

*“OUR MISSION AS THE AQUINAS COLLEGE STUDENT SENATE IS TO FAIRLY REPRESENT THE DIVERSE VIEWS, NEEDS, AND EXPECTATIONS OF OUR STUDENT BODY IN A CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENT.”*

## Bylaws of the Aquinas College Student Senate

### Aquinas College Grand Rapids, Michigan

Current as of May 1, 2011

#### ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS

The name of this organization is the Student Senate, which derives its charter from the Aquinas College Governance Agreement and is subject to the duly constituted authority of the President of the College and the bylaws and policies of the Board of Trustees.

The Student Senate adopts the following definitions:

- A. A Traditional Aged Student shall be any enrolled student whose education has not been interrupted (two or more years in higher education, or four or more years since high school graduation), is not a veteran of the Armed Forces, and is not otherwise categorized by the Registrar as a Continuing Education Student.”
- B. A full-time student shall be registered for twelve or more semester hours of instruction per semester through this college or college approved programs as defined by the Registrar’s Office. College approved programs include the University of Detroit-Mercy nursing program.
- C. The academic year shall begin on the first day of classes of the fall semester and end the last day of classes spring semester.
- D. The calendar year shall consist of twelve consecutive months from January 1 to December 31 of the given year.
- E. A duly elected officer shall have received a plurality of all votes cast in an election.
- F. The Cabinet shall consist of the directors of all Senate committees, the Executive Committee, and the Advisor to the Senate, who shall be a non-voting member.
- G. Regular, Special, and Closed Meetings consist of: Regular; pre-announced monthly and annual meetings. Special; called when need arrives for special announcements or talks. Closed; used in case of grievances on behalf of review of Executive Officers.
- H. Quorum consists of one more than one-half of the voting members of the Student Senate.
- I. Student Organizations shall be all college recognized clubs, organizations, and Residence Area Councils.

## ARTICLE II: SENATE MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1: Composition of Senate Membership

- A. Members shall be any Aquinas College student representing a student organization, serving as a Senator at Large, or serving on Student Senate Cabinet.
- B. Continuing education, graduate, and part-time Aquinas College members shall not vote on budgetary matters.
- C. The Advisor to the Senate, the Dean of Students, the Director of Residence Life, the Director of Diversity Initiatives, the Director of Student Activities, an appointee from Campus Ministry, and three appointees each from Faculty Assembly and Staff Assembly shall serve as non-voting ex officio members.
- D. The President of the College and the Provost shall not be members of the Student Senate, but have the right to attend meetings, to address the Senate, and to recommend matters for consideration.

### Section 2: Membership Requirements

- A. Members must be in good academic standing at Aquinas College, having achieved a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 or higher.
- B. Members shall be assigned by the Executive Committee to serve on a Senate standing committee.
- C. Members must attend all Senate meetings, including Senate committee meetings. Membership shall be forfeited upon a member's second unexcused absence from Senate meetings.
  - a. Absences from regular and special meetings of Senate shall be deemed excused by the Secretary.
  - b. Absences from committee meetings shall be deemed excused by the relevant committee director.
- D. Student organization representatives shall act as a liaison between Student Senate and the student organization being represented.

### Section 3: Student Organization Representatives

- A. Residence Area Councils shall appoint a minimum of two and a maximum of three representatives.
- B. College recognized clubs and organizations shall appoint a minimum of one and a maximum of three representatives.
- C. Students wishing to represent a student organization shall submit an information and letter of intent form, which shall be made available by and returned to the Executive Committee.
- D. Student organizations shall establish representation by the first regular meeting of Senate of each semester.
- E. Additional student organization representatives may be added after the first regular meeting of each semester at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

### Section 4: Senators at Large

- A. Students wishing to serve as Senators at Large shall complete a petition of fifty duplicable, nonexclusive signatures from Aquinas College students. Petitions shall be made available by and returned to the Executive Committee, which shall verify all completed petitions.
- B. Senators at Large shall also submit an information and letter of intent form, which shall be made available by and returned to the Executive Committee.
- C. Senators at Large shall establish their representation by the first regular meeting of each semester.

### Section 5: Non-discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Student Senate that no person shall be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Student Senate is responsible on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnic origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.

## ARTICLE III: ELECTED OFFICERS

### Section 1: Position

The officers of the Student Senate shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. The officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these Bylaws and by the parliamentary authority of the Student Senate. The offices require a year long commitment and a minimum of 15-20 hours per week. Elected officers will have a full voice at all Senate meetings, but may not serve as senate representatives of any student organization.

### Section II: Eligibility

- A. Any full-time, traditional-aged Aquinas student with a cumulative G.P.A. of at least 2.50 is eligible for elected office.
- B. A person applying for the position of Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Student Senate shall have served at least two full semesters on Senate or shall have served on Student Senate Cabinet. In the event a person applying for the position of Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of the Student Senate has served one full semester and is in the process of serving a second semester during the election process, the person is considered eligible.
- C. Petitions will be made available for five consecutive business days by the Political Affairs Committee.
- D. To be recognized as a candidate for office, an individual must submit a valid petition with one hundred unduplicated signatures of full-time, traditional-aged Aquinas students.
- E. Any full-time, traditional-aged Aquinas student may sign one petition for each office (Secretary, Vice-Chair, and Chairperson).

