# CONSTITUTION OF THE HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT

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# **Constitution of the Holy Angel University Student Government**

We, the students of Holy Angel University, imploring the aid of Almighty God, desirous of establishing a just and benevolent Student Government that will unite the studentry, promote and protect students' rights and welfare, foster a collaborative relationship among the students and other sectors of the University, and of the society, and to instill consciousness for the development of the Angelite student community that transforms students into persons of conscience, competence, and compassion, do hereby ordain and promulgate this Constitution.

# I. Name and Purpose

**Section 1.** This Constitution shall be known as the "Constitution of the Holy Angel University Student Government."

**Section 2.** There shall be a University Student Government, henceforth the Government, which shall be the central governing body of the Holy Angel University studentry.

# II. Declaration of Principles and Objectives

# **Principles**

**Section 1.** The Government declares its main guiding principle to be a just and answerable student government that embodies the collaborative and genuine interest of the Holy Angel University studentry.

**Section 2.** Student leadership shall be a platform for personal holistic development as a training ground for Angelite students to have an understanding of the macro-politics and micro-politics that surround their growth as Filipino citizens.

**Section 3.** The Government shall devote itself to continuous learning, committed to constantly practicing assessment and evaluation for the betterment of service to the students.

**Section 4.** Student leaders shall hold the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards of:

- (a) Exhibiting diligence in the service of the students as stipulated in this Constitution;
- (b) Upholding and ensuring transparency in sharing their objectives, methods, and decisions concerning the student body; and
- (c) Dedication to the Angelite student community without personal or external bias.

**Section 5.** The Government shall encourage active participation and cooperation among student organizations and institutions, placing a high value on empathy and camaraderie.

**Section 6.** Under Article 218 of Executive Order No. 209, s. 1987, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines, the Government shall reserve the right of a student over the age of majority to independence in running for a position without the need for consent from their parents or guardians.

**Section 7.** The Government shall prioritize the well-being of its fellow students wherein it should promote a culture of wellness within the Government when preparing and pursuing its initiatives and activities.

**Section 8.** The principles held within the Constitution of the Philippines, including the rights conferred by it and specifically the Bill of Rights, shall be respected. The rights conferred by the Constitution may be incorporated by law or by binding decision of the High Court.

**Section 9.** The Government shall respect the separation of powers between the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary, and of other organs of the Government.

**Section 10.** The College Student Councils shall have executive autonomy within their respective Colleges.

**Section 11.** The Government shall aim to be transparent in its activities and initiatives.

**Section 12.** The Government shall respect the independence of the press, as embodied by the student publications, and shall respect all relevant orders and laws of the Philippines and of the University regarding the independence of freedom of speech, of expression, and of the press.

# **Objectives**

### **Section 13.** The Government shall at all times:

- (a) advocate for an accessible quality education afforded by the Angelite student community;
- (b) defend, promote, and protect the rights and welfare of the students;
- (c) serve as an active forum for student ideas and sentiments;
- (d) uphold the ideals of the University geared towards ensuring a well-rounded development of every student;
- (e) instill campus awareness and social consciousness among students;
- (f) collaborate with concerned sectors of the University in the pursuit of the common good of the students; and
- (g) develop a responsible studentry who will put educational opportunities to optimal use in order to look after the welfare of the students.

# **III. University Student Council**

**Section 1.** The central executive power shall be vested in the University Student Council, which is composed of the President, the Vice President, the Directors of the executive Departments, the members of the Office of the Solicitor General, and other officers.

**Section 2.** The President shall be the chief executive of the University Student Council, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) represent the University studentry;
- (b) represent the University Student Council in external affairs;
- (c) preside over meetings of the University Student Council;
- (d) sign resolutions, communications, and papers of the University Student Council;
- (e) exercise supervision and oversight over the Departments;
- (f) propose priority subjects to be discussed by the Senate before the semester starts;
- (g) send official correspondence to the Senate on situations where a certain issue requires special attention; and
- (h) execute such powers and duties as may be necessary or assigned by law or the University Student Council.

**Section 3.** The Vice President shall be the deputy of the President and shall act in place of the President whenever the latter is incapable or unable to execute the powers and duties of their office.

The Vice President shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) supervise and oversee the executive Departments;
- (b) gather all delegations of tasks, including deadlines, from the President, Vice President, and Directors, to the officers and staff;
- (c) create a checklist of delegations and monitor their progress; and
- (d) execute such powers and duties as assigned by law, the President, or the University Student Council

**Section 4.** The executive Departments shall be headed by a Director who reports to the Vice President, and shall include the following:

- (a) The Secretariat;
- (b) The Department of Finance;
- (c) The Department of Events Management;
- (d) The Department of Logistics;
- (e) The Department of Community Extension Services;
- (f) The Department of External Communications; and
- (g) The Department of Human Resources.

**Section 5.** Executive Departments other than those enumerated in this Constitution may be established by the Senate through law.

There shall be no more than three additional executive Departments at any time, including those established under the provisions of this section or enumerated by Section 4.

All executive Departments established under the provisions of this section shall reflect on the University Student Council and on the College Student Councils as Committees, and no executive Department or Committee shall be created exclusively for either the University Student Council or any College Student Council.

**Section 6.** The Secretariat shall be an executive Department with general responsibility over the documents and papers of the University Student Council and of its internal communications, whose Director shall be named the Secretary General, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (e) keep all the minutes of the meetings and proceedings of the University Student Council;
- (f) prepare internal memorandums, letters, and other documents;
- (g) report and update the University Student Council regarding its activities and involvements; and
- (h) execute other such powers and duties vested by law or by the University Student Council.

