

# CONSTITUTION OF THE HARVARD REPUBLICAN CLUB

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## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Harvard Republican Club, hereinafter referred to as "the club" or "the HRC."

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The purpose of the club shall be threefold. First, the club shall encourage students at Harvard University to support, discuss and advance the philosophy, values and policies of the Republican Party. Second, the club shall assist Republican campaigns on a university, local, state and national level, and shall promote the adoption of Republican and conservative policies by various facets of the University. Third, the club shall provide a friendly and social atmosphere for its members.

## **ARTICLE III - BOARD STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

**Section A. Introduction** - The club shall be governed by two boards: a General Board and an Executive Board.

**Section B. General Board** - The General Board has ultimate control over the direction of the club, and is a superset of the Executive Board. As such, the General Board may by majority vote at a General Board Meeting compel the Executive Board to undertake such actions and provide such information as the General Board shall require in executing the purposes of the club. Additionally, a petition of 1/3 of the General Board shall compel the club to hold a General Board Meeting within 7 term days, for consideration (non-exclusively) of business contained in the petition. The General Board shall be organized into functional committees as described below.

**Section C. Executive Board** - To streamline club operations, the tasks, decisions, planning and setting of priorities ultimately reserved to the General Board shall be, by default, delegated to the Executive Board. The Executive Board also organizes and leads the General Board, calling and chairing regular General Board meetings, organizing General Board operations, and serving as or appointing leaders of all General Board committees.

**Section D. Limitations on General Board Votes** - The General Board may not override the following actions by the Executive Board except by a 2/3 vote: financial commitments, endorsements and public statements (including those to the press). This is necessary to give the Executive Board the requisite freedom and credibility to act in the public sphere.

**Section E General Board Membership and Voting Requirements** - The President, with the advice and consent of the executive board, shall at the beginning of his term appoint members in good standing to serve on the General Board, with the goal of including all members who wish to take an active role in its operations. The President may add to this list over the course of the year as he sees fit, subject to the advice and consent of the Executive Board. The Secretary shall maintain the official list of General Board Members for determination of quorum and General Board voting rights. Quorum for the General Board is 1/2 of the General Board membership; otherwise no votes taken at a General Board meeting are binding. Only official General Board members may vote at General Board meetings.

**Section F. Confidentiality** - Information shared within the General Board is, unless otherwise stated, considered confidential, including information shared at meetings and over General Board or Executive Board email lists.

**Section G. Club Policy Positions** - The official policy positions of the club shall by default be those contained in the most recent official platform of the national Republican Party. The General Board may deviate from these policies by a majority vote. Club positions on issues not covered by that platform and not yet voted on by the General Board may be determined as needed by the Executive Board or General Board like any other policy decision. Additionally, the President has the right to make statements to the press as he or she sees fit, without explicit Executive Board or General Board approval, provided he or she makes a good faith effort to conform to the existing positions and attitudes of the club.

## **ARTICLE IV - EXECUTIVE BOARD AND OFFICERS**

**Section A. Executive Board** The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers of the HRC. These officers shall be the President, Vice-President for Campaigns and Activism, Vice-President for Speakers and Political Discourse, Vice-President for Social Events, Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership and Publicity Director, in descending order of rank. The Executive Board shall, subject to the provisions of this constitution, direct club activities, and appoint committees and/or temporary officers to assist it. All such committees and officers shall be subject to the supervision of the Executive Board and, ultimately, the General Board. The Executive Board may also appropriate and spend money from the Treasury to meet the expenses of the HRC.

**Section B. Executive Board Meetings** The President shall call meetings of the Executive Board. Should the President receive a petition signed by three members of the Executive Board, he must call an Executive Board meeting within two days. Reasonable effort must be made to notify all Executive Board members at least 24 hours in advance. A majority of the executive board must be present to constitute a quorum. Executive Board meetings shall be open to non-Executive Board members, unless there exists a majority vote to close the meeting.

**Section C. Voting** - To streamline Executive Board functions, Executive Board votes may be taken by email outside of regular Executive Board meetings over the Executive Board email list (to which all Executive Board members shall be subscribed). Votes over other media (e.g. phone, personal email) may be accepted by unanimous consent of the Executive Board. Upon obtaining the number of affirmative or negative votes that would be needed to reach the required threshold if all executives were to vote, an executive may consider a vote to have passed or failed even if the remaining executives have not voted.

