

The University of New Mexico-Taos

Student Government Constitution

Adopted December 14, 2010

PREAMBLE

We, the students of The University of New Mexico-Taos, in order to appropriately organize the responsibilities of participatory governance in joint effort among students, faculty, staff and administration of UNM-Taos do hereby establish this University of New Mexico-Taos Student Government Constitution.

The University of New Mexico-Taos Student Government Constitution and any actions taken under this Student Government Constitution are subject to the laws of the United States of America and the State of New Mexico in accordance with the policies and regulations formulated by The University of New Mexico-Taos Administration and the University of New Mexico Board of Regents.

ARTICLE I. Name

The name of this organization shall be The University of New Mexico-Taos Student Government (UNMTSG).

ARTICLE II. Purpose

The purpose of the UNMTSG is to represent the interests and concerns of the student body of The University of New Mexico-Taos and to fairly and judiciously expend such funds as are available for student clubs, activities and initiatives under the guidance of advisors, UNM-Taos business office and UNM policies and procedures.

ARTICLE III. Membership

The UNMTSG is comprised of nine members elected at large from The University of New Mexico-Taos student body. UNMTSG members must be enrolled in at least six (6) credit hours in freshman and/or sophomore level courses at The University of New Mexico-Taos. Members of UNMTSG must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 and be in good academic standing, i.e. not presently serving a probationary or suspension period. Any member of the UNMTSG who fails to meet the minimum grade point average and/or is placed on academic probation or suspension will automatically be ineligible to remain a member of the UNMTSG.

ARTICLE IV. Election Process

UNMTSG elections for all nine members shall be held annually during the Fall semester. All candidates for election to the UNM-Taos Student Government must follow procedures set forth in the Student Government Elections Code, which is part of the UNMTSG Bylaws. The nine candidates receiving the highest number of votes will become the new members of the UNMTSG. Election results shall be certified and newly elected Senators shall take the oath of office no later than seven days following the election unless an official protest is filed, in which case outgoing Senators shall remain in office until the protest has been resolved, and meetings shall be chaired by an Advisor.

ARTICLE V. Terms of Office

The term of office for UNMTSG members will be from one annual election to another.

UNMTSG members are eligible to run for re-election and to serve for a maximum of two terms. An appointment to finish out a term vacated for any reason shall count as one full term.

ARTICLE VI. Vacancies

Any vacancies in the membership of the UNMTSG will be filled by appointment by majority vote of the seated government after the vacancy has been posted campus-wide and applications have been accepted. Such appointments shall be made within 45 days of the vacancy.

Appointee shall serve the balance of the unexpired term.

ARTICLE VII. Resignation and Removal

Any UNMTSG member may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to the Student Government. UNMTSG members who are no longer in attendance at The University of New Mexico-Taos are deemed to have resigned. Such resignations will be verified by the Student Government Advisor(s).

A Student Government member may be removed by majority of the remaining UNMTSG members for any of the following reasons:

1. Non-attendance at regular or special meetings, emergency meetings, designated trainings, committee meetings or scheduled events a total of three times in a term without the excusal of the President of Student Government. UNMTSG President shall, along with UNMTSG Advisor, be responsible both for notifying any member in danger of removal and notifying the Senate of pending action in a timely manner.
2. Gross misconduct, willful neglect of office, or inability to discharge duties pursuant to procedures set forth in the bylaws.

3. Failure to meet the minimum requirements of membership enumerated in Article III above shall result in automatic removal (no vote of the body required).

A member removed from office by the UNMTSG is suspended from membership through the end of the original term to which the member was elected.

ARTICLE VIII. Meetings

Regular meetings of the UNMTSG are held not less than once a month during the Fall and Spring semesters and as needed during the summer session, and are open to the public in compliance with the New Mexico Open Meetings Act. Committee meetings of the UNMTSG shall be chaired by a Student Government member, and minutes are kept and made available to the UNMTSG at their next regular meeting. Special meetings, emergency meetings, workshop meetings where no action may be taken, committee meetings and executive sessions may be called from time to time pursuant to the New Mexico Open Meetings Act.

Quorum necessary for the transaction of Student Government business in a nine member body will be five (5). If membership decreases to eight a quorum will still be five (5). If the membership is seven or six a quorum will be four (4). Membership of five or four members will require three (3) for a quorum. A body comprised of fewer than four members that has not filled vacancies with appointed members shall be required to call a general election to re-form.

ARTICLE IX. Committees

The President of UNMTSG may create and appoint members to standing and/or ad hoc committees with the advice and consent of a majority of UNMTSG members present. Committees shall be comprised of at least one member of UNMTSG who will facilitate and record the work of the committee, with reports made to the full UNMTSG in a timely manner.

ARTICLE X. Decision Making Process

All issues brought before the UNMTSG unless otherwise designated in Bylaws, Constitution or parliamentary authority are decided by the process of a simple majority vote.

ARTICLE XI. Administrative Duties and Responsibilities

The specific administrative duties and responsibilities of the UNMTSG members are:

1. Members are responsible for carrying out the mission of the UNMTSG and serving as a liaison between students and administration.

