

Constitution  
of  
Varsity House, Incorporated

Revised March 23, 2023

## **1 Name**

As designated in the Articles of Incorporation, the name of this organization shall be Varsity House, Incorporated (“House”).

## **2 Purpose**

The purpose of this organization is (1) to establish an atmosphere of Christian Fellowship and spiritual growth whereby the scholastic, intellectual, cultural, social and athletic aspects of living may be pursued, (2) to provide adequate opportunities of outreach, service and constant testimony of Christ, in the community of which we live, and (3) to provide an economical, non-profit, cooperative living group for male students of Oregon State University and Linn-Benton Community College, and other higher education institutions as determined by the Board of Directors. This constitution establishes the type of government that shall operate in Varsity House (Revised 2011).

## **3 Membership**

1. The membership shall consist of all House residents who have been approved by majority vote as explained in Section 3.2. Approved resident members have the privilege to vote on any voting matter. Proxy votes will not be allowed for any purpose.
2. Membership Process
  - a. Candidate orientation. Each resident applying for membership shall be supplied a copy of the Varsity House Constitution, Policy Manual, and Friendly Reminders with a contract application. He shall be a candidate member of Varsity House on receipt of a signed contract by the Vice President and remain a candidate member until approved for membership.
  - b. Credentials. It is required that each member of Varsity House Inc. pass the standardized constitution, policy manual, and friendly reminder exam with a minimum of 80%. This exam will be the same for all candidates and will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of executive council's approval to undergo any amendments. Exams are to be taken without any outside assistance and all candidates taking the exam are to be proctored by a current Varsity House member. Once a candidate has passed the exam with a minimum of 80%, he or she is not required to retake the exam. Passing the exam does not ensure membership, for it is only used as a standardized measurement of a candidate's understanding on the rules and regulations established at Varsity House Inc. (Revised 2020)

- c. Voting on membership. Voting for approval of membership for candidates shall take place on the Friday of Dead Week of the candidate's first term of residency in the House, excluding summer. Residency shall be considered to have been for a term if the candidate moved into the House before the end of the second week of the term. The current resident members of the House shall vote on candidates by ballot vote without the candidates present (Revised 2012). A two-thirds (2/3) majority approval is necessary for a candidate to receive membership.
- d. Continued Candidate Residency. If a candidate does not obtain the required two-thirds (2/3) vote, a separate vote shall be taken to determine if he may continue to reside in the house, requiring a 2/3 majority to remove him. After an additional term of residency, a candidate must be presented again for membership.

### 3. Probation and Removal

- a. Any member who has shown severe and consistently inappropriate behavior or misconduct is subject to probation and, in turn, removal. A written complaint signed by two or more witnesses shall be submitted to the President. He shall present the complaint at the next Executive Council meeting. The council shall study the problem and discuss it with the accused and witnesses to evaluate the validity of the claim. In order to determine that the complaint is valid, a motion to bring the claim before the house membership must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Council members present.
- b. If recommended by the Council, the members of the house shall hear the charge and defense, after which a motion for probation will be in order. In order to be found guilty of the charges and be placed under probation, the motion must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present. The terms of punishment (fines, repairing damage, apology, etc.) and duration of the probation period must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present. There shall be no appeal from a house decision on probation.
- c. It is allowed for step B to occur within exec, rather than bringing the matter before the entire house, if both the individual and the majority of exec agree. If either party wants to bring the matter before the house, it must be brought to the house. If step B occurs within exec, 2/3 of the members present need to approve probation and the terms, which also should include what other house residents need to be informed about the matter.
- d. Only after a resident has been placed on probation may a motion be made to remove that resident from the house. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all members of the house is required for the removal of a resident. An appeal to a removal may be submitted in writing for review by the House membership.
- e. During the probation and removal process the President shall act as mediator and shall not present his own opinion or bias. He must remain neutral toward the accused and the complainants. In the event that the President is the subject of

the complaint or is a witness, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President.

4. *Residency Limit.* Residents are limited to twelve school terms (excluding summer term) of residency in the House.

5. *Non-discriminatory Policy.* Membership shall not be denied to any student on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, disability, disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran status. Since the purpose of this organization is to provide a Biblical-based, Christian residential living environment for male students, it does discriminate on the basis of religion and sex. Although Varsity House does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation for membership, it does retain the right to deny or revoke membership based on Biblical standards of behavior for residents, which prohibits, among other things, behavior that is sexual sin, whether homosexual or heterosexual. (Revised Fall 2016)

