

Constitution

of the

Texas Young Democrats

Article I. Name

The name of the organization shall be the Texas Young Democrats (TYD).

Article II. Object

Firmly believing that the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party provide the best guides to peace, security, liberty, dignity, and prosperity for the people of the Great State of Texas, we, the members of the Texas Young Democrats, in order to foster and perpetuate those ideals, to stimulate an active interest in the political process, to promote the involvement of young people in all aspects of the political arena, and to provide the highest degree of justice and social welfare for the citizens of our Great State, do associate ourselves together and do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Texas Young Democrats.

Article III. Chartered Organizations

Section 1. Chartered Organizations

The Texas Young Democrats shall be composed of local, autonomous organizations (chapters). To charter as distinct entities, chapters in counties with over one hundred thousand (100,000) votes for the Democratic candidate in the last gubernatorial election must consist of ten (10) or more members, and chapters in counties with one hundred thousand (100,000) or fewer votes for the candidate must consist of five (5) or more members.

Chapters representing more than one county must calculate their total votes for the Democratic candidate in the last gubernatorial election across all counties represented by the chapter.

Chapters representing educational institutions, to charter as distinct entities, must consist of ten (10) or more members on campuses with enrollment greater than ten thousand (10,000) students, while campuses with ten thousand (10,000) or fewer enrolled students must consist of five (5) or more members.

Section 2. Duration of Charter

A club's charter shall be in effect from its granting until the following State Convention, unless one of the following applies: a) the chapter is found to have violated criminal law, b) the chapter is found to have violated the rules set forth by the Texas Ethics Commission regarding campaign finance, c) a complaint filed against the chapter is upheld by the grievance committee, d) the chapter fails to meet the required deadlines for updating chapter information as set forth by the TYD governing documents, or e) at the request of the chapter by a vote of the entire chapter membership.

Section 3. Granting Charters

Chapters shall be granted a charter by submitting a charter application to the State Convention that is in compliance with any requirements or time limits established for such an application, for verification by the convention's Credentials Committee, and approval by the State Convention. A charter may also be submitted between conventions to the Rules Committee for verification and approval by a majority vote of the State Board, or three-fourths vote of the Executive Committee between quarterly meetings.

Section 4. Chartering and Membership Fees

Texas Young Democrats will not charge membership or chartering fees to individual chapters.

Section 5. Supremacy Clause

This Constitution of the Texas Young Democrats shall be the supreme governing document of the organization, and under no circumstances may the rules set forth in this document be suspended. No changes may be made to this Constitution, or to the Bylaws, except as provided herein. Affiliated chapters retain all rights as to the organization and management of their local affairs free from interference from the Texas Young Democrats; however, the provisions of this Constitution shall take precedence in any matters relating to the relationship of the affiliated chapters with the Texas Young Democrats.

Article IV. Members

Section 1. Age Requirement

Democrats having attained the age of fourteen (14) years, and not having attained the age of forty-one (41) years shall be eligible for membership in the Texas Young Democrats. Any member that holds an elected or appointed office in the Texas Young Democrats shall be eligible to serve out the remainder of their term regardless of age requirements, and will retain any voting rights applicable to their office during that period.

Section 2. Membership Criteria

Regular membership to the Texas Young Democrats shall be granted to individuals who meet all membership requirements in the governing documents of the Texas Young Democrats and either:

- a) Join a chartered club; or
- b) Request and are granted at-large membership to the Texas Young Democrats at any State Convention or State Board meeting, in which case the at-large membership shall expire at the beginning of the following State Convention or upon joining a chartered club, whichever comes first.

Section 3. Special Memberships

The Bylaws may establish special classes of membership that are not granted voting privileges at any level of TYD.

Section 4. Oath of Affiliation

Membership in TYD shall require the signing of an Oath of Affiliation with the Texas Democratic Party.

