



# RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

Western Washington University  
Ratified: May 15, 2003

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the representatives of the Western Washington University residence system with authority delegated to us by Western Washington University and the state of Washington, do hereby establish and ordain this constitution of the Residence Hall Association.

## **ARTICLE I - NAME AND PURPOSE**

**Section 1 - Name:** The name of this organization shall be the Residence Hall Association (hereafter referred to as RHA).

**Section 2 - Purpose:** RHA is a student-run organization whose purpose is to provide communication, education, leadership and community development opportunities for students in the residence hall system. Students who comprise the system are of different abilities, races, ethnicity, sexual orientation, beliefs, ages, gender and political affiliations. We strive for an appreciation, understanding and celebration of the diversity within our population.

## **ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1 - Types:** Four types of members shall exist: (1) active, (2) officer, (3) liaison, (4) ex-officio.

### **Section 2 - Definitions:**

- (1) An **active member** shall be defined as a student elected by the residents of the residential community/apartment complex where that student resides to represent their community/apartment complex.
- (2) An **officer** shall be defined as a member who has been elected by the RHA council under the RHA executive board election code by-laws to serve as President, Vice President, National Communications Coordinator (hereafter referred to as VP and NCC respectively), Secretary, or Treasurer.
- (3) A **liaison** shall be defined as the Associated Students (hereafter referred to as AS) Liaison, the National Residence Hall Honorary (hereafter referred to as NRHH) Liaison, and the Resident Advisor (hereafter referred to as RA) liaison(s). Liaisons shall be appointed to the RHA Council through their parent organizations, with the exception of the RA Liaison(s) which shall be appointed by Residence Life. Liaisons must receive a 2/3 majority vote of confidence from

the RHA Council. Each liaison votes with the confidence of their parent organization (one representative vote).

- (4) An **ex-officio member** shall be defined as a member who holds a non-voting position. All hall presidents and advisors shall hold ex-officio membership. The RHA Executive Board in conjunction with a 2/3 majority vote from the RHA Council may appoint other ex-officio members as they see fit.

**Section 3- Qualifications:** Officers shall be students at Western Washington University and reside in the residence system. The RHA President, VP and NCC must have been a member of the RHA Council for at least two consecutive quarters prior to their elected terms. Officers with a cumulative GPA of less than 2.50 shall receive official notification by an advisor of probationary standing. This probationary period shall last for one previously agreed upon academic quarter. In the event that the cumulative GPA remains below 2.50, then the officer will be deemed ineligible to continue holding their elected position. At this time, the RHA Election Code will take effect.

**Section 4 - Numerical Composition:** Each hall/ tenants council shall have two **active** members on RHA, exceptions to be considered by the executive board. There shall be five **officers**, two **advisors**, three or four **liaisons**, and **ex-officio** members.

**Section 5 - Term of Office:**

- (1) The term of office for all officers shall be one the last day of finals week of spring quarter to the last day of spring quarter the following year. There shall be no limit to the number of times an RHA member may be re-elected to RHA from his/her residence hall or apartment complex.
- (2) Executive officers may serve a maximum of two years in the same position and a maximum of four years on executive board.

**ARTICLE III – MEETINGS**

One executive board meeting and one RHA meeting shall be held weekly unless otherwise determined by the executive board throughout the academic year beginning as soon as the RHA Council is formed. The executive board may be required to meet prior the formation of the RHA Council.

**ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS AND ADVISORS**

**Section 1 - Executive Board**

- (1) **Membership:** The members of the RHA Executive Board shall be the President, VP, NCC, Secretary, and Treasurer. All Executive Board members shall have one vote on the Executive Board, with the exception of who is serving as the Chair. The RHA Advisor(s) shall also sit on the Executive Board as an ex-officio member.
- (2) **Purpose:** The RHA Executive Board shall provide oversight to RHA, make recommendations, establish the RHA agenda, oversee the implementation of legislation passed by RHA, including the enforcement of RHA policies; make emergency decisions when it is impossible to convene the entire RHA (subject to ratification or rejection by RHA at its next regular meeting or special session), and assist RHA in operating according to proper procedures and goals.

(3) **Attendance:** Executive Board attendance is required at every meeting. Excused absences will be determined by the executive board. The President must be notified prior to an officer's absence with the exception of the President notifying the VP.

## **Section 2 – Advisor(s)**

(1) **Membership:** The advisor(s) shall be appointed by University Residences.

(2) **Purpose:** Advisor(s) shall advise and assist RHA in fulfilling its purpose as a student organization. The advisor(s) shall act as a resource and shall uphold and enforce University Residences and University Policy.

