

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 secretary 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 Secretary of International and Multicultural Concerns, a guaranteed, elected position should be a student of color or of a student whose first language is other than English, shall establish and maintain LSM-USA's ties to other national and international and multicultural students at local, regional, and national levels through the coordination of the regional SIMC's; and promote a broader understanding and awareness of multicultural issues and concerns facing LSM-USA. The Secretary of International and Multicultural Concerns should have significant experience with diversity, social injustice, and/or minorities and shall help coordinate an annual LSM-USA service learning theme.

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.