



# Constitution

Venerable House

November 18, 2024

## 1 Name and Membership

### 1.1 Name

The name of the organization shall be Venerable House.

### 1.2 Membership

1. The types and qualifications of membership are:
  - (a) a Full Member, who is an undergraduate of the California Institute of Technology and is picked as such at the end of Rotation Week, or is elected at a House meeting by a  $2/3$  majority of non-abstain votes with at least 50% of the members present voting "Yes";
  - (b) a Social Member, who is an undergraduate at the California Institute of Technology and has been elected as such, following a week of consideration, by a simple majority of those voting, when those voting constitute at least  $1/3$  of the House Membership;
  - (c) an Associate Member, who was an undergraduate of the California Institute of Technology and was a Full Member or Social Member of Venerable House, or who is any other person associated with Venerable House and so designated by the Executive Committee;
  - (d) the Resident Associates, who shall be considered to be non-voting Full Members.
2. Full and social members who discontinue paying their house dues while they are registered students at the California Institute of Technology must be re-elected at a house meeting as provided for in Section 1.2, part 1a.
3. Full members can voluntarily demote themselves to social membership or cancel their membership. Social members can voluntarily cancel their membership.

### **1.3 Duties and Privileges**

1. The duties and privileges of Full Members apply immediately upon attaining such status. These duties and privileges are:
  - (a) to attend all regular and special House Meetings;
  - (b) to participate actively in all House functions;
  - (c) to pay dues;
  - (d) to have room preference;
  - (e) to vote on all matters put before the House;
  - (f) to abide by the rules and regulations made by the Executive Committee, the Upper Class Committee, and the Committee on Student Houses.
2. The duties and privileges of Social Members apply immediately upon ratification by The House and are identical to Full Members, with the exception of:
  - (a) the right to have room preference;
  - (b) the right to vote on all matters put before The House;
3. The duties and privileges of associate members:
  - (a) do not include a vote in House matters;
  - (b) shall be determined by the Executive Committee in other extents.

## **2 Officers**

### **2.1 General Qualifications**

Each officer shall be a Full Member of the House when elected and during their term of office. If, during their term of office, their membership changes, they immediately forfeit their office.

### **2.2 Qualifications and Duties of Elected Officers**

1. The President shall reside in Venerable House and shall be a junior or senior for the latter portion of their term in office. They shall represent the House on the Interhouse Committee, preside over House Meetings, be chairperson of the Executive Committee, and be an ex-officio member of all House committees, and shall be responsible for selecting Full Members to attend frosh picks.
2. The Vice President shall be a junior or senior for the latter portion of their term in office. They shall assume the duties of the President in the event of the President's absence. They shall be responsible for maintaining the external relations of the House, for bringing guests to the House, and shall act as official host for all House guests. They shall be the Venerable representative on the Review Committee. They shall share duties with the Treasurer in maintaining house property.

3. The Secretary shall record minutes, including all motions made and the votes on these by all officers present, of all House, Executive Committee, and Upper Class Committee meetings; and post publicly a copy of the minutes of all open meetings. They shall have custody of all House records not specifically delegated to the custody of another officer, and in general shall perform all the duties of a corresponding and recording secretary. They shall be responsible for room assignments.
4. The Treasurer shall be responsible to the House for all receipts and expenditures, shall maintain an adequate book-keeping system, shall submit a report to the Executive Committee at each regularly scheduled meeting, shall propose a budget to the Executive Committee for each term, and shall submit to the House a written report of the finances at the end of each term. They shall share duties with the Vice President in maintaining house property.
5. The Librarian shall reside in Venerable House and shall be a sophomore for the latter portion of their term in office. They shall be responsible for procuring magazines and newspapers, and for maintaining the House Library, including its records. They shall publish a House list at the beginning of each term. They shall be responsible for frosh orientation and organizing the frosh members of the House for the performance of those tasks assigned to them.
6. The office of Social Team shall be held by not more than five members of the House, among them a Social Manager and Assistant Social Manager. The Social Team will be responsible for organizing social functions, and for publishing a calendar of such events.
7. The office of Athletic Team shall be held by not more than three members of the House, among them a single Athletic Manager. The Athletic Team shall be responsible for all athletic equipment used by the House, for the participation of the House in Interhouse and intrahouse athletics, and in general shall organize and promote the athletic activities of the House.
8. The office of Sophomore Representative shall be held by a sophomore for the latter portion of their term in office. They shall be responsible for representing the thoughts and ideas of the sophomore members of the House on the Executive Committee.
9. The order of succession shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Social Manager, Athletic Manager, Assistant Social Manager, and Sophomore Representative.
10. In the event that the President is unable to complete their term of office, the Vice President shall assume all responsibilities of the President, and a new Vice President shall be elected pursuant to nomination and election guidelines.

