

CONSTITUTION OF THE LEWIS UNIVERSITY  
STUDENT SENATE  
UPDATED NOVEMBER 1, 2017



# Preamble

We the People of Lewis University shall exist to promote the development of the student body through the pursuit of wisdom, justice, knowledge, fidelity, and association. We shall exist to represent the voice of student opinions through representation of constituents, as well as the entire student body, in order to uphold, as well as improve, the quality of life for students at Lewis University.

## Article I: Formation

### Section I: Name

The student government of Lewis University shall be known as the Lewis University Student Senate, hereafter referred to as LUSS.

### Section II: Authority

1. This constitution shall serve as the governing document of LUSS.
2. The LUSS shall govern and represent the students of Lewis University only in those matters over which the authority has been designated to the LUSS by the administration of the University.
3. The LUSS shall have exclusive control and jurisdiction over its internal affairs while recognizing the authority of the University to oversee the work of the LUSS.

### Section III: Eligibility Requirements

1. Enrollment as a student of Lewis University during each semester of the term the individual will serve
2. Maintain a 2.5 cumulative GPA
  - a. Due to not having an established GPA, freshmen must have two non-personal letters of recommendations.
  - b. If GPA falls below 2.5 the Senator is put on Probation. After one semester, if GPA has yet to be a 2.5 or above then they are removed from the Student Senate.
3. Ability to attend LUSS functions in accordance with the outlined attendance policy (Article II, Section V, Number 5)
4. Senators must be a member of the constituency that their seat represents
5. Members of the Executive Board must have served for a minimum of one term as a LUSS Senator
  - a. By discretion of the advisor, exceptions can be made.
6. Members shall comply with all Lewis University policies, local ordinances, and state and federal laws
  - a. Special Committee presents case to Judicial Committee
    - i. The Judicial Committee consists of The LUSS Advisor, the Executive board, and oversight from the Dean of Student Services.

7. All requirements for membership and service are enforced at all times unless a specific exemption from this policy has been granted by the LUSS Advisor.
8. Every Member of the Executive Board must complete an interview process conducted by three graduating seniors or designee of the seniors.
  - a. The interview will consist of four major questions selected by the Constitution Review Committee and approved by the Executive Board.
    - i. The questions will be specific to the position being applied for.
  - b. If approved by the Executive Board, the candidate is eligible to make a speech and run for election at the designated Senate meeting by the current LUSS.

## Article II: Organizational Framework

### Section I: Executive Board

1. The Executive board shall be composed of four A non-voting members: President, Vice President, Director of Communications and Director of Finance
  - a. The Duties of the President shall be
    - i. To serve as the official delegate of the Lewis University Student Senate to the University President
    - ii. To actively seek means in which to represent and serve all Lewis University students
    - iii. Seeking opportunities to carry out issues deemed important by the Lewis University Student Senate and student body
    - iv. Setting an agenda for the Lewis University Student Senate at the beginning of each semester
    - v. The power to veto any act voted upon by a simple majority of the Lewis University Student Senate
    - vi. To oversee, manage, and disburse 10% of the annual budget without authorization of the Lewis University Student Senate for the betterment of the Lewis University Student Senate and/ or student body
    - vii. To keep and maintain all documents of deemed importance to the Lewis University Student Senate
    - viii. To oversee and ensure the proper management of the Lewis University Student Senate Meetings.
    - ix. To propose the official budget of the LUSS at the start of each academic school year
    - x. To oversee absence policy and any other duties as detailed in Article V.
  - b. The Duties of the Vice President shall be
    - i. To Oversee and Review all Committee agendas and decisions
    - ii. To cast the deciding vote in case of a tie by the Senate
    - iii. Relay concerns from the President to Senate
    - iv. Maintain order in all executive and senate meetings
    - v. Assists President in all delegated endeavors
  - c. The Duties of the Director of Communications shall be

