

Williams Student Union

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Williams Student Union established to promote the wellbeing of Williams College students, do ordain and establish this constitution and subscribe to the regulations and policies of Williams College.

In establishing this constitution, we understand that the Williams Student Union must abide by the Williams College Student Government and Registered Student Organization Relationship Statement and that registration with and recognition by Williams College should not be considered as the College's endorsement of the purposes or beliefs of the student organization or its members.

All powers and responsibilities not enumerated in this Constitution or defined in the bylaws are reserved to their respective bodies, or to the students.

ARTICLE I – Name

The organization shall be referred to as the “Williams Student Union,” and formally abbreviated as “WSU,” or shortened as “The Union.”

ARTICLE II – Purpose

The Williams Student Union is empowered to consider matters of interest to students and shall act as a voice for students in official matters if requested.

The Williams Student Union ensures that the voice and concerns of students are amplified and that the administration is best serving the needs of students through advocacy to the administration or through the support of different student initiatives.

Through various forms of advocacy, the Williams Student Union will begin to collect institutional knowledge that will help future generations of students navigate the bureaucracy at the College.

The Williams Student Union will:

1. Create spaces for students to air grievances, talk about student concerns, and voice opinions. This can be through the creation of campus forums, town halls, or open meetings.
2. Amplify student issues or concerns, especially to raise awareness to the student body and bring issues to the administration.
3. Hold public, regularly scheduled meetings that are spaces for students to voice their opinions.
4. Serve as a link between the administration and students, especially for important campus issues or policies.
5. Create a publicly-accessible record archive that contains information on current membership and Union issues.

ARTICLE III – Affiliation

The Williams Student Union acknowledges NO affiliation with any local, state, or national organization at this time.

Article IV - Membership

The Williams Student Union is comprised of 12 elected representatives, as defined and selected by the terms and procedures in Article V. These individuals represent the student body.

The Williams Student Union agrees not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, or military

service. Any member of the College community who on any of these grounds feels discriminated against by another member of the community should take action and reach out to the Office of Campus Life, Dean's Office, Davis Center, or Office for Institutional Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Advancement.

ARTICLE V - Officers/Elections

The Williams Student Union is comprised of twelve students that serve as advocates for students and conduits to the administration.

Leadership

All members of the Union shall be considered equal in power. At the beginning of each term, the Union will internally select an organizational contact and treasurer as they see fit, but other members of the Union may assist in the responsibilities delegated to those roles. If someone holding one of these positions is recalled, any other member must be promptly appointed to the position.

For official WSU meetings to take place and for voting on official matters, a quorum of $\frac{2}{3}$ of members must be present.

Terms and Elections

1. Members of the Union shall serve terms of one academic semester in length, with the Winter Study period included in the fall term and voluntary participation during the summer period included in the spring term.
2. Elections will be held once per semester, no later than the third week of official classes.
3. Each class votes for three representatives through direct elections, using ranked-choice voting methods.
4. The membership of each Union is responsible for conducting elections for the next term.
5. A person may only run for election to one class position in any given election.
6. Campus-wide elections shall be held using ranked-choice voting methods.

Eligibility

1. Students self-nominating for any Union position must be currently enrolled students at the College.
2. Students self-nominating for any Union position must be on-campus for the duration of their respective term.
3. No student shall simultaneously hold more than one position on the Williams Student Union.
4. No person(s) may run on a joint or split ticket for any single position on the Williams Student Union.

Vote to Recall Members of the Union

Upon receipt of a written petition for recall of one or more of its constituent members, with signatures representing at least ten percent of the enrolled student body, the Williams Student Union will be responsible for holding a campus-wide recall vote with the following parameters:

- a. Referenda must be held within ten days of the receipt of a valid petition.
- b. The original signed petition in its full length shall be posted no less than three days before voting begins.
- c. An optional written response from the recalled member(s) shall be posted no less than three days before voting begins, if available.
- d. Voting shall be open for no less than five days.
- e. A simple majority from the voting members of the student body in support of the recall will trigger an immediate class-year election(s) to fill the open seat(s). The recalled member is eligible to participate in the subsequent election, as are all other students meeting the class year requirement.
- f. A failure to reach a simple majority vote in support of the recall will result in the member(s) serving the remainder of their term(s).

ARTICLE VI - Advisor

This organization must select and secure an advisor from the active faculty or staff of Williams College and will register their name with Campus Life annually. The advisor will be informed of all meetings and activities of the organization and may call a special meeting of the organization to discuss concerns. The advisor may also be asked to be present at meetings/events and may need to approve events put forth by the club. The advisor will be confirmed by a majority vote.

