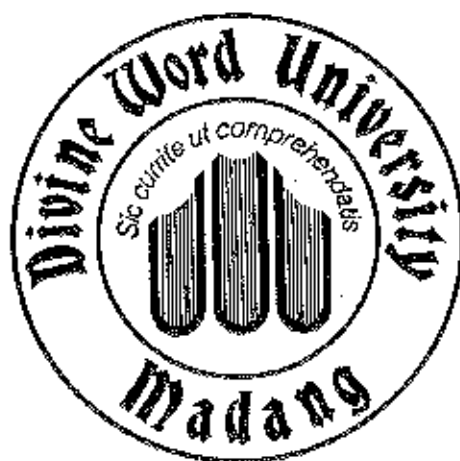


# **DIVINE WORD UNIVERSITY**



## **Constitution of The Students Representative Council**

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## **Part I - Preliminary**

### **1. Preamble**

We the students of Divine Word University (DWU), in realising the need to govern our affairs through a sound Constitution, declare first our desire to live as a Christian academic community. Accordingly, we espouse and make our own the vision, mission and charter of Divine Word University. In particular, we found this Constitution in the gospel values of peace, justice, truth, honesty and equality. With the help of God, the Students Representative Council (SRC) will contribute to students becoming competent Christian professionals who will serve their respective nations and especially the nation of Papua New Guinea. Through the SRC, we will join in partnership with all in the Divine Word University community so that every student will grow towards "life to the full" (John 10:10).

### **2. Status of Preamble**

The preamble to this Constitution is part of this Constitution and shall be given effect as the basis for interpretation and applications of this Constitution.

### **3. Name**

The name of the Council shall be the Students Representative Council of Divine Word University (SRC DWU).

### **4. Interpretations**

In this Constitution unless the contrary intention appears:

"Absolute majority" means majority of all the persons who are members of the SRC, whether elected or appointed.

"Academic day" means a day during first or second semester not being a Saturday, Sunday, a University holiday or a public holiday.

"Academic year" means that period falling between the first day of first semester and last day of the second semester.

"Constitution" means the Constitution of Divine Word University SRC.

"Council" means the Students Representative Council of Divine Word University.

"Disciplinary Board" means the Disciplinary Board of Divine Word University.

"Executive" means the Executive of the SRC of Divine Word University.

"President" means the SRC President.

"Student" means a student enrolled on the register of students as a full-time or part-time student for either an undergraduate or post-graduate degree, diploma or certificate at Divine Word University.

"Staff" means staff members employed by Divine Word University.

"University" refers to Divine Word University.

## **Part II - The Council**

### **5. Establishment**

- a) A Students Representative Council shall be established by virtue of a two-thirds majority vote of the DWU student body approving this Constitution and approval of the Constitution by the University Council of Divine Word University.
- b) The SRC shall comply with the Charter of the University as well as the regulations and policies of the University as they are enacted from time to time.

### **6. Composition**

The Council shall consist of:

- a) The Executive as established under Sections 13 and 14 of this Constitution.
- b) A Representative of each of the Academic Departments of the University.
- c) The Chairperson of each of the SRC Standing Committees as established by Section 22 of this Constitution.

### **7. Functions of the Council**

The functions of the Council shall include the following:

- a) To work in partnership with all students and staff to accomplish the vision and mission of Divine Word University.
- b) To lead the students and collaborate with staff in developing programs which offer students opportunities for intellectual, emotional and spiritual development.
- c) To promote peace, unity and good order among the student body.
- d) To establish and foster clubs, sporting teams and interest groups which promote the development of students.
- e) To be a vehicle for communication between the student body and the University Administration.
- f) To encourage dialogue as the means of resolving differences between students.
- g) To actively promote the role of women in student life and to promote the dignity and equality of women.
- h) To facilitate the organisation of graduations, Open Day and Cultural Day of DWU.
- i) To manage the finances of the SRC.
- j) To co-operate with student representatives of other universities in the interests of students throughout Papua New Guinea.
- k) To contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic growth of the nation.
- l) To welcome to the University students of other tertiary institutes.
- m) To liaise with the student organisations of colleges affiliated with Divine Word University so that there is a complementarity between programs and activities.