Article V. Officers

Section 1. Elected Officers

The Elected Officers of the Texas Young Democrats shall be the President, the Executive Vice President, the Finance Director, the Policy Director, the Membership Director, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and the two Young Democrats of America (YDA) National Committee Representatives.

Section 2. Elections

All officers shall be elected at each TYD State Convention. The term of office shall run until the next TYD State Convention or until their successors are elected. At any occasion where officers are elected, a forum of all officer candidates to be elected shall be held. No member shall hold more than one simultaneous elected office in the Texas Young Democrats. An officer accepting a nomination and being elected to a second office is considered to have immediately resigned their prior held office.

Section 3. Election Code

At the fourth-quarter meeting of the State Board the year before a TYD State Convention, the State Board shall approve an Election Code that shall include but is not limited to: campaign expenditure limits, a campaign code of ethics, nomination and disqualification processes, campaign timelines, dispute resolution procedures, and convention voting processes (including runoff). The Election Code must be published and accessible to the membership no more than 30 days following its adoption. This Election Code shall be in force until another election code is adopted..

Section 4. Filing for Offices

In order to be considered as a candidate for elected office in TYD, the candidate must:

- a) be a member of TYD, and
- b) must file an application according to the process and timeline in the Election Code. Candidates who do not meet this requirement may file for a position by a petition of at least 25% of Convention delegates.

Section 5. Residency Requirements

In order to file for candidacy for the offices of President and Executive Vice President, an applicant who wishes to serve in these respective roles must live, work, or go to school within the state of Texas for at least one year prior to seeking nomination and upon election, be required to maintain full time residency in Texas for the entirety of their term.

In order to file for candidacy for the remaining offices, an applicant who wishes to serve as an officer must live, work, or go to school within the state of Texas for at least six months prior to seeking nomination, and upon election, be required to maintain full time residency in Texas for the entirety of their term.

Section 6. Duties

The officers of TYD shall execute the duties assigned to them by the TYD governing documents, the President, and the Executive Committee. Nonperformance of these duties shall be grounds for removal from office.

Section 7. Order of Succession

Following the President, the order of succession shall be: 1) Executive Vice President, 2) Finance Director, 3) Policy Director, 4) Membership Director, 5) Secretary, 6) Treasurer.

Section 8. Appointed Positions

The President may appoint such positions as are needed to aid in the operation of the Texas Young Democrats, with the approval of the Executive Committee. These positions shall not hold a vote.

Section 9. Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs among the Officers, the President shall appoint a regular member of TYD to fill the office with majority approval of the State Board at their next meeting.

Section 10. Removal from Office

All elected and appointed positions of the Texas Young Democrats may be subject to removal from office for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance of assigned duties as per these governing documents; or, for violations of the governing documents of the Texas Young Democrats; or, for committing a felony under the laws of the State of Texas or the United States of America while in office; or, for failure to maintain decorum while acting in a capacity as an officer of the Texas Young Democrats.

Article VI. State Convention

Section 1. Authority

The State Convention shall be the highest authority of the Texas Young Democrats, subject to the provisions of the Texas Young Democrats governing documents.

Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of the State Convention shall be to elect the Officers of the Texas Young Democrats; to hold statutory meetings of Region Committees and Caucuses; to elect Region Directors; to adopt a platform and resolutions which embody the basic principles of the Democratic Party and which set forth the positions of the Texas Young Democrats on current issues of statewide significance; to establish and amend the rules of the Texas Young Democrats; and to take such action as it deems necessary and proper to effect the operations of the Texas Young Democrats.

Section 3. Time and Place

The Texas Young Democrats shall hold its State Convention in the second quarter of odd-numbered years in Austin, Texas or within a thirty (30) mile radius of the Texas State Capitol. The date and venue shall be decided by a vote of the State Board by the end of the fourth quarter State Board meeting the year prior.

