

The Constitution of Wiess College

Preamble: The members of Wiess College establish this Constitution as the framework through which Wiess College shall complement the education offered by the University.

In support of the mission of Rice University, it is the purpose of Wiess College and of the government thereof, empowered and created by this Constitution, to foster democratic student self-government and provide for the intellectual, cultural, social, and professional development of the Wiess community.

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. This organization shall be named Wiess College for the late Harry Carothers Wiess, whose generosity, with time, mind, and resources greatly shaped the expansion of the University.

Section 2. College membership shall be determined from the entering undergraduate students of Rice University, by the Masters of the Colleges acting together, and, once determined, shall not be changed except by the Masters acting in concert. Graduate students shall be members upon residence in the College or by application to and approval by the Master of Wiess College. Membership is dependent upon annual payment of college dues.

ARTICLE II: ASSOCIATES

Section 1. There shall be at least ten resident or nonresident associates who shall be faculty members of Rice University. The Master of Wiess College shall be the highest-ranking faculty associate of Wiess College.

Section 2. There may be any number of Community Associates not chosen from the faculty of Rice University, but on the basis of service to the College or community. The Associates shall advise and assist the College.

Section 3. The Master shall be recommended by Cabinet and appointed by the administration of Rice University. All other Associates shall be appointed by the Master acting upon the recommendation of Cabinet.

ARTICLE III: THE CABINET

Section 1. The legislative and executive powers shall be united in the Cabinet, chosen from the entire membership of Wiess College.

Section 2. The Cabinet shall administer the Rules and Bylaws as well as the administrative regulations that it shall deem necessary to fulfill its legislative and executive functions. The Cabinet shall also be empowered to amend and revise the Rules and

Bylaws.

Section 3. The elected members, except the First-Year Representatives, shall be elected in the spring semester. The First-Year Representatives shall be elected within six weeks of the beginning of the fall semester. The appointed members shall be selected by the Cabinet in the spring semester.

Section 4. The Cabinet shall consist of nineteen members:

A. There shall be a President of Wiess College who shall:

1. be at the time of election of junior or senior standing, and must be a resident during the academic year following his/her election;
2. call meetings of Cabinet and preside over meetings of the College and the Cabinet;
3. appoint and dismiss the coordinators and chairmen of all committees with the approval of Cabinet; and
4. represent Wiess College at College, Student Association and University affairs.

B. There shall be an Executive [Internal] Vice President who shall:

1. assume the duties of the President upon the absence, resignation or impeachment of the President, or upon the inability of the President to continue his/her duties, and shall continue in that position until the President is replaced or able to resume his/her duties;
2. shall coordinate all the various committees and see to their smooth operation; and
3. be required to regularly attend Student Association meetings as a representative of Wiess College.

C. There shall be an External Vice President who shall:

1. be of sophomore, junior or senior standing at the time of election; and
2. coordinate and foster programs of communication and cooperation with Wiess College Alumni, other Residential Colleges, Associates, and the surrounding community; and
3. appoint a chair of the Associates Committee and all committee members who shall be tasked with coordinating the selection and assimilation of Associates.

D. There shall be two Social Vice Presidents who shall:

1. chair the Social Committee;
2. plan and direct the social activities of the College; and
3. run jointly in the election.

E. There shall be a Secretary who shall:

1. keep and post the minutes and voting record of all College and Cabinet meetings;
2. post notices of meetings and proposed agenda; and
3. chair the Publicity Committee and arrange for an orderly system of posting the various notices on the bulletin boards and in the College lounge.

F. There shall be two Treasurers who shall:

1. manage the finances of the College;
2. prepare for approval, by the Cabinet, a preliminary budget before the beginning of the academic year;
3. prepare a statement of financial condition of the College no less than once a month; and
4. run for a 2-year term;
5. be confirmed by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the incoming Cabinet after being nominated by the incoming President for his/her second year of service;
6. be elected separately in alternating years; and
7. serve as the head treasurer during his/her second year, responsible for training and mentoring the apprentice treasurer who shall be in their first year.
8. must be resident during the academic year following his/her appointment as head treasurer.

G. There shall be two Off-Campus Representatives who shall:

1. be non-residents during the academic year following their election;
2. chair the Off-Campus Committee; and
3. coordinate activities and execute duties relating to non-resident members.

H. There shall be two Cultural Representatives who shall:

1. chair the Cultural Committee
2. plan and organize events that broaden the cultural experience of Wiess members; and

3. run jointly in the election.

I. There shall be two Sophomore Representatives who shall:

1. be sophomores during the academic year following their election;
2. represent the sophomore class;
3. serve as administrative assistants to the President;
4. organize freshmen service points to be measured in hours as decided by Cabinet; and
5. be elected by members of the sophomore class.

J. There shall be two First-Year Representatives who shall:

1. be new students during the academic year following their election;
2. represent the new student class;
3. serve as administrative assistants to the President; and
4. be elected by members of the new student class.

