

# The Winthrop Teaching Fellows Constitution

## Preamble

The Winthrop University Teaching Fellows program was established in 2002 with funding provided by the state of South Carolina's general assembly. The South Carolina Teaching Fellows Mission is "...to recruit talented high school seniors into the teaching profession and to help them develop leadership qualities." This program enables Winthrop students to work closely with the international community in areas in and around Rock Hill. This experience aids students in gaining classroom experience and reiterates the importance of service in the community. The program also provides professional development opportunities during summer months. The Teaching Fellows program provides a unique experience that will better equip its members to be productive in the teaching community.

### **Article I. Purpose**

**Section I:** The organization shall be known as the Winthrop University Teaching Fellows Cohort. (and shall be herein referred to as the Cohort.)

Section II: The purposes of the Cohort shall be to:

1. Build relationships within the international community with special attention given to the increasing Hispanic population.
2. Provide Fellows with learning experiences and opportunities
3. Provide Fellows with leadership opportunities within the Cohort and the community.

### **Article II. Requirements**

**Section I.** Attendance at required meetings and/or events

- a. Teaching Fellows are allowed one absence (illness, unforeseen circumstances, etc.) each semester. Teaching Fellow is required to contact the Director and the class or cohort secretary.
- b. Consequences for additional absences without an acceptable excuse
  - i. COE disposition form will be completed by Director
  - ii. If unexcused absences continue and there is no response to the correction plan written into the disposition form the student will be placed on in-house probation for the remainder of the semester.
  - iii. The second semester excessive unexcused absences occur: The Fellow will be placed on CERRA probation. (These semesters do not have to be consecutive.)

c. Absences are excused for

i. Illness

ii. Class conflicts. Class must be required by the major or minor and may be taken only during the current semester. The class must be offered only at the time of the conflict

iii. Family emergencies with documentation

iv. Religious holidays

**Section II.** Members of the Cohort are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements:

a. Members will maintain a minimum GPA of 2.75.

b. Members will maintain good standing with Winthrop University.

c. Members will comply with the Winthrop University academic conduct code.

d. Members will attend all Cohort and respective Class meetings. One excused absence is allowed.

e. Members will attend all monthly seminars. One excused absence is allowed.

f. All members of the Sophomore class will participate in the Sophomore Experience as designed by the Campus Director. Students who elect not to participate in that planned event must use the Winthrop University petition form to request a substitute experience. This form must be submitted to the Campus Director by September 1 of the sophomore year. The Campus Director will submit the request to the Teaching Fellows Advisory Board at the fall meeting.

g. Members must contact the Campus Director about possible conflicts (such as classes) with meeting times to see if it can be amended before the semester begins.

h. Members will complete a minimum of 40 hours of Teaching Fellows Service Learning hours each year. *This is in addition to hours required for other courses or for admission to the Richard W. Riley College of Education.* A time log will be maintained and signed by the respective site advisor. One excused absence is allowed. No unexcused absences are permitted. *Three tardies equals one absence.* Service hours missed will be made up and dealt with accordingly. Members will inform the site supervisor and Cohort advisor of any absences in far as advanced as possible and will provide written documentation for each absence. If certain circumstances arise, service hours may be obtained at other locations that must be approved by the Campus Director. These special service hours can supplement local service hours, but cannot replace normal Teaching Fellow service hours.

i. Members will complete total number of reflections deemed necessary by the Campus Director. At least one article must be written such as a book review, reflection on service learning experiences, seminars, etc. Reflections may also be in the form of art, music, drama, dance, video, etc. Reflections may be completed in small groups when appropriate and approved by the Campus Director. *All reflections will be kept as artifacts for the portfolio which will be submitted to the Teaching Fellows Advisory Board in April of each year. In addition, the portfolio will include evidence of exemplary coursework from EDUC 110, EDUC 210, EDUC 250, EDUC 310, EDUC 390, EDUC 490 as well as a clean copy of the Richard W. Riley College of Education application essay. The portfolio will be displayed each year during the Spring Dinner.* Reflections will be due at the class meeting following the month the reflection was assigned. *(i.e. January reflections will be due during February meetings)* If a reflection is not finished by the due date, proper documentation must be filled out. Missing reflections will be dealt with accordingly.

j. Members will serve on at least one Cohort committee per calendar year. One cannot serve on the same committee twice. The Placement committee, consisting of the Vice Presidents of each class, will select committees in the fall

k. Members will join and participate in a professional organization related to your major.

