

Constitution of University Sounds A Cappella
(Adopted Spring 2009)

Article I
Name

The name of this organization shall be University Sounds A Cappella at Christopher Newport University (“University Sounds”).

Article II
Purpose

The purpose of University Sounds is to bring collegiate men and women together based on a shared passion for a cappella music, and to share their musical talent with not only the student body of Christopher Newport University, but also the surrounding community.

Article III
Membership

Section 1. General Requirements

Any undergraduate student enrolled in Christopher Newport University shall be eligible to become a member of University Sounds. All members must be enrolled at least part-time (6 credit hours) at Christopher Newport University and must be in good academic standing with the university.

All members of University Sounds are required to pay dues at the beginning of each semester on the date the treasurer has established.

Section 2. Categories of Membership

“Potential members” are those who wish to join University Sounds. All potential members wishing to join University Sounds may not be affiliated with any other Christopher Newport University a cappella group at the time of their audition.

“Current members” are those who have been accepted into University Sounds.

“Alumni members” are those former members of University Sounds who have graduated from Christopher Newport University as members of University Sounds. Members that do not graduate as members of University Sounds will be considered for alumni status by the current executive Board on a case by case basis.

“Inactive members” are those who are still members of University Sounds but are taking a leave of absence for a set period of time. After a total amount of 4 months (120 days) of inactivity, your membership status will be addressed with Executive Board in a meeting. Members who are inactive for a whole semester are not required to pay dues, however, if a member becomes inactive in the middle of the semester, they will not be refunded for their dues after they have been paid. Members who return from being inactive during the semester must still pay dues. If a member’s absences start to negatively affect the group, the Executive Board will address the situation to consider said member’s inactive status. If a member of the Executive Board chooses to go inactive they will step down from their position. The group will then vote on a replacement for that Executive Board position and they will take said position immediately.

On a case-by-case basis Executive Board members may be able to hold their position throughout inactivity, as long as they are able to fulfill their position’s requirements. These members will not retain voting rights during rehearsals (such as solo auditions and song selections) but will still hold voting privileges regarding Executive Board decisions. If an Executive Board member decides to go inactive and their inactivity period exceeds four months, the member who has been fulfilling their role will assume the position permanently. The group holds the right to vote on Executive Board position changes due to inactivity.

Section 3. Qualifications and Privileges

Potential members shall have no voting rights in University Sounds.

Current members shall have full voting rights, one vote per person, unless otherwise stated.

Inactive members do not have voting rights for the time they are inactive. They also do not have voting rights for decisions that will affect the time of their inactivity unless otherwise stated.

Section 4. Selection Process

Potential members shall audition for at least sixty percent of the current members of University Sounds during an initial audition process. This initial audition may be blind at the request of the potential member. Potential members become current members after accepting an offer of membership post-callbacks and fulfilling any other obligations stated in this Constitution.

Section 5. Removal Process

The Executive Board may put any member on a probationary period, as deemed suitable, if the member in question has not upheld the duties of a current member. Following this probationary period, the member in question will be reviewed by the Executive Board to discuss further action.

Any member may be removed from University Sounds if their behavior is negatively affecting the group or the A cappella community as a whole, or has violated their probation. If three or more members notify the Executive Board about a specific member's behavior and/or actions, then the Executive Board will meet to discuss the negative behavior and will bring the issue to the group. During this time, the member in question will be allowed to come before the Executive Board and the group to defend his or herself. A vote will be taken to the group as a whole in which they will decide by a two-thirds affirmative vote if the member in question should be asked to leave the group. Said member will not have a vote, regardless of their position in the group.

Any member may be removed from University Sounds upon a two-thirds affirmative vote by written secret ballot of the group.

Article IV

Executive Board Officers

The Executive Board officers of University Sounds shall consist of: President, Vice-President, Music Director, Treasurer, and Director of Marketing. Assistant Music Director is an officer but is not a part of the Executive Board. No member can hold two Executive Board positions, but can hold two office positions (Assistant Music Director and one other position) if elected.

Section 1. The President shall be responsible for making sure all duties done by other executive Board members are completed and held to a high standard. They shall preside over all Executive Board meetings, appoint special committees with the approval of the Executive Board, and be the main point of contact through the compass. The President shall also approve all financial administration of all funds. The President is also responsible for closely monitoring the University Sounds' bank account on a regular basis.

Section 2. The Vice President shall preside over meetings in the President's absence and organize events and performances. The Vice President is responsible for keeping minutes during all executive Board meetings, constantly checking the University Sounds email, and keeping track of attendance during each scheduled rehearsal and group performance. The Vice President will keep documented evidence of excused and unexcused absence sent by Google Form. The Vice President shall also perform any other duties requested by the President.

