

# **Constitution of the Vancouver School of Theology Student Association (VSTSA)**

Revised and updated November, 2014

All previous constitutions and amendments are hereby repealed and are replaced with these constitutions dated this November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and as approved by vote at the General Meeting of the VSTSA, held in Vancouver, BC on March 13, 2014.

## **Article I – Name**

1.0 The name of this society shall be known as the Vancouver School of Theology Student Association, hereafter referred to as the "VSTSA".

## **Article II – Aims and Purposes**

2.0 The aims and purposes of the VSTSA shall be to:

- 2.1 Participation of Students – Foster and promote the full participation of students in the governance, community life and administration of the Vancouver School of Theology,
- 2.2 Forum for Discussion – Provide a forum in which concerns of students can be discussed and pursued,
- 2.3 Sponsor Events – Arrange, promote and sponsor social, educational, and other activities for the membership of the VSTSA,
- 2.4 Support Other Students – Foster and encourage ways in which students may support each other financially, spiritually, and academically.

## **Article III – Definitions**

3.0 The following terms will be defined as follows:

- 3.1 VSTSA – Vancouver School of Theology Student Association
- 3.2 VST – Vancouver School of Theology
- 3.3 Executive – the elected members of the VSTSA entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining and administering the activities of the VSTSA.
- 3.4 UBC AMS – Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia of which the VSTSA is eligible to have one VSTSA student representative on this board, normally an elected member of the VSTSA Executive.
- 3.5 Majority – normally will mean two-thirds of the vote.

## **Article IV – Membership**

4.0 The following conditions shall apply to membership:

- 4.1 Membership – The membership of the VSTSA shall consist of all persons actively registered as students in the Vancouver School of Theology and who have paid VSTSA fees.
- 4.2 Equality – All members of the VSTSA shall enjoy equal rights, responsibilities, and obligations of membership.

- 4.3 **Fees – Changes in the amount of fees paid to the VSTSA shall be voted upon at a duly constituted meeting no later than December of the previous academic year, with immediate notice to the Office of the Dean, the Registrar, Accounting and the Principal.**

#### **Article V – Organizational Structure**

- 5.0 **The organizational structure of the VSTSA shall consist of:**

- 5.1 **The Executive of the VSTSA shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, three (3) Faculty Council Representatives (ideally one M.Div, one Research Degree, and one non-specified degree member), UBC AMS Representative, a First Year Representative, and Community Coordinator and will be referred to as the Executive Officers of the VSTSA.**
- 5.2 **Elections – Two elections will be held each academic year. The Fall Election will be to elect the three Faculty Council Representatives, First Year Representative and the Vice President. The Spring Election will be to elect the President, Treasurer, Secretary, AMS Representative, and Community Coordinator.**
- 5.3 **The designated titles reflect the nature of the roles and responsibilities of each Executive Officer, and the day-to-day function and activities of the Executive shall function primarily as a cooperative, coordinating oversight team.**
- 5.4 **The Executive Officers of the VSTSA shall be:**
- 5.4.1 **Current members of the VSTSA, be elected or ratified, as the case may be, for a one-year term by members in good standing of the VSTSA at the General Meeting in either the Fall or Spring Semester as outlined in these constitutions; OR, due to lack of a quorum or any other valid reason that no election is held, serve until such time as successors may be elected or ratified at the first possible General Meeting of the following academic year.**
- 5.4.2 **Elected by a two-thirds majority present at a General Meeting called to include the purpose of an election.**
- 5.4.3 **Maintain the duties of the Executive Officers as outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities in Appendix A.**
- 5.4.4 **When time is of the essence, the Executive shall invite, solicit, or request student representatives and/or committees as necessary, and these names shall be approved by a majority vote of the Executive.**
- 5.5 **Members of the Executive shall:**
- 5.5.1 **Represent the student body of VST and therefore will encourage relevant and responsible input from students and the Executive, and will provide regular reports back to the VSTSA as required.**
- 5.5.2 **Be members in good standing of the VSTSA.**
- 5.5.3 **Carry out the duties, obligations and responsibilities as outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities identified in Appendix A.**

