



## ***Bylaws of the Utrecht Debating Society***

### ***Last amendment***

*General Assembly October 19th 2009*

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## **BYLAWS OF THE UTRECHT DEBATING SOCIETY**

Save any legal restrictions and in accordance with the statutes, internal affairs of the society are governed by these bylaws and the decisions taken by the GA.

### **Chapter 1: General**

- 1 Every member of the society must follow the stipulations in such a way as is recorded in this code. Upon violation the board may suspend the member in question.
- 2 Part of these bylaws are the guidelines for the board.
- 3 Amendments to these bylaws can be made by the GA when 1/5 of the members is present or represented. The amendments need to be voted in with a 2/3 majority.
- 4 If in an assembly in which an amendment to the bylaws is under consideration not 1/5 of the members is present or represented, a new assembly is called for, at least fourteen days later, but within thirty days of the first.
- 5 Damages or personal injury of members cannot be visited upon the society.
- 6 Any place in these regulations where the male form is used, one can, if it pleases, also read the female form.

### **Chapter 2: Membership**

- 1 Every person that is enlisted with a university or university of applied sciences (*hogeschool*) may become a member of the society.
  - a. Every person who is enlisted by the society, but no longer a student, will be enlisted as a favorable member, as stated in article 4 sub 4 in the articles of association of the society. The yearly subscription as a favorable member is at least the yearly membership fee.
  - b. Every person who want to become a member of the society, but is not enlisted with university Utrecht or university of applied science Utrecht, can on their request be enlisted as a favorable member, their request will be reviewed by the board.
- 2 The membership is the same as the society's year and runs from September 1st until August 31st.
- 3 The membership is automatically renewed, unless a written request for termination is received before August 1st by the board. In the case of a late written request for termination the members of the board, as representatives of the society, are authorized to levy contribution, until a valid request of termination has been made.
- 4 Members receive a notification of the termination of their membership to the society.
- 5 The board can, as is stipulated in the statutes, name a member an honorary member, provided the GA supports this nomination.
- 6 Honorary members need not be enrolled in a university or university of applied sciences and pay no contribution.

### **Chapter 3: Finances**

- 1 The height of the contribution and/or the form in which the contribution is levied can be changed during a GA, provided the GA is included to do so. The in this way determined amount will be applied from the following year onward.

- 2 The yearly minimum contribution is € 37,50 .
- 3 The board will give a € 2,50 discount if a member pay via direct debit.
- 4 The members have to fulfill their payment obligation before the end of the fiscal year.  
A member cannot terminate his membership until the contribution for the year in question has been paid in full.
- 5 Expenditures larger than 10% of the budget for that year have to be approved by the GA.

#### **Chapter 4: The General Assembly**

- 1 The General Assemblies will not be held during the academic holidays, nor on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays.
- 2 The General Assembly is called for at least seven days in advance via electronic or regular mail. When possible other places or means of publicity will also be used.
- 3 The chair is charged with leading the General Assembly and maintaining the order.
- 4 The chair can suspend the assembly for a period of time to be determined by him.
- 5 The General Assembly is only open to members, unless the General Assembly decides to open its doors to others. All those present should behave as is required of members. All regular members have voting rights.
- 6 The secretary records who is present at the assembly and notes down their names. Only he, whose name is on the roll call, is considered to have been present at the assembly.
- 7 During the setting of the agenda members can submit topics. The chair determines where these topics go on the agenda.
- 8 Proposed by the chair a definitive agenda for the General Assembly is determined after the opening of the assembly.
- 9 Members should behave orderly and disciplined during the General Assembly.
- 10 If a member misbehaves himself or expresses himself indecently, the chair may call the member to order.
- 11 On repeated disturbance of the peace the chair can have the offender removed from the assembly.
- 12 No one takes the floor unless it is granted to him by the chair. The latter grants the floor to members in the order in which it was requested, whenever possible.
- 13 No one may be interrupted unless by the chair, if the latter wants to call the speaker to order or remind him of stipulation of the statutes or the Bylaws.
- 14 If a speaker departs from the topic under consideration, the chair will call him to order. On continual diversion the chair can forbid him to speak.
- 15 If the chair judges that a topic has been sufficiently discussed, he closes the considerations.
- 16 Every member can via a point of order suggest the closing or reopening of the considerations.
- 17 A point of order may be submitted at any time and will be voted upon immediately.
- 18 Every member can submit a motion to change the order or splitting of motions under consideration.
- 19 Every member can submit amendments to the motions under consideration.

