

# CONSTITUTION OF KNUST PEER COUNSELLORS

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## PREAMBLE

We the members of the KNUST Peer Counsellors under the auspices of the KNUST Counselling Center, in our bid to seek for the welfare of KNUST students; with respect to their social, academic, psychological and general counselling hereby adopt this constitution to guide us.

## INTERPRETATIONS

1. 'Associations' as used in the constitution shall refer to the KNUST PEER COUNSELLORS.
2. 'Coordinator' as used in the constitution shall refer to the professional counsellor who supervises activities of the peer counsellors.
3. 'He' 'Him' 'Chairman' as used in the constitution shall refer to any member of the KNUST PEER COUNSELLORS; male or female.
4. 'Judicial committee' refers to the coordinator, the main electoral commissioner; deputy electoral commissioner and any executive they may deem fit to join the committee.
5. 'Members' as used in the constitution shall refer to all students who are qualified and current members of the KNUST PEER COUNSELLORS.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION

#### ARTICLE 1: Name and Motto of the Association

1. The name of the association of students who qualify to act as peer counsellors shall be known as the 'KNUST PEER COUNSELLORS'
2. The motto of the association shall be known as Your Caring Friend.

#### ARTICLE 2: Supremacy of the Constitution

1. The constitutions shall be the supreme law of the governance of the KNUST PEER COUNSELLORS
2. Notwithstanding Article 2(1), the constitution shall be subject to the KNUST counselling Center constitution and the constitution of the republic of Ghana.
3. In the event of any conflict, the provision of this constitution shall to the extent of the conflict, take precedence over any other provision in another constitution by a committee of sub-committee.
4. Any member or group of members who will allege an act of omission or commission of any member or group of members is in contravention with a provision in this constitution may apply to the judicial committee for a declaration to that effect.
5. Failure to obey or carry out the order under 2(4) constitutes a violation of this constitution shall attract a punitive measure such as being ceased to be a member.
6. The judicial committee reserves the right to interpret the constitution and rule on matters which are silent.

## CHAPTER TWO

### AIMS AND FUCTIONS

#### ARTICLE 3: Aims and functions

1. To support the KNUST counselling center in attending to the counseling needs of the students in KNUST.
2. To acts as peer counsellors to the students in the KNUST.
3. To act as eyes and ears of the counselling center.
4. To assist in promoting the welfare of students in KNUST.
5. To assist students in finding where they can get financial assistance.

CHAPTER THREE  
MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE 4: Membership

1. Membership shall be open to all students in KNUST who are interested in serving under the counselling center.
  - (a) Interested students will apply to be part of the association.
  - (b) Vetting of interested students will be conducted and successful applicants will be appointed as peer counsellors.
2.
  - (a) The activities of the peer counsellors will be supervised by a coordinator who will be a counsellor at the KNUST Counselling Center.
  - b) The supervisor approves all plans, activities and budgetary preparation of the association.
  - (c) All request and letters to the head of the KNUST Counselling Center must pass through the Coordinator.

ARTICLE 5: Terms of Membership

1. A member shall attend all meetings, visitations and all events of the association.
2. Missing more than three meetings, visitations or other events organized in a semester by the association automatically disqualifies a member for certification.
3. A member shall seek permission to be absent from his supervisor when he cannot be present for any gathering related to peer counselling.
4. A member shall be subjected to the leadership of his hall (group) leader and the executive body.
5. A member shall submit his semester report to the coordinator. Failure to do so leads to automatic disqualification for certification.

6. Any peer counsellor challenged by case will refer the case to his supervisor or any other counsellor.
7. Peer counsellors shall be given the chance to determine the length of time they want to serve the association during the interview.
8. If a peer counsellor serves for a year, he is entitled to a bronze certification.
9. A peer counsellor who serves for two years with the association is entitled to a silver certification.
10. A peer counsellor who serves for three years gets a gold certification.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE ASSOCIATION

#### ARTICLE 6: Governing Structure

1. The structure of the association shall comprise:
  - (a) The elected executive officers
  - (b) Other appointed executive officers
  - (c) Members of the association

#### ARTICLE 7: Executive Officers

1. All executive officers shall act on behalf and for the association.
2. All executives shall individually take the oath of allegiance on the day of handing over prior to assumption of duties.
3. All executive officers shall be accountable to the coordinator, executive committee, judiciary committee or any member of the association during meetings.

