Brooks College House Constitution

PREAMBLE

We the people of Brooks College House, recognizing the benefits afforded college students arising from membership in a community rich in intellectual, social, and leadership opportunities, establish this Constitution of the Brooks College House. The mission of the Brooks College House is to empower our students to take charge of their House government and to foster a sense of community among its members and within the College.

ARTICLE I. THE RULING BODY

Section 1: Membership
The Congress is the governing body of the Brooks College House. Congress shall consist of two bodies, the Executive Board and the General Assembly. The twenty-one-member Congress shall have sixteen General Assembly representatives, four from each class year, as well as a five member Executive Board. Each member of Congress shall have one vote.

Section 2: The Executive Board
The Executive Board shall have five positions: President, Secretary-Treasurer, Social Programming Chair, Judicial Chair, and Public Relations Chair. As a whole, this body is responsible for overseeing the governing of the House.

ARTICLE II. RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1: Executive Board
A. The Executive Board shall consist of active members of the House
B. The Executive Board shall participate in votes
C. The Executive Board shall present new ideas
D. The Executive Board shall act in the best interest of the House
E. The Executive Board shall decide meeting dates, times and places
F. The Executive Board shall enforce the attendance policy for all Congress members
G. The Executive Board shall organize elections
H. The Executive Board shall make the final decision in the case of a split vote in the congress
I. The Executive Board shall uphold the Brooks College House Constitution
J. The President of Brooks College House shall:
   a. Be responsible for representing Brooks College House to the broader College community and acting as the spokesperson for events such as the first-year Initiation and Convocation
   b. Be the liaison between Brooks College House, the other College Houses, College administration and the Franklin & Marshall community as a whole
   c. Be elected according to the guidelines in Article V
   d. Be a voting member of both the Executive Board and Congress

K. The Secretary-Treasurer of Brooks College House shall:
   a. Be responsible for recording detailed minutes from each meeting and e-mailing them to the Congress
   b. Be responsible for providing Congress with an agenda established at the Executive Board meeting prior to the Congress meeting
   c. Regularly communicate with the Public Relations Chair to ensure that Brooks College House members are updated with the news and important events
   d. Usually distribute Congress announcements (including but not limited to meeting dates, minutes, and judicial disputes)
   e. Be responsible for handling/distributing House funds according to the guidelines specified in Article VIII
   f. Maintain a record of all House expenditures, making all information public, and signing checks, as per the approval of Congress
   g. Record and regulate attendance at every Congress meeting
   h. Be a voting member of both the Executive Board and Congress

L. The Social Programming Chair of Brooks College House shall:
   a. Be responsible for organizing, soliciting, and implementing social events as well as chairing the Social Programming Committee
   b. Be a voting member of both the Executive Board and Congress

M. The Judicial Chair of Brooks College House shall:
   a. Be responsible for chairing the Brooks College House Court
   b. Be responsible for offering guidance to the Executive Board for interpreting the Constitution when the need arises
   c. Be the liaison between Congress and the House Don and Prefect for judicial purposes
   d. Be elected according to the guidelines in Article V
   e. Be a voting member of both the Executive Board and Congress
N. The Public Relations Chair of Brooks College House shall:
   a. Be responsible for regularly updating events and meetings on the online calendar, maintaining the Brooks College House website, and delivering such publications to the House
   b. Be a voting member of both the Executive Board and Congress

Section 2: The General Assembly
   A. The General Assembly shall be active members of the house
   B. The General Assembly shall participate in votes
   C. The General Assembly shall present new ideas
   D. The General Assembly shall represent their constituents
   E. The General Assembly shall act in the best interest of the House
   F. Each General Assembly member shall serve on at least one committee

ARTICLE III. HOUSE COMMITTEES

Section 1: Standing Committees
   The standing committees of the House shall be: the House Court, the Social Programming Committee, the Public Relations Committee – together referred to as the Executive Committees – and the Community Service Committee.
   The Congress may create new standing committees through an amendment of the Constitution.

Section 2: Non-Standing Committees
   The Executive Board may, at their discretion create non-standing committees within the House to serve a specific function or oversee a particular area meriting interest but not the creation of a formal standing committee. These committees must be reestablished at the start of each academic year or will be considered to have lapsed into nonexistence. Should the Congress deem necessary, a Non-Standing Committee may be elevated to a Standing Committee through amendment of the Constitution.

Section 3: Committee Chair Positions
   The Executive Board or an appointee of their choosing shall serve as the chairs of the House Committees. Members of Congress must serve on at least one committee and may serve on more at their pleasure. Committee membership is further open to all members of the House.

