

Student Council and Student Government

Student Council

The Student Council is comprised of elected and appointed student representatives from each class at Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University. Responsibilities of the Council include supervision of student organizations, disbursement of university funds, and the dissemination of information on issues pertinent to student life at the Medical College. Furthermore, the Council acts as the liaison between the students, faculty and administration. Council representatives serve with faculty on standing committees in the areas of Admissions, Affiliations, Alumni, Curriculum, Research, Student Affairs, and Technology. As the collective voice of the student body, the Council works continuously with faculty and administration to recommend and implement changes that will positively affect students at the Medical College and within the University community.

Constitution of the Student Council of SKMC

Article I – Designation

This organization shall be known as the Student Council of the Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University.

Article II – Purposes

This student council is a class-based representative body acting on the behalf of the student body of Sidney Kimmel Medical College. The council's responsibilities will include supervising, organizing, and appropriate funding of the medical college student body activities which pertain to the University.

The council will act as the responsible liaison body between the students, the faculty, and the administration and will act to promote stronger student/faculty relations.

The council shall act as an instrument of student opinion concerning matters pertaining to students and the University community.

The council will provide student body representatives to voice student concerns on all student/faculty or ad hoc committees.

Article III – Membership

The student council shall be composed of students in the first-, second-, third-, and fourth-year classes of Sidney Kimmel Medical College.

Voting Members

- a. The executive officers of the student council: president, vice president, secretary and treasurer.
- b. The six equal representatives of each class.

Non-voting Members

- a. The student representatives of each student/faculty committee.
- b. The chairman or the representatives of each student council committee.
- c. A representative from each student or campus organization.
- d. The Dean of the Medical College or the Dean's representative.
- e. A representative from the College of Health Professions and the College of Graduate Studies.

The Sidney Kimmel Medical College Student Council also encourages any members of the Thomas Jefferson University community to attend all meetings and voice any of their concerns to the council.

Article IV – Functions of Student Council Members

Rights and Privileges of Council Members

- a. Voting members shall have one vote each on all motions, except for the president, who shall vote only to break a tie.
- b. Each voting member shall have the right to introduce motions.
- c. All members, voting and nonvoting, shall have the right to make reports, to initiate or to participate in debate, and to address the student council on all issues.

Responsibilities of Council Members

- a. Attendance
 1. Voting members are required to attend all regular meetings. Should a voting member be absent without valid excuse from two or more meetings during the course of a year, that member shall have his/her voting privileges suspended. At this time, the representative's constituents will be notified and will be given the privilege of holding a new election should they desire. Illness or any absence required for official college or personal business shall constitute a valid excuse for absence. Any unusual excuses may be brought before the council for consideration. The secretary must be notified prior to any student council meetings for any excuse to be considered valid.
 2. Nonvoting members, especially those who regularly report to the council, are expected to attend all regular meetings or to send a representative in their place. Each student/faculty committee must have at least one representative present at each meeting. Should no Student/Faculty committee representative be present without valid excuse for two or more meetings during the course of a year, the Council at its discretion will take action, which can include dismissal of the offending representative(s) from his or her committee position.
- b. Representatives and their constituents

Representatives of the first- and second-year classes are expected to report to their constituencies the results of each monthly meeting. Prior to all regular meetings the representatives should solicit the advice, opinions, and suggestions of their constituents with regards to old issues or to new issues which the classes would like to have addressed.
- c. Participation in the student council

Each student council representative is expected to participate as a member of one or more standing or special student council committees when his or her involvement is requested by the president or vice president of the student council.

Duties of Officers

- a. The duties of the president shall be to:
 1. Call meetings to order.
 2. Preside at meetings of council.
 3. Enforce the constitution.

