

The Constitution of the Veterans Society of William and Mary

We, the military veterans at the College of William and Mary, recognize the common bonds shared through sacrifice, hardship, and service to the United States of America. We affirm the importance of education and service and recognize the challenge which veterans face in their transition from military service.

I. This organization will be known as the Veterans Society of William and Mary

II. The purposes of this organization are to:

1. Strengthen the community through charitable actions.
2. Educate the community on military service as a strictly nonpartisan and nonpolitical organization by conducting forums, discussion groups, and honoring veterans.
3. Provide support services to:
 - A.) Members of the community and students who have lost a relative or loved one serving overseas.
 - B.) Veterans in transition from military service to the civilian and academic sectors in order to promote their success as contributing members of society.Type of support includes, but is not limited to, academic, educational, and social.
4. Establish a network of veterans of the William and Mary community.

III. Membership is given to William and Mary students, staff, and faculty who have served honorably, on active duty or reserve, or are currently serving in the armed forces of the United States, such as the Marine Corps, Army, Navy, and Air Force, in addition to the Coast Guard. All membership will ultimately be decided based on the discretion of the Executive Board following the evaluation of each member to ensure that each new member meets the criteria for membership and is properly informed, integrated and oriented into the organization.

Special membership may be awarded for special circumstances deemed appropriate by the Executive Board as stated in the first and second by-laws. Each incoming member must provide evidence of honorable service to the transition committee president for verification and induction into the organization. A voting member is defined as any member who has already been inducted into the organization. The Executive Board is made up of all officers mentioned herein. Alumni members shall retain their membership and may choose to keep their voting rights.

At least 90% of the members must be past or present members of the U.S. Armed Forces. 7.5% may be college cadets enrolled in ROTC or service academies or spouses, widows, or widowers of any of those listed here.

The Veterans Society openly admits veteran students and faculty to its membership and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, personal appearance, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

IV. Officer Positions (Executive Board Members)

President

Vice President

Secretary

Faculty/Staff Representative

Director of Finance

Director of Transition Affairs

Director of Internal Affairs

Director of External Affairs

All Officers are required to attend Executive Board meetings.

Officer descriptions:

President

The President shall conduct Executive Board meetings; maintain the power to appoint committee Presidents. The President may call for Executive Board meetings or cancel or reschedule existing board meetings. The President may break any existing deadlocks in voting.

The President will hold all officers accountable for their conduct as well as provide any needed support for operations within the society. The President shall provide vision, support the constitution, and settle external matters involving veteran issues.

Vice President

The Vice President shall oversee the completion of all administrative tasks and assume the President's responsibilities in case of absence. Will mediate complaints and issues on a professional level.

Director of Finance

The Treasurer is President of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer ensures the accountability of all funds. The Treasurer is responsible for reporting on current financial matters and maintaining strict accountability of all types of transactions. It is the treasurer's responsibility to determine whether spending qualifies for exempt or society purposes. The Treasurer must be knowledgeable and follow all regulations regarding authorized

non-profit expenditures, keeping meticulous records and receipts, and regulating the appropriation of funds as determined by the Executive Board.

In addition, the treasurer will be responsible for all financial transactions and keeping detailed records and receipts of expenditures. The secretary must provide written acknowledgment to donors who contribute \$250 or more. The Treasurer will prepare the initial annual 990-EZ form to be turned into the IRS no later than February 12 of each year.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for maintaining all contact information, membership rosters, information, an attendance record of meetings and events, receiving mail, and keeping all other records and documents pertaining to the society.

Faculty-Staff Representative / Advisor

Represents the voice of the faculty and staff who are members of the organization. Will give insight and guidance to the Executive Board, giving advice and criticism when necessary.

Director of Transition Affairs

Will be responsible for promoting higher education and to assist in the transition of veterans who chose to attend William and Mary, as well as welcoming new members into the organization. Shall be responsible for presenting new members to the Executive Board and issuing certificates of membership. After ensuring that applicants meet membership requirements, the director will give the new member's information to the secretary.

Director of Internal Affairs

Will be responsible for organizing and coordinating social events and functions.

Director of External Affairs

Will hold forums and other functions for the general population, such as organizing campus events, a Veterans Day ceremony with the purpose of honoring those who have served, educating the community on military service, planning community service projects, and supporting those who are currently serving overseas.