Section 3: Non-Executive Standing Committees
   A. The Community Service Chair shall
      a. Organize and coordinate philanthropic events within the House and in conjunction with other Houses
      b. Direct and coordinate volunteer programs and events in conjunction with the President
ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Section 1: Meetings
Congress meetings shall be held on a weekly basis unless cancelled or postponed by the Executive Board. All Congress meetings are open; in order for non-congress members to be on the agenda they must notify the Secretary-Treasurer 48-hours prior to the Congress meeting. Issues requiring a vote must be proposed by members of Congress. At its discretion the Congress may choose to conduct some meetings as an open forum or town hall.

Section 2: Attendance Policy
If a Congress member misses two Congress meetings in one semester the President will put him/her in a probationary period and notify the member via e-mail. At that point the member must attend three consecutive meetings to end the probation. If the member fails to meet probationary requirements or has three or more unexcused absences, he/she will be subject to removal from office as detailed by Article VII.

Excused absences must be reported to the Secretary-Treasurer (who keeps the attendance records) by noon on meeting day. Acceptable reasons include sickness, emergencies, classes, required lectures, collegiate athletic events and/or rehearsals and will be verified by the Executive Board. Other student activities will be discussed at the discretion of the Executive Board. All notifications should be via e-mail.

The Executive Board may in good faith and at their discretion define what constitutes an excused or unexcused absence in the event that a question arises which is otherwise unaddressed above.

Section 3: Quorum and Voting
Quorum shall consist of fifty percent of the existing Congress and its presence shall be necessary in order for votes to occur. A vote may only pass if it receives a majority of the present Congress.

Section 4: Legislative Authority
The Congress shall have sole legislative authority. The Congress by majority vote may enact bylaws, rules, and procedures to the Brooks College House and any of its components. Congress shall pass no bill conflicting with this Constitution. All proposals must be submitted in writing to the Congress and brought up by a member of Congress.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

Section 1: Executive Board
The Executive Board positions shall be filled by the candidates who receive the highest percentage of votes from the members of the entire House. All
candidates must have held a position in the Congress or sat on a committee for at least one year prior to running for the Executive Board. If a candidate does not meet these requirements he/she may still run by completing an application. This application consists of seven signatures: three Congress members, three Executive Board members, and the House Prefect or the House Don.

Presidential candidates must have held a position on the Congress for at least one academic year to be eligible to run. If a candidate does not meet these requirements he/she may still run for the Presidential position if he/she attends at least six Congress meetings as well as obtaining the seven signatures in the application mentioned above.

Elections will occur two weeks after Spring Break and a week prior to Congress Elections. The Executive Board positions shall be held for a period of one academic year, from the beginning of the fall semester to the end of the spring semester, which once elected, officers must serve unless incapacitated or removed from office. Failure to disclose a conflict/ inability to serve a full academic year shall be grounds for immediate impeachment.

Section 2: General Assembly
The House will vote for twelve Congress members, consisting of four members from the rising sophomore, junior and senior classes. Congress elections shall take place one week after the Executive Board elections. These positions will not assume responsibilities until the close of the spring semester. Congress members hold their positions for one academic year, from fall to spring semester.

Section 3: First year elections
The final four seats of Congress will be filled by the incoming first-years in the fall semester. The elections for these four seats will be held the second Tuesday in September. No special preference shall be given to quotas in regards to how many first-years may serve from Marshall or Buchanan so long as four are elected to sit on Congress.

**ARTICLE VI: BROOKS COLLEGE HOUSE COURT**

The Brooks House Court shall be the highest authority of the House. The Court shall consist of House Members and the Judicial Chair. House Justices must be proposed by the Judicial Chair and be confirmed by a majority vote of the twenty-one members of the House Congress.
ARTICLE VII: IMPEACHMENT AND RESIGNATION

Section 1: Impeachment
If a Congress member does not fulfill his/her duty, as stated in the Constitution, or fails to remain in good standing in the eyes of the House, by either breaching policies or ethics, he/she will be subject to impeachment.

To be removed from office, a simple majority of the Congress must be in favor of removal. If impeached, the Congress member will be tried before the Brooks College House Court, and if found guilty, his/her position shall be declared vacant; if found not guilty, he/she shall resume duties.

Clause 1. If the defendant is the Judicial Chair, the President shall chair the trial.

Section 2: Resignation
In the event that any Congress member wishes to resign, he/she must submit a formal statement to the Congress which will absolve him/her from all duties, become effective immediately, and be made public to the House. The vacant position will be filled using the protocol found in Article VII.