- 5.5.4 Covenant to regularly participate in all meetings, provide reports, feedback and/or input to the Executive and/or other boards, committees or meetings as assigned.
- 5.5.5 In the event a member of the Executive is unable to fulfil their duties, it is the responsibility of that member to find an alternate Executive Officer to fill in, and if they are no longer able to continue in the role in which they have been elected or ratified, or are no longer fulfilling their duties, they may be requested by consensus decision of the VSTSA Executive to step down from that position in order for the Executive to find a suitable replacement at their earliest convenience.
- 5.5.6 Vacancy of Executive Officers greater than one month - If there is a vacancy on the executive with greater than one month before the next General Meeting due to an elected member resigning, or no member being elected during the previous General meeting, the VSTSA Executive has the authority to appoint a member of the VSTSA to that position until the next General meeting where it will be ratified by the membership of the VSTSA.

#### **Article VI – Meetings**

- 6.0 The following conditions shall apply to VSTSA meetings:
  - 6.1 Regular Business Meetings – Regular business meetings of the Executive will be called by the President or their designate on a regular basis with a minimum of two (2) meetings per academic term.
  - 6.2 General Meetings – two (2) General meetings will be held each academic year, one in the early Fall and one in the late Spring (normally October and March) for the purposes of elections and for the reporting to the student body of any issues, changes or decisions of the Executive that require input, vote and/or ratification.
  - 6.3 Special Meetings – Special meetings can be held at any time by:
    - 6.3.1 Majority consent of the Executive.
    - 6.3.2 By petition of ten (10) or more members of the VSTSA, submitted in writing to the Executive of the VSTSA, and posted in a prominent location (VSTSA Bulletin Board) as well as on the appropriate internet communication forum of the VSTSA.
    - 6.3.3 Such special meeting shall be held within two (2) weeks plus a day after receipt of the petition allowing a minimum of ten (10) days' notice to be given to the members of the VSTSA.
  - 6.4 Notice of General and Special Meetings – General and Special meetings shall be announced at community worship, by appropriate posters and notices in prominent locations at VST, through appropriate internet communication methods (including email).
  - 6.5 Quorum – Quorum at General and Special Meetings shall be fifteen (15) students of the VSTSA, in good standing, who are present at that meeting.
  - 6.6 Voting – In consideration of the number of long distance or part time students, the provision of proxy voting shall be allowed for voting purposes

at General and Special meetings, including elections. A proxy form (see Appendix B) shall be completed and signed by the member in good standing who will be absent on the day of the meeting. Member(s) who have completed proxy vote forms must declare and present completed forms to the chairperson of the General or Special meeting for verification prior to the commencement of the meeting. Each proxy vote will be counted towards the number of members participating in said meeting for the purposes of reaching a quorum. If a member fails to provide a completed proxy vote form prior to the commencement of the meeting, those proxy votes will be deemed to not be included for the purposes of that specific meeting.

- 6.7 Notice of Regular Business Meetings – Regular business meetings will be announced at previous meetings and reminders sent out to Executive members at least one (1) week prior to the said meeting with a proposed agenda, through normal channels of communication (internet, email).
- 6.7.1 Conduct of Meetings – Meetings shall be chaired by the President or their designate, and will follow Robert's Rules of Order and will follow the VST "Signposts of our Life Together" Guidelines as approved by Vancouver School of Theology.
- 6.7.2 Decisions of the VSTSA Executive meetings shall be by consensus where ever possible. If a consensus cannot be reached in a reasonable period of time during a meeting, the chairperson may call a vote for a two-thirds majority of those present. Quorum for Regular business meetings shall be a two-thirds majority of the Executive present.

#### **Article VII – Amendments**

- 7.0 Amendments to the Constitution of the VSTSA shall be proposed by a motion presented at a General or Special meeting of the VSTSA.
- 7.1 Proposed amendments shall be posted in a prominent location on the premises of the VST, as well as on any appropriate internet communication method (including email) at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting of the VSTSA at which the proposed amendment(s) will be considered.
- 7.2 Adoption of the amendment(s) to the Constitution shall be by two-thirds majority of the vote of a quorum at such a duly advertised meeting (as defined above in 7.1).