**Section 7.** The Department of Finance shall be an executive Department with general responsibility over the finances and budget of the University Student Council, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) keep a record together with the supporting documents (official receipts, invoices, contracts, deposit and withdrawal slips, etc.) of all financial transactions of the University Student Council;
- (b) keep and replenish a petty cash fund whenever necessary;
- (c) ensure that all disbursements are justifiable and authorized;
- (d) update the financial status of the Council and present a financial report when requested;
- (e) prepare the financial statement of the Council every end of semester; and
- (f) execute such powers and duties vested by law or by the University Student Council.

**Section 8.** The Department of Events Management shall be an executive Department with general responsibility over the management and execution of events of the University Student Council, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) create events in accordance to the advocacies of the University Student Council;
- (b) prepare the calendar of events of the Council;
- (c) delegate tasks to the Council and its staff for the events identified by the department;
- (d) ensure event orientations are administered to the Council;
- (e) prepare necessary documents for events; and
- (f) execute other such powers and duties vested by law or by the University Student Council.

**Section 9.** The Department of Logistics shall be an executive Department with general responsibility over the logistics and material properties of the University Student Council, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) act as the custodian of the properties, materials, and equipments of the University Student Council;
- (b) keep and control the inventories and supplies of the University Student Council;
- (c) submit a quarterly inventory report to the Office of Student Affairs;
- (d) canvass prices and quality of materials and equipments as may be needed;
- (e) coordinate with concerned offices regarding venues, facilities, equipment, and other logistical concerns; and
- (f) execute other such powers and duties vested by law or by the University Student Council.

**Section 10.** The Department of Community Extension Services shall be an executive Department with general responsibility over the establishment and maintenance of community-supporting services and activities, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) create activities based on the reports of the Office of the Solicitor General and of other offices and departments;
- (b) offer assistance for essential services of the council and of the other offices of the University;
- (c) lead outreach and community extension programs inside and outside the University; and
- (d) execute other such powers and duties vested by law or by the University Student Council.

**Section 11.** The Department of External Communications shall be an executive Department with general responsibility over communications and relations with the public and other entities, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) coordinate with student publications on the activities publicized by the University Student Council in accordance with Article XIV;
- (b) speak on behalf of the University Student Council to the public under the supervision of the President;
- (c) prepare external letters, memorandums, and other documents; and
- (d) establish a multimedia arts and creatives team that will create the publication materials of the council.
- (e) execute other such powers and duties vested by law or by the University Student Council;

**Section 12.** The Department of Human Resources shall be an executive Department with general responsibility over the recruitment, retention, and evaluation of the University Student Council's officers and staff, and shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) gather all important personal information of all University Student Council officers and staff and secure a record thereof only for useful purposes concerning Council operations;
- (b) plan, organize, and conduct recruitment of staff to supplement the workforce of the executive Departments;
- (c) plan, organize, and conduct necessary trainings, seminars, and educational discussions for leadership enhancement of the officers and staff;
- (d) design and spearhead internal peer evaluations of all officers and staff;
- (e) design and spearhead public evaluations of all officers, individually and collectively;
- (f) administer evaluations for the events spearheaded by the Council; and
- (g) execute other such powers and duties vested by law or by the University Student Council.

### Section 13.

- (a) In case of vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall become the President for the remainder of the term.
- (b) In case of vacancy in the office of Vice President, the Director with the highest number of votes in the previous regular election shall become the Vice President for the remainder of the term.
- (c) In case of vacancy in the office of Director, the Commission on Elections shall proclaim the unelected candidate for the office of President, Vice President, or Director in the previous regular election who obtained the highest number of votes shall become a Director; provided, if there is no such candidate, the President shall appoint a person to such office.

# IV. College Student Councils

**Section 1.** The collegiate executive power shall be vested in the College Student Councils, for each College, composed of a Governor, a Vice Governor, Councilors, and other officers.

**Section 2.** The College Committees shall be headed by a Councilor who reports to the Vice Governor, and shall include the following:

- (a) The Committee of Communications;
- (b) The Committee of Finance;
- (c) The Committee of Events Management and Logistics;
- (d) The Committee of Community Extension Services; and
- (e) The Committee of Human Resources.

**Section 3.** Should a College have a student population of more than one thousand students, the following Committees shall be split:

- (a) The Committee of Communications shall be split into the Committee of Internal Communications and the Committee of External Communications; and
- (b) The Committee of Events Management and Logistics shall be split into the Committee of Events Management and the Committee of Logistics.

**Section 4.** Unless otherwise specified by law, the functions and duties of each Committee shall mirror those of their executive Department counterparts, with the necessary substitutions, insofar as they are applicable within the College Student Council, including the following:

- (a) The counterpart of the Secretariat shall be the Committee of Internal Communications or, if Section 3 is not applicable, the Committee of Communications; and
- (b) The counterpart of the Department of Events Management and the Department of Logistics shall be, if Section 3 is not applicable, the Committee of Events Management and Logistics.

# Section 5.

- (a) In case of vacancy in the office of Governor, the Vice Governor shall become the Governor for the remainder of the term.
- (b) In case of vacancy in the office of Vice Governor, the Councilor with the highest number of votes in the previous regular election shall become the Vice Governor for the remainder of the term.

(c) In case of vacancy in the office of a Councilor, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) shall proclaim the unelected candidate for the office of Governor, Vice Governor, or Councilor in the previous regular election who obtained the highest number of votes shall become a Councilor; provided, if there is no such candidate, the Governor shall appoint a person to such office.

# V. Class Presidents' League

**Section 1.** There shall be a Class Presidents' League in each College, composed of the presidents of each block section and headed by the Governor of the respective College Student Council.

**Section 2.** The Class Presidents' League shall serve as an official link between the College Student Council and their respective constituents, as an avenue for the College Student Council to communicate its programs and activities, resolutions and other matters concerning students, and as a means for the students of the College to raise their needs and concerns to the College Student Council.