### Section III: Election Administration

- A. Recognized Candidates:
  1. Will be reimbursed for up to \$25 worth of materials used and purchased for the campaign. The reimbursement can be obtained through normal check request procedures used by the Budget Committee. Candidates may only spend up to a total of \$50. Donations may not be accepted by Candidates. Money will be reserved each year in the budget of the Political Affairs Committee.
  2. Will be recognized as an official candidate at a series of two separate debates coordinated by the Political Affairs Committee.
    - a) One of the debates will consist of three or four panelists who will be selected by the Political Affairs Committee
    - b) The other debate will have one moderator chosen by the Political Affairs Committee who will oversee questions presented by the audience to the candidates.
    - c) Dates and length of debate will be determined annually by the Political Affairs Committee.
    - d) If all candidates run unopposed, the Political Affairs Committee will coordinate a minimum of one open forum information session

3. Will have his/her name printed on the official ballot alphabetically by last name.
- B. Completed petitions will be turned in to the Political Affairs Committee on the days and times designated by the Political Affairs Committee.
- C. Two consecutive weeks of in-session classes will be provided for campaigning. Election must be completed by the Political Affairs Committee.
- D. A write-in candidate who meets all requirements is eligible to become duly elected. However, he/she will be considered an unofficial candidate and as such, will not be eligible to receive the benefits listed in Part A above. His/her name will not be made available at the election booth either in writing or by word of mouth.
- E. The election shall be the responsibility of the Political Affairs Committee, following these guidelines:
  1. Election times and places will be announced at least one week in advance.
  2. No less than one Senator and one official of the college or two Senators shall run the polls.
  3. The ballots shall be counted by the Director of the Political Affairs Committee, the Student Senate Advisor, and a Senate representative.
  4. In the event that any of those running for office are supposed to count the ballots, they will not be permitted to count the ballots. Alternates shall be chosen by the Political Affairs Committee.
- F. The results will be released after all candidates have been notified.
- G. Installation of the new officers will take place at the Senate meeting which follows the election.
- H. In the event of a run-off election or in the event that the election is declared invalid by the Executive Committee and the Political Affairs Committee, the petitions obtained under Part D of Section II will remain valid. The new election will be as soon as possible under the procedures of Section II. Officers elected under this provision will take office the Monday following the election. The current Executive Committee will remain active until the officers have been elected.
- I. Upon installment of the new Executive Committee, the immediate predecessors shall retain the privileges and powers of a traditional-aged senator for the remainder of that academic year.
- J. All students are eligible to vote.

#### Section IV: Campaign Restrictions

- A. Candidates must follow ethical practices as well as the guidelines set forth in the student conduct code while campaigning. Student events shall not be used as a forum for campaigns. Failure to act responsibly will result in the forfeiture of their campaign. If ethical questions arise, they will be brought in front of the Student Senate for a majority decision.
- B. Candidates for office will submit all campaign materials to the Director of the Political Affairs Committee. If the Director is running for office, materials will be submitted to an appointee from the Political Affairs Committee for approval. Neither the college nor the Senate shall support any particular candidate over another. All material shall contain promotion for only one candidate.
- C. Members of the Senate may not use their title of office to endorse any candidate for office. Endorsements may be given on a personal level only. No student organization shall endorse a candidate.
- D. No candidates running for a position of the Executive committees shall be allowed to loiter in sight of the polling place.
- E. No candidate will present a means of voting to any student, whether paper or electronic.
- F. Violation of any two (2) of the election bylaws will result in the automatic invalidation of the election results.

- G. Any charges of election bylaws violations will be submitted in writing to the Director of the Political Affairs Committee, or a member thereof, no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the publicized election results.

## **ARTICLE IV: REPLACEMENT AND GRIEVANCE**

### **Section I: Replacement of Elected Officers**

In the event that either the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, or the Secretary can no longer fulfill their duties, the Executives shall, with a 2/3 majority vote of the Senate, elect a member of the Senate to fill the empty position and carry out the remaining term, empowered with all the duties granted to that position in these Bylaws.

- A. When a vacated Executive position occurs, the next elected officer or cabinet member in line will have precedence for the nomination.
1. The order for determining precedence for filling elected positions in the Senate shall be as follows: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Budget Director, Political Affairs, Student Representation, Promotions, Student Affairs, and Diversity.
- B. If a 2/3 majority is not reached the first time, the Senate shall nominate a different Senator for office. All positions must be filled by current voting Senate members.

### **Section II: Replacement of Committee Directors**

Committee directors shall be replaced in the same manner that they are originally appointed.

### **Section III: Replacement of Senators**

When a Senator's office has been terminated, if the Senator represented a student organization, it is the student organization's responsibility to find a replacement representative. At-Large senators will not be replaced.

