

We, the UMBC Humanities Scholars Program Advisory Board, in order to more perfectly serve the needs of our program and aid in its growth, establish this constitution. In all of our proceedings, we will be guided by our shared appreciation for the study of the Humanities.

I. Formation

We dissolve the UMBC Humanities Scholars Program Advisory Board and now form the UMBC Humanities Scholars Program Senate, hereafter referred to as “The Senate.”

II. Purpose

The primary responsibility of the Senate is to represent the interests of the members of their cohort and the members of the Humanities Scholars Program as a whole. This includes not only attending meetings but also actively promoting interest and involvement in the program.

The Senate shall also be a resource to the director of the Humanities Scholars Program by providing the director with our official suggestions. These shall be ideas for excursions, events, or any other matter within the jurisdiction of the Humanities Scholars Program. The Senate shall also, when necessary, provide assistance to the director in implementing The Senate’s suggestions.

III. Eligibility and Election

Any scholar with good standing in the Humanities Scholars Program may serve as a senator, subject to a vote by their peers, acceptance by the senator-elect, and the confirmation of the program director.

Senators shall be elected by their cohort, or year, but they will represent not just their cohort, but the Humanities Scholars Program as a whole.

Each cohort shall elect two scholars to serve as their senators. Scholars shall not vote or elect the representative of a cohort they do not belong to. For those cohorts who have more than ten scholars, they shall elect an additional senator for every five additional scholars. Thus, a cohort of 17 shall elect no more than 3 senators.

Senators shall be elected by a popular vote, those two senators obtaining the most votes being elected. If there is a tie for the 1st or second place vote receiver, a run-off vote shall be conducted between just those who have tied. If this still results in a tie then the director shall choose.

The director of the program shall choose the time, place, and manner of the voting process. To ease the voting process, the voting may be conducted via an electronic medium.

The elections for new senators shall occur during the month of April, unless an emergency vote is required to fill an empty seat. Senators will not officially assume their seats until after the conclusion of the spring semester.

Newly elected senators shall have attended at least one senate meeting before assuming their seats so that they might understand what exactly the Senate does and how it functions.

Just as the director must confirm the election of a senator, so too may the director remove a senator from their seat, with the consent of no less than two-thirds of The Senate.

IV. Serving

Senators are expected to serve the entirety of the academic year, that being the fall and spring semesters.

The frequency of Senate meetings shall be determined by the Senate and the director at the beginning of the semester, although the frequency and time of meetings may be adjusted as needed during the course of the semester so that the Senate-Chair and the majority of senators may attend. The Senate shall never meet less than one-time per month.

Senators shall attend Senate meetings regularly. If they cannot attend a meeting they shall make accommodations with their fellow senators and the director of the program so that they are still contributing members. These accommodations shall include responding electronically upon receipt of the Senate Chair's meeting minutes and offering comments on the minutes.

Due to the Humanities Scholars Program's unique emphasis on study abroad, and because of the hardship it would potentially place on certain cohorts, a scholar who is studying abroad is not barred from serving as a senator. However, they must ensure they are doing their utmost to remain in contact with their fellow senators—by whatever means they have at their disposal.

V. Convening and Voting

Upon convening, The Senate will hear and discuss any matters brought before them by the director, fellow senators, or other scholars of the program.

They shall not vote upon the issues that day, but instead shall open their next meeting by voting upon the previous meeting's matters. Thus, senators will have time to consider a matter before voting upon it, and those senators who were absent will have time to

familiarize themselves with the issues as detailed in the meeting notes to be compiled by the Senate-Chair. Herein lies the importance of maintaining a regular, and frequent, meeting schedule.

In the case of matters that require an expedient vote, an electronic vote may be conducted before the Senate's next convening. However, this electronic-emergency vote can only be held if two-thirds of the present senators agree to the vote. Furthermore, absent senators must be given at least forty-eight (48) hours to review the matter before any vote can be held.

If a senator knows they will not be able to attend the meeting, they may submit their vote electronically.

Any scholar of the program may attend a Senate meeting and make any suggestions, but for the sake of expediency and stability, only the senators shall vote upon an issue.

However, an affirmative vote is nothing more than an official suggestion to the director.

Any incoming freshmen intending to serve as Senators must first attend a Senate meeting so that they might come to understand what serving as a senator entails.

VI. Senate-Chair

The senators, upon convening their first Senate, meeting shall conduct a blind vote to elect one of the senators to the position of Senate-Chair. A simple majority is required. The Senate-Chair's chief responsibility shall be to record notes from every Senate meeting and make them available so that the senators may review the issues presented in prior meetings. Those senators unable to attend a meeting will use these notes to learn what issues were discussed. It is the responsibility of the Senate-Chair to either take and disseminate meeting notes or designate another senator to take and disseminate meeting notes. The Senate-Chair will also organize all voting processes.

Additionally, the Senate-Chair shall be the chief liaison with the Director, planning the Senate's agendas with the Director and remaining in frequent contact with the director about all Senate matters.

It shall be the duty of the Senate-Chair to oversee the meeting of The Senate when the director is unable to attend the meeting. The Senate-Chair shall strive to ensure an orderly navigation of the meeting's agenda.

Although studying abroad is not a barrier to a scholar serving as a senator, it does preclude a senator from serving as the Senate-Chair.

The Senate-Chair shall be responsible for coordinating with the Director to set and plan the times at which the Senate shall convene.

The Senate-Chair may be removed from their position as Senate-Chair by a unanimous vote of their fellow senators.

If a vacancy in the Senate-Chair's seat develops during the course of the year then the same measures taken to elect the Senate-Chair shall be taken to elect a new Senate-Chair.

VII. Amending the Constitution

An amendment to this constitution may be suggested by any Senator, Scholar, or the Director.

Any amendment, after necessary discussion and revision must be nominated, or brought before the senate by one of the Senators. Then, a second senator must "second" the amendment, endorsing it. At this point the amendment will be voted upon by the entire senate, a three-fourths majority being required for its passage.

No amendment vote shall be considered official until all senators have voted, including those senators who must cast their vote electronically due to absence.

After its passage, the amendment shall be added to the text of the Constitution by the sitting Senate-Chair.

Additionally, an amendment may be made to this Constitution by the non-Senatorial scholars of the program via a two-thirds vote of each cohort. If two-thirds of the scholars in each cohort vote affirmatively then the amendment shall pass. It is important to note that this is not two-thirds of vote casters, but two-thirds of the cohort's population.