

# Residential College Board Constitution

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## **Section I: Statement of Purpose**

*(Revised 03/10/2015)*

The Residential College Board (hereafter “RCB” or “the Board”) shall exist to serve all members of the Residential College community by upholding the tenets on which the Residential Colleges are founded:

1. That the Colleges provide a stimulating atmosphere for interaction between students and faculty
2. That the Colleges develop programs that stress educational opportunities outside the classroom
3. That the Colleges increase and add to the quality of undergraduate life
4. That the Colleges foster a sense of community among their members as well as on campus

Accordingly, RCB will advance the academic, philanthropic, and social goals of the entire Residential College system. It will be a source of support, information, and advice for the colleges, and will serve as a formal means of communication between the colleges for collaboration and exchange of ideas. RCB will aid individual colleges in reaching their common goals, and work to promote unity and community among all members of the system.

A Residential College shall be defined as any living unit designated by the University as a residential college. A Residential College member shall be defined as any resident or non-resident member of a Residential College.

A resident member of a Residential College is any individual living in a Residential College that pays the appropriate Residential College dues.

A non-resident member of a Residential College is any individual who has filled out the application to become a non-resident member, been approved by the Executive Council or corresponding governing body of the Residential College, and has paid the appropriate dues.

## **Section II: Membership and Dues**

*(Revised 03/14/2019)*

### **Article I – Dues**

Members of the Residential College Board shall consist of the Executive Board – President, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Social Affairs, Vice President of Philanthropic Affairs, Vice President of Public Relations, Vice President of Financial Affairs, and Vice President of Inter-College Relations – and the Presidents of each of the Residential Colleges. An individual cannot hold two positions simultaneously on the Residential College Board.

Voting members of the Board shall consist of all of its members except for the President, who only votes in the case of a tie. In the event of co-chairs holding a position, both individuals will share a single vote.

Residential Colleges shall submit a quarterly membership fee of six dollars per resident. A quarter is defined as an academic period at Northwestern University as determined by the Office of the Registrar; for RCB purposes, the quarters are Fall, Winter, and Spring.

The number of Residential College members in each Residential College shall be determined by Residential Services at the beginning of each quarter. The Residential College Board receives dues

only for the number of residents in the college system at the beginning of the quarter.

All Executive Board members must be residents or non-resident members of a Residential College. All Executive Board members shall pay Residential College member dues, either as residents paying social fees, or as non-residents paying non-resident fees. Non-resident paperwork shall be submitted within the first two academic weeks of each quarter of service on the Executive Board.

The Residential Colleges shall not account for Resident Assistants, Resident Directors, or vacant spaces when transferring funds to RCB.

## **Article II – Budget Maintenance**

After the end of spring quarter each year, any excesses greater than 1.5 quarters worth of dues (assuming full capacity for residents) for the Residential College will be transferred to the RCB account. Treasurers who anticipate being unable to spend down their account to below the 1.5 quarter cap must notify their exec and the RCB Vice President of Financial Affairs immediately.

Current treasurers will be required to submit yearly spending plans to their executive board and the RCB Vice President of Financial Affairs by the fifth week of fall quarter. The treasurer in office each quarter will also submit an end-of-quarter spending report. The content each report should contain is described below. Any supplementary information can be included as well.

Yearly spending plan: dues per quarter, predicted spending per quarter with estimate of costs for each event, starting balance, and year-end balance.

Quarterly spending report: total income for the quarter, total spending for the quarter, difference between yearly plan and actual spending, events that did not spend money as predicted, and adjustments to be made next quarter if necessary.

Every effort must be made to spend within  $\pm 5\%$  of total dues each year. Each Residential College's treasurer must report when spending deviates from projections and present an updated yearly spending plan to fix the deviations.

The VP of Financial Affairs for the Residential College Board will be given access to each college's account totals through SOFO. This is to allow the VP to guarantee needs are being met.

RCB and the individual Residential Colleges will make constitutional revisions to make the following responsibilities clear:

1. Treasurers must submit quarterly spending reports by the end of Reading Week of each quarter and yearly spending plans by the end of Reading Week in Spring quarter to RCB and their exec board.
2. Treasurers must check in with the RCB Vice President of Financial Affairs at least once per quarter to discuss their spending plans and any problems.

