

# **Students For Life Constitution**

## ARTICLE I. STUDENTS FOR LIFE

The name of this organization shall be **Students for Life**.

## ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE

**Students for Life** is dedicated to the proposition enunciated by Thomas Jefferson in the United States Declaration of Independence that all human beings are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and among these is the right to life. We hold that all persons from conception to natural death have a right to live and that the laws should support this right. **Students for Life** will include within its mission educating the University community concerning the stands taken on life issues by public officials, as revealed through voting records and public statements, but is strictly independent of any existing or future political party. **Students for Life** benefits the university by (a) providing a forum and fellowship for pro-life students, (b) contributing to the national debate about life issues, and (c) educating people concerning the biology of life in the womb and the status of our laws on life-related issues. We believe students who share the organization's orientation will wish to join, as well as others who are interested in learning about the pro-life movement.

**Students for Life** exists (a) to provide an avenue for pro-life students to join together for fellowship and to promote a pro-life culture, (b) to disseminate accurate, scientific information concerning abortion, its consequences for physical and mental health, and life in the womb, (c) to promote awareness of the current status of the law with respect to abortion, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, and stem-cell research, as well as the positions taken on these issues by those running for or in public office.

## ARTICLE 3. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

**Students for Life** is open to all undergraduate and graduate students at Clarion University regardless of grade point average, class standing, or major. Meetings are bi-weekly during the Fall and Spring semesters. Anyone interested in membership can contact the Faculty Advisor, Dr. Thomas Rourke, who is available at [trourke@clarion.edu](mailto:trourke@clarion.edu).

Section 2.

Membership in **Students for Life** is five dollars per year, payable to the Treasurer.

Section 3.

**Students for Life** is absolutely committed to non-violence and to the promotion of civil discourse concerning life issues. Moreover, **Students for Life** is not affiliated with any political party or church, although it welcomes members of all parties and ecclesiastical organizations. Members who fail to respect these norms through (a) advocating or practicing violence (b) engaging in abusive discourse or personal attacks, or (c) compromising the organization's status

as non-partisan and civic (as opposed to ecclesiastical) by misrepresenting the organization's nature through public speech or action, are subject to dismissal. The decision to dismiss for misconduct will be made if three of the following officers concur: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. In the event that the violator is an officer, the decision to dismiss will be made by three-fourths of the existing membership. The faculty advisor reserves the right to overturn any such decisions.

#### ARTICLE 4. DUTIES AND ELECTIONS OF THE OFFICERS

##### Section 1.

The leadership of **Students for Life** will consist of four elected officers, named as follows with the following duties:

A. President. The President works in conjunction with the Faculty Advisor and is responsible for chairing meetings, setting meeting agendas, making space requests, and seeing that all necessary paperwork required by the Clarion Student Association is submitted correctly and in a timely manner. The President is expected to attend all organization-related functions.

B. Vice-President. The Vice-President assists the President in all of the latter's duties, replacing the President whenever he or she cannot attend a function or perform a duty. The President may delegate responsibilities to the Vice-President whenever the President deems it necessary. If the President vacates office during an academic year for reasons of illness, resignation, or graduation, the Vice-President assumes the position of President for the remainder of the year or for the duration of the President's absence as the case may be. The Vice-President is expected to be involved in the planning and execution of all meetings and functions of the organization.

C. Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for organizing fund-raising activities and collecting student dues. The Treasurer is expected to be involved in the planning and execution of all meetings and functions of the organization. The Treasurer is also responsible for maintaining the organization's financial records.

D. Secretary. The Secretary is responsible for recording the minutes of all meetings and maintaining all non-financial records of the organization's activities. The Secretary is expected to be involved in the planning and execution of all meetings and functions of the organization.

Any officer may be removed for non-fulfillment of duties. If the advisor deems that an officer is not fulfilling duties, he or she will warn the officer verbally. If non-fulfillment of duties continues after the warning, the Advisor will notify the President, who will make provision at the next scheduled business meeting for a vote to remove the officer in question. A two-thirds vote is necessary to remove an officer, in accord with Article 6, Sections 2 and 3 of this Constitution. In the event of removal from Office, the President shall make provision for nomination and election of a new officer in accord with the procedures in Section Two of this Article; with the exception that the election will take place the meeting after the vote to remove occurs. In the

event that it is the President who is failing to fulfill his or her duties, the Advisor will make provision for the vote to remove directly and the Vice-President shall assume the office of President, to be followed by an election for a new Vice-President.

