

The 2024 Constitution of the Bowdoin Student Government

We, the students of Bowdoin College, in order to advocate our interests to administrators, equitably fund clubs, and support the student body, establish this constitution of the Bowdoin Student Government. We seek to partner with faculty, staff, administrators, the Board of Trustees, and students themselves to improve student life and ensure equal access to campus resources and opportunities.

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Article I: General Provisions

Section 1: Introduction

The Bowdoin Student Government is composed of four branches with unique powers:
the General Assembly is vested with advocacy, spending, and rule-making power;
the Executive Board is vested with administrative and executive power;
the Student Government Treasury distributes the Student Activities Fee to all chartered student organizations, including this government;
and the Class Councils promote class unity and pride.

Section 2: Bylaws

All members of this government outlined in this constitution must abide by the Bowdoin Student Government Bylaws. These transparent and public bylaws govern all conduct beyond that which is dictated within this constitution. No part of the bylaws may conflict with this constitution.

Section 3: Faculty Advisor

This government shall have at least one faculty advisor, like other student organizations, who is a member of the Office of Student Affairs.

Section 4: Nondiscrimination

This government shall not discriminate on the basis of citizenship, economic status, ethnicity, disability, national origin, philosophy, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Article II: The General Assembly

Section 1: Powers

The General Assembly of the Bowdoin Student Government is vested with advocacy, spending, and rule-making power. The Assembly may make statements, advocate to administrators, and request funding from the Student Government Treasury on behalf of the entire student body for programming or services to improve student life.

The Assembly is the sole body capable of altering the Bowdoin Student Government bylaws.

The General Assembly may also, within reason, compel any member of this government to attend an Assembly meeting with a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote.

Section 2: Membership

Each academic year's Assembly shall consist of:

- the Student Government President, Student Government Vice President, Student Government Charterer, Chair of the Treasury, and the Special Advisors;
- the chairs of the standing committees;
- the class president for each of the College's four class years;

16 general representatives, selected to represent the entire student body; and at most 6 special representatives, which represent special interests on campus, the type of which shall be specified in the bylaws. For example, this government may choose to recognize a representative for ResLife, Athletics, or the McKeen Center.

The Assembly's members shall be organized into standing committees.

At the beginning of their term, all representatives and class presidents may choose on which committee they sit beyond that which is in this constitution, but they must sit on at least one committee for the entirety of their membership.

All assembly members have one vote. No one individual may hold multiple voting positions.

Section 3: Standing Committees

Standing committees are working groups that focus on addressing specific issues of the College and address them through advocating, administering services, hosting events, and writing proposals for the Assembly. Each standing committee must have a charter in the bylaws dictating its roles and responsibilities that is to be updated over time.

Standing committees consist of:

- a committee chair, elected by the student body and sitting as a member of the Executive Board;

- any of the Assembly's representatives or class presidents.

If dictated by their committee's charter, chairs shall select student delegates to Bowdoin's Faculty Committees in the spring before the elected chair is to take office.

Each standing committee has a budget of 0.625% of the previous year's government spending as withdrawn from the Student Government Treasury that may be spent by the committee chair without approval from the Assembly.

The Assembly may organize or dissolve standing committees by adding a standing committee charter to the bylaws.

Section 4: Conducting Business

The presiding officer of the Assembly is the Student Government President or the Student Government Vice President when the President is absent.

A motion to change the presiding officer to a different assembly member may be initiated once per meeting. This motion is immediately brought to a vote regardless of the current presiding officer's conduct. A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote is required to change the presiding officer. Any successful measure to change the presiding officer reverts at the closing of a meeting.

The assembly requires a quorum of $\frac{2}{3}$ of its voting members to conduct official business. A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of members present constitutes the approval of any proposed action unless otherwise stated in this constitution. To ensure quorum at meetings, the assembly may adopt equal attendance requirements in its bylaws that carry the force of expulsion.

The Assembly shall meet only during the duration of the College's allowable club activity period during the academic year. Each assembly shall meet in two sessions, the fall and the spring, with a recess during winter vacation, and shall make their meeting schedule public such that Bowdoin students, faculty, staff, and administrators may attend. All meetings must be public unless a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority determines otherwise. Any member of this government is always entitled to attend Assembly meetings regardless of Assembly vote.