### **8. Elections**

- a) Annual elections for all Council positions shall be conducted no later than the end of third term each year.
- b) A student electoral officer appointed by the Registrar of the University shall be responsible for the conduct of the elections. This officer shall be assisted by two other students also appointed by the Registrar.
- c) Nominations for Council positions shall be supported by at least ten(10) signatories and the nomination shall be accepted in writing by the nominee.
- d) All registered students who have lived on the University campus for three continuous terms shall be eligible for nomination for any position.

- e) A student shall be ineligible to stand for election if he or she has been found guilty by the University Disciplinary Board of a Category A offence less than one year before the elections.
- f) No one person shall be nominated for more than one position with the exception of sub-section (g) below.
- g) The elections for Executive and Standing Committee positions shall be held first. After the results of those elections are announced, the elections of departmental representatives shall be held within each department. Students who were nominated for the first elections but not elected shall be eligible for nomination as departmental representatives.
- h) The elections shall be conducted by a secret ballot and decided by a simple majority of votes cast.
- i) The results of the elections shall be communicated first by the electoral officer to the Registrar. The electoral officer shall then publish the election results no later than the first week of term four.
- j) In the event of an equal vote between the candidates who achieve the most votes for any position, a new election for only those candidates for that position shall be held.
- k) Any disputes over the results of the elections shall be resolved by the Registrar.

#### **9. Term of Office**

- a) All Council positions shall be held from the announcement of the election results till the announcement of election results in the subsequent year.
- b) Those who hold office in one year may stand for any office in subsequent years.

#### **10. Meetings of Council**

- a) The Council shall hold at least one meeting in each term of the academic year. Other meetings may be called by the Executive as necessary for the efficient conduct of the Council's affairs.
- b) In October and November of the year of its election, the Council shall hold such meetings as are necessary to complete a plan for the following year.
- c) At a Council meeting:
  - (i) Nine shall be the quorum.
  - (ii) The SRC President or Vice-President, either male or female, shall preside.
  - (iii) All questions shall be decided by a simple majority of the votes of members present and voting.
  - (iv) The person presiding shall have a deliberative and, in the event of an equality of votes on a matter, also a casting vote.
- d) No meeting shall be held without the presence of at least two Executive members.
- e) The Council shall cause minutes of its meetings to be kept and forward copies of the minutes to the Director of Student Affairs.
- f) The exercise or performance of any function of the Council shall not be invalidated by reason only of a vacancy in the membership of the Council.
- g) The procedures of the Council meeting shall be as determined by the Council or this Constitution.

### **11. Membership Vacancies**

- a) Where a member of Council other than an Executive member:
  - (i) presents a letter of voluntary resignation to the Secretary or
  - (ii) is absent from two consecutive meetings without leave of absence or
  - (iii) is considered by a majority vote of Council members to be not fulfilling his or her duties or
  - (iv) is found by the Disciplinary Board to be guilty of a Category A offence and to be penalised by deprivation of office,that member ceases to be a member of the Council.
- b) Where a position becomes vacant by virtue of sub-section(a), the members of the relevant department or committee shall appoint one of their members to fill the position.

### **12. Accountability**

- a) The Council is accountable to the students of DWU through a General Meeting of students and to the University Administration through the Director of Student Affairs.
- b) A General Meeting of students may require the Council to report to the Meeting on its actions pursuant to Section 24 of this Constitution and may pass motions at a General Meeting which bind the Council.
- c) Where the Ombudsman or Director of Student Affairs has serious concerns about the conduct of the Council or its Executive, the Ombudsman or Director shall investigate the relevant affairs of the Council or Executive and present a report to a General Meeting of students. The Ombudsman and Director have the right to call a General Meeting notwithstanding Section 24 of this Constitution.
- d) A General Meeting of students shall have the right to dismiss any or all members of the Council or Executive pursuant to the provisions and limitations of this Constitution.

## **Part III - The Executive**

### **13. Establishment of Executive**

An Executive body of the Council is hereby established.

### **14. Composition of Executive**

The Executive shall consist of:

- a) the President
- b) a male Vice President
- c) a female Vice President
- d) a Secretary
- e) a Treasurer.

### **15. Functions of the Executive**

The functions of the Executive shall be to:

- a) offer principal leadership of the student body
- b) carry out the policies and decisions of the Council
- c) call meetings of the Council and prepare the agenda and minutes of the meetings

- d) oversee all functions and committees of the Council through the distribution of portfolios among Executive members and represent the interests of persons and groups covered by those portfolios
- e) appoint and oversee ad hoc committees including the committees for the annual National Union of Students Games and DWU Cultural Day.
- f) oversee preparation of an annual budget and administration of SRC finances
- g) manage the day to day affairs of the SRC.