### **Section IV: Grievance Committee**

Recognizing the possibility that disputes may occur, the Senate encourages the parties in any dispute to try to settle their grievances among themselves. Knowing that this is not always possible, the Senate established a Grievance Committee whose purpose is to mediate any grievances or disputes between both parties involved before it becomes a public issue and brought before the floor of the Senate for a decision. This can only be done after the action reaches no settlement at the Grievance Committee.

- A. A grievance shall be made in writing to the Political Affairs Chairperson. The Political Affairs Chairperson will convene the Grievance Committee within one (1) academic week of reception of the grievance.
- B. Membership of the Grievance Committee will consist of two senator-at-large representatives of the Senate and one alternate of whom will be elected at the first Senate meeting of the school term, the Dean of Student Development, the advisor to the Senate, and two (2) members of the Political Affairs Committee appointed by the Director of the Political Affairs Committee.
- C. To ensure quick and fair treatment of a grievance, it shall be dealt with within two (2) academic weeks of a written notification of the grievance.

- D. If the grievance cannot be settled at the Grievance Committee level and needs to be brought to the Senate for discussion and a decision, it will be presented by a Senator-At-Large member of the Grievance Committee in an unbiased manner.
- E. If the grievance is serious enough, it could result in the Senate requesting the termination of the Senator's position on the Student Senate. This would require a ¾ majority vote of the Senate.
- F. Confidence/no confidence pertaining to Executive officers.
  - 1. After the grievance process has been exhausted, a petition containing a majority of the voting members of the Senate's signatures can be made, calling a special closed meeting of the Student Senate.
  - 2. Any special meeting called to order in the above manner will be chaired by the highest-ranking officer not being discussed. After discussion, by both sides, a vote of confidence will be taken resulting in deciding termination of the officer in question from his/her position. A vote to affirm no-confidence in this manner will require a three-fourths (3/4) majority.

## **ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

Duties of officers include but are not limited to the following:

### **Section I: Chairperson**

- A. Issue the call to meetings at least one week prior to the date of meetings, with the assistance of the remainders of the Executive Committee
- B. Draw up and distribute agendas for all meetings.
- C. Preside at all Senate meetings.
- D. Vote only in case of a tie.

### **Section II: Vice-Chairperson**

- A. Perform the duties of Chairperson in his/her absence.
- B. Act as a Student Representative to two (2) of the five (5) Board of Trustee Committees.
- C. Serve as a Student Representative to the Staff and Faculty Assemblies.
- D. Act as director of the Standing Committee on Student Representation
  - 1. This committee shall act as a representative review committee for all of the student representatives on various faculty and staff boards, including Faculty Assembly and Staff Assembly.
  - 2. This committee shall maintain a secure, stable relationship with faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustee Committees. The Director shall appoint student representatives to serve on these committees.
  - 3. This committee shall have complete student representation on the following boards:
    - a) Awards Committee
    - b) Diversity Committee
    - c) Enrollment Committee
    - d) Facilities Committee
    - e) Student and Religious Affairs Committee
    - f) All-College Judicial Review Board
    - g) Eastown Community Organization
    - h) Student Traffic Board

- i) All other boards that Senators have the opportunity to serve on.
- 4. Any absence from the Board of Trustee Standing Committee meetings, which is not approved by the Director of Student Representation, will count as an absence from a Student Senate meeting. In addition, the President's office must be notified of the absence prior to the meeting.

Section III: Secretary

- A. Be responsible for keeping all official records and files of the Senate.
- B. Record the minutes (regular and special) and member voting records of the Senate and the Cabinet meetings. File a copy of all minutes in the Senate Office, and post copies on the Senate Bulletin Board.
- C. Keep current records, reports, and lists of all members of the Senate and respective committee meetings.
- D. Notify a Senator who has had one absence from the Senate meetings (to be done within one (1) academic week).
- E. Send written notification to senators who have had two (2) unexcused absences from the Senate meetings that he/she has forfeited his/her positions as a Senator (to be done within one (1) academic week).
- F. Notify the Political Affairs Committee of vacancy (within one (1) academic week).
- G. Set up the Senate Office mailboxes (to be completed within the first week of any given semester).
- H. Be responsible for the upkeep of the Senate office.
- I. Preside over the Senate meeting on the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

Section IV: Stipends of Officers

- A. Stipends for officers will be based on Budget Committee recommendations, taking into account cost of living, and must be approved by majority vote of the Senate.
- B. Stipends are to be paid out following regular student payroll procedures, minus the months of May, June, and July.
- C. As agreed by the Budget Committee and approved by the Senate, the initial starting stipends for the Officers and Committee Directors are:
 

Chair: \$3,500.00	Budget Dir.: \$2,500.00
V-Chair: \$3,000.00	Committee Dir.: \$1,000.00
Secretary: \$3,000.00	

Section V: Evaluation of Officers

- A. The Executive Committee Officers are to be evaluated at the end of the fall semester. A written report on strengths and weaknesses will be prepared and presented to the Executives by the Advisor.
- B. Committee Directors shall be evaluated by the Executive Officers, taking into account input from the representative committee members at the end of the first semester.