Section 5: Impeachment

Any member may be removed from this government through the Assembly's process of impeachment for violating this constitution or bylaws.

A motion to impeach must be introduced to the Assembly at the meeting preceding the meeting in which a vote, at the earliest, shall be held. A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority constitutes successful impeachment and removal.

Any member of the student government being tried for impeachment must be allowed to attend all proceedings. If requested by the member standing trial, the Assembly must hold impeachment proceedings privately from the public and anyone in attendance of the proceedings must maintain confidentiality.

Further impeachment procedures may be dictated in the bylaws.

Article III: The Executive Board

Section 1: Powers

The administrative and executive power of the Bowdoin Student Government shall be vested in the Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall be responsible for preserving and updating the bylaws at the direction of the Assembly, managing the website, and hiring and directing paid employees. It shall also maintain a record of proposed and passed proposals.

The Executive Board is elected in the Spring of the year it is to take office. It shall oversee and administer the election of its year's General Assembly and Student Government Treasury in accordance with this constitution. Further, the outgoing Executive Board shall oversee and administer the election and appointment of the following year's Executive Board in the Spring before it is to leave office.

The Executive Board shall administer all referenda.

The Executive Board shall select among its government student delegates to the Board of Trustees.

The Student Government President, Student Government Vice President, and the Special Advisors each have a budget of 0.625% of the previous year's government as withdrawn from the Student Government Treasury. They may spend these funds at their discretion to further the goals of this constitution without approval from the Assembly.

Section 2: Membership

The Executive Board shall consist of:

- the Student Government President, who serves as the Assembly's official spokesperson, controls the government's email address, presides over Assembly meetings, and sets the Assembly's agenda;
- the Student Government Vice President, who maintains this government's budget, and submits requests to the Student Government Treasury on behalf of the Assembly;
- all Chairs of the General Assembly's Standing Committees;
- the Chair of the Treasury and the Student Government Charterer;
- and at most 3 Special Advisors.

No person shall be elected Student Government President or Vice President who has not served in this government for at least one semester before they are to take office.

Section 3: Conducting Business

The Executive Board conducts official business with a $\frac{1}{2}$ majority vote.

The Executive Board may send emails from the government's email address without the President's approval with a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote.

Each year's Executive Board may determine for themselves, through $\frac{1}{2}$ majority vote of the Board itself, further rules by which to conduct their business.

The Board shall meet only during the duration of the College's allowable club activity period during the academic year.

Article IV: The Student Government Treasury

Section 1: Powers

The Student Government Treasury is responsible for managing access to and distributing funds of the Student Activities Fee. It shall help clubs maintain leadership and campus presence as well as ensure fair use of distributed funds in accordance with the bylaws.

The Student Government Treasury is divided into two commissions with two separate responsibilities: the Treasury Funding Commission, responsible for approving club funding requests; and the Treasury Chartering Commission, responsible for chartering and rechartering student organizations for eligibility to request funds in accordance with the bylaws.

Section 2: The Treasury Funding Commission (TFC)

The TFC is granted control over the entirety of Bowdoin's Student Activities Fee. The TFC shall, through $\frac{1}{2}$ majority votes, distribute funding to student organizations on a regular basis according to transparent, public guidelines approved by the General Assembly.

All members except the Charterer and Chair of the Treasury vote in the TFC. The Chair of the Treasury shall vote as a tie-breaker when necessary.

The TFC shall consist of:

- the Chair of the Treasury, who sits as chair of this commission;
- The Student Government Charterer;
- each Class Treasurer;
- and at most 4 other at-large members whose selection may be determined by the bylaws.

No person shall hold the office of Chair of the Treasury who has not served on the TFC for at least a semester before they are to take office.

The TFC shall distribute funds as dictated by their public guidelines, but only organizations approved by the TCC shall receive funds

The TFC's guidelines must be re-approved each year through a set of two votes. First, a $\frac{1}{2}$ majority vote of the TFC itself must approve the updated guidelines. Second, the General Assembly must approve the updated guidelines by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote. Only the Chair of the Treasury may propose changes to the guidelines to the Assembly.