Section 3. The Music Director shall arrange and distribute musical selections, lead the group in vocal warm-ups, work with individual members as needed, and perform any other duties requested by the President. The Music Director should be educated in music theory and have a good understanding of the piano. Music director is also required to meet with the Music Committee and Assistant Music Director outside rehearsal as needed to evaluate previous

rehearsals and distinguish music selections with help of the Music Committee and parts for upcoming rehearsals.

*Section 4. **Assistant Music Director*** (Non Executive Board Position) shall lead rehearsals in the Music Director's absence. The Assistant Music Director shall assist the Music Director in musical selections, lead vocal warm-ups, and perform any other duties requested by the President or Music Director. The Assistant Music Director is also required to meet with the Music Director outside rehearsal as needed to evaluate previous rehearsals and distinguish music selections with help of the Music Committee and parts for upcoming rehearsals. They have the option of attending Executive Board meetings but do not have a vote in these meetings.

*Section 5. **The Treasurer*** shall work with the President and preside over the financial administration of all funds and share with the Executive Board and members the financial condition of the organization every week to the rest of the Executive Board and every month to the rest of the group. The Treasurer shall set up the bank account as well as administer and collect group dues each semester. The Treasurer will set a due date for group dues at the beginning of each semester. A physical copy of all monthly bank statements must be kept on file in a binder by the treasurer and passed down to the following treasurer.

*Section 6. **The Marketing Director*** shall be responsible for advertising all of University Sounds' performances. The Marketing Director shall also be responsible for fundraising events and promotion of campus involvement. The Marketing Director shall be responsible for creating a marketing plan that coincides with the image of University Sounds and advertising the group accordingly.

Section 7. If any members of the Executive Board are unable to uphold their duties as specified within the Constitution, the Executive Board officer shall have the option to delegate tasks to members within their committee.

Section 8. All Executive Board members must meet every week at a designated time that is determined by the Executive Board at the beginning of the semester. Each Executive Board member has two unexcused absences. The member is still responsible for posting updates to the Executive Board Facebook page prior to the Executive Board meeting. To avoid absences from executive Board meetings, the time that Executive Board meets can be changed to accommodate.

Article V

Election of Officers

Section 1. Election of officers shall take place annually each spring semester at a date decided upon by the current Executive Board.

Section 2. Any current member shall be eligible to be an officer who is a full-time student (12 semester hours) and understands the responsibilities that come with the position they are running for. Any current members that are running for executive Board positions should have an understanding that academics are important and that this position should not get in the way of that.

Section 3. If any member of the Executive Board resigns before the end of their term, there will be an automatic election for a permanent replacement.

Article VI

Recall of Officers

Any officer of this organization may be removed from office upon a two-thirds affirmative vote by written secret ballot of the members of University Sounds. If four or more members contact the Executive Board regarding the recall of an officer or concerning the duties of the officer in general, the decision will automatically go before the group to vote if said officer should be recalled. Said complaints would remain anonymous. There will be an initial discussion in which the member in question may state their argument. After this discussion a vote will be held. If two-thirds of members vote in favor of the recall, the officer must immediately step down from their position. The officer will not have a vote during this process. If the reason for recall is breaking university conduct or any other large-scale offense, the Executive Board will send said member to CHECS.

Article VII

Group Committees

Section 1. All active members of University Sounds who are not members of the Executive Board shall participate as active committee members. Members will submit their preference for committees to be approved and finalized by the Executive Board.

Section 2. *The Music Committee* shall consist of the Music Director, Assistant Music Director, and at least four other group members. At least one committee member will be chosen from each voice part. Committee members will work with the Music Director and Assistant Music Director to arrange group music, run rehearsals, and lead group warm ups. All members of the Music Committee are required to meet outside of rehearsal to prepare for upcoming rehearsals. If a member of the music committee misses three meetings, then they will be replaced. If a member misses practice, then they will have the option to attend the music committee meeting that follows that practice. Each committee member should know their parts in case others need assistance.

Section 3. The Marketing Committee will consist of the Director of Marketing, the Treasurer, and remaining group members. The Committee will work together to come up with a strategic marketing plan for University Sounds and will work together to execute the plan. The committee will be responsible for brainstorming and carrying out fundraising activities, as well as promoting University Sounds and its events to the CNU Community and the general public. The Marketing Committee will also be responsible for keeping up relations with other groups within the A Cappella community and designing group apparel.