Article VII - Meetings

Meetings will be held weekly during the semester after new members have been elected. The attendance of one more than two-thirds of voting members or their respective proxies constitutes a quorum for all Union meetings.

Attendance rules will be established in the bylaws. All members are expected to attend all the Union meetings and to adhere to the rules of attendance.

All Union meetings shall be open to any member of the student body.

ARTICLE VIII - Constitutional Amendments

Campus-wide referendum on Constitutional amendments or a decision of this Union shall be conducted on a three-fourths vote of the Union, or upon written petition with signatures representing at least ten percent of the enrolled student body. Referenda shall follow the following conditions and procedures:

- a. Referenda must be held within ten days of the receipt of a valid petition.
- b. The original signed petition in its full length shall be posted no less than three days before voting begins.
- c. An optional written response from the current Union shall be posted no less than three days before voting begins, if available.
- d. Voting shall be open for no less than five days.
- e. A simple majority from the voting members of the student body, in support of the referendum for a Constitutional amendment, will result in the modification of this Constitution to the letter of the referendum.
- f. A simple majority from the voting members of the student body, in support of a referendum to overturn a decision of the Union, will result in the immediate nullification of the decision by the Union petitioned in the referendum.

All amendments, additions, or deletions must be approved and filed with the Office of Campus Life.

Article IX - Bylaws

The Union shall establish bylaws to qualify and/or elaborate matters pertaining to the internal conduct of The Union not specified in the Constitution.

ARTICLE IX – Funding

This student group agrees to abide by all funding [bylaws](#) set forth by the FAST. This includes the [process](#) for applying for funding and the possible uses for FAST funds by student organizations. A finance officer/treasurer will be responsible for budgeting the student organization's funds in accordance with FAST Funding bylaws. The finance officer (and organization as a whole) is responsible for all activities involving funding.

In approving this constitution, this student group also acknowledges that it may fundraise of its own accord, but alumni solicitation must be coordinated through the Development Office.

Article X – Dissolution

Upon receipt of a written petition with signatures representing at least ten percent of the enrolled student body, a campus-wide referendum on the dissolution of this body shall be held with the following parameters:

- a. Referenda must be held within ten days of the receipt of a valid petition.
- b. The original signed petition in its full length shall be posted no less than three days before voting begins.
- c. An optional written response from the current body shall be posted no less than three days before voting begins, if available.
- d. Voting shall be open for no less than five days.
- e. The referendum shall include the following options: a rejection of the petition for dissolution, complete dissolution without replacement, or the formation of a task force to reform or replace the body.
- f. The referendum should be held using ranked-choice voting methods for the available options.
- g. A simple majority from the voting members of the student body in support of the referendum for dissolution will result in the nullification of all charges and bylaws of this body.
- h. A failure to reach a simple majority vote in support of the referendum for dissolution will result in the continuation of this body, as well as its charges and bylaws.
- i. A simple majority from the voting members of the student body in support of the formation of a task force will result in the solicitation, election, and convening of a new task force within thirty days. Upon the receipt of the recommendations for reform or dissolution from said task force, the Union must hold a campus-wide referendum within ten days.

Any money that the Williams Student Union has acquired prior to dissolution will be donated back to the sector from which it came.

Approval

Date Approved by the RSO Recognition Committee_____

Amendments

Resignation

Passed on 9/26/22 by: Manny, Yunjin, Caitlin, Gwyn, Samir, Will, Jeffrey, Dylan, Wes

- A. Resignation: A written statement must be given to all other members of the union. A written nullification of the statement can be made by the resigner within 72 hours. If the statement is not withdrawn within 72 hours, the resigner is no longer a member of the WSU effective immediately.
 - Written as be defined as any archivable material, digital or print.
 - Replacement: Replacement proceedings will occur if the resignation occurs more than 3 weeks from the end of the term. During the 72 hour waiting period, a special election committee is formed to release a form for applications at the 72 hour mark. Solicitations of applications may proceed for 1 week. Election should run for the following week.
- B. Resignation within a week of the elections closing: If a written statement is given to all other members of the union as a resignation within the first week since the elections close, the seat will be filled by the next highest ranking candidate for that class year. If there are no other candidates, then the seat shall remain vacant until the next election.

- *The seat stays empty because it is close enough to the election that people have already decided they don't want to run and it would cause another election to be run immediately after closing the original election.*