

Constitution Of The College Democrats (Co –Chartered with Young Democrats) University of Miami (Dade County, Florida)

Preamble

In order to promote a better University, a better Florida, a better United States, and a better world, with equality, opportunity, and freedom for all, we dedicate ourselves to promoting the causes of the Democratic Party. We call for action based on principles and values, and principles and values backed by action. As citizens and leaders of tomorrow, we share a Democratic vision of the future where the rich care for the poor, where minorities are given the same rights as the majority, and where government sits with the people and not above it. We will strive for a government that ensures every citizen the right to a quality education, a clean environment, and the unimpeded opportunity to pursue his or her dreams regardless of sex, race, religion, physical handicap, or sexual orientation. Under these principles and to further these goals of the Democratic party, we hereby form The College Democrats at the University of Miami.

Article I: Name and Purpose

Section 1. The official name of this organization shall be The University of Miami Young and College Democrats.

Section 2. The purpose of The College Democrats shall be to stimulate political thought and activity among the college students of the University of Miami, promote interest in governmental affairs, and further the philosophy and goals of the Democratic Party.

Subsection A. The College Democrats reserve the right to adopt a platform separate but adherent to the basic tenets of the platform of the Democratic Parties of Florida and the United States.

Article II: A Note on Activities and Funding

Section 1: The Importance of Action:

The College Democrats are committed to action and activities based on Democratic principles that will make a much needed difference in people's lives. Simply, we believe that changing society for the better requires that we be active and establish a vocal presence in our community.

Subsection A: The executive board shall have the responsibility of determining what activities shall further the above stated goals. These activities may include, but are not limited to: voter registration drives, sponsoring political speakers, campaigning for Democratic candidates, petition drives, peaceful protests, and attending Democratic Party conferences.

Subsection B: At no time shall these activities violate University of Miami rules. Participants in activities are expected to conduct themselves in a respectable manner

Section 2: A note on Funding

Subsection A: For the first year of our existence, The College Democrats will fund our activities through donations from members, from the Florida College Democrats, SA FAC (Student activity fee allocation committee) and/or the Democratic Party.

Subsection B: After a full year of activity, we will apply for funding from the Student Government of the University of Miami. Thereafter, any funds provided by Student Government shall be used in strict accordance with University rules and regulations.

Article III: Membership, Non-Discrimination, and Regulation Statements

Section 1: In accordance with Student Government guidelines, membership shall be limited to UF students. However, faculty, staff and student spouses may be associate members.

Subsection A: Associate members may not vote or hold office.

Subsection B: In order to qualify as a member of The College Democrats, a student must attend three general meetings a semester and must participate in at least one activity every two semesters.

Section 2: Nondiscrimination statement:

In accordance with both Student Government regulations as well as our deepest held beliefs, The College Democrats will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

Section 3: Regulation Statement:

As a member of the University of Miami Community and an official organization of the University of Miami's Student Government, we are committed to adhering to the Student Guide and the other laws, rules, and regulations governing the University of Miami and its students.

Subsection A: Anti Harassment Statement:

In accordance with these rules, we pledge to refrain from harassment of members or non-members, regardless of their political orientation.

Subsection B: Anti-Hazing Statement:

We believe that hazing is a deplorable activity, and we will not tolerate hazing or any kind of barbaric initiation procedures. All students are free to join our cause without fear of physical or emotional abuse from their peers.

Subsection C: Freedom to Disassociate Statement:

If at any time, a member of The College Democrats wishes to remove themselves from our organization, they are free to do so without retribution or harassment.

Article IV: Executive Board Offices and Duties

Section 1: The Executive Board shall be the policy-making and administrative body of The College Democrats. This Board shall be responsible for scheduling and organizing general meetings as well as coordinating activities. The Executive Board shall consist of the Executive Offices of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Intelligence Chair, the Publicity Chair, and the Community Outreach Chair.

Section 2: The duties of the Executive Officers shall include those outlined in this Article plus those assigned by the President or the Executive Board. Each Executive Officer shall be required to give a report on all activity of his/her duties at each Executive Board meeting (or a written report if absent from meeting).

Section 3: The duties of the President shall include the following:

Subsection A: Serving as the official spokesperson, representative, and ambassador of The College Democrats.

Subsection B: Calling Executive Board meetings and general meetings at least once a month.