Section 4. Committee leaders will actively participate within their committee and oversee their committee's activities. Committee leaders will cooperatively work with their assigned committee and will make an effort to work as partners with their members. It will be the responsibility of the committee leaders to relay information and committee activities to the rest of the Executive Board at each Executive Board meeting.

Section 5. If a member wishes to switch committees, they must send a request to the Executive Board, and receive their approval to transfer. In this request they must state valid reasons as to why they should leave their current committee and how they could help the committee they wish to switch into more effectively. The Executive Board will decide whether or not the member's request is valid.

Article VIII

Meetings

Section 1. Regular meeting dates and time (rehearsal schedule) of University Sounds will be voted on by the group prior to the beginning of classes each semester. Practices shall each be 2 hours in length.

Section 2. The President may request special meetings at their discretion.

Section 3. Fifty-one percent of the membership shall constitute a majority.

Article IX

Attendance

Attendance at all scheduled events is required for all current members of University Sounds.

Section 1. Members are required to attend all scheduled rehearsals and performances so long as those events are announced at least two weeks prior to taking place, unless deemed excusable by the Executive Board. All members are required to attend the scheduled rehearsal prior to a

performance in order to be eligible to perform as a member of University Sounds. At the discretion of the Executive Board, members may still be allowed to perform despite a prior absence on a case-by-case basis. Soloists that have been excused from a rehearsal before a performance may still solo at said performance.

Section 2. If any member acquires two consecutive unexcused absences, said member will not be allowed to perform with the group at the next scheduled performance. If a member acquires an unexcused absence at the practice right before a performance(s), said member will not be permitted to perform at said performance(s). If any member acquires three unexcused absences within the time of a semester, said member will be placed on a one-month probationary period. Following the probationary period*, said member will meet with the Executive Board where their membership within University Sounds will be up for question. Four unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the group if voted upon by two-thirds of the current membership.

*Probation: Attendance at rehearsal is still expected and required. However, all performing privileges will be taken away for 4 weeks during which school is in session in the Fall and Spring semesters. Absences may still be excused during this time period if need be.

Breaking probation only occurs when there are any additional unexcused absences. This will result in a meeting with the Executive Board.

Section 3. Any member who arrives late three times unexcused to rehearsal or call times will acquire an unexcused absence.

Section 4. Executive Board can consider any tardies on a case by case basis. Tardies can be deemed as an unexcused absence at the Executive Board's discretion.

Section 5. Phones are required to be on the piano during practice time at the discretion of the Music Director.

Section 6. All of the above applies unless previously excused by the Vice President and Executive Board. Consequences for unexcused absences, such as missing a performance, shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Section 7. Excused absences include: serious illness, family emergency, work, and academic major requirements. If a member votes initially on a poll they cannot make a performance, said member must email the University Sounds account stating the reason for absence in order to be excused. All other circumstances will be taken into consideration and voted on by the Executive Board. All excused absences must be submitted through the google form at least 24 hours prior, unless it is considered an emergency case. In the emergency case, a google form must be filled out within 24 hours of an event occurring for record purposes. If evidence of an excused absence

being invalid is presented, it will be taken into consideration and may result in an unexcused absence. If a member has an excused absence, but fails to fill out the google form 24 hours prior, said excused absence will become an unexcused absence.

Section 8. Unexcused absences reset each semester.

Section 9. Reasons for not attending a performance or event will not automatically be excused because the Vice President was informed at the point of voting on a performance. The reason for a member's absence will still be taken into consideration when determining whether the absence is excused or unexcused no matter the amount of time before said performance, unless otherwise voted upon by the Executive Board.

Section 10. If a member wishes to appeal an unexcused absence, they may notify the Executive Board and meet with the Board to discuss the appeal. The Executive Board will then vote on whether or not the absence is appealed.

Section 11. Current members will be notified by the Vice President through email if a tardy or absence has been recorded.

Article X

Dues

Section 1. The amount and timing of dues is set by the Treasurer. The current amount for dues is set at \$45.00 per semester. For each practice that dues are late they shall increase by \$5.00, unless previously discussed with the Treasurer. If necessary, dues may be raised or lowered at the discretion of the Executive Board.

Section 2. The Treasurer shall collect the dues with oversight by the President.

Section 3. If group members are unable to pay the specified dues within the designated semester, the member will be responsible for the dues the following semester. If necessary, the member will be responsible for contacting the Treasurer to set up a payment plan or to pay the remaining amount the next semester.

Article XI

Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any current member and must be approved with a majority vote of the current membership.

Article XII

Advisor

A CNU faculty or staff member shall serve as an advisor if desired by the group. The advisor of the organization shall provide support, counseling, and guidance to University Sounds.

