

# Nebraska Wesleyan University's Constitution of the Student Affairs Senate



## **Preamble:**

A sense of pride exists in the mind of each senator who knows he/she has been elected by peers from the same academic division or living unit. The senator acts as a liaison between these students and the Student Affairs Senate. Communicating information between these two groups of students further develops this pride as the senator works toward the improvement of student life at Nebraska Wesleyan University. In this light senators should have an active relationship with those students and departments they represent.

The development of motivation goes hand in hand with a sense of pride. Direct involvement with the Senate's projects motivates senators to input their ideas, watch those ideas grow into plans of action, witness the action, and evaluate the results. Committee work on projects creates a sense of unity among the group's members, as well as a sense of accomplishment in knowing that positive steps have been taken toward the well-being of the university and its students.

The responsibility of working as a liaison gives senators the opportunity to work closely not only with students, but also with the faculty and administration. As a result, senators gain knowledge about the university and its operations which they can pass back to those they represent in order to gather their opinions and responses.

A voice in student government is clearly a responsibility and an honor to those chosen to serve. This voice, when tactfully spoken, can ensure unity, spirit, and good will among students and the community of Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Attending Student Affairs Senate meetings weekly is both a duty and a privilege for individual senators. Once a week, in Callen Conference Center, a Student Affairs Senate meeting will be held. Upon entering one will find a room full of students bearing the title of "senator." They are genuinely concerned about the students and the university. As a result of their efforts, time, and dedication, they are confident that only positive changes will occur for their colleagues at Wesleyan.

Sterling L. Miller & John M. Allen  
President & Vice-President of Student Affairs Senate 1984-1985

We, the students of Nebraska Wesleyan University, with the consent of the Board of Governors, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution to provide a democratic procedure for serving student needs, coordinating student activities and promoting the general welfare of the student body.

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**Article I: Name**

**Section 1:** The name of this organization shall be the Student Affairs Senate of Nebraska Wesleyan University, henceforth referred to as SAS.

**Article II: Purpose**

**Section 1:** The purpose of this organization shall be to enact legislation to enhance student life. SAS shall strive to protect the academic and social rights and responsibilities of students and promote diversity, while laboring to guarantee the freedom of students to be informed about every aspect of their University. SAS shall act as a liaison between students, the administration, faculty, and Board of Governors for the further advancement of Nebraska Wesleyan University.

**Article III: Membership**

**Section 1:** Any full-time student in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, henceforth referred to as CLAS, at Nebraska Wesleyan University who is in good academic standing with the University at the time of taking office is eligible for the office of senator or representative.

**Section 2:** When elected each senator or representative must remain in good academic standing and be enrolled full-time for the duration of his or her term.

**Article IV: Elections**

**Section 1:** Procedures for Elections

- A. A list of the names of candidates for an election must be prepared by the Public Relations and Elections Committee, henceforth referred to as the PRE Committee, and presented to SAS prior to holding an election. Candidates may withdraw their names from the candidate list by submitting a written request to the PRE Chairperson at any time prior to the election.
- B. An alphabetical list of eligible voters, full-time and part-time students in the CLAS working toward a degree at Nebraska Wesleyan University, will be obtained by the PRE Committee from the Office of the Registrar.
- C. The official polling places for all elections shall be publicized and made known to the students two weeks prior to elections.

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- D. Two election officials from SAS at large shall be present at the polling place at all times.
- E. The ballot box shall be sturdy and well secured.
  - I. It shall be placed under the supervision of the election officials at all times.
  - II. It shall be checked prior to the opening of the polls to ensure that it is empty, and this fact attested to by two witnesses in a signed statement indicating the date, time, and place of such inspection.
  - III. When the polls are closed, at least two election officials must seal the ballot box in the manner that no additional ballots can be inserted without breaking the seal and deposit within the ballot box a signed statement as to the date, time, and place of sealing the box.
- F. Each student wishing to cast a ballot shall provide evidence of his/her identity by showing photo identification and signing the list of eligible voters by his/her name before receiving a ballot.
- G. A committee of at least three persons shall be responsible for counting ballots and certifying the correctness of the election. If the computer services department is used to count the ballots, arrangements must be made at least two weeks prior to the election with the director of the computer services department. The committee also shall devise a test to ensure that the procedures used within the computer services department to count ballots are valid.
- H. The technology coordinator, PRE Committee, and Computer Services shall have the power to oversee the implementation of online voting.