#### 4 Officers

1. The elected offices of Varsity House shall consist of President, Vice President, Financial Manager, Treasurer, two Work Managers, Chaplain, two Social Chairmen, Athletic Chairman, Worship/Media Director, and Secretary. One person may not simultaneously hold more than one office except when there is no one running for a Social Chairman position. Only members of the house are allowed to run for office. In the case of the social chair position that is elected during fall term, if no members sign up within 5 days of the election posting, a resident in their first term of the house may nominate themselves. (Revised Fall 2021)
2. Executive Council
  - a. *Members.* The Executive Council shall consist of all officers of Varsity House. For legal purposes, the Executive Council shall be designated the Board of Directors.
  - b. *Meetings.* Executive Council meetings are to be held weekly with a majority present. The time is to be set by the President. The meetings shall be open to all residents unless the majority of the Council decides that a closed meeting is advisable. The President may cancel any meeting or call special meetings at his discretion. Inconsistent attendance of executive or house meetings by an executive member will allow for the executive team to determine if disciplinary actions are needed and what those actions will be. The discussion of an executive member's attendance may be brought forward by any executive member during an executive meeting. Disciplinary actions will be determined by a majority of executive members.
  - c. *Function.* The Executive Council shall discuss business relating to the House and formulate plans and resolutions. Any fiscal matters not contained in the current year's budget shall be brought before the House for discussion and vote. Any complaint about the actions of a resident or a decision of any House officer(s) may be brought before the Executive Council. Any complaint concerning an Executive decision may be brought before the entire House by a non-Executive Council member for a vote of appeal. An Executive member cannot bring before

the entire House a matter that has been voted down by the Executive Council. A matter that ends in a tie vote or a majority vote shall be brought before the House at the next House meeting.

3. *Elections.* General election for all House officers shall be held by closed ballot. Votes will not be released until the final tally. Self-nominations for office shall be open until three days prior to the Election Day. A simple majority of all House members is required for an officer to be elected. If no one person receives a majority, a run-off election shall be held within five days of the general election between the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes in the general election. Special elections shall be held within two weeks after a vacancy occurs.

- a. The President, one Work Manager, the Financial Manager, and the Secretary shall be voted on three weeks prior to dead week winter term. (Week 7)
- b. The Vice President, one Work Manager, Treasurer, Chaplain and one Social Chairman shall be voted on two weeks prior to dead week winter term.
- c. The Kitchen Manager, Athletic Chairman, one Social Chairman and Worship/Media Director shall be voted on one week prior to dead week winter term.

#### 4. Period of Service

- a. The period of service of all officers shall be one year and shall start at the beginning of spring school term.

5. *Recall.* Any officer may be subject to recall if he does not consistently fulfill the duties of his office. The procedures for probation and removal of a house resident must be followed to recall an officer.

#### 6. Duties of Officers

- a. The President shall preside at all House and Executive Council meetings; facilitate Exec's management of the resident advisor and cook, promote cooperation amongst all residents, keep an updated list of alumni, actively communicating with the board of advisors on a regular basis to meet with the board of advisors and other executive council members once a term (revised March 2023) and see that the necessary business of the House is carried out. He shall see that the functions of the House officers are carried out properly. He shall call all joint meetings of the Executive Council. The President shall remain neutral on all issues under discussion in the House, and may not make motions. (Reinstated Fall 2021). However, the President may vote on closed ballots but may not disclose information regarding his vote. He is ultimately responsible for all House actions. If the president deems fit, he can declare Varsity House in a state of emergency, activating the state of emergency policy (Revised 2020).

- b. The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in the absence of the latter. He shall serve as membership chairman and shall be in charge of all applications for residency and documentation of contracts. He shall act as recruitment coordinator. He will make room assignments for new residents and will assign rooms to current members each term, according to the room assignment application. He will work with the Chaplain to establish the Big/Little brother program for the Fall school term. He shall be responsible for the Cold Rock Fall Retreat and its budget, as approved by the Financial Manager.
- c. The Financial Manager is responsible for paying all expenses. He shall keep a record of all transactions, prepare and monitor an annual budget, propose room and board rates for each year, give a report on the House's finances at least once per term, and prepare and pay all Varsity House taxes. He shall bring a budget proposal before exec at the beginning of the school year. This budget requires a majority vote of the executive council to be established for the upcoming year. He is responsible for paying all employees. He shall keep Varsity House checks available to authorized members at all times. He shall also be responsible for working with the cook to develop the food budget. He shall also be responsible for facilitating the review of the emergency fund cap (maximum amount) (Revised Winter 2015).
- d. The Treasurer is responsible for billing House residents for room and board, and other miscellaneous charges. He is responsible for making deposits and maintaining the cash receipts journal and the individual student journal.
- e. The Secretary maintains the House network, phone system, and website. The Secretary also responds to cases of network abuse, such as any illegal transfer of copyrighted material or network use that disrupts network performance. The house web site should be an informative, well-representing web site for the House to contain information for residents, applicants, and others with an interest in the House. Because of the necessity of technical knowledge needed to fulfill his duties, an incumbent Secretary may declare a candidate to the position as unfit if he does not have the experience or knowledge to meet the responsibilities. He shall take minutes of all House, Executive Council, and Board of Advisors meetings and shall retain copies. He shall post the minutes online and send copies to each member of the Board of Advisors. He shall post meal sign-up sheets, room assignment sheets near each phone, charts on each sleeping porch door showing where every House resident sleeps, and name tags on the mail boxes. He shall maintain the bulletin boards. He shall keep the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Policy Manual up to date and shall keep on hand two official copies of each document. He shall take roll at all house meetings and levy fines for unexcused absences (Revised March 2023)
- f. The Work Managers divide up the work that needs to be done among the House residents and post duty rosters. They are responsible to see that all work is done on time and properly, for keeping the house presentable, and to keep things in