V. Operations

1. General Elections:

General Election of officers shall be held at the second general meeting of the spring semester. Any voting member may nominate persons who meet the preceding specifications. Members are not allowed to nominate themselves. Nominations may be made at any time starting from the first meeting until the ballot is formalized. The President will take nominations from the floor. After nominations have taken place, the process must be closed by the President and the movement seconded. The nominating parties will be allowed to vote. All voting in person shall be conducted via secret ballot and tabulated by the Secretary, Treasurer, and one other voting member appointed by the incumbent President.

Voting takes place at the second meeting. A candidate is elected upon receiving a simple majority. Voting members must be present unless they are unable to attend. In the event a voter is unable to attend, they will notify two persons within the society via email or signed paper along with their phone and email address in the event of a dispute. The identity and legitimacy of the member and the vote must be distinguishable and verifiable. The votes for President shall be counted first. If no candidate receives a majority in the Presidential election the two highest scoring candidates will move on to a runoff round. If no majority can be established (50/50 split) a second vote shall be cast after each Presidential candidate has had an opportunity to speak to the present body. If no agreement can be reached, the election will continue for the remaining officers and vote for the Presidency once more. If a deadlock remains, the meeting will be postponed for not more than one additional meeting period. In the event of an even split in any other officer election, the President will cast the deciding vote. Any officer may serve concurrent terms.

2. Replacement Elections:

If an officer position is vacated, the President may nominate a replacement. A candidate is elected upon receiving a majority vote from the voting members present. Voting will be held during the next meeting following the day that the candidate is nominated; exceptions may be made in the case of an officer removal as outlined in section 3. If no candidate receives a majority, the two highest scoring candidates will move on to a runoff round. If no majority can be established, the President or highest ranked officer not eligible for replacement will have the option to cast the deciding vote in addition to their previous vote, or postpone the election for not more than one additional meeting period.

3. Officer Removal:

An officer may be removed if they are in violation of the Organization's purpose or constitution and fails to meet the required duties and obligations. An officer has the option of resigning a position at any time if he/she feels the need to do so. An officer may be voted out by a secret ballot requiring a 5/7 vote of the Executive Board. The request for a secret ballot must be made during a regular meeting in addition to stating the reasons behind such a request. Voting for an officer's removal will begin at the beginning of the meeting following the decision to cast a secret ballot. The Executive Board will then nominate two potential replacements. Replacement nominations may not take longer than seven days and voting must commence within 7 days of nominations.

Once an officer is removed they will have an option for appeal. Any voting member – other than the removed officer – will be able to file for an appeal against the Executive Board's decision. They must officially notify the President or Vice President of the appeal during the next normal meeting period after the officer's removal. If no appeal has been started by the end of the aforementioned meeting, then the option to appeal will be closed. If an appeal has been started, the member who filed for appeal will have to collect $\frac{3}{4}$ of the signatures of all voting members of the Society on a petition by the end of the next regular meeting. Should they fail to collect the required number of signatures in the specified amount of time, then the option for appeal will be closed, and the replacement process will continue.

Election of replacement candidates will be conducted in the manner of General Elections as listed above. In the event that it is the President whose office is being replaced and there is no majority, the Vice President will cast the deciding vote.

4. Terms of Office:

No member may hold more than one office at one time. The Term of Office is one academic year. In the event of having been elected in a replacement election the term of office shall expire at the beginning of the following spring semester. The exception being: the Officers elected for the interim period of this constitution. Interim officers' positions will expire in the spring semester of 2009. There is no limit on the number of terms in which an officer may serve.

- VI. Financial Operations.
- a. All financial transactions must be recorded in detail and receipts must be retained. Financial paperwork, the tax exempt letter, 990 forms, and all spending records must remain transparent and available for public viewing.
 - b. All expenditures do not have to be tax exempt in nature, but all expenditures must be in agreement with the purposes of the Veterans Society as stated in Article 2.
 - c. The Treasurer and President are the only persons authorized to write checks or expend funds. The Treasurer must be informed of all transactions and all receipts and records must be kept and given to the Treasurer. A check must have the signature of two persons in order to be used- the President and Treasurer, but may be signed by another officer in either of the formers absence.
 - d. All spending measures must receive a majority vote from the executive board or shall be approved by either a quorum of the executive board or a majority of Society members. The Director of Finance must determine if the proposed expenditures are in compliance with current tax exempt status, and the President must decide if the expenditure is consistent with the mission of the Veterans Society. The Director of Finance may veto a specific expenditure but must clearly state the reasons for such a veto. Such a veto can be nullified by a 4/5 vote of the Executive Board.
 - e. Donations are to be used for general spending as determined by the Executive Board, unless the donor has specified a purpose, project, officer, or committee for the donations.
 - f. The Society shall use the direct accounting method to comply with state and federal accounting requirements.
 - g. An annual report must be sent to the State of Virginia in addition to the IRS.
 - h. Tax help may be found in IRS publications 3386 or 557. It is important that all officers be familiar with the strengths and limitations of tax exempt status and it shall be required that the Director of Finance and President are knowledgeable and proficient with regards to exempt status.
- VII. Meetings will occur on a bi-weekly basis or during special circumstances called for by the President and will follow the procedures listed below:
- a. Attendance is taken by the Secretary or temporary appointee in the event of absence.
 - b. Report by the President
 - c. Director / Committee Reports
 - d. Questions regarding Presidential and Director's / committee reports, followed by a vote on all committee decisions and motions. Outcomes and votes are recorded by the secretary.
 - e. Any other business is put forward by remaining members and Officers.
 - f. Dismissal by the President