**Section 2: General Election**

- A. The SAS general election shall take place during the 14<sup>th</sup> week of the spring semester. Installation of the newly elected SAS will take place at the first SAS meeting of the fall semester.
- B. Students may gain a seat on SAS by representing any one of five academic divisions (Professional, Fine Arts, Humanities, Natural Science, and Social Science). The seats available for each division shall be determined by the PRE Committee according to the percentage of students with declared majors in those divisions.

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- C. President and Vice-President of the Student Body candidates shall run in pairs. Each pair shall obtain one petition from the Student Life Office and return the completed petition to that office no later than two weeks prior to the general election. This petition must include the signatures of at least 100 full-time or part-time students working toward a degree at Nebraska Wesleyan University.
- D. Candidates for student senator must obtain a petition from the Student Life Office and return the completed petition to that office no later than two weeks prior to the general election. All petitions of students wishing to represent their academic division on SAS must include the signatures of at least 25 full-time or part-time students working toward a degree at Nebraska Wesleyan whose major field of study also falls within the division they will represent.
- E. The Executive Council of SAS, or its designated authority, must validate all petitions.
- F. Students shall vote in the general election in any one division in which they have a declared major. Undeclared students are eligible to vote in any one division in which they intend to declare.
- G. To elect a President/Vice-President a plurality of the popular vote shall be sufficient.
- H. Those candidates in each division receiving the most votes, up to the number of seats available for each division, shall be elected as senators.
- I. In the case of a tie between two or more candidates, a run-off election will be held between or among these candidates no later than the Wednesday of the next academic week.

**Section 3:** Faculty representatives shall be elected as prescribed by the faculty constitution.

**Section 4:** Administration representatives shall be appointed by the President of Nebraska Wesleyan University.

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**Section 5:** Filling of special seats in SAS:

- A. Residential Facility representatives – Will be elected from an election within each residence hall. The individual with the majority of the popular vote of residents shall serve as that facility's representative. The election will be conducted by the Residence Life Coordinator in a manner he/she deems most effective.
- B. Commuter representatives - Will be elected by commuting students in the general election.
- C. International representative – Will be elected by the international students. This election shall be conducted within the first two weeks of the fall semester.
- D. Minority representatives – Will be appointed by the Director of Multicultural Programs and Services.
- E. Disabilities representative – Will be appointed by the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities.
- F. Greek Representatives – Will be elected internally by each Greek Chapter.

**Section 6:** Senior Class Council Election

- A. The PRE Committee shall conduct an election for the following year's Senior Class Council, which shall consist of a President, Secretary/Treasurer, and 4 members, at the same time as the general election.
- B. The duration of the Senior Class Council's term shall begin upon the announcement of the election results until the class has graduated and fulfilled all obligations in regard to year served.
- C. The PRE Committee shall be responsible for filling any vacancies in the above Council by elections within the senior class.

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- D. Duties
- I. President: The President is responsible for coordinating the class gift and any class project, for selecting the senior class sponsor, and for speaking at class engagements, including commencement. He or she will work extensively with the office of University Advancement and the office of Student Life in matters concerning the senior class.
  - II. Secretary/Treasurer: The Secretary/Treasurer will correspond with the senior class, collect funds for the class gift, and give the invocation at commencement. He or she shall also assist the President in any way possible.
  - III. Class Council Members: The remaining members of the Senior Class Council will assist the President and the Secretary/Treasurer in accomplishing the goals of the senior class.

**Section 7:** University Judiciary and Board of Governors Appointments

- A. Any student interested in becoming a student member of the University Judiciary or Board of Governors, spring/fall seat, shall complete an application available in the Student Life office.
  - I. The application periods shall be publicized and made known to the students two weeks prior to deadline.
- B. After a review of all candidates, the President of the Student Body, upon consultation with the Council of Chairs, shall pick a student to fill each available seat according to his/her qualifications upon 2/3 approval of a quorum the Student Affairs Senate.
- C. Any student will only be allowed to hold a voting seat on one of the following: SAS, University Judiciary, Board of Governors. All student members of the Board of Governors and University Judiciary must be full-time students at the time of their election and throughout the duration of their term.
- D. If a student member of University Judiciary or the Board of Governors vacates his or her seat for any reason the President of the Student Body shall select a replacement candidate from any remaining applicants upon 2/3 approval of a quorum of Senate.