- i. To orchestrate Lewis University community outreach
  - ii. To oversee Student Senate Media source(s)
  - iii. Relay concerns from the Senate to the President
  - iv. Have direct contact with the Public Relations Committee
  - v. Direct concerns from the People to the President
  - vi. Document retention
  - vii. Provide copy of minutes to the Executive Board and the advisor
  - viii. Document retention every two years
  - ix. In the event of the absence of the Director of Communications, they must appoint someone to take minutes prior to the meeting.
  - x. Distribute agenda every meeting
- d. The Duties of the Director of Finance shall be
- i. Responsible for budgetary Issues
  - ii. Distribution of funds to all committees and senate
  - iii. Offers recommendations to the President on how the Student Senate budget should be planned
  - iv. Handles cost efficiency among committees
  - v. Monthly Finance Reports

## **Section II: Student Senate**

1. The voting body of the LUSS shall be made up of up to twenty-one voting Student Senators.
  - a. One seat designated for a Representative from the Freshman Class
  - b. One seat designated for a Representative from the Sophomore Class
  - c. One seat designated for a Representative from the Junior Class
  - d. One seat designated for a Representative from the Senior Class
  - e. One seat designated for a Representative of Graduate Students
  - f. One seat designated for a Representative of Commuter Students
  - g. One seat designated for a Representative of Residential Students
  - h. One seat designated for a Representative of International Students
  - i. One seat designated for a Representative of Transfer Students
  - j. One seat designated for a Representative of Student Organizations
  - k. One seat designated for a Representative of Student Athletes
  - l. One seat designated for a Representative of Greek Organizations
  - m. Two seats designated for a Representative from the College of Arts & Sciences
  - n. One seat designated for a Representative from the College of Business
  - o. One seat designated for a Representative from the College of Nursing and Health
  - p. One seat designated for a Representative from the College of Education
  - q. One seat designated for a Representative from the College of Professional and Continuing Education
  - r. One seat designated for a Representative of University Mission
  - s. One seat designated for an At-Large Representative
  - t. One seat designated for a Representative from the Armed Forces/Veterans/ROTC

- u. One seat designated for a Representative from the Campus and Recreational Advisory Committee
  - i. The CRAC nominates the members who can run for the Senate position.
  - ii. Out of those nominated, there is a campus wide election on who is selected for the position.
  - iii. The person elected into this position serves on the CRAC and serves as a liaison between CRAC and the senate.
- 2. More seats may be added in the future if population increases
- 3. Duties and Powers of the Senators shall be
  - a. Listen to their constituents.
  - b. Bring up issues at senate meetings that their constituents have brought to them.
  - c. Represent their constituents
  - d. To participate and be a member of at least one committee
  - e. To overturn a Presidential veto with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority of Student Senate
  - f. Must host at least one event a semester to reach out to constituents

### **Section III: Succession**

1. In the event that the President wishes to enter the debate on a motion, the gavel passes to the Vice-President, Director of Finance, Director of Communication then members in order of seniority (total time served as an elected member of the senate). Any member of the Senate who has spoken on the current motion may hold the gavel.
2. Executive Vacancies
  - a. Should the Presidency fall vacant, the Vice President shall assume the role of President, resulting in a Vice-Presidential vacancy. If the Vice President declines the position then the Director of Communication is next in the line of succession. Then it is The Director of Finance
  - b. Should the Vice President, Director of Finance, or Director of Communication positions fall vacant, the President will appoint a replacement among the sitting senators, upon a simple majority confirmation by a quorum of the voting body of the LUSS.
  - c. Should both the President and Vice President positions become vacant, the Director of Communication will fill that vacancy upon a simple majority confirmation by a quorum of the voting body of the LUSS. If Director of Communication declines, then the Director of Finance will fill the vacancy

### **Section IV: Committees**

1. Standing committees shall be Academic Affairs, Programming, Student Services, Mission, Public Relations, and Student Advancement
  - a. All standing committees will be comprised of student senators
    - i. Any non-LUSS members invited by members of a committee must submit an official request to the committee, which then must be approved in the following order: Committee chair, then lastly a majority vote of the LUSS.