**Section 3.** The Governor shall have the power to organize the leadership and officers of the Class Presidents' League; *provided*, any leaders or officers shall be from the membership of the League.

**Section 4.** The Governor shall convene a meeting of the Class Presidents' League on a monthly basis, and as necessary thereafter.

**Section 5.** Each block section shall choose their officers, which shall at least include the class president who shall be a member of the Class President's League.

In case of absence or incapacity of the class president, the class vice president, or a suitable representative of the block section if there is no class vice president, shall take over the position of the former.

# VI. Office of the Solicitor General

**Section 1.** There shall be an Office of the Solicitor General, composed of the Solicitor General and the Associate Solicitors General.

**Section 2.** The Office of the Solicitor General shall be responsible for studying, recording, and processing of student grievances, such as but not limited to:

- (a) academic concerns;
- (b) student-employee relations;
- (c) student welfare and development;
- (d) concerns on facilities and equipment; and
- (e) other grievances and concerns.

The Office of the Solicitor General shall identify the appropriate action, or refer and endorse student grievances to the administrative offices of Holy Angel University, or both.

**Section 3.** Each College Student Council shall appoint, without the power of removal, from their College one Associate Solicitor General.

The President shall appoint, without the power of removal, the Solicitor General from the list of appointed Associate Solicitors General.

**Section 4.** The term of office of the Solicitor General and the Associate Solicitors General shall be one academic year, and shall commence on the first day of the academic year for which they are appointed.

A Solicitor General or Associate Solicitor General appointed during the academic year to fill a vacant position shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

No Solicitor General or Associate Solicitor General shall serve for more than two terms. Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of their service for the full term they are appointed.

# VII. University Senate

**Section 1.** The legislative power shall be vested in the University Senate, the unicameral legislature of the Government, which is composed of Senators, one elected each from the Colleges and an equal number of Senators elected at-large.

All bills, resolutions, laws, and other forms of activities in exercise of the legislative power of the Senate shall cover and shall be limited on the boundaries of the operations of the University Student Government.

- **Section 2.** The Senate shall elect the Senate President by an absolute majority vote of the Senators. The Senate shall choose such other officers it may deem necessary.
- **Section 3.** The Senate shall determine the rules of its proceedings, establish its standing committees, and create sanctions for its members and staff for disorderly behavior, through a document for its rules of procedure that will be ratified with a three-fourths majority of all the Senators.
- **Section 4.** The Senate shall keep a Journal of its proceedings, which shall be published regularly. The ayes and nays of votes shall be entered into the Journal.
- **Section 5.** The Senate shall create a special committee that identifies and redacts sensitive and confidential information discussed on all legislative meetings before public consumption. Sensitive and confidential information shall scope:
  - (a) personally-identifiable information as defined by Republic Act 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012;
  - (b) information protected by non-disclosure agreements;

- (c) sources of quoted statements from internal evaluations screened by the High Court for the consumption of a legislative discussion; and
- (d) names of the petitioners and respondents of quoted cases or disciplinary proceedings from Holy Angel University.

**Section 6.** The Senate shall meet for two regular sessions, one in the first semester and one for the second semester, and shall continue to be in session for a period of days as it may determine until fourteen days before the end of the semester.

The Senate President or one-fourth of the Senators may call for a special session or emergency meeting of the Senate.

- **Section 7.** There shall be no closed-door sessions to be scheduled or organized by the Senate.
- **Section 8.** All bills shall embrace only one subject, which shall be expressed in its title.
- **Section 9.** All bills shall be deliberated on three readings, and a copy shall be furnished to the Senators three business days before each reading by the Senate. On the last reading, no amendment shall be entertained, and the vote shall be taken immediately thereafter.

**Section 10.** All bills passed by a two-thirds majority of the Senate shall be published, and presented to the High Court to test its constitutionality for three to five consecutive business days.

If the bill is certified as unconstitutional, it shall be returned to the Senate with the reasons for its unconstitutionality. The Senate, upon receipt of a bill returned by the High Court, shall not repass the bill unamended, and any amended bill shall pass through the same legislative procedures as a new bill.

**Section 11.** If the bill was certified to be constitutional by the High Court, the bill shall be endorsed to the President to either approve or veto the bill.

If the bill was approved by the President, the bill shall become a law. If the bill was vetoed by the President, they shall return the bill to the Senate with their objections.

**Section 12.** The Senate, upon receipt of the vetoed bill, may override the veto through the approval of the three-fourths majority of all of the Senators.

**Section 13.** If the President takes no action on a bill within fourteen calendar days of its date of receipt from the High Court, it shall become a law as if they had signed it.

# Section 14.

(a) In case of vacancy in the office of a Senator elected from the Colleges, the Commission on Elections shall proclaim the unelected candidate for the office of a Senator elected from their College in the previous regular election who obtained the highest number of votes or, if there is no such candidate, the Governor shall nominate a person to serve such office; provided, the

- Governor shall consult with the College Student Council before a nomination of a person other than an unelected candidate.
- (b) In case of vacancy in the office of a Senator elected at-large, the Commission on Elections shall proclaim the unelected candidate for the office of a Senator elected at-large in the previous regular election who obtained the highest number of votes or, if there is no such candidate, the President shall nominate a person to serve such office; provided, the President shall consult with the University Student Council before a nomination of a person other than an unelected candidate.
- (c) Nominations made under the provisions of this section shall require the approval of the Senate by an absolute majority vote before their appointment.

# VIII. High Court

**Section 1.** The judicial power shall be vested in a High Court, which is composed of a Chief Justice and the Associate Justices.