#### **Articles VIII – Finances**

- 8.0 The following guidelines for finances are:
- 8.1 Budget – the VSTSA shall have an annual budget prepared by the Executive.
- 8.2 The budget shall be posted prior to being ratified at the Regular business meeting in a prominent location for at least two (2) weeks for input and feedback from the membership.

- 8.3 **Signing Authority** – Signing authority for VSTSA banking shall require two authorized signatures, normally the President and the Treasurer.  
8.3.1 A third signing authority may be chosen by separate motion each year, normally this would be the Vice President position.
- 8.4 **Spending** – Signing authorities have the ability to spend up to \$150 (one hundred fifty dollars), and any expenditures above that amount requires approval by the Executive.
- 8.5 **Accounts** – A record of the accounting of the VSTSA shall be maintained by the Treasurer and kept in the VSTSA Office in a locked secure location. Records shall be available to all students upon written request to the President.
- 8.6 **Annual Financial Review** – An independent VSTSA member, (not a member of the Executive) will be asked to review the annual financial reports of the VSTSA to ensure accuracy and accountability to all members of the VSTSA. A report of this review will be given at the Fall General meeting for the previous year.

#### **Article VIX – Dissolution of VSTSA**

- 9.0 In the event that the VSTSA is required to dissolve, a motion to that effect will be required at a General or Special meeting of the VSTSA and will require a two-thirds majority vote. A second motion at said General or Special meeting will be required to decide how to disburse any funds or assets that the association may have at the time of dissolution.

## **Appendix A – Executive Officers Roles and Responsibilities**

### **1.0 President**

- 1.1 President to be elected at the Spring General Meeting, and will be for a one year term.**
- 1.2 Duties to include:**
  - 1.2.1 Chair all meetings of the VSTSA.**
  - 1.2.2 Prepare and distribute agenda in advance of all meetings.**
  - 1.2.3 Ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities to new members after an election, including arranging of any changes in bank signatories in cooperation with Treasurer.**
  - 1.2.4 Provide any necessary orientation or training to new Executive Officers.**
  - 1.2.5 Coordinate a VSTSA hosted student orientation event during Fall orientation week.**
  - 1.2.6 Ensure that constitutions and policies of the VSTSA are adhered to in all meetings, activities and functions of the VSTSA.**
  - 1.2.7 Be a liaison between the school and VSTSA when necessary.**
  - 1.2.8 Report to the student body all decisions of the VSTSA.**
  - 1.2.9 Attend all meetings of the VSTSA whenever possible.**
- 1.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed.**

### **2.0 Vice President**

- 2.1 Vice President to be elected at the Fall General Meeting, and will be for one term.**
- 2.2 Duties to include:**
  - 2.2.1 Coordination of the Fishes and Loaves Program on behalf of the Executive**
  - 2.2.2 Be available to the student body, assess, interview and be a liaison when a student is in need of short term financial support or other resources in a confidential manner.**
  - 2.2.3 Communicate with appropriate staff and faculty as necessary to ensure students are given access to all available resources.**
  - 2.2.4 Communicate with student body about Fishes and Loaves program.**
  - 2.2.5 Chair meetings in the absence of the President.**
  - 2.2.6 Attend all meetings of the VSTSA whenever possible.**
- 2.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed.**

### **3.0 Secretary**

- 3.1 Secretary to be elected at the Spring General Meeting, and will be for one term.**
- 3.2 Duties to include:**
  - 3.2.1 Support the President with compilation and distribution of agendas for all meetings.**
  - 3.2.2 Take minutes of all meetings of the VSTSA and distribute as necessary.**
  - 3.2.3 In cooperation with Executive, maintain and respond to any correspondence.**
  - 3.2.4 Maintain any online internet communications when required (to include maintenance of the VST SA email and development of newsletter for distribution to SA members)**
  - 3.2.5 Attend at VSTSA meetings whenever possible.**
- 3.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed:**