- b. As the committees are paired, Committee chairs for each standing and special committee(s) will be selected by the LUSS in its entirety at the start of each academic year. The executive board reserves the right to change a committee chair, should the need arise. All Committee Chairs must be current LUSS members
- c. Committee Structure
  - i. Committee Chairs will update the LUSS on committee actions no less than every LUSS meeting. Should a committee chair be unable to present, another member of the committee may present in their place.
  - ii. Each committee will have no more than 8 student senators and non-student senator members including the chairperson
  - iii. No more than 5 LUSS members may sit on one committee
  - iv. An Executive Board Member may be on one committee, but may not hold the chair seat, with the exception of the Vice-President on the Constitution Committee.
- 2. Special committees shall be the Election Committee and the Constitution Review Committee.
  - a. Special Committees will meet as needed
  - b. The Constitution Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President of LUSS
  - c. The Election Committee chair will be selected by the LUSS executive board at the start of each academic year.
- 3. Ad-hoc committees will be formed as needed.
  - a. Any member of the LUSS or Executive board may propose an ad-hoc committee
  - b. Ad-hoc committees are approved by a simple majority of voting members of the LUSS
  - c. Committee chairs for ad-hoc committees will be selected by the LUSS executive board as they are formed.
  - d. Any non-LUSS members invited by members of an ad-hoc committee must submit an official request to the committee, which then must be approved in the following order: Committee chair, then lastly a majority vote of the LUSS.
  - e. Ad-hoc committee chairs will update the LUSS on committee actions no less than every LUSS meeting until the committee is dissolved. Should a committee chair be unable to present, another member of the committee may present in their place.
  - f. Ad-hoc committees are dissolved at completion of business by a simple majority vote of all voting LUSS members.

## **Section V: Meetings**

- 1. LUSS meetings will be open to all members of the LUSS, Executive Board, advisors, invited guests, and members of Lewis University Administration, and are held to conduct official LUSS business. Meetings shall be scheduled a minimum of every other week on Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m. during the fall and spring semesters while classes are in session. Meetings may occur weekly as needed. Need is determined by the LUSS executive board. Scheduling will be the responsibility of the LUSS President. LUSS meetings shall not exceed a length of 2 hours.
  - a. LUSS Retreats will be held before the start of each academic semester
- 2. Executive Board Meetings shall consist of the LUSS Executive Board, Advisors and are open to invited guests and Lewis University Administrators, and shall occur a minimum of every other week during the fall and spring semesters while classes are in session.

3. General Assembly meetings will be open to all members of the Lewis University Community, and are held for the LUSS to communicate with the Lewis Community. General Assemblies will be held a minimum of twice per semester and are scheduled by the Executive Board at the start of each semester
4. Committee meetings will be held bi-weekly on the respective Non-LUSS meeting days, during the times that are reserved for the respective committee.
5. LUSS Attendance Policy
  - a. Members of the LUSS and executive board shall report anticipated absences to the Director of Communication for approval no later than 24 hours prior to a LUSS function. In event of an emergency, members shall notify the Director of Communication as soon as possible. In the event that the Director of Communication cannot attend an event, they shall notify the President.
  - b. An absence is defined as 15+ minutes late. Members must stay for the duration of the function unless approved by the Director of Communications 24 hours in advance. Leaving from a LUSS function without prior approval will be counted as one unexcused absence.
  - c. Members of the LUSS are allowed 2 unexcused absences at LUSS functions. After a third unexcused absence shall result in impeachment hearings by the Judicial Review committee.
  - d. Excused absences are limited to illness and family emergencies. Any other absence is labeled as unexcused unless approved by the Director of Communications. Appeals of unexcused absences are brought to the LUSS advisor. Director of Communications absences are approved by the Director of Communications.
  - e. Programming committee must give two weeks' notice on functions.
6. LUSS tardy policy
  - a. Tardiness is defined as more than 1 and less than 15 minutes late to a LUSS function.
  - b. Tardiness must be excused by the Director of Communications.
  - c. Tardiness at three LUSS functions is equivalent to one unexcused absence.
7. Agenda Topics
  - a. Topics for discussion at LUSS meetings must be submitted for approval to the Director of Communications a minimum of 48 hours prior to the meeting.
8. Executive Board Meeting Policy
  - a. Meet at the discretion of the LUSS President

## **Section VI: Voting**

1. A quorum is defined as 50% +1 of the total voting members of the LUSS.
2. A simple majority will be defined as 50% +1 of the voting members present.
3. All votes will require a simple majority unless otherwise explicitly stated in this document.