4. Appoint committees unless otherwise directed by council.
 5. Provide the student council secretary with an agenda for each upcoming meeting.
 6. Carry out such other duties as may be required by the council or by right of office as generally understood.
 7. Supervise any election in which a conflict of interest arises for the vice president.
- b. The duties of the vice president shall be to:
1. Act for the president in his absence.
 2. Supervise the work of all temporary committees.
 3. Assume the office of the president should it become vacant.
 4. Supervise the orientation program for incoming first-year students.
 5. Supervise all elections carried out under the auspices of student council except when such supervision entails a conflict of interest.
 6. Organize and oversee the appointment of all student/faculty committee representatives.
 7. Supervise and regulate all student organizations.
 8. Oversee the formation of any new organization.
 9. Solicit annual reports from each student organization and to print a composite of these reports for distribution.
- c. The duties of the secretary shall be to:
1. Keep a complete record of all council proceedings.
 2. Compile an agenda from the other officers and to provide printed copies of this agenda at all meetings.
 3. Post a copy of the minutes of each student council meeting on the student council bulletin board within two weeks of the previous meeting
 4. Carry out other such duties as commonly assigned to the office.
- d. The duties of the treasurer shall be to:
1. Maintain an exact record of all accounts.
 2. Receive funds and to set the rate of collection of the student activities fee as directed by the student council.
 3. Disperse funds appropriated by the council.
 4. Provide up-to-date summaries of the status of the treasury at each regular meeting.
 5. Solicit and obtain annual budget requests and detailed expenditures for each organization requesting student council funding.
 6. Organize and run the annual budget meeting of the student council.
 7. Perform such other duties as delegated by the council or which are commonly required of this office.

Article V – Election to Membership

The elections committee, chaired by the vice president, will arrange all elections for the student council officers and for the student council representatives within the time limits specified by this constitution.

Timing of elections

- a. Class elections for the first-year students shall be held in the month prior to the October meeting and again in the month prior to the March meeting. The term will last for one year after the March election.

- b. Class elections for the second-year students shall be held in the month prior to the March meeting. The term will last for one year.
- c. Class elections for the third-year students shall be held in the month prior to the March meeting. This term will end at graduation.

Election of class representatives

- a. The election committee shall announce at least four weeks prior to the date of the elections the opening of petitioning for six equal representatives.
- b. Each candidate must obtain the written endorsement of 25 constituents. Petitions for candidacy must be submitted to the elections committee or its designate at least one week prior to the elections. Candidates running for first-year representatives positions in the October election must write a short statement of intent to be posted one week prior to the election. Distribution, collection, tabulation, and publication of results will be handled by the election committee.
- c. Each constituent will vote for six of the candidates for representative. The six candidates receiving the most votes shall be the six equal representatives for that class.
- d. In the event of a tie, the elections committee shall hold a runoff between the tied individuals only.

Election of Executive Officers via the Election Oversight Committee

- a. The Election Oversight Committee defined. The Election Oversight Committee is formed to conduct the election of the Student Council Executive Committee. It is formed of five or six members which include the following people:
 - The sitting president or vice president.
 - One other member of the current Executive Committee, selected randomly by name drawing (unless volunteered) in the presence of the Student Council at the December meeting. This individual cannot be running for election to the new Executive Committee. If three or all of the members of the current Executive Committee are running for future Executive Committee positions, one or two representatives from the current third-year class will be picked randomly (unless volunteered) by name drawing at the December Student Council meeting. This will ensure two members are picked from either the current Executive Committee or the third-year class representatives.
 - Four volunteer class representatives from the first- and second-year classes: there must be at least one first- and one second-year class representative. If need be, the other two individuals may come from the third-year class representatives. If not enough or none volunteer, these four will be randomly selected by name drawing at the December Student Council meeting. If it is impossible to coordinate the following balloting procedures among these four individuals, or if individual constraints preclude selecting four individuals, three individuals may substitute (with a minimum of one each from the first- and second-year class representatives.)
- b. Of the five (or minimum four) randomly selected or volunteered individuals, two will be randomly picked by name drawing at the December Student Council meeting to make the final tally of the ballots along with either the sitting president or vice president.

The five or six Election Oversight Committee members would coordinate placement, pickup, counting, and delivery of the ballots.

Each individual will count the ballots that s/he picked up and write the count on a card. This card and the ballots would be brought to a mutually agreed upon place (e.g., Jefferson Alumni Hall), whereupon the president or vice president along with the two randomly selected individuals would each tally the accumulated ballots. These three individuals must necessarily reach the exact same counts. After reaching the same counts, the ballots will then be destroyed, and these three individuals, the only ones privy to the total counts, are sworn to secrecy. The results of the election (not the numerical totals) would then be announced individually to each candidate by the president or vice president.

