

Collegium V Constitution

Adopted 8/24/01 - Revised 3/07/2023

Mission Statement

We the Council do hereby represent the membership of the Collegium V Honors Program in matters of planning, organization, and administration. In order to continually expand and refine Collegium V, it shall be the duty of the Council to create and maintain an environment both enriching to and supportive of the Collegium V Honors Program of the Hobson Wildenthal Honors College and the University of Texas at Dallas campus community. In so doing, the Council shall uphold the ideals of democratic self-governance by, of, and for the student body in accordance with the traditions and policies of Collegium V. The Council's responsibilities, organization, and structure are outlined herein.

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Article I: The Council's Structure and Means of Election

Section A: Number of Members on the Council

The Council shall consist of seven members of the Collegium V Honors Program (henceforth, the Program). Adding Council seats above 7 shall require the approval of the Dean, Associate Dean, and/or Assistant Dean of the Hobson Wildenthal Honors College (henceforth, the Administration). Council seats may be removed only upon resignation of a Councilmember or immediately preceding an election upon a two-thirds majority vote to eliminate one or more chairs. At no time shall the Council have less than 5 nor more than 9 members.

Section B: Council Tenure

Councilmembers will be elected to a 1-year term by the membership at large during the month of April at a time designated by the Administration. The newly-elected Council shall be sworn in at the beginning of the final meeting of the Spring semester (henceforth, "Handoff Meeting"). At the Handoff Meeting, the Speaker of the previous Council shall conduct the election of the new Speaker and Secretary according to Article III, Section B. If the previous Council's Speaker is running for Speaker, the most senior member of the previous Council who is not running for Speaker shall conduct this election.

Section C: Election Procedure

Councilmembers may serve an unlimited number of terms pending re-election. All members of the Collegium V student body (henceforth, the Students) may vote for as many candidates as there are seats on Council. The number of available seats should be emphasized on the ballot used for the vote. Students are allowed to vote online for a period of one week, at latest in April, with specific times at the discretion of the Administration. Results should be delivered no later than the end of April. The candidates with the most votes will fill the open Council positions in succession. In the case of a tie between candidates where there are not enough spots available for them all, a runoff election will be held.

Section D: Succession of Alternates

The two candidates nearest to selection will become Council alternates and will immediately fill vacant seats with preference given to the first choice alternate. A tie between alternates shall be decided by the Administration. In the case that there are vacant seats with no alternates available, a special election can be held, the process for which is outlined in Article I, Section E.

Section E: Special Elections

In the case that a Councilmember resigns, and the seat cannot be filled by alternates, the Council may, by two-thirds majority of the remaining members, vote to hold a special election. The Council shall determine by a two-thirds majority vote how many seats shall be open in the special election. The special elections shall be held through the same measures outlined in Article I, Section B. In the case that Council membership drops below 5, a special election to fill vacant seats must be held as soon as possible, regardless of a two-thirds majority vote of the remaining Councilmembers.

Article II: Responsibilities of the Council and Limitations of Power

Section A: Council Meetings

Council meetings are led by the Speaker in accordance with Article III, Section A. If the Speaker cannot attend a meeting, the meeting shall be led by a Councilmember designated by the Speaker or those present. A quorum shall be established when no more than 2 Councilmembers are absent from a planned meeting, in-person or otherwise. A quorum may not consist of less than 4 Councilmembers. Unless otherwise specified, votes will be of members present. Council meetings shall be held at least once per week during the fall and spring semesters, and as necessary otherwise, with the time being chosen by a two-thirds majority of Council. All attempts should be made to have meeting times accessible to all Councilmembers. Council meetings are open to the entire Collegium V body, including administrators and faculty associated therewith. As outlined in Article III, Section A, the Speaker may also call special meetings outside of regular meeting times.

Section B: Budget

The Council shall request a budget from the Honors College for the purpose of fulfilling its responsibilities and goals. A draft of the budget must be determined during the Spring semester, before a deadline determined by the Administration and/or Business Manager. The final budget shall be subject to a two-thirds majority vote of the Council. This request must be submitted to the Business Manager for approval in a timely manner following the vote. Should it become apparent that additional funds are necessary, a budget increase to cover costs for the remainder of the year can be requested via a two-thirds majority vote of Council, though the value of the initial budget should be made so that this can be avoided when possible. A detailed record should be kept of all purchases using the Council budget, and should be referenced when planning the budget for the following year.

