Rochester Community and Technical College
Student Senate Constitution

ARTICLE I – NAME
The name of this organization shall be the Rochester Community and Technical College (hereinafter “RCTC”) Student Senate.

ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT
The Student Senate administers a diverse, world-class Student Life program for the lifelong educational development and betterment of RCTC stakeholders.

ARTICLE III – VISION
The Student Senate will provide a dynamic environment which ensures that students have abundant opportunity to acquire real-world, personalized extra- and co-curricular education and experiences.

ARTICLE IV – PURPOSE
Section 1: The Student Senate exists as an integral part of the college’s governance. It is the official representative of the RCTC student body and represents the students’ rights and views to all RCTC stakeholders.

Section 2: The Student Senate is the administrative body for the RCTC Student Life Division. The Senate approves all expenditures collected through the Student Life fee, and sets requirements for and governs all student organizations on campus.

Section 3: The Student Senate empowers students by providing world-class leadership development, creating a diverse learning environment, and building relationships that enhance life-long learning.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP
Section 1: The membership of the Student Senate shall consist of:
A. One student representative from each RCTC chartered club and student organization in good standing (as stated in By-laws Article IV, Sections 2 - 4) (hereinafter “active clubs.”)
B. The Executive Board, consisting of the Student President, Senate Vice President, Senate Treasurer and Senate Secretary.
C. Senators-at-Large.
D. One representative from the athletic programs.

Section 2: Members of the Student Senate must be a student of Rochester Community and Technical College in good standing, as defined in the Student Senate By-laws, Article I, Section 1.

Section 3: All Student Senate seats shall have a term of one academic year excepting the Student President whose term shall run from commencement to commencement.
Section 4: The RCTC Student Senate does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law.

Section 5: Responsibilities of all Student Senate members shall include:
A. Attending Student Senate meetings and assigned committee meetings.
B. Reviewing of and voting on proposed motions made during regular and special meetings.
C. Participating in Student Senate functions when necessary.
D. Attending any agreed upon meetings and conferences. A Senator that does not attend, or cancels at the last moment, shall reimburse the Student Senate in full, unless a valid excuse can be presented to the Student Senate. A hold may be put on that person’s record until full reimbursement is made.
E. Any Senator that does not fulfill a full year commitment must reimburse the Student Senate the cost of any item purchased on his or her behalf, unless a valid excuse can be presented. A hold may be put on that person’s record until full reimbursement is made.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1: The officers of the Student Senate shall be Student President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall also make up the Executive Board.

Section 2: The Student President shall be elected by the Student Senate at a special meeting of the Student Senate during the spring semester.

Section 3: The Executive Board, not including the President, shall be elected by the Student Senate during the second meeting of fall semester.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

Section 1: The Student Senate shall meet on predetermined Tuesdays throughout the months of September through May with the Student Senate Advisor and/or Student Senate Faculty Advisor. The Student President or Executive Board may call special meetings when such meetings are deemed necessary.

Section 2: The Executive Board shall meet:
A. Tuesdays opposite of Student Senate meetings at 2:00 pm with their Advisor and/or Faculty Advisor to approve the agenda and discuss other issues for the next Senate meeting.
B. Monthly with the Cabinet September through May.

Section 3: All Student Senate meetings shall be open to the public, pursuant to law.

Section 4: Parliamentary Authority: The most recent published edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern the Student Senate in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and By-laws of the Student Senate.

Section 5: Quorum: One member more than half of the Student Senate membership (in good standing) shall constitute a quorum.
Section 6: The Student President shall be a non-voting member with the exception of a tie vote, in which case he/she will be the tie breaker.

**ARTICLE VIII – ADVISOR**

Section 1: The Student Senate Advisor shall be the Director of Student Life.

Section 2: The Student Senate Faculty Advisor shall be an RCTC faculty member. The faculty advisor for the next academic year shall be selected by the Student President, in consultation with the Student President-Elect and Faculty President, prior to commencement. Once selected, the Faculty Advisor shall serve a term of one academic year with no term limit.
A. The Student Senate Faculty Advisor is expected to attend Student Senate meetings, Senate-Cabinet meetings, fall and spring General Assemblies of the Minnesota State College Student Association (hereinafter “MSCSA”), and other duties as delegated by the Student Senate.

Section 3: The Student Senate Advisor and/or their designee shall be present at all Student Senate and Executive Board meetings, and at all MSCSA assemblies, conferences, retreats and workshops.

Section 4: The Student Senate Advisor shall assist in yearly budget planning, training of officers and other members of the Senate, goal setting and implementation of a yearly work plan. The Student Senate Advisor shall carry out any duties delegated to them by the Senate or the Constitution and By-laws, and serve as an effective link with the administration, faculty, staff and the community.