Section VI: Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of three (3) elected officers with the Advisor and Budget Director as non-voting members. It shall meet regularly and be empowered to:

- A. Transact any necessary business of the Senate in the interim between Senate meetings and during vacation periods.
- B. Attend to necessary correspondence of the Senate.
- C. Attend to the payment of bills authorized by Senate.

- D. Account for Student Senate fiscal operations.
- E. Appoint all members to committees working under delegated Senate responsibilities.
- F. Divide responsibility of overseeing Senate committees in a manner agreed upon between the Executives.
- G. Outline responsibilities and provide job descriptions for each committee, each year.
- H. Appoint Committee Directors at the end of each academic year and replace Directors when necessary.

## **ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES**

### **Section I: Requirements**

- A. The Student Senate shall operate on a committee structure. Each committee shall designate all general responsibilities listed below and by the Executives. The Committee Director position is a year long commitment.
- B. All Committee Directors shall determine the internal structure of their committee using the democratic process of one voice/one vote.
- C. All committees shall be required to hold meetings every two weeks, providing regular communication to the Student Senate.
- D. All Committee Directors shall have a full voice at Senate meetings, but may not serve as senate representatives of any club, organization, or Residence Hall Council.

### **Section II: Committee Guidelines**

- A. Standing Committee for Academic and Student Affairs
  - 1. This committee will serve to deal with all questions concerning the rights of all Aquinas students. Issues will be introduced to the committee by the Director or someone designated by the Director. It will investigate these concerns and the Director or someone designated by the Director will introduce Senate legislation whenever necessary.
  - 2. This committee will also deal with College policies and decisions that affect the curriculum and general academic life of Aquinas students.
  - 3. It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that any concern brought forward is presented before the committee within one (1) academic week of notification. Likewise, it is the duty of all committee members to give notice to the Director of any other concerns.
  - 4. The function of this committee is not to implement solutions to problems, but rather investigate solutions and develop means of solving such problems.
  - 5. The committee shall organize a minimum of one (1) student event a year. Provided that the budget allows, it is encouraged that the committee expend the remainder of its budget independently or in collaboration with another committee's to benefit the student body.
- B. Standing Committee for Political Affairs
  - 1. This committee shall be responsible with enforcement of parliamentary procedures and the Bylaws of the Student Senate.
  - 2. This committee shall evaluate the Bylaws and recommend changes. All changes must be approved by the Student Senate as provided for in Article IX of these Bylaws.
  - 3. This committee shall assume all responsibilities as defined throughout these Bylaws.
  - 4. The Director shall be responsible for enforcing discussion limits set by the Chairperson for each proposal on the agenda. These time limits may only be extended by a 2/3 majority vote of those

Senators present and voting. The Political Affairs Director, along with the Secretary and the Senate Advisor, shall count all ballots cast in a silent vote, which may be called by any member of Senate.

5. This committee shall also be an informative committee offering an equal opportunity for both sides of any given issue to be covered. It will enlighten students on State and Federal Legislation that affect them, address local concerns that affect Aquinas students, communicate activities of other colleges and universities relating to student legislation, and address other concerns and issues that may be brought to the committee's attention by Aquinas students.

#### C. Standing Committee on Budget

##### 1. Budget Committee

This committee shall be responsible for the approval of allocation of funds for the Senate and other student organizations requesting financial assistance from the Senate.

A student organization may appeal the allocation by requesting additional funding through the Senate.

##### 2. The duties of the Budget Director shall be:

- a) To record and keep an accurate balance of all accounts of the Student Senate.
- b) To prepare a comprehensive Budget Director's Report of the Student Senate's expenditures to be submitted to the Student Senate at every regular Senate meeting.
- c) To inform each student organization of their allotment and financial status.
- d) To authorize via signature all cash disbursements (the signature of the Senate Advisor is also required on all cash disbursements).
- e) To complete all bank reconciliations for all bank accounts of the Student Senate.
- f) To serve as chair of the Budget Committee meetings and vote in these meetings only in the event of a tie.
- g) To give an overview of the budget process at student organization orientation.

#### D. Standing Committee on Promotions

1. This committee shall be responsible for all promotional activities of Senate.
2. This committee shall keep an ongoing photographic journal of major Senate events.
3. This committee shall communicate news of Senate via Senate Publications.

#### E. Standing Committee on Diversity

1. This committee shall be responsible for promoting diversity within the entire Aquinas Community; recognizing that diversity is a broad goal encompassing racial, ethnic, gender, gender identity, religious, physical ability, intellectual, and sexual orientation differences.
2. This committee shall monitor student issues relating to diversity.
3. This committee shall provide programming and community outreach in support of this mission.
4. The Director shall serve as a liaison with the administration on diversity issues and work in conjunction with the Office of Diversity Initiatives.
5. The Director, or his or her agent, shall serve as a student representative to the Board of Trustees Diversity Committee.