Section 3: The Treasury Chartering Commission (TCC)

The TCC shall, through a $\frac{1}{2}$ majority vote, establish charters for clubs that grant official campus recognition of their right to reserve campus space, publicize events under the College name, and receive funds from the TFC. Their decisions shall be made according to transparent, public guidelines approved by the General Assembly.

All members except the Charterer and Chair of the Treasury vote in the TCC. The Charterer shall vote as a tie-breaker as necessary.

The TCC shall consist of:

- the Student Government Charterer, who sits as chair of this commission;
- the Chair of the Treasury;
- each Class Vice President;
- and at most 4 other at-large members whose selection may be determined by the bylaws.

The TCC's guidelines may be altered through a set of two votes. First, a $\frac{1}{2}$ vote of the TCC itself must approve the updated guidelines. Second, the General Assembly must approve the updated guidelines by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote. Only the Student Government Charterer may propose changes to the guidelines to the Assembly.

Article V: Class Councils

Section 1: Powers

All four classes of the College, beginning with the academic year's graduating class and the three classes below it, shall have a class council. Class councils shall promote class

unity and pride through hosting events and providing spirit gear to class members. Advisors in the Student Activities Office guide them as class councils.

Class Councils consist of:

- each year's Class President;
- each year's Class Vice President;
- each year's Class Treasurer;
- and each year's Class Programming Director.

Each class council has a semesterly budget separate from the Student Activities Fee, delegated to them by the Student Activities Office, that is drawn from their year's class dues.

Each year's Class Programming Director is a student government delegate to the E-Board. Their position must be communicated to E-Board leadership within four weeks of the first day of fall classes.

Section 2: Conducting Business

Each Class Council shall meet throughout the academic year with a member of the Student Activities Office to spend its delegated budget.

Each Class Council conducts official business with a ½ majority vote.

Each year's Class Council may determine for themselves, through ½ majority vote of the Council itself, further rules by which to conduct their business.

Article VI: Spending, Funding, and Contracts

Section 1: Government Spending

This constitution grants the entirety of each year's Student Activities Fee to the Student Government Treasury. This government's budget is then requested from the Student Government Treasury like a fixed budget club as defined in the TFC Guidelines. Unlike other fixed-budget clubs, this government may return to the Student Government Treasury to request more funding.

The Student Government Vice President must dutifully file requests for funding from the TFC upon their approval by the General Assembly.

No member of the student government may enter into a contract on behalf of the Bowdoin Student Government without the authorization of the Bowdoin Student Government Assembly, but must enter into contract if dictated so by the Assembly.

Section 2: The Government's Preliminary Fixed Budget

Before the election of the incoming Executive Board in the spring, the Student Government President, Student Government Vice President, and Chair of the Treasury must review and document the past year's spending.

After the election of the incoming Executive Board but at least two weeks before the last meeting of the TFC, the incoming and outgoing Student Government Presidents, Student Government Vice Presidents, and Chairs of the Treasury must meet to plan a preliminary fixed budget for the incoming Assembly.

Before the last scheduled Assembly meeting and with enough time to submit to the outgoing TFC, the outgoing Assembly must approve this preliminary fixed budget, and the incoming Student Government Vice President shall submit it to the TFC.

Article VII: Referendum

A Student Government Referendum shall accurately and fairly assess student opinion on a given statement but does not carry decision-making power.

A submission of signatures to the Executive Board equal to twenty percent of the student body on a student-initiated petition shall bring any statement to a student referendum.

Petitioners must request a form from the Executive Board and clarify the intention of the petition; and may not, unless failing to clarify the petition's intentions, be denied the form within two weeks of filing the request.

If the petition succeeds, the entire student body shall be entitled to vote. $\frac{1}{3}$ of the student body shall constitute a quorum. A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of voters constitutes approval. A vote must take place within three non-vacation weeks of a successful petition's submission to the Executive Board.

A referendum may be overturned by a three-fourths vote of the Assembly if the Assembly concludes the referendum violates the bylaws.