**ARTICLE IX – RCTC PRESIDENT’S AUTHORITY**

The powers of the Student Senate are derived from Minn. Stat. 136F.22, MNSCU Policies 2.1, 2.3, et al., and related procedures. The President of RCTC shall have power to stay any action of the Student Senate as they are legally responsible for the conduct of the college. If the President stays Student Senate action, a conference shall be held within one calendar week in which the President and the members of the Student Senate discuss the issues involved. If, after the conference, the President still stays the action of the Student Senate, then the President’s action shall become final.

**ARTICLE X – METHOD OF DISSOLUTION**

Section 1: The RCTC Student Senate may be dissolved by one or more of the following methods:
A. By a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the student body.
B. Closing of the college.

**ARTICLE XI – METHOD OF AMENDMENT**

Section 1: The Student Senate, by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the membership (in good standing), shall have the power to amend this Constitution.
A. Amendments must be submitted in writing at least one (1) meeting before it comes to a vote.
B. Proposed amendments must be properly displayed for at least five (5) school days preceding the meeting at which it comes to a vote.
Section 2: Any member of the Student Senate (in good standing) may submit a proposal for an amendment.

Section 3: Any member of the student body may submit a proposal for an amendment for the consideration of the Student Senate by presentation of a petition in favor of the amendment which contains the signatures of at least five (5) percent of the students at RCTC.

Rochester Community and Technical College
Student Senate By-laws

ARTICLE I – QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Each member of the Student Senate must be, and remain, a student in good standing at Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC). The definition of a student in good standing is as follows:
A. All students must carry a minimum of six (6) credit hours at the beginning of a term, and may not drop below three (3) credit hours during the term.
B. Students must carry at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average.
C. Students must not have been previously removed from the Student Senate for reasons of conduct or character.
D. Special circumstances will be addressed by the Student Senate and will need a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership for approval.

Section 2: The following additional qualifications apply to the officer positions of the Senate.
A. Students must be voting members of the Student Senate to be eligible for election to the positions of Senate Vice President, Senate Treasurer and Senate Secretary.
B. In order to be eligible for Student President candidacy, students must complete an application and submit a short essay which must be reviewed and approved by the Student Life Department. Materials must be submitted after the start of spring semester and no later than thirty (30) days prior to elections being held.

ARTICLE II – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1: The Student President is responsible for the organization and general operations of the Student Senate, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
A. Chair all Student Senate, Executive Board, Senate/Cabinet, and Student Life Finance Committee meetings.
B. Distribute agendas for all Student Senate meetings by the last day of the previous week.
C. See to the proper execution of all motions passed by the Senate.
D. Review all committee appointments set by the Vice President.
E. Select students to serve on college committees.
F. Maintain communications with the RCTC Student Senate, in regard to matters dealing with RCTC faculty, staff, and administration, other student senates and the MSCSA.
G. Meet with the Director of Student Life and the RCTC administration on a regular basis throughout the term.
H. Perform a minimum of ten (10) office hours per week.
I. Attend, or appoint a senate designee to attend, monthly MSCSA Governing Council/regional meetings. Attend MSCSA’s fall and spring General Assembly
meetings, National Leadership Conference, and report on these meetings and assemblies to the Student Senate by the next scheduled meeting.
J. Act as a liaison between the ECHO and the Senate.
K. Attend other college and community events to represent the Student Senate.
L. Speak at Commencement and other functions as assigned.
M. Follow the Standard Operating Procedure document for this office.

Section 2: The Vice President of the Student Senate is responsible for, but not limited to, the following:
A. Assist the Student President in aspects of student government/leadership.
B. Fulfill the duties of the Student President in the event the Student President leaves office or is unavailable for an extended period of time.
C. Present charters to the Senate and monitor all activities for student organizations/clubs on campus.
D. Enforce the Constitution and By-laws of the Student Senate.
E. Ensure all Senate meetings follow Parliamentary Order (Robert’s Rules).
F. Serve as chair of the Working Documents Committee.
G. Work a minimum of five (5) office hours per week.
H. Maintain all committee rosters.
I. Serve as a member of the Student Life Finance Committee.
J. Other duties as assigned by the Student President.
K. Follow the Standard Operating Procedure document for this office.

