

Lutheran Student Movement in the United States of America Constitution

PREAMBLE

We, Christian students following in the Lutheran tradition, recognizing our identity in the Christian faith as confessed by the Apostle's Creed, and living in a creative and dynamic relationship with all believers, frame this Constitution to inform and empower a faithful witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ in the academic community. It is our purpose to enable and facilitate that witness and service to which God calls local communities of faith in higher education. We acknowledge that all have sinned and fall short of the grace of God and therefore, we welcome all individuals as we are all saved solely by the grace of God and in need of God's forgiveness.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be Lutheran Student Movement in the United States of America, hereinafter referred to as LSM-USA.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSES

The purposes of LSM-USA shall be:

- A. To strengthen and develop the faith and life of the believer through participation in the Community of Word and Sacrament;
- B. To advance the understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its implications for the life of the believer in the world, and especially believers within higher education;
- C. To enable and encourage believers in serving their neighbors for the glory and honor of Christ;
- D. To provide a well-developed program of study, assembly, discussion and action, which shall provide for the expression of fellowship in Christ and of the social and intellectual concerns of campuses, of communities and of the entire world;
- E. To encourage active participation in the life and mission of the Lutheran churches;
- F. To promote Christian unity in every possible way; and
- G. To communicate and cooperate with fellow Christians in ecumenical concerns, and to provide opportunities that encourage community with and witness to non-Christian persons and groups.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

The membership of LSM-USA shall consist of such groups and individuals as subscribe to the purposes stated above and qualify for membership according to the Bylaws.

ARTICLE IV - THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The powers of LSM-USA shall be vested in the Legislative Assembly, which shall meet in conjunction with the annual conference, and the manner of election or appointment of whose members are specified in the Bylaws.

During the business session of the Assembly, LSM-USA will vote on positions and actions for LSM-USA to take. The legislation adopted is an active response to our growing understanding of what it means to be God's people in today's world. The legislation serves to express our needs, concerns and actions to the church bodies and to our fellow students here and abroad. The deadline for legislation that will be guaranteed consideration at the annual assembly will be October 31st prior to the assembly. The deadline for legislation that will be considered as time allows shall be received by December 1st prior to the assembly. Any legislation received after this date will only be considered with approval of the assembly. A simple majority vote by the assembly will allow the presentation of the legislation. The deadline for all revisions to legislation by the author will be December 1st. All legislation shall be submitted to the LSM-USA President, who will then forward it to the rest of the LSM-USA council. The legislative committee can allow additional revisions after this date at its discretion.

Under special circumstances, due to time constraints, (e.g. meetings and conferences held after the December 1st deadline), legislation which is a direct result of these special circumstances will be accepted for consideration at the annual assembly. These special circumstances will be determined by the legislative committee and the appointed Parliamentarian.

All legislation received by the December 1st deadline will be posted on the LSM-USA website and limited hard copies of legislation will be available upon request at the national gathering. All legislation that is received after the October 31st deadline and before the December 1st deadline will be posted to the LSM-USA website by the webmaster/webmistress marked indicating that it is not guaranteed consideration.

There are four types of legislation:

- (A) resolutions
- (B) position papers
- (C) regional concerns
- (D) study/action projects

(A) Resolutions

1. Purpose:
 - a. Address particular issues by providing necessary background information and outlining specific actions for LSM-USA.
 - b. Commit all affiliated groups and individuals supportive of the resolution to follow through on specified action(s)
2. Passage by Assembly requires a two-thirds majority of votes cast.

(B) Position Papers

1. Purpose:
 1. Define LSM-USA's particular position on an issue relevant to the life and mission of the LSM-USA for advice and counsel to members and representatives of LSM-USA.
2. Passage by Assembly requires simple majority.

(C) Regional Concerns

1. Purpose:
 - a. Inform Assembly of the commitment of a specific region or group to action on a particular issue.
 - b. Does not commit Assembly to any actions.
2. No vote is required.