working order. They shall purchase items necessary for the maintenance and improvement of the house, levy fines for failure to do work duties and/or dish duties, and organize and supervise all House work days. They shall recommend and implement the disciplinary policy approved by the Executive Council. They are responsible for monitoring the parking lots and levying fines for parking violations. They will perform a check of each room at the beginning and end of each year. If damage has occurred to a room, they may bill the responsible parties. They shall also maintain fire safety standards for the House, demonstrate the use of fire extinguishers at the first House meeting of the Fall school term, obtain an annual "Permit of Assembly" from the City of Corvallis, conduct a minimum of two fire drills per term and submit a formal report for each drill to the University, and attend all necessary city or university fire meetings. They may levy fines at their own discretion for fire code violations. (revised March 2023)

- g. The Chaplain shall organize a weekly House Bible study and may organize House prayer meetings. He may call a day of prayer when appropriate. He shall delegate responsibility for grace and Scripture readings at meals. He shall assist the Vice President with the organization of the Big/Little brother program. The Chaplain is responsible for administering and collecting membership exams from all candidates (Revised 2020). He administers House related ministries, which may include but are not exclusive to Fall retreat activities, music reviews for dances, summer missions funding and sponsor child support, and overseeing worship nights as well as organizing guest speakers for worship as he sees fit. He shall act as House counselor. Should the Worship/Media Director be unable to fulfill their worship duties, the Chaplain will assume the duty of Worship/Media Director. (revised March 2023)
- h. The Social Chairmen shall schedule, arrange and be in charge of all social and alumni events of the House. (revised March 2023) They shall handle all correspondence associated with House social activities; ensure that greeting cards and thank-you notes are sent when appropriate; and post a calendar of social events.
- i. The Athletic Chairman shall be responsible for all House athletic and intramural functions. He shall appoint team managers for each activity. He shall be responsible for the house athletic equipment and may hold team managers and team members responsible for loss or damage to issued equipment. Upon loss of or damage to equipment, the responsible party will provide a replacement of equal or greater value to the Athletic Chairman within two weeks. All athletic equipment will be returned to the Athletic Chairman after final competition of that sport for the season. He shall announce dates and times of upcoming sporting events and may organize tournaments within the house. The Athletic Chairman may levy fines at his own discretion for member's missing Intramural event's, parking on the basketball court, and/or any sports-related misconduct. (Revised 2020)

He shall assume all other duties for Athletic chairman as prescribed by the Department of Intramural Sports.

- j. The Worship/Media Director shall keep an accurate account of the house history and activities. At the end of his elected period of service he shall present a photo album from that period to the house. He shall be responsible to obtain a camera. The Worship/Media Director will also be responsible for keeping an active, accurate, and engaging presence in current social media platforms. The Worship/Media Director shall also be responsible for the upkeep of worship nights. This includes directing set-up and tear-down, delegating worship leaders/vocalists, instrumentalists on a weekly basis and maintaining and keeping inventory of equipment (revised March 2023)
  
- k. The Kitchen Manager shall inform the Cook of all upcoming events and how much and what kind of food to make. He will make a list of food that is low and make sure the Resident Advisor and/or the Cook are aware of what is low and assist the Resident Advisor with getting groceries (when needed). He will also oversee managing dish duties which will include: making sure the kitchen is being properly cleaned, and giving out fines related to the kitchen when needed. The Kitchen Manager will be required to go to all house retreats. If he is unable to attend for any reason he must find a replacement, but will still be responsible for coordinating the menus and communicating with the chef on what needs to be prepared beforehand. The Kitchen Manager will not have to pay to attend the retreats. If the Kitchen Manager is unable to attend the retreat, the replacement will be awarded the same discount. (Revised Nov 22).
  
- l. Executive week shall begin at 8:00 PM on the Sunday that is two weeks and one day before the first day of fall term of any school year. It shall begin with a meeting of all Executive Council members present. The meeting will be to go over all of the anticipated work to be finished during the week and to go over discipline actions for the members of exec who are neither in attendance or consistently present. The disciplinary actions will be decided by the majority of the executive council on a case-by-case basis including the ability to levy a fine. Exec week shall have a required attendance for all members that will be on the executive council during the following term. It is the responsibility of the Work Managers to plan and run executive week (Revised winter 2011).