K. There shall be an At-Large Representative who shall:

1. be nominated by the President and approved by a two-thirds majority vote of Cabinet; and
2. be of junior or senior standing at the time of his/her appointment.

L. There shall be a Capital Improvements Representative who shall:

1. be nominated by the President and approved by a two-thirds majority vote of Cabinet;
2. solicit and present to Cabinet capital improvements projects to benefit Wiess College; and
3. explore use of all University funds available to the College.

K. There shall be an Academics and Career Chair who shall:

1. be nominated by the President and approved by a two-thirds majority vote of Cabinet; and
2. chair the Wiess Academics and Career Committee responsible for coordinating the academic and professional programming of Wiess College.

Section 5. No person shall be a Cabinet member who is on Rice University probation of any sort. No person may hold two positions on the Cabinet concurrently.

Section 6. There shall be a College Parliamentarian and Historian who shall serve the Cabinet in a non-voting capacity. These positions shall be filled in the same manner as the

selection of the appointed Cabinet members.

Section 7. A quorum shall be a simple majority of the voting members of the Cabinet. The Cabinet shall meet at a regular time and place set by the President at least once a month.

Section 8. The Master and Resident Associates shall serve the Cabinet in a non-voting capacity. The Master shall have veto power over any action of the Cabinet.

Section 9. Attendance at all Cabinet meetings shall be mandatory for all voting members. Multiple unexcused absences without a replacement are grounds for impeachment at the discretion of Cabinet.

Section 10: All members of Cabinet are expected to update and pass on all relevant documents to their successor, act as a mentor during the changeover process, and be available as a resource after their term ends.

ARTICLE IV: THE WIESS COLLEGE COURT

Section 1. The Wiess College Court shall be conducted as stipulated in the Rice University Code of Student Conduct. The Court's purpose shall be to ensure that the College is responsible for the self-discipline of its own members in College affairs.

Section 2. Positions on the Court:

A. Associate Justices

1. The College will select by vote five Associate Justices from the ballot in the spring election.

2. Candidates will be sophomores, juniors, or seniors at the time of the election.

3. In the case of a vacancy, the election will occur within ten days after the filing deadline.

B. Chief Justice

1. The Associate Justices will select from among themselves a Chief Justice.

2. Seniority and past Court experience should be taken into account in the selection process.

3. Selection of the Chief Justice shall be completed within two weeks of the election of all Associate Justices.

4. In the case of a vacancy in the office of Chief Justice, the remaining Associate Justices will select among themselves someone to fill the position.

5. The Chief Justice shall be a resident during the academic year following his/her election.

C. Assistant Justices

1. The College will select by vote two Assistant Justices from the ballot in the spring election.

2. Candidates will be freshmen, sophomores, juniors, or seniors at the time of the election.

3. In the case of a vacancy, the election will occur within ten days after the filing deadline.

4. The Assistant Justices shall aid the Court in the performance of all Court proceedings. They shall be present at all Court proceedings, and shall have a vote in the decisions of the Court.

5. Each Assistant shall serve on a rotating basis as a Court Ombudsman. The Ombudsman shall be responsible for:

a. indicating procedural errors to the Court as indicated in the University Code of Judicial Procedure;

b. indicating to the accused if the deliberative process is defective and presenting any grounds for appeal to the accused;

c. presenting the accused his/her rights in each case.

D. Each Justice must be on no form of probation.

Section 3. The Wiess College Court shall have original jurisdiction of any complaint of an alleged Class II violation of University Rules brought against any members of Wiess College, and students of other colleges violating Class II rules at Wiess College. The college masters and the assistant dean may choose to remove or refer a matter before the College Courts to the University Court or the Judicial Affairs Committee as appropriate. The Wiess College Court shall have power to investigate, to hold hearings and trials, to reprimand, and to produce decisions and sentences, as according to the University Code of Student Conduct. The Wiess College Court may also choose to refer matters otherwise within their authority to another college court, the College Master, University Court, or the Assistant Dean. In the event of alleged misbehavior by one or more members of the Court, they will be tried by the remainder of the Court.

Section 4. The Chief Justice shall notify the accused of the verdict and penalty.

Section 5. A defendant may appeal his/her case to the Wiess Court for review within two weeks, or he/she may appeal directly to the Master. Grounds of appeal are those found in the University Code of Student Conduct.

Section 6. The Court shall establish The Wiess College Court Procedures and Code of Conduct in harmony with the University Code of Student Conduct. These laws may be

amended by four assenting votes of the Court. Policies of the Rice University Code of Student Conduct supercede the policies of the Wiess College Court.

Section 7. An Associate or Chief Justice of the Court shall be present at all College and Cabinet meetings.

Section 8. The President shall serve as ex-officio to the Wiess College Court.

ARTICLE V: THE FELLOWS

Section 1. The Fellows' responsibility shall be to advise and assist the new students throughout the year. Within the framework established by Cabinet, the Fellows shall be responsible for the new students orientation and assimilation within the College.