Subsection C: Ensuring that mandates, policies, and motions of the Executive Board are carried out.

Subsection D: Ensuring that all officers are satisfactorily completing their respective duties, and if they are not, initiating the process for their replacement.

Subsection E: Communication with other College Democrats organizations on the state and national levels. This shall include a monitoring of upcoming College Democrats conferences and events that our organization may wish to participate in.

Section 4: The duties of the Vice President shall include the following:

Subsection A: Assuming position and duties of the President if the President is unable to fulfill duties.

Subsection B: Supervising, coordinating, and delegating authority to committees. This shall include consistent communication (via phone, e-mail, etc....) with committee chairs and members to accomplish these goals.

Subsection C: With the assistance from the Outreach and Intelligence committees, organizing internal actions such as (but not limited to) voter registration drives, political campaigning, petition drives, and peaceful protests.

Section 5: The duties of the Treasurer shall include the following:

Subsection A: Keeping all records for and holding signing power, along with the president, of The College Democrats bank account.

Subsection B: Collecting donations from members as well as local, state, and national College Democrats organizations.

Subsection C: Along with the President, the Treasurer shall be responsible for applying for funding from Student Government. If said funding is awarded, the Treasurer (along with the President) shall be responsible for seeing that it is spent according to Student Government regulations.

Section 6: The duties of the Secretary shall include the following:

Subsection A: Taking attendance and keeping a record of minutes of both Executive Board meetings and general meetings.

Subsection B: Keeping an up-to-date list of members, their phone numbers, and their addresses.

Subsection C: Handling of paperwork related to registration with state and national organizations.

Subsection D: Ensuring that The College Democrats are in full compliance of the Student Activities Center Space Policy. This includes scheduling sufficient office hours and keeping track of office hours in manner specified by the Student Activities Center.

Subsection E: Management of the listserv. This includes adding and removing names, sending meeting reminders, and sending minutes.

Section 7: The Outreach Chair shall use his committee to accomplish the following:

Subsection A: Organizing and supervising members into productive political campaigns.

Subsection B: Working to help The College Democrats create friendly relations throughout the community through volunteering and community service.

Subsection C: Networking with Democratic political figures in Florida and Washington to facilitate internships and other opportunities for members.

Section 8: The Intelligence Chair shall use his committee to accomplish the following:

Subsection A: Informing students and members about Democratic principals and current political issues. This includes writing letters to the editor and guest columns for local newspapers.

Subsection B: Promoting the Democratic Party and Democratic ideals.

Subsection C: Protecting and defending Democratic candidates, legislation, and issues.

Section 9: The Publicity Chair shall use his committee to accomplish the following:

Subsection A: Notifying the campus and community of meetings and activities. This includes tabling and distributing flyers.

Subsection B: Creating and maintaining liaisons between The College Democrats and other student organizations

Subsection C: Storage of banner and tabling material.

Article V: Terms, Election, Replacement, and Removal of Executive Officers

Section 1: Terms of Executive Officers:

Subsection A: No member shall serve more than two one-year terms in a certain Executive Office. After serving two years in a given office, a member may run for and be elected to a different office (with the exception of a two term president -- see below). However, no member shall serve more than two years in the same office.

Subsection B: Any member that has completed two terms as president shall not be allowed to serve as an Executive Official after completion of said terms. If approved by a majority of the Executive Board, a former two-term president may attend Executive meetings to offer advice, but shall no longer be a commanding or voting member of the Executive Board.

Section 2: Election of Officers:

Subsection A: Any member of The College Democrats may be nominated for and run for any Executive Board office. However any member can not serve more than two terms in the same office, and a member who has held two terms as president is no longer eligible for any Executive office.

Subsection B: Election of Executive Board officers is to take place over the course of two general meetings during the second half of the spring semester. The exact date of these two meetings shall be determined by the Executive Board. At the first general meeting, nominations shall be accepted for all Executive Board positions. At the second general meeting, candidates will give speeches and the members shall vote for one candidate for each office. The candidate with the most votes for their respective office shall be elected to

that office.

Section 3: Replacement of Officers:

Subsection A: If an office of the Executive Board comes vacant during the course of the school year, the remaining five Executive Board members shall select a member (who does not currently hold an Executive Board position) to serve the remaining term of the vacated office.