#### F. Standing Committee on Sustainability

1. Shall direct and maintain the Student Senate Sustainability Committee. This Committee shall review student recommendations on how to incorporate long-term sustainability at Aquinas College by considering social, natural and financial capital.
  - a) Membership shall include the Director of the Committee, two (2) non-voting Sustainable Business majors appointed by the Sustainable Business Department Chair, and Senators

chosen by standard committee selection procedures. To be eligible, Senators must also submit a letter explaining their interest in sustainability.

- b) Responsibilities of the Committee shall include:
  - i. To raise awareness of the triple bottom line of Sustainability.
  - ii. To meet as regularly as deemed appropriate by the Director in order to review proposals.
  - iii. To bring student suggestions deemed plausible before the Student Senate for a vote. Suggestions shall be discussed by the Committee with all affected parties, and then brought before the Joint Sustainability Committee. If approved by the Joint Committee, suggestions shall be brought before the Senate.
- c) The Director and one (1) Student Senate Sustainability Committee Member shall meet a once a semester, unless called to convene, with the Joint Sustainability Committee. The Joint Sustainability Committee shall be composed of two (2) representatives from both the Faculty and Staff Assembly Sustainability Committees, the Student Senate representatives, and the Provost's designee. The Joint Committee shall review suggestions and provide feedback. Student suggestions that achieve a Sustainability Value Score of four (4) and over on a 1-5 scale shall continue on to be voted on in Student Senate. Suggestions passed by the Senate or the two (2) Assemblies will be sent to the President's designee for assessment and implementation.

#### G. Standing Committee on Special Events:

- 1. To oversee and organize Senate "Of the Month" Awards and to organize receptions/dinners with recipients and the President of the College. Members of the Aquinas Community may only receive the award once per academic year.
- 2. To organize Fallfest and coordinate Senate activities with the President's Office.
- 3. To oversee and organize the Faculty/Staff Recognition Ceremony, and the Student Awards Ceremony.
- 4. To work with the Promotions Committee to promote the image and functions of the Senate to the Aquinas Community.

#### H. Special Committees:

- 1. Special Committees may be formed at the request of The Executive Board.
- 2. The Executive Board will have the authority to appoint the members and Chair of all Special Committees.
- 3. Special Committees will report to the Senate Cabinet.
- 4. At the time of formation of any special committee, the scope and mandate will be made clear as well as the timeline for the execution of business.
- 5. Once the mandated business of the committee has been completed the committee will be dissolved.
- 6. Following dissolution a final report shall be created by the executive board and presented to the Senate as a whole.

### Section III: Appeals Process

Any senator may file a petition for appeal of any ruling made by a standing or ad-hoc committee of the Student Senate. A valid petition for appeal must:

- A. Be submitted, in writing, to the Chair within two (2) senate meetings of the relevant committee ruling;

- B. Clearly articulate the specific ruling or decision under consideration;
- C. Provide a justification for the appeal.

The Senate Chair will approve petitions that meet the above qualifications. An approved petition will then be moved before the floor of the full Senate at its next meeting. Prior to this meeting, the Chair will disseminate the Appeal to the Senate Body for their review. Appropriate debate shall be allowed on the petition for appeal. A super-majority vote (two-thirds) of the full senate is needed to approve an appeal. An approved petition will take immediate effect.

## ARTICLE VII: APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS

### Section I: Receipt of Funds

The amount allocated to the Student Senate shall be equal to \$70 per traditional-aged student. This allocation will be based on the official 4<sup>th</sup> Friday count of the current fall and previous spring semester. Said appropriations shall be determined by a budget approved by the Senate and submitted to the Business Office in the spring of each academic year for review.

### Section II: Initial Allocation

- A. Initial student organization's allocations are determined by the Budget Director at the beginning of the fiscal year. This amount is determined by the student organization's year-end review (see Section VI: Exit Interview and Budget Proposal).
- B. A Club deemed discriminatory will not receive funding by the Student Senate. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on gender, creed, race and sexual orientation.
- C. A representative from each student organization must attend all meetings, including Senate Committee meetings. If a student organization is unrepresented at a meeting it will lose 10% of its allocated funds, beginning with the second occurrence in the same academic year. Absences will be deemed excused by the Secretary.
- D. Funds must be spent during the fiscal year of the allocation. Remaining funds will be returned to the unallocated account (with the exception of fundraising and donations; see Section V).

### Section III: Club Spending

- A. All cash disbursements of the Student Senate shall require the written authorization of the Budget Director and the Advisor of the Student Senate, in addition to the signature of the student organization Treasurer and Advisor.
- B. Student organization spending must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - 1. All Senate funds shall be used to benefit the greater student population and programs supported by the Senate must be made available to all full-time, traditional-aged students.
  - 2. The use of funds shall be consistent with the student organization or Committee's goals for the academic year as outlined in their proposal to the Budget Director or goals expressed in their year-end review.
  - 3. No Senate funds can be used to purchase alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or illegal drugs without exception.
  - 4. No Senate funds are to be spent contributing to any political party, political action committee, candidate's committee for election, or candidate in any local, state, or federal election.

