

07/27/11

Constitution of Comitatus

Article I. Name

The name of this club shall be The Bridgewater College Comitatus.

Article II. Affiliation

This organization is not affiliated with any local, state, national, or international organizations.

Article III. Purpose and Objectives

Comitatus stands to promote the study and safe practice of the Western Martial Arts, the armed and unarmed martial arts of Medieval and Renaissance Europe and Britain. These include but are not limited to: the martial tradition of the German *fechtmeisters* (fight masters) of the 14th through 16th centuries, the promotion of chivalric attitudes on and off the field and general historical knowledge of the period. This will be achieved through the Medieval Swordsmanship class offered at Bridgewater College (ES 186), individual research, and regular participation in group activities.

Article IV. Adherence

Comitatus is in agreement with and supports all campus rules, regulations, and policies at Bridgewater College as well as all local, state, and federal laws. Its members, upon joining Comitatus, agree to follow these rules, regulations, and policies. Any member found to be breaking any rules, regulations, or policies of Bridgewater College and/or local, state, or federal laws is answerable to the Bridgewater College Honor Council and the local, state, or federal government respectively.

Article V. Membership

Section 1. General Requirements

Membership is open to all students, faculty and staff at Bridgewater College. Members can participate in all training activities of the club except for free-sparring unless individuals have 1) previously completed the ES 186 (Medieval Swordsmanship) course offered at Bridgewater College, 2) have, at the discretion of the club's Advisor and Atheling, displayed a level of proficiency in the practice of Western Martial Arts adequate to insure the safety of individual and his or her sparring partner or 3) successfully completed the new member training program and demonstrated their aptitude during an authorization match. A one-time membership fee of five dollars will be surrendered to the club to help with the advancement of the group's cause. Members also must agree not to use fighting techniques for harmful purposes. If a member is found practicing swordsmanship techniques in a harmful and violent manner, including sparring in the absence of a Marshall and/or before receiving permission to spar, they will be subject to permanent dismissal from the group.

Section 2. Non-exclusionary membership Clause.

Any member who refuses to abide by any rules, regulations, and or policies of Bridgewater College is prohibited from joining in group activities.

Section 3. *Voting and Non-Voting Members*

The Executive Board shall be made up of an Atheling, Thegn, Seneschal, Exchequer and Herald. A general member is someone who has surrendered his membership dues and has agreed to the Comitatus Constitution.

Article VI. Advisor

Section 1. *Qualifications*

The Faculty Advisor must have proficient knowledge and understanding of the Western Martial Arts as well as the experience necessary to instruct members in the Western Martial Arts.

Section 2. *Responsibilities*

The Faculty Advisor is responsible for supervising group activity and is required to attend group activities on a regular basis. The Advisor is also in charge of helping the executive board in making decisions and overseeing the leadership of the club.

Article VII. Meetings

Section 1.

General meetings will be held weekly during the semester. Members are recommended to be in attendance for two meetings every month, though certain circumstances are unavoidable and understood. Meetings will be led by the Advisor and/or one or more members of the Executive Board.

Executive meetings will be held at least once a month during the school year to plan events and activities for Comitatus. All members who hold a leadership role are expected to be in attendance, though certain circumstances are unavoidable and understood. These meetings will be led by the Advisor and/or the Atheling of Comitatus.

Article VIII. Officers

Section 1. *Title*

Official names of Comitatus officers are as follows:

President: Atheling
Vice-President: Thegn
Secretary: Seneschal
Treasurer: Exchequer
Web Manager: Herald

Section 2. *Duties*

Official duties of Comitatus officers are as follows:

The *Atheling* will be in charge of organizing and leading the general meetings of the group as well as helping orchestrate and oversee the different events and activities planned for the group. The Atheling will be in charge of distributing tasks to the rest of the Executive Board and making sure Comitatus is continuing to be an active organization. Other responsibilities include helping the Advisor oversee and instruct during general meetings, communicating with the faculty and

assisting the Advisor's with other duties.

The **Thegn** will be in charge of assisting the Atheling with administrative duties as needed. The Thegn will also be in charge of presiding over meetings if the Atheling is unavailable, making sure Comitatus events and activities are advertised to the campus and will assign jobs to make sure that this is accomplished. Lastly, should the Atheling become unable to continue their role in the club the Thegn will assume the duties of Atheling. If the replacement is temporary (up to one semester) a new Thegn will not be selected, but if the replacement is permanent elections will be held immediately for a new Thegn.

