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**The Vermont Connection Constitution**

**Preamble:**

The Vermont Connection shall serve as the official organization for all current students in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration (HESA) graduate program at The University of Vermont (UVM). The goals and objectives of the organization shall be in line with HESA historical traditions and adjust to fulfill the needs of its membership. The organization’s utmost priority is to publish a scholarly, double-blind, peer-reviewed journal of high integrity, addressing the student affairs profession and higher education. The organization is responsible for providing opportunities to further develop members’ educational and professional skills in order to further prepare them for their future careers. The organization shall foster cohesion and camaraderie within HESA and provide ways to enjoy their graduate experience.

**Article I:** Name

The name of the organization shall be The Vermont Connection, hereinafter referred to as TVC.

**Article II:** Full Board

Section 1. Membership

All current students in HESA graduate Program at UVM will be considered part of TVC Full Board.

Section 2. Active Participation

The entire Full Board is expected to participate in all TVC events, including but not limited to: Executive Board elections, Phone-A-Thon, Production Week, and Premiere.

Section 3. Expectations

The Full Board is expected to represent TVC and the HESA program in an honest and professional manner to the best of their abilities.

Section 4. Quorum

When conducting elections to amend or ratify the constitution, a quorum of two-thirds of the full board is required. Members who are unable to attend the Full Board meeting may vote absentee with prior notification of the Executive Editor.

**Article III:** Executive Board

Section 1. Members

TVC officers of the Executive Board are hereinafter referred to as the Eboard and consist of the Executive Editor, Managing Editor, Content Editors, Alumni & Public Relations Chair, Membership Chair, Social & Professional Development Chairs, faculty liaison, and staff advisor(s).

Section 2.Terms of Office

The Eboard shall be elected for a term of one (1) year during an election in February. Incoming Eboard members proceed with transition process with outgoing members and assume full positions in May. Exception to this are the Social & Professional Development chairs, whose term is one (1) academic year and assume their positions after their election process in September.

Section 3. Elections

**Subsection 1.** Responsibility

The Executive Editor shall coordinate and facilitate the election process.

**Subsection 2.** Calendar

The majority of the Eboard is elected during the spring semester before Premiere. The 1st year cohort positions are elected during the first few weeks of the fall semester.

**Subsection 3.** Process

1. Nominations shall be solicited from the Full Board within a given time period.
2. After nomination deadline, nominees will be notified and asked for their candidacy, confirmed by submission of a platform.
3. Platforms are distributed to the Full Board for consideration prior to Full Board meeting.
4. Full Board meeting is convened to offer opportunity for candidates to expand on their platforms.
5. The Executive Editor, or a non-candidate HESA student, conducts anonymous election with assurance that all Full Board members have the opportunity to vote.
6. Election results are announced to Full Board immediately in the fall and at Premiere in the spring.

Section 4. Vacancies

Following withdrawal or resignation, vacancies occurring between elections must be filled by special elections at the first Full Board Meeting at the discretion of the Eboard.

Section 5.Removal

Officers may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the membership.

**Article IV.** Duties of Executive Board

Section 1. The **Executive Board (Eboard)** will have the primary responsibility of coordinating all TVC activities by:

1. Meeting weekly, or as needed, to discuss issues and activities related to TVC.
2. Remaining committed to the involvement of the Full Board in all activities and decision-making, and serving as role models and sources of encouragement.
3. Making sound financial decisions.
4. Actively participating in and standing behind decisions made by the Eboard.
5. Actively recruiting first-year students to contribute to TVC processes.
6. Supporting each other in order to achieve all goals and objectives of The Vermont Connection.
7. Maintaining permanent records for the organization.
8. Writing a year-end transition report discussing role and goals of TVC.
9. Securing and maintaining an updated online directory of alumni/ae, faculty and friends.

Section 2. The **Executive Editor** will assume ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the journal’s content and publication and for all TVC programs and projects by:

1. Serving as representative of the organization when Eboard is unable to be present.

2. Facilitating all meetings through the creation of agendas and providing an open forum.

2. Serving as the primary contact for all members of the Eboard and providing support and direction in their various responsibilities.

3. Maintaining a vision for the journal and for all programs and projects sponsored by TVC.

4. Reviewing goals and objectives at the beginning of the school year and revisit when needed with the Eboard.

5. Coordinating a final timeline with the assistance of the Eboard and adjusting as necessary.

6. Maintaining communication with the journal’s advisor(s).

7. Serving as liaison to the HESA program coordinator and faculty.

8. Coordinating the Invited Author(s) process, including timelines and communication.

9. Overseeing the elections process, both in the fall for the Social and Professional Development Chairs and in the spring for the following year’s Eboard in collaboration with the Membership Chair

10. Oversee the transition process in collaboration with outgoing board for incoming board through a standardized documentation process.

Section 3. The **Managing Editor** will ensure that the journal well represents the UVM academic program, is comparable in appearance to other professional journals, and will oversee the fundraising process. These processes will be achieved by:

1. Working closely with the Content Editors to prepare articles for publication.

2. Overseeing the production process of the journal, including word processing, InDesign applications, typesetting, and printing.

