Constitution

of

RESIDENTIAL STUDENT GOVERNMENT

PREAMBLE

Residential Student Government serves all students who live in University housing by providing them with ways to enhance and contribute to their residential experience at the University of Southern California. Residential Student Government, acting as a liaison between students, faculty, and administrators, expresses a unified voice to build community, empower residents, and create opportunities for academic excellence and leadership development.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Residential Student Government of the University of Southern California, hereafter referred to as RSG.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1:
All persons residing in any University owned or leased housing facility, holding a valid contract for housing with the University, and contributing to the Housing Activity Fee shall be considered Residents of University Housing.

Section 2:
All persons residing in any University owned or leased housing facility that is represented within RSG shall be considered Persons Residing within University Housing.

Section 3:
No member of RSG shall be restricted from holding office, either elected or appointed, or from otherwise participating in RSG activities, business, or government on the basis of age, race, religion, or creed, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

ARTICLE III - ORGANIZATION

Section 1:
The representatives defined in Article IV shall comprise the voting membership of the General Board. The President, Vice Presidents, and Executive Coordinators defined in Article III, section 3 shall serve as non-voting members of the General Board, except in the case of a tie.

Section 2 – Executive Board:
A. Membership
1. The Executive Board of RSG shall be comprised of all the RSG elected officers, all the Executive Coordinators of RSG, and the elected president of NRHH.
2. The President shall chair this board.
3. Membership on the Executive Board precludes membership on the General Board
B. Function

1. The Executive Board shall serve as an advisory and administrative cabinet of the President, and shall:
   a. Represent RSG and all Persons Residing within University Housing, where appropriate.
   b. Create policy consistent with the Constitution.
   c. Assist individual Executive Board Members in the fulfillment of their duties.
   d. Make relevant recommendations to the General Board.
   e. Provide direction for RSG.

C. Acting President

1. The Administrative Coordinator shall hold the temporary position of Acting President should a vacancy in the President position occur until a new President is brought into office.
2. If the Administrative Coordinator is unable to hold the position of Acting President, the Vice President whose position title is alphabetically earlier than all other Vice Presidents and is able to fulfill the role shall take the role of temporary Acting President until a new President is brought into office.

Section 3 - Executive Board

Duties: A. Elected Officers

1. President
   a. The President shall serve as a representative of RSG to the University Community and any regional or national affiliates.
   b. The President shall be regarded as a non-voting member of the Executive and General Boards except in the case of a tie.

2. Vice-Presidents
   a. There shall be four Vice President positions:
      1. Vice President of Advocacy
      2. Vice President of Community Outreach
      3. Vice President of Funding
      4. Vice President of Programming
   b. These individuals shall be elected to direct the efforts of the established boards of Advocacy, Community Outreach, Programming, and Funding and shall chair the meetings for each designated board.
   c. The President chairs the meetings for the Building Government Chairs Board.
   d. Each Vice-President shall fulfill other duties as assigned by the President.

B. Appointed Executive Coordinators

1. Administrative Coordinator
   a. Coordinates all RSG records and fundraising efforts.
   b. In the case of a vacancy in the position of RSG President, the Administrative Coordinator will fulfill this role until a new President is brought into office.
   c. Plans leadership development activities for RSG.
   d. Administers funding allocations.

2. Building Government Coordinator
a. Supports and implements the vision for residential governments created by RSG and the Office for Residential Education.
b. Develops an initial and ongoing training program for residential government advisors and chairs.
c. Chairs the meetings for the Building Government Chairs Board.

3. Vice President of Community Outreach
   a. Coordinates and develops RSG community outreach programming
   b. Works with residential governments to encourage volunteerism among university residents.

4. National Communications Coordinator (NCC)
   a. Serves as a member of the Executive Board for both RSG and its sister organization, Resident Student Leader Honorary Chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH).
   b. Serves as the official delegate and communications link between USRC and NRHH and the National Association of College and University Residence Halls (NACURH) regional and national offices.
   c. Prepares and submits all dues and reports requested and ensures required membership by the NACURH regional and national offices in order to maintain the status of “good standing” for both RSG and NRHH.
   d. Coordinates and aids the completion and submission of bids on both a regional and national level.
   e. Upholds all duties as outlined in the PACURH and NACURH By-Laws.

7. Public Relations Coordinator
   a. Develops a marketing plan to create an awareness of RSG to the University community
   b. Prepares publicity for projects and programs initiated by RSG.

8. NRHH President
   a. Represents NRHH to the RSG Executive and General Boards.
   b. This individual shall be elected to direct the effort of the established board of Recognition and shall chair the meeting for the Recognition board.
   c. Works with the building governments to encourage the Recognition of those associated within the Residence Halls
   d. Upholds all duties as outlined in the PACURH and NACURH By-Laws.