## C. Receiving Funds

### 1. Reimbursements

- a. Every check request must be accompanied by a receipt and given to the Budget Director.
- b. Check request forms must be completed in full.
- c. In the case that Senate funds are used to compensate travel by car, receipts should not be kept. Rather, a record of mileage must be held. This must be signed by two student organization executive board members. Amount for reimbursement is determined by the current College mileage standard.

### 2. Cash Advance

- a. Any unspent funds from a cash advance must be deposited in the Student Accounts office. Failure to do so will result in a freeze of the student organization's account.
- b. Purchase receipts, along with the deposit receipt from Student Accounts, must be submitted to the Budget Director within ten (10) business days from the date the disbursement check was written. An extension may be requested by contacting the Budget Director in writing. These extensions will be given at the discretion of the Budget Director.

## Section IV: Additional Allocations

A. All requests for unallocated funds must be approved by the majority of the members present and voting at a Student Senate meeting. An exception may be made for funds not exceeding \$500.00, which must be allocated by the Budget Committee before the next meeting of Senate. A report of these expenditures must be given to the Senate at its next regular meeting.

1. The Budget Committee will consider the efficiency with which student organization and Committees use the funds allocated to them, the visibility and consistency of the student organization on campus, and how the goals of the student organization benefit the student body the Senate represents.
2. The Budget Committee reserves the right to refuse funds to student organization who do not meet the above criteria, consistently overspend, do not follow proper protocol in the request and management of funds, or use Senate funds inappropriately. Funds may also be refused if the proposed event or cause is deemed inappropriate.

B. The Budget Director will notify the student organization requesting funds within one (1) academic week. This will be done in writing, and include the amount allocated as well as the basis for the decision. For purposes of this paragraph "in writing" includes by e-mail.

C. Approved funds will not be placed in student organization's accounts; rather, the funds will be withdrawn directly from the unallocated account.

D. The student organization advisor must be present for allocation requests exceeding \$500.00.

E. Unspent monies are reabsorbed by the unallocated account.

## Section V: Fundraising and Donations

A. Student organizations may seek funding outside of the Senate allocations. This is most commonly accomplished through fundraising and donations.

B. Money acquired through fundraising may be used at the discretion of the student organization, provided that it is not used to purchase alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Exceptions must be approved by the Budget Director.

C. A student organization with unspent fundraised monies will retain those funds into the next fiscal year.

D. If a student organization is inactive for two years any fundraised money will return to the unallocated account.

#### Section VI: Exit Review and Budget Proposal

Every Senate-funded student organization is reviewed at the end of each academic year. This review is conducted by the newly appointed Budget Director. He or she examines to what degree spending was consistent with student organization goals and spending guidelines. The exit review is used by the Budget Director to determine student organization allocations for the following fiscal year.

#### ARTICLE VIII: CONTRACTS

Recognized contracts by Aquinas College and the Student Senate are those which have been signed by the Student Senate Advisor. Any other person making a contract, either written or oral, assumes all financial responsibility and liability for the completion and fulfillment of that contract as it is an unrecognized contract. The person making an unrecognized contract may not use the names of Aquinas College or the Student Senate and may not publicize that event on the Aquinas College campus.

#### ARTICLE IX: PROVISION TO AMEND THE BYLAWS

These Senate Bylaws may be amended at regular meeting of the Student Senate with at least one week prior notice. Approval of the amendments will be a 2/3 majority vote of members present and voting, a quorum being present.

#### ARTICLE X: PROVISION TO SUSPEND THE BYLAWS

A Bylaw may be suspended at a regular meeting of the Student Senate with a 2/3 majority vote, a quorum being present. Action taken during a suspension of the Bylaws must still adhere to the Aquinas College Governance Agreement.

## APPENDIX A: BUDGET GUIDELINES FOR REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS(RSO)

### Section I: Initial Allocation

- A. Initial RSO allocations are determined by the Treasurer at the beginning of the fiscal year. This amount is determined by the RSO's year-end review (see Section XIV and XV: Exit Interview and Budget Proposal).
- B. Any entity deemed discriminatory will not receive funding by the Student Senate. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, religion, age, ethnic origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.
- C. Funds must be spent during the fiscal year of the allocation. Remaining funds will be returned to the unallocated account (with the exception of fundraising and donations; see Section XVII).

### Section II: Club Spending

- A. All cash disbursements of the Student Senate shall require the written authorization of the Treasurer and the Advisor of the Student Senate, in addition to the signature of the RSO Treasurer and Advisor.
- B. RSOs are strongly encouraged to attain co-sponsors in the delivery of their events but is not required.
- C. RSO spending must adhere to the following general guidelines:
  1. All Senate funds shall be used to benefit the greater student population and programs supported by the Senate must be made available to all full-time students.
  2. The use of funds shall be consistent with a RSO's goals for the Academic Year as outlined in their budget proposal to the Treasurer and must be consistent with the remainder of these rules and guidelines.
  3. Any RSO seeking corporate sponsors must meet with Campus Life prior to any communication with a potential sponsor.

