



The Constitution of the High School Senate of UNIS Hanoi

Foreword

The Senate, in all its glorious democratic glory, has passed through multiple stages since its inception. Yet the one thing that has changed so little is the Constitution that provides the foundational guidelines for our work. Ultimately, leaders have been able to mold the Senate to fit its needs in the past, but the Senate has had some trouble staying consistent in order for people to grasp its ideas. Following the decision to organize the Senate into the Student Representatives Committee and the Events Committee, those who would have formerly been known as the Big Three gathered to create the 2015 Revision of the Constitution that would build upon the strengths that have been displayed so far. The following is what we leave, in the hopes that it will help the Senate to continue to be more effective. It is not complete, nor will it ever be¹. No doubt, the future iterations of Senate will look back at these words and change them as they see fit.

Sincerely,

The Big Three of 2015

President

VPE

VPSR

¹ Feel free to try, though.

Contents

[Introductory Statement](#)

[The Five Senate Tenets](#)

[Officers](#)

[Officer Roles & Election Protocol](#)

[Executive Branch](#)

[Communications Branch](#)

[Secretarial Branch](#)

[Committees](#)

[Overall Purpose & Duties](#)

[Student Representatives \(SRs\)](#)

[Members of the Events Committee \(MECs\)](#)

[Specific Responsibilities](#)

[Events Committee](#)

[Student Representatives](#)

[Combined \(under TEP\)](#)

[Systems & Procedures](#)

[Total Events Protocol \(TEP\)](#)

[Officer Assignment Procedures](#)

[Annual Senate Election Procedures](#)

[Members of the Events Committee \(MECs\)](#)

[Student Representatives \(SRs\)](#)

[Confidentiality Policy](#)

[Amending the Constitution](#)

Introductory Statement

29/01/2015

Dear future President, Executives, Communications Officers, Secretaries, and Senators,

I warmly congratulate you on joining the High School Senate of UNIS Hanoi!

The High School Senate has had a long lasting legacy. As leaders of the school, we are expected to create spirit and guide the way for the student body. However, as years passed by and each generation of students come and go, we, the Senate, gradually faded away from our original purpose. The Senate slowly transformed into an unmanned sailboat with no sense of direction, always racing against time in order to fulfil our duties. Hence, The Big Three – Jonas, Trung, and I – decided to redirect this boat and help steer it towards a more promising future through the creation of this Constitution.

Before you begin your journey with the Senate in the upcoming year, you must always remember that the core purpose of the Senate is to provide a better school experience for the high school student body. Whether you are preparing for the Talent Show, or discussing ideas with the administration, you must never forget that it is the student body which we serve. If you are here simply for recognition on your college résumé or for commendation by your peers, you might as well save your precious time in high school doing something that you truly have a passion for.

With that said, what lies beyond these words are clauses and instructions that the Big Three have left behind for the future Senate. The Constitution is not an FAQ where you will be able to find solutions to all problems. Rather, it serves as a guideline that we believe will provide the Senate with the most efficiency. The Constitution is a method to run the Senate, but it is worthless without purpose. The purpose lies within all of you, and it can be only brought out by you yourselves. You must be able to feel the purpose running from your heart, through your blood and to your skin. The spirit must run through your neurons before you can pass it onto the student body. You must be able to appreciate every minute of your contribution to the Senate. Then and only then will this Constitution make sense and guide you to the success that lies at the horizon. Free yourself from anxiety, see your vision, and lead the way!

I wish you all the best of luck!

President of the High School Senate (2014-2015)

Duong D. Nguyen

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Duong D. Nguyen', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

The Five Senate Tenets

1. You shall represent and serve the student body.
2. You shall be a role model to the public.
3. You shall uphold all your responsibilities.
4. You shall take initiative.
5. You shall lead.