#### ARTICLE 8: The executive Committee

1. The executive committee shall comprise:
  - (a) The President (Elected)

- (b) The Vice President (Elected)
  - (c) The General Secretary(Elected)
  - (d) The Financial Secretary(Elected)
  - (e) Main Organizing Secretary(Elected)
  - (f) Deputy organizing Secretary (Appointed)
  - (g) Main Public Relations Officer(Elected)
  - (h) Deputy Public Relations Officer (Appointed)
  - (i) Editor in Chief (Appointed)
  - (j) Deputy Editor in Chief (Appointed)
  - (k) Main electoral commissioner(Appointed) ( Functions as Judiciary member when allowed by coordinator)
  - (l) Deputy Electoral commissioners(Appointed) ( Functions as Judiciary member when allowed by coordinator)
2. The executive committee shall have authority over the day-to-day administration of the association with the approval of the coordinator and inputs from members during general meetings.
  3. The executive committee shall be individually accountable to the president in the day-to-day administration of the association.
  4. Elected executives shall propose members to be appointed executives who will be approved by the coordinator.
  5. Members of the executive committee shall assume office after they have been sworn the oath of allegiance.
  6. The executive committee shall be accountable to members during meetings.
  7. The executive committee shall present to the coordinator the programme line up for the semester in the first week of the semester. This shall be accompanied by a budget.
  8. Selected executives by the coordinator shall receive commuting and communication allowances.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DUTIES OF OFFICERS

#### ARTICLE 9: The President

1. He shall be the leader and the chief spokesperson of the association in all matters related to peer counselling.
2. He presides over all the executive meetings that are conducted by the executive committee.
3. He shall lead all delegations of the association to conferences and meetings.
4. The president shall be the chairperson during the general meetings of the association.
5. He shall be accountable to the members during meetings.

#### ARTICLE 10: Vice President

1. He shall act in the absence of the President when:
  - (a) The president becomes disabled by reason of illness or any other incapacitation from the discharge of his duties.
  - (b) The office of the president becomes vacant by reasons of resignation, by removal, or death.
2. He shall lead in programs or projects related to the welfare of the members of the association.
3. He shall be accountable to the members during meetings.
4. He shall perform any other duties assigned to him by the president.

#### ARTICLE 11: The General Secretary

1. He shall in consultation with the president summon meetings of the executive committee and keep records of such meetings.
2. The secretary shall keep minutes during general meetings.
3. He shall have executive powers in the absence of the president and vice president.



4. He shall type and print out letters and is also responsible for all correspondence of the association.
5. He shall be accountable to the members during meetings.
6. He shall perform any other duties assigned to him by the president.

#### ARTICLE 12: Financial Secretary

1. The financial secretary shall be responsible for collection of all the monies of the association and keep accurate records thereof.
2. He shall lead all matters relating to raising funds for the association and budget preparation.
3. The financial secretary shall present a budget for the semester in the first week of the semester.
4. He shall present budgets for release of monies two week before the date of an event.
5. He shall be accountable to the members during meetings.
6. He shall perform any other duties assigned to him by the president.

#### ARTICLE 13: The Organizing Secretaries

1. The organizing secretaries shall see to the organizing, securing and arrangement of meeting place and other activities of the association.
2. They shall be responsible for refreshments during meetings.
3. They shall be responsible for getting members to attend functions of the associations in consultation of the public relations officers.

4. They shall be accountable to the members during meetings.
5. They shall perform any other duties assigned to him by the president.

#### ARTICLE 14: The Public Relations Officers

1. They shall be responsible for the publicity of internal and external meetings, programs, activities and events of the association.
2. They shall take charge of all interactions associated with the media.
3. They shall manage the presence of the KNUST Peer counsellors on social media.
4. They shall chair a publicity committee if any is created.
5. They shall be accountable to the members during meetings.
6. They shall perform any other duties assigned to them by the president.

#### ARTICLE 15: The Editors in Chief

1. They shall create, edit and manage articles to be posted on notice boards across KNUST campus.
2. They shall maintain blogs, websites and other platforms that have information and write-ups about the association.
3. They shall ensure that data about the members of the associations are updated.
4. They shall be accountable to the members during meetings.
5. He shall perform any other duties assigned to him by the president.

#### ARTICLE 16: The Electoral Commissionaires

1. They shall stipulate rules and regulation for the conduct of elections.
2. They shall organize and conduct all elections, referenda and opinion polls undertaken by the association.
3. They shall serve on a judiciary committee headed by the coordinator.

4. They shall be custodians and account for tags to be used for visitations.
5. They shall be accountable to the members during meetings.
6. They shall perform any other duties assigned to him by the president.

