

**Doc. T23-036, as amended**

*Passed by the Board of Trustees*

*December 6, 1995 (under Doc. T95-095)*

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6/9/23*

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS DARTMOUTH  
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION**

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**PREAMBLE**

We the students, to provide an effective, responsible and representative form of government do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Student Senate of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

**ARTICLE I: AUTHORITY**

**Section 1: Senate**

The Senate derives its authority from the Board's approval of this constitution, as provided in Section 3, Chapter 75 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

**Section 2: Governance**

The Senate shall be governed by the Board's statement on University Governance, Trustee Document T73-098.

**Section 3: Notice of Non-Discrimination**

In the exercise of its powers, the Senate shall not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation/preference, veteran status, economic status, or handicap.

**Section 4: Constitution**

This constitution supersedes any earlier constitution of the Senate.

**Section 5: Revision Dates**

All official editions to this constitution shall bear a current revision date on the title page, which shall coincide with the most recent date of ratification by the Board.

**ARTICLE II: NAME**

**Section 1: The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth**

Hereafter, the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shall be referred to as the UMass Dartmouth.

**Section 2: The Student Senate of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth**

Hereafter, the Student Senate of UMass Dartmouth, shall be referred to as the Senate.

### **Section 3: The Board of Trustees of University of Massachusetts**

Hereafter, the Board of Trustees of University of Massachusetts shall be referred to as the Board.

## **ARTICLE III: PURPOSE**

The guiding principles of the Senate shall be:

1. To act as the students' liaison to UMass Dartmouth, the UMass system, the Commonwealth, The Chancellor, and the Board.
2. To provide guidance in cooperation and understanding among the students and their organizations.
3. To provide an outlet for student views and concerns.
4. To promote student rights, views, interests, and welfare by recommending appropriate policies.
5. To endeavor to provide adequate funding for student needs and interests.

## **ARTICLE IV: STUDENT RIGHTS**

### **Section 1: Fundamental Rights**

The Senate unequivocally recognizes the rights of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, and the freedom of assembly on and off campus, for any and all members of the academic community.

### **Section 2: Right to Privacy**

The Senate unequivocally recognizes, and shall not abridge students' right to protection from unauthorized disclosure of any documents or files pertaining to their views, beliefs, or associations.

### **Section 3: Right to Lectures**

The Senate unequivocally recognizes the rights of students to invite to campus and to hear any person of their own choosing so long as observance of routine procedures required for the use of institutional facilities are followed.

### **Section 4: Right to Judicial Hearing**

The Senate unequivocally recognizes and shall not abridge the right of students to be protected by just and fair procedural standards in disciplinary actions as set forth by UMass Dartmouth.

### **Section 5: Right to Choose Advisors**

The Senate unequivocally recognizes the right of student organizations to choose freely their own faculty or administrative advisors.

## **ARTICLE V: POWERS**

The Senate shall have the following powers in carrying out its purposes as delineated in Article II of this Constitution:

1. To have vested in it all legislative functions of the student government.
2. To ensure the proper functioning of student government at UMass Dartmouth.
3. To make recommendations on any question, including proposed fee and tuition increases.
4. To make recommendations pertaining to the various student affairs, including, but not limited to funding and management of student services, organizations, and activities.
5. To make recommendations regarding standards of student behavior and discipline.
6. To confer recognition on student publications, clubs and organizations. Such recognition will be a prerequisite for funding by the Senate.
7. To establish rules and procedures for funding Senate Recognized Organizations.
8. To manage all student government elections.
9. To establish committees, as delineated in the bylaws, in order to facilitate the performance of its duties. These committees shall investigate issues pertinent to their subject matter and draw up recommendations on these issues.
10. To make any and all acts necessary and proper to enable the execution of the powers vested in the Senate.

## **ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Representation**

The Senate represents the student body: any student who is currently registered for at least one course bearing a minimum of three academic credits. Only members of the student body are eligible to vote in student government elections.