Officers

Officer Roles & Election Protocol

Branch	Position	Formal Qualifications	Assignment	Time of Assignment ²	Term Extension
Executive	President	1 year in Senate	Elected (All)	End of year (1st ³)	Yes
	VPSR	Previous year in SR	Appointed (Exec.) ⁴	End of year (2nd)	Yes
	VPE	Previous year in EC	Appointed (Exec.)	End of year (2nd)	Yes
Comms	COSR	1 year in Senate	Elected (SR)	End of year (3rd)	Yes
	COE	1 year in Senate	Elected (EC)	End of year (3rd)	Yes
Secretaries	SSR	None	Elected (SR)	Start of year	No
	SEC	None	Elected (EC)	Start of year	No

Key

VPSR: Vice President of Student Representatives

VPE: Vice President of Events

COSR: Communications Officer of Student Representatives

COE: Communications Officer of Events

SSR: Secretary of Student Representatives

SEC: Secretary of Events

² Also time of term start.

³ Round of elections. See [Officer Assignment Procedures](#).

⁴ Appointed by previous executives, the newly elected president and the adult supervisors.

In-depth Officer Responsibilities & Duties

Executive Branch

President

A responsible leader of the Senate who:

1. Acts as the Executive Prime⁵, leader, and mentor over the entirety of the HS Senate;
2. Takes a position of leadership during full-senate meetings, chairing them in a respectful and orderly fashion in correspondence with the weekly agenda;
3. Assumes responsibility for ensuring that all members and their respective ideas and voices are equally represented and considered when partaking in meetings or discussions;
4. Moderates the progress of both committees and may assume control over either group where necessary;
5. Behaves as a role model not only for Senators but the wider community;
6. Controls the weather.

Vice President of Student Representation (VPSR)

A vocal and engaged Senator and leader who:

1. Takes a position of leadership during the meetings for the Student Representatives, chairing them in a respectful and orderly fashion in correspondence with the agenda;
2. Works closely with the student body and works to constantly improve the school community through a number of ways;
3. Acts as the voice of the Senate to the administration and the student body. This includes serving as primary contact person for The Flame and any other news agencies;
4. Is ready to take leadership responsibility for the President alongside the Events Coordinator, if the former is absent.

Vice President of Events (VPE)

A highly organised Senator and leader who:

1. Takes a position of leadership during the meetings for the Events Committee, chairing them in a respectful and orderly fashion in correspondence with the agenda;
2. Plans, organizes, and keeps track of all the main high school events of the year;
3. May enact the Total Events Protocol⁶ with consent from the Executive branch, which expands leadership to the entirety of the Senate in order to organise larger events;
4. Is ready to take leadership responsibility for the President alongside the Student Representatives Coordinator, if the former is absent.

⁵ Presidency does not guarantee becoming a Transformer.

⁶ See [Total Events Protocol](#).

Communications Branch

Communications Officer of Events (COE)

A creative, organized, and intuitive Senator who:

1. Plays the lead role, in cooperation with COSR, in promoting the Senate to the student body by maintaining Senate information portals such as, but not limited to:
 - a. The main Facebook page,
 - b. The Senate bulletin board,
 - c. The Senate website;
2. Publicizes Senate events using various forms of media;
3. Assumes the role of second-in-command to the VPE, in order to assist in the execution of Senate events.

Communications Officer of the Student Representatives (COSR)

A Senator who:

1. Plays the lead role, in cooperation with COE, in promoting the Senate to the student body by maintaining Senate information portals such as, but not limited to:
 - a. The main Facebook page,
 - b. The Senate bulletin board,
 - c. The Senate website;
2. Plays the lead role in managing the Morning Meeting agenda and logistics;
3. Recruits and equips Masters of Ceremony (MCs) with the relevant information to perform their duties;
4. Supervises the Morning Meetings and ensures the fluency and quality of proceedings, assuming the equivalent role of stage manager to the Morning Meetings;
5. Assumes the role of second-in-command to the VPSR, in order to assist in the maintenance of representative duties.