## CHAPTER SIX

### ELECTIONS

#### ARTICLE 17: QUALIFICATIONS

1. Any member of the Association in good standing shall qualify to contest election into office.
2. Any student who has been found guilty of acting in the best of the interest on the associate shall not qualify to contest election into any office within the association.
3. Any candidate wishing to contest any position shall have acquired a cumulative weighted average (CWA) of sixty and above.
4. Any candidate wishing to contest any position shall submit himself to a vetting committee (including the coordinator) appointed by the electoral commissioners for thorough screening and vetting.
5. Each nomination form shall bear the names and signatures of two (2) members of the association in good standing.
6. The screening and vetting committee shall have the power to disqualify or otherwise any candidate so screened.
7. The decision of the screening and vetting Committee in such matters shall be deemed final.
8. Any candidate wishing to contest for any position should not have been elected for a position elsewhere in the school or should not wish to contest for a position in the school.

#### ARTICLE 18: Conduct of election

1. Members aspiring for elected portfolio shall be elected through secret ballot by members of the association

2. Any outgoing officer shall be eligible for elections of the association on the grounds that he resigns from his office at least 7 days prior to the commencement of the election.
3. All offices shall be held for two semesters.
4. A simple majority shall be required to win an election.
5. Candidates who stand unopposed shall require at least 50% + 1 votes of the total votes cast to win the election thereof.
6. The Electoral Committee shall be required to publish the Additional Rules and Regulations regarding the conduct of elections at least four (7) days prior to the commencement of the election process.
7. If after two attempts the unopposed candidate fails to get the required number of votes, a period of one (1) week shall be allowed for fresh nomination and canvassing of votes if after this period no opposition emerges the candidates shall be deemed duly elected.
8. A run-off may be conducted for candidates who may tie.
9. Any candidate who shall be guilty of any electoral malpractice(s) shall be asked to withdraw from the election by the electoral commissioners
10. Electioneering campaign shall start after the electoral commissioners have published the results of the screening conducted.
11. Every member of the Association shall be entitled to one vote.
12. There shall be no voting by proxy.
13. The electoral commissioners shall add any other rules they deem fit for the election process after getting approval from the coordinator.

#### ARTICLE 19: Declarations and challenging of electoral results

1. The electoral commissioners shall declare provisional results immediately after counting the ballots cast.
2. The provisional results of the elections can be challenged within seventy-two (72) hours after they have been made public. After seventy-two (72) hours, no complaints shall be entertained and the result shall be declared the final results by the electoral commissioners.

3. Copies of any petition(s) challenging the results or the validity of an election shall be presented to the executive committee to be submitted to the coordinator.
4. The coordinator shall without prejudice to any provision of this constitution decide on the validity of the results and or the election within ninety six (96) hours from the time the petition(s) is/are being received.
5. Any member of the association shall be obliged to appear before the Judicial Committee for the purpose of article 19 (2) supra, if need be.
6. If a challenge is upheld, fresh elections for the affected office(s) shall be held within one (1) week from the time of the coordinator's decision.

#### ARTICLE 20: Handing over

1. There shall be a handing over ceremony in presence of all members and elected and appointed executives shall be sworn into office.
2. Handing over shall be held within 21 days after the certification of election results by the electoral commissioners.

### CHAPTER SEVEN

#### ABANDONMENT OF POST

#### ARTICLE 21: Resignation

1. Any officer of the association may resign voluntarily.
2. Any such resignation shall be communicated in writing to the Executive Committee at least five (5) days before the date of resignation. The Executive Officers shall in accordance with the relevant position of this constitution appoint one of their members to act until a substantive officer is elected.
3. In the event of any officer elected by members resigning, the executive committee shall communicate to coordinator upon receipt of the resignation letter.
4. Any officer relinquishing his office shall hand over all documents and property belonging to the association to the Executive Committee within seventy two (72) hours.

#### ARTICLE 22: Vote of no confidence

1. A vote of no confidence shall require at least 5 of members of the executive body to form a quorum.
2. Any officer shall automatically cease to be a member of the executive if a vote of no confidence is passed on him or if adverse findings are made against him by the coordinator.

#### ARTICLE 23: Removal from office

1. Any member may by notice in writing and stating the grounds for removal addressed to coordinator or the judicial committee, commence impeachment proceedings against any officer(s) provided that such notice shall be authenticated by the names and signatures of at least 2/3 of members of the association during a general meeting.
2. The Judicial Committee shall within seven (7) days upon receipt of the notice examine the issues involved and determined its merit. It shall then submit its report to the coordinator for consideration and deliberation during which the officer(s) concerned shall have the right to state their case to the coordinator.
3. An executive officer against whom impeachment charges have been preferred shall officially be removed from office by majority members of the judiciary council at a meeting specifically convened for.