Election of Executive Officers

1. Candidates for president and vice president must be members of the second- or third-year classes.
2. Candidates for the offices of secretary and treasurer must be members of the first-, second-, or third-year classes.
3. A candidate must run for only one office in a given election, and verbal nominations will be accepted at the November and December Student Council meetings or via an email or telephone call to an executive committee member contacted during the period after the November meeting but before the December meeting.
4. The Election Oversight Committee shall determine the elections schedule for each class prior to the November meeting and shall also inform the classes of this schedule and of all the requirements prior to the November meeting.
5. Candidates will be permitted a position statement (one page or less) to be posted for all to read at least one week prior to the election. Candidates for the office of president must submit a brief letter of intent which will be printed on the reverse side of the ballots.
6. Each candidate will be given the opportunity to briefly (three minutes or less) voice their intentions and goals at the December meeting. After all speeches are completed, the voting representatives shall vote via secret ballot for the candidates they chose to be given their proxy votes. These votes will be tallied by members of the Election Oversight Committee as described above.
7. At the time of the general election, any student may opt to vote proxy. Proxy will be determined such that each voting representative of the designated class decides 1/5 of the proxy vote.
8. A minimum of 50 percent of Sidney Kimmel Medical College first-, second-, and third-year students must cast ballots for an election to be valid. Fourth-year students will be given the opportunity to cast ballots if they desire.
9. In the event of more than three (3) candidates appearing on the ballot for an executive council position or positions, a primary election must be held for that position or positions during the general election. A final election consisting of the two candidates receiving the most votes in the primary election should then occur as soon as permitted.
10. In the event of a tie vote in the general election, a reelection shall occur between the involved candidates according to the election procedures above.

All elected members of council shall assume their positions on the council at the first meeting following their election. Executive officers term will start in January and will last for one year.

In the event of resignation, death, disability, or recall of any member of council (except the president), his/her successor shall be chosen by special election according to the provisions of this article.

Article VI – Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held at least once a month during the academic year. These meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., unless a change is deemed necessary by the council.

Section 2

Special meetings may be called by the president subject to two days advanced notice. Items not included in the planned agenda of a special meeting may not be acted upon at that time.

A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.

A quorum must be present at all regular and special meetings in order for official action to be taken.

Regarding parliamentary procedure, the rules contained in the current edition of *Roberts' Rules of Order*, newly revised, shall govern this council except when inconsistent with this constitution or with any special rules of order which the council has adopted.

Discussion of committee reports shall be limited to five minutes.

At the president's discretion a motion must be placed in writing and distributed to council members before it can be voted upon.

Article VII – Committees

There shall be two types of committees, designated under the headings "standing" and "special":

- a. Standing committees shall include the elections committee, the student council curriculum committee, and additional committees that council may create.
- b. Special committees shall be appointed by the president at his/her discretion, or the council may, by a majority vote, appoint committees.
- c. Representatives may serve on more than one committee, but may chair only one standing committee.

All committee chairpersons shall make monthly reports to the council on the progress and activities of their respective committees.

Special committees shall be dissolved upon completion of their duties.

Article VIII – Student Organizations

New Organizations

- a. The founders of any proposed new organization must first schedule an appointment at the next Student Affairs Committee meeting through the Dean's Office secretary. At this meeting the organization must present:
 1. A petition which describes the need for the formation of such an organization as well as the group's proposed goals as described in a mission statement.
 2. The signatures of Jefferson students who are interested in forming such a group and in becoming members.
 3. Approval and proposed support of the organization by a faculty sponsor.
 4. An agenda detailing the organization's future activities.
- b. If approved by the Student Affairs Committee the organization must then petition the SKMC Student council for recognition. The organization leaders must contact a student council executive officer and request to be placed on the next student council agenda. At the student council meeting, the proposed organization's leaders must again present all of the information which was detailed at the Student Affairs meeting. In addition, a detailed budget for the upcoming school year must be presented.
- c. The proposed organization may then be officially recognized by a majority vote of the student representatives present at the meeting. If a proposed organization is not approved, its leaders may reapply for recognition in the same academic year after a two-month period only if they have new issues to present.