**Section 2.** The High Court shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) Exercise original jurisdiction over cases where no lower tribunal has original jurisdiction as provided by law, and over petitions of certiorari, prohibition, mandamus, quo warranto, and other writs:
- (b) Review, revise, reverse, modify, or affirm on appeal or certiorari, as the law or the Rules of Court may provide, final judgments and orders of lower tribunals or agencies;
- (c) Issue any and all writs necessary and appropriate in aid of their jurisdiction;
- (d) Answer certified questions regarding the constitutionality, validity, or interpretation of laws or executive issuances:
- (e) Promulgate rules concerning the administration of justice, pleading, practice, and procedure in all tribunals. Such rules however shall not diminish, increase, or modify substantive rights, constitutional provisions of the Government, and existing policies governing student discipline in the Philippines and in Holy Angel University. Rules of procedure of lower tribunals shall remain effective unless disapproved by the High Court;
- (f) Appoint and supervise the officials and personnel of the Judiciary; and
- (g) Open cases on its own initiative as necessary for the facilitation of justice.

**Section 3.** The President shall appoint the Chief Justice and the Associate Justices from a list of at least three nominees prepared by the Senate; *provided*, the President may instead appoint the Chief Justice from among the Associate Justices. The Chief Justice shall be the highest-ranking position on the High Court.

The number of the Associate Justices of the High Court shall be seven.

Any vacancy shall be filled within thirty days from the occurrence thereof.

**Section 4.** The High Court may organize itself into divisions to hear cases and petitions; *provided*, decisions of a division of the High Court are appealable to the High Court *en banc*.

**Section 5.** Members of the High Court shall enjoy tenure during their continuous stay at the University, and shall not be removed unless they lose their qualifications.

**Section 6.** The Members and staff of the High Court shall not have any affiliation to any political party prior and during their service.

**Section 7.** There shall be a formal deliberation for every case submitted to the High Court before the writing of the opinion of the High Court by the Member assigned to it. Any Members who took no part, or dissented, or abstained from a decision or resolution, must state their reason.

The formal deliberation shall discuss clearly and distinctly the facts and the law on which an argument was based.

**Section 8.** No petition or motion for reconsideration of a decision of the High Court shall be refused or denied without stating its legal basis.

**Section 9.** The Chief Justice shall represent the student government in the Board of Discipline hearings of the Office of Student Affairs. In the unavailability of the Chief Justice, they may be assigned from the pool of available Associate Justices for the hearing.

**Section 10.** The High Court shall draft rules of procedure that shall include the processing decisions towards cases or matters that need the attention of the High Court as required by this Constitution. It shall also detail all the necessary documents that signifies internal and external communication, essential to the operations of the Court.

The rules and procedures shall be ratified by the Senate, and by the President and the Governors in an assembly called for that purpose.

**Section 11.** There shall be a High Court Secretariat, under the supervision of the High Court and headed by a Chief Clerk, which shall assist the High Court in overseeing the court's administration, such as managing the flow of cases through the court, keeping records, handling internal and external communication involving the High Court, and organizing platforms of reception of cases and appeals from the public and from the Government.

The Chief Clerk shall be appointed by the Chief Justice with the approval of the High Court en banc.

**Section 12.** If a matter involves a violation of the College Student Handbook that is not related to the operations of the Government, the High Court shall immediately refer the case to the Holy Angel University Office of Student Affairs.

**Section 13.** The High Court shall be responsible to proactively react on student issues that have attracted the attention of the general public relating to the constitutional duties of the Government, including the publication of written statements for the education of the public regarding the processes.

### IX. Constitutional Commissions

**Section 1.** The independent Constitutional Commissions are the Commission on Elections, the Commission on Financial Audit, and the Commission on Student Organizations.

**Section 2.** Each Commission en banc may promulgate its own rules concerning pleadings and practice before it or before any of its offices. Such rules however shall not diminish, increase, or modify substantive rights, constitutional provisions of the Government, and existing policies governing student activities in the Philippines and in Holy Angel University.

**Section 3.** Each Commission shall decide by a majority vote of all its Members any case or matter brought before it within sixty days from the date of its submission for decision or resolution. A case or matter is deemed submitted for decision or resolution upon the filing of the last pleading, brief, or memorandum required by the rules of the Commission or by the Commission itself. Unless otherwise provided by this Constitution or by law, any decision, order, or ruling of each Commission may be brought to the High Court on certiorari by the aggrieved party within thirty days from receipt of a copy thereof.

**Section 4.** The Members of the Constitutional Commissions, excluding the Commission on Student Organizations, shall not have any affiliation to any political party.

# X. Student Organizations

**Section 1.** There shall be a Commission on Student Organizations, composed of Commissioners as representatives of the student organizations and a non-voting adviser, and headed by a Chairman, which shall be the central forum for cooperation and collaboration between the student organizations, and for their collective representation to the Government and other entities.

### Section 2.

- (a) The President shall convene the heads of the University-wide student organizations, witnessed by a representative of the Commission on Elections, to elect a Commissioner representing the University-wide student organizations to the Commission on Student Organizations.
- (b) The Governors shall convene the heads of the student organizations of their College, witnessed by a representative of the Commission on Elections, to elect a Commissioner representing the student organizations of their College to the Commission on Student Organizations.
- (c) The Commissioner representing the student organizations shall come from the membership of those student organizations, which may include their officers, but shall not include the head of the student organization. Each student organization shall nominate one candidate for the

- election held under this section. The election of a representative shall not cause the termination of the membership or office of that person in their respective student organization.
- (d) The President and the Governors shall convene the heads of the student organizations at the beginning of the academic year and within fourteen days of the occurrence of a vacancy on the Commission.