## **ARTICLE V - ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Election of officers will occur as outlined in the by-laws for the following academic year.

## **ARTICLE VI - NACURH**

**Section 1 - Membership:** RHA is a member of National Association of College and University Residence Halls (hereafter referred to as NACURH).

**Section 2 - Dues:** RHA will pay annual dues as required by NACURH.

**Section 3 - Conferences:** RHA will attempt to provide representation at each regional and national conference.

## **ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

**Section 1 - Vote Required:** This constitution and by-laws may be amended by a 3/4 majority vote of members in attendance with voting rights.

**Section 2 - Procedure:** An amendment shall be voted on at least one (1) week following its introduction to RHA.

**Section 3 - Proposing an Amendment:** An amendment to this constitution and by-laws may be proposed two ways:

- (1) by the students residing in the residence system through a petition containing the signatures of at least ten percent (10%) of all students living in the residence system; **or**
- (2) by a member of the RHA Council that has voting rights.

## **ARTICLE VIII - SUSPENSION OF PORTIONS OF THIS CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

**Section 1 - Vote Required for Suspension:** Suspension of the constitution and by-laws requires a 2/3 majority vote.

RATIFIED THIS DAY: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*President's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Advisor's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parliamentarian's Signature*

## RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION BY-LAWS

### MEETINGS

#### **Section 1- General Council**

- (1) The RHA Council shall meet in special session when designated by the executive board or requested by 2/3 majority vote of the council membership.
- (2) The RHA meetings will be held on Thursdays when classes are in session, at a time determined by the executive board two weeks prior to the first meeting of Fall Quarter. The times of the meetings are subject to change during special events planning and preparation. A meeting will not be held during Finals' Week.

**Section 2- Quorum:** A quorum of RHA shall consist of 50% plus one of the voting memberships. No legislation shall be officially approved unless a quorum is present. Vacant seats shall not be included when calculating to determine if a quorum is present.

**Section 3- Voting Rights:** The community/apartment complex's population shall determine the number of votes available to each council. Each council has one vote per 100 residents (rounded to the nearest hundred residents above 50, with a minimum of two votes per council. Delegates can choose to vote in a block or the split the number of votes as their hall/tenant's council wishes. Population of the community/apartment complexes shall be based on the occupancy numbers at the beginning of Fall Quarter, and shall be reviewed by the advisor at the beginning of Winter and Spring Quarters. The Chair may vote only in order to break a tie. The executive board shall not vote in funding request matters.

**Section 4- Voting Procedure:** At the request of two RHA Council members (not including ex-officios), a vote shall be taken. All voting results shall be published in the minutes. Motions requiring a 2/3 majority vote include funding requests, opening and closing of nominations, officer recall, and suspension of the constitution and by-laws. Constitutional amendments require a 3/4

majority approval. All other motions will be passed on a simple majority of 50% plus one of members in attendance with voting rights, not to include abstaining from voting.

**Section 5- Attendance:** Any RHA officer, liaison, or active member shall notify the President of their absence prior to that weeks RHA meeting. It is the responsibility of the absentee to designate a proxy from their community/ apartment complex for their missed meeting. The Proxy takes the absentees voting privileges for that meeting by sending written consent with the proxy or by contacting the RHA President or their designated Executive Board officer.

**Section 6- Rules of Order:** RHA shall operate under the rules and guidelines established by this constitution and it's by- laws. In cases where this constitution and bylaws have not spoken to an issue of order, the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail. Any student who wishes to speak at an RHA meeting shall contact the President on or before noon on the Tuesday before the upcoming RHA meeting to request guest status.

## **DUTIES**

**Section 1- Allotment of Funds:** The RHA Executive Board shall have the authority to grant or reject expenditure requests of \$100 or less, with the RHA Council having override authority. The RHA Executive Board may also approve the spending of up to \$150 quarterly for office supplies, with the RHA Council having override authority.

**Section 2 - Duties of Officers:** The RHA office shall be open 10 hours per school week with each officer establishing and maintaining at least two posted office hours per school week held in the RHA office. Each officer shall be assigned two Residential Communities for which they will serve as a liaison twice a quarter between the RHA council, the hall/ tenants council, and the RHA Executive Board. Along with liaison responsibilities, each officer shall meet with their liaison hall active members at least once a quarter. Officers will also sit on at least one AS or University Committee.