**Section D. Letterhead and Email** - Only executives may use club letterhead and the club email account, and only for official club purposes. This requirement may be waived for specific purposes for specific General Board members by a majority Executive Board vote.

**Section E. Overview of Positions** - The Executive Board shall consist of the below 7 positions in descending order of rank. The below are the constitutionally required duties for each position, however the President may assign additional duties to each executive with the consent of the Executive Board.

- The **President** is primarily responsible for the effective functioning of the Executive Board, and is also ultimately responsible for all club operations. The President presides at all meetings of the General and Executive Boards and appoints members in good standing to serve on the General Board (as described in Article III, Section E). The President also serves as the chief and (by default) only spokesperson for the club, and represents the club in interactions with all other organizations except as delegated otherwise. When the President is absent or otherwise unable to fulfill his or her duties, the highest-ranking executive present shall serve as Acting President.

- The **Vice-President for Campaigns and Activism** is responsible for directing the planning of all club campaign trips, both in and out of state, and for all on-campus activism, including (but not limited to) issues related to the University administration and the student government. The Vice-President for Campaigns and Activism shall fulfill this task through leadership of the Campaigns and Activism Committee of the General Board.

- The **Vice-President for Speakers and Political Discourse** is responsible for directing the invitation of all speakers to visit the club, and for overseeing club-based regular discussion groups and the like. The Vice-President for Speakers and Political Discourse shall accomplish this task through leadership of the Speakers and Political Discourse Committee of the General Board.

- The **Vice-President for Social Events** is responsible for planning all club social events, including regular parties, game nights, outings and similar. The Vice-President for Social Events is also responsible for planning non-campaign club trips to Washington DC, and shall accomplish all of these tasks through leadership of the Social Events Committee of the General Board.

- The **Treasurer** is responsible for the safekeeping, management and disbursement of all club monetary resources and nonmonetary inventory, subject to the restrictions and guidelines in Article V ("Club Assets"). The Treasurer must keep a record of every transaction in which the club engages, though inventory sales and dues receipts may be recorded in aggregate only. The Treasurer is also responsible for ensuring the club receives sufficient revenue through various means, including grants from the Undergraduate Council, grants from the Institute of Politics, grants from outside groups, alumni donations, dues from club members, and sales of inventory. Finally, the Treasurer is charged with developing creative ways for the club to increase its resources, and with counseling the Executive Board on avoiding wasting club resources.

- The **Secretary** is responsible for administrative tasks to improve the organization of the Executive and General Boards. This includes but is not limited to taking both minutes and attendance at Executive and General Board meetings (and providing minutes to the relevant board within one week), maintaining an electronic calendar accessible to the Executive Board of all tentative club events, maintaining a public calendar of confirmed events for all club members, publishing the official HRC Weekly e-newsletter, maintaining any club office space, regularly checking the club mailbox and official email inbox, maintaining, cataloguing and analyzing the club archives, and entering new material (including yearly membership lists) into those archives. Attendance at General Board meetings shall be taken no sooner than 15 minutes after the meeting is called to order.

- The **Membership and Publicity Director** is responsible for maximizing club membership, dues payments, participation in club events, and the club's profile in the news. This includes recruitment during Prefrosh Weekend and Freshman Week, as well as recruitment drives throughout the year. This executive is also responsible for all poster, flyering, leafleting and emailing campaigns, for developing strategies to increase turnout at events, and for ensuring that newspapers, especially The Harvard

Crimson , cover club events. Finally, this executive is responsible for maintaining up-to-date and consolidated membership rolls (including members' dues-paid status).

**Section F. Emeritus Privileges** - The outgoing President may continue to exercise an Emeritus privilege after he or she leaves the Executive Board. The Emeritus privilege simply means that the executive is a non-voting member of the Executive Board and a voting member of the General Board. A President Emeritus's privilege may be cancelled under extreme circumstances by a 2/3 vote of the current Executive Board.