#### Section 2.

Nomination and election of officers will take place at the last meeting in April of each year. Two votes will be sufficient for nomination for any office. Election shall be done by secret ballot. A majority vote of the voters participating in the election is necessary to win any office. In the absence of a majority, there will be a run-off election with the two candidates receiving the most votes on the first ballot placed on the second and deciding ballot. The faculty advisor will count the votes and administer the election. In the event there are vacancies in offices, an election will be held at the next scheduled organization meeting.

#### Section 3.

In order to win an election, a candidate must secure a majority vote of the members participating in the election. In the absence of a majority on the first ballot, a second and deciding ballot will take place.

### ARTICLE 5. ROLE OF FACULTY ADVISOR

#### Section 1.

The faculty advisor is Dr. Thomas Rourke. He serves in this capacity until he retires or resigns the position. In the event of his departure, the President will initiate a search for a replacement. The President has the authority to nominate a new advisor, who will assume the position with the approval of any two other officers. The advisor oversees all organization activities. The Advisor seeks to insure that the organization maintains its institutional integrity and that it also acts in accord with its principles and with this Constitution.

#### Section 2.

The Advisor reserves the right to veto any proposed activity or communication that in his or her judgment compromises the organization's mission. The advisor must pre-approve (a) the content of any written communication emanating from the organization, (b) any interviews to be granted to media sources, (c) all space requests, and (d) all events sponsored by the organization. The advisor is authorized to bring in speakers or presenters related to the organization's mission at his discretion and to commit the organization to sponsorship of events. This includes financial commitments. The advisor can veto any proposed activity that, in his judgment, is not for the good of the organization.

### ARTICLE 6. MEETINGS

#### Section 1.

Meetings will be held every two weeks during the Fall and Spring Semesters. The Secretary will issue a schedule at the beginning of each academic year. With advisor approval, meetings can be postponed.

#### Section 2.

A quorum shall be deemed to exist whenever business is held at a regularly scheduled meeting at which the President, one other officer, and six others are present. With the approval of the advisor, students who cannot attend a meeting for a reason the advisor finds acceptable may vote via e-mail to the advisor. In such a case, the non-attending student will be counted as one of the six additional members needed.

#### Section 3.

For purposes of voting, a majority shall consist of one half of the members present plus one. Again, with approval of the advisor, students who cannot attend a vote may vote via e-mail to the advisor. In such a case, the non-attending student will be included in the calculation of the majority.

#### Section 4.

The meeting shall be conducted in accord with the latest available edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

#### Section 5.

The Advisor may call for a special meeting if he or she deems that there is business sufficiently urgent that it cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting. A five-day notice is required to schedule such a meeting. There will always be a strong preference that such a meeting be held on the same day of the week and time of the usual meeting, but the Advisor can choose another time if this time is inconvenient. If a vote is involved at a special meeting, non-attendees can vote via e-mail to the advisor. The President shall have the responsibility of notifying the members of the special meeting via e-mail. The calling of special meetings need not be voted upon by the membership.

### ARTICLE 7. FINANCES AND FUNDING

#### Section 1.

There will be dues of five dollars per year payable to the Treasurer.

#### Section 2.

Funds will be sought from the Student Senate subject to the latter's criteria.

### Section 3.

Whether funded by the Student Senate or not, **Students for Life** will seek to raise money for itself, subject to university guidelines.

#### ARTICLE 8. AMENDING, SUSPENDING AND ACCEPTING

This Constitution can be altered with the approval of three of the four officers and 75% of the enrolled members in any given year. This must take place at a scheduled meeting. Prior to the meeting, all members must receive in writing the proposed language of the amendment. The Faculty Advisor must pre-approve any such amendment prior to its being submitted for a vote, and may veto any proposed amendment. The Student Senate, the Vice-President of Student Affairs, and the President of the University must approve changes to the Constitution.

#### ARTICLE 9. RATIFICATION

The affairs of **Students for Life** shall be governed as outlined in the preceding articles effective upon adoption by a majority of the charter members as listed on the Organization Form submitted to the Student Senate, and then approved by the Student Senate, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the President of Clarion University.