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- E. The student member on the Board of Governors shall have a non-voting seat on the SAS.

**Article V: Seats in Senate**

**Section 1:** There shall be 10 non-voting members of SAS

- A. The Advisor, Vice President, Parliamentarian, Treasurer, 1 Board of Governors member, 2 Secretaries, Technology Coordinator, Wesleyan Entertainment Board representative and Publications representative.

**Section 2:** There shall be 50 voting members of SAS

- A. 20 voting seats that shall be divided according to Article IV, Section 2, Sub-Section B.
- B. 3 administrative representatives and 3 faculty representatives
- C. 1 representative from each Greek Chapter (Omega Alpha Chi, Delta Zeta, Willard, Phi Kappa Tau, Omega Chi Rho, Alpha Gamma Delta, Zeta Psi, and Theta Chi).
- D. 2 representatives from the Heim-White Suites and 1 representative from each of the following: Centennial, Burt North, Plainsman, Johnson, Pioneer, Townhouse Village, and Madison Apartments.
- E. 1 international representative
- F. 3 commuter representatives
- G. 2 minority representatives. Minority representatives must be people that identify themselves with traditionally underrepresented groups in society.
- H. 1 disabilities representative

**Article VI: Duties and Ethics of Senators and Representatives**

**Section 1:** Each member shall serve from induction until the end of the following spring semester.

**Section 2:** No senator shall receive a salary.

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- Section 3:** Each senator shall have one vote.
- Section 4:** Each senator shall serve on one of the standing committees of SAS and attend each weekly SAS meeting.
- Section 5:** The individual senators shall represent their respective constituencies to SAS, ascertaining and reporting the opinions of their constituents and initiating appropriate legislation.
- Section 6:** The Executive Council and Committee of Chairs shall each have the power to require any active student member of the SAS or student government, excluding University Judiciary members, to serve in the SAS office at any point during his or her term.
- Section 7:** Each senator is expected to vote according to the wishes of his or her constituents, regardless of the senator's personal interests.
- Section 8:** Each senator is expected to be cognizant of the responsibilities and power that are inherent in his or her position as a policymaker within our campus community and should therefore conduct him- or herself in an ethical manner befitting the position.

**Article VII: Duties of Non-Voting Members**

- Section 1:** The advisor of SAS shall be a member of the faculty, administration or staff appointed by the President of the Student Body and shall help to guide SAS in all matters of business. The advisor of SAS shall also sit on the Committee of Chairs.
- Section 2:** Secretaries
- A. Shall serve a one year term.
  - B. Shall serve as non-voting members of SAS, Committee of Chairs, and the Executive Council.
  - C. Shall compile in an orderly and timely manner all minutes, bills, resolutions, and other information from Senate meetings, making this available to the public in the Office of Student Life and publicizing it through appropriate University outlets, including the SAS web site.
  - D. Shall record attendance of senators at each meeting of SAS and sub-committee meetings.

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- E. Shall keep a record of senators' constituent e-mails to ensure senators are being held accountable.

**Section 3:** Technology Coordinator

- A. Shall serve a one year term.
- B. Shall serve as a non-voting member of SAS.
- C. Shall develop and maintain an SAS website complete with recent minutes and legislation, as well as any other materials about SAS that are deemed appropriate and necessary.

**Section 4:** Parliamentarian

- A. Shall serve a one year term.
- B. Shall serve as a non-voting member of SAS.
- C. Shall instruct the rest of the members of SAS on proper use of Parliamentary Procedure according to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
- D. May volunteer to be a member of an SAS committee.

**Section 5:** Board of Governors Representative

- A. Shall serve a one year term.
- B. Shall serve as a non-voting member of SAS.
- C. May volunteer to be a member of an SAS committee.