Secretarial Branch

Secretaries (SSR & SE)

Two reliable and organized Senators, each under their respective committees, who:

1. Meeting organisation:
 - a. Record minutes for their respective committees and full-Senate meetings, which are to be found available to all Senators for future reference on a shared domain, such as the Google Drive;
 - b. Keep attendance and manages other organisational details relevant to the Senate proceedings;
2. Treasury:
 - a. Monitor and are aware of the Senate's annual budget;
 - b. Authorize, document, and monitor all transactions, deposits, and withdrawals to and from the Senate account, co-signed by the Senate supervisors;

- c. Present a summary of all financial transactions at the conclusion of each school year.

Committees

Overall Purpose & Duties

Student Representatives (SRs)

A group of highly open-minded, observant, and aware Senators that:

1. Listens to the suggestions of the student body and brings the issue to the attention of the rest of the Senate during each meeting;
2. Works cooperatively to turn suggestions of the student body into a reality;
3. Always takes initiative in looking for ways to improve the high school life of the student body;
4. Acts as a communication channel between students and faculty;
5. Has regular meetings with school administration to implement changes and consider school-related issues;
6. Helps out with the Members of the Events Committee on large events under the Total Events Protocol;
7. Directs students with concerns about teachers in the following procedure⁷:
 - a. Ask the student to talk directly to the teacher to figure out the problem and the solution;
 - b. If step (a) does not work, ask the student to talk to counselor;
 - c. If step (a) and (b) does not work, help the student to schedule a meeting with the principle in order to sort out the problem.

Members of the Events Committee (MECs)

A group of highly creative and organized Senators that:

1. Works cooperatively with each other to plan, publicize, and carry out current and upcoming high school events;
2. Documents the outcomes of events for future reference;
3. Listens to the needs and wants of the student body in terms of events;
4. Molds events for the high school student body to fit the orders of promoting student life, and high school spirit.

Specific Responsibilities

Events Committee

1. Movie Nights
2. Spirit Weeks

⁷ The Senate does not have the responsibility to solve issues between teachers and students. Any issues **must** be solved between teachers and students.

3. Candy Canes
4. HS Dance
5. Winter Social
6. Any other event ideas

Student Representatives⁸

1. Attend regular administration meetings
2. Organise and facilitate regular HS Morning Meetings
3. Listen to & act upon student suggestions
4. Provide communication channel between students & faculty
5. Any other non-event initiatives

Combined (under TEP)

1. High School Day
2. Prom
3. MSHS Talent Show
4. Extended HS Assemblies

Systems & Procedures

Total Events Protocol (TEP)

The Total Events Protocol may be enacted by the VPE with consent from the Executive branch. The purpose is to focus all Senate resources on a single event, maximizing the available manpower. TEP can be enacted for the duration of an event, after the completion of which the Senate will resume normal activity.

Under TEP, the following changes are implemented:

1. The SR committee merges with the EC to form a full Senate, which will meet as a group when necessary.
2. This full-senate meeting will be chaired by the VPE and co-chaired by the President, assuming full responsibility & management of Senate activity during this time.
3. The VPSR will retain Executive power over the SR committee, however will act under the guidance of the VPE.

Officer Assignment Procedures

The procedures for officer assignments vary depending on the position in question⁹, however all elections should follow the following general procedures:

1. Senators who meet the formal qualifications may nominate themselves for a maximum of one position per round of assignments.¹⁰

⁸ See SR [Master List of Tasks & Responsibilities](#) for more details

⁹ See [Officer Roles & Election Protocol](#)

¹⁰ In the event that an officer leaves before the concluding of the term, the position must be re-elected at the soonest possible occasion.

