

# **Manhattan College**

## **Student Government Constitution**

### **Preamble**

*We, the undergraduate students of Manhattan College, recognize the pursuit of academic excellence and a Lasallian Catholic community and in pledging ourselves to the attainment of these goals, do ordain and establish a structure of student self-government, as described in the Constitution written hereafter.*

### **Article I- Name and Purpose**

#### Section 1

The governing body of student self-government shall be named the Student Government of Manhattan College. This Student Government shall consist of a Student Assembly and a Student Court.

#### Section 2

The purpose of the Student Government of Manhattan College shall be to govern the undergraduate students in those matters pertaining to the students; for preserving student rights and freedoms on campus and beyond; attaining for the students a proper voice in all of the affairs of the college community; initiating and supporting growth in the spirit of unity and understanding of Manhattan's Lasallian Catholic mission, in hoping to create a better college environment/community; maintaining a favorable environment for students and supervising all student organizations.

### **Article II- Membership**

#### Section 1

All students regardless of race, color, creed, age, sex, sexual orientation, and financial background shall have an equal opportunity for representation under this student government. However, those students who have not paid the required student activities fee shall not have all the privileges granted to those who have.

#### Section 2

All organizations, clubs, councils, and committees affiliated with the Student Government shall function, be composed of and select officers in accordance with their governing instruments (which must be submitted and approved by the Student Assembly prior to official formation), the Student Government Constitution, and the Student Government Bylaws.

#### Section 3

All members of the Student Government must be matriculated full time undergraduate students and must maintain a minimum G.P.A of 2.3.

### **Article III- The Student Assembly**

#### Section 1- Name and Purpose

There shall be a Student Assembly that shall exercise all of the legislative and executive authority of Student Government.

## Section 2- Membership

- A) The Student Assembly shall be composed of individuals representing the respective schools within the college. The number of representatives shall be stipulated in the Bylaws.
- B) The senior, junior, sophomore and freshman classes shall each send one representative to the Student Assembly.
- C) The Executive Vice President, Vice President for Club Administration, Vice President for Communication, Vice President for Commuter Affairs, Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Resident Affairs, and Vice President for Social Life shall each have a seat and a vote on the Student Assembly. The Assistant Vice President for Social Life shall have a seat, but no vote, on the Student Assembly.
- D) The Student Athlete Advisory Council, the College's student-run newspaper, radio station, and television station shall have a seat and a voice on the Student Assembly, but no vote. In reference to closed meetings of the Student Assembly or its committees, these representatives shall only report the results.

## Section 3- Officers

- A) The Student Body President shall be President of the Student Assembly, hereafter referred to as President. The President shall preside over the meetings of the Student Assembly. The President shall only have a vote in case of a tie.
- B) The Executive Vice President shall be President Pro Tempore of the Student Assembly. The President Pro Tempore shall serve as President of the Student Assembly in the absence of the President. The President Pro Tempore shall relinquish all privileges of a member of the Student Assembly while serving as President of the Student Assembly.
- C) The Student Assembly shall elect all other non-voting officers as stipulated in the Bylaws of Student Government.

## Section 4- Power

The Student Assembly shall have the power:

- A) To approve the creation and constitutions of all student clubs and organizations that are funded by the Student Activities Fee;
- B) To regulate the student clubs and organizations funded by the Student Activities Fee;
- C) To approve the appointment of the Justices of the Student Court made by the Student Body President with a 2/3 vote;
- D) To constitute the alternate student membership on the Judiciary Committee on Student Affairs;
- E) To determine the Student Activities Fee for the following 2 years, requiring a 2/3 vote;

- F) To approve allocations of the Student Activities Fee after sufficient study in the appropriate committee;
- G) To make rules and procedures for the freshmen and general elections;
- H) To enact all necessary and proper legislation, after sufficient and detailed study in a committee, to the running, maintenance, and improvement of the Student Government and the quality of life on the Manhattan College campus.