**Section 3.** The adviser of the Commission shall be the Student Activities Coordinator of the Office of Student Affairs who shall have no vote but shall act as the parliamentarian of their meetings, and shall be present in all of its meetings.

In the temporary absence of the Student Activities Coordinator, the Office of Student Affairs may designate a representative to act as adviser in the interim.

**Section 4.** The Members of the Commission on Student Organizations shall meet before the start of the first semester of the academic year, and shall elect during that meeting from among themselves a Chairman, who shall serve concurrently as Commissioner, to moderate and maintain the administrative affairs of the Commission, which shall be witnessed by a representative of the Commission on Elections.

**Section 5.** The term of office of the Commissioners shall be one academic year, which shall end before the first day of the next academic year.

**Section 6.** The Chairman of the Commission shall act as the liaison between the student organizations and other offices and entities of the University. They shall collect the general concerns of the student organizations that need the attention of the entities around the conduct of student activities at Holy Angel University.

**Section 7.** The Commission shall assist the Office of Student Affairs Student Activities Coordinator in all procedures relating to accreditation of student institutions.

**Section 8.** The Commission shall establish an official gazette for the Commission, named the Student Lens, which shall collaborate with the Office of Student Affairs to collect the narrative reports of all student activities of all student institutions and of the Government and present the same to the public.

### XI. Financial Management

**Section 1.** The audited financial statements of student institutions shall be made available to the public, and all financial records shall at all times be accessible to the Commission on Financial Audit.

**Section 2.** There shall be a Commission on Financial Audit, composed of no less than three and no more than seven Commissioners; provided that the Commissioners should come from the Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants and Auditors - United Inc. (JPIAA-U) or the equivalent organization.

**Section 3.** The Commission on Financial Audit shall have the power and mandate to examine and audit the financial records of student institutions, which shall include the Government, and shall have the exclusive authority to define the scope of its financial audit and examinations, establish the techniques and methods for such, promulgate accounting and auditing rules and regulations, and establish guidelines through an audit handbook.

**Section 4.** The JPIAA-U Vice President for Audit or the equivalent position shall be the Chairman of the Commission, who shall serve concurrently as Commissioner.

In case the character of the Vice President for Audit or the equivalent position is put into question in a formal investigation or is found guilty of a major offense, or in case the accreditation of the JPIAA-U or the equivalent organization was suspended, the Student Activities Coordinator of the Office of Student Affairs shall have the power to terminate the Chairman and appoint a Chairman *pro tempore*.

**Section 5.** The Chairman of the Commission shall have the power to appoint and remove the Commissioners.

### Section 6.

- (a) No law shall be passed that encompasses the purview of the Commission on Financial Audit, as certified by its Chairman, without its advice and concurrence.
- (b) No law shall be passed exempting any student institution from the jurisdiction of the Commission on Financial Audit.

**Section 7.** If a Commissioner working under the Commission on Financial Audit finds probable cause of financial fraud in its audit of an institution, it shall immediately inform the Commission on Financial Audit en banc who shall then have the discretion to conduct an investigation.

The investigation shall be conducted by an *ad hoc* panel of Commissioners and Justices of the High Court, whose composition shall be determined by the Chairman of the Commission and the Chief Justice.

Should such an investigation find probable cause of financial fraud, the Commission on Financial Audit shall file an incident report within 24 hours at the Student Conduct Office of the Office of Student Affairs.

**Section 8.** The Commission on Financial Audit shall select and designate a receipts supplier, which may be the same as the Commission on Financial Audit, and which shall exclusively supply all blank official receipts, acknowledgment receipts, and petty cash vouchers for use of the Government and and other student institutions.

The Government and other student institutions shall not obtain or use blank receipts supplied by any other source other than the receipts supplier.

**Section 9.** No acknowledgement receipt shall be valid unless signed by the institution's finance officer, the institution's head, and the institution's adviser, and signed with name by the receiver and payer of the transaction.

No petty cash voucher shall be valid unless signed by the student institution's finance officer, and signed with name by the receiver and payer of the transaction.

**Section 10.** The Commission on Financial Audit shall consult the Senate for the pricing of all financial documents or slips by presenting at least two quotations for each type of financial document or slip to establish an estimated amount and pricing for blank receipts and petty cash vouchers to supply to institutions at the beginning of an academic year.

Institutions may request for additional amounts of blank receipts and petty cash vouchers from the receipts supplier, upon submission of:

- (a) an outline of planned activities, including the projected amount of sales, within the first three weeks of a semester; or
- (b) the outline of a planned activity, including the project amount of sales, at least two months before the actual date of the event.

**Section 11.** Any expense over three thousand pesos, or a larger amount as may be established by the Commission on Financial Audit, shall require the inclusion of the contact information of the supplier or payee in the financial statement.

**Section 12.** Institutions under the jurisdiction of the Commission on Financial Audit may opt to be audited by a Certified Public Accountant instead of by the auditing partner of the Commission; *provided*, a copy of the Certified Public Accountant's communications and reports shall be furnished to the Commission on Financial Audit.

Such institutions shall bear the costs of the Certified Public Accountant.

**Section 13.** The JPIAA-U or any equivalent organization, as the audit partner of the Commission, shall ask for the assistance of an external auditor for their own financial statement and shall submit the results of the audit to the Office of Student Affairs on the same deadline they are required by the Securities and Exchange Commission, in accordance with the provisions of Section 12.

### XII. Elections

**Section 1.** The regular election period shall be identified by the Office of Student Affairs and shall be no earlier than the midterm period and no later than the final period of the second semester of the academic year.

**Section 2.** Elective executive and legislative positions of the Government shall be elected by popular vote through a secret ballot.