Section 4. Call

The Call for the State Convention shall be issued by the President no later than two weeks following the convention selection to all affiliated chapters and such unaffiliated chapters as the President may be able to contact.

Section 5. Delegations

a) Delegate Strength

All chapters placed on the Temporary or Permanent Roll of the Convention shall be considered delegations for the purposes of the State Convention. Members of the Texas Young Democrats who are credentialed for the State Convention at-large will be considered a single additional delegation. Each delegation shall have a number of votes allocated as per the Bylaws.

b) Vote Apportionment

Each delegation shall vote the full Delegation strength to which it is entitled, divided proportionally amongst its delegates participating in the vote.

The use of the unit rule shall not be permitted.

c) Delegation Assignment

Attendees shall designate the chapter whose delegation they are a member of at the time of registration. If the attendee wishes to participate as a member of a different delegation or change to participate as an at-large delegate, they may submit a request to the Credentials Committee, who will facilitate the change.

d) Delegation Attendance

No club shall be deemed to have been in attendance and/or seated at a State Convention which is not represented at the Convention by at least one (1) registered delegate.

Section 6. Convention Officers

a) Temporary Officers

The Executive Committee shall designate a Convention Director at the third quarter State Board Meeting the year prior to the State Convention, who may designate whatever such assistants as may be necessary to plan, to arrange, and to conduct the necessary work of the Convention. The President of the Texas Young Democrats shall serve as Temporary Chair to call to order and preside over the State Convention until a Permanent Chair has been elected.

b) Permanent Officers

The Permanent Officers of the Convention shall be the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Parliamentarian. The Permanent Chair shall be elected upon the adoption of the Temporary Roll, and shall appoint the Vice Chair, Secretary, Parliamentarian, and Chairs of the Permanent Convention Committees.

Section 7. Committees

a) Temporary Convention Committees

The temporary committees of the State Convention shall be: the Temporary Credentials Committee, the Temporary Convention Program Committee, and the Temporary Nominations Committee. Temporary committees will be appointed by the President and confirmed by the State Board at the fourth-quarter meeting the year prior to the respective State Convention.

(1) Temporary Credentials Committee

The Temporary Credentials Committee will be responsible for reporting the initial roll at the start of the convention, which must include which chapters submitted complete and valid chartering packets, how many chapters have registered attendees to the convention at that time, and the total count of attendees at that time. The Temporary Credentials Committee must hold at least one public meeting at a time and place prior to the start of the Convention. The committee shall examine submitted charters and credentials in preparation for the initial roll. The Temporary Credentials Committee is discharged upon the adoption of the initial roll at the beginning of the convention, and all further updates are the responsibility of the Permanent Credentials Committee.

(2) Convention Program Committee

The Convention Program Committee is responsible for creating the initial convention program for approval at the final State Board meeting before the convention and recommendation for adoption by the State Convention. The Convention Program Committee is discharged upon the adoption of the convention program following the adoption of the initial roll.

(3) Temporary Rules and Platform & Resolutions Committees

The Temporary Rules Committee and Temporary Platform & Resolutions Committee shall be the standing Rules and standing Legislative Policy Committees of the State Board.

b) Permanent Committees

The Permanent Committees of the State Convention shall be the Credentials Committee, the Rules Committee, the Platform & Resolutions Committee, and the Nominations Committee. The membership of the Permanent Credentials Committee shall consist of a Chair appointed by the Permanent Convention Chair and one delegate from each club on the Temporary Roll of the Convention. The membership of all other Permanent Committees shall consist of a Chair appointed by the Permanent Convention Chair and one delegate from each club on the Permanent Roll of the Convention. The Permanent Convention Chair shall appoint a Vice Chair to a Committee if such a position is needed to ensure that

the Committee consists of an uneven number of members. A simple majority of the clubs present at the convention shall constitute a quorum for the committee, provided that at least two clubs of which the committee chair is not a member must be present.