#### ARTICLE 24: Grounds for removal

1. Executive Officers and other committee members shall individually and severally be removed from office for:
  - (a) Misappropriation and or embezzlement of the association's funds.
  - (b) Suspension or dismissal from the University.
  - (c) Repetition of academic year (class).
  - (e) Inefficient and or negligent discharge of duties.
  - (f) Acting in such a manner as can bring the association into disrepute.
  - (g) Gross misconduct.
  - (h) Deformity of mind and insanity.
  - (i) Acting in violation of the oaths of office set out in the schedule of this constitution.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### AMENDMENTS AND REVISION

#### ARTICLE 25: Amendments

1. Any notice for revision or amendment of any provision of this constitution shall be made to the Judicial Committee.
2. Notice for the revision or amendment of any provision of this constitution may be made by the Executive Committee or by any member in writing and submitted to the Judicial Committee. Such a notice in the latter case shall be supported by at least forty (40) other members whose signatures shall be appended thereof.
3. The Judicial Committee shall sit to consider the issue within fourteen (14) days upon the receipt of any valid notice of amendment and submit a report to the Executive Committee.
4. The coordinator shall have the final decision if an amendment should be made or not.

#### ARTICLE 26: Honorary

1. Certificates of honour shall be presented to deserving executive officers and members at end of their tenure of office and service respectively.
2. The president in consultation with the other executive committee members shall identify and honour dedicated and committed members of the association.
3. Any Executive Officer or Committee member who is impeached or has a vote of no confidence passed on him shall automatically forfeit his certificate of honour.
4. Any Executive Officer or Committee member who is removed from office based on shall automatically forfeit his certificate of honour.
5. Any members who go against any term stated in Article 5 shall forfeit his certification.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

Standing orders for meetings

1. Voting shall be by full members. Each member shall be entitled to one vote.
2. Voting privileges shall include the right of members to make, second motion or nominations.
3. In voting, motions shall be carried by simple majority, unless otherwise stated or provided for by the constitution or the standing orders.
4. casting votes shall be in the following order: a) votes for b) votes against c) abstentions
5. If votes for and against are equal in number, the president will have an additional vote shall exercise his voting right.
6. Member(s) abstaining shall be considered non-voting.
7. Voting at meetings shall be by show of hands or by secret ballot or as may be determined by the chair.
8. There shall be no voting by proxy.

## APPENDIX 2

### OTHER INTERVENTIONS

1. In addition to discussion on an issue, the chair shall recognize those requesting the floor by the following order of precedence:
  - a) Point of order
  - b) Point of information
  - c) Point of correction
2. A point of order, which must be heard at all times, except during the act of voting, must deal with the conduct or procedure of the meeting and must concern only such matters;
  - a) Indecorum
  - b) Transgression on the standing orders
  - c) Transgression on the constitution
  - d) A call to attention of the introduction of a matter not relevant to the question under consideration.
  - e) The use of improper language.



## CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

1. A chairman shall direct his speech to the issue under discussion. Every member shall address himself solely to the chair.
2. No member shall be allowed to speak more than once on a motion as long as a member who has not spoken desires the floor. No member shall speak for more than two(2) minutes at one time without the permission from the speaker.
3. The chairman shall interpret the standing orders before the commencement of the very first meetings.
4. Anymore standing orders may, in case of urgency, or after notice duly given be suspended or changed at meetings, so far as business at that particular meeting proved that there is a two-thirds( $\frac{2}{3}$ )majority in favour.

## TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

### SCHEDULES OF THE CONSTITUTION OATHS

#### Executive Oath

I.....having been elected/appointed as a .....of the KNUST Peer Counsellors, do hereby in the name of the almighty God swear that I will at all times faithfully and truly serve the association in my capacity as the .....

That I will support and uphold the principles of the meticulous accountability and I shall seek the welfare of the association and KNUST as a whole.

I further solemnly affirm that should I should not be found wanting in the discharge of my duties as an executive member nor place myself in such a position to frustrate the sufficient functioning of the executive body or association.

I further solemnly affirm that should I at any time break this oath of office, I shall submit myself to the penalty prescribed by the constitution of the association thereof.

So help me God.

## THE JUDICIAL OATH

I..... having been elected member of the Judicial committee of the KNUST Peer Counselor , do hereby in the name of the Almighty God swear that I will at all times faithfully and truly serve the association.

That I shall uphold, defend and interpret the constitution of the Association without fear or favour and also guarantee justice in the adjudication of all matters that shall be brought under my jurisdiction without affection, ill-will or personal interest.

I further solemnly affirm that should I should not be found wanting in the discharge of my duties as member of the Judicial Committee nor place myself in such a position to frustrate the sufficient functioning of the committee or association.