#### Section 5- Meetings of Student Assembly

- A) Regular meetings of the Student Assembly shall occur at least once every two weeks during the regular academic school year, which shall include all days from the first day of classes until the last day of final exams each semester, at a time fixed by the President in accordance with the assembly members. The President must announce meetings three days in advance.
- B) Special or Emergency meetings of Student Assembly may be called by the President. The President must call a special meeting at the request of a majority of the Assemblymen. Special summer or winter intersession meetings shall be announced accordingly.
- C) The Student Assembly, under conditions prescribed in the By-laws may declare a closed session of the Student Assembly. This process may be granted in a majority approval.
- D) The agenda and minutes, of the previous meeting, of the Student Assembly shall be distributed via e-mail or campus mail at least three academic days prior to the scheduled meeting of Student Assembly.
- E) At regular meetings, the Student Assembly shall hear and act upon reports of Standing Committees and Special Committees.
- F) The President of Manhattan College, other administrators, and faculty shall have access to assembly meetings, excluding those that are in closed sessions.
- G) The business of the Student Assembly shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, as revised by the Student Assembly.

#### Section 6- Standing Committees of the Student Assembly

- A) The Student Assembly shall have the following standing committees: the Budget Allocations Committee, the Campus Improvements Committee, the Club Establishment Committee, the Club Oversight Committee, the Elections Committee, the Executive Committee, and the Lasallian Action Committee.

#### Section 7- Special Committees of Student Assembly

- A) Special Committees shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Student Assembly, whenever it may be deemed appropriate. They shall perform such duties as may be authorized by the

Student Assembly. These committees may expire at a time set by the President, with the approval of the Student Assembly.

- B) A Governmental Oversight Committee may be established at the discretion of the President or a majority of the Student Assembly for a period of no more than 3 academic weeks at which time the Committee must report its findings to the Student Assembly.

## Section 8- Executive Offices

The Executive Offices shall include the Student Body President, Executive Vice President, Vice President for Club Administration, Vice President for Communication, Vice President for Commuter Affairs, Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Resident Affairs, Vice President for Social Life and Assistant Vice President for Social Life.

- A) There shall be established the office of Student Body President. All Executive Powers shall be vested in the Student Body President. Shall serve as the official liaison between Student Government and the College Administration. Shall fill a vacancy in the position of Executive Vice President with the 2/3 approval from the Student Assembly. Shall be ex-officio President of the Student Assembly.
- B) There shall be established the office of Executive Vice President who shall succeed the Student Body President in the event of a vacancy. Shall be ex-officio President Pro Tempore of the Student Assembly; shall be acting President of the Freshman Class until one is elected.
- C) There shall be established the office of Vice President for Club Administration who shall oversee and regulate all student clubs and organizations, excluding communication groups' publications and broadcasts.
- D) There shall be established the office of Vice President for Communication who shall act as the Public Relations Officer of Student Government. The Vice President for Communications shall oversee and coordinate all student run communication groups' publications and broadcasts.
- E) There shall be established the office of Vice President for Commuter Affairs who shall be the prime advocate to and liaison between the commuter students and the Student Assembly/College Administration.
- F) There shall be established the office of Vice President for Finance who shall keep a record of all income and expenditures of Student Government and all clubs and organizations under Student Government jurisdiction. Shall be responsible for the transactions of Student Government and its subsidiary clubs and organizations in accordance with the established policies and procedures of the Office of the Controller of Manhattan College and with the procedures of the individual commissions and/or committees.
- G) There shall be established the office of Vice President for Residential Affairs who shall be the prime advocate to and liaison between the resident students and the Student Assembly/College Administration.
- H) There shall be established the office of Vice President for Social Life who shall be responsible for the programming of Student Government.