Section 3: The Secretary of Student Senate is responsible for, but not limited to, the following:
A. Assist the Student President in aspects of student government/leadership.
B. Record proceedings of all Student Senate, Student Life Finance Committee, and Senate/Cabinet meetings.
C. Submit within two (2) days of any meeting, a typed draft of the minutes to the Student Senate Advisor, at which time corrections will be made. The final copy will be distributed within three (3) days of said meeting. The minutes shall be distributed to the students through the Student Senate D2L Page.
D. Maintain attendance roster and inform the Student Senate Advisor and Club Advisor of clubs that have their funds frozen.
E. Serve as the custodian of all records for the Student Senate.
F. Perform a minimum of five (5) office hours per week.
G. Serve as a member of the Student Life Finance Committee.
H. Other duties assigned by the Student President.
I. Follow the Standard Operating Procedure document for this office.

Section 4: The Treasurer of the Student Senate is responsible for, but not limited to, the following:
A. Assist the Student President in all aspects of student government/leadership.
B. Coordinate with the Director of Student Life to insure accuracy of the Student Life Budget.
C. Serve as a member of the Student Life Finance Committee.
D. Serve as custodian of all financial records for the Student Senate.
E. Perform a minimum of five (5) office hours per week.
F. Other duties assigned by the Student President.
G. Follow the Standard Operating Procedure document for this office.
Section 5: The **Executive Board** of the Student Senate is responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

A. Act on behalf of the Senate between meetings as necessary; however, decisions of the Executive Board may be overruled by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate membership.

B. Approve the Senate agendas prior to the next Senate meeting.

C. Serve no more than two years in any given executive seat.

D. Participate in Senate functions/activities.

E. Attend all Student Senate, Senate-Cabinet, Student Life Finance Committee, and Executive Board meetings. When two meetings are missed (without being excused by the Executive Board), or repeated or intentional neglect of that officer’s explicit responsibilities as outlined in this document occurs, the officer will lose their position. The student will retain any Student Senate seat held prior to election to the Executive Board, but the officer position that student held will be filled by an interim appointment by the Student President.

F. Discuss and implement standing committee initiatives.

G. Attend MSCSA’s fall and spring General Assembly meetings and a national leadership conference and a minimum of one monthly MSCSA Governing Council/regional meeting per semester.

H. Understand and enforce Robert’s Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1: Each RCTC chartered club will appoint one student delegate and one student alternate by the first (1st) Student Senate meeting of the fall semester.

Section 2: Each newly chartered club during the academic year will appoint a student delegate and one student alternate by the third (3rd) week after the club is chartered.

Section 3: The RCTC Athletic Coordinator will appoint a student delegate and student alternate by the first (1st) Student Senate meeting of fall semester.

Section 4: These student delegates will serve as members of the Student Senate. Clubs will not have access to Student Life funds until a student club representative attends a Student Senate meeting.

Section 5: The Student Senate may, by general consent, appoint students to serve as senators-at-large.

**ARTICLE IV – REMOVAL OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Section 1: By a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Student Senate membership (in good standing) by secret ballot, and with the approval of the Student Senate Advisor, the Student Senate shall have the authority to remove any Senator from membership for:

A. Disciplinary reasons.

B. Failure to perform duties as stated in the Constitution and By-laws.

C. Reasons of character.

D. Failure to cooperate with the other members of the Student Senate.

E. Academic/behavioral probation and/or suspension.

Section 2: If a Senator-at-Large is absent from two (2) Student Senate meetings, the seat shall be vacant and may be filled by interim appointment by the Student President.
ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES

Section 1: Standing Committees shall consist of: Student Life Finance and Working Documents.
   A. Student Life Finance: See Article VII.
   B. Working Documents: The committee is charged to examine and evaluate the working documents of the Student Senate. The working documents of the Senate include, but are not limited to, the Student Senate’s Constitution, By-laws, Standard Operating Procedure, as well as the Student Life Finance Committee Policies and Procedures and Student Life’s Strategic Plan. This committee will be chaired by the Senate Vice President and the other Student Senate officers shall be ex-officio members.

Section 2: Ad-hoc committees can be created by vote of the Senate, shall function in the capacity for which they were designed and shall be automatically dissolved upon submission of their final reports or the conclusion of the academic year.

Section 3: The Student Senate Vice President shall appoint all committee members with approval of the Student President.

ARTICLE VI – CLUBS

Section 1: Any group of students wishing to form a club for any purpose must secure a charter from the Student Senate and the approval of the RCTC President before that organization can be recognized as an official RCTC club.

Section 2: To secure such an approval for a charter, a group must meet the following requirements:
   A. Have a purpose for the club which will benefit the College and does not advocate discrimination or violence of any kind.
   B. Must have a faculty advisor. Club Advisors are responsible for ensuring the club operates in a manner consistent with all laws and regulations, as well as all applicable Minnesota State Colleges and Universities or RCTC policies and procedures.
   C. Submit a club constitution to the Student Senate for approval.
   D. If the club is affiliated with any state or national organization, the affiliated constitution(s) and the terms of affiliation for the club must be filed with the constitution.
   E. The organization must have a minimum of ten (10) active student members in the group at the time of petitioning.

