



CONSTITUTION
FOR THE
RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

We, the Residence Hall Association, representing the residential community of Western Oregon University, acknowledge individualism through learning and understanding by promoting tolerance, diversity, and unity among students. Accepting the responsibility bestowed upon us by the University Housing Staff to be the main policy approving body for the residence halls, we will place emphasis on the resident voice and opinions on issues and concerns. We encourage the development of leadership, programming skills, and self-responsibility, striving to maintain an open and just living environment.

ARTICLE I. NAME

This organization shall be known as the Residence Hall Association, hereafter called the RHA.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of RHA shall consist of all students attending WOU who reside in the residence halls and an advisor to the organization, who is appointed by the Dean of Students.

ARTICLE III. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of the RHA to coordinate and/or sponsor programs common to the residence halls, represent the resident voice in all policy making in the residence halls, and represent the members of the RHA in any and all matters of concern between its members, the various halls, other student organizations, the Division of Student Affairs, the Vice President for Student Affairs, other offices of the university, and the community.

ARTICLE IV. STRUCTURE

The governing body of the RHA shall be divided into two boards: Executive Board and General Assembly.

ARTICLE V. EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section A. Membership

The RHA Executive Board shall consist of the RHA President, Vice President (VP), National Communication Coordinator (NCC), Finance Director, Programming Coordinator, Publicist/Historian, Secretary/Webmaster, First Year Liaison, NCC In Training (NCC-IT), and Advisor.

Section B. Duties

1. It shall be the primary duty of the executive officers to represent the RHA and fulfill the specific duties outlined in the RHA Statutes.
2. The Executive Board shall act only as a guiding body, limiting its decisions to the day to day operations of the RHA.
3. The Executive Board shall approve expenditures from the General Assembly Programming Fund up to \$50.00.

Section C. Term of Office

1. The term of office of the compensated executive officers shall run from finals week Spring term of the year of election through finals week of spring term of the following academic year, with pay period running from September 1st of that year to May 31st of the same academic year.
2. The term of office for the NCC-IT is from appointment until succession as NCC, which will occur at finals week of spring term of the year of appointment.

Section D. Resignation of Office

1. Resigning officer must give verbal and written notice to the RHA President and Advisor two weeks prior to resignation unless otherwise agreed upon by the RHA Advisor and RHA President.
2. Resigning officer must update their position transition folder, and facilitate transition assistance as deemed necessary by the Executive Board.

Section E. Succession

1. Mid-Year
 - a. An Executive Board vacancy must be filled within three weeks or a time to be determined by the Executive Board.
 - b. Any vacancy in the Executive Board shall be filled through application and interview process by the Executive Board and two representatives from General Assembly.
 - c. Approval of candidate through a two-third vote of the RHA Executive Board and the two General Assembly representatives.
2. Summer
 - a. An Executive Board vacancy must be filled within three weeks or a time to be determined by the Executive Board.
 - b. Any vacancy in the Executive Board shall be filled through application and interview process by as many Executive Board members as possible.

Section F. Presiding

1. The RHA President shall preside over all business meetings and organizational functions of the Executive Board.
2. In the absence of the RHA President, the RHA Vice President, or a member of the Executive Board appointed by the RHA President, shall preside over meetings of the Executive Board.

Section G. Meetings

1. The Executive Board shall have weekly open meetings each term, excluding finals weeks and summer term.
2. Special meetings may be called by the RHA President.
3. Closed meetings may be held only to consider appointments of Executive Board members or recall of any executive or non-elected officers.

ARTICLE VI. RHA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Section A. Membership

1. Voting members of the RHA General Assembly shall include the RHA Executive Board's NCC, Vice President, Finance Director, Programming Coordinator, Publicist/Historian, Secretary/Webmaster, First Year Liaison and each Hall Government's President, Vice President, a General Assembly Representative as each hall qualifies under Article VIII Section A 1, and the NRHH Representative. Nonvoting members of the RHA General Assembly shall include the RHA President, RHA Advisor, Peer Mentor Representative, ASWOU Representative, appointed and/or elected representatives to university committees, any RHA executive assistants appointed by the RHA President and all others not mentioned in Article VI section A 1.

Section B. Powers and Duties

1. All legislative and fiscal powers of the RHA are vested in the RHA General Assembly.
2. The RHA General Assembly shall initiate policies and programs, as it deems necessary to carry out its responsibilities, as outlined in the RHA Constitution and Statutes.
3. The RHA General Assembly must approve all loan and allotment requests, expenditures over \$50.00 from the RHA programming fund and any sponsorship.
4. All voting members of RHA General Assembly are required to attend all RHA General Assembly meetings, or send a representative for them no more than 2 times per term unless previously arranged with the RHA President.
 - a. If a voting member of General Assembly misses 1 General Assembly without notifying the RHA President or sending a representative, then they must meet with their Advisor and the RHA President.