- I) There shall be established the office of Assistant Vice President for Social Life who shall be responsible for assisting the Vice President for Social Life in the programming of Student Government. The Vice President for Social Life shall appoint the Assistant Vice President for Social Life with a 2/3 approval of the Student Assembly

#### Section 9- Quorum

The Quorum for the meetings of the Student Assembly and all Committees shall be a majority of voting members.

#### Section 10- Vacancy in Elected Office

- A) In case of the removal, resignation or any other way that the position of Student Body President is vacated, the Executive Vice President shall assume the position of Student Body President.
- B) The Student Assembly shall establish a line of succession within the Bylaws of Student Government in case of the removal, resignation or any other way that the positions of Student Body President and Executive Vice President are vacated simultaneously.
- C) Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Executive Vice President, the Student Body President shall nominate an Executive Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a 2/3 vote of the Student Assembly.
- D) Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of any Vice President, the Executive Committee shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a 2/3 vote of the Student Assembly.
- E) Whenever there is a vacancy in a Representatives seat on the Student Assembly, any member can nominate an individual of the required constituency and the said nominee shall take office with the approval of a majority of the Student Assembly. In cases where more than two persons are nominated, a plurality is sufficient for approval.

#### Section 11- Parliamentary Authority

The Parliamentary Authority for the conduct of the Student Assembly shall be the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, revised by the Student Assembly.

### **Article IV- The Student Court**

#### Section 1- Members

The Student Court, hereafter called the Court, shall be established and its arrangement and composition shall be determined through legislation. The Justices are to be nominated by Student Body President and approved by a 2/3 vote of Student Assembly. Justices shall hold their seat until the last day of finals of the spring semester of their second year, at which point, they may be reappointed.

#### Section 2- Jurisdiction

The Court shall have jurisdiction in:

- A) Any case referred to the Court, by the Dean of Students or his/her designee, at the behest of any staff, faculty, or student member of Manhattan College, due to violations of the Student Code of Conduct and/or is a student unbecoming of the Lasallian Tradition of Manhattan College;
- B) Any case referred to the Court, by the Dean of Students or his/her designee, pertaining to cases of alleged procedural defects in Student Government;
- C) Adjudicating campus parking tickets.

### Section 3- Appeals

The Court shall have the authority to hear all cases in which it has jurisdiction. The Court's verdict shall be absolute and final in cases of alleged procedural defects in Student Government and Campus Parking Tickets. Under violations to the Student Code of Conduct an appeal may be made to the Dean of Students who may refer the case to a different Court as outlined in the most recent addition of the Manhattan College Student Handbook. In cases where new evidence is brought to the attention of the Student Court, the court shall retry the case. In cases of procedural defect during the Court hearing, an appeal may be made to the Dean of Students for the possibility of a new hearing.

### **Article V- Class Officers**

#### Section 1 –

There shall be established the office of President, Treasurer, and Secretary for the senior, junior, sophomore, and freshman classes, who shall be responsible for representing their respective class on campus and programming all class run events.

### **Article VI- Elections**

#### Section 1-

Student Government members shall serve until such time as successors have been installed. General and Freshmen Class Elections shall be run by the Elections Committee in accordance with this Constitution and Bylaws.

#### Section 2-

There shall be two elections each academic year. Freshmen Elections are held in the fall semester, after September 30 and before November 14. General Elections shall be held during the spring semester; after March 14 and before April 14. All elections results must be reviewed by the Elections Committee. The newly elected members shall take their seats or offices on a date set by the Elections Committee.

#### Section 3-

All Executive Officers and Representatives shall be elected during the General Elections with the exception of the incoming freshman class.

#### Section 4-

The Offices of Student Body President and Executive Vice President shall run on the same ticket in the general election. A candidate for Student Body President or Executive Vice President is prohibited from running individually. When a vote is cast for the Presidential Ticket the vote shall count only once.