#### **16. Duties and Responsibilities of Executive Office-holders**

- a) The SRC President shall:
  - (i) be the principal leader and spokesperson of the student body in implementing the vision and mission of Divine Word University
  - (ii) be the Chief Executive and Chairperson of the Council
  - (iii) undertake principal responsibility for such portfolios as allocated by the Executive
  - (iv) oversee the performance of other members of the Executive
  - (v) convene and chair Forums or meetings of all students
  - (vi) liaise with the University Academic Board in relation to both policy matters and the interests of individual students.
  - (vii) represent the SRC at meetings of the University Council
  - (viii) represent the student body in relations with bodies external to the University including the National Union of Students.
- b) The Female Vice-President shall:
  - (i) act in the position of SRC President when so delegated by her/him.
  - (ii) undertake principal responsibility for such portfolios as allocated by the Executive
  - (iii) represent the SRC on the Disciplinary Board and Academic Board along with the Male Vice President.
- c) The Male Vice-President shall:
  - i) act in the position of SRC President when so delegated by her/him
  - ii) undertake principal responsibility for such portfolios as allocated by the Executive
  - iii) represent the SRC on the Disciplinary Board and Academic Board along with the Female Vice President.
- d) The Treasurer shall:
  - (i) act as adviser to the SRC President on financial matters
  - (ii) manage Council revenue sources and keep records of all Council financial transactions.
  - (iii) manage day to day expenditure and income of the SRC
  - (iv) prepare and present the Council budget
  - (v) undertake principal responsibility for such portfolios as allocated by the Executive.

- e) The Secretary shall:
  - ii) be responsible for preparation of the agenda and minutes of all SRC meetings.
  - iii) provide administrative support to the SRC President.
  - iv) oversee proper handling of incoming and outgoing SRC correspondence
  - v) be responsible for the timely publication of notices to the student body.
  - vi) establish and manage effective record keeping systems
  - vii) undertake principal responsibility for such portfolios as allocated by the Executive.

### **17. Meetings**

- a) The Executive shall hold at least one meeting in each of the months of the academic year.
- b) At a meeting of the Executive, three shall be the quorum.
- c) By agreement of all, any member of the Executive may preside.
- d) All questions shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the Executive members present and voting
- e) The person presiding shall have a deliberative vote and in the event of an equality of votes on a matter, also a casting vote
- f) The Executive shall cause minutes to be kept of its meetings, of which copies shall be forwarded to the Director of Student Affairs
- g) The procedure of the Executive meeting shall be as determined by the SRC President or this Constitution
- h) The exercise or performance of any function of the Executive shall not be invalidated by reason only of a vacancy in the membership of the Executive.

### **18. Vacation of Office**

A member of the Executive shall vacate his or her office if:

- a) he or she ceases to be a student of the University or
- b) is absent from three consecutive meetings without leave of absence or
- c) is found guilty by the Disciplinary Board of a Category A offence and is deprived of office by the Board or
- d) the Council or a General Meeting of students passes a vote of no-confidence in the member or

### **19. Votes of No-Confidence in the Executive**

- a) An Executive member or the whole Executive may be voted out of office by the Council at any time if the Council finds that the member or Executive is responsible for:
  - (i) a serious breach of this Constitution
  - (ii) unsatisfactory performance of duties
  - (iii) misappropriation of funds
  - (iv) a serious breach of University regulations
  - (v) personal misconduct on or off campus or behaviour which is likely to bring the University or the SRC into disrepute.
- b) A motion of no-confidence against an Executive member or the Executive shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary who shall call a Council meeting within seven days after receipt of the motion.



- c) A motion of no-confidence shall be signed by not less than five members of the Council.
- d) The motion shall be tabled at the meeting and both the proposers of the motion and those subject to it shall have the right to speak.
- e) Where the SRC President is subject to the motion, another member of the Council shall be elected to preside at the meeting.
- f) Where the motion is endorsed by the Council:
  - (i) the Executive or member shall cease to hold office
  - (ii) the student body and the Registrar shall be informed of the decision
  - (iii) a by-election shall be held as provided by Section 20.
- g) Where the Executive or member ceases to hold office by virtue of this Section, that Executive or member shall prepare a report for the Council on their conduct of the office. That report shall be given to the next incumbent of the position(s).