### **2.3 Duties and Qualifications of Appointed Officers**

1. One Upper Class Committee-member shall reside in each Venerable House Alley and two shall reside off-campus, except in the case where no suitable volunteers can be found living off-campus, in which case the Off-Campus Upper Class Committee-members may live on-campus. An Upper Class Committee-member shall have been both enrolled at Caltech for at least five academic terms and a Full House Member for at least three academic terms prior to their term of office. A Peer Advocate shall have been both enrolled at Caltech for at least five academic terms and a Full House Member for at least three academic terms prior to their term of office. They shall be available to counsel any member of the House, particularly

the occupants of the alley in which they reside or, in the case of an Off-Campus Upper Class Committee-member, any off-campus member. They shall be responsible for maintaining order and enforcing the rules and policies of the House. They shall not concurrently be an Upper Class Committee-member and hold a position on the Executive Committee.

2. The Head Upper Class Committee-member shall have all the qualifications and duties of an Upper Class Committee-member. They shall be the head and ex officio member of the Upper Class Committee. They shall be responsible for the entire frosh selection except for the duties delegated to the President. The Head Upper Class Committee-member shall have previously served as a Venerable Upper Class Committee-member, except in the case where no suitable volunteers can be found.
3. The Diversity Councilmembers shall be responsible for liaising with the Caltech Center for Diversity. They shall also represent the House on the campus-wide Advocacy Committee. They shall be available to advise any member of the House on issues pertaining to diversity. They shall select one Representative to be present during the selection of the Upper Class Committee and the Diversity Council. This Representative may not reapply for a position on the succeeding Diversity Council. In the case where no suitable volunteers can be found, the Head Upper Class Committee-person shall act as a proxy for the Diversity Council during the selection of the Upper Class Committee and the Diversity Council.
4. The Historians shall be responsible for all recording and preservation of House records and traditions, including House scrapbook, House history, and House roll, and for submission of the House article in the Institute yearbook.
5. The Head Waiter shall be responsible for maintaining proper decorum and conduct in the dining room, and shall direct the student waiters. The Head Waiter shall be the Food Representative for Venerable House.
6. The House BFD Editors shall be responsible for publishing the House paper.
7. The House O'Domhnaill's Suppliers shall maintain the House convenience store.
8. The House IMSS Representatives shall act as liaisons between House members and Information Management Systems and Services for network, application, hardware, and software problems. The IMSS Representatives shall include the following:
  - (a) The Lab Rat shall be responsible for the upkeep of computer lab computers, organization of computer lab supplies, and cleaning of the space.
  - (b) The Printer Representative shall ensure that the House paper-and-ink printers are in working order for use by House members and coordinate with admin for replacement parts and supplies.
  - (c) The 3D Printer Representative shall ensure that the House 3D printers are in working order for use by House members, procure House-provided 3D printer supplies, and maintain a usage policy for the printer and supplies.
  - (d) The Webmaster shall be responsible for administration of the Venerable web server and keeping the website ([venerable.caltech.edu](http://venerable.caltech.edu)) online.