Subsection B: At the end of the term of office, the person appointed to fill the office is eligible to run for that office in a general election.

Subsection C: In the case that the five remaining Board members cannot form a consensus on which member to choose to fill the vacated position, they shall vote to fill the position.

Subsection D: All remaining five officers must be present at the Board meeting before the vacated position can be filled.

Section 4: Criteria for Removal of Officers:

Officers may be removed from office if they have failed to uphold the above mentioned requirements of their offices, if they have missed more than two Board meetings, if they have missed more than two general meetings, if they have improperly used the powers of their office, if they have misrepresented the organization, or if they have failed to conduct themselves according to University and Student Government regulations.

Section 5: Process for Removal from Office shall be as follows:

Subsection A: A charge shall be brought against the officer by a member of the Executive Board. The charge shall be debated, which shall include an opportunity for the accused board member to defend him or herself. If the accused needs time to prepare a defense, he or she shall be granted two days to prepare a defense. After two days, the Executive Board shall meet again to complete debate and vote on the charges.

Subsection B: If three or more of the five un-accused Executive Board members vote in the affirmative, the charge is then presented the next regularly scheduled general meeting. At this meeting, the Board members voting in the affirmative shall present their case against the accused board member. The accused member shall also be given time to present their defense. At the end of the meeting, all members of The College Democrats shall vote on the removal issue. If two thirds of the members vote to remove the officer, he or she shall be immediately be considered to be removed from office. The Executive Board shall then commence the procedure for filling a vacant office in accordance with the procedure stated in Section 3 of this Article.

Section 6: The election of officers for The College Democrats will be held during the first half of the spring semester. Officers elected will serve in office for one year, a year being comprised of Spring and Fall semesters, after which elections will again take place.

Section 7: If, at the time elections, The College Democrats choose not to fill all Executive Board positions then those positions will remain vacant. If a position is not filled then all occasions that require a majority of the Executive Board to pass a decision will continue in the same fashion with the smaller number.

Subsection A: If at anytime a majority of the Executive Board votes at an Executive Board meeting to fill a position not filled at the time of elections then said position will be filled through the election process outlined in Article V, Section 2, Subsection B.

Subsection B: An officer elected to an Executive Board position during the Spring semester will hold that position until the next election and be held to the same terms of office as the other officers as outlined in Article V, Section 1. If their election shall come during the Fall semester then they shall hold said position until the next elections at which point they will again be eligible to seek an office. The terms of office shall not be considered for their previous position since they served for under half of the year.

Article VI: Meetings

Section 1. General meetings shall take place on a monthly basis, during the school year, as scheduled by the members of the Executive Board.

Subsection A: Executive Board meetings shall take place on a frequent basis (approximately once every two weeks) as scheduled by the members of the Executive Board.

Article VII: Finances

Section 1: Membership dues: No member shall be required to pay dues to The College Democrats. We believe that membership in this movement should be based on adherence to the principles of liberalism and the values of the Democratic party, and not on one's status of wealth.

Section 2: Donations:

Subsection A: Donations from members: The Executive Board, however, is given the discretion to ask for donations from every member. These donations can be requested for both general purposes or for specific projects. Yet, a member's inability or refusal to donate to the cause may in no way hinder their status with the organization.

Subsection B: Donations from outside donors, including (but not limited to) the Florida College Democrats and the College Democrats of America, may be accepted if a majority of the members of the Executive Board choose to accept said donations. However, the Executive Board shall not allow outside individuals or organizations to use donations to exert authority or influence on The College Democrats.

Section 3: Membership Dues for state and national Democratic Organizations:

Subsection A: Members' individual registration with outside organizations: The College Democrats shall not require its members to register and/or pay dues to any outside College Democrats organization. If a member chooses to register themselves with the national or state organizations it is entirely their decision and they are free to choose whether or not they wish to incur the financial burden of said registration.

Subsection B: The organizations' registration with outside organizations: The members of the Executive Board shall incur the costs of registering or renewing the organization with state or national College Democrats groups.

Section 4: Financial Responsibility:

Donations and finances (including any money received from Student Government) shall be handled with the greatest level of caution and integrity. If Student Government funding is made available, The College Democrats are to strictly abide by the rules and regulations regarding SG finances.