- g. The structure and organization of each meeting shall be adhered to. Any one in violation will receive one warning from the Vice President for the first offense. Upon the second offense, the violator will be asked to leave. Meetings shall be structured and organized.

VIII. No dues are required.

IX. By-Laws

The Constitution is binding to all members of the Veterans Society, but the Constitution is not binding unto itself. By-laws to the constitution may be proposed in writing by any voting member at any meeting in which a quorum of the executive board is present. All members and officers shall be notified and receive a written copy of the proposed by-law. The by-law(s) will be placed on the agenda for the next general or executive board meeting and voted on accordingly. A 5/7 vote of the Executive Board is required to amend the constitution and by-laws. Five members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum and four members of the quorum shall be required to amend the constitution and by-laws. However, each may be negated with a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of all society members.

By-Law 1, Honorary and Associate Membership: Honorary Membership may be granted to an individual by the Executive Board only on special circumstances. The individual receiving Honorary Membership must have made a significant impact on promoting the purposes and values for which the organization stands while making a substantial contribution to the success of the organization in accomplishing its mission. Honorary Membership is decided through a unanimous vote of the Executive Board. Honorary members will not vote in elections.

Associate Membership may be awarded under special circumstances, such as the children, siblings, or spouses of service members who were killed in action. Spouses of deployed members of the armed forces of the United States may also qualify upon a 5/7 vote of the Executive Board. Associate members will not vote in elections.

By-Law 3, Dedication and Distribution of Assets: Upon the dissolution of the Veterans Society of William and Mary, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c) (19) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the Federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. One example of such an organization is the DAV, or Disabled American Veterans.

By-Law 4, Honor Clause: Members of the organization are expected to conduct themselves in a respectable manner. The Society is not responsible for individual actions as members should not engage in illegal or other

activities which may discredit and damage the reputation of the Veterans Society.

By-Law 5, Dispute Resolution: Any individuals within the society who have a personal dispute or difference with another member of the society shall adhere to the following procedure. First, go and speak with the other person and show them their fault, just between the two of you. If they will not listen, take one or two others along so that every issue may be established by the testimony of witnesses. If dispute persists, take it to the Vice President. If the Vice President is unable to resolve the conflict, take it to a counseling center, or another official who is not a member of the society and is trained in conflict resolution between two individuals. Personal matters should be resolved with a professional outside the Society and its organizational meetings.

Meetings and other events are not the appropriate arena in which to resolve such issues. Personal issues between members will be kept separate from society business to prevent the society from being pulled into a damaging internal conflict. Society and personal matters must be kept separate and shall not interfere with the mission of the society.

By-Law 6, Chapters: We, the Veterans Society of the College of William and Mary, in affirmation of the challenge veterans face on other campuses, shall answer the call and assist other veterans requesting support in forming a local veterans society. Support will not include financial or material contributions from the society. Support shall only include advice, recommendations, administrative support, and the potential for granting tax exemption through a group exemption letter.

X. Ratification

The Constitution will become effective immediately after it has been ratified by a 5/7 vote of the Executive Board. By-Laws and Officer Positions will also take effect upon the ratification of the constitution. Voting on all other issues not mentioned herein require a 5/7 vote of the Executive Board. A 4/5 vote of a quorum may ratify by-laws and amend the constitution. A quorum shall be defined as five of seven members of the executive board. The Constitution will take effect on October 10, 2007.

Voting Officers:

President

Vice President

Secretary

Director of Finance

Director of Internal Affairs

Director of External Affairs

Director of Transition Affairs