## 2.4 Nominations, Elections, and Appointments

1. Nominations for ARC representative, CRC representative, three BoC representatives, Sophomore Representative, Athletic Manager, Athletic Team, Social Manager, Assistant Social Manager, Social Team, Librarian, Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President, and President, in that order, shall be made at a meeting of the House held for that purpose between the beginning of the second term and the third Friday of second term. Nominations shall remain open until 36 hours before the start of the elections as described in section 2.4.2.
  - (a) Two of the three BoC representatives shall be a junior or senior for the latter portion of their term in office. One of the three BoC representatives shall be a sophomore for the latter portion of their term in office.
2. Election of all officers except Social Team and Athletic Team shall be carried out at a House Meeting held for that purpose within one week after the nomination meeting. The order of election shall be in the following order: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Social Manager, Athletic Manager, Assistant Social Manager, Sophomore Representative, three BoC representatives, CRC representative, ARC representative. Elections shall be managed by an Election Committee in accordance with the Procedural Amendment (Amendment A).
3. Election for Social Team and Athletic Team shall be carried out through proxy voting beginning at the conclusion of the 36-hour grievance period in accordance with the Procedural Amendment and concluding a week later. The elections shall be managed by the Election Committee.
4. All officers shall be installed at a meeting of the House held not more than one week from their election. The oath of office shall be administered by the retiring president. Each officer shall assume the duties of office immediately upon being installed.
5. Upper Class Committee-member sign-ups, Peer Advocate sign-ups, and Diversity Councilmember sign-ups shall be posted concurrently. All Upper Class Committee-members, Peer Advocates, and Diversity Councilmembers shall be appointed at the same meeting. The entire Executive Committee, the current Head Upper Class Committee-member, and the Diversity Council Representative will be present for selection. Selected Peer Advocates will be members of the Upper Class Committee. The term of service for those selected to be members of the Upper Class Committee will be the academic year directly following their appointment, with the exception of the newly-appointed Head Upper Class Committee-member and Diversity Council-members, who will begin serving in their roles during Third Term.
6. The interview committee for Peer Advocates will be composed of the Head Upper Class Committee-member, the President, the Sophomore Representative, and the highest-ranking sophomore member of the Executive Committee. If there are no sophomore members of the Executive Committee, then the Vice President will fulfill this role. The interview committee for non-Peer Advocate Upper Class Committee-member positions will be composed of members of the Executive Committee and the Upper Class Committee as the Head Upper Class Committee-member and President see fit.
7. Sign-up lists for non-Upper Class Committee-member appointed offices shall be posted between the first day of Third Term and the third Friday of Third Term. Sign-up lists shall be

removed and appointments made by the Executive Committee two weeks thereafter. The term of service for appointed offices shall be the academic year directly following their appointment by the Executive Committee.

8. Except as stated in Section 2.2, Paragraph 10, if an unexpected vacancy in an elected or appointed office occurs, the Executive Committee, or the remaining part thereof, shall select a qualified member of the House to fill the vacancy until the next election or appointment process. If an elected or appointed officer plans to be absent or otherwise unable to fulfill their duties for an extended period of time (e.g. study abroad), the officer shall notify the Executive Committee of their intended absence, and the Executive Committee shall then appoint a qualified member of the House to temporarily fill the position until the officer can assume their duties again.

## **2.5 Recall of Elected Officers**

1. Any elected officer may be recalled by a majority vote of the voting membership of the House.
2. The procedure shall be as follows:
  - (a) Petitions, containing reasons and purpose, must be submitted in writing, endorsed by 1/3 of the total Full Membership, at a House meeting held for that purpose;
  - (b) The petitions must be posted immediately following the presentation and remain posted until voting is closed;
  - (c) Voting shall follow the specified procedures for Constitutional amendment elections.