Article XIII

Responsibilities

Section 1. University Sounds shall adhere to University Policies and all city, state, and federal laws.

Section 2. University Sounds shall not haze any prospective member for the purpose of admission into or affiliation with the organization. Members of University Sounds are free to leave or dissociate without fear of retribution or harassment. University Sounds shall not discriminate based on race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.

Section 3. The Office of Student Activities must review any revisions to this Constitution.

Article XIV

Ratification

This Constitution shall become effective upon ratification by a majority of the organization's membership and the Office of Student Activities.

Article XV

Set List

(Amended Fall 2013)

Section 1. Each setlist shall be formed through a nomination and voting process by current members of University Sounds. Once the setlist is determined, the order in which the music is taught shall be decided on by the music director and the assistant music director. The songs that receive majority votes shall be included in the set list for the following semester. In the event that University Sounds does not complete all of the songs voted upon for the semester, leftover songs will not roll over to the following semester unless voted for by a majority.

Section 2. Songs will continue to be listed on our setlist until voted out by a majority vote of members. At the end of each academic year members will be allowed to suggest songs for retirement. A brief discussion will be held followed by voting. Songs that have been voted out

may be re-entered into the setlist voting, however, if selected they must be performed as a new arrangement.

Article XVI
Recall of a Member based on Attendance
(Amended Fall 2014)

Section 1. In the case that a member has acquired three unexcused absences and has broken probation, a meeting to discuss the member's membership must be held. At the beginning of this meeting, the President or Vice President shall explain the purpose of the meeting. They will give a brief overview of the member's unexcused absences and state relevant details regarding the nature of the case. The member under question shall then have an opportunity to plead their case and give reasoning for their absences. After they plead their case and answer any questions, they will be dismissed until voting by the remaining membership has commenced.

Section 2. After the member under question has been dismissed, the Vice President shall entertain any further questions and, afterwards, begin a group discussion regarding the eligibility of membership for the member in question, leaving the Executive Board to discuss last.

Section 3. After each member has had the opportunity to state their case, voting by secret ballot shall take place to determine the member in question's standing within the group. A two-thirds affirmative vote must be attained to dismiss the member from University Sounds.

Section 4. If a member does not receive a two-thirds affirmative vote for their dismissal from the group, they will continue to be a member of University Sounds. They will receive a probation decided on by the Executive Board and in the case that this probation is broken; the member shall be dismissed from University Sounds immediately, without further action. If the probation period ends with no offenses by the member, the Executive Board shall hold a meeting with the member discussing their continued membership within the group.

Section 5. A member who has been dismissed from University Sounds may not re-audition for the group during their time at CNU.

Article XVII
Recall of a Member based on Vocal Abilities
(Amended Fall 2016)

Section 1. A member experiencing vocal issues of any kind will be notified in a face to face meeting with the President and Music Director. Vocal issues are classified as anything affecting

overall group performance negatively on a consistent basis (ie: consistent pitch problems, inability to remember parts, inability to blend, etc.)

Section 2. Said member will be granted a one-month developmental period during the academic year to meet with the Music Director/Assistant Music Director twice a week outside of practice.

Section 3. At the end of the one-month developmental period, progress will be assessed among the Executive Board.

Section 4. If sufficient progress has not been made, the case will be brought forth before the group. Said member will be permitted to write a letter to the group explaining their side of the situation, but will not be permitted to attend said meeting. The Executive Board will read the member's letter and explain the situation to the group from the Executive standpoint and entertain any questions. Anything discussed during this meeting should not be discussed outside of the group.

Section 5. After details are voiced, a secret ballot vote will be held among the group and if two-thirds affirmative vote occurs, said member will be notified and removed from University Sounds effective immediately.

Section 6. A member who has been dismissed from University Sounds may not re-audition for the group during their time at CNU.

Article XVIII

University Sounds Colors

(Amended Fall 2022)

Section 1. University Sounds' official colors are red, black, and white.

Section 2. University Sounds' performance attire will be determined at the beginning of each year and will be required for certain performances. A checkpoint at a determined time within the year will be required where members will wear their outfit for approval. Casual performance attire includes dark wash jeans and/or black jeans and University Sounds apparel. Formal performance attire is a black performance outfit. Acceptable attire for masculine presenting members includes black suspenders, black button ups, black pants, black dress shoes, and approved accents. Acceptable attire for feminine presenting members includes black heels/boots, black jeans, black skirt/dress, black top, and approved accents.

Section 3. It is highly recommended that members get their outfits pre-approved via text by an Executive Board member. If a member arrives in unacceptable attire they will be sent back to change, and may receive an unexcused tardy.