Further rules governing student referendum must be dictated by the bylaws.

Article VIII: Elections, Appointments, and Vacancies

Section 1: General Rules

A year's government shall be formed through a process of elections and/or appointments as governed by this constitution starting in the spring before the new government is to take office. Election winners are determined by a plurality of the vote.

All members of this government shall serve in one-year terms unless otherwise stated.

All must remain in good standing with Bowdoin College for the duration of their term.

The class years used in the following sections refer to the year in which the selected members of government are to be during their term of office.

Any eligibility requirement specified in this constitution may be waived with a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the Assembly except requirements to remain on campus.

Section 2: Selection of the Executive Board

With the exception of the Special Advisors, the Executive Board members are elected by the entire student body. Each position is elected independently of one another. The selection of the incoming Executive Board shall be complete at least three weeks prior to the last day of spring semester classes and be administered by the outgoing Executive Board.

All members of the Executive Board must be on campus for the entire academic year unless they are to sit as Special Advisors.

Special Advisors are to be appointed by the incoming Executive Board after its election in the spring and serve to further Executive Board priorities, but each must have served in the government for at least a semester before they are to take office.

Section 3: Selection of the General Assembly

The selection of the incoming Assembly shall be administered by the incoming Executive Board.

An incoming Assembly's special representatives and 8 of the 16 general representatives shall be selected by the last day of spring classes.

The remaining 8 of the 16 general representatives shall be selected within the first four weeks of the first day of the academic year's fall classes and no earlier than the first day of fall classes.

The transparent and fair manner of the selection of the general and special representatives must be dictated in the bylaws.

With the exception of juniors, all special and general representatives must be on campus for the entire academic year. Juniors may be selected for either the spring or fall session, but must be selected in tandem with another junior who will exchange positions during winter vacation.

Section 4: Selection of the Class Councils

Class Councils are elected by their respective class. Each position is elected independently. The selection of the incoming Class Councils shall be administered by the incoming Executive Board.

The election of Class Councils shall be complete by the last day of spring classes with the exception of members of the First Year Class Council.

The First Year Class Council shall be elected within the first four weeks of the first day of the academic year's fall classes.

With the exception of the junior class council, all class council members must be on campus for the entire academic year. Juniors may be elected for either the spring or fall session, but must be elected in tandem with another junior who will exchange positions during winter vacation.

Section 5: Election and Appointment Rules

All positions must be advertised in a school-wide email at least once per selection cycle.

Further rules on time, manner, and eligibility of position selection may be specified in the bylaws.

Section 6: Vacancies

An office left empty by impeachment, resignation, lack of candidates and applicants, or other unforeseen events shall be filled by a procedure dictated in the bylaws.

Article IX: Amendments

The Assembly, if it deems necessary, may amend this constitution in two $\frac{2}{3}$ majority votes. The Assembly must first approve the amendment by one $\frac{2}{3}$ vote and make said amendment public. At least fourteen days after the initial vote, the Assembly may take a final vote on the amendment. A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority in this second vote constitutes adoption.

Article X: Adoption

This constitution shall be ratified by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the assembly operating under the previous constitution in two separate meetings.

This constitution shall govern all conduct in preparation for the fall that follows its ratification.

Article XI: Recall

A successful recall shall remove any non-employee member of this student government from office based on a student vote.

The entire student body shall vote on all non-class-council positions. To remove a member of a class council, the same percentages apply as below, but the voting body is their class population. A submission of signatures to the Executive Board equal to twenty percent of the voting population on a student-initiated petition shall initiate a recall vote.

Petitioners must request a form from the Executive Board and clarify who is to be recalled; and may not, unless failing to clarify the petition's intentions, be denied the form within two weeks of filing the request.

If a member of the Executive Board is the subject of a recall petition, they must recuse themselves from processes related to the recall.

If the petition succeeds, the entire voting body shall be entitled to vote. One half of eligible voters shall constitute a quorum. A two-thirds majority of voters constitutes a successful recall.

A vote must take place within three non-vacation weeks of a successful petition's submission to the Executive Board.

Further rules governing recall must be dictated by the bylaws.