names of Institutions or College Positions made by the college, CSCU or the State of Connecticut may be changed in this document with merely a simple majority vote of the Student Senate.

ARTICLE X – RATIFICATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION

Section 1. This Constitution shall be declared ratified after having been sponsored by two thirds (2/3) of the entire voting membership of the Student Senate, and by a simple majority of the Student Body voting in referendum.

Section 2. All debts against the Student Activity Fund incurred previous to ratification of this Constitution shall be valid.

Section 3. With ratification of this Constitution, all previous Constitutions are null and void.

Approved by the CT State Northwestern Student Body on April 14, 2023