### **4.0 Treasurer**

- 4.1 Treasurer to be elected at the Spring General Meeting, and will be for one term.**
- 4.2 Duties to include:**
  - 4.2.1 Maintain and keep accurate records of all VSTSA financial activities, and ensure cheque book and all financial records are stored in a secure manner in the VSTSA office.**
  - 4.2.2 Prepare regular financial reports to be presented at Executive meetings and at the General Meetings as required.**
  - 4.2.3 Ensure that an annual review of the financial records is completed at the end of the academic year.**
  - 4.2.4 Oversee the development of an annual Budget in cooperation with the Executive.**
  - 4.2.5 Meet with the VST accountant annually to coordinate transfer of any student fees to VSTSA account.**
  - 4.2.6 In cooperation with the President, ensure that the appropriate paperwork is completed with the Bank for signing authority changes each year.**
  - 4.2.7 Attend all VSTSA meetings whenever possible.**
- 4.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed.**

## **5.0 First Year Representative**

**5.1 First Year Representative to be elected at the Fall General Meeting, and will be for one term.**

**5.2 Duties to include:**

**5.2.1 Ensure that the viewpoint(s) of first year students are included in VSTSA decisions and activities.**

**5.2.2 Attend all VSTSA meetings whenever possible.**

**5.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed.**

## **6.0 AMS Representative**

**6.1 AMS Representative to be elected at the Fall General Meeting, and will be for one term.**

**6.2 Duties to include:**

**6.2.1 To attend AMS meetings.**

**6.2.2 To engage in the debate in a way that reflects the Guideposts of VST, and the wishes of the VSTSA (with guidance from the Executive). To report to the VSTSA Executive on any current projects and issues being discussed by the AMS, particular those that affect VST students.**

**6.2.3 To communicate AMS services, and how VST students are able to access them.**

**6.2.4 Attend all VSTSA meetings whenever possible.**

**6.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed.**

## **7.0 Faculty Council Representative(s)**

**7.1 Faculty Council Representative(s) to be elected at the Fall General Meeting, and will be for one year.**

**7.2 Duties to include:**

**7.2.1 Attend VST Faculty Council Meetings, as set by the faculty/academic calendar.**

**7.2.2 The three representatives will provide a collaborative VSTSA report at the direction of the Executive to be shared at Faculty Council.**

**7.2.3 Each representative has the right of the power to vote at Faculty Council.**



- 7.2.4 The three Representatives will provide a collaborative Faculty Council report with pertinent/appropriate information to be shared at the VSTSA meetings.
  - 7.2.5 Each representative will pay special attention to the needs of whichever branch she or he has been voted to represent.
  - 7.2.6 Attend all VSTSA meetings whenever possible.
- 7.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed.

## **8.0 Community Coordinator**

**8.1 Community Coordinator to be elected at the Spring General Meeting, and will be for one term.**

**8.2 Duties to include:**

**8.2.1 Coordinate identified VSTSA social community events, including planning, advertising and assist, along with other members of the SA Executive and SA, with hosting of events**

**8.2.2 Identify community building ideas and activities and report to the VSTSA Executive**

**8.2.3 Attend all VSTSA meetings whenever possible.**

**8.3 In collaboration with the Executive, support, participate and carry out any activities of the Executive as directed.**

**Appendix B – Proxy Vote Form**

To the Attention of:

Vancouver School of Theology Student's Association  
Elections Officials

I \_\_\_\_\_, a fee-paying member of the VSTSA, hereby appoint  
\_\_\_\_\_ **<NAME>** \_\_\_\_\_, to act on my behalf as a proxy at the General Meeting to be held  
\_\_\_\_\_ **<NAME>** \_\_\_\_\_  
on \_\_\_\_\_ **<DATE>** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**<SIGNATURE>**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**<PRINTED NAME>**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**<DATE>**

If you would like to indicate your vote on specific issues, please do so in the box below

ISSUE	VOTE