Article VII. Executive Committee

Section 1. Authority

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for conducting the day-to-day affairs of the Texas Young Democrats between conventions and State Board Meetings.

Section 2. Membership

a) Voting Members

The voting members of the Executive Committee shall be all Elected Officers and Region Directors.

b) Non Voting Members

The non voting members of the Executive Committee shall be the Chairs of Standing Committees who are not otherwise voting members, the president of the Texas College Democrats, the primary officer of the Texas High School Democrats, and any Appointed Positions.

Section 3. Meetings

Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at least monthly and at the call of the President. Meetings shall be held by any means, including electronic, which allows for all members to hear and participate in all proceedings in real time. A majority of the voting membership of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

Article VIII. State Board

Section 1. Authority

Except for powers reserved to the Executive Committee, the governing body of the Texas Young Democrats between conventions shall be the State Board.

Section 2. Membership

a) Voting Members

The voting members of the State Board shall be all voting members of the Texas Young Democrats Executive Committee, the Chair or another designated representative of each caucus of the Texas Young Democrats, and the President or another designated representative of each chartered chapter of the Texas Young Democrats.

b) Non voting Members

The non voting members of the State Board shall be all non voting members of the Executive Committee not expressly specified as voting members above.

Section 3. Meetings

The State Board of the Texas Young Democrats shall meet at least once per calendar quarter, but shall not be required in quarters where a State Convention of the TDP or TYD is held. The President shall issue the call for each State Board meeting to all members of the State Board of the Texas Young Democrats. One-quarter (25%) of all voting members of the State Board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. Standing Committees

The State Board shall have Standing Committees as follows:

- ♦ The Finance Committee shall be chaired by the Finance Director.
- ♦ The Political Policy Committee shall be chaired by the Policy Director or their deputy.
- ♦ The Legislative Policy Committee shall be chaired by the Policy Director or their deputy.
- ♦ The Rules Committee shall be chaired by a member appointed by the President with majority approval of the Executive Committee.

Article IX. Region Committees

Section 1. Apportionment

There shall be nine (9) regions of the Texas Young Democrats, each with a Region Committee. Each Region Committee shall be composed of all chartered chapters within the region as provided for in the Bylaws. Each chartered chapter shall receive one (1) vote in their Region Committee. A chartered chapter may only cast a vote in one Region Committee; chapters whose primary members represent more than one region may choose the region in which they are represented at a State Convention and shall participate in that Region Committee until the next State Convention.

Section 2. Region Committee Meetings

The Region Committees shall convene during each State Convention, and as called by their respective Region Director or by 25% of the chartered chapters in the region. Meetings shall be held by any means, including electronic, which allows for all members to hear and participate in all proceedings in real time.

Section 3. Region Directors

a) Election

A Region Director shall be selected from among the members of the chartered chapters within each Region Committee at the statutory meeting of the Region Committee at the State Convention. Region Directors shall hold office until the next State Convention or until their successors are elected.

b) Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs among the Region Directors, the TYD President may appoint a replacement from within the same region upon majority approval of the Executive Committee at their next meeting.

Section 4. Deputy Region Directors

At the request of a Region Director, the TYD President shall appoint a Deputy Region Director, with the approval of the Region Committee at a called special meeting before the close of business of the next State Board meeting.

Article X. Grievance Committee

Section 1. Membership

Upon the receipt of a formal grievance by the Rules Committee Chair, in the manner prescribed by the Bylaws, a Grievance Committee shall be formed which shall be composed of the State Board's Rules Committee Chair and six (6) members of the State Board drawn at random by the Grievance Committee Chair. Any party described by the grievance shall not participate in the process and shall not be eligible for membership in the Grievance Committee during the deliberation or resolution of said grievance. If the Rules Committee Chair is a party described in the grievance, the President shall appoint another member of the Rules Committee to serve in their stead. If a member selected at random to participate in the Grievance Committee does not confirm their acceptance of said appointment to the Grievance Committee Chair within seventy-two (72) hours, a different State Board member shall be drawn at random by the Grievance Committee Chair within twenty-four (24) hours after that period expires to replace said member.