**Section 6:** Wesleyan Entertainment Board Representative

- A. Shall serve a one year term.
- B. Shall serve as a non-voting member of SAS.
- C. May volunteer to be a member of an SAS committee.

**Section 7:** Publications Representative

- A. Shall serve a one year term.
- B. Shall serve as a non-voting member of SAS.

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- C. Shall write a column of SAS activities for each edition of the Reveille.
- D. May volunteer to be a member of an SAS committee.

**Article VIII: Meetings**

**Section 1:** SAS shall hold a meeting once a week that will be held in Callen Conference Center. The time shall be determined by Wesleyan scheduling.

**Section 2:** Meetings of SAS may be held at the discretion of SAS student senators called by a petition of 20 percent of the total SAS membership.

**Section 3:** A quorum constitutes 2/3 of the filled voting positions of SAS.

**Section 4:** Robert's Rules of Order, the latest edition, shall govern the actions of the SAS in all matters not otherwise prescribed by this Constitution.

**Section 5:** Legislation

- A. Legislative actions that fall within the authority of the SAS are defined as Resolutions (e.g., expressions of SAS recognition or disbursement of monies from SAS funds). Legislative actions that fall outside the authority of the SAS are defined as Bills, and therefore require approval of the President of the University and/or the Board of Governors (e.g., constitutional amendments, activity fee allocations, or changes in University policy).
  - I. Legislation is to be submitted to the President of the University within 72 hours of the Student Body President's approval. Should the President reject the action, then it would require a 2/3 vote of the SAS to appeal the measure to the Board of Governors – which is bound to respond not later than its second subsequent regular meeting.
- B. After introduction, any legislation not originating in a standing committee of Senate shall be referred to the appropriate committee as determined by the Vice President for at least one week before a vote is taken.

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**Section 6:** At the request of any two Senators any vote upon a main motion may be taken by a roll call, in which case every Senator's name and manner of vote shall be recorded by the Secretaries. This shall not apply when voting on candidates for an election.

**Section 7:** Any person recognized by the chair shall be permitted to speak and debate in any meeting of the SAS.

**Article IX: Officers**

**Section 1:** Duties and Powers of the President of the Student Body

- A. Shall act as a representative of SAS in all functions calling for a representative of SAS, except as otherwise designated. The President shall have the authority to appoint senators to aid in this function.
- B. Shall serve on the Executive Committee of the Faculty and as the fall/spring representative on the Board of Governors.
- C. Shall act as the chair of the Executive Council.
  - I. Shall have the power to appoint a Cabinet that will be part of the Executive Council.
- D. Shall appoint a Parliamentarian, 2 Secretaries, a Treasurer, the spring/fall member of the Board of Governors, the Technology Coordinator and members of University Judiciary.
- E. Shall appoint members to all Ad Hoc Committees within Senate and other University committees. Upon the request for student representatives to faculty/administrative committees the President shall appoint said representatives.
- F. Shall have the ability to request reports on activity, structure, and function of all organizations receiving full or partial funding from SAS.
- G. Shall have the ability to present a plan of operation and objectives to SAS during his or her first 3 weeks of office to be discussed and planned for implementation.
- H. Shall have the ability to address SAS within 1 week after the Presidential inauguration.

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- I. Shall be responsible to fulfill all duties, responsibilities, and obligations conferred upon the office by SAS.
- J. Shall have the power to veto legislative acts of Senate within ten days of the passage of the legislation. If the President does not take action within those ten days, the passed legislation will automatically be enacted without his/her signature.

**Section 2:** Duties and Powers of the Vice-President

- A. Shall conduct the weekly meeting or any called session of SAS.
- B. Shall have voting privileges only in the event of a tie-vote.
- C. Shall assume the duties of the President in the event of the President's absence or incapacity to perform his or her duties.
- D. Shall act as the chair of the Committee of Chairs and shall exercise voting privileges within the committee.
- E. Shall be a member of the Executive Council.
- F. Shall be responsible to fulfill all duties, responsibilities, and obligations conferred upon the office by SAS.
- G. Shall not be eligible to hold the at-large student seat on the Board of Governors.