### **Section 2: Qualifications for Membership**

Any student represented by the Senate (as delineated in Article VI, Section 1), registered for at least 9 credits, and in good academic standing in accordance with the UMass Dartmouth policy may stand for election to the Senate.

### **Section 3: Structure**

The Senate shall consist of forty senators and five non-voting ex-officio members.

There shall be:

- Three senators representing each of the four classes; Two senators representing commuter students; One senator representing resident students;
- Twenty senators representing the colleges: the twenty senators from the five colleges (CAS, CCB, COE, CON, CVPA, and Honors) shall be determined on a proportional basis. The proportion shall be based on enrollment at winter break;
- One senator representing first generation college students\*;
- One senator representing international students;
- One senator representing student athletes;

- One senator representing student veterans;
- One senator representing transfer students;
- Five ex-officio non-voting members, consisting of the four Class Presidents and the Student Trustee.

\*First generation college students are students where neither parent has earned a bachelor's degree. The source of this data field is the Common Application. Any senator or representative must themselves be a member of the body which they represent.

#### **Section 4: Executive Board**

There shall be an executive board comprised of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary.

#### **Section 5: Voting**

All senators shall have voting rights at all meetings of the Senate. The Senate President, however, only votes in the case of a tie.

### **ARTICLE VII: DUTIES**

#### **Section 1: Office Hours**

Each senator shall spend at least 1 hour in the office and/or tabling for Senate each week and perform any tasks necessary for the upkeep of the Senate during this time.

#### **Section 2: Preparatory Reading**

Each senator shall be responsible for reading, reviewing, and correcting the minutes of each meeting, motions for the upcoming meeting, and submitted Senate Recognized Organization constitutions prior to their passing by the general board. All senators should also be well versed in the Senate constitution as well as Robert's Rules.

#### **Section 3: Attendance**

Each senator is responsible for attending all their Committee and Taskforce meetings and all Senate meetings.

#### **Section 4: Constituency Meeting**

Each senator shall meet regularly with members of said senator's constituency in order to understand their specific concerns.

#### **Section 5: Schedule**

Each senator is responsible for maintaining an updated schedule of their available hours in the Senate office at all times.

**Section 6: Each senator is responsible for maintaining his/her current contact information in**

**public space at all times.**

### **Section 7: Duties of the Officers**

In addition to the regular duties of a senator, the officers of the Senate shall be responsible for the following:

#### President

The president shall be the presiding officer of the Senate, be the chief executive of the student government at UMass Dartmouth, have the power to issue executive orders provided that they are for the purpose of enforcing motions passed by the Senate or assuring the proper functioning of student government at UMass Dartmouth, act with the Treasurer as co-signer for all Senate expenditures, and oversee all student government elections.

#### Vice President

The Vice President shall assist the President in his or her duties, take on the responsibilities of the President in his or her absence, make and adjust all committee appointments with the approval of the Senate, assist the committees in carrying out their duties, chair the Policy Committee and the Committee Council.

#### Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial records of the Senate, be responsible for the administration of Senate funds, act with the President as co-signer for all Senate expenditures, audit the Senate financial records once every year, and chair the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall not make any disbursements of Senate funds without prior Senate approval.

#### Corresponding Secretary

The Corresponding Secretary shall assist the President in his or her duties, be responsible for facilitating all Senate communications, keep records of all correspondence, coordinate informational forums, and chair the Public Relations Committee.

#### Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary shall issue constitutions to all new senators, take the minutes of all Senate meetings, be responsible for the publication of those minutes within the week, prompt senators to perform their duties as delineated in Article VII Sections 1 through 6 of this constitution, and keep record of all motions, minutes, activities, and duties performed by the Senate.

#### Committee Chairpersons

The By-Laws shall list and describe the functions of the Senate's standing committees. There shall be Chairpersons to preside over these committee meetings, create taskforces within their committees to complete pertinent projects, divide up committee work among those taskforces, have the power to appoint non-senators to his/her committee, have the power to grant and revoke voting rights from said members, and submit committee meeting minutes and reports to the Recording Secretary. All

Committee Chairpersons shall be members of the Committee Council.

