

Debate Society of Tufts University

Constitution and Bylaws

(September 2002)

Article I. Organization

Section 1. The Name of this organization shall be the Debate Society of Tufts University.

Section 2. All business of this organization will take place according to these bylaws.

Section 3. If any part of said bylaws in any way is in conflict with any University Policy, that section of the bylaws shall be null and void, with University Policy taken precedence over all else.

Article II. Purpose.

Section 1. The purpose of this organization is to provide all Tufts University students the opportunity to further their education through forensic activities.

Section 2. Activities shall include formal debates and presentations to the Tufts Community, campus and community involvement, and possible travel to state, regional and national tournaments

Section 3. Funding will be provided through the Tufts Community Union and any other sources which the Society sees fit to approve.

Article III. Membership.

Section 1. General membership is limited to undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at Tufts University.

Section 2. Any student in good standing with the university will be eligible for general membership.

Section 3. Active membership is defined as follows: To be an active member, one must participate in at least fifty (50) percent of activities in which any part of the Society participates in, including but not limited to weekly meetings, tournaments, and other campus activities. Membership is established in this manner and must be maintained in the same way for subsequent semesters. For the 2002-2003 school year, until the Society can participate in so many activities as the requirements of this section are easily attainable, membership shall be defined as attendance at seventy-five (75) percent of meetings.

Section 4. There will be no dues. Additional costs to team members will vary according to specific activities.

Section 5. The Speech and Debate Team is an equal opportunity organization.

Section 6. Any member of the Speech and Debate Team shall be free to leave or disassociate with the team without fear of harassment or reprisal.

Article IV. Meetings.

Section 1. Meetings will be held at a regular interval agreed upon by the general members of the Society. Until the general membership is determined, meetings will be held weekly.

Section 2. The day and time of the meetings will be voted upon at the same time as the interval of meetings. Until the general membership is determined, meetings will be scheduled by the President with the advice of the potential general members.

Section 3. Emergency meetings may be called by the president of the team or by a majority of the board. For an official meeting to take place under these circumstances, a quorum need be present. For all purposes regarding quorums within this constitution, a quorum shall be defined as thirty percent (30%) of the active membership for that particular semester.

Section 4. Meetings will be led by the President. If at any time the President feels the meeting has become disordered, he may invoke Robert's Rules of Order for the purpose of restoring order.

Article V. Elections.

Section 1. Elections will be held during the final meeting of the year. The two meetings prior to the election will be reserved for nominations to be made. For the 2002-2003 school year, elections shall not be held later than the fourth meeting of the year.

Section 2. Voting for President, Vice President, Secretary/Public Relations Officer, Parliamentarian, and Treasurer shall be reserved for all members active during the Spring Term. Any member expected to graduate at the conclusion of the spring term shall remain eligible to vote in election.

Section 3. During the election, the order of the vote shall be as follows: President, Vice President, Secretary/Public Relations Officer, Parliamentarian and Treasurer. Downslating will be permitted. No proxy voting shall be allowed. Each active member is allotted one (1) vote which must be cast in person at the time of the vote.

Section 4. In the case of a vacancy of the Presidency, the Vice President will become President and a special election of the Vice Presidency will take place the meeting following the one week at which nominations are made and two weeks following the vacancy.

Section 5. In the case of a vacancy of any office other than President, the office in question shall be filled by special election to take place the meeting following the one week of nominations are made and two weeks following the vacancy.

Section 6. All elections shall be determined by a simple plurality with a quorum of the active members and shall be run by the Parliamentarian.

Article VI. Officers and Duties.

Section 1. The Executive Board shall be defined as consisting of the following: President, Vice President, Secretary/Public Relations Officer, Parliamentarian and Treasurer. Any action called for from the executive board must have the involvement of all members. All officers serve one school year, which will begin at the start of summer and conclude at the end of the spring term. In the absence of the President, duties fall down the chain of command. The order of succession shall be as is the order below.

