

# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE STUDENT'S SURGICAL SOCIETY OF THE AUSTIN

**Name of Organisation:** Student Surgical Society of the Austin

**Motto:** Discens est infinita. (*Lat.:* "Learning is infinite.")

## **Abbreviations:**

- SSSA:** Student Surgical Society of the Austin
- AGM:** Annual General Meeting
- AMSS:** Austin Medical Students Society
- RACS:** Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
- ANCS:** Austin and Northern Clinical School

**Preamble:** The founding principle of the Student's Surgical Society of the Austin ("the Society") is to facilitate and promote surgical teaching at the ANCS, to complement the curriculum already in place. This is to be achieved both by developing professional relationships between students and surgeons, and by providing a resource for students interested in pursuing a surgical career. The Society represents all University of Melbourne medical students based at the ANCS. The Society is to work in cooperation with pre-existing organisations, especially the AMSS. Membership of the society confers no advantage for selection to surgical training programs.

## **ARTICLE 1**

### **Section A – The aims of the Society:**

- i. Advocate surgery as a career choice for students at the ANCS
- ii. Maintain links with the RACS
- iii. Improve level of surgical knowledge among students at the ANCS
- iv. Develop and promote ties between students and surgeons
- v. Enhance awareness of social issues relevant to surgery
- vi. Provide information about surgical careers to interested students

## **ARTICLE 2**

### **Section A - Committee composition:**

- i. The committee will be composed of an executive committee, consisting of a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer
- ii. Additional posts are Sponsorship Officer(s) and Website Officer.
- iii. Three primary subcommittees devoted to central aspects of the Society's agenda will be formed, dealing with: education, careers, and mentoring
- iv. An undefined number of general committee members will make up secondary subcommittees and provide general consultation
- v. Students of any year level may be a part of the committee, though only 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year students may be elected as office bearers
- vi. In order to preserve continuity, at least one member of the executive committee must be from 4<sup>th</sup> year
- vii. A willing senior surgeon or academic will serve as the patron of the Society,

providing guidance and assistance when required.

**Section B - Office holders:**

i. *President*

1. Represent the Society in an official capacity
2. Preside over all meetings of the Society
3. Liase with Austin Medical Student Society (AMSS)
4. Liase with the ANCS

ii. *Vice-president*

1. Represent the Society in an official capacity where the President is unable to
2. Preside over meetings in the case of the President's absence
3. The Vice-president should perform other duties as requested by the President

iii. *Secretary*

1. Take care of administrative details of meetings, this involves:
  - a) Taking minutes of all meetings, or appointing another committee member to do so in their absence
  - b) Circulating an agenda for each meeting at least 2 days in advance
2. Furthermore, the Secretary should coordinate other administrative duties as requested by the President or Vice-President.

iv. *Treasurer*

1. The Treasurer is responsible for the finances of the Society, this involves:
  - a) Keeping custody of the Society's financial records and documents
  - b) Authorising expenditure on behalf of the Society
  - c) Preparing an annual budget for the Society at the end of each financial year
  - d) Keeping the committee apprised of financial considerations at each meeting, including an ongoing budget

**Section C - Additional posts:**

i. *Website Officer*

1. The Site Officer is required to keep the content of the Society's website up to date, including posting details of current events

ii. *Sponsorship Officer(s)*

1. The Sponsorship Officer(s) is required to correspond and develop ties with sponsors in order to secure funding and/or material that would assist in holding an event run by the Society

**Section D - Primary Subcommittees:**

i. *Education* (3 – 4 members)

1. Promote surgical teaching at the ANCS
2. Organise academic teaching seminars and workshops

ii. *Careers* (3 – 4 members)

1. Provide information to students interested in pursuing a surgical career
2. Organise speakers to develop awareness of surgical opportunities

iii. *Mentoring (surgical liaison)* (3 – 4 members)

1. Develop and promote ties between surgeons and students
2. Facilitate student attendance at surgery

## **ARTICLE 3**

### **Section A - Membership:**

- i. Members of the Society must be current students or alumni of the ANCS unless otherwise involved with the surgical department at the teaching hospital
- ii. The Society will consist of:
  1. Patron
  2. Executive committee members
  3. General committee members
  4. Members
  5. Honorary members
- iii. Non-students may be inducted as honorary members
- iv. Prospective honorary memberships will be voted upon by the General committee at monthly meetings