**Section G. Parliamentarian** - In addition, the Executive Board shall designate a member in good standing, not currently on the Executive Board, as Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian shall:

- Advise the club on adherence to this constitution
- Serve as an adviser on questions of parliamentary procedure at General and Executive Board meetings (as determined by this constitution and any bylaws or rules the club may adopt)
- Rule on questions of constitutional interpretation, subject to reversal by a 2/3 vote of the Executive Board

## ARTICLE V - CLUB ASSETS

**Section A. Checks and Appropriations** - The President and Treasurer must have check-signing privileges. Other executives may be given such privileges by majority Executive Board vote. Appropriations less than \$50 may be made by the President or the Treasurer; however, appropriations equal to or greater than \$50 must be approved by a majority of the Executive Board.

**Section B. Safekeeping of Funds** - All monies taken in by the club must be transferred to the Treasurer as soon as possible (the Membership and Publicity Director must do this after recording dues received). No more than \$500 of club money may be held in cash at any given time except when enabled for a specific limited duration by majority vote of the Executive Board. The remainder must be deposited in one or more accounts at one or more financial institutions. This may include volatile investments with the informed, explicit approval of the Executive Board, however the default shall be to store club monies in a savings or checking account at an FDIC-insured institution.

**Section C. Regular Treasurer Updates** - The Treasurer must provide the Executive Board with an update on club resources at least once every six term weeks, which at a minimum must include the following: total cash on hand, total expected value of inventory, total investments (if any), total value of accounts receivable and accounts payable, and net worth of the club. The Executive Board may make additional requests by a majority vote. The Treasurer must keep a record of every transaction in which the club engages, though inventory sales and dues receipts may be recorded in aggregate only.

## ARTICLE VI - ELECTIONS

**Section A. Purpose** - The membership of the Executive Board shall be determined by elections held once every academic year ("executive elections").

**Section B. Election Window** - The executive elections shall occur on a single term day within a window beginning 14 term days prior to the beginning of Thanksgiving Recess, and ending 4 term days prior to the beginning of Thanksgiving Recess.

**Section C. Timeline for Elections** - No later than midnight three weeks prior to the beginning of the executive elections window, the President shall nominate, with the approval of the Executive Board, five members in good standing to serve as an Election Commission. Each member must be individually approved by the General Board. If a nominee is not approved, a replacement nominee may be presented to the General Board under the same process.

No later than midnight two weeks prior to the beginning of the Executive Board elections window, any candidate or voter must be dues-paid in order to be eligible for the election (see Section J). No later than midnight one week prior to the beginning of the Executive Board elections window, the Election Commission shall announce the date and time of the elections. The Election Commission must solicit declarations of candidacy within the time period beginning midnight three weeks before the executive elections window, and ending midnight one week before the executive elections window. If no candidate has declared for an executive position by this deadline, the Election Commission may extend the deadline for that specific position at its discretion.

**Section D. Election Commission Mandate** - The President may not serve on the Election Commission, and no commission members shall be eligible to run for office in the corresponding election. The Election Commission shall choose the date, time and location of the election, collect declarations of candidacy and candidate statements, monitor candidates for compliance with campaign rules, sanction non-complying candidates, run the election ceremonies including counting votes and declaring winners, and receive challenges to election results. All Election Commission decisions shall be by majority vote or by bylaws drafted internally by majority vote. The highest ranking executive on the Election Commission shall be chair, or if no executives are on the commission, the President shall select the chair, subject to reversal by majority Executive Board vote.

**Section E. Nonnegotiable Election Requirements** - Unsolicited emails and unsolicited phone calls are explicitly prohibited, as is campaigning during official club, caucus and committee meetings, and these prohibitions cannot be overridden. The Election

Commission may, however, define its own party-neutral, a priori standards as to what constitutes an unsolicited email or phone call, and candidates may campaign before and after official meetings. Use of any official club announcement medium including but not limited to websites, newsletters and announcement lists is also prohibited.

**Section F. Negotiable Election Requirements** - Use of any club discussion medium including but not limited to discussion email lists and official blogs is prohibited, but may be conditionally allowed by the Election Commission, provided the accepted use is not unlimited. There must be word limits and/or posting limits, and every candidate must be given equal access to the medium.