Section 3: Only club members may choose advisors. Club Advisors may not transfer their advisorship between colleagues.

Section 4: A simple majority vote of the Student Senate shall be required to recommend approval of a charter. The Student Senate shall notify the President of the College of its charter recommendation. The Cabinet will consider the Student Senate’s recommendation and either approve or deny it with comment. If approved by the Cabinet, the Student Senate shall then issue the charter.

Section 5: The Student Senate will revoke or suspend the charter of any organization or club for due cause:
   A. If for one (1) year and 2 months an active membership roll does not include a minimum of ten (10) students.
B. If for one (1) year and 2 months, an organization has not actively attempted to fulfill its stated purpose. If an organization has acted in a manner contrary to its stated purposes or has brought discredit to the college.

Section 6: Two (2) Student Senate meeting absences per academic year by any club shall be considered prima facie evidence to suspend that club’s charter and freeze all associated Student Life funds.

Section 7: Any club charter which has been suspended and has funds frozen under Section 6 must have a student representative attend two (2) consecutive Student Senate, Executive Board and/or Student Life Finance Committee meetings, which will automatically return the club to good standing. Additional absences after a club has been returned to good standing will automatically return it to suspended status under Section 6.

Section 8: Absence from one half or more of total Student Senate meetings held in a given academic year by any club will be considered prima facie evidence to suspend that club’s charter and freeze all associated Student Life funds until the next academic year. Clubs suspended and frozen under this section shall have the right to an appeal.

Section 9: Denial or revocation of a charter or probationary status for a club or organization shall not be used as a device for censorship.

Section 10: All chartered clubs, or the Club Advisor as appropriate, shall be responsible for:
A. Assigning a Student Senate delegate and alternate as stated in Article III of these By-laws.
B. Submitting an annual non-personnel operating budget request for the next fiscal year by the date set forth by the Student Life Finance Committee.

Section 11: Student Life funds shall be distributed to the clubs as per the Student Life Finance Policies and Procedures.

Section 12: The Student Senate will notify the RCTC President of club charters that the Student Senate anticipates will not be renewed for the upcoming academic year.

ARTICLE VII – STUDENT LIFE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Section 1: The composition of the Student Life Finance Committee shall consist of the Student President as chair and a non-voting member, the Senate Vice President, Senate Secretary, and Senate Treasurer, two (2) other Senators (See Article V, section 3), two (2) Students-at-Large, one (1) Student Athlete Representative, the Director of Student Life, Student Life Specialist, and the Athletic Coordinator. The Business Office Manager shall attend all Student Life Finance Committee Meetings as a non-voting member.

Section 2: Duties of the committee:
A. To approve all expenditures from the Student Life Contingency Fund.
B. To develop a Student Life budget, including a Student Life fee recommendation for the following year, and to appropriate funding to the Student Life cost centers.
C. The Student Life budget that is adopted by the committee shall be presented to the Student Senate, and sent to the RCTC President for final approval.
D. In the event that enrollment or revenue projections are not met, the Student Life Budget shall be adjusted by the Director of Student Life in consultation with the Student Life Finance Committee. Adjustment recommendations must be approved by the RCTC President.
E. All Student Life Finance Committee members shall attend all scheduled meetings and any special meetings called by the Student President unless they are excused by the committee chairperson.

ARTICLE VIII – METHOD OF AMENDMENT

Section 1: The Student Senate, by a simple majority vote of the membership (in good standing), shall have the power to amend these By-laws.
A. Amendments must be submitted in writing at least one (1) meeting before it comes to a vote.
B. Proposed amendments must be properly displayed for at least five (5) school days preceding the meeting at which it comes to a vote.

Section 2: The Student Senate Working Documents Committee or any member of the Student Senate may submit an amendment to any of the Senate’s working documents.

Section 3: Any member of the Student Body may submit a proposed amendment for consideration by the Student Senate through presentation of a petition in favor of the amendment that contains the signatures of at least five (5) percent of the students at RCTC.

ARTICLE IX – ACTIVATION

This Constitution and By-laws, upon ratification, shall become effective on January 12, 2015. All policies and regulations adopted by previous Student Senates remain in effect unless they are inconsistent with this Constitution and By-laws.

Constitution and By-laws ratified on December 16, 2014.

Michael J. Wenzel, Student President, 2014-2015

Student Senate Vice President Dirk McGrane

Student Senate Secretary Katharine Viker

Student Senate Treasurer Micheal Olson