

CONSTITUTION FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Rutgers University - Camden Law Students For Sensible Drug Policy

PREAMBLE

Mission Statement:

Students for Sensible Drug Policy is an international, grassroots network of students who are concerned about the impact that drug abuse has on our communities, but who also know that the War on Drugs is failing our generation and our society. SSDP mobilizes and empowers young people to participate in the political process, pushing for sensible policies to achieve a safer and more just future, while fighting back against counterproductive Drug War policies, particularly those that directly harm students and youth.

Values Statement:

Students for Sensible Drug Policy neither encourages nor condemns drug use. Rather, we seek to reduce the harms caused by drug abuse and drug policies. As young people, we strive toward a just and compassionate society where drug abuse is treated as a health issue instead of a criminal justice issue. We recognize that the very real harms of drug abuse are not adequately addressed by current policies and we advocate measures that would effectively help those who develop drug problems. Yet, we also believe that individuals must ultimately be allowed to make decisions for themselves as long as their actions do not infringe upon anyone else's freedoms or safety.

Because the War on Drugs has historically been justified as necessary to protect youth, it is our responsibility as young people to stop this harmful war from being waged in our names any longer. As scholars, we seek solutions to society's drug problems through focused research, honest dialogue, and informed debate, instead of unquestioned extremism, punishment, and propaganda.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be "Rutgers University - Camden Law Students for Sensible Drug Policy."

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Membership shall be open to all Rutgers University Law students. Membership, benefits, and the election of officers will not be made on the basis of race, sex, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, political, veteran or religious affiliation or status.

Section 2

The organization shall abide by all applicable laws of the state of New Jersey and the United States.

Section 3

The organization shall abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the University and under the privileges as granted by the Office of Campus Involvement and the Dean of Students, along with those of the Board of Governors, University and the College.

Section 4

Each member shall contribute to the organization by:

- 1) attending meetings regularly to keep abreast of both drug policy developments and the activities of the organization,
- 2) Keeping up to date with SSDP's activities at the national level by receiving SSDP's national e-mail updates.
- 3) offering any suggestions they may have concerning how to best accomplish the mission of the organization, and
- 4) developing and participating in organizational events for the purpose of accomplishing the organizations mission, subject to availability.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS and TERMS OF OFFICE

Section 1: OFFICERS and DUTIES

A. PRESIDENT

The President:

1. Shall open meetings at the time at which the organization is to meet by taking the chair and calling the meeting to order.
2. Shall announce the business before the members in the order in which it is to be acted upon.
3. Shall state and put to vote all questions which are regularly moved or necessarily arise in the course of the proceedings, and announce the result of the vote.
4. Shall restrain the members when engaged in debate as specified in Robert's Rules of Order.

5. Shall enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members, deciding all questions of order and to inform the assembly when necessary on a point of order.
6. Shall be objective on issues before the assembly, but may sometimes call the Vice-President to take the chair so (s)he can take part in debate.
7. (S)he can vote in order to break a tie and shall be able to veto all motions approved by the organization. However, the organization can override the President's veto with three-fourths (3/4) affirmative votes.
8. Shall enforce the observance of this Constitution.
9. Shall authenticate by his/her signature when necessary all acts, orders and proceedings of the organization and in general shall represent the organization, declaring its will in all things and obeying its commands.
10. Shall be an ex-officio member of all, standing and ad hoc, committees.
11. In absence of the Vice-President, shall perform the Vice-President's duties.
12. Shall assume the responsibilities and powers of the Vice-President, should that office become vacant.
13. Shall have other responsibilities, powers and duties as may be assigned to their position by this constitution, the Office of Campus Involvement and any policies of the school.

B. VICE-PRESIDENT

The Vice-President:

1. Shall serve as the ex-officio of all standing committees, with the power to appoint all new committee chairpersons and members.
2. Shall chair the Election Committee.
3. In absence of the President, shall preside and perform the President's duties.
4. Shall assume the responsibilities and powers of the President, should that office become vacant.
5. Shall have full voting power unless presiding as chair.
6. Shall enforce the observance of this Constitution.
7. Shall have other responsibilities, powers and duties as may be assigned to their position by this constitution, the Office of Campus Involvement and any policies of the school.

C. SECRETARY

The Secretary:

1. Shall take accurate minutes (or records) of all organization meetings, general and emergency, and elections, votes, etc that occur within the organization.

2. Shall chair the Constitution Committee to annually review the constitution of the organization.
3. Shall read and distribute copies of the previous meeting's minutes to all members of the organization.
4. Shall be responsible for taking roll call. The attendance shall be accurately kept in a record book.
5. Shall record the name of the maker of a motion and the results of a vote.
6. Shall take charge of all documents belonging to the organization.
7. Shall call a meeting to order in the absence of the President and Vice-President and to preside until the election of a Chairperson pro-tem, which shall take place immediately.
8. Shall have a list of all officers and representatives, notifying the members of meetings.
9. Shall conduct all correspondence as directed.
10. Shall read important correspondence at all meetings.
11. Shall keep an accurate account of all correspondences.
12. Shall enforce the observance of this Constitution.
13. Shall have other responsibilities, powers and duties as may be assigned to their position by this constitution, the Office of Campus Involvement and any policies of the school.