- (1) **PRESIDENT** – The President shall:
  - Preside over all RHA meetings
  - Chair RHA Executive Board meetings
  - Appoint ad-hoc committees
  - Notify members of all RHA meetings giving sufficient notice
  - Monitor and follow up on member attendance problems, as well as grant absences to active members
  - Be the chairperson of the Presidents' Council which shall convene at least once a quarter
  - Act as the spokesperson for RHA on all official matters
  - The President or their designee, as approved by the Executive Board, shall also sit on Activities Council, **Housing and Dining**, Service and Activities (S&A) Fees Committee and other committees as necessary
  - Complete other duties assigned by the executive board and/or the advisor(s)
  - Abide by and enforce this constitution
- (2) **VP-** The VP shall:
  - Assume the duties of the President in case of the absence or vacancy

- Coordinate leadership development for the organization (programming, team builder)
- Serve as parliamentarian for RHA
- Complete other duties assigned by the executive board and/or the advisor(s)
- Abide by and enforce this constitution

(3) **NCC** – The NCC shall:

- Maintain ongoing contact with the PACURH region as well as NACURH on behalf of RHA and NRHH
- Act as a liaison to NRHH and follow their constitutional duties
- Provide RHA and NRHH with bid writing, training and assistance
- Act as the chair of conference fundraisers in conjunction with the Treasurer
- Complete other duties assigned by the executive board and/or the advisor(s)
- Abide by and enforce this constitution

(4) **SECRETARY** - The Secretary shall:

- Keep all records of RHA, including correspondence
- Distribute weekly agendas and RHA minutes to active members, ex-officio members, and all advisors
- Monitor and follow up on member attendance problems, as well as grant absences to active members
- The minutes shall be typed up and distributed within two business days after the RHA meeting
- Coordinate RHA council orientation in Fall Quarter in collaboration with Advisors
- Work with the Treasurer to produce quarterly evaluations
- Act as an ex-officio of all RHA committees
- Provide tools and administrative supplies for the active members to ensure successful fulfillment of their job requirements
- Complete other duties assigned by the executive board and/or the advisor(s)
- Abide by and enforce this constitution

(5) **TREASURER** - The Treasurer shall:

- Keep accurate, written records of all monetary transactions, collect all debts, distribute and present the official treasury report at each RHA meeting (not including special session)
- Answer any questions from RHA membership concerning the treasury report
- Serve as budget authority for RHA matters in conjunction with the President
- Coordinate RHA's budget orientation, and facilitate the presentation of the Housing and Dining Budget to RHA
- Produce quarterly evaluations
- Coordinate fundraisers in conjunction with the NCC
- Oversee web development and the list serve
- Complete other duties assigned by the executive board and/or the advisor(s)
- Abide by and enforce this constitution

**Section 2 - Duties of the Advisor(s):**

(1) The Advisor(s) shall:

- Act as a resource and shall uphold and enforce University Residences and University policy

- Attend all Executive Board meetings, RHA meetings, and additional meetings as deemed appropriate
- Assist the incoming RHA President with training and development of the incoming Executive Board members and the Council; including the Executive Board retreat
- Serve as an information link to the Office of University Residences and the Division of Student Affairs
- Provide information about policy changes and other issues affecting students to the Council
- Meet weekly with the RHA President and other RHA Executive Board member as deemed appropriate
- Be familiar with the RHA Constitution, policies and procedures, as well as Robert's Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure.
- In the event that neither Advisor is able to attend an RHA council meeting, it is their responsibility to appoint an appropriate proxy for the length of their absence.
- Abide by and enforce this constitution

### **Section 3 - Duties of Active Members**

- (1) **Approval of Funds:** Funding Requests may only be voted on at a meeting if they appear as an action item on the meeting's printed agenda, unless the funding request does not exceed \$150; in which case the RHA Council can make a motion to review the request as an action item. Funding Requests may be brought before the RHA Council from the meeting floor and then discussed. During the discussion, the proponents of the request must leave the meeting premises. Funding Requests must be approved by a 2/3 majority of members present, and must be presented to the RHA Council at least four weeks prior to the scheduled event.
- (2) **Council Representatives:**
  - Attend all RHA meetings
  - Fulfill the duties and requirements of their respective community constitutions
  - Members will be held accountable for the representation of their hall/ tenants council at RHA meetings.
  - Report information acquired at RHA meetings back to their hall/ tenants council
  - Serve on one RHA Committee per school year
  - Attend a meeting with appointed RHA executive member at least once a quarter
  - Complete other duties as requested by the executive board and/or the advisor(s)
  - Abide by and enforce this constitution

**Section 4 - Duties of the Liaisons:** Liaisons shall act as a link between their parent organization and RHA as well as uphold and enforce the RHA Constitution.