## **ARTICLE VIII: ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1: Spring Elections**

All senators except for those representing the incoming freshman class shall be elected between the tenth to twelfth weeks of the spring semester. These senators-elect shall take office at the first meeting of the new Senate.

### **Section 2: Fall Elections**

Elections for freshman class senators, as well as any other vacant seats, shall be held between the third and fifth weeks of the fall semester. These senators-elect shall take office upon acceptance of their seat. They shall serve until the first meeting of the Senate elected in the spring or their subsequent termination.

### **Section 3: Advertising**

Vacancies shall be adequately advertised. The adequacy of the advertising shall be determined by the Senate President.

### **Section 4: Elections of Officers**

Before the first meeting of the new Senate is called to order, senators shall elect, from within the Senate, the following officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Committee Chairpersons.

This election shall be presided over by the Senate advisor.

### **Section 5: Subsequent Vacancies**

Normal vacancies arising after the fall election and before the spring election shall be filled in special internal elections.

In the event of a vacancy in a Committee Chairperson position, a special internal election shall be held to fill said position.

In the event of a vacancy in the Executive Board (except for the president, who is succeeded by the vice president) the president shall call special internal elections for every Executive Board position. These elections will be presided over by the Senate's advisor.

Internal elections must take place no sooner than one week and no later than four weeks after the vacancy is formed.

### **Section 6: Terms of Office**

Each senator and officer shall, upon acceptance, serve until the calling of the new Senate or subsequent termination.

## **Section 7: Transition Between Old and New Officers**

All officers of the Senate shall take their respective office after the president elect has taken his/her oath of office.

## **ARTICLE IX: TERMINATION**

### **Section 1: Resignation**

Upon submitting an official letter of resignation to the Executive Board, a senator shall forfeit his or her seat. Any senator who ceases to be enrolled at UMass Dartmouth forfeits their seat as a senator.

### **Section 2: Removal**

Any member of the Senate who fails to perform their duties for three active weeks throughout a semester shall be removed from office. The dismissal ruling by the Executive Board may be appealed and the senator re-instated by a vote of two-thirds majority of the senate. An active week shall be determined by the Senate President.

### **Section 3: Recall of an Officer**

Any senator may move for a recall election of an officer of the Senate at any Senate meeting. This motion must pass by two thirds of the Senate. An election will then be held between any senators who desire the position, including the incumbent if he or she so desires.

### **Section 4: Impeachment**

Any student may move to impeach a senator for an impeachable offense by introducing a motion proposing impeachment and having it pass by a two thirds majority of the Senate. Impeachable offenses shall be delineated in the bylaws.

### **Section 5: Setup for Impeachment Trial**

If the initial motion for impeachment passes, an impeachment hearing will be set up and conducted according to the procedures specified by the UMass Dartmouth appellate board. A majority vote of the Senate will appoint two senators to act as the prosecutors. The rights of the accused are outlined in the Student Judiciary Document.

### **Section 6: Reinstatement**

A petition signed by ten percent of an impeached or removed senator's constituency will be sufficient to reinstate a senator as long as his or her seat has not been filled.

## **ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS**

### **Section 1: Submission**

Proposed amendments to this constitution may be submitted to the Senate by any member of the student

body. A proposed amendment shall be adequately advertised for at least one week before being acted upon by the Senate. The adequacy of the advertising shall be determined by the Senate President. A copy of all proposed amendments shall be submitted to the University Newspaper.

## **Section 2: Ratification**

Any proposed amendments must first be ratified by two-thirds of the Senate. Second, they must be passed in a general or special election by two-thirds of those students casting ballots in regard to such amendments. Finally, they must be approved by the Board according to their policies and procedures. No amendment to this constitution shall be deemed effective unless and until fully ratified according to the above procedure.

## **Section 3: Documentation**

An up-to-date list of ratified amendments shall be kept in the Senate office. This list shall contain the dates of submission and ratification.

## **Section 4: Constitutional Review**

The Senate constitution will undergo a review, but not necessarily a revision, every year.