## **2.6 Recall of Upper Class Committee-members**

1. Any appointed Upper Class Committee-member may be recalled by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee of the House.
2. The procedure shall be as follows:
  - (a) Petitions, containing reasons and purpose, must be submitted either in writing to or in an interview with the Head Upper Class Committee-member and the President;
    - i. If the petition is for the Head Upper Class Committee-member, it may be only the President in the interview, and the Head Upper Class Committee-member will be absent from following procedures; similarly, if petitioned person is the Diversity Council Representative, they will be absent from following procedures;
  - (b) A meeting will be held in the presence of the entire Executive Committee, the current Head Upper Class Committee-member, and the Diversity Council Representative for removal;
  - (c) The vacancy will be filled as stated in Section 2.4, Paragraph 8.

# **3 The Executive Body**

## **3.1 Name**

The executive body of the House shall be known as the Executive Committee.

### **3.2 Membership**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, who shall act as chairperson, the Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Social Manager, Athletic Manager, Assistant Social Manager, and Sophomore Representative.

### **3.3 Voting**

All members of the Executive Committee shall vote. Each office shall receive one vote.

### **3.4 Powers**

1. The Executive Committee shall formulate House rules and policies, and assume all duties not otherwise delegated.
2. It shall appoint all offices described under Section 2.3 of this Constitution.
3. It shall designate associate members.
4. It shall have the power of dismissal over all appointed officers.

### **3.5 Meetings**

1. Meetings may be called by the President or any two members.
2. A quorum shall consist of five of the nine offices.
3. There shall be regularly scheduled meetings, at least biweekly, the day to be determined by the Executive Committee.
4. Closed meetings, attended only by the Executive Committee members, shall be held when discussing individuals and other sensitive issues, at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
5. Upon petition of 1/3 of the Full Membership of the House, a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held within two weeks to consider any proposal so petitioned.

## **4 The Judiciary Body**

### **4.1 Name**

The judiciary body of the House shall be known as the Upper Class Committee.

### **4.2 Membership**

The Upper Class Committee shall consist of the Upper Class Committee-members.

### **4.3 Powers and Duties of the Committee**

The Upper Class Committee:

1. shall review and act on all violations of House rules and policy, by reprimand, punishment, or other appropriate action.
2. shall be responsible for the administration and tabulation of recall and amendment elections.
3. shall be autonomous in all matter of judicial policy not otherwise specified in this Constitution.

### **4.4 Meetings**

1. Meetings may be called by the Head Upper Class Committee-member, Resident Associate, or any two Upper Class Committee-members.
2. The Head Upper Class Committee-member shall preside over Upper Class Committee meetings and shall vote only in the case of a tie.
3. A quorum shall consist of at least 2/3 of the Upper Class Committee-members, provided that when the Committee considers the case of an individual person, the Upper Class Committee-member of the alley in which the person lives, and the Upper Class Committee-member of the alley in which the infraction occurred, must be present.

## **5 House Meetings**

### **5.1 Meetings**

1. The House shall meet:
  - (a) for the nomination, election, and recall of officers;
  - (b) when a meeting is called by the Executive Committee;
  - (c) at other times, on petition by 1/5 of the Full Membership.
2. Notice of the meeting shall be published at least three days prior to each House meeting in a manner expected to reach the entire membership of the House.
  - (a) The notice shall contain the date, time, and place of the meeting and an agenda of all issues to be discussed and voted upon at that meeting.
  - (b) No substantive issues not on a meeting's posted agenda may be voted upon at that meeting. Discussion of any issue and voting on non-substantive issues are not constrained.

### **5.2 Quorum**

1. A quorum shall consist of the larger of:
  - (a) 1/3 of the Full-Membership of the House, or



- (b) 80% of the average attendance of House meetings held during the three hundred sixty-five (365) days prior to the announced date of the meeting regardless of whether those meetings established quorum.
2. If quorum is not established, no substantive matters can be decided.

### **5.3 Procedure**

In case of a dispute on parliamentary procedure in meetings of the House or any of its committees, Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) shall provide the rule whenever the Constitution does not.

