

# CONSTITUTION

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CONSTITUTION OF THE  
VPI CAVE CLUB  
STUDENT GROTTO OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
ADOPTED January 26, 2024

## Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the VPI Cave Club, Student Grotto of the National Speleological Society (VPI is an acronym for Virginia Polytechnic Institute.)

## Article II: Purpose

The purpose of this club shall be to promote interest in, and to advance the science of speleology; to promote conservation of caves and safety in their exploration; and to encourage fellowship among those interested in caving.

## Article III: Membership

1. There shall be three classes of dues paying members: full, associate, and prospective. There shall be two qualifiers, inactive and life, as described in the By-Laws.
  1. Full membership shall be restricted to students, faculty, or staff of VPI&SU who have completed membership requirements as stated in the By-Laws. Full members shall have access to club records and files and may use club equipment.
    1. Life members are considered to be associate (defined below) until they have submitted written notice to the Secretary or Treasurer each semester. Non-life full members are automatically registered to vote when their dues are paid.
    2. Any full members may choose associate membership. Full membership may be reinstated upon written notification of the club treasurer during the first two meetings of any subsequent semester.
  2. 1. Associate membership shall be reserved for those who have completed requirements for full membership but are not students, faculty or staff of VPI&SU. Associate members have all privileges of full membership except for the holding of an elected office and voting. Full and associate members shall have access to club records and files and may use club equipment.
    2. Faculty or staff who are full members may for any semester for which dues have been paid choose associate membership. Full membership may be reinstated upon written notification of the club treasurer during the first two weeks of any subsequent semester.
    3. Students who are full members and who anticipate being absent from campus for a semester may choose associate membership for that semester.
  3. Any individual may be invited verbally by the president and vice-president to become a prospective member upon recommendation of a full or associate member. The prospective member must be willing to uphold the purposes and policies of the club. A prospective member may attend and address meetings, but may not vote or hold elected office.
2. Honorary members may be recognized at the discretion of the club for their outstanding achievements or contributions to the club or the interests of the club. Honorary membership is a ceremonial title and holds no bearing on actual membership status.
3. Dues shall be paid in a timely manner in an amount as stated in the by-laws.
4. Any prospective, associate, or full member may face disciplinary action, including possible loss of membership privileges, as defined in the By-Laws.

## Article IV: Officers

1. The elected officers of this club shall be: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Election procedures are defined in the By-Laws.
2. All elected officers must be enrolled as full-time students at VPI&SU throughout the duration of their term. The President and Vice President and Treasurer must be full or associate members at the time of the election.

The Secretary can be a full, associate or prospective member. If an officer is not an NSS member, membership must be applied for, within one month of the election.

3. In the event of extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to events preventing meetings, caving, training of new members, or other club activities, the voting membership of the club shall have the option to declare a state of emergency by 2/3rds majority vote. The purpose of the state of emergency will be to allow the club to temporarily suspend portions of the bylaws that prevent normal operations of the club because of the conditions of the emergency. Upon the end of the state of emergency a special election will take place at the next regular meeting in order to fill cave club officer positions with traditionally eligible members. Should the vote to end the state of emergency fall at a time when meetings are not happening, the vote will occur at the next meeting of the club, and the state of emergency will extend until it is voted upon at that said meeting. During a state of emergency the following policies will go into effect:
  1. Any full, student member may hold office regardless of part-time or full-time status.
  2. In the event that there are not enough willing student members to hold office, the club may elect non-student associate and full members, as defined in Article III, Section 1.b to take on the responsibilities of the Vice President and/or Secretary as acting officers
  3. A state of emergency has no effect on a member's voting status, except,
  4. In the event that fewer than 3 members are eligible to vote, associate members will be allowed to vote to approve new members.
  5. During a state of emergency the items herein supersede any and all conflicting bylaws or directives

## **Article IV: Committees**

1. Standing committees shall be: the Equipment Committee, Safety and Techniques Committee, Publicity Committee, Project and Program Committee, Conservation Committee, Supplies Committee and Executive Committee.
2. Special and ad hoc committees may be established by the President or by action of the club by simple majority vote.

## **Article VI: Amendments**

1. Amendments to this Constitution may be submitted by motion of any full member and then tabled after passing with a simple majority of votes from full membership.
2. An amendment must be voted on no later than three meetings subsequent to its proposal, and the full and associate members of the club must be specifically notified of the date of the vote and the nature of the amendment, in writing.
3. A 3/4 majority vote of the full membership shall be required for the adoption of any amendment.

## **Article VII: By-Laws**

1. The club shall establish a set of By-Laws for the purpose of amplifying and explaining in detail certain sections of the Constitution.
2. The By-Laws may be amended as follows:
  1. A motion to amend the By-Laws may be introduced by any full or associate member.
  2. If the motion is "seconded" it is automatically tabled.
  3. The secretary must notify the members of the amendment in writing.
  4. Final action shall be taken at the next meeting by a 2/3 vote of the full membership.