**Section 3.** There shall be one winner for each of the following executive positions:

- (a) The President;
- (b) The Vice President;
- (c) The Governors; and
- (d) The Vice Governors

**Section 4.** For the election of Directors, the number of winners shall be based on the number of executive Departments, and shall be elected at-large.

Following their proclamation, the Directors-elect shall each assemble and determine the assignment of Departments; provided, that in case of disagreement, the assignment of Departments shall be by lot.

No Director-elect shall serve and be sworn in to office unless they have been assigned to a Department.

**Section 5.** For the election of Councilors, the number of winners shall be based on the number of Committees, and shall be elected at-large in their respective Colleges.

Following their proclamation, the Councilors-elect shall each assemble and determine the assignment of Committees; provided, that in case of disagreement, the assignment of Committees shall be by lot.

No Councilor-elect shall serve and be sworn in to office unless they have been assigned to a Committee.

**Section 6.** No person shall run for office if they have less than one academic year of residency remaining for their degree program at the start of the academic year they shall serve in; *provided*, the residency of students enrolled in a double-degree program shall be based on the second degree.

**Section 7.** There shall be a Commission on Elections (COMELEC), composed of a Chairman, a non-voting advisor, and Commissioners representing the Colleges and the University as a whole.

The COMELEC shall have the exclusive power and mandate to: direct, organize, and supervise elections, referenda, and plebiscites; verify the qualifications of elected or appointed officials; maintain the official list of elected officials; and register and administer political parties, alliances, and coalitions.

**Section 8.** Members of the COMELEC shall enjoy tenure during their continuous stay at the University, and shall not be removed unless they lose their qualifications.

**Section 9.** No appointment, automatic or discretionary, to an elective office shall be valid unless and until the appointee's qualifications are verified by the Commission on Elections.

**Section 10.** The non-voting adviser of the Commission shall be *ex officio* a representative designated by the Director of the Office of Student Affairs. In the absence or unavailability of the designated representative, the Student Activities Coordinator shall act as adviser *pro tempore*.

**Section 11.** The election code shall be written by the COMELEC and shall be ratified by the President and Governors in an assembly called for that purpose, the Senate, and the High Court.

The election code shall detail the election procedures, guidelines and sanctions, and the appointment of Commissioners, and other support staff.

**Section 12.** There shall be an Electoral Tribunal under the COMELEC, composed of Commissioners as provided for by the COMELEC, which shall have exclusive original jurisdiction on any dispute arising from matters relating to elections, referenda, and plebiscites, except for the right to vote.

The decisions of the Electoral Tribunal may be appealed to the Commission *en banc*.

# XIII. Political Party Systems

**Section 1.** The right of students to organize and form political parties shall be recognized and respected by the Government.

The COMELEC shall administer and regulate the accreditation of political parties. No political party shall operate within the University unless accredited by the Commission.

**Section 2.** The applications for accreditation of political parties shall be open any time of the year and shall be processed by the COMELEC no later than thirty days after the receipt of the application.

Once the application for accreditation is approved, the COMELEC shall endorse the political party to the Student Activities Coordinator for their acknowledgement and recording of the same.

**Section 3.** Political parties shall be allowed to organize or participate only during the following activities beyond the election period as set by the COMELEC:

- (a) Freshman orientations;
- (b) The Student Activity Festival;
- (c) Orientations of newly recruited political party members;
- (d) Meetings of the political party; and
- (e) Activities that exercise the right to freedom of speech and expression.

**Section 4.** Their onsite activities shall be limited to recruiting, orienting, and recalibrating political party members and shall not conduct any acts of premature campaigning in preparation for the next elections.

**Section 5.** All onsite recruitment interviews and meetings shall be limited to closed-door venues and shall be witnessed by a representative of the COMELEC.

**Section 6.** No off-campus activities shall be organized by political parties.

**Section 7.** Except during the campaign period as designated by the COMELEC, no online public events shall be organized by the political parties.

**Section 8.** All activities of every political party shall comply with the guidelines in the conduct of on-campus student activities of the Office of Student Affairs.

### XIV. Government and Press Relations

**Section 1.** A collaborative relationship must be maintained between the Government and the student publications for the common good of the University studentry.

**Section 2.** No law shall be passed that limits or diminishes the right of student journalists to reach out to any public official for interviews and consultations.

**Section 3.** The Department of External Communications and the equivalent Committee of the College Student Councils shall establish and maintain communications with the press community.

**Section 4.** The Director for External Communications shall appoint a university press secretary, who shall handle official communications between the University Student Council and the press. The Director may designate themselves to concurrently serve as press secretary.

**Section 5.** The Councilor for External Communications or the Councilor for Communications shall appoint a college press secretary who shall handle official communications between the College Student Council and the press. The Councilor may designate themselves to concurrently serve as press secretary.

**Section 6.** The press secretary shall organize at least two press conferences during every semester, in separate academic periods. The press secretary shall be held accountable for failure to conduct the mandatory amount of press conferences during the semester.

For the University Student Council, invitations to the press conferences shall be extended to all tertiary-level student publications.

For the College Student Councils, invitations to the press conferences shall be extended to the student publications of their respective Colleges. The College Student Council may extend those invitations to other tertiary-level student publications.

**Section 7.** The University Student Council and the College Student Councils shall publish without undue delay all important announcements to the general public, which shall include:

- (a) Major accomplishments of public importance;
- (b) Calendar of events, whether semestral or for the whole academic year;
- (c) Priorities of the Government in at least the next three months;
- (d) Priority bills the President or the Governor endorsed to the Senate; and
- (e) Other important announcements as provided by law.

**Section 8.** The Senate shall publish without undue delay in accordance with law the following documents, papers, and information:

- (a) List of priority bills for this semester;
- (b) The order of business for all sessions;
- (c) Major accomplishments;
- (d) Senate journal;
- (e) Filed bills; and
- (f) Approved laws.