## **20. By-elections for the Executive**

- a) In the event of an Executive position becoming vacant, a by-election shall be held within fourteen days of the vacancy except as provided in (c) below.
- b) By-elections shall be conducted by an electoral officer appointed by the Registrar pursuant to the provisions of Section 8.
- c) Where a position becomes vacant after July, an election shall not be obligatory.
  - (i) If a single Executive position is vacant, the Council shall appoint a caretaker member of Council for that position for the balance of the term.
  - (ii) If all Executive positions become vacant, the remaining members of the Council, after consultation with the Director of Student Affairs, shall appoint such students as the Council considers suitable to the positions for the balances of the terms.

## **Part IV - Committees**

### **21. Types of Committee**

- a) There shall be Standing Committees of the SRC and other student committees and clubs which are affiliated to the SRC.
- b) Affiliation shall entitle a committee or club to:
  - (i) support from the SRC through the portfolios of the Executive
  - (ii) representation of its interests to the student body and university Administration through the SRC
  - (iii) make application for funding assistance from the SRC subject to the condition that such funding will only be provided according to rules for this purpose established by the Council.

## **22. Standing Committees**

- a) The Standing Committees of the SRC shall be the:
  - (i) Community Service Committee
  - (ii) Sports Committee
  - (iii) Social Committee
  - (iv) Liturgy Committee
  - (v) Pastoral Care Committee
  - (vi) Gutpela Sindaun Committee
  - (vii) Ombudsman Committee (Male and Female Ombudsman) and
  - (viii) Dining Room Committee.
- b) The Standing Committees shall establish role descriptions and submit them for approval to the Council. These role descriptions shall be reviewed by the Committees in February of each year.
- c) The Chairperson and two members of each committee, a male and female, shall be elected at the annual SRC elections. Other members shall be appointed by those elected according to the needs of the committee.

## **23. Other Student Committees or Clubs**

- a) Student committees or clubs which wish to affiliate with the SRC shall submit a request for affiliation to the Council which states:
  - (i) the name of the committee or club
  - (ii) the objectives and activities of the committee or club
  - (iii) the current membership and structure of the club or committee
  - (iv) sources of finance for the committee or club
- b) In considering whether to affiliate a committee or club, the Council shall take into account whether the committee or club has:
  - (i) a viable membership
  - (ii) an appropriate structure and leadership group which is accountable to members
  - (iii) a defined purpose and spirit which is in harmony with the vision, mission and charter of Divine Word University.
- c) Student clubs or committees of tertiary institutes affiliated to Divine Word University, including Students Representative Councils of such institutes, shall be entitled to affiliation with the SRC subject to the provisions of sub-sections (a) and (b).

## **Part V - General Meetings and Forums**

### **24. General Meetings and Forums**

- a) A General Meeting or Forum of all students shall only be held on academic days subject to the approval of the Council and the Dean of Studies.
- b) There shall be at least two Annual General Meetings for all students for the academic year.
- c) The Secretary of the Council shall convene a General Meeting or Forum for students upon the approval by the Council and the Dean of Studies and the notice convening that meeting or Forum shall set forth the purposes, venue and time of the meeting as approved by the Council, at least four days before the meeting.

- d) A student group proposing to convene a meeting or Forum shall do so by written request to the Secretary of the Council at least seven days before the time it is to be held.
- e) Notwithstanding sub-section (d), where the SRC President considers a matter is urgent, the SRC President may call a General Meeting of students without notice.
- f) The quorum at any General Meeting or Forum shall be one hundred.
- g) All motions which come before any student General Meeting or Forum shall be decided by a majority of votes except for changes to this Constitution.
- h) All decisions of a General Meeting or Forum shall be binding on the Council.

## **Part VI - Finance**

### **25. General**

The Council:

- a) shall act as trustee of money it receives on behalf of Divine Word University.
- b) shall act as trustee of property purchased by the SRC. Disposal of property shall only occur by agreement with the Director of Student Affairs.
- c) shall not borrow money at interest by way of mortgage or pledge, nor shall it alienate, charge or dispose of any real or personal property other than money except with the written approval of the President of the University.
- d) may undertake fundraising activities providing such activities are in harmony with the Charter of the University.
- e) may invest SRC funds after consultation with the Vice President for Finance of the University.

### **26. Financial Year**

The financial year of the Council shall be from 1 October to 30 September or such period as specified by the Finance Office of the University.