Section 3: Vacant General Assembly Positions
The Executive Board is usually responsible for filling any vacant General Assembly positions by choosing a member of the House, from the same class year as the vacating member via this three-step process:
1. The candidate within the specific class year, who received the next highest percentage of votes, from the previous election, will be appointed to the vacant position, OR
2. The position be will offered to any Brooks College House members within the specific class year, and will be voted on by the Executive Board, OR
3. If the Executive Board is unable to find someone within the specific class year, then the position will be opened to any member of the House.

Section 4: Study Abroad Vacancy
In the event that an elected congress member studies abroad, the Congress will nominate an interim congress member to fill the vacant position for the semester that person is abroad. The abroad Congress Member shall surrender his/her powers until the end of the interim congress member’s term. This process ensures that when the Congress member returns from his/her study abroad experience, he/she will sit on Congress in their allotted position.

Section 5: Vacant Executive Board Positions
The Executive Board is responsible for filling any vacant Executive Board positions by choosing a member of the House, via the following process:
1. Appoint a member of Congress to fill the position by majority vote of the Executive Board.
2. Appoint a member of the House to the position by majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 6: Vacant Presidency
After the freshmen election to Congress in the fall, the Congress shall vote by secret ballot, for one member of the Executive Board to act as the vice-chair of Congress throughout the year. In the event that the presidency of the House becomes vacant, the vice-chair shall serve the remainder of the term as President of Brooks College House.

**ARTICLE VII: FUNDS**

Section 1: Fund Requests
Any person or organization requesting funds, whether they are a member of the House or not, must appear before the Congress or send a proxy to answer questions. If possible a fund request form should also be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer detailing the fund amount requested and the intended use for those funds. In the event a proxy is sent, a fund request form must be submitted.

Section 2: Voting on Funds
Any general funding request, to be considered passed by the Congress, must achieve a simple majority of the present Congress. Any funding request of or exceeding $2000 must receive a super majority of the entire Congress. In the event that Members of Congress feel that a funding request cannot be voted on, due to an absence of a large number of members, or because further clarification of the request is required and thus the requester needs recalling, funding requests may be tabled by a motion supported by a second and third.

Section 3: Calendar
All fund requests submitted to the Brooks House Congress must be confined to the academic school year. From the end of the previous academic year until the investiture of the House President at Convocation, the Brooks House Government does not have the authority to allocate funding.

**ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the Constitution may only be proposed by a member of Congress and must be submitted in writing. When brought before the Congress, an amendment can only pass if it receives 2/3 of the existing Congress's votes in favor of the proposed amendment.
ARTICLE X: CONCLUSION

The Brooks College House Constitution is the highest governing document of the Brooks College House. This document must be followed in its entirety, any changes to either this document or Brooks College House procedure must follow the guidelines specified in Article IX and IV.

The house mascot shall be the Phoenix, and the house colors shall be hunter green and royal blue.

ARTICLE XI: OTHER OFFICIALS OF BROOKS COLLEGE HOUSE

Section 1: Legate of the Brooks College House to the Diplomatic Congress

A. The Legate of the Brooks College House to the Diplomatic Congress (from here on referred to as “the Legate”) shall represent the interests of the polity of Brooks College House to and on the Diplomatic Congress, attending all meetings thereof.

B. The Legate shall exercise the House’s vote on the Diplomatic Congress.

C. The Legate shall attend all meetings of the Brooks House Congress, informing the Congress of the Diplomatic Congress’s undertakings and noting the activities of the Brooks Congress in order to keep the Diplomatic Congress apprised.

D. The Legate shall keep the House proper apprised of the Diplomatic Congress’s undertakings.

E. The Legate may participate in debates of the House Congress. The Office of Legate, however, shall not have the right to vote on matters before the House Congress.

F. The Legate shall be elected at the same time as the Executive Board.

G. A candidate for the Office of Legate must be a Brooks College House member and must be able to fulfill a full term as Legate (one academic year). Members of the Executive Board may not concurrently serve as Legate. Should a Member of Congress be elected to a concurrent term as Legate, that Member of Congress shall be absolved of their Congressional Committee obligations, and retain a single vote on Congress by right of the Office of a Member of Congress.

H. The Legate shall be held to the same attendance expectations as Members of Congress and the Executive Board in matters concerning Congress.

I. The Legate may not concurrently represent any other group to the Diplomatic Congress.

J. In the event that the Office of Legate becomes vacant, the Executive Board shall oversee an emergency election to fill the vacancy with candidates being subject to the terms laid out above in Subsection G.