**Section 9.** The High Court shall publish without undue delay in accordance with law the following documents, papers, and information:

- (a) List of cases and proceedings;
- (b) Court decisions;
- (c) Jurisprudence; and
- (d) Court calendar.

**Section 10.** The COMELEC shall publish without undue delay in accordance with law the following documents, papers, and information:

- (a) Appointment and resignation letters;
- (b) Major accomplishments;
- (c) Calendar of events:
- (d) Public memorandum;
- (e) List of Certificate of Candidacy submissions;
- (f) List of qualified candidates for the election; and
- (g) Election results.

**Section 11.** The Commission on Student Organizations shall publish without undue delay in accordance with law the following documents, papers, and information:

- (a) Accreditation file for all student institutions without personally-identifiable information; and
- (b) Post-event submissions.

**Section 12.** The Commission on Financial Audit shall hold a press conference on the release of copies of the financial statements of all student institutions to the public.

**Section 13.** Public officials have the right of consent to the release of any statement outside of a formal interview or platforms of communication. However, this right to consent does not apply to public and official statements, where waiver of consent is implied, which shall be but not limited to:

- (a) Official business correspondence;
- (b) Statements made in press conferences;
- (c) Public speeches;
- (d) Public statements made by public officials published through official channels or platforms of communication.

### XV. Offenses and Sanctions

**Section 1.** No person shall be held to answer for an offense without due process of law.

**Section 2.** In all prosecutions, the accused shall be presumed innocent until the contrary is proved, and shall enjoy the right to be heard by the counsel, to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation against them, to have an impartial trial, and to have compulsory process to the production of evidence in their behalf. However, after arraignment, trial may proceed notwithstanding the absence of the accused; *provided*, that they have been duly notified and their failure to appear is unjustifiable.

**Section 3.** No ex post facto law or bill of attainder shall be enacted.

**Section 4.** Serious offenses are acts which involve grievous violations of law which may cause great damage to property and persons or be morally repugnant or obscene, and shall include the following:

- (a) Willful violation of this constitution;
- (b) Gross negligence of duties;
- (c) Three consecutive unauthorized absences in the required activities of the Government;
- (d) Misrepresentation of the Government and/or designated position/office;
- (e) Severe or chronic abuse of discretion or authority;
- (f) Malversation and/or misappropriation of finances;
- (g) Forgery, falsification, or tampering of official Government or University records or papers;
- (h) Willful destruction of property;
- (i) Obstruction of justice;
- (j) Contempt of court;
- (k) Violations of the College Student Handbook considered as Class A offenses, as determined by the Office of Student Affairs;
- (l) Alarm and scandal of lawful proceedings of a body of Government or a Constitutional Commission;
- (m) Third time of committing a petty offense; and
- (n) Other acts as provided by law.

**Section 5.** Petty offenses are acts which involve violations of law which do not rise to the level of a serious offense, and shall include the following:

- (a) Interruption of lawful proceedings of a body of Government or a Constitutional Commission;
- (b) Failure to deliver duties and responsibilities on time either without notification or without acceptable reasons causing minor interruption or damage to Government operations;
- (c) Violations of the College Student Handbook considered as Class B offenses, as determined by the Office of Student Affairs; and
- (d) Other acts as provided by law.

**Section 6.** Upon conviction of an offense by a court, the following sanctions may be applied upon the discretion of the court:

- (a) A written warning;
- (b) Community service, whose duration shall be no less than 20 hours;

- (c) Temporary suspension from office;
- (d) Indefinite suspension from office;
- (e) Termination from office; and
- (f) Other sanctions as provided by law, the College Student Handbook, the Student Activities Manual, and existing laws and statutes of the Philippines.

**Section 7.** An officer of the Government found guilty of a serious offense shall be terminated immediately after the decision.

**Section 8.** Should a person be sanctioned with termination from office by order of the court, they shall be permanently disqualified to run for or hold future office in any capacity.

### XVI. General Provisions

**Section 1.** The following are considered public officials:

- (a) The members of the University Student Council, including the President, the Vice President, and the Directors of the executive Departments;
- (b) The members of the College Student Council, including the Governor, the Vice Governor, and the Councilors;
- (c) The Solicitor General and the Associate Solicitors General;
- (d) The Senators;
- (e) The Members of the High Court;
- (f) The Members of the Constitutional Commissions; and
- (g) All other officers serving in an important and public capacity.

**Section 2.** In addition to other such qualifications within this Constitution for specific offices, no person shall serve as a public official unless they:

- (a) are enrolled in an undergraduate degree program of the University;
- (b) have not been sanctioned for a major disciplinary offense;
- (c) have no more than two failed units in the previous and current semester at the time of election; and
- (d) have at least one semester residency in their college and degree program.

**Section 3.** Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, the term of office of elected public officials shall be one academic year, and shall commence on the first day of the academic year following their election

No public official shall serve for more than two terms in the same position. Voluntary renunciation of a public official's office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of their service for the full term they are elected or appointed.

**Section 4.** No person shall serve in any office, appointed or elected, under the Government or in the Constitutional Commissions unless they swear an oath of office, administered by the Members of the

High Court or by other officials as may be provided by law, which shall at least include the following declarations:

- (a) That they will support and defend this Constitution;
- (b) That they shall faithfully execute the duties of their office; and
- (c) That they take this obligation freely and voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

Any person required to swear an oath may instead swear an affirmation, which shall be considered equal to an oath.

**Section 5.** No person shall serve in more than one office in the Government or in the Constitutional Commissions.

**Section 6.** No person serving in office in the Government shall serve more than one office outside of the Government, including in any student institutions.

No person serving in office in the Government shall serve as the head of any student institution.