(D) Study/Action Projects

1. Purpose:
 - a. Explore different aspects of an issue or a problem with the intention of providing impetus for local group discussion.
2. Passage by Assembly requires simple majority.

Authors shall properly footnote all facts in the legislation that they propose to LSM-USA. Authors will be permitted to lead a group session discussing their legislation upon request to the National Council by December 1st.

The format of the aforementioned types of legislation will reside in the Bylaws and be maintained by the legislative committee. Templates for each type of legislation will be provided and maintained on the LSM-USA web-site by the webmaster at the request of the legislative committee and be made available via hardcopy by the National Office upon request.

The chair person or any member of the legislative committee will remove all minor grammatical errors from legislation once the legislation is approved at the assembly. All changes will be made in conjunction with author approval.

ARTICLE V - THE COUNCIL

Between meetings of the Legislative Assembly, the affairs of LSM-USA shall be managed by the Council, whose members will be elected according to the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI - THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. Between meetings of the Council, the affairs of LSM-USA shall be managed by the Executive Committee.

B. The Executive Committee shall include the following officers, the manner of election or appointment of whose members are specified in the Bylaws.

1. The President, shall convene and preside at the annual conference and at meetings of the Council and of the Executive Committee, shall manage the affairs of LSM-USA between meetings of the Executive Committee in consultation with the Council, and shall oversee and offer support to all committees of LSM-USA but shall not chair any committee.
2. The Vice-President, shall maintain the correspondence of the Council and of the Executive Committee, keep accurate records of the meetings of the Council, the Executive Committee, and the Legislative Assembly; maintain a physical record of all legislation and publications of LSM-USA. As chair of the financial committee the vice-president shall be responsible for providing the Council and Legislative Assembly a financial report; and also, in conjunction with an ELCA staff person, monitor the expenditures of LSM-USA and coordinate fundraising when determined by the council.
3. The Advocate for Diversity and Service-Learning shall establish and maintain LSM-USA's ties to national, international, and multicultural students at local, regional, and national levels through the coordination of the regional equivalents of the Advocate for Diversity and Service-Learning; and promote a broader understanding and awareness of multicultural issues and concerns facing LSM-USA.
 - a. The candidate running for this position is encouraged to be a member of color, or a member whose first language is not English, or a member who was raised outside the United States of America for the majority of their lives, or a member who feels they are a minority.
 - b. This elected position shall be a member with desire and passion to end social-injustices and to educate LSM-USA, its regions, and the world about diversity and social injustice.
 - i. The Advocate for Diversity and Learning, as chair of the Diversity and Service-Learning committee, is additionally responsible for the creation and promotion of a national service-learning theme to be taken part in by each of the regions, as well as aiding regions in any service-learning projects or discussions they may partake in.

C. LSM-USA acknowledges that all peoples are equal in the eyes of God and that the Executive Committee should be elected on the basis of a candidate's ability and call to serve Christ in a given office. LSM-USA further acknowledges that the abilities and callings which are given by Christ transcend all peoples, regardless of their identities and orientations, and that all members shall be encouraged equally to follow a call to serve in elected office.

ARTICLE VII - THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Council shall plan, promote, and execute an annual conference designed to assist LSM-USA in the achievement of its stated purposes. The annual conference shall be open to all members of LSM-USA. Notice of the annual conference shall be given to all members at least ninety (90) days prior to the annual conference

ARTICLE VIII - DISSOLUTION

A. LSM-USA may be dissolved only as follows: At the meeting of the Council held in conjunction with the annual conference, dissolution shall be proposed and ratified by vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Council. At the next annual conference, the proposal must be ratified by vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Legislative Assembly.

B. In the event of dissolution of LSM-USA and all of its regions, all funds, records, and property of LSM-USA shall be given to the leaders, directors and overseers of Lutheran Campus Ministry within the ELCA for use only in conjunction with Lutheran Campus Ministry. If any regions vote to remain active after the dissolution of the national representation of LSM they may maintain control of regional funds for continued LSM regional ministry.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Legislative Assembly, provided that notice of each proposed amendment shall have been given to all members of LSM-USA at least ninety (90) days prior to the Legislative Assembly.