### **Section B - Meetings:**

- i. An annual general meeting (AGM) will take place during August of each year, during which:
  1. New office bearers will be elected by society members who are present at the AGM
  2. Primary subcommittees will be formed from committee members
  3. Constitution may be reviewed and changed by vote
- ii. Meetings of the Society will be held fortnightly during the academic year, during which:
  1. New initiatives will be discussed
  2. Subcommittees will update the society on progress
  3. General discussion will take place
  4. Date and time of the next meeting will be set
- iii. Additional meetings of the Society may be called by the Executive committee
  1. Calling a meeting requires the approval of at least two members of the Executive committee
  2. Committee members must be notified at least one week in advance of the additional meeting date
  3. In exceptional circumstances, a special meeting of the committee may be called with two days notice, all resolutions of such a meeting will be reviewed at the following general meeting
- iv. At least two days in advance of each meeting, an Agenda will be circulated, containing items for discussion at the upcoming meeting
  1. Items should be placed on the Agenda by contacting the Secretary in advance of the meeting
  2. For a resolution to be valid, it must be an item on the Agenda
- v. The president will preside over all meetings of the Society, in their absence, the Vice-president will preside, in the absence of both President and Vice-president, any member of the Executive committee will preside
- vi. In order to pass resolutions, a quorum must be present
  1. Quorum requires at least 70% of committee members (inc. Executive committee members, and general committee members) be present, in addition to at least two members of the Executive committee
  2. An exception to this is made for exceptional meetings – for these meetings, a quorum need not be present
- vii. Minutes at each meeting will be kept by the Secretary or their appointed replacement
  1. Minutes should be circulated within a week of the meeting's date

- viii. Committee members are expected to attempt to attend the majority of meetings in the academic year or forfeit their position on the committee.
- ix. An official apology can only be recorded if it has been passed on to an executive committee member within reasonable time prior to the meeting.

### **Section C - Procedures:**

- i. Once ratified, the constitution may only be changed at the AGM or at a regular meeting, in the latter case the entire membership of the Society must be informed of the proposed changes at least a week in advance of the meeting the vote will be held at
- ii. Resolutions fall into several categories:
  - 1. Policy resolutions
  - 2. General resolutions
  - 3. Special resolutions
- iii. General and Policy resolutions should be put forward, discussed, and voted upon before being adopted or rejected
  - 1. Items for discussion must be placed on the Agenda prior to each meeting
  - 2. When previous items have been resolved, whomsoever is presiding over the meeting will put forward the item for discussion
  - 3. The member who requested the item be put on the agenda will then introduce the topic, or if it is a regular item, it will be introduced either by the subcommittee concerned (subcommittee reports) or by the secretary (date and time of next meeting)
  - 4. Following the introduction, the item will be opened to general discussion
  - 5. If the item requires a resolution be made, a vote will be held following discussion, or it may be postponed until the following meeting
  - 6. Once voted upon, the item may not be re-introduced until the following meeting
  - 7. To be passed, a quorum must be present, and greater than half of those present must vote in favour
- iv. Special resolutions are passed at exceptional meetings
  - 1. To be passed, special resolutions require the unanimous approval of the executive committee
  - 2. Special resolutions will be reviewed at the following meeting
  - 3. If a special resolution is rejected at a general meeting, it may only be reintroduced at general meetings if additional details or amendments have been made

### **Section D – Finances:**

- i. All expenditure must be authorised by the Executive committee
  - 1. All cheques must be co-signed by the Treasurer in addition to another member of the Executive committee (subject to bank confirmation)
  - 2. Funds will only be reimbursed when a receipt for purchases has been sighted by the Treasurer.
  - 3. Expenditure is expected to stay within the operating budget.
- ii. Incoming funds will be deposited into the Society's bank account (unless otherwise decided by the Committee for urgent expenses)
- iii. An annual budget will be prepared by the Treasurer at the end of each financial year, the budget should record:
  - 1. All income and expenditure of the preceding financial year
  - 2. Total assets of the Society
  - 3. Net change in assets from previous year
  - 4. Budget forecast for year to come

**Section E – Elections:**

- i. In the case of the early retirement of a member of the Executive committee or another office-holder, new applicants will be voted upon by the General committee at the next monthly meeting, nominations must be received and circulated at least two days prior to the meeting
- ii. The Patron is entitled to retain their position until retiring from the role, and may only be replaced by the same procedure required to change the constitution