## **Article III: Resolutions**

### **Section I: Proposal of Resolutions**

1. All Resolutions must be proposed by a member of the LUSS or executive board.

2. Resolutions must be submitted to the Vice President at least 72 hours in advance to be voted on in an LUSS meeting.

## **Section II: Adoption of Resolutions**

1. Resolutions must receive a simple majority vote to be adopted
  - a. VP Breaks any ties when there is an even number of senators in that year's LUSS.
2. An adopted resolution is a recommendation of the LUSS as representatives of the Lewis University student body.
3. Absentee voting is permitted 24 hours in advance and must be sent to the advisor

## **Article IV: Elections**

### **Section I: Student Senators**

1. Student Senators shall be elected by vote of the constituents that their seat represents.
2. Elections shall occur in the spring for all senate seats, with the exception of Freshman and Transfer senators.
3. Fall elections will be held for Freshman and transfer senators, as well as any remaining open seats.
4. Election Process
  - a. Mass email sent out to all students
  - b. At the first General Assembly meeting information about the election process and Student Senate will be given to attendees.
  - c. Application Process
    - i. A candidate may run for more than one seat on the senate, but may not hold more than one seat.
  - d. Special Election day program

### **Section II: Executive Board**

1. The Executive Board shall be elected in the spring semester, prior to senator elections.
2. Executive Board nominees must currently be serving on the LUSS or Executive Board.
  - a. **Senator must have served at least one completed semester on the LUSS**
    - i. **Process begins Fall of 18'**
3. Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by a member or LUSS or Executive Board.
4. **The President and Vice-President are elected by the entire Lewis Student body.**
  - a. **The nominated candidates may run on a two person ticket if there are at least 4 nominees.**
5. **The Director of Communications and the Director of Finance are nominated and elected by the LUSS**
6. Terms of service can be severed by resignation or removal.
  - a. Removal may be disputed by appeal to the advisor



### **Section III: Terms of Service**

1. Elections or appointments will be for one term of service.
  - a. A term runs from the beginning of Fall Semester and is concluded at the closure of the Spring Semester.
2. Positions elected in the Spring shall serve from the first meeting following election ratification, until the closure of the term.
3. Positions elected in the Fall shall serve from the Fall election ratification until ratification, until the closure of the term.
4. Terms of service can be severed by resignation or removal.
  - a. Removal may be disputed by appeal to the advisor.

## **Article V: Removal and Replacement**

### **Section I: Replacement**

1. A seat is considered vacant if it remains unfilled after an election, or if the person resigns or is removed from the position
2. Replacement of vacant senate seats is by Presidential appointment and must be approved by simple-majority vote of the LUSS after the Spring and Fall elections.

### **Section II: Removal**

1. Members shall comply with all Lewis University policies, local ordinances, and state and federal laws. Any internal infraction may be subject to Judicial Review by the Executive Board and Advisor. Any external infraction will be handled by LUSS Advisor
2. Members may be removed by the LUSS Advisor if they are no longer in good judicial or academic standing, or have not filled their responsibilities as outlined in this constitution.
3. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority by the voting members of the LUSS is required to remove a LUSS or executive board member from their position.
4. All members are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or greater. Should a member's cumulative GPA fall below 2.5, the student shall have one semester to raise their GPA to the required 2.5. Failure to do so will be subject to removal.
5. Any student not registered as a Lewis University student will automatically forfeit their seat.
  - a. This is inclusive of Fall Semester graduates.

## **Article VI: Amendments**

### **Section I: Proposal**

1. All proposed amendments must be submitted for the Constitution Review Committee. After review and majority approval by the committee, they are presented in writing to the LUSS.
2. Amendments must be distributed to all members of the LUSS and Executive Board at least 1 week prior to the LUSS meeting in order to be brought to a vote.

## **Section II: Ratification**

1. Amendments require a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority by LUSS voting members and advisor approval to pass.
2. Unless specified, all amendments take effect immediately upon ratification.

## **Article VII: Code of Ethics**

### **Section I: Member Behavior**

1. Members shall comply with all Lewis University policies, local ordinances, and state and federal laws
2. Members must treat all members of the Lewis University Community with respect
3. All members will conduct themselves according to the Robert's Rules of Order during LUSS meetings