## **6 Finances**

### **6.1 Dues**

1. The dues of the House shall be due and payable by each regular member at registration for each term.
2. Married students shall be exempt from dues.
3. The dues for Social Members shall be set by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
4. The dues for Associate Members shall be set by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

### **6.2 Levies**

The dues may be changed, or additional assessments levied, only by a 1/2 vote of the Full Membership.

### **6.3 Payment of Moneys**

1. Checks and other instruments for the payment of moneys shall be drawn in the name of the House and shall be signed either by the President or by the Treasurer.
2. The Treasurer may authorize House related expenditures up to \$250.
3. House related expenditures greater than \$250 must be approved by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee.
4. Any expenditure may be placed to a House vote at the discretion of the Executive Committee. A simple majority of the House voting membership may approve any expenditure.

## **7 Room Hassles**

### **7.1 Procedure**

1. The Secretary shall be responsible for running the Room Hassle in the spirit of fairness to maximize the occupancy of the house.

2. A Room Hassle shall be held:
  - (a) once per year following the announcement of appointed offices to allocate rooms for the next academic year
  - (b) whenever beds are available and there are Full Members seeking residence
  - (c) whenever a partially filled room is sought by a member higher in the order given by section 7.1.4.
3. A Room Hassle shall continue until either all the available beds have been filled or there are no longer any Full Members seeking residence.
4. Rooms shall be picked in the following order:
  - (a) by the House President, then
  - (b) by all other Full Members in order of
    - i. class (seniors then juniors...) with the exception of partial occupancy of room capacity, then
    - ii. intended number of occupants in excess of room capacity as a percentage of the room capacity, descending, then
    - iii. office as specified in section 7.2.8, then
    - iv. up to two random sophomores as determined by a random order prepared prior to the section 7.1.2a Room Hassle in a manner prescribed by the Secretary. Rising sophomores who have not lived in a House are given priority. Then
    - v. a random order prepared prior to the section 7.1.2a Room Hassle in a manner prescribed by the Secretary, then
    - vi. partial occupancy of room capacity.
5. The Upper Class Committee shall arbitrate all conflicts and disputes.
6. The Secretary may consolidate unoccupied beds if doing so will increase the number of occupants of the house.

## 7.2 Guarantees

1. All Full Members shall have the opportunity to participate in any Room Hassle in person or by proxy.
2. All Full Members shall have the opportunity to designate their roommate(s) before another individual picks or is placed into the room. Thereafter, any unoccupied bed may be picked.
3. Contracted residents may exchange rooms and beds with each other at their own discretion. In the event of a dispute between roommates, the member with the higher pick shall have preference.
4. Room Hassles under section 7.1.2b or section 7.1.2c may not forcibly displace any participant from the house, and all non-participants shall retain their current rooms except as in 7.1.6. Members holding rooms sought under section 7.1.2c must participate in the hassle.

5. At any time during a Room Hassle, any participant may restart the process from their position in the order.
6. The President may have themselves counted as a double occupant.
7. Entire rooms shall be guaranteed to the following officers:
  - (a) In order of preference, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Social Team including the Social Manager and Assistant Social Manager (up to three members), Athletic Team including the Athletic Manager (up to two members), Head UCC, On Campus UCCs (one member per alley), Peer Advocates, IHC Chair, ASCIT President, BoC Chair, House-elected BoC Representatives (up to two members, with one of the two members being a rising sophomore), O'Domhnaill's Suppliers (up to two members), House Head Waiter (one member), House BFD editors (one member), House Historians (one member) for the entire academic year following the election or appointment provided the officer completes their term. If an officer quits their office mid-term, the room guarantee shall transfer to the succeeding officeholder for the remainder of the guaranteed term.
8. The officer room pick order shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Social Manager, Athletic Manager, Head UCC, On Campus UCCs, Assistant Social Manager, IHC Chair, ASCIT President, BoC Chair, Social Team (up to three members including the Social Manager and Assistant Social Manager), Athletic Team (up to two members including the Athletic Manager), House-elected BoC Representatives (up to two members, with one of the two members being a rising sophomore), O'Domhnaill's Suppliers (up to two members), House Head Waiter (one member), House BFD editors (one member), House Historians (one member).
9. All Full Members who have picked into a room through a room hassle under 7.1.2a or 7.1.2b shall be guaranteed the same room upon their return from Study Abroad.