**Section 7.** No person serving in office in the Government shall serve a position on a student publication.

**Section 8.** Vacancy in an office of the Government shall be recognized upon the resignation, removal from office, permanent disability, or death of its incumbent.

**Section 9.** Any unelected candidate considered for appointment to an office by virtue of vacancy thereof who refuses such appointment shall thereafter not be considered for such appointment.

**Section 10.** Staff and personnel of the Government shall not be removed unless for cause and with due process; *provided*, the right of the Government to subject their staff and personnel to disciplinary proceedings and measures shall not be impeded.

**Section 11.** Unless otherwise specified, the summer semester shall be considered as an extension of the second semester.

**Section 12.** An appointed or elected officer must have at least four months of service during their term to be considered as having served their term for the purposes of certifying their service.

### XVII. Amendments and Revisions

**Section 1.** An amendment to this Constitution shall be any alteration of any provision of this Constitution that does not alter the whole principle of this Constitution.

**Section 2.** A revision of this Constitution shall be any alteration of any provision of this Constitution that does alter the whole principle of this Constitution shall be referred to as a revision.

**Section 3.** Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed by:

- (a) The Senate, upon a three-fourths vote of all the Senators;
- (b) The President and the Governors, upon a three-fourths vote in an assembly called for that purpose;
- (c) The High Court, upon a three-fourths vote of all its Members; or
- (d) A constitutional convention.

**Section 4.** A constitutional convention shall be composed of delegates representing all sectors of the University studentry, and delegates from the Office of Student Affairs, and may be called by:

- (a) The Senate, upon a three-fourths vote of all the Senators; or
- (b) The President and the Governors, upon a three-fourths vote in an assembly called for that purpose.

**Section 5.** An amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution under the provisions of Section 3 shall be approved by a three-fourths majority vote of an assembly consisting of:

- (a) The Senators;
- (b) The President:
- (c) The Governors;
- (d) The Members of the High Court; and
- (e) The Chairmen of the Constitution Commissions.

**Section 6.** An amendment to this Constitution shall be valid and ratified when approved under the provisions of Section 5.

**Section 7.** A revision of this Constitution shall be valid when approved under the provisions of Section 5, and ratified by a majority of the votes cast in a plebiscite, which shall be held not earlier than seven days or not later than thirty days after the approval of such amendment or revision under Section 5.

**Section 8.** A ratified and valid amendment to, or revision of, the Constitution shall take effect immediately, unless otherwise specified in the amendment or revision.

# **XVIII.** Transitory Provisions

**Section 1.** References to officers specified as "newly-elected" shall refer to the persons elected to those positions of the previous Constitution in force in the election held immediately before the ratification of this Constitution.

# Section 2.

- (a) The newly-elected President shall continue in office as the President.
- (b) The newly-elected Vice-President for Internal Affairs and the newly-elected Vice-President for External Affairs shall both continue in office as concurrently serving in the office of Vice President, and shall be entitled to style themselves as whatever title they deem necessary to

- differentiate themselves; provided, they shall decide among themselves who shall be first in succession to the office of President.
- (c) The newly-elected Senators of the University Student Council shall become Directors-at-Large of the University Student Council, who shall head no department but shall execute the powers and duties assigned by the Vice Presidents and the University Student Council.
- (d) The Directors-at-Large as designated in the previous paragraph may be appointed by the President, with their consent, as the Directors of the executive Departments.

### Section 3.

- (a) The newly-elected Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the College Student Councils shall become the Governors and Vice Governors of the College Student Councils, respectively.
- (b) The newly-elected Councilors of the College Student Councils shall become Councilors-at-Large of their College Student Council, who shall head no committee but shall execute the powers and duties assigned by the Vice Governor and the College Student Council.
- (c) The Councilors-at-large as designated in the previous paragraph may be appointed by the Governor, with their consent, to head a committee.

**Section 4.** For the academic year immediately after this Constitution's ratification, the President and the Governors shall have the power to reorganize their respective Councils, including the establishment of new executive Departments and Committees, and the appointment of Directors-at-Large and Councilors-at-Large to senior positions under an executive Department or Committee.

**Section 5.** The College Student Councils, upon the ratification of this Constitution, shall appoint the following, subject to the qualifications of those offices:

- (a) the Associate Solicitor General, pursuant to Section 3 of Article V;
- (b) a Senator to serve at-large, who may be from any College; and
- (c) a Senator to serve their College, from their respective College.

**Section 6.** For the academic year immediately after this Constitution's ratification, the Student Councils shall not have the power to appoint Directors or Councilors unless the number of officers is less than specified by this Constitution.

**Section 7.** The Chairman and the Commissioners of the University Student Elections Commission shall continue in office as the Chairman and Commissioners of the COMELEC.

**Section 8.** For the academic year immediately after this Constitution's ratification, the Members of the COMELEC shall be authorized to administer oaths under Section 4 of Article XV.

**Section 9.** All properties, records, equipment, buildings, facilities, and other assets of any office or body abolished or reorganized under this Constitution shall be transferred to the office or body to which its powers, functions, and responsibilities substantially pertain.

**Section 10.** The President, the Governors, the Senate President, the Chief Justice, and the Chairmen of the Constitutional Commission shall identify, if necessary, an amount to propose for collection of fees that will be the source of budget of their Government bodies to present in the Senate, which shall require ratification of the two-thirds majority of the class presidents. Fund collection shall start in the academic year in which the first regular election under this Constitution is held.

**Section 11.** Upon its ratification, this Constitution shall take effect on the first day of the academic year after its ratification, unless otherwise specified by a proclamation of the University Student Council President within two months before the first day of the academic year after ratification.

Drafted by the delegates of the Constitutional Convention.

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	Santiago, Krishane S.
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