### **27. Budget**

- a) Within one month of the beginning of Term 4 of the academic year, the Executive of the SRC shall draw up a draft budget detailing income sources and expenditures.
- b) The draft budget shall be:
  - i) circulated to the students through their representatives and a copy put up on the main notice board at least three academic days prior to the General Meeting specially convened for that purpose; and
  - ii) approved by the majority of the students present at the general meeting convened for that purpose.
- c) Should the budget fail to be passed, the Executive shall submit a revised budget to a General Meeting within two weeks.
- d) Pending approval of the budget the Council may spend up to K500 for any relevant and necessary items provided that such expenditure shall be included in the budget.
- e) Once approved by the student body, the budget shall be submitted to the University Cabinet for its endorsement.

## **28. Books of Account**

The Council shall submit such books and accounts as determined by the Vice President for Finance of the University and shall submit such books and accounts to that Vice President for review at the end of each academic term.

## **29. Annual Audit**

- a) At the close of each financial year, the Council shall, with the aid of an Auditor as provided for under sub-section (b) prepare an annual report of its activities for the year, together with a financial statement
- b) The Auditor shall be:
  - i) The Vice President for Finance of the University or
  - ii) any other person appointed by that Vice President in consultation with the Council.
- c) The Auditor shall:
  - i) be entitled to full and free access to all accounts, records, vouchers or documents and papers of the Council relating directly or indirectly to the receipt, custody or disposal of assets of the Council.
  - ii) interview and take statements from any member or officer of the Council.
- d) The Auditor shall immediately draw to the attention of the SRC President and Director of Student Affairs any irregularity(ies) revealed by the Audit.
- e) The Auditor shall be entitled to attend and be heard at any meeting at which accounts which have been examined or audited by him or her are presented or discussed.

## **30. Loans**

- a) The Executive may consider applications for loans from students who are experiencing financial hardship and who have the capacity to repay the loan.
- b) The Executive shall not consider an application for a loan unless the majority of its members are present and a loan shall not be approved otherwise than by the unanimous decision of the members present.
- c) The Executive shall, if the loan exceeds K50.00:
  - i) require security to be given for each loan; and
  - ii) determine the security or guarantor required for each loan; and
  - iii) determine the conditions of repayment of each approved loan.
- d) All persons owing any liability to the Council are obliged to repay their debts to the Council.
- e) In the event where a person owing any liability to the Council does not comply with sub-section(d) then the Council, represented by the SRC President, the Vice President (either male or female), or the Treasurer, shall inform the Registrar who shall withhold any academic grades of the person until the loan is repaid or, if circumstances warrant, shall suspend the person until the loan is repaid.

## **Part VII - Constitutional Review**

### **31. Amendments**

- a) Subject to the final approval of the University Council, the provisions of this Constitution may be amended or repealed by a resolution of a special General Meeting of students of which not less than eight academic days notice shall set out the place, the date, the hour of the meeting and the text of the amendment sought.
- b) The text of the proposed alteration must be submitted in writing to the Secretary not less than ten academic days before the date of the proposed meeting.
- c) Any relevant amendment to a motion for the amendment or repeal of this Constitution or any part thereof may be considered only if not less than two thirds (2/3) of the students present at the meeting vote in favour of the amendment to the motion.
- d) No motion for the amendment or repeal of the whole or any part of this Constitution shall be deemed to have been agreed to unless not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the students present at the meeting vote in favour of the motion.
- e) If any motion for the amendment or repeal of the whole or any part of this Constitution is passed in the manner herein provided, it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Council within three days to forward the resolution(s) to the Director of Student Affairs.
- f) The agreed motion shall come into effect upon the approval of the University Council.

## **Part VIII - Miscellaneous**

### **32. Rules**

The Council may make any rules relating to the proper running and management of Council affairs.

### **33. Validity of Former Actions**

To the extent that this Constitution does not allow for matters and things done or suffered before the commencement of this Constitution by any person in the Council under the authority or purported authority, expressed or implied, under a former Constitution, shall be deemed to have been, and to continue to be, as validly done or suffered as if they had been done or suffered after the commencement of this Constitution, and under the authority of the Council.

## **Part IX - Conclusion**

### **34. Conclusion**

Having adopted this Constitution by a two-thirds majority vote on 2 November 2000, the student body of Divine Word University commits itself to this Constitution and invokes God's blessing on the actions which flow from it.