- b. If a voting member of General Assembly misses a second meeting without notifying the RHA President or sending a representative, then they are subject to recall as stated in the applicable constitution.
- c. If a Hall Government has no representation at a General Assembly meeting, there will be a meeting with the Hall Government President and Advisor as well as the RHA President and RHA Advisor.

Section C. Presiding

- 1. The RHA President shall preside over all meetings of the RHA General Assembly.
- 2. In the absence of the RHA President, the RHA VP, or a member of the Executive Board appointed by the RHA President, shall preside over the RHA General Assembly.
- 3. The presiding officer of the RHA General Assembly shall exercise a vote only as a tiebreaker.

Section D. Retroactivity

- 1. No legislation shall be retroactive (effective before date of enactment) unless so stated in the proposed legislation.
- 2. Any changes in remuneration (payment equivalent to services, losses, etc.) will take effect no earlier than the beginning of the next term of office.

Section E. Meetings

- 1. The RHA General Assembly shall have weekly open meetings, excluding finals week and summer term unless General Assembly members vote to cancel the meeting at least one week in advance. Special meetings may be called by the RHA President.
- 2. Four voting members of the RHA General Assembly may request that the RHA President call a meeting and, upon such a request, a meeting must be called.
- 3. The first meeting of each term shall be no later than the second week of each term, with the exception of fall term, which shall meet no later than the fourth week.
- 4. A quorum of two-thirds of the voting membership must be present to conduct and vote on business.
- 5. All business should be passed by a majority of the votes cast unless otherwise stated in this Constitution. An abstention shall not be considered a vote cast.
- 6. All regular meetings of the RHA General Assembly shall be open to the public.
- 7. Closed meetings may be held only to consider appointments of Executive Board members or recall of any executive or non-elected officers.
- 8. Seating must be provided for the public. Members of the public shall be entitled to speak.

ARTICLE VII. RHA COMMITTEES

Section A. Formation

- 1. All voting members of RHA General Assembly shall have the power to form and disband special committees.
- 2. A member of the RHA Executive Board must chair all RHA committees.
 - a. Committee chairs are responsible for submitting a verbal report to the RHA General Assembly at a date and time set by General Assembly.
 - b. Subcommittees shall appoint a committee chair.

Section B. Standing Committees and Committee Representatives to University Committees

- 1. Standing committees and committee representatives to university committees shall include those defined in the RHA Statutes.
- 2. Standing committee chairs and committee representatives to university committees must attend all meetings of their respective boards.
- 3. The term of office for standing committees shall run from the beginning of the academic year to the end or the length of time specified by their respective boards.

ARTICLE VIII. HALL GOVERNMENT

Section A. Duties and Powers

1. Each residential area shall provide for a hall government consisting of at least one President, Vice President, General Assembly Representative, Historian, Secretary, Treasurer, Activities Director, and Advisor, as well as any other officer deemed necessary by the hall. Any offices may be separated or combined if the hall government deems it necessary.
 - a. Any residential area containing at least 1/3 traditional first year students shall have a traditional first year student serving as a First Year General Assembly Representative.
 - b. Any residence area that is ineligible to have a First Year General Assembly Representative shall have a General Assembly Representative (GAR).
 - c. Any residential area containing 200 or more residents must have an additional Activities Director, who shall also receive a vote.
2. In the event of Hall government vacancy the open position must be advertised for a minimum of one week and must be filled by application and interview process to be conducted by the Hall Government Executive Board.
3. Any Hall Government not complying with the RHA Constitution may be restricted from all RHA services, activities, and funds.

ARTICLE IX. RHA ELECTIONS AND HOLDING OFFICE

Section A. Executive Officers

1. RHA Executive Board members shall be elected by popular election except for the First Year Liaison, NCC and NCC-IT.
2. Popular election procedures are as follows:
 - a. The popular election will be administered by the RHA VP or designated RHA Executive Board member selected by the RHA Executive Board.
 - b. Candidates shall be required to complete and submit a candidate application form.
 - c. The elections shall be held by the fifth week of spring term. The polls shall be open for at least two days as determined by RHA Executive Board.
 - d. The polls shall be in the Valsetz dining hall and by special arrangement in other locations as deemed necessary.
 - e. Each residence hall student may cast one vote per elected office.
 - f. Elected positions can be filled by write in votes.
 - g. Votes will be counted after the polls close at the end of the last day of voting. The results will be posted on the RHA office door within 24 hours of polls closing.
 - h. In the event of a tie, the RHA General Assembly will select a winner from among those who tied in the election.
 - i. If no one is elected to a position, the Executive Board and two representatives from the RHA General Assembly will appoint someone to fill the position.
3. The First Year Liaison shall be appointed through an application and interview process.
 - a. The First Year Liaison shall be an incoming traditional first year student.
 - b. The First Year Liaison shall be selected no later than one week after the last Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration (SOAR).
 - c. The application and interview selection process for First Year Liaison is as follows:
 - i. Applications shall be sent out with the general housing information.
 - ii. Applications shall be returned by the applicants the Monday before the first SOAR.
 - iii. The First Year Liaison selection committee shall consist of the RHA President or designee, Advisor, and at least one (1) Executive Board member.
 - iv. Applicants shall be interviewed in person or by phone during SOAR.
4. The NCC-IT shall be an uncompensated and nonvoting member of the RHA Executive Board and shall be appointed through an application and interview process. Selection process for the NCC-IT is as follows:
 - a. The selection committee shall consist of the RHA Executive Board and two (2) General Assembly representatives.
 - b. Application and interview selection shall be completed by the 3rd week of winter term.