Subsection A: At any time, a member or an official of Student Government may request and

be presented with the final records of The College Democrats. The Treasurer and the President are expected to keep these records and present them on request.

Article VIII: Committees

Section 1. Four committees shall be standing. The purposes of the committees include:

Subsection A: The Intelligence Committee is in charge of educating students on Democratic principles and ideals while raising student awareness of current political topics.

Subsection B: The Publicity Committee is responsible for raising student awareness of The College Democrats and recruiting students to become members.

Subsection C: The Ways and Means Committee is in charge of finances for the club. The Treasurer shall chair this committee.

Subsection D: The Community Outreach Committee is responsible for organizing volunteering and campaigning activities.

Section 2. The chairs designated in Article IV shall be responsible for fulfilling his duties in his respective committee. The chairs have the power of delegation to accomplish their objectives.

Section 3. The Executive Board may create additional committees to focus on special projects if they deem necessary. The Board shall choose one individual member to head the committee. Other terms and conditions (regarding length of existence, goals, procedures) may be set forth by the Executive Board upon creation of a committee.

Article IX: Amendments

Amendments to this constitution may be adopted upon a 2/3rds vote of all the members of The College Democrats. The procedure for amendment shall be as follows:

Section 1: At any general meeting, any member may propose an amendment to the constitution. The amendment shall then be open to debate and discussion by all the members.

Section 2: At the next general meeting, the members shall vote on this proposed amendment. However, this delay requirement may be by-passed if 2/3rds of the members are willing to vote on the amendment at the initial meeting. If 2/3rds are willing to by-pass the delay, the amendment may be voted on immediately.

Section 3: If 2/3rds or more of the members vote in favor of the amendment, and if Student Government gives approval to the change, it shall become part of this constitution.

Article X: Faculty Advisor

Section 1: Role and duties of the faculty advisor:

The primary function of the advisor is to actively advise, counsel and serve The College Democrats as a resource person. He or she should provide assistance in the achievement of our goals and should engage the club in furthering these objectives.

Section 2: Criteria for faculty advisor:

As stipulated by university rules, the faculty advisor must have a full time faculty or professional position, or must be an approved staff member to serve as faculty advisor. Furthermore, the faculty advisor should have knowledge of US politics on the national, state, and local levels, and should be committed to furthering the goals of the Democratic Party.

Section 3: Selection of faculty advisor:

Selection of faculty advisor shall mirror the process for selecting officers. At the same general meeting in the spring semester when nominations are accepted for officers, nominations for faculty advisors shall be accepted. Any member nominating a faculty advisor should have already spoken with that faculty member to insure that they are a willing candidate for the position. At the next general meeting votes for the nominated faculty advisor position shall be taken. The candidate who receives the most votes shall be the next faculty advisor. In between these two meetings it is the responsibility of the President to speak with the nominated faculty advisors and insure that they are all willing candidates for the position. If any nominee says that they are not willing candidates, then they shall be struck from the ballot at the second general meeting.

Section 4: Terms of office and reelection of faculty advisor:

The term of the faculty advisor shall be one calendar year, from the time that they are elected in the spring until the time of the next elections the following spring. An incumbent faculty advisor is eligible for reelection and there is no limitation on the number of terms an individual staff member can serve as faculty advisor.

Section 5: Emergency removal and replacement of the faculty advisor:

Subsection A: The faculty advisor may be removed from office, at any time, if he or she does not live up to their duties stated above. The process of removal for the faculty advisor goes as follows: If 4 of the 6 executive officers vote at an officers meeting (where all six officers are present) to remove the faculty advisor, then the issue shall be presented at the next general meeting. At the next general meeting, the officers voting for removal of the faculty advisor shall present their case to the members. If two thirds of the members choose to remove the faculty advisor, then they shall be considered removed from office.

Subsection B: If the faculty member is removed at the above mentioned general meeting, then nominations for a new faculty advisor will also be accepted at that general meeting, and the 2-meeting process for selection of faculty advisors (delineated above) shall be considered begun.

Subsection C: If at any point, the faculty advisor chooses to resign from office, it is the responsibility of the officers to call a general meeting (if one is not already scheduled in the following three weeks) to begin the two meeting process for selecting a faculty advisor. When a new faculty advisor is chosen, he or she must also go through the normally scheduled two meeting selection process in the spring semester.