**Section 3:** Duties and Powers of the Treasurer

- A. Shall keep a current record of all SAS student fee accounts and business that relates to said accounts.
- B. Shall report at each weekly SAS meeting on the balance of all SAS accounts.
- C. Will sit as a member of the Budget Committee.
- D. Shall be a member of the Executive Council.
- E. Shall be responsible to fulfill all duties, responsibilities, and obligations conferred upon the office by SAS.

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**Article X: Executive Council**

**Section 1:** The Executive Council shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretaries, and any Cabinet Members (should the President deem necessary).

**Section 2:** The duties of the Executive Council shall be to ensure the smooth movement and dissemination of ideas and thoughts between the Administration and the student body of Nebraska Wesleyan University.

**Article XI: Committees**

**Section 1:** The Standing Committees

- A. The Committee of Chairs – Will consist of the Vice-President, chairpersons of standing committees, Secretaries, and the SAS Advisor.
  - I. Duties and powers of the Committee of Chairs shall include serving as the emergency governing board of SAS in the event business must be handled and a quorum of SAS cannot be secured.
  - II. Shall be responsible for executing all rulings and policies passed by SAS, in conjunction with any Senate standing committees dealing with the action taken.
  - III. Shall be responsible for checking participation of student appointments to Faculty and Administrative committees.
- B. Budget – The Budget Committee shall deal with all budgetary matters, following all rules and regulations outlined in the NWU SAS Budget Handbook.
- C. Academic Affairs – The Academic Affairs Committee shall deal with matters involving academic policy and faculty relations.
- D. Public Relations and Elections (PRE) – The Public Relations and Elections Committee shall be responsible for organizing Senate social activities, general publicity, and conducting elections, as prescribed in Article IV.
- E. Student Affairs – The Student Affairs Committee shall deal with matters regarding student relations, social life, recognition of student organizations, and Student Center functioning.

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- F. Buildings and Grounds – The Buildings and Grounds Committee shall deal with matters regarding the physical grounds and facilities of the University.
- G. Multicultural Affairs and Minority Viewpoints – The Multicultural Affairs and Minority Viewpoints Committee shall deal with all matters relating to discrimination, prejudice, and intolerance. The committee is also responsible for voicing and addressing minority viewpoints.

**Section 2:** Beginning at the second SAS meeting of the Fall Semester a Chair will be elected for each committee. Nominations will be taken from the floor in a manner decided upon by the Vice-President.

**Section 3:** The Committee of Chairs will appoint each senator to a Standing Committee.

**Section 4:** SAS Account Committees – SAS will work with other University committees requesting or requiring student representation or input, with student members of such committees being appointed by the President as indicated in Article X Section 2. SAS Account Committees that require student representative appointments are, but not limited to, the following:

- A. Wesleyan Wheels – Wesleyan Wheels is a safe ride program for all students and is funded by student fees and administered through SAS. It is considered an independent agency of SAS.

**Section 5:** Ad Hoc Committees – SAS shall establish and dissolve Ad Hoc committees as it deems necessary. Members of such committees shall be appointed by the President as indicated in Article X Section 2.

**Article XII: Duties and Powers of SAS**

**Section 1:** The SAS shall serve as the official liaison between the student body, Board of Governors, administration and faculty of Nebraska Wesleyan University, conveying student concerns and ideas.

**Section 2:** Senate shall have the power to overturn a presidential veto by a 2/3 vote of a quorum.

**Section 3:** Enacting Legislation – SAS shall have the right to enact legislation pertaining to its purpose, including, but not limited to the following:

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- A. Legislative Recognition and Rights – The SAS shall recommend recognition of proposed new student organizations and approve their constitutions through a SAS bill. Without such recognition and approval, an organization shall not be sanctioned to hold meetings or functions on Wesleyan's campus, post or distribute written material on the campus, or be eligible to receive financial support from SAS.
- B. Organizations' Policies – For a group to be recognized as a campus organization, its purpose must be compatible with the policies of Nebraska Wesleyan University, it must follow the procedures indicated in the SAS Constitution, and must, within the limits of its facilities, be open to any member of the University community who is willing to subscribe to the stated aims and who meets the stated obligations and requirements of the organization.
- C. Use of Facilities and Student Funds – Recognition grants the organization the rights to use Wesleyan facilities and request funds derived from student fees and allocated through SAS.
- D. SAS Approval – Recognition of organizations shall not be construed to imply approval or disapproval of the aims or policies of the organization.