### **RHA EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION CODE:**

**Section 1 - Timeline:** The Executive Board shall set the date for the election process. Two weeks prior to that date, they shall coordinate advertising in the Residence System. Following the meeting when elections are announced, all interested nominees shall meet with the executive board for an overview of the election process. During this proceeding, the timeline of the election process must be stated, the election procedure must be over-viewed, and any questions by the interested nominees may be asked.

**Section 2 - Nominations:** At the meeting following the election announcement, nominations will be made by the RHA Council. In order to accept a nomination the nominee must be present to accept or decline their nomination. Bids will be submitted on the night of nominations to the executive board at the beginning of the RHA meeting. Elections will be held at the following meeting.

**Section 3 - Eligibility:** For the positions of Secretary and Treasurer, candidates must have been living in the Residence Halls for at least two consecutive quarters. Candidates for these positions need not be current members of the RHA Council. For the positions of President, VP, and NCC candidates must have been members of the RHA Council for at least two consecutive quarters prior to their elected term.

**Section 4 - Vote Required for Election:** A majority vote of 50% plus one shall be required for election based on the number of ballots cast.

**Section 5 - Bid Process:** Bids for a position must be a minimum of three pages and a maximum of five pages, a page being defined as a one side of print, excluding any dividers or cover pages the candidate may choose to include. The bid is required to include the candidate's name and the position the candidate is running for, and candidates may include any additional information they wish in their bid. Letters of recommendation are not required, but do count toward the page limit. 34 bids need to be submitted to the RHA Executive Board at the beginning of the nomination meeting.

**Section 6 - Presentations:** Candidates will be allotted a maximum of five minutes for their presentation. Time will not be extended. Opposing candidates will not be allowed in the room while another candidate is presenting.

- (1) **Question and Answer Period:** Question and answer period for each candidate will be a maximum of five minutes and each candidate must be present for this process. Council members may vote to extend the time for this period a maximum of two times if deemed necessary by a simple majority of 50% plus one from the council. Candidates have the power to refuse to answer any questions. Opposing candidates for the position will not be allowed in the room while another candidate is participating in the question/ answer period.
- (2) **Pro Con:** After all candidates for a particular position have presented, a time limit of five minutes will be allocated.
- (3) **Discussion Period:** After all candidates for a particular position have presented, a time limit of 10 minutes will be allocated for the council to discuss the candidate selection. Discussion may be extended a maximum of two times by a simple majority vote of the council. Discussion may be closed prior to the end of the allotted time. Furthermore, while in discussion, an individual may yield to another voting member a maximum of one time per instance recognized by the Chair and placed on the Speaker's List. No candidates may be present during the discussion. Discussion by the council must have relevance to the candidate's presentation and their bid, or it must pertain to the position being elected and the candidate's ability to carry out the duties of this position if elected. This may include discussion about past job performances or experiences. The advisor to the council will act as a mediator regarding the discussion of the candidates by the council. It is the advisor's position to halt any topic that they deem not relevant to any of the areas stated or any

discussion deemed wrongfully damaging to any candidate. All discussion within the council shall remain confidential.

(4) Each hall/ tenants council may appoint one ex-officio member for the election meeting. That ex-officio member will be eligible to vote for candidates running for Secretary or Treasurer only. The Executive Board shall be responsible for orientating these additional representatives about election procedures and officer duties.

1. The Single Transferable Vote Method shall follow these steps:
  - a. Each voting member will receive a ballot where they rank the candidates in order of preference, with the first being the most desired candidate.
  - b. If, after all the votes have been transferred, a candidate achieves a majority, the candidate is then selected.
  - c. If, after all the votes have been transferred, no candidate achieves a majority, each candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated, and shall be ineligible to receive any additional votes. In the event that all remaining candidates receive the lowest number of votes (a tie), no candidate shall be dropped and the members revote for a second round. If a tie still exists for the lowest number of votes, the presiding chair will select the candidate to be eliminated. Therefore, the presiding chair will not be able to cast a ballot.
  - d. Each vote that belonged to the eliminated candidate(s) is transferred to the voter's next preference at full value.
  - e. If the is candidate is one who was previously eliminated, Step d. is repeated.
  - f. If the voter has not listed an additional preference or was unable to do so, his/her vote is exhausted.
  - g. Steps a through g are repeated a maximum of three times, including the original vote.
  - h. If a majority cannot be reached after three rounds of voting, then elections will automatically be closed and an appointment will be made by the Executive Board following the procedures and timeline that they establish and make known prior to the election process begins.
2. Ballots are secret, and will be provided by the Executive Board. Members will have options that include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Writing the name(s) of the candidates to receive a vote
  - b. Leaving the ballot blank
  - c. Not turning in a ballot
3. Two non-voting individuals will count ballots. Ballots with names will be counted based on the ranking order, and blank ballots will not count against an individual candidate.