D. Advisor
   1. The advisor to RSG shall be the Assistant Director of Student Development and Leadership of the University of Southern California.
   2. The advisor shall not have a vote in official RSG matters.
Section 4 - Executive Board Qualifications:

A. All elected officers and appointed coordinators must be Residents of University Housing during their entire term of office.
B. All elected officers must have at least one year experience in RSG prior to their term of office.
C. Each elected officer must have at least two full semesters of leadership experience within residential life prior to taking office, unless there are no candidates or in a case of no confidence.
D. The President must have at least two full semesters of experience on the Executive Board prior to taking office, unless there are no candidates or in a case of no confidence.
E. All elected officers and appointed executive coordinators must maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA.

Section 5 - Advocacy Board:

A. Purpose
   1. To voice the concerns of the residential student community to the University administration and other student organizations.
   2. To develop policies, endorsements, resolutions, and operating procedures in accordance to RSG and University goals.

Section 6 - Building Government Presidents Board:

A. Purpose
   1. To develop Building Government Chairs as leaders within the residential community and their own residential governments
   2. To encourage residential participation within residential governments and RSG.
   3. To increase awareness and communication regarding residential programs, ideas, and culture between residential governments and RSG.

Section 7 - Funding Board:

A. Purpose
   1. To hear proposals from University-owned housing groups, recognized student organizations, or individuals whose programs are qualified to receive funding from RSG.
   2. To determine whether an event will be funded based on the guidelines established by the Vice President of Funding.
   3. To foster development of the residential community through support of educational, recreational, cultural, academic, and social programming.

Section 8 - Programming Board:

A. Purpose
   1. To develop programming for residents of University housing.
   2. To encourage programming for the development of the residential student.
   3. To encourage faculty and staff participation with residential programming.
   4. To determine whether an event will be sponsored by the board and what level of sponsorship will be given.
Section 9 - Recognition Board:
A. Purpose
   1. To recognize outstanding members of the residence hall system.
   2. To promote a higher quality and standard of involvement and interaction in the residence hall community.
   3. To maintain correspondence and affiliation with PACURH and NARUCH Inc.
   4. To prepare nomination bids for the achievements of USC to achieve regional and national recognition. A nomination bid consists of either a formal bid as set forth by the By-Laws of NACURH or an Of the Month

ARTICLE IV – REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1:
There shall one chair from each section of Housing, as defined in bylaws, for each of the six boards: Advocacy, Community Outreach, Programming, Funding, and Building Government Presidents, Recognition.

Section 2:
Chairs shall serve as liaisons between their respective sections and the RSG General Board, especially in areas related to their designated board.

Section 3:
Chairs shall serve to promote an active/interactive environment in their respective section.

Section 4:
Chairs shall be elected according to procedures developed within the section’s residential governments by the end of the second week of the Fall semester. The term of office begins immediately and ends at the close of the academic year.

ARTICLE V - NACURH AFFILIATION

Section 1. – USC
A. This organization is a recognized student organization at the University of Southern California.
B. In all correspondence and business transactions, it may refer to itself as an organization at USC, but not as part of USC itself.
C. RSG accepts full financial and production responsibility for all activities it sponsors.
D. RSG agrees to abide by all pertinent USC policies and regulations. Where USC policies and regulations and those of RSG differ, the policies and regulations of USC will take precedence.
E. This organization recognizes and understands that the University assumes no legal liability for the actions of the organization, and that the University is not providing blanket indemnification insurance coverage for any activities of the organization, unless those activities expressly benefit and further the goals of the University, and have received prior review, approval, and consent of Campus Activities, Risk Management, and/or General Counsel.
Section 2 - NACURH Affiliation:
A. Membership
   1. USC shall be a member institution of the National Association of College and University Residence Halls, Inc. (NACURH) and its regional affiliate (PACURH), and shall complete all requirements to maintain annual membership in good standing.
B. Honorary Chapter
   1. RSG shall maintain a relationship with USC’s chapter of the NACURH National Residence Hall Honorary.

ARTICLE VI - FUNDS

Section 1 - Source:
RSG derives its funding from a designated portion of the Housing Activity Fee collected from each resident as part of the housing contract with the university.

Section 2 - Budget:
The annual budget shall be developed by the Budget Committee, consisting of the President, Advisor, and Administrative Coordinator, after having first consulted with the Executive Board. The budget shall be approved by a majority vote of the RSG General Board within the first month of scheduled meetings.