**Section G. Additional Election Commission Rules** - The Election Commission may also create other rules for campaigns as it sees fit, in accordance with this constitution. The Election Commission may not apply its own rules in an ex post facto manner. However, rules existing in this constitution may be applied after the fact by the Election Commission even if it did not explicitly state them in its communications with candidates.

**Section H. Voting Integrity** - In order to maintain the integrity of club elections, the purchase of dues by a member for another member is strictly forbidden. All dues must be purchased by a member using his or her own money, and not using loans or gifts from any candidate or from anyone working on behalf of a candidate. The Election Commission holds the right to investigate the purchase of dues. If a member of the club is found by the Election Commission to have violated this rule, the member concerned as well as any associates in the effort will be disqualified as voters and candidates from the election and will not have any of the dues concerned refunded. However, this penalty requires a majority vote of the General Board after recommendation by the Election Commission. Any dues found to have been purchased in such a manner will be considered invalid.

**Section I. Candidate Sanctions** - Candidates who break rules in this constitution or rules set by the Election Commission may be sanctioned by the Election Commission. Sanctions are limited to one or more of the following: public rebuke, loss of a portion of a candidate's speaking time, and bans from campaign activity for a specified period of time. A majority vote by the General Board may grant additional sanction capabilities to the Election Commission for the duration of a single election. Sanctions may also include disqualification, but this requires a majority vote of the General Board after official recommendation by the Election Commission, and each candidate recommended for disqualification must be voted on separately.

**Section J. Voter and Candidate Eligibility** - For the purposes of executive elections (including Section C of this article), "dues-paid" status only takes effect when the names and dues are given to the Membership Director, and not when they are collected by any other executive. Other executives may, however, deliver names and dues to the Membership Director on behalf of the dues payers.

Additionally, candidates and voters in the executive elections must have attended two General Board meetings within the calendar year preceding the date of the election itself (this may include meetings after the deadline for paying dues but more than 7 term days before the election). Attendance at these meetings is determined solely by the official records kept by the Secretary. However, in special circumstances, this meeting attendance requirement may be waived for a specific individual, subject to the principle that the voters in club elections should be those who are involved in club activities. To obtain such a waiver, the individual in question must submit a petition for waiver, which must be approved by a unanimous vote of the Election Commission, subject to reversal by a majority vote of the General Board.

Beginning 3 term days after the deadline for paying dues prior to executive elections, the Membership Director must provide a list to all candidates as they declare of the members who were dues-paid by the deadline. 6 term days before the election, the Secretary must provide all declared candidates with a final list of eligible voters.

**Section K. Candidacy Declarations** - No more than 4 term days after the deadline for candidacy declarations for the executive elections, the Election Commission shall send all eligible voters a list of current declared candidates and candidate statements.

**Section L. Timing and Format** - The Election Commission, and not the Executive Board or General Board, shall have full control over the election event. The start of the election must be between 4 PM and 10 PM to enable maximum access, however it may run as long as necessary. The election must include speeches by all candidates and some form of questions for all candidates. Questions may be waived by the Election Commission if the candidate has no opponent.

Positions must be elected in order of rank. Votes must be tallied and announced for one position before the next lower position is considered. Nomination for any position may be taken from the floor.

**Section M. Preventing Vote Fraud** - Ballots must be official and pre-made, and generic ballots must be disregarded. Voters' actual votes must remain secret. However, ballots may be numbered and a separate list maintained showing sign-in and sign-out times for each specific ballot number (without names), to prevent proxy votes or votes by those who have already left. For ease of sign-in/sign-out a separate sheet may be maintained linking names to numbers, provided the person using it never has access to the ballots themselves.

Voters who receive ballots after the Election Commission begins to collect votes for a race may not vote in that race. Voters must be present for every race in which they cast votes. In particular, the Election Commission must create safeguards to ensure that voters do not leave their ballots for others to cast in their name, potentially through the method described above. Absentee ballots may be granted to voters ONLY in the following cases, which must be verified by the Election Commission: religious observance,

out of town trip, death in the family. Absentee ballots shall not be granted later than 48 hours prior to the start of the election under any circumstances.