3. Coordinating the printing of the journal by communicating with publishing company.

4. Developing budgets with the other Eboard members that are fiscally sound.

5. Coordinating and organizing fundraising efforts that sustain TVC and the HESA program.

6. Serving as a liaison to the University of Vermont Alumni and Development Office in planning Phone-A-Thon.

7. Coordinating entire process of Phone-A-Thon, including, but not limited to: organizing pledge cards, soliciting volunteer schedule from Full Board, maintaining group’s morale, purchasing meals/snacks, determining fundraising goals and monitoring throughout, and mailing pledge cards.

Section 4. The **Content Editors** will strive to achieve high quality journal articles by:

1. Creating the initial editing timeline.

2. Drafting and sending the Call for Submissions in the summer.

3. Involving Full Board members in the editing process.

4. Evaluating the overall content of the journal and making decisions in congruence with the needs of our readership.

5. Establishing and managing editing teams to organize and implement editing processes.

6. Assisting authors and editing teams in adhering to the NASPA guidelines.

7. Maintaining clear communication with authors and editing teams, including monitoring deadlines.

8. Ensuring Full Board is adhering to an anonymous, peer-reviewed editing process.

9. Removing all author signifiers to the best of their ability during the editing process, especially in regards to editing teams and production week.

10. Working closely with the Managing Editor to prepare articles for production.

Section 5. The **Alumni/ae & Public Relations Chair** will initiate and maintain connections between HESA graduate students, friends, faculty and alumni/ae by:

1. Planning and coordinating professional development events and conference receptions by working with the advisor(s), HESA faculty, and the Eboard.

2. Working closely with the Eboard to plan the Premiere Ceremony for the journal.

3. Developing a close working relationship with HESA faculty to encourage resource sharing, educational opportunities, and professional development experiences.

4. Producing at least two (2) newsletters for students, alumni/ae, and friends of TVC and the HESA program.

5. Coordinate invitations to NASPA and ACPA conferences with the Dean of Students Office.

6. Maintaining and updating UVMHESA (alumni/ae) listserv.

Section 6. The **Membership Chair** will promote and foster out-of-classroom interactions of the Full Board membership by:

1. Work alongside the Social and Professional Development Chairs as a committee to focus on Full Board internal relations.
2. Having a leadership role in planning social gatherings.
3. Facilitating the Graduate Colleague (GC) program.
4. Acting as a resource to the Social and Professional Development Chairs by serving as a mentor and assisting them as they identify the unique needs of both cohorts.
5. Finding creative ways to recognize and motivate HESA graduate students.
6. Maintaining and updating HESAGRADS (current students) listserv.
7. Creating and passing on the HESAXX (1st year class) listserv.
8. Collaborate with the Executive Editor in the elections process, both in the fall for the Social and Professional Development Chairs and in the spring for the following year’s Eboard.

Section 7. The **Social & Professional Development Chairs** will connect the two HESA cohorts by planning events to foster growth between the cohorts on both a professional and social level by:

1. Implement professional development activities for both cohorts.

2. Develop and organize social programming to bridge the gap between first- and second- year HESA cohorts.

3. Collect and maintain a historic record of TVC.

4. Collect and disseminate information to and from the first-year cohort and provide insight to Eboard.

5. Act as institutional memory of TVC for future eboard regardless of future prescence on Executive Board.

Section 8. The **Staff Advisors** and **Faculty Liaison** will:

1. Be a resource and provide an outside perspective on TVC business.
2. Attend Eboard meetings and TVC events at their discretion.
3. Help facilitate conversation and resolve conflicts when needed.
4. Be available to meet with Full Board, especially Eboard members, to provide support and guidance.
5. Serve as a source and keeper of TVC’s oral history.

**Article IV:** Meetings

Section 1. Full Board

Meetings will occur at the discretion of the Eboard, coordinated by the Executive Editor. At least one (1) meeting will occur each of the fall and spring semesters to accommodate for the election process.

Section 2. Executive Board

Meetings will occur at the discretion of the Executive Editor.

**Article V:** Events

Section1. **Election Process** will be managed by Executive Editor and defined in Article III, Section 3.

Section 2. **Phone-a-Thon** will be coordinated by Managing Editor and is defined as:

TVC’s annual fundraising campaign that takes place over the course of several days in the end of September. The event is staffed by the Full Board, HESA faculty, alumni/ae, and friends of HESA. All funds go toward the publication of the journal, TVC events, and the HESA program.

Section 3. **Editing Teams** will be managed by the Content Editors and is defined as:

Arranged pairs, a 1st year with a continuing student, who work specifically with one or two articles and provide feedback through two rounds of edits to the authors. Typically, editing teams meet for 1-1.5 hours twice during the fall semester to edit their article(s). They are matched by complimenting strengths in editing skills (grammar, spelling, APA, flow, style, etc.). It is an imperative part of the process to provide this feedback to authors as it is a reflection of the entire program. It is a unique opportunity to see the “full circle” of this process by serving as an editor, and a way for Full Board members to hone writing and editorial skills.