ARTICLE VII – ELECTIONS

Section 1 – Who votes:
All elected officers shall be elected by a majority of the votes cast by secret ballot in a regular meeting of the RSG General Board. For the purpose of the elections the voting members of the RSG General Board shall consist of the vice-presidents, all appointed executive coordinators, and the elected representatives. The President may vote in the case of a tie.

Section 2 - Term:
The term of office for all RSG officers shall begin the day after the commencement exercises closing the academic year. The term of office shall be one academic year.

Section 3 - Vacancies:
Vacancies in any of the elected offices shall be announced at the first meeting of the RSG General Board after the resignation occurs. The election to fill the vacancy will occur one week later. The Administrative Coordinator shall serve as the temporary Acting President in case of a vacancy in the office of President. The President may appoint temporary Acting Vice-Presidents.
ARTICLE VIII - REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Section 1 – Removal of Representatives:
A. Residential governments shall retain the right to remove and replace their respective representatives at their discretion.
B. Any representative may be removed from office for failure to perform duties as outlined in the RSG Constitution and bylaws. The Vice President of the representative's respective board shall issue a warning and probationary period, which the Vice President deems appropriate, to the representative. A two-thirds vote of the Executive Board is required for removal.

Section 2 – Removal of Executive Board Members:
Any Executive Board Member may be removed from office by the President after consultation with the Advisor and subject to two-thirds majority vote among the other Executive Board Members; which includes the President, for failure to perform duties as outlined in the RSG Constitution and bylaws or if found responsible by Student Conduct for violations of University Policy.

Section 3 – Removal of the Advisor
The RSG Executive Board may request removal of the Advisor for failure to perform duties as outlined in the RSG Constitution. Upon a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board, which includes the President, the President may draft a letter of concern regarding the Advisor's specific grievances and deliver it to the Director of Residential Communities, who will then lead a mediation session between the two parties. If the issue cannot be resolved it will be referred to the Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs for further review.

ARTICLE IX – ADVISOR SELECTION AND REVIEW

Section 1
The advisor must hold a full-time position within the Division of Student Affairs. The position held by the advisor must be at a level equal to or greater than that of an Assistant Director of Student Development and Leadership.

Section 2
In the event of a vacancy in the position, the Office for Residential Education will initiate a nationwide search for a replacement. Representatives from the RSG Executive Board will interview all final round applicants and submit their recommendation to the selection committee to be taken into account for all final decisions.

Section 3
The RSG Executive Board will submit an evaluation of the Advisor to be considered as part of their annual review. They will be evaluated in the same manner as the rest of the Executive Board, and the results will be submitted to both the advisor and the Director of Residential Communities.
ARTICLE X - APPEALS

Section 1
Any decision made by the Executive Board may be appealed by any Resident of University Housing to the General Board. If the General Board decides to hear the appeal, the decision may be overturned by a two-thirds vote of the General Board. If the General Board decides not to hear the appeal, a statement explaining that decision must be issued.

Section 2
Any decision made by either the Advocacy Board, the Community Outreach Board, Recognition Board, the Funding Board, the Programming Board, or the Building Government Chairs Board may be appealed by any Resident of University Housing to the Executive Board. If the Executive Board decides to hear the appeal, the decision may be overturned by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board. If the Executive Board decides not to hear the appeal, a statement explaining that decision must be issued.

ARTICLE XI – JUDICIAL REVIEW

Section 1 – Constitutional Challenge
A. Any action taken by any part of RSG may be challenged by any Resident of University Housing on the assertion that the action violates this constitution.
B. A challenge on this basis must first pass through the appeals process outlined in Article X.
C. After passing through the appeals process a challenge may proceed, at the request of any Resident of University Housing, to the Judicial Review Board outlined below.

Section 2 – Judicial Review Board
A. The Judicial Review Board shall be composed of the RSG Advisor, the Director of the Office for Residential Education, and a randomly selected Residential Coordinator.
B. The Judicial Review board shall review all constitutional challenges as directed by Article XI, Section 1. The Judicial Review Board shall hear opposing arguments during the review. The authority of the Judicial Review Board shall not extend beyond the arbitration of the Constitutional Challenge.
C. If after reviewing the challenge the Judicial Review Board finds that RSG acted in violation of this constitution, the action in violation shall be declared null.

ARTICLE XII – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

This Constitution, all financial documents, all official minutes and agendas produced by any board defined by this Constitution shall be made available for timely review by any Person Residing in University Housing.
ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

The RSG Constitution may be amended at regular meetings of the four RSG boards, excluding the Executive, by a two-thirds vote of the General Board, provided that the proposed amendment has been read at the preceding meeting of RSG General Board.

Constitution of Residential Student Government, University of Southern California
(Originally Drafted by Stephen Makino and Sunit Rohant, March 2010,
Updated by Sera Choi 2013)