**Section N. Immediate Recounts** - After the results of a specific race are announced, any candidate in the race has the right to demand an immediate recount if they believe the tally may have been incorrect. This may only be done once, and must occur before the beginning of speeches for the next race. All candidates have the right to see the actual tally numbers, but releasing the count to all those present is at the discretion of the Election Commission.

**Section O. Challenges** - Election results become permanent 3 hours after the announcement of the results of the last ballot of the event, with the exception of results that have been challenged within that 3 hour window by a candidate notifying the Election Commission in writing. The only acceptable grounds for challenges are the following allegations: miscounting of votes, ineligible voters, votes cast by absent voters (other than legitimate absentee ballots), and announcing the wrong winner. In such cases, the outgoing Executive Board must call a General Board meeting within 4 term days to resolve the dispute by a binding majority vote of the General Board (in executive elections, this means the outgoing General Board). If the General Board sustains the challenge, the Election Commission shall hold a new election for that position within one week of the General Board meeting, under the same terms as the previous election (to the extent possible). No candidates may participate in the second election except those who already participated in the first election for that seat. If a candidate in winning a second election vacates a lower seat whose election did NOT face a challenge sustained by the General Board, that seat must be immediately filled by a vote at the same event. In this case, nominations may be taken from the floor even if there were other candidates in that race, since those candidates lost despite the fact that the election was deemed fair, and consequently have no special claim on the seat.

**Section P. Destruction of Ballots** - Ballots for unchallenged races must be destroyed 3 hours after the election. Ballots for challenged races must be destroyed upon completion of the General Board vote on the challenge.

## ARTICLE VII - TERMS AND QUALIFICATIONS

**Section A. Executive Board** - All Executive Board positions carry a term of approximately one calendar year from the date of election, including vacations and recesses. Such terms shall end at midnight on the Sunday following the election to replace the respective officeholder.

No person may stand for election for, be elected to, or serve on the Executive Board who is not a full-time student at Harvard College. If an executive takes a leave of absence, graduates or otherwise loses their status as a currently-enrolled full-time student at Harvard College, they shall lose eligibility to serve on the Executive Board when that change of status officially takes effect.

**Section B. General Board** - All General Board positions carry a term beginning with their official appointment and payment of dues (see Section E below), continue through vacations and recesses, and end at midnight on the Sunday following the executive elections. No person may serve officially on the General Board who is not a full-time student at a school of Harvard University (including Harvard College, Extension School, GSAS, or any of Harvard's other graduate schools). However, all other persons are eligible to receive unofficial non-voting status on the General Board.

**Section C. General Membership and Special Categories** - The official general membership of the club is limited to full-time students at schools of Harvard University (including Harvard College, Extension School, GSAS, or any of Harvard's other graduate schools). Membership shall be open to all students in good standing currently enrolled in Harvard University, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or physical disability. The club shall not have the power to impose an ideological test for membership, though malicious intent and actions can be barriers to membership.

To be a part of the general membership, an eligible student must be subscribed to the HRC Weekly mailing list and/or dues-paid (dues-paid members need not be subscribed). Eligible students may become general members by sending a request to any club executive or by submitting the relevant forms on the club website (when available). To become a member "in good standing," a member must be dues-paid and have not been expelled from the General Board or general membership since the last club elections.

Alumni may obtain alumni membership, which is separate from general membership. Persons who are not eligible for either alumni membership or general membership may obtain honorary membership. Alumni membership or honorary membership may be obtained by paying dues or by majority vote of the Executive Board, continues from year to year, and does not convey any official rights or responsibilities in the club or under this constitution.

**Section D. Overlapping Categories** - For clarification, membership in the Executive Board automatically implies membership in the General Board and the general membership. Membership in the General Board automatically implies membership in the general membership.

**Section E. Setting Dues and Dues-Paid Status** - The existing yearly cost of dues shall continue from year to year except when a majority of the General Board votes to change it. Changes shall take place immediately, but those who have paid dues prior to the change shall neither owe nor be refunded the difference.