Section 2. There shall also be Co-Fellows (members of another college) who shall work with the Fellows during new student orientation and throughout the year in new student advising.

Section 3. The Fellows shall be selected by a method determined by the current, non-returning Fellows. The Co-Fellows shall be selected by a method determined by the new Fellows.

ARTICLE VI: THE STUDENT ASSOCIATION SENATOR

There shall be a Student Association Senator who shall:

- A. be elected from the body of College membership in an annual spring election;
- B. serve the Cabinet in a non-voting capacity; and
- C. represent the college at the Student Association Senate.

ARTICLE VII: THE COMMITTEES

Section 1. There shall be a number of College committees charged with specific responsibilities to the Cabinet and the College membership.

Section 2. The Standing Committees shall be chaired by Cabinet members and shall consist of the following:

A. Appropriations Committee

1. The Appropriations Committee shall consist of a chairman who shall be the Head Treasurer and other members nominated by the Head Treasurer.

2. The duties of the Appropriations Committee are to discuss all solicitation for donations outside of Wiess college and its members, and to present the result of their deliberations and a suggested donation to Cabinet before it considers said solicitations.

B. Budget Committee

1. The Budget Committee shall consist of a chairman who shall be the Head Treasurer, and shall include all members who control a Wiess College Budget, and other interested College members.

2. The duties of the Budget Committee are to meet at least once yearly to set the budget for the coming year.

ARTICLE VIII: ELECTIONS

Section 1. Elections of members of the Wiess College Cabinet shall be by a simple majority according to the procedure set forth in the College Bylaws.

Section 2. In the event that an office of Cabinet, besides the President, becomes vacant, the Cabinet shall provide for the means by which the remaining term of that office shall be filled. If the office is an elected position, the President shall make a temporary appointment approved by a simple majority of Cabinet until such time as the office can be filled by special election.

Section 3. A justice of the College Court may not be elected or appointed a Cabinet member during his/her tenure in office as a voting member of the Court, and may not run for College office within one semester after accepting appointment to the Court.

ARTICLE IX: THE TREASURY

The Treasury of the College shall consist of members' dues, fines imposed by the Court at the discretion of the Court, and any other funds derived by Cabinet-approved methods not constituting involuntary collection from the members of the College.

ARTICLE X: IMPEACHMENT

Section 1. Impeachment of any Cabinet or Court member may only be on the grounds of malfeasance, partiality, exceeding authority, or failure to meet vested responsibilities.

Section 2. Impeachment, except in the case of the President, shall be by a signed accusation from a member of the Cabinet or Court submitted to the President. In the case of the President, the signed accusation shall be submitted to the elected members of the Cabinet. Cabinet shall convict only by a three-fourths majority in a closed session.

Section 3. If an individual holds two or more positions within the College, his/her impeachment or conviction in one of those offices shall not affect his/her other positions.

ARTICLE XI: RECALL AND REFERENDUM

Section 1. A referendum on any non-disciplinary act of Cabinet or the Court, or to recall any Cabinet or Court member, may be obtained on the written petition of at least one quarter of the total College membership.

Section 2. A positive vote of two-thirds majority of those voting in the recall shall require

that the position be vacated and filled again by the usual procedure.

Section 3. If the Court of Cabinet action is not sustained by the simple majority of the College membership voting in the referendum, the decision supported by the referendum shall be binding on the Court or Cabinet.

Section 4. A referendum will be arranged and completed by the Elections Committee within seven days of receipt of the petition from one quarter of the College.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, or Rules may be proposed by:

- a. a Cabinet member; or
- b. a College member through an initiative petition authored by any College member and having the signatures of at least ten percent of the College membership.

Section 2. An initiative petition must be presented to the College President, who will, along with the author of the petition, draft a ballot detailing the proposed change and present said ballot to the elections chairman within one week of the receipt of the petition.

Section 3. Amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, or Rules that change college operating policy must be posted for at least one week prior to the General College vote and must contain the Rule, Bylaw, or section of the Constitution to be amended, as well as the text of any proposed change.

Section 4. The elections chairman will verify the signatures and conduct a poll of College members in the usual fashion within one week of his/her receipt of the ballot from the President.

Section 5. A proposed change to the Constitution, Bylaws, or Rules must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Cabinet. Any proposed changes to the Constitution must then be approved by a two-thirds vote of the College, in which at least two-fifths of the College participates. A simple majority of the College members voting is required in the case of a Rules or Bylaw change.

Section 6. Amendments shall be added to the end of the unchanged Constitution until such time as there are ten amendments attached, at which time the Cabinet shall supervise the rewriting of the Constitution. The Cabinet may supervise a rewriting of the Constitution before the accumulation of ten amendments if it deems such a rewriting necessary. The rewritten Constitution must be approved by at least two-thirds of the College members voting in a general election.

Last Amended February 8th, 2013