## 7. Officers' Privileges

- a. The Work Managers and Financial Manager shall have no work duties or dish duties. The Chaplain, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall each be assigned one work duty or one dish duty. The President shall have a dish duty. The Kitchen Manager shall have a work duty. The Athletic Chairman, Social Chairmen, and Worship/Media Director, shall each be assigned one work duty and one dish duty (Revised March 2023).

- b. The Financial Manager shall be entitled to a 75% discount off of room and board per school term while he is Financial Manager. Each Work Manager shall be entitled to a 50% discount. The President shall be entitled to a 50% discount. The Vice President, Treasurer, Chaplain, and Kitchen Manager shall be entitled to a 25% discount. The remaining Executive positions shall be entitled to a 12.5% discount.

## 5 House Meetings and Voting

1. *Regular Meetings.* House meetings are to be held alternating Mondays except for Dead Week and Finals Week. All House residents are required to attend.
2. *Special Meetings.* Special House meetings may be called at the discretion of the President or by one-fourth (1/4) of the House residents.
3. *Quorum.* Two thirds (2/3) of the House members must be present at any House meeting in order to vote on any matter.
4. *Voting.*
  - a. A simple majority of House members present at a House Meeting with quorum shall be required to pass any motion unless the Constitution requires a greater percentage. (Revised May 2016) An abstain will be taken out of the voting pool for all votes taken by the house or exec. (Revised Winter 2021)
  - b. A member's right to vote is temporarily revoked when he moves out for any period of time longer than half a school term, such as for an internship  
(Revised Fall 2016).
1. *House Business.* It is recommended, but not required, that any vote in a house meeting take place only if the matter had been discussed at a previous Executive Council meeting.
2. *Waiver of House Documents.* A two-thirds (2/3) vote of all House members is required to waive any portion of the Bylaws, Policy Manual, or Accommodations Contract. (Revised May 2016).
3. *Authority.* All votes taken in the House meeting shall have final authority over any decision of the Executive Council or an individual officer.

## 6 Board of Advisors (Revised 2012)

1. *Board Members.* The Board of Advisors of Varsity House, Incorporated shall be chosen at the beginning of Spring Term each year by the Executive Council. The Board shall consist of at least four and no more than six Advisors. The board shall consist of at least one alum, two pastors, and a financial advisor. An OSU faculty member is suggested but not required (1 Timothy 3:1-7). The board shall attend a meeting with the Executive Council officers one each school term, and attend any other special meetings for board members that may be called by the House President. (Revised Fall 2016).
2. *Duties.* The Board of Advisors shall serve in an advisory capacity to the House on business matters. Board members are to remain informed on all House business by



means of the minutes of the Executive Council and House meetings sent to them weekly by the House Secretary/Alumni Coordinator. If a Board member is unable to attend one of the board meetings, he shall notify the House Secretary/Alumni Coordinator. The Board shall not be financially responsible for any debts incurred by Varsity House, Incorporated.

## **7 Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin on the first day of July of each year and end on the last day of June in each year or shall be as otherwise determined by the Executive Council.

## **8 State of Emergency Policy**

During a state of emergency, the executive board will represent Varsity House entirely and has the authority to make constitution and policy manual amendments with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of exec's approval.

1. The state of emergency policy may be implemented under presidential orders in the event that:
  - House residency drops below quorum with the exception of academic breaks and summer term, or,
  - National or state orders are contradicting the constitution/policy manual
2. The President must declare that the State of Emergency has ended when neither of the above circumstances are still in effect. (Revised Fall 2021)
3. All policy manual and constitution changes made during a State of Emergency only remain in effect during the State of Emergency. (Revised 2020)

## **9 Emergency Fund** (Revised Winter 2015)

An emergency fund shall be maintained for emergency repairs, uses, etc. The fund shall not exceed \$50,000. The cap (maximum amount) on the emergency fund shall be reviewed with the Board of Advisors winter term every odd year, facilitated by the Financial Manager. Uses of the emergency fund shall be approved by a two thirds (2/3) majority of the Executive Council.

## **10 Amendments**

1. *Proposals to Amend.* Proposals to amend the Bylaws, Policy Manual or Accommodations Contract must have been discussed at and be in the minutes of the previous Executive Council meeting and must be posted at least one week prior to the meeting in which a final vote is taken (Revised May 2016).
2. *Voting.* A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of all House members is required to pass an amendment to the Bylaws, Policy Manual or Accommodations Contract (Revised May 2016).

## **11 House Dissolution**

Dissolution of Varsity House, Incorporated must follow along the guidelines of the Articles of Incorporation for Varsity House, Incorporated.