To obtain "dues-paid" status, an eligible student must give their first and last names and full dues in cash, check or electronic payment (when available) to any Executive Board member. Their dues-paid status shall take effect immediately, except for electoral purposes (see Article VI Section J, "Voter and Candidate Eligibility"). The Membership and Publicity Director must record receipt of dues for the given member and year and provide the dues-payer with receipt of payment (a membership card may be used for this purpose). Dues-paid status for all members automatically resets to "not dues-paid" on the Upperclass Registration date or equivalent every fall semester. Executive and General Board members are given a 4-week grace period after such date within which to pay dues, otherwise they lose their eligibility to serve.

**Section E. Cancellation of Membership** - Any class of membership may be canceled at any time by informing the Executive Board of one's wishes. However, the Executive Board must keep records of dues-paid members as long as their dues are in effect.

## **ARTICLE VIII - REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT**

**Section A. Non-Executive Removal** - Any general membership may be cancelled at any time for any reason by the Executive Board by a 2/3 vote, however the dues of the member in question must be refunded if they are dues-paid for the year. General Board positions may be eliminated or changed at any time for any reason by the Executive Board by a 2/3 vote, without refunding dues. This includes if the General Board member has done nothing wrong and their position simply needs to be eliminated or changed.

**Section B. Recall of Executives** - The General Board may recall (remove from office) any member of the Executive Board for any reason. A recall vote requires a petition signed by 1/2 of the General Board, and a 2/3 vote at a General Board meeting. As always, quorum is 1/2 of the General Board. Recalls must be addressed before any other General Board business may proceed.

Additionally, the executive board may remove an executive from office by a 2/3 vote at an Executive Board meeting, but only upon charges of loss of eligibility to serve on the executive board, poor attendance at board meetings, unacceptable performance or reliability in their assigned tasks, or conduct unbecoming an executive board member.

**Section C. Executive Replacement** - Should the President's seat become vacant, the highest-ranking Vice President shall become President. No other seats may be filled by automatic ascension. If it has been less than 60 term days since the last election for the position, a new election must be held in accordance with Article VI ("Elections") to the greatest extent possible. Otherwise, the Executive Board may appoint somebody to fill the position by a 2/3 vote.

## **ARTICLE IX - ISSUES NOT COVERED**

Governance issues not covered by this constitution shall be determined by a majority vote of whatever body is voting. Either body may vote on such issues, however, the General Board may trump the Executive Board's decision.

## **ARTICLE X - AMENDMENT**

This constitution shall be amended by a 2/3 vote of one General Board meeting at which at least half of the General Board is present. Amendments may be introduced by a petition of a majority of the General Board membership, or a vote of a majority of the Executive Board. Absentee ballots shall be accepted.

## **ARTICLE XI - DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED HEREIN**

The following definitions shall apply to terms used throughout this constitution.

A "majority vote" shall be defined as a vote in which the number of persons voting in the affirmative is greater than, and not equal to, the number of persons voting in the negative.

A "2/3 vote"/"2/3 majority" and a "3/4 vote"/"3/4 majority" shall be defined as votes in which the number of persons voting in the affirmative is either equal to or greater than a 2/3 or 3/4 share (respectively) of all those voting in either the affirmative or the negative. Thus a vote of 8 in the affirmative and 4 in the negative would qualify as a 2/3 vote, and a vote of 6 in the affirmative and 2 in the negative would qualify as a 3/4 vote. The reason for such definitions is that in the case of an even split, the will of the body is ambivalent, whereas in the case of exact 2/3 or 3/4 approval, the will of a supermajority is already manifest. This standard shall also be applied to 1/3 votes/petitions, since the goal in that case is simply to determine a substantial minority.

All partial fractions must be rounded up to the nearest integer vote (e.g. 2/3 of 5 is 3.33, so a 2/3 vote of 5 voters requires 4 to vote in the affirmative).

Unless otherwise specified, explicit abstentions shall not factor into the calculation of votes. Also, no phrase in this constitution shall be taken to imply a quorum requirement unless it explicitly states so, or is bound by another portion of the constitution that explicitly states so.

In cases where the voting threshold is not defined, the requirement shall default to a majority vote requirement.

References to "term days" mean all days, including weekends and weekdays, but excluding holidays and vacations honored by Harvard University, regardless of whether classes are held.