Section B. Requirements for Candidacy

Candidates for any elected or appointed RHA Executive Board office must:

1. Live in the residence hall system during the election and while holding office

2. Be currently registered as a full-time student for at least 12 credit hours for undergraduate students and at least 10 credit hours for graduate students, and have a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.25 or above.
3. Sign financial agreement form with the Office of University Housing and Campus Dining.
4. Must be in good conduct standing with University Housing.
5. President candidates must have at least one year of residence hall leadership experience eligible(e.g. RHA Executive Board, Resident Assistant, Hall Government, Peer Mentoring, or National Residence Hall Honorary).

Section C. Holding Office

1. Before the first RHA Executive Board meeting of each term the RHA Advisor will confirm academic standing of each RHA Executive Board member.
2. An RHA Executive officer not maintaining a 2.25 term GPA will meet with the RHA President and RHA Advisor, who will place that individual on probationary status with guidelines for the remainder of the term.
3. An RHA Executive officer not in good judicial standing will meet with the RHA President and RHA Advisor who will place that individual on probationary status with guidelines for the remainder of the probationary period.
4. All officers shall be disqualified from holding office during any term (excluding summer term) in which they are not a full time student unless approved by the RHA President and RHA Advisor.

ARTICLE X RECALL AND REMOVAL

Section A. Accountability

1. If the President is not in good academic or conduct standing, the Vice President and Advisor shall meet with the President to set appropriate consequences and/or probationary guidelines.
2. If two or more Executive Board members are involved with a conduct policy violation, the Advisor and President shall meet with each Executive Board member individually and with the entire group involved in order to set appropriate probationary guidelines. Each officer shall then bring a plan of improvement in front of the Executive Board to be approved.
3. If the President and Vice President are involved with an alcohol and/or drug policy violation, the Advisor will meet with each Executive Board member individually to remove each person from office.
4. If Executive Board members deem it appropriate, an officer may be removed from office with a 2/3 majority vote.

Section B. Recall Guidelines

1. RHA Executive Board members shall not be subject to recall until six weeks after taking office. After that time, recall may be initiated.
2. A motion for recall shall be presented at one RHA General Assembly meeting and voted upon at the next RHA General Assembly meeting.
 - a. Recall of RHA Executive officers shall be initiated by a petition of no less than 15percent of the whole RHA membership.
 - b. Recall shall take effect after approval of the before mentioned petition by two-thirds of the voting members of the RHA General Assembly.

Section C. Reasons for Removal

1. Any RHA Executive Board member who does not maintain the qualifications set forth in their position description may be removed from office through the process set forth in the Accountability Contract.
2. Any RHA Executive Board Member found in violation of University alcohol and drug policy shall be removed from office after meeting with the RHA President and Advisor.
3. Officers not maintaining a 2.25 G.P.A. for two consecutive academic terms or a cumulative G.P.A. of a 2.25 shall be removed from office.

ARTICLE XI. FINANCE

Section A. Funds

1. The RHA budget shall be supported financially by University Housing accounts.

Section B. Budget

1. The RHA budget shall follow the fiscal year beginning summer term and ending summer term the following year.
2. The RHA budget must include all planned revenue and expenditures of the RHA.
3. The RHA Finance Director shall be responsible to report to the RHA General Assembly and the Office of University Housing all expenditures of the RHA and maintain records of transactions involving RHA budgets and activities.
4. The RHA Finance Director shall chair the RHA Budget Committee; it will also include at least: one hall treasurer, one General Assembly member, the RHA President, and the RHA Advisor.
5. The RHA Budget Committee shall prepare the RHA budget and submit it to the RHA General Assembly no later than the fifth week in spring term. The budget is subject to approval by the RHA General Assembly, Director of University Housing, and the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

ARTICLE XII. STATUTES

Section A. Content

1. A statute system shall be established to include the duties and remuneration of the RHA Executive officers and hall officers, and description of all RHA standing committees. Additionally, all official RHA general election policies, RHA accountability contract, and other official RHA policies shall be included in the statute system.