Section 2. Duties

The Grievance Committee shall be responsible for resolving disputes within the Texas Young Democrats and for the adjudication of removal proceedings for State Board members that arise out of a formal grievance.

Section 3. Meetings

Meetings of the Grievance Committee shall be open to the membership of the Texas Young Democrats and to any applicable witnesses as needed for the proceedings of the meeting. Two-thirds of the Grievance Committee shall constitute a quorum.

Article XI. Procedural Provisions

Section 1. Open Meetings Policy

a) Meetings

All meetings of the Texas Young Democrats and any body or unit thereof shall be open to the public, save for administrative matters internal to the organization, which shall then be held in Executive Session.

b) Voting

All votes conducted by any body or unit of the Texas Young Democrats shall be open and there shall be no secret ballots.

Section 2. Open Records Policy

All records of the Texas Young Democrats are presumed to be open for inspection by the membership. Upon a classification by the Executive Committee of certain records as confidential, such records will not be open for inspection until the earlier of the passage of five (5) years or a reclassification by the Executive Committee.

Grievance Committee rulings shall be made public immediately up completion of Committee hearings. All other records relating to the Grievance Committee shall be sealed unless and until the aggrieved party agrees to the release of said records.

Section 3. Procedural Guarantees

a) Anti-Discrimination Standards

All activities of Texas Young Democrats, at all levels of the organization, shall be open to all members of the Texas Young Democrats regardless of race, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age (except as provided in requirements for membership), color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, economic status, disability, or philosophical persuasion.

b) Right of Access

The time and place for all public meetings of the Texas Young Democrats shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons and parties.

c) Right of Participation

(1) Procedural Disclosures

The Texas Young Democrats shall publicize fully, in a timely fashion, and in an accessible manner, a full description of the procedures and rules by which the organization operates.

(2) Candidacy Requirement Disclosures

The Texas Young Democrats shall publicize fully, in a timely fashion, and in an accessible manner, a full description of all elected offices within the Texas Young Democrats, including their required qualifications and duties.

Article XII. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the governing documents and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

Article XIII. Amendment

Section 1. Constitutional Amendments

The Texas Young Democrats State Convention may amend this Constitution by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of all delegates on the Permanent Roll after passing the convention's Rules Committee by the same vote.

Section 2. Bylaws Amendments

The Texas Young Democrats State Convention may amend the Bylaws by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all delegates on the Permanent Roll after passing the convention's Rules Committee by the same vote.

Section 3. Interim Amendments

Between State Conventions, the Constitution of the Texas Young Democrats may be temporarily amended for good cause by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the State Board, and the Bylaws by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the State Board. Any such amendments must be first passed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Rules Committee and presented to all members of the State Board at least thirty (30) days in advance. All amendments so passed by the State Board shall be presented to the next State Convention for approval, although they shall be in effect and binding until such convention is held.

Section 4. Rejection of Amendments by Convention

If any amendment introduced at a State Convention is rejected by the convention, it may not be proposed again until the following State Convention.

Appendix

General Guidelines for Dismissal

The Texas Young Democrats, as a volunteer organization, appreciates all the hard work freely given by its members and officers. As such, it is understood that even the best laid plans are complicated by life. That being said, the success of the organization depends on the smooth functioning of several critical aspects of one's job roles. Repeated or chronic nonperformance of duty, in particular, is a severe blow to the efficacy of the organization; given that life throws everyone difficulties, it is necessary that officers be able to either perform their duties or appropriately delegate them; or, if such management of duty is not possible, to either resign from office or be removed from said office.

Clarification of Language

The phrases "State Convention," "State Board," and "Executive Committee" shall refer to TYD's own bodies, except where explicitly indicated otherwise.