D. TREASURER

The Treasurer:

1. Shall be the custodian of the organization's funds and shall properly handle all organization funds.
2. Shall keep an accurate record of all transactions.
3. Shall advise the organization of financial position to them, such as funding and constitutional policy.
4. Shall enforce the observance of this Constitution.
5. Shall have other responsibilities, powers and duties as may be assigned to their position by this constitution, the Office of Campus Involvement and any policies of the school.

Section 2: TERMS OF OFFICE

The term of office for all offices shall be one year, with elections to take place in the spring.

Section 3: ELECTIONS

If an office is to become vacant, the organization has the power to temporarily appoint someone to fill the vacant position so as not to interfere with the workings of the student organization. The person appointed to fill the vacant position must be approved by at least 2/3 of the organization.

Every candidate for or office holder of an organization office shall maintain the following minimum requirements:

- A. Shall be a registered, currently enrolled student of one of the Rutgers University - Camden School of Law.
- B. Shall have and maintain at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point average (GPA). Should a student's cumulative average fall below a 2.00 due to an error by the Registrar's Office, (s)he shall be allowed to remain in office until a final decision is made provided. S(he) must provide University documentation to the organization and the Office of Campus Involvement (OCI) that the grade causing the low GPA is under appeal.
- C. Shall comply with all of the election rules and requirements of this Constitution and its bylaws and the Election Committee of the organization.

Section 4: IMPEACHMENT

Impeachment proceedings may be brought against any member of the organization provided that grounds for impeachment exist.

- A. Grounds for impeachment include, but are not limited to
 1. Failure to carry out the duties of office as specified by this Constitution and/or its bylaws.
 2. Failure to meet the requirements of office as determined by this Constitution.
- B. Impeachment procedure is as follows:
 1. a. Impeachment proceedings may be initiated by any member of the organization.
 - b. The charges shall be in written form and signed by not less than three-fourths (3/4) of the organization.
 2. Exactly two (2) weeks after the delivery of the charges, the charged person shall meet with the full membership and Program Coordinator for the OCI/Director of Student Activities (if requested) in presiding in a closed session and shall have the opportunity to respond to the charges.
 3. If the organization, by at least a three-fourths (3/4) vote, finds the person in question guilty at the impeachment hearing, that person shall be removed from his/her office immediately and the vacancy shall be filled according to this Constitution and/or its bylaws

ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The executive authority of the organization is vested in the elected officers of the organization, who form the executive committee.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

Section 1: All organization meetings are mandatory for all members.

- A. Absences are defined as failures to attend general meetings and failure to attend organization sponsored events for which a member has agreed to participate.
- B. Absences may be excused due to illness, emergency work schedules, make-up exams, tests, representing the Camden Campus at another administrative function, or any other unavoidable emergency situation; subject to the President's prerogative.
- C. Only three (3) unexcused absences shall be allowed per semester.
- D. Violations of clauses "B" and /or "C" above will result in immediate termination of office only after a fair hearing of the organization.

Section 2: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

The organization shall hold two general meetings per month. The schedule for such meetings shall be subject to the availability of the membership.

Section 3: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The executive committee shall meet at least once a month outside of the general membership meetings.

Section 4: SPECIAL MEETINGS

Meetings for special purposes may be approved and scheduled by a majority of the members.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

Any member or members may form a committee, provided that the purpose for forming the committee has been approved by the President and by a majority of the members. A committee shall remain in existence while it contains at least one member and while its purpose is approved by the president and a majority of the members and shall be dissolved thereafter. Three-fourths (3/4) of the membership may override a Presidential veto with regard to either the creation or dissolution of a committee. Committee members are responsible for selecting a chair, who will report the developments within the committee to the membership.

ARTICLE VII: FINANCIAL

Funds shall be acquired through donations, fundraising events, and through the Student Bar Association. All funds shall be held according to the guidelines of the Student Bar Association.

ARTICLE VIII: QUORUM

A simple majority is required to hold a legal meeting.

ARTICLE IX: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised Edition, shall be the authority on all questions of parliamentary law and proceedings.

ARTICLE X: ORDER OF BUSINESS

The agenda format for the meeting shall be as follows:

- A. Call to Order and Ascertainment of a quorum
- B. Secretary's Report and Distribution of the Minutes, Attendance and Approval of Communications
- C. Approval of the Agenda
- D. President's Report
- E. Vice-President's Report
- F. Treasurer's Report
- G. Old Business
- H. New Business
- I. Adjournment (subject to a motion)

ARTICLE XI: ADVISORS

The President shall appoint an advisor from the Rutgers University Law School faculty, subject to the approval of the majority of the members. The advisor shall be responsible for keeping the organization reasonably abreast of legal developments in drug policy at both the national and the local levels, and submitting recommendations concerning the organization's policies and events.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

Section 1: An amendment may be proposed by any member of the organization.

Section 2: The procedure for amendments to this Constitution shall be as follows:

- A. The proposed amendment shall be announced at a meeting at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting when the vote will be taken.
- B. Two (2) weeks after the proposed amendment has been announced, the organization may adopt the amendment by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present.

ARTICLE XIII: BY LAWS

The organization will adhere to the University alcohol policy and the Student Code of Conduct.