Section B. Amendments

1. Amendments to the statutes shall be presented at one RHA General Assembly meeting and voted on at the next RHA General Assembly meeting.

ARTICLE XIII. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, SUSPENSIONS, AND ADOPTION

Section A. Constitution Review

1. An annual review of the RHA constitution shall be completed by a committee no later than the fourth General Assembly meeting of spring term or a time designated by RHA President. The RHA President shall chair the RHA Constitution Committee. It will also include at least two (2) General Assembly members, one (1) RHA Executive Board member, and the RHA Advisor.
2. All hall government constitutions shall be ratified by their hall annually and then approved by the RHA President and Advisor

Section B. Amendments

1. Proposed amendments to the RHA Constitution shall be presented at one RHA General Assembly meeting and voted on at the next, unless postponed until some specific date.
2. Amendments to this constitution shall become effective after review by the RHA General Assembly by a 2/3 vote and approval of the Dean of Students.

Section C. Suspensions

1. Reasons for Suspension
 - a. Sections of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes may be temporarily suspended on rare occasions when "Emergency Circumstances" are presented.
 - b. Identifying an "Emergency Circumstance" is at the discretion of the President, or in the case of a President vacancy, the Acting President, and must be done in consultation with the RHA Advisor.
 - c. Suspension should be a short term immediate response to a non-reoccurring extenuating circumstance. All other attempts to change the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes must follow the amendment process stated within that specific section.
 - d. The scope of suspension is very limited; only the direct section(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes may be suspended. The entire RHA Constitution and/or Statutes may never be suspended through this process.
 - e. Suspension of part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes should be considered a last resort, when all other viable options have been exhausted.

- f. The General Assembly has ultimate authority regarding suspension of part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes. The Executive Board may only act to suspend part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes when the General Assembly cannot be formed. The President or Acting President may only act to suspend part(s) of the constitution when the General Assembly or the Executive Board cannot be formed.
2. Process
 - a. If the General Assembly is in session, a 2/3 vote of the membership can temporarily suspend part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes.
 - i. The President or designee will present the “Emergency Circumstance” to the General Assembly.
 - ii. At the discretion of the General Assembly, a motion may be made and voted on by the General Assembly at the same meeting at which it is made.
 - iii. Any voting member of the General Assembly may move to temporarily suspend part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes.
 - iv. The motion must identify the specific clause(s) to be suspended, the reason why, the replacement action (or non-action) to be taken, and the duration of the suspension.
 - v. The motion must pass with a 2/3 majority.
 - vi. The suspension will expire at the close of the term in which it is approved or sooner if stated in the motion.
 - vii. Should the “Emergency Circumstance” apply to a future term, the General Assembly must vote again during that future term to extend the suspension.
 - b. If General Assembly is not in session for the academic year, a 2/3 vote of the Executive Board can temporarily suspend part(s) of the Constitution and/or Statutes.
 - i. The President or designee will present the “Emergency Circumstance” to the Executive Board.
 - ii. At the discretion of the Executive Board, the motion may be voted on by the Executive Board at the same meeting at which it is presented.
 - iii. Any voting member of the Executive Board may move to temporarily suspend part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes.
 - iv. The motion must identify the specific clause(s) to be suspended, the reason why, the replacement action (or non-action) to be taken, and the duration of the suspension.
 - v. The motion must pass with a 2/3 majority.
 - vi. The suspension will expire at the first meeting of the General Assembly once the General Assembly has been formed, or sooner if stated in the motion.
 - vii. Should the “Emergency Circumstance” still apply after the General Assembly has formed, the attempt to suspend part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes must follow the General Assembly process described above.
 - c. If General Assembly is not in session and the RHA Executive Board cannot be convened (such as during Summer recess), the President or Acting President may suspend part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes.
 - i. This must be done in consultation with the RHA Advisor.
 - ii. There must be a written documentation identifying the specific clause(s) to be suspended, the reason why, the replacement action (or non-action) to be taken, and the duration of the suspension.
 - iii. This documentation must be sent immediately to the Executive Board, the RHA Advisor, and the Dean of Students.
 - iv. The suspension will expire at the first available opportunity for the Executive Board or the General Assembly to convene, whichever meeting occurs first, or sooner if applicable.
 - v. Should the “Emergency Circumstance” still apply after either group has formed, the attempt to suspend part(s) of the RHA Constitution and/or Statutes must follow the process described in each voting group’s specific section stated above.

Section D. Adoption

1. The RHA Constitution will become effective after review by the hall governments and General Assembly, and after approval of the Dean of Students
2. Hall government constitutions shall be ratified by their halls at the beginning of the year, and then go into effect upon approval of the RHA President and Advisor

Revised May 2014