### **Article VII- Removal from Office**

#### Section 1- Impeachment

- A) Should any member of the Student Government, either elected or appointed, fail to or improperly attend to the duties of his/her office as outlined in the governing instruments of student government, the Student Assembly may remove that individual from office with a 2/3 vote, allowing him/her due process of action.
- B) Should any member of the Student Government, either elected or appointed, conduct themselves unbecomingly as a member of our Lasallian Catholic community, either on the campus property, or off, shall also be grounds to remove said officer from his/her position. The Student Assembly may remove that individual from office with a 2/3 vote, allowing him/her due process of action.
- C) Any member of the Student Government that is being impeached from a specific office and holds additional positions within Student Government, shall immediately forfeit all rights and responsibilities afforded the said individual that devolve from the additional office held until a decision is rendered.

#### Section 2- Judicial Removal

Any member of the Manhattan College Community may file written charges against another student for violating the Student Code of Conduct or conducting themselves unbecomingly of the Manhattan College Lasallian Tradition, either on the campus property, or off, may be afforded a hearing by the appropriate Judiciary Body as outlined in the Student Handbook. Any member of Student Government expelled, forced to take an involuntary leave of absence or placed on disciplinary probation and has exhausted all appeals shall be summarily removed from office.

#### Section 3- Right Afforded to the Accused

- A) The accused member will be notified within (5) academic days of the filing of charges. The accused shall be notified in writing of the charges by the Student Court or by the President of the Student Assembly, in order to prepare a defense, and shall be notified of the date when the Student Court or the Student Assembly shall meet in disciplinary session. The rights afforded a member through this document shall not be infringed upon until the accused is found guilty and the resulting recommendations of the Student Court or the Student Assembly become final.
- B) Disciplinary hearings shall be held in closed sessions and take place not more than 10 academic days after the charges have been filed.

#### Section 4-

- A) In cases of impeachment, a 2/3 vote of the Student Assembly's members is required to determine the outcome of the Impeachment Hearing.
- B) In cases of a judicial hearing, a majority vote of present court justices is required to determine the outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing.
- C) Both the Student Court and the Student Assembly must abide by all regulations regarding quorum and voting as stipulated in the Bylaws of Student Government.
- D) The final decision rendered by the Student Assembly regarding impeachment is final and absolute except in the case of procedural defect. The Student Assembly shall retry the case.
- E) Any member of Student Government that has been removed from office by the Student Assembly shall be prohibited from seeking another office in Student Government for the remainder of his/her academic career at Manhattan College.
- F) The final opinion of a Disciplinary Hearing, heard by the Student Court, may be appealed through the appellate process established in this constitution. This requires a referral from the Dean of Students to the appropriate Judiciary Body as outlined in the most recent addition of the Manhattan College Student Handbook.

#### Section 5-

Should any official fail to maintain the minimum grade point average (2.3) during the course of their term; or, should they be placed on disciplinary or academic probation, they will summarily forfeit their position.

#### **Article VIII- Bylaws**

The Bylaws of the Constitution shall be adopted and amended by a two-thirds vote of the Student Assembly. The Bylaws amendment bill(s) shall be subject to notification one meeting prior to their consideration.

#### **Article IX- Amendments to the Constitution**

The Constitution may be amended if 2/3 of the voting members of the Student Assembly vote in favor of the amendment at two consecutive votes. If the amendment is approved, it is enacted at a date determined prior to the second vote. If the amendment fails either the first or second vote, the amendment cannot appear before the Student Assembly in the same form for the term of one academic year from the date of the last vote.

#### **Article X- Ratification**

The ratification of this Constitution or any subsequent constitution shall require a 2/3 vote of all the members of the legislative body at two consecutive votes. If the constitution fails either the first or second vote, the constitution cannot appear before the Student Assembly in the same form for the term of one academic year from the date of the last vote.

Upon ratification of this Constitution and its subsequent amendments shall take effect at a date determined prior to the second vote and/or for the first general election subsequent to its ratification. This Constitution shall take precedence over all other constitutions, documents, and related governing instruments of Student Government and its committees, councils, clubs, and organizations.