Section 4. **Production Week** is managed by the Content Editors and Managing Editor and is defined as: the final review and editing process for all journal content. Both cohorts are asked to volunteer time throughout this week to review each article and make final editing suggestions that relate to APA formatting, content, style, and remaining clarification issues. Content Editors maintain the double-blind process throughout Production Week and work with authors to confirm any final changes made to articles. The Managing Editor works alongside with Content Editors to setup the layout of the journal in preparation of the publishing process.

Section 5. **Premiere** is prepared by the Alumni/ae and Public Relations Chair, managed by the Executive Editor, and is defined as: the official “premiere” of the new volume of the journal and the incoming Eboard. Members of the local HESA community are invited to a reception where the newly published journal is presented and the Eboard officially thanks those who contributed to the process.

**Article VI:** Goals & Objectives

Section 1. Produce a journal of scholarly integrity.

* 1. Solicit and select a balance of article genres (research, literary review, philosophical commentary, scholarly personal narrative, argumentative essay, poetry, current issues in the field, book review, interview, etc.).
  2. Actively solicit a balance of article authors who represent multiple identities, including graduate students, alumni, faculty, and friends.
  3. Pursue authors who represent multiple perspectives on current issues in student affairs and the journal theme.
  4. Provide a comprehensive format to include an introduction from the editor, The Final Word, New Connections, and when appropriate, dedications.
  5. Engage in researching comparable professional journals in student affairs.

Section 2. Initiate and maintain connections among alumni/ae, graduate students, faculty, and friends.

1. Invite local authors, alumni/ae, graduate students, faculty, and friends to the Premiere and initial distribution of the journal.
2. Encourage HESA community involvement in fundraising endeavors and professional development opportunities.
3. Maintain connections, communications, and relations with alumni/ae:
   1. Update and maintain the online alumni/ae directory.
   2. Sponsor and host alumni/ae receptions at ACPA and NASPA.
   3. Distribute the journal to alumni/ae and professional colleagues at conferences and through the mail.
   4. Create and distribute a biannual newsletter for the HESA community.
   5. Maintain and update TVC website and additional social media.
4. Maintain connections with graduate students, faculty, and friends:
   1. Distribute the biannual newsletter to the HESA community.
   2. Provide opportunities for first year, second year, and part time students to unite by creating a schedule of regular programming, encompassing both social and professional development needs.
   3. Organize professional development opportunities for current students, faculty, and friends.
   4. Support the professional development of graduate students who are presenting at national and regional conferences through scholarship awards.

Section 3. Remain financially self-supporting.

1. Make sound financial decisions.
2. Maintain accurate budgetary information.
3. Distribute budget reports to the Editorial Board and Advisors in a timely fashion.
4. Monitor the budget so that all projects secondary to the publication of the journal do not compromise the quality of the publication.
5. Coordinate fundraisers with the objectives of attaining funds for:
   * 1. Journal and directory publication
     2. Daily operational expenses
     3. Sponsorship of receptions at national conferences.
     4. Professional development, including scholarship funds.
     5. HESA community development.

Section 4. Continue to improve the editorial process.

* 1. Communicate clearly, constructively, and consistently with authors.
  2. Coordinate editing and production teams so that they work cooperatively.
  3. Revise the Editing Manual distributed to editing teams.
  4. Provide training materials to editors.
  5. Provide a formal evaluation process for authors.
  6. Maintain and respect the anonymous editing process.
  7. Provide authors with reasonable flexibility regarding their submissions.

Section 5. Provide a significant learning experience for all board members of TVC*.*

1. Keep the work of the Full and Editorial Boards productive, educational, and enjoyable.
2. Provide editorial training, writing workshops, and Phone-A-Thon training workshops for all HESA students.
3. Include all members of the Editorial Board in decision-making processes and production schedule.
4. Encourage board members to provide feedback and to propose new programs and projects, regardless of their level of involvement.
5. Increase participation in all TVC activities, especially Phone-A-Thon and Production Weekends.

Section 6. Maintain communication, support, and positive attitudes.

* 1. Make decisions by consensus whenever possible.
  2. Stay well organized and keep a focused sense of direction.
  3. Maintain good communication among all board members.
  4. Provide feedback, encouragement, and support to one another.
  5. Take risks with both journal content and professional development opportunities.
  6. Pay attention to timeliness regarding communication and tasks.
  7. Be creative, flexible, and proactive about helping others.
  8. Enjoy the experience!

Section 7. Pursue the continued organizational growth and development of TVC.

* 1. Maintain communication with Faculty Advisor
  2. Select two Advisors who are HESA alumni/ae and/or friends of the program each academic year to serve the Editorial Board as needed.
  3. Continually develop two First-Year Social and Professional Development Chair positions, to be elected each year by the cohorts as a more formalized link between the Editorial Board and first-year HESA students.
  4. Identify strategies by which TVC may more effectively utilize technology in its operations.
  5. Consider the development of documents (a “History of TVC”) that may strengthen TVC and promote increased continuity from year to year.

**Article VII:** Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Full Board. Proposals for amendments are open to entire membership and shall be submitted in writing. All members must be notified of the intent to amend the constitution and brought to a vote with a quorum present.