- 20 Submitted amendments are voted upon in order of their submission. If the chair deems a later amendment more extensive than a preceding one, the more extensive amendment will be voted upon first.
- 21 If for any motion no more amendments are proposed and the deliberations are closed, voting on the motion commences. The assembly can decide to vote on parts of the motion first and then on the motion as a whole.
- 22 The General Assembly is only authorized to take decisions if at least 1/7 of members entitled to vote is present.
- 23 Decisions are made with an absolute majority of votes.
- 24 Blank votes are counted as cast votes. Withheld votes are not considered not to be cast.
- 25 Voting about matters is done by the raising of hands, unless the assembly wishes for a vote by ballot.
- 26 Voting about persons is always done by ballot.
- 27 Members are allowed to vote in the name of absent members, if they have gotten a written permission from this absent member. The maximum amount of authorizations per member is determined as two.
- 28 During the other business section questions can be asked to the board. The necessary announcements can also be made.
- 29 The distributing, collecting and counting of the ballots is done by an electoral committee appointed for this purpose, formed by a member of the board and members that have not nominated themselves for the position that is being voted upon. The chair appoints this committee.

## **Chapter 5: Board**

- 1 The board is obliged to ensure that the society functions in accordance with her goals as described in the statutes and the carrying out of the decisions of the GA.
- 2 At least two months before a GA in which new board members are installed, the board notifies the members of the possibility to show their interest in fulfilling a board position in writing.
- 3 A member of the board can be suspended at all times by the GA if a decision to do so is taken with a 2/3 majority of valid votes.
- 4 The board oversees the board committees and can refuse a member a position in the committee if he has proven unfit.
- 5 The board gives an advise to the GA about the composition of the new board. Members can apply with the board. The advise is non-binding, members can also individually announce their ambitions to fulfill a board position to the GA.
- 6 The composition of members that as a whole want to form a new board, also known as candidate board, writes a policy plan and presents this to the GA.
- 7 The board consists of at least three persons, of which at least 2 have reached the age of majority, that are chosen in function by the GA from the members.
- 8 A board member is allowed to be re-elected as a member of the board of the society only once.

## **Chapter 6: Financial Committee**

- 1 The financial committee oversees the financial management of the treasurer. Members of the financial committee cannot fulfill a board position.
- 2 The financial committee is appointed by the GA.
- 3 The financial committee reports at least to the yearly/install GA about the auditing of the financial management of the board.

## **Chapter 7: Board of Advisors**

- 1 The General Assembly appoints the Board of Advisors based on a proposal by the board for the duration of one society year. The members of the Board of Advisors can serve a maximum of three years on the Board of Advisors.
- 2 The Board of Advisors consists of at least three persons. Of which at least two have fulfilled a board position within the Utrecht Debating Society in the past. Members of the board and members of the financial committee are barred from membership of the board of advisors
- 3 The Board of Advisors appoints a chair amongst themselves.
- 4 The goal of the Board of Advisors is to serve the interests of the society in both a critical and constructive way.
- 5 The Board of Advisors has at least the following tasks:
  - a) advising the board both when requested and out of own motivation;
  - b) stimulating and guarding the interests of the society.
- 6 The Board of Advisors convenes at least a week before each GA with the board.
- 7 The Board of Advisors reports every GA to the society.

## **Chapter 8: Tournament selection**

These rules will be applied in the event of over-subscription for a tournament, i.e. when more teams have enrolled than the organization will allow. This is only the case; if there are still too many teams after (in this order):

a) the teams that have enrolled after the deadline have been dropped. The board announces this deadline as soon as possible. Enrollment can only happen via a written message to one of the board members.

The rules are as follows:

### 1) Abroad:

Every team that has more experience than another team takes priority over the other team.

## 2) National

- a) 50% novice teams and 50% advanced teams
- b) In the case of an uneven amount of allowable teams: one team more of the category in which the most enrollments have been made. If the amount of enrolled teams per category is equal a lottery will decide from which category (novice or advanced teams) one extra team will be placed.
- c) For over-subscription within these two categories a lottery will be held.

## 3) Definitions:

- Abroad: all tournaments outside the Netherlands as well as EUDC and WUDC.
- More experience than another: having partaken in a higher number of tournaments. Every tournament abroad counts for 2 points and every national tournament for 1 point (per team add the amount of points and divide by two).
- National: all tournaments within the Netherlands, except EUDC/WUDC.
- Novice team: a team of which a member (or both) do not meet the requirements of an advanced (see below).
- Advanced team: a team of which both members (1) have at least been a member of UDS or a different debating society for one year (2) have at least partaken in one tournament (both national or abroad, excluding UDS internal tournaments).

## 4) Methodology

- a) The board takes care that these rules are applied in a diligent manner (especially important concerning the deadline) and records how long people have been a member and in which tournaments they have competed in in the past.
- b) The secretary performs a possible lottery under the supervision of at least two members who are not involved.
- c) The board will actively promote lesser known tournaments.