## **Section III: Duties of the Executive Board**

*(Revised 03/11/2020)*

The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Board. The President shall be responsible for

the following: supervising all Board activities; overseeing all other officers and the routine affairs of the Board; coordinating long-term planning for the Board; acting as the official representative of RCB to the University; managing, with the Vice President of Financial Affairs, all RCB funds by being SOFO trained; preparing an agenda for all Board meetings and presiding over them under Robert's Rules of Order or another code of conduct that the Board passes in a two-thirds vote. The President is also responsible for appointing a Senator to represent RCB in ASG.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs shall coordinate all Board-sponsored academic events to foster intellectual development in the Residential Colleges. In the absence of the President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs shall assume the President's duties. If there are co-VPs of Academic Affairs, one of the co-VPs shall assume the President's duties while the other retains the office of VP of Academic Affairs, as decided on by the co-VPs of Academic Affairs with the approval of the executive board. In addition, the Vice President of Academic Affairs shall coordinate a meeting at least once per quarter of all Residential College positions which arrange academic events.

The Vice President of Social Affairs shall coordinate all Board-sponsored social functions in order to foster inter-college unity. In addition, the Vice President of Social Affairs shall coordinate a meeting at least once per quarter of all Residential College positions which arrange social events.

The Vice President of Philanthropic Affairs shall coordinate the philanthropic efforts of the colleges and create all-Residential College philanthropy events. In addition, the Vice President of Philanthropic Affairs shall coordinate a meeting at least once per quarter of all Residential College positions which arrange philanthropic events.

The Vice President of Public Relations shall be responsible for internal and external communications, including, but not limited to, publicity of Board-sponsored events, public relations, and minutes of Board meetings. The Vice President of Public Relations will be responsible for maintaining the Residential College Board Website.

The Vice President of Financial Affairs shall coordinate the financial matters of the Board. Such matters shall include developing and maintaining a quarterly budget, managing transactions involving the Board and members of the Board, and overseeing the withdrawal of quarterly dues from the Residential Colleges. The Vice President of Financial Affairs oversees the approval of the quarterly budget by the second meeting of the Board by a two-thirds vote. The Vice President of Financial Affairs is responsible for meeting with treasurers and executive boards when spending issues are reported in order to rectify the situation and get spending plans back on track. The outgoing Vice President of Financial Affairs is responsible for organizing and conducting a training session for new treasurers and the incoming Vice President of Financial Affairs to go over budgeting tools, guidelines, and budget reporting requirements before Spring Quarter begins.

The Vice President of Inter-College Relations shall be responsible for developing inter-college interaction through events and programs, in particular through aiding in registration of Residential College teams in the IM co-recreational league or other forms of friendly competition. Part of this responsibility includes meeting with the colleges' IM chairs at least once a quarter. In addition, the Vice President of Inter-College Relations shall help other Board members as appropriate to foster community through the Inter-College programming requirement and other means. The Inter-College programming requirement mandates that each residential college participate in two events per quarter hosted jointly by two or more residential colleges.

The ASG Senator is a non-voting member of the Board, and is required to attend three Fullboard meetings per quarter, although the Senator is strongly encouraged to attend all Fullboard meetings. Eligible candidates for RCB Senator shall include all resident or non-resident members of a Residential College. The Senator shall be added to the RCB listserv. The senator is responsible for being in regular communication with the President.

## **Section IV: Voting Standards**

*(Revised 03/14/2019)*

The voting standards below shall apply to all elections. They will also apply to Board meetings if it is decided that Robert's Rules shall be followed per Section III of this document. If Robert's Rules is not followed, a different set of voting Standards must be agreed upon by the Board.

1. Unless otherwise instructed by this document, the Board shall act only when the majority of votes cast are in favor of a main motion put to question
2. A quorum for all questions shall consist of two-thirds of the voting members of the board, not including any board members running for a position in the case of elections.
3. Board members running as candidates in an election are not able to cast a vote in that election.
4. Every voting member may move or call for the question only when a quorum is present
5. Every voting member shall cast one vote of equal weight or abstain. Abstentions shall not affect the outcome of a vote
6. Absent Residential College Presidents may vote by proxy providing the identity of their proxy is revealed to the presiding officer before the relevant meeting. Individuals that already have a vote on the Board cannot serve as proxies for absent members. It is recommended that the proxy be either an elected or appointed RC officer of the respective President's Residential College or else the RCB President. If an RC officer or the RC President is unable to serve as a proxy, Board members may vote to designate an individual of their choosing. It should be noted that in doing so the board member authorizes the proxy to vote on their behalf.
7. The President of the Board shall vote at the same time as the board on all votes, but the vote shall be kept separate and shall only be considered in the case of a tie to break a deadlock.
8. The President of the Board may veto any motion passed at the time of the vote. This veto can be overridden by a subsequent two-thirds vote by the Board
9. Every voting member may move to override a veto only when a quorum is present, before a new action has been approved, and before the relevant meeting has adjourned. Abstentions shall not affect the outcome of a vote .

## **Section V: Election of the Executive Board**

*(Revised 03/11/2020)*

### **Article I - Election Procedures**

Elections shall consist of three stages. The first stage is the nomination and application process, wherein the candidate must fill out and submit the application to the Residential College Board President by the date and time specified. The second stage is a question and answer session for the candidate. The third stage is discussion and voting by the Board. The second, and third stages shall all occur in one day for any particular position.