Section C: Responsibilities and Powers of the Council

1. The Council shall establish and enforce rules regulating the use of the designated space(s) of the Program (henceforth, “the Lounge”), Collegium V property, and services rendered to Students by the Council. These rules shall be made public via the Program’s website, and shall be distributed to the student body on a semesterly basis.
2. The Council shall organize social events and activities open to the Students at large.
3. The Council shall bring before the Administration recommendations for disciplinary action for any Students found in violation of Collegium V rules and regulations.
4. The Council shall respond to issues and complaints regarding the Program and the Lounge. The Council shall report their findings to the Administration, membership, and faculty where appropriate.
5. The Council shall maintain official means of mass communication to and/or between the Students.
6. The Council may temporarily or permanently designate non-Council individuals to handle specific concerns. Designated individuals must report to the Council once per month at minimum during the course of their tenure.
7. Any additional powers necessary not listed and not requiring approval of the Administration may be established by a two-thirds majority vote of Council.

Section D: Council Votes

A vote must occur on matters of budget allocation, Council membership, and Constitutional amendments. The Council may vote on other issues not listed herein, and must do so should any Councilmember call for a vote. Votes must be recorded in the minutes by the Secretary, and votes may only occur at meetings publicized to the Students no less than 24 hours prior.

All efforts will be taken to settle split votes internally. If the split cannot be resolved and is deemed significant, it shall be settled by the Administration. Abstention from voting is encouraged when and only when a Councilmember's vested interest in an issue prevents just representation of the Program.

Section E: Councilmember Removal

Should a Councilmember in any way hinder the operation of the Council, the member may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council. In the event that this member holds a special position, a Councilmember shall be elected to fill that position, according to Article III, Section C. Any removal of a Councilmember should be reported to Administration.

Section F: Policy for Re-Admittance Following Resignation or Removal

Should any Councilmember or alternate, after resignation or removal, wish to rejoin the Collegium V Council within their elected term, they must submit a written request detailing their reasons and any extenuating circumstances that should be considered. This request will be reviewed and voted upon by the Council in a closed meeting within a reasonable period of time. No person may be readmitted less than one month prior to the elections for the next Council body.

Article III: Special Positions on the Council

Section A: Role of the Speaker

The Speaker is a Councilmember who serves as the primary face and voice of the Program when a single representative is needed. While all Councilmembers represent the interests of the Program, the Speaker is the primary contact point between the Council and the Administration. The Speaker has the duty of calling and moderating Council meetings, as well as organizing these meetings and determining an agenda. The Speaker may call special sessions of the Council to discuss Constitutional issues or other matters of immediate concern.

Section B: Role of the Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes at Council meetings and publicizing these minutes to the Students. Meeting minutes should include the meeting agenda, attendance, and a detailed report of meeting business and discussions. Meeting minutes must receive approval from the majority of Council within one week of the meeting in question, and must be publicized within 24 hours of approval. This approval process may be done asynchronously. The Secretary is also responsible for the organization of all internal Council documents.

Section C: Election of the Special Positions

Elections for Speaker and Secretary (henceforth “special positions”) must occur as the first order of business any time a position is vacant. Councilmembers holding special positions (henceforth “Officeholders”) must be elected from among Council membership, and any candidate must receive approval from the majority of Councilmembers for election. A split vote shall be settled by the Administration. At a given time, only one Councilmember may hold each special position, and no Councilmember may hold more than one special position.

Section D: Resignation or Removal of Officeholders

Officeholders retain the right to resign at any time. If an Officeholder is unable to fulfill the duties of their position, any Councilmember may call a vote for the Officeholder's removal. The Officeholder can be removed by a two-thirds majority of Council, pending approval of the Administration. Upon removal, the Officeholder retains their membership in the Council. Upon resignation or removal of an Officeholder, a replacement shall be voted on as per Article III, Section C.

Article IV: Amendments to this Constitution

Amendments may be made to this Constitution at meetings of the Council as described in Article II, Section A. Changes to the Constitution must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Council, approved by the Dean, and reported to the membership within one week. All Amendments must be made publicly available following approval.