The **Seneschal** will be in charge of chronicling and archiving club events including taking notes at meetings and keeping records of the discussions and forwarding these to the Executive Board and/or general membership as necessary. Other responsibilities include maintaining the club roster and sending emails regarding events, practices, etc. to the club members and larger campus community as necessary.

The **Exchequer** will be in charge of keeping track of the club budget, collecting dues and creating, planning, and executing fundraisers for the Comitatus. Other responsibilities include assigning tasks to the Executive Board and general membership in order to make sure fundraisers are successful.

The **Herald** will be in charge of maintaining the club website. This includes but is not limited to maintaining a calendar of events and practices, maintaining a list of current members and uploading photos, videos and web links.

Section 3. Additional Roles

1. Marshall

A **Marshall** is any club member who has been certified by the Faculty Advisor and Executive Board to supervise sparring in the absence of the Faculty Advisor. Any member who has received authorization to spar at club practices may submit their name for consideration to become a Marshall. Individuals will be evaluated by the Faculty Advisor and existing Marshalls on the basis of general skill at sparring, control during a bout, and general responsibility. Assumption of an officer position will NOT automatically confer the Marshall certification.

2. Mentor

The **mentorship program** is designed to aid in the integration of new members into the Comitatus club. Each new member will be assigned a mentor who will be responsible for working with the new member at club practices to assist in their training, serve as a contact person in the club and be willing to assist new members in practice outside of formal meetings. Mentors are expected to participate heavily in the **new member training program**, a 4-5 week instructional designed to provide new members with the fundamental technical skills with a longsword necessary to begin sparring. Any member may submit their name for consideration to become a Mentor, and individuals will be evaluated on the basis of their skill with a longsword and general responsibility.

Section 4. Removal

If a member of the Executive Board refuses to abide by any rules, regulations, and or policies of Bridgewater College or threatens to be a detriment to Comitatus, he or she will be removed from their leadership position. The removal process will begin with any member of Comitatus coming

forward to either the Faculty Advisor or Atheling about a concern that they have with one of the leaders. The concern will be considered between the Atheling and the Faculty Advisor and corrective action will be attempted before removal. If corrective action should fail and removal is inevitable, the leader will be asked privately to leave the Executive Board and elections will be held immediately to select a successor. Should the concern be with the Atheling, discussion will take place between the Faculty Advisor and Atheling to take care of the concern. If the Atheling will not correct the action, the Atheling is subject to removal. If the Atheling should be removed, the Thegn shall be promoted to Atheling and elections will be held immediately to select a new Thegn.

Article IX. Officer Selections

Qualifications/approval of candidates:

Officers will be chosen during the final general meeting of the Fall Semester. During the two weeks prior to selection, interested parties will submit their names and qualifications to the Faculty Advisor and current Atheling. Those found eligible during review will be informed by the Atheling prior to the final meeting. To be eligible for Atheling, Thegn, Seneschal, and Exchequer, one must show adequate knowledge of Western Martial Arts practices as well as a noticeable interest in the advancement of the group. Additionally, candidates for the Atheling must have served as an officer for at least one year prior to eligibility. If, and only if, there are no possible members with this prerequisite the Advisor and current Atheling will confer about and decide on which candidate is best qualified to assume the position. It is understood that for the initial selection of Atheling, the requirements of prior officer activity will be waived and that the Atheling will be selected following the same process as the other club officers.

The selection process for the Atheling, Thegn, Seneschal, and Exchequer will involve a vote by all members of the Comitatus (including the candidates but not the Faculty Advisor) with the individual receiving the majority vote being declared the winner. In the event of a tie a second round of balloting will take place immediately between the tied candidates.

Article X. Committees

Comitatus committees will be agreed on by the Advisor and all officers if the need should present itself. A committee can be as small as one person to help perform a needed task. Committees will be a temporary group unless otherwise determined by the Advisor and leadership board.

Article XI. Amendments

Amendments can be presented by any of the officers of the current year during one of the executive meetings. Member must have good reasoning behind the proposal and must have the advancement of the group in mind. Amendments will be discussed by the Advisor and Atheling and, at the latest, will be brought to the following executive meeting to report if the Advisor and Atheling have found the amendment to help advance the group's efforts. If the amendment has done that, it will be brought to the decision process where it must be passed by a unanimous agreement of the leadership board. This will help to prevent any disunity from arising among the group.