Annual Reports

- a. Every Student Organization which wishes to remain recognized by Sidney Kimmel Medical College and the Student Council must submit an annual report. This report shall also be required for the group to receive any funding from the University or student government. All reports must be handed in to the Student Council Vice President at least six weeks before the budget meeting in the Spring. In January, the Student Council Vice President will notify all organization leaders in writing as to the deadline for the reports and post notice in the main auditoriums as well as on email.
- b. The Student Organization Annual Reports should include the following:
 1. Goals which were set for the past year, accomplished in the past year, and delineated for the upcoming year.

2. Finances, including fund-raisers and membership dues, and how these moneys were spent.
 3. Projects which were completed in the past year and which are planned for the future.
 4. University activities such as seminars and lectures.
- c. These reports will help the Student Council target inactive or non-productive groups to be sent for review to the Student Affairs Committee, and help streamline the annual Student Council budget meeting. Any organizations which have not progressed toward their proposed goals or which do not show active involvement on the part of their members will be sent to the Student Affairs Committee. Here, a final decision will be made regarding the University's continuation of the groups funding and charter. Leniency will be given to foundling groups. Regulation of student organizations is delineated further in Section 3.

Regulation of Student Organizations

- a. Each recognized student organization must submit a complete annual report which details the group's objectives for the past year, their accomplishments, the events that were held during the year, and their goals for the following year. The report should also include the number of members attending each event, the names and addresses of the organization's leaders, and the name of their faculty advisor.
- b. The student leaders must meet annually with their faculty advisor and submit the advisor form (obtainable from the student council vice president) with their annual report.
- c. The Sidney Kimmel Medical College student council and the Student Affairs Committee will review all annual reports in order to identify student organizations which do not contribute to the University community or have not provided an active organization for their members.
- d. The groups identified as potentially probationary will be reevaluated at the following student council meeting. If any group of students would like to revitalize the organization, they must present themselves before the student council with a letter of support from the faculty advisor and with specific plans for the following year. If reapproved, the organization must follow the guidelines for a group on probation as detailed in Section 4.
- e. It is the responsibility of each group to report changes in leadership, addresses, and phone numbers to the student council executive officers. Any problem in communication or missed dead lines from failure to report such changes shall be the responsibility of the student organization, and it remains at the discretion of council members as to what penalties, if any, to invoke.

Guidelines for Probationary Student Groups

- a. Each group must meet at least twice each semester and keep record of all in attendance.
- b. Each group will receive a baseline of \$75 in financial support for the year of probation. If additional funds are needed, the group must request these in person from the student council.
- c. The group must have three officers who are to meet with the faculty advisor once each semester to evaluate their progress.
- d. The group leaders must submit a semi-annual report in December to the student council and to the Student Affairs Committee as well as the annual report required of all student organizations. Group members must sign in at all organization events, and these attendance sheets must be submitted with the semiannual and annual reports.
- e. Any probationary organization that fails to meet the above guidelines will have its charter revoked for one year after which time interested parties can request to be recognized again by the student council.
- f. These regulations are not meant to be punitive. They have been ratified to protect and to best serve the Jefferson community. Such regulations will permit students to most effectively partici-

pate in activities and to avoid committing themselves to inactive groups. The student council and Student Affairs Committee appreciate the cooperation of the student leaders in these matters.

- g. Any organization that loses its charter will have its constitution and other information filed by Student Council so that the group can easily be re-chartered if interest arises at a later date.

Article IX – Initiative, Referendum, and Recall

Initiative

- a. The signatures of 15 percent of the student body shall be sufficient to place any issue on a ballot for consideration by the entire student body. Upon the receipt of such a petition, the council shall direct the elections committee to place the issue before the students within 30 days.
- b. Policy statements and fiscal actions shall be enacted by a majority vote.
- c. Constitutional amendments shall be enacted by this method or by the proposal of the council's executive officers and require a majority vote.

Referendum

Student council may direct the elections committee to place on a ballot any proposed policy for consideration by the student body.

Recall

Any voting member of the student council shall be subject to recall as follows:

1. Officers shall be subject to recall upon receipt of signatures of at least one-half of the enrolled members of each class.
2. Class representatives shall be subject to recall upon the receipt of signatures of at least one-half the members of the enrollment of his or her class. Upon receipt of such a petition the council shall direct the election committee to place the issue before the students within 30 days.

Article X – Amendments

The constitution of the student council of Sidney Kimmel Medical College may be amended as follows:

Any amendment must be passed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a regular meeting; the amendment may then be approved and made official by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the subsequent regular meeting.