## 8 Amendments

### 8.1 Order

Only Full Members may vote on Constitutional amendments.

### 8.2 Necessary Vote

1. In the case of non-conflicting amendments, an amendment to this Constitution passes if at least 2/3 of the votes cast are in favor of the amendment.
2. In the case of conflicting amendments being voted on concurrently, votes shall be cast as if they are for a position in the house. All amendments failing to reach a 2/3 supermajority approval over NO (indicating no change; NO shall be ranked as if it is a candidate) shall be thrown out, and the ranked pairs (Tideman) method shall be applied to any remaining amendments to determine which amendment passes. Such conflicting amendments must be proposed simultaneously; concurrent voting on conflicting amendments can only be done if

voting begins and ends at the same time for all such amendments. In the case of a tie between multiple amendments, all amendments shall be repropose to the house, discussed at another meeting, and revoted on. NO wins in the case of a tie.

### **8.3 Procedure**

1. Proposed amendments, containing reasons, purpose, and un-amended and amended language must be submitted electronically to the Full Membership of the House, endorsed by 1/5 of the Full Membership or two members of the Executive Committee not including the proposer, at least three days prior to a House Meeting.
2. The proposed amendments must be posted immediately following their presentation and remain posted until voting is closed.
3. Voting
  - (a) Voting shall officially commence upon the legal presentation of the amendment and shall close at 11:59 PM on the seventh day following;
  - (b) Voting shall be by secret ballot;
  - (c) Votes of House Members shall not be examined prior to the closing of the election;
  - (d) A roll of those members who have voted shall be available throughout the election.

### **8.4 Records**

1. If a proposed amendment is passed, the Constitution is modified to match the amended language. In addition, the proposal for the amendment shall be added to the “Amendment History” document. This includes the date of the amendment’s approval, the proposer of the amendment, the reasoning of the amendment, the unamended language, and the approved amended language. The Amendment History document shall be accessible to all Full Members of the House.

## A Procedural Amendment

An Election Committee shall be appointed at the nomination meeting. The Election Committee shall be composed of nine Full House Members: 3 sophomores, 3 juniors and 3 seniors, who shall be randomly selected from a pool of volunteers who are not running for an elected office. In the event that too few members of a specific class volunteer, the remaining members shall be drawn from the other classes.

Paper ballots shall be cast anonymously at a House Meeting held for that purpose. The Election Committee shall be responsible for collecting and tabulating ballots. The winner of each election, other than for the BoC representatives, shall be determined as follows: all candidates that do not achieve a majority over “NO” are eliminated, and the ranked pairs (Tideman) method is applied to the remaining candidates. The Election Committee shall be responsible for breaking any ties that occur during this process.

For the election of the BoC representatives, each voter may cast two first choice votes and rank their replacements in the case that one of their first choices is eliminated. Votes shall be counted via elimination of the candidate with the lowest number of first choice votes until two candidates receive over  $1/3$  of the votes each.

Proxy votes shall be submitted to a member of the Election Committee prior to the election. The Election Committee shall be responsible for entering proxy votes during the election.

The Election Committee shall hear the grievance of any Full House Member from the time of the election to 36 hours post. They shall have closed meetings to determine the legitimacy of the grievance and shall announce any solution to the House. If a solution cannot be reached by the Election Committee, then the election shall be rerun, in part or in full, in accordance with the nature of the grievance. If the grievance is regarding the persons on the Election Committee, then the Upper Class Committee shall hear the grievance. They shall have the powers to disband the Election Committee, force a redrawing of a new Election Committee, and begin the election process anew.