The Bylaws of the Lutheran Student Movement of the United States of America

Updated December 2008

Article I – Membership

- A. Members of LSM-USA shall be any individual who is enrolled in one or more of the instructional programs of any established institution of post-secondary education in the United States, and declares affiliation with LSM-USA by attending the annual assembly. Members need not be affiliated with any specific Lutheran body such as a church or campus ministry, but should in some way identify with Lutheran tradition.
- B. Associate members of LSM-USA may include those individuals who are not students, but who find an identity in the Christian faith as confessed by the Lutheran churches. Associate members shall have voice but not vote.
- C. Honorary members of LSM-USA shall include those individuals who, in the judgment of the Legislative Assembly, have made a significant contribution toward the realization of the mission of LSM-USA. Honorary members shall have voice but not vote.

Article II – Voting Procedures

- A. Each member group shall be granted one vote at the Legislative Assembly. A member group is composed of all members present at the legislative assembly who attend the exact same established post secondary institution of education. If an institution has only one member present, that one member shall be the member group. If an institution has multiple campuses, each campus will be one member group.
- B. The right of voice at the Legislative Assembly shall be granted to all members of LSM-USA.
- C. The legislative committee shall determine membership as per these bylaws at the Legislative Assembly.

Article III – The regions

- A. The regions of LSM-USA shall be as follows:
 1. Region 1 (PAC-Northwest): Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington
 2. Region 2 (PAC-Southwest): California, Hawaii, Nevada
 3. Region 3 (Desert Southwest): Arizona, New Mexico, Western Texas
 4. Region 4 (Rocky Mountain): Colorado, Utah, Wyoming
 5. Region 5 (Tri-Otas): Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota
 6. Region 6 (Central Midwest): Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Upper Peninsula Michigan
 7. Region 7 (Central) Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri
 8. Region 8 (ALTO): Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma
 9. Region 9 (IMOK): Indiana, Lower Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky
 10. Region 10 (NELSM): New York, Vermont, Rhode Island, Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts
 11. Region 11 (MALSM): Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, West Virginia, Maryland, D.C.
 12. Region 12 (Blue Ridge): Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina
 13. Region 13 (GALSM): Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico
- B. Regional boundaries may be adjusted by majority vote of the Legislative Assembly.

Article IV – The council

- A. Voting members of the council shall include members of the Executive Committee and one representative from each region of LSM-USA.
- B. Regional representatives to the Council shall be elected according to the practice of each region no later than the conclusion of the annual conference. Each region shall select an alternate representative who shall serve in the absence of the regional representative or in the event of a vacancy in the office of regional representative.
- C. Non-voting members of the Council shall include advisors, staff of LSM-USA, and any persons whom the Council of the Legislative Assembly shall so designate.
- D. All members of the Council shall assume office at the conclusion of the annual conference.

- E. The Council shall meet at the immediate conclusion of the annual conference, at least once between meetings of the Legislative Assembly, and at least once in conjunction with the annual conference. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the President or at the request of one-third (1/3) of the voting members of the Council. With the exception of those meetings held in conjunction with or at the immediate conclusion of the annual conference, notice of all meetings shall be given to all members of the Council at least thirty (30) days prior to each meeting.

Article V – The executive committee

- A. The executive committee shall be elected in a secret ballot from voting members of LSM-USA who are in attendance at the annual conference; the candidate with the most votes shall be elected.
- B. No officer shall serve more than two terms on the executive committee.
- C. In the absence of the president or in the event of a vacancy in the office of president, the duties and office shall be assumed by the vice-president.
- D. In the absence of any member of the executive committee or in the event of a vacancy in any office of the executive committee, the duties and office shall be assumed by another member of the executive committee or by a member of the council upon election by vote of a majority of the council.