2. Members are responsible for participating in activities of the UNMTSG, including but not limited to meetings, committee hearings, trainings and general advocacy for students.
3. Members are responsible for understanding the policies, procedures and administrative regulations of UNM and UNM-Taos, and those State and Federal laws which relate to their activities.
4. Members are responsible for providing documentation of all actions on a regular basis to advisors, business office and other appropriate governing bodies of The University of New Mexico-Taos to maintain communication within the college community. Members will meet regularly with the Student Government Advisor(s).
5. The Student Government Advisor is responsible for the placement, supervision, and removal of any staff serving the Student Government, consistent with The University of New Mexico-Taos policies and procedures.
6. The Student Government Advisor is responsible for the overall management of the student government center area, including the office space and equipment.
7. Members will make recommendations through advisors to the Administration of proposed campus projects that are of concern to students.

ARTICLE XII. Finance

Section 1: Authority and Source

1. The UNMTSG shall exercise control over its finances in accordance with this Constitution, the Bylaws, The University of New Mexico and The University of New Mexico-Taos regulations as they apply to funds of The University of New Mexico-Taos and applicable federal and state law.
2. Funds approved by the UNM-Taos Executive Director and placed in the Student Government account shall be derived from a percentage of designated student government fees levied on each enrolled lower division student at The University of New Mexico-Taos by the University of New Mexico Board of Regents. Additional income may be derived from fundraising enterprises of the UNMTSG. Said fundraising enterprises must have approval of Student Success Director before implementation.

Section 2: Authorization of University of New Mexico-Taos Student Government Fee

1. A fee shall be levied on each student enrolled in lower division (100-200) courses at The University of New Mexico-Taos in an amount authorized by the University of New Mexico Board of Regents. Said fee shall be divided between a Student Government operating account and a second account allocated to student-oriented services as determined by UNM-Taos Executive Director.

ARTICLE XIII. Financial Duties and Responsibilities

1. Members are responsible for the prudent decision-making, disbursement, authorization, and financial oversight of UNMTSG revenues and expenditures. The UNM - Taos Administrative Finance Office has final oversight and approval of UNMTSG expenditures.
2. Members are responsible for approving all allocations to The University of New Mexico-Taos student clubs and organizations.
3. Members are responsible for establishing and maintaining contact with the Finance Office, and being fully aware of the UNMTSG financial status at all times.
4. Members are responsible for receiving and reviewing monthly financial statements, provided by the Finance Office, of all revenues and expenditures related to UNMTSG funds.
5. Members are responsible for developing budgets and maintaining financial reports on all Student Government-initiated activities.
6. After each Annual Election previous government members will provide to incoming members an accounting of assets and complete financial accounting of the treasury citing balance, funds available and encumbrances.
7. UNMTSG may not solicit funds, goods or services on behalf of UNM-Taos, its students, organizations or others without express written permission from the UNM-Taos Development Office.

ARTICLE XIV. Conflict of Interest

UNM-Taos Student Government members shall maintain the highest standards of business ethics.

Conflict of interest shall be defined by the following paragraph adapted from the UNM Conflicts of Interest policy #3720, to wit:

UNMTSG members are expected to perform their duties faithfully and efficiently and never give rise to suspicion of improper conflict with interests of the college or in carrying out their duties as representatives of the student body. UNMTSG members must avoid any conflict of interest that may affect their independent judgment in the impartial performance of their duties and may not use their positions to enhance their direct or indirect financial interest or use confidential information for anyone's private gain.

Should a question of conflict of interest arise, that question shall be resolved by a majority vote of the UNMTSG subject to oversight by Student Success Director. Should it be determined that there is, indeed, a conflict of interest, the member with a conflict shall not be allowed to vote on the issue at hand.

All hiring and bid processes in which the UNMTSG is involved are subject to state law as well as University policy regarding fair hiring and purchasing.

ARTICLE XV. Dispute Resolution

The University of New Mexico-Taos Student Government shall, in its bylaws, establish a means to resolve disputes arising under this Constitution and bylaws. The dispute resolution mechanism may be a student court, a form of alternative dispute resolution, or a combination thereof. A discretionary appeal shall be provided.

ARTICLE XVI. Ratification and Amendments to Constitution

The UNMTSG Constitution will become effective and deemed ratified upon the approval of a supermajority of sixty percent of the current members in good standing of the Student Government followed by approval of a simple majority of the voting student body and the approval of the University of New Mexico Board of Regents.

All proposed amendments to this Constitution must also be approved by a supermajority of sixty percent of the entire UNMTSG followed by a simple majority of the voting student body. Any amendment so adopted must be approved by the University of New Mexico Board of Regents before becoming effective.

ARTICLE XVII. Bylaws

1. The UNMTSG may adopt bylaws or amendments thereto which must be approved by a supermajority of sixty percent of the current members in good standing of the Student Government. Additional requirements to pass or amend bylaws may be set forth in the UNMTSG Bylaws.
2. The UNMTSG Bylaws and amendments shall be subject to review and approval by the University Counsel as to form and consistency with applicable law and regulations before becoming effective.
3. Bylaws to implement this Constitution may be adopted so long as they are not inconsistent with the spirit or letter of the provisions of this Constitution.

ARTICLE XVIII. Interpretation

In the event that a question of interpretation of the contents of this Constitution or its amendments should occur, the interpretation will be considered by a Dispute Resolution Committee consisting of the UNMTSG, the Student Government Advisor(s) and the Student Success Director. Their interpretation of this Constitution may be appealed to the Executive Director of The University of New Mexico-Taos by any member of the Dispute Resolution Committee within seven calendar days of the ruling.