In order to comply with the Residential College-wide election process, the Residential College Board elections must be completed prior to the end of the seventh week of Winter Quarter. Election for the office of President shall occur no later than the fourth week of Winter Quarter. Elections for the other offices shall occur within the two weeks following the election of the President. Nominations for all offices shall close 48 hours prior to the respective election date. Nomination of candidates for the Executive Board can be made by voting members of the Residential College Board and the President of the Board. The Board will provide at least two weeks' notice of position availability prior to the initial date of election for any election cycle. Nominees for the office of President shall be drawn from all members of the Board. In the event that no present Board member has declared candidacy for the office of President by the close of nominations, nominations shall be open to all present elected or appointed officials of the Residential Colleges and former such members who are present members of a Residential College.

Nominees for the offices of the Vice Presidents shall be drawn from all present elected or appointed officials of the Residential Colleges and the Residential College Board and former such members who are present members of a Residential College, whether by being a current resident or non-resident. In the event that any of the positions of Vice President lack candidates by the close of nominations, nominations shall be open to all present members of the Residential Colleges.

If candidates are running as co-chairs for VP of Social Affairs, Philanthropic Affairs, Academic Affairs, or Inter-College Relations then they need to make this clear going into the election. Candidates running as co-chairs will submit individual applications, but they will be interviewed together.

If no one is nominated for a given office by the deadline, nominations for that office shall remain open until twenty-four hours after a nomination is made.

For each position being elected, the second stage of the election process shall be the same in length for each candidate running for the position. The fourth stage shall take as long as necessary until an individual is elected or a vote of "no confidence" has been made.

Elections shall be cast by secret ballot with the winner securing a majority of voting members. In the event that four or more candidates run for any position, the Board shall vote to eliminate candidates until there are two remaining by voting to remove one at a time.

A decision of "no confidence" can be made if passed by more than 50% of the voters. "No confidence" means that the voter does not believe that the individual or individuals running for a position can perform the duties for this position adequately. Determining how the position shall be filled or who potential candidates to fill this position are may not be discussed until after a decision of "no confidence" has been made, so as not to affect the vote. Specific alternative candidates in the event of a decision of "no confidence" may not be discussed until after that decision has been made, so as not to affect the vote.

In the event of a decision of "no confidence":

1. The position shall have a second nomination period of no more than one week, following the same procedures as before
2. Candidates shall be drawn from all present members of a Residential College
3. Candidates present in the first election may only be nominated again at the discretion of the Executive Board

4. Applications shall be due no more than one week after the close of nominations
5. An emergency meeting of the Board shall be held to elect the position as soon as possible, following the aforementioned guidelines
6. This entire process must be completed before the end of the seventh week of Winter Quarter

## **Article II – Expulsion of Executive Board Officers and Vacancies**

Criteria for such a recall may include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to complete responsibilities as stated within the Constitution
2. Poor meeting attendance
3. Acting in a manner that is detrimental or harmful to the Board or its interests
4. Failure to pay membership dues as per Section II

Inability to comply with these criteria shall be determined at the discretion of the Board.

A motion to recall an officer may be submitted to the President by email. In the event that the motion is to recall the President, it shall be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The motion shall be kept in confidence and will be presented by the President or Vice President of Academic Affairs at the meeting immediately following the submission of the motion.

A member of the Executive Board may be expelled from their position by a two-thirds majority vote of all Executive Board officers, excluding the officer in question and including the President if not in question, followed by a two-thirds majority of the Residential College Board.

When a vacancy of an office occurs, via a resignation or expulsion of an officer, it shall be filled by an emergency election within two meetings of the announced vacancy. In the interim period, the President shall appoint a member of the Executive Board to fulfill the vacated duties. Residential College Presidents may not be expelled by the Board.

## **Section VI: Amendment Procedures**

*(Revised 03/23/2014)*

Ratification of the entire Constitution shall be contingent on a unanimous vote of all Residential College Presidents.

The Executive Board shall conduct a review of the Constitution annually with any interested members of the Board.

Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be brought to the Board by its voting members. Proposed amendments by Residential College members who are not voting members of the Board shall be considered by RCB only after petitioners have obtained signatures from ten percent of Residential College members.

Amendments shall be considered ratified with a three-fourths vote of the Board members.

## **Section VII: Absences and Fees**

*(Revised 03/10/2015)*

The attendance shall be documented in the minutes from each meeting.

The first absence of each quarter shall not be fined. Any Residential College not represented at a Residential College Board general assembly meeting for a second time in a quarter shall be fined 10 percent of the respective Residential College's members in dollars.

In the case of absences during Residential College Board elections, this percentage will increase by 25%.