## **Chapter 9: Guidelines for the board**

- 1 The board ensures strict obedience of the Statutes and the Bylaws.
- 2 The board writes a yearly report.
- 3 The board meets as often as it deems necessary. In principle the board meetings are closed.
- 4 Of the board meeting minutes are kept, which are public.
- 5 The board takes decisions based the majority of votes. If this results in a draw the chair leading the meeting at that time makes the decision.
- 6 If a board member wants to perform a legal act for an amount higher than € 50,-, authorization of the board is required. Expenditures below € 50,- only require the treasurer's approval.
- 7 The board is authorized to change their internal task division at any time, provided they publicize this as much as possible.

- 8 The board is authorized to, if one or more members of the board is no longer part of the board, to fill the vacant position with one or more person(s) that have their confidence, taking full responsibility as board until the next General Assembly.
- 9 Tasks of the chair:  
The chair leads the board meetings. In his absence the vice-chair fulfills this function. If neither the chair nor the vice-chair are present, then the board provides for leadership themselves.  
When the board represents the society the chair does the talking, or in his absence, his replacement. If his replacement is also absent one of the other board members is appointed.
- 10 Tasks of the secretary:  
The secretary does the correspondence for the society, takes minutes during the General Assembly, the board meeting and other gatherings where he is present en required to. In his absence, the treasurer takes the minutes.
- 11 Tasks of the treasurer:  
The treasurer manages the financial means of the society and makes the necessary expenditures. The treasurer has a bookkeeping in which the society's income and expenditures are accounted for in detail. He presents a financial report about his term in office at the GA in which a board in new composition will be installed.

## **Chapter 10: Guidelines of committees**

- 1 A committee is a relation between members which organizes activities for the entire society.
- 2 The UDS has two types of committees: board committees and GA-committees. Board committees answer to the board. GA-committees answer to the GA.
- 3 When proposed by a member a new committee can be founded, provided the board gives her consent.
- 4 The committee has the responsibility to keep an orderly registration of the committee.
- 5 A clear task division is important in order for a committee to function well. A clear task division lets everyone know what is expected of him and reduces the risk of tasks being neglected.
- 6 Tasks of the chair:
- The chair leads the committee meetings and has to keep an overview of the functioning of the committee.
  - He prepares an agenda for the committee meetings. During the meeting he ensures everyone is allowed to speak, allowed to finish and that people listen to one another. In the case of an endless discussion it is the chair's tasks to end it.
  - As fellow committee member the chair is allowed to voice his opinion (task as committee member), but he has to take care that everyone has their opinion heard (task as chair). He may not use his position to enforce a certain point of view.
  - When problems between committee members occur the chair has to attempt to ensure a friendly atmosphere and if possible resolve the problems. The chair also has a representative function. During activities it is often the chair that gives an introductory speech on behalf of the committee.

- 7 Tasks of the secretary:
- A secretary has to be in the know about incoming and outgoing mail. Responses to letters can be written by the secretary himself, he can also leave this to another committee member. This has to be agreed upon clearly.
  - A secretary keeps minutes during the committee meeting. In his absence a replacement minute taker has to do so. The minutes need to be in the possession of all members of the committee before the next meeting and be filed in the committee folder.
  - A secretary has to be in the know about incoming and outgoing regular and digital mail. Responses to letters and emails can be written by the secretary himself.

- 8 Tasks of the treasurer:
- The treasurer draws up a budget for the committee. He can do this alone or in cooperation with other members of the committee. During a meeting the budget has to be approved by the committee. The definitive budget has to be presented to the board of UDS before a date set by the board.

If during the course of the year the risk of serious deviation from the approved budget is looming, the committee must decide what to do about/with the shortage/abundance of money. Changes in the budget need to be communicated to the treasurer of the board. If committee members incur expenditures on behalf of the committee, the treasurer needs to ask permission from the treasurer of the board if the amount is below € 50,-. For amount higher than € 50,- the permission of the entire board is required. The committee members can get their expenditures refunded, provided they give the treasurer a receipt. After the activity the treasurer has to make a financial report. At the end of the society's year all committees have to submit a definitive financial report over the past year to the board, before a date set by the board.

- 9 Within every committee a board member also sits, who functions as the contact between the board and the committee. H has to ensure that committees do not get in each other's way and that committees, whenever possible, help each other.

- 10 As committee member everyone is responsible for the work of the committee. This includes the finances: every member is responsible for the management, not just the treasurer!

- 11 The committees are part of the society UDS. The board of the society is responsible for the presentation of the society and her committees. Should the board on a certain issue disagree with a committee, then the board has the final say in this issue, provided this issue harms the society.

- 12 A committee must, if they want to use sponsors for an activity, communicate this to the board.<sup>13</sup> The maximum amount of members for a committee is 7. From this number can be diverted if the board decides so. When there are a larger number of candidates than required, then the candidates will be voted upon during the GA. Voting happens by choosing 2 members per committee.

- 14 Voting within a committee is possible when more than half of the committee members have agreed to come. Voting occurs based on the majority vote.