## **REMOVAL OF OFFICERS:**

- (1) **Officer Resignation:** A resignation is deemed official when an officer submits a formal letter, dated and signed, to a member of the RHA Executive board. Upon receipt of the letter, the RHA Executive Board will present the information to the RHA Council at the next RHA meeting with the election proceedings outlined in *sub section B – Vacancy*.
- (2) **Vacancy:** In the event of an officer vacancy either during the summer or academic year, the Election Procedure will take effect. If the offices of President and VP both become vacant the NCC shall act as chairperson until another election can be held. In the event

that there is no standing executive board, the advisor(s) shall adjudicate the election process, as well as appoint a chair to run the meetings.

- (3) Service to the residential students at Western as an RHA executive board member (officer) entails the timely and effective performance of duties associated with an individual's respective area of responsibility. If a situation arises where a member of RHA, be it an officer, liaison, active or ex-officio member, believes that an officer is not fulfilling their duties, the following procedures will apply:
1. The person(s) having a complaint shall meet with the RHA Advisor(s), or Residence Life designee, to outline their concerns.
  2. The RHA Advisor(s), or Residence Life Designee, will investigate the concerns and will, as part of this investigation, meet with the officer in question.
  3. If the RHA Advisor(s), or Residence Life Designee, believes there is not enough information to warrant removal from office, they shall simply file a report, to be kept in their confidential files. The officer in question will also receive a copy of this report.
  4. If the RHA Advisor(s), Residence Life Designee, believe there is cause to warrant removal from office, they shall document the reasons why this is so, provide a copy to the officer in question and ask the officer to resign. Additionally, the Advisor(s), or Residence Life Designee, will put an immediate stop on the payment of further stipends for the officer in question. If the officer refuses to resign, the Advisor(s), or Residence Life Designee, will call a meeting with the executive board in closed meeting and outline the situation. The executive board will then provide a recommendation to the Advisor, or Residence Life Designee, which may include the following:
    - a. Reinstate the officers' stipend and take no further action.
    - b. Present the situation to the general membership at the next official RHA meeting and outline the situation. The Advisor(s), or Residence Life Designee, will make this presentation to the group and the group will vote on whether to reinstate the person or to remove the person from office (at the same meeting). A simple majority of those in attendance at the meeting will apply.
    - c. A simple majority of executive board members may request and be assured that the Associate Director of University Residences oversees this process either in addition to, or in place of, the RHA Advisor(s), or Residence Life Designee.
  5. The officer in question must abide by the decision. Judicial action may be taken against the officer if circumstances warrant this.

### **FUNDING REQUESTS:**

- (1) There shall be a two meeting process for acquiring RHA funds exceeding \$150. The process shall be as follows: the funding request will be considered an information item only at the first meeting it appears on the agenda. At that time, the person/group submitting the request must be present to field any questions from the RHA Council. The request can be

considered an action item and voted on at the second meeting it appears on the agenda. Again, the person/group must be present to field questions. To appear on the agenda, 30 copies of the funding request must be submitted to the RHA Office by Tuesday at 12:00 p.m, and the request must be made at least four weeks prior to the event.

- (2) Funding requests must be presented by WWU students (Faculty, staff and/or advisors may be present to answer questions; however students must be the primary presenters). RHA Executive Board members may only present funding proposals that are for RHA-sponsored events or activities.
- (3) A maximum of two information items and two action items may appear of the agenda at an RHA meeting, in which Resident Hall entities are given priority over nonresident hall entities. Requests are accepted on a first come, first serve basis within the parameters previously stated.
- (4) The following items must be arranged before a funding request is made:
  1. Date
  2. Location
  3. Sponsoring Group
  4. Advertising Plan
  5. Performer (if necessary)
  6. Tentative Budget
  7. Confirmation of amount to be contributed from parent organization
- (5) The RHA Council is a funding source designed mainly for on-campus students, and has sole discretion as to the allocations of its funds to programs. Although the RHA Council may at times deny funding, such an action does not mean that the RHA Council does not support a program philosophically, but that the necessary funds may not be available.

## **STIPENDS:**

- (1) Before the end of Spring Quarter, the Executive Board will submit proposed stipends for the following academic year to the RHA Council. A 2/3 majority vote of members with voting rights is required for approval of stipends. Following approval, stipends will be submitted to the Office of Residence Life for approval.
- (2) In order to receive their stipends, each officer must fulfill their duties as outlined in the RHA Constitution and By- Laws.