The fine shall increase by 5 percentage points for each subsequent absence per quarter. With each new quarter these fines will reset to the 10 percent figure for the second absence, and will continue to increase again as stated above. All of the money collected from this fee shall be put into the Residential College Board's general fund.

When there are frequent absences, the President of the Board should make every effort to sit down with the College's President to determine what the situation is and how the Residential College Board can alleviate the situation.

The fee may be waived on an individual basis at the discretion of the Executive Board.

# Appendix A: Web Standards

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*(Revised 03/1/2016)*

To further the goal of more effectively promoting the Residential College system to prospective members and facilitate communication to current members, the following guidelines are enacted to govern the websites of the eleven Residential Colleges:

1. Required Components: Each college website must maintain the following up-to-date information:
  - a. List of college faculty fellows
  - b. Current version of the college constitution
  - c. Description of the college points system, including if possible a list of activities that merit points and the number of corresponding points
  - d. Descriptions of each position on the college executive board (“job descriptions”) and a current list of the students holding those positions
  - e. Description of the college master staff, including the Faculty Chair, the Assistant Chair, and the Associate Chair
  - f. Link to the Office of Residential Academic Initiatives
  - g. Link to the Residential College Board (<http://www.groups.northwestern.edu/rcb>)
  - h. Link to the non-resident membership application maintained on the Office of Residential Academic Initiatives website
  
2. Recommended Components: The following are recommended but are not required components of the college websites:
  - a. Description of college facilities
  - b. Photos from recently held events
  - c. Description of main college events (for example, CCI might list the Business Symposium)
  - d. A “virtual tour” or similar presentation of the college for prospective students
  - e. A list of “recent college happenings” or updates on college events
  - f. List of helpful links
  - g. Link to find one’s own points status
  - h. Executive board and full college minutes
  - i. Calendar of upcoming events
  - j. Links to public social media pages

# Appendix B: Listserv Definition and Usage

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*(Revised 04/07/2017)*

To better communication between the Residential Colleges Board members, the Hall Government and members of the Residential Colleges, the listservs affiliated with the Residential College Board shall be maintained and moderated. Listed are managed listservs and minimum membership enacted to ensure proper usage for each listserv:

1. The RCB listserv shall consist of the advisor and executive board members of the Residential College Board and the Residential College Presidents. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the President and the Vice President of Public Relations.
2. The RCB\_EXEC listserv shall consist of the advisor and executive board members of the Residential College Board. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the President and the Vice President of Public Relations
3. The RCB\_ACAD listserv shall include the Vice President of Academic Affairs and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President of Public Relations
4. The RCB\_ALUMNI listserv shall include the Vice President of Academic Affairs and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President of Public Relations
5. The RCB\_FELLOWS listserv shall include the Vice President of Academic Affairs and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President of Public Relations
6. The RCB\_FINANCE listserv shall include the Vice President of Financial Affairs and the treasurers sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Financial Affairs and the Vice President of Public Relations
7. The RCB\_SOC listserv shall include the Vice President of Social Affairs and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Social Affairs and the Vice President of Public Relations

8. The RCB\_PHIL listserv shall include the Vice President of Philanthropic Affairs and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Philanthropic Affairs and the Vice President of Public Relations
9. The RCB\_IMSPORTS listserv shall include the Vice President of Inter-College Relations and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Inter-College Relations and the Vice President of Public Relations
10. The RCB\_PR listserv shall include the Vice President of Public Relations and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Public Relations
11. The RCB\_TECH listserv shall include the Vice President of Public Relations and associated representatives sitting upon the College executive boards. Associated representatives include officers whose responsibilities include maintaining any of the following shared resources for their respective residential college:
  - non-physical electronic resources, such as a website, Facebook page, web domain, online accounts, etc.
  - physical electronic resources such as shared desktop computers, printers, projectors, game consoles, recording equipment etc. and/or associated resources such as printer paper, projection sheets, game controllers and discs, etc.The Presidents of the Residential Colleges may request the addition of other positions onto the listserv. This listserv shall be a private listserv and shall be managed by the Vice President of Public Relations.
12. "The RCB\_COLLEGES listserv shall consist of the RCB advisor, the executive board members of the Residential College Board and the residents of the Residential Colleges. This listserv shall be a private listserv. Only the RCB advisor, President and the Vice President of Public Relations will be given permissions to send emails via the listserv."

# Appendix C: Area Council Representation

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*(Revised 03/1/2016)*

Each Residential College will designate one resident member to serve on the board of the College's Area Council. The three Area Councils are governing bodies for the Residential Colleges and Halls, and have jurisdiction in matters of residential policies and amenities, improvements to facilities, and advocacy on behalf of residents. The Area Councils collect no fees from Residential Colleges and have no budget.