**Section 4:** SAS shall have the power to sponsor social activities of an all-school nature, held on campus and open to any student.

**Section 5:** Budgetary Issues - SAS shall receive and review all requests for student activity fees allocations from any recognized campus organization, honorary, department or program, in accordance to the policies included in the Budget Handbook.

**Section 6:** SAS may at any time submit to a vote of the entire student body any question concerning the general welfare of the student body.

**Section 7:** Special Authority

- A. SAS shall have the power, at any time, to request any student of Nebraska Wesleyan University to appear before it. Failure of the student to comply shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action by University Judiciary.

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- B. SAS shall have the power, at any time, to prohibit any meeting, activity, or social event which conflicts with the regular meeting of SAS, providing the same meeting time is scheduled with reasonable regularity by SAS.
- C. SAS shall have the authority and responsibility to maintain a Student Affairs Senate office in a readily accessible building on campus.

**Article XIII: Vacancies and Removal from Office**

- Section 1:** Any position remaining vacant following the general election shall have the potential to be filled at the beginning of the SAS term for which the election was held. Beginning with the term's first meeting, nominations will be taken from the floor. Nominees must be present in order to run and the process may not consume more than three meetings. The SAS Vice-President shall preside over the meeting(s) to fill the unelected seats. If these seats are not filled at this time they shall remain vacant for the remainder of the term.
- Section 2:** Any seat vacated by a senator or representative during the term for which he or she was elected may be re-filled through an election of the senate. News of the newly available seat must be publicized to eligible nominees. Nominations will be taken from the floor and the nominee must be present to be elected. He or she will be elected by the SAS. This process should take place as soon as possible after the seat(s) is (are) vacated.
- Section 3:** Any senator who exceeds three unexcused absences per term, including general session, committee meetings, and special sessions; shall be expelled from membership in SAS.
- A. Faculty and Administrative Representatives with voting privileges shall be allowed three unexcused absences. If absences exceed three their voting privileges shall be revoked.
  - B. The Committee of Chairs shall rule on the acceptability of all excuses for absences from required meetings.
  - C. The President of the Student Body has the power to appoint individuals to fill vacant seats at any time during the SAS term.
- Section 4:** The SAS Committee of Chairs shall have the power to remove any senator from his or her position by a concurring vote of 3/4 majority.
- Section 5:** Any senator who has been removed from office may appeal his or her removal to the SAS at large.

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- A. A concurring vote of 3/4 majority of a quorum can reinstate said member.

**Section 6:** Removal from office of the Student Body President and Vice-President

- A. Upon a concurring vote of 2/3 of the SAS at large, or upon receipt by SAS of a petition signed by 33% of enrolled full-time and part-time students working toward a degree at Nebraska Wesleyan University, a vote of confidence shall be taken from the student body to affirm the original election of the President and/or Vice-President.
- B. A failure of these officers to receive an affirmative vote of a majority of those full-time and part-time students working toward a degree at Nebraska Wesleyan University and voting in the election shall result in their removal from office.
- C. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Vice-President or President, under circumstances in which the Vice-President is unable to assume the Presidency, the vacant position(s) shall be filled by a senator elected by a majority vote of SAS at large.
- D. If the offices of both President and Vice-President are vacated, the Treasurer shall preside over SAS until a special election is held.

**Article XIV: Amendments**

**Section 1:** There shall be no suspending of any clause in this Constitution.

**Section 2:** Amendments originating from SAS may be passed by a concurring vote of 3/4 of a quorum. A quorum is defined as 2/3 of the total voting membership of SAS.

**Section 3:** Ratification of Amendments

- A. A majority vote of a quorum of the Board of Governors of Nebraska Wesleyan University shall serve to ratify a substantive constitutional amendment.
- B. Non-substantive changes may be made through the SAS legislation procedures and by approval of the President of Nebraska Wesleyan University.

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- C. In the event that SAS, by a majority vote, or the President of Nebraska Wesleyan University disagree as to the determination of an amendment being substantive or non-substantive, the amendment is declared substantive.