Section 2. President - The President shall preside over all general meetings of the Society, conduct team business and act as the figure head for representing the Society to the Tufts Community. The President may also set up temporary administrative

committees or positions if necessary. The President may also be referred to as Chancellor or Emperor.

Section 3. Vice President - The Vice President shall assist the President in all relevant matters and assume responsibility of conducting the business of the Society in the absence of the President. This office shall also coordinate community and campus activities as well as oversee any temporary administrative committees or positions.

Section 4. Secretary/Public Relations Officer - The Secretary/Public Relations Officer will be responsible for all team documentation, including but not limited to, phone and email lists, notes of weekly meetings, recording team and individual awards, and recording weekly meeting attendance for the purpose of determining active membership. This office shall be responsible for collecting information from new members as well as organizing team socials. In addition, he or she shall be responsible for ensuring adequate communications with the Tufts Community, including but not limited to the Daily, Observer, or any other campus publication, the Tufts Community Union, Faculty and Administration. The Officer shall also be responsible for working in conjunction with the Treasurer to provide proper advertising of Society meetings.

Section 5. Parliamentarian - The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for keeping all meetings of the Society in adherence to this Constitution, and University, as well as Roberts Rules of Order. In the event that the Secretary/Public Relations Officer finds a member of the Society who does not meet the requirements of the Society, the Parliamentarian will be responsible for making the issue known to the Executive Committee and recommending appropriate action. Furthermore, the Parliamentarian shall be responsible for conducting all elections of the Society.

Section 6. Treasurer - This office shall be responsible for controlling the budget of the Society, and informing members about the team's financial status. The treasurer shall also be responsible for preparing and defending the budget proposal each spring.

Section 7. Chair Positions - All chair positions shall be appointed. Candidates should submit letters to the executive board. The executive board will choose the best qualified candidate for each of the positions. Removal from chair position shall be done by executive board vote. As appointed positions, these chairs will have no voting power at executive meetings.

Section 8. Should any member of the executive board be accused of being delinquent of duties, an impeachment process must proceed in the following manner. A group of at least five (5) active members shall call for an impeachment hearing before the executive board. At this point, the indicted shall be suspended from the board, pending the outcome of this process. During the impeachment hearing, one person only shall offer testimony against the accused, followed by a defense of the accused, which may be presented by the accused personally or a representative. If any member of the executive board shall find just cause for an impeachment, that member shall call for an impeachment vote to be held at the meeting following the meeting at which the announcement of the vote is made. A 2/3 vote of the active membership shall be required for the removal of office. This vote concludes the impeachment process. If impeached, a member may not hold any position, elected or appointed, for the length of one (1) semester, to begin by the soonest semester which is not yet one-half (1/2) over.

Article VII. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 1. Amendments shall be presented to the executive board. The executive board will determine if such an amendment shall be deemed relevant by the board. If an endorsement is made, the amendment must pass two (2) consecutive readings before a quorum of the active members by a two-thirds (2/3) vote. If the amendment passes both the first and second reading, it shall be added to the constitution. If the amendment fails either the first or second reading, it shall be considered dead.

Section 2. In either the first or second reading, a vote may be made to send the amendment back to the executive board for a re-writing. This vote may not be made once the amendment has failed a reading and thus should be made prior to a vote in favor or opposed to the amendment.

Article VIII. Ratification of this Constitution

Section 1. This Constitution shall be considered Ratified if, at the first general meeting of the Debate Society of Tufts University to be held during the 2002-2003 school year, two-thirds (2/3) of the assembly votes for Ratification.

Article IX. Definitions

University: Tufts University

Forensic: The art of public speech and debate. Forensics is intended to teach its participants how to critically analyze either a piece of communication or an issue to be communicated and present it to an audience.

Tufts Community Union (TCU): The organization charged with representing the students of Tufts University. This includes the TCU Senate, Judiciary, and all other groups recognized by the Office of Student Activities.

Society, Team: The Debate Society of Tufts University