### Section III: Entertainment Events

- A. An event aimed at solely entertainment for the Aquinas community should reflect the RSO's mission statement.
- B. When a guest or performer is contacted to appear on campus, it is the responsibility of the RSO to contact the Campus Life Office to determine contractual obligations at least three (3) weeks in advance.

### Section IV: Supplies

- A. In order to reduce the unnecessary purchase of supplies, RSO's should maintain a current inventory of supplies.
- B. The Campus Life Office will have an inventory of all supplies available in the Student Leadership Office; this inventory should be consulted before any materials are purchased.
- C. When purchasing supplies or materials that cost over \$150, the Campus Life Office must be contacted in order to reduce a student's liability for providing payment.

#### Section V: Capital Expenditures

- A. Any items purchased with Senate funds that may be considered a capital item including but not limited to; games, electronics, music, movies, or food equipment, must remain with Campus Life in order to benefit facilitation by Aquinas students, unless provisions are made otherwise with the written authorization of the Director of Campus Life and Student Senate Treasurer.
- B. The RSO that originally purchased the item will be given priority access to the item in the future.
- C. If the capital item is not delivered to Campus Life, the Senate will not provide funds for the expenditure and the RSO account will either be frozen in the current academic year, or subsequently reduced for the following academic year.

#### Section VI: Advertising

- A. Promotional material of the RSO must clearly reflect that all Senate funds allocated to RSOs shall be used to benefit the greater student population and programs supported by the Senate must be made available to all full-time, traditional-aged students.
- B. All RSO events utilizing Senate funds should advertise at least 7 calendar days prior to the event.
- C. Electronic postings on the Clubs and Organizations Calendar, "The Moose," and Digital Signage around the Aquinas Campus should be utilized in order to cut down on costs of paper and waste.

#### Section VII: Food

- A. Food purchased for meetings will be tracked in order to ensure the expense of food does not outweigh the mission of the group itself.
- B. RSOs are encouraged to utilize Aquinas College Food Services when price, quality, and variety are comparable.
- C. No RSO funds can be used to purchase alcoholic beverages, tobacco or illegal drugs.

#### Section VIII: Student Travel

- A. No major travel expenditures should be made unless funding is secured.
- B. Details regarding vehicles and mileage of travel must be disclosed to the Treasurer when traveling beyond the Kent County limits in order to receive proper reimbursement.
- C. An effort of travel through personal vehicles should be attempted before committing to the renting of vehicles from an agency, unless the need for passenger vans is prevalent.
- D. RSOs will be asked to demonstrate that certain methods of travel are clearly more beneficial than less expensive modes.
- E. In the case that Senate funds are used to compensate travel by car, receipts should not be kept. Rather, a record of mileage must be held. This must be signed by two RSO executive board members or one member and the advisor. Amount for reimbursement is determined by the current College mileage standard.
- F. A student group requiring lodging for a conference or retreat should make efforts to provide lodging in a sufficient manner, with regards to cost, safety, and convenience.
- G. RSOs will be required to provide up to three alternative lodging sites with cost and convenience comparisons.
- H. RSOs attending a conference, retreat or other event requiring student travel must subsequently facilitate an event in the Aquinas Community displaying what was gained.

- I. The Senate should not be considered as the sole source of funding for travel expenditures. The RSO should exhaust all other means of funding including departments, fundraising, sponsorship, and personal contribution.
- J. Travel that is taken to specifically fulfill an individual student's academic requirement will not be funded through an RSO. Academic Travel is defined as a student participating in a trip that is in fulfillment of a student's credits, and not in conjunction with an existing RSO.

Section IX: Membership and Dues

- A. Funding for membership and dues will be provided when it is necessary to the functioning of an RSO.
- B. Membership and dues may not be approved when said dues benefit an individual student as opposed to an RSO as a whole.

Section X: Political

- A. Funding for RSOs promoting specific political parties or views will be allowed as long as they act respectfully to other members of the Aquinas community and their political and social standing.
- B. None of these funds are to be given to any Political Parties, Candidates, Committees To Elect, Political Action Committees, Unions, or other 570 groups.

Section XI: Additional Funding Requests

- A. Additional allocations of funds up to \$500 may be reviewed and approved by the Budget Committee
- B. The Budget Committee will consider the efficiency with which RSO use the funds allocated to them, the visibility and consistency of the RSO, spending habits, initial allocation amount, co-sponsorship and how the goals of the RSO benefit the student body the Senate represents.
- C. The Budget Committee reserves the right to refuse funds to student organization who do not meet the above criteria, consistently overspend, do not follow proper protocol in the request and management of funds, or use Senate funds inappropriately.
- D. The Treasurer will notify the RSO requesting funds within one (1) academic week. This will be done in writing, including but not limited to Aquinas College E-Mail, with the amount allocated as well as the basis for the decision.
- E. A report of these expenditures must be given to the Senate at its next assembly meeting.
- F. A report of some form must also be made available for all students.
- G. Requests over \$500 must be approved by a simple majority of the full Senate. The RSOs advisor must be present for allocation requests exceeding \$500.00. If an advisor is unable to be present, the advisor must contact the Treasurer to ensure their awareness and support of the request.