Article VI – Advisors

- A. The Council shall select at least one advisor from among Lutheran campus ministry personnel in the United States.
- B. Additional advisors shall include the appropriate staff members within the unit of Vocation and education as set forth by the ELCA, and any other persons whom the council may designate.

Article VII – Contributions

Groups and individuals who are or were members of LSM-USA are encouraged to make financial contributions to the best of their ability in support of LSM-USA.

Article VIII – Quorum

- A. A quorum for the transaction of business, etc., at meetings of the Council or the Executive Committee shall be a majority of the voting members of those respective bodies.
- B. A quorum for the transaction of business, etc., at the Legislative Assembly shall be a majority of the voting members of LSM-USA who are in attendance at the annual conference.

Article IX – Committees

- A. The appointment and instruction of committees shall be the province of either the Council or the Legislative Assembly. However the following committee structure is recommended:
 - 1. Legislative;
 - a. Be responsible for all affairs regarding the LSM-USA constitution and bylaws
 - b. Lead legislative affairs at the assembly
 - c. Offer guidance and counsel on all legislative issues
 - d. Monitor, record, and report national and regional instances of non-compliance to the LSM-USA constitution and bylaws
 - 2. Diversity and Service Learning
 - a. Establish and promote a national service learning theme
 - b. Raise awareness of social injustices
 - c. Create, maintain, and monitor relationships and/or partnerships with social ministry organizations
 - 3. Public relations and marketing
 - a. Maintain LSM-USA Website
 - b. Publish LSM-USA Newsletter (New Frontiers) twice a year
 - c. Review all LSM-USA publications annually
 - d. Promote LSM-USA and its various programs and events

- e. Relay information regarding LSM-USA to LCMs, LSMs, ELCA Colleges and other pertinent organizations
- 4. Assessment
 - a. Create and distribute an annual report to all appropriate entities and organizations
 - b. Evaluate LSM-USA and its mission, and identity statements annually
 - c. Advise and assist the executive committee of LSM-USA in guiding and focusing LSM-USA's future and goals
 - d. Asses how to develop LSM members at local campuses
 - e. Works to solve problems of LSM-USA in order for the movement to continue its mission
- 5. Finance
 - a. Manage and monitor LSM-USA Budget
 - b. Create and present finance report to the national assembly

Article X – Parliamentary Authority

In all procedures not covered by its Constitution and Bylaws, LSM-USA shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order as most recently revised.

Article XI – Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the Legislative Assembly, provided that notice of each proposed amendment shall have been given to all members of LSM-USA at least ninety (90) days prior to the Legislative Assembly. Exceptions are noted above.

Article XII – Regional Responsibility

- A. Regions shall be required to submit an annual budget to the appropriate party of LSM-USA immediately after the region's first retreat of the year or by the first day of March.
- B. Regions must possess a bank account
 - 1. Signers shall include the regional president, the regional treasurer, and at least one regional advisor.
 - 2. A year end summary of all regional accounts shall be rendered to the LSM-USA vice-president in December
- C. Regions shall maintain a record of events, finances, procedures, documents including legislation, and any other pertinent information to the welfare for the future of the region within a physical or digital file. This file shall be maintained by the region's president.
- D. Regions shall ensure that LSM-USA has the most current and up-to-date constitution and bylaws on file. If a regional constitution or bylaws is updated, the new file shall be submitted to the appropriate parties in LSM-USA.
- E. Regions shall be responsible for designating and sending a representative to all LSM-USA national council meetings each year.
 - 1. Regions shall be financially responsible for sending their representative to one (1) national council meeting per year.
 - a. Regions may individually determine where the financing comes from.
- F. Regions shall be responsible for advertising and promoting all national events and programs.
- G. Regions shall submit an annual covenant of commitment to LSM-USA. This pledge shall be signed by the regional president and advisor after approval and support of the regional body. This document shall be submitted to the vice-president of LSM-USA immediately following the first regional retreat of the calendar year or by the first day of March.