2. Assignments will proceed in a staggered fashion, allowing failed nominees to run for another officer position of a lower tier, if they so desire.
3. For positions that are appointed:
 - a. Nominees are expected to provide a short (200 words max) personal statement for the Executive branch, along with the new president and the teacher supervisors, to consider.
 - b. The Executives may request an interview with nominees where necessary.
 - c. The list of all candidates for appointment will be publicized to the whole Senate, and there shall be a public opinion period. All comments concerning candidates will be confidential.
 - d. The Executives, new president and teacher supervisors will then decide on the most fitting candidate, and inform this person of the decision.
 - e. In the event that an Executive is returning the next year and wishes to attempt to extend their term, an election is held within their respective committee, instead of appointment.
4. For positions that are elected:
 - a. Nominees must sign up as candidates before the deadline, as set by the Executives. Late nominations may or may not be considered at the Executives' discretion.
 - b. In a dedicated session, candidates will be asked to perform a short (2-3 minute) speech to their respective committee.
 - c. The relevant committee will then proceed to an online, anonymous vote outlining their first, second and third choice (where applicable). The voting survey will be moderated by the teacher supervisors, as well as any non-running Executive officers.
 - d. After having reviewed the voting polls, the newly elected officers will be informed of the decision.
5. In addition, for newly-assigned Executive officers:
 - a. The chosen candidates will be asked to perform a short (1-2 minute) speech in front of the whole Senate, outlining their commitment to the group and their general vision for the future.
 - b. The Senate will then hold inaugural speeches, affirming the new officers into their role.

Annual Senate Election Procedures

Members of the Events Committee (MECs)

The Events Committee is dedicated to organisation and publicizing all senate-initiated school events, and therefore require a capable and well-organised group of students. With this in mind, Members of the Events Committee (MECs) are appointed by the returning officer board through an application process, as follows:

1. Nominees may fill out an online application form as provided by the returning officers, including responses to a number of questions relevant to the candidate's organisational ability, experience and the responsibilities required from an MEC. This

application must be submitted by the given deadline, and late applications may or may not be considered at the discretion of the returning officers.

2. After all applications have been submitted, the returning officers will read through all of them and meet to discuss the most qualified candidates from each grade level (2 from each). Emphasis will be put not only on past experience, but also on creative passion and an eagerness to contribute.
3. The results will be announced once all choices have been made. Unsuccessful candidates may run for the position of Student Representative for a second chance at making it into the Senate.

Student Representatives (SRs)

The Student Representatives Committee is dedicated to act as a communications channel and means of representation for the student body. With this in mind, Student Representatives are elected at the beginning of each school year by their respective grade levels through means of a simple democratic vote as follows:

1. Nominees must sign-up for candidacy before the given deadline. Late submissions may or may not be accepted.
2. In a dedicated X-block session, each candidate may make a short speech of three minutes maximum in length to his/her respective grade level.
3. Immediately after the speeches, a voting form will be sent out upon which students may vote for 2 candidates whom they feel will fulfill the role of SR best.
4. Results will be announced after all votes have been processed.

The election procedure, including management of the relevant sign-up and voting forms and the facilitation of the speaking session will be moderated by the returning Senate officers along with the Senate teacher supervisors.

The SR elections will happen after the events committee assignments have been completed, meaning EC candidates not selected will have a chance to run for SR as well.

Confidentiality Policy

While the Senate promotes the value of transparency and boasts a positive cooperation with The Flame and other school news organisations, all senators are under strict confidentiality obligations. These obligations are as follows:

1. Any non-Executive senator should refrain from publicizing any information from within Senate meetings that is not already public knowledge, unless given permission to do so by an Executive officer¹¹.
2. When in doubt about the nature of certain information, senators should refer to an Executive officer for clarification before publicizing it.

¹¹ Executive officers should consult with all fellow Executives before publicizing information that may be deemed critical.

3. When asked to be interviewed by The Flame or any other news agency, the Senator may do so (with regard to clauses 1 and 2), however must inform an Executive member of this interview at the soonest possible opportunity.

The HS Senate is dedicated to serve the student body, however bears a responsibility to respect the privacy rights of others, as well as keeping sensitive matters confidential. In order to ensure the continued trust and respect of the Senate within the school community, this policy is essential.

Amending the Constitution

The Constitution is a democratic document; amendments and changes must be placed through the following process:

1. The suggestion of an amendment is submitted to the Executives.
2. In cooperation with the teacher supervisors, the amendment is drafted.
3. The amendment is voted upon and only passed through a unanimous vote.