Section XII: Non RSO Requests

- A. Requests for non-RSOs must be made by a student on behalf of the group in writing to the Treasurer.
- B. Requests by non-RSOs, regardless of the amount, must be approved by a simple majority of the full Senate.
- C. Requests must be made in writing to the Executive Committee one week in advance of the Senate meeting the matter is to be voted on.

### Section XIII: New RSO Funding

- A. New RSOs will automatically be granted a \$200 initial allocation upon recognition of their RSO by Campus Life and the Secretary of the Senate. The initial allocations will come from the Unallocated Account.
- B. New RSOs will be on a probationary period until the first day of the Quadmester following the RSOs recognition. Probation shall consist of:
  - 1. An inability to request additional funds;
  - 2. At least two meetings with the Treasurer and Member of the Rules Committee
  - 3. At least one program or event must be held by an RSO before it may leave its probationary phase.

### Section XIV: Year End Review

- A. This review is conducted by the newly appointed Senate Treasurer in conjunction with the previous Treasurer.
- B. The Treasurers will be responsible for examining to what degree spending was consistent with the RSO's goals and these budget guidelines.
- C. Available members of RSOs Executive Board (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) and Advisor may be required to attend an Exit Interview, in which the RSO's current and subsequent year's budgets will be discussed.
  - 1. An Exit Interview may be required when an RSO has overspent their funds for the year, is requesting an increase in funding, or has not followed budget procedures outline by this Appendix.
  - 2. Need for an Exit Interview will be determined by Treasurers.
  - 3. An RSO may request an Exit Interview if not offered by the Treasurer.

### Section XV: Budget Proposal

- A. The Treasurer shall make available a Year End Budget Proposal for all RSOs seeking funding. The proposal will consist of:
  - 1. List and contact information for outgoing executive board
  - 2. List and contact information for incoming executive board
  - 3. Detailed Year-to-Date spending for the RSO
  - 4. Detailed plan and amount requested for following year
- B. Failure to complete all parts of the Year End Budget Proposal will result in a freeze or decrease of funding for the next Academic Year at the discretion of the Treasurer.

### Section XVI: Check Requests

- A. Check request forms must be completed in full.
- B. Every check request must be accompanied by the original receipt and given to the Treasurer.
- C. Check Requests must be in the amount of \$10 or more.
- D. Check requests must be turned in within ninety (90) days of the date printed on the receipt or invoice.
- E. Failure to do so will result in a 10% reduction of reimbursement per academic week.

#### Section XVII: Cash Advances

- A. Any unspent funds from a cash advance must be deposited in the Student Accounts office. Failure to do so will result in a freeze of the student organization's account.
- B. The unreconciled amount will be billed to the RSO Treasurer's student account.
- C. Purchase receipts, along with the deposit receipt from Student Accounts, must be submitted to the Budget Director within ten (7) business days from the date the disbursement check was written.
- D. Under extreme situations, an extension may be requested by contacting the Budget Director in writing. These extensions will be given at the discretion of the Budget Director.

#### Section XVIII: Fundraising and Donations

- A. An RSO may seek funding outside of their Senate allocations. This is most commonly accomplished through fundraising and donations.
- B. Money acquired through fundraising may be used at the discretion of the RSO.
- C. No fundraised money can be used to purchase alcoholic beverages, tobacco or illegal drugs.
- D. RSOs with unspent fundraised monies will retain these funds into the next fiscal year.
- E. After an RSO has been inactive for two years any fundraised money will return to the unallocated account.

#### Section XIX: Event Evaluations

- A. All reimbursements for events should be accompanied by a short evaluation of the event turned into the Treasurer.
- B. RSOs that refuse to evaluate events and spends may be looked on less favorably in the budgeting process.

#### Section XX: Line Items

- A. Certain budget goals of the Senate may be set aside as a line item, rather than dispersed to clubs.
- B. Expenditures from any line item of the Senate will require the signature of the entire Executive committee and Advisor to the Senate.

#### Section XXI: Exception

- A. Any RSO may request an exception from any of these guidelines in writing to the Treasurer at least fifteen (15) days in advance in order to properly inform the Senate of the nature of the exception requested prior to the Senate convening.
- B. Exceptions will be decided at regular meeting of the Student Senate with at least one week prior notice. Approval of the amendments will be a 2/3 majority vote of members present and voting, a quorum being present.

#### Section XXII: Amendments

This appendix may be amended or altered at regular meeting of the Student Senate with at least one week prior notice. Approval of the amendments will be a 2/3 majority vote of members present and voting, a quorum being present.