*l. Additional requirements as determined by CERRA, Campus Director, advisory board, or Council.*

**Section III.** With regards to monthly seminars, meetings, and service learning, all absences must be properly documented. Each student will be required to fill out a log 48 hours in advanced for all absences *(located with his/her class secretary)* as a means of accountability. Although excused absences must still be documented by the above guidelines, a student will not be docked or punished for such an event. Excused absences include personal illness with written documentation from student health services or personal physician, class conflicts, Winthrop affiliated activities, immediate family emergencies, or extenuating circumstances. The Campus Director must also be notified as soon as possible, preferably in advance. Written documentation and 48 hour notice is required when possible.

a. Service obligation

When a Fellow fails to provide documentation of 40 hours of service earned for the previous academic year by the beginning of the next fall semester (or 10 hours for senior Fellows)

i. A COE disposition form will be completed by the Campus Director

ii. The Fellow will be placed on CERRA probation

## b. Substitute Service

Fellows who plan to earn service hours at a site other than their assigned site must

- i. Submit a written request documenting the name of the site, name of the supervisor and stating how service in that site fulfills the mission of the Teaching Fellows program.
- ii. Provide the Campus Director with an evaluation completed by the director of the site when five or more hours are earned.

Any exemptions will require completion of the Winthrop University Petition form which will be submitted to the director for review by the Teaching Fellows Advisory Board. Exemptions will be granted only for documented cases of illness or other extenuating circumstances.

## Article III. Meetings

### Section I: Meeting Structure

Adhere to Robert's Rule of Order (*parliamentary procedure*).

### Section II: Cohort Meetings

Cohort meets once a semester.  
Cohort meets in October of fall semester.  
Cohort meets in March of spring semester.

### Section III: Class Meetings

Class meets once a month

### Section IV: Council Meetings

The Council will have one meeting at the beginning of each semester  
(during the first month).

## Article IV. Committees

**Section I:** Each Committee Chairman is responsible for holding committee meetings and communicating to Campus Director any significant activities or ideas.

**Section II:** The Chairman must maintain a committee notebook and send out a report to committee members and the Campus Director each month.

**Section III:** Members of the committee will report on the activities of the committee at class meetings.

**Section IV:** Vice Presidents of each class are responsible for monitoring committees and making sure there are committee reports on class meeting agendas.

**Article V.** Teaching Fellows Governing Council

**Section I:** The organization shall be known as the Teaching Fellows Governing Council and herein be referred to as the Council.

**Section II:** The purpose of the Council shall be to provide a governing body to serve the Teaching Fellows cohort.

**Article VI.** Council Membership

**Section I:** Automatic members of the Council will consist of the following persons:

1. Campus Director
2. Cohort President
3. Cohort Vice-President
4. Cohort Secretary
5. Respective Class Presidents
6. Respective Class Vice-Presidents
7. Respective Class Secretaries
8. Senior Class Representative
9. Two people per class to keep track of service and monitoring

**Article VII.** Duties of Officers

**Section I.** Responsibilities of Officers

President of Cohort:

- Presides over Cohort meetings and his/her respective class meetings (*works with the Vice President and Advisor in coordinating agendas for said meetings*).
- Will serve on the Teaching Fellows Advisory Board.

Vice President of Cohort

- Presides over Council meetings (*works with the President and Advisor in coordinating agendas for said meeting*).
- Conducts all duties of the Cohort President if absent or ill.
- Will serve on the Teaching Fellows Advisory Board.

#### Secretary of Cohort

- Records minutes and prepares typed agenda at Council, Cohort and respective class meetings.
- Is in charge of maintaining a notebook of records (*including meetings, activities, etc.*).
- Will serve on Teaching Fellow Advisory Board.
- When the secretary is absent, the Vice President of the class or cohort will fulfill the secretary's duties.
- The secretary will type and email minutes to all meeting participants within one week of the meeting.

#### Presidents of Classes

- Preside over respective class meetings (*works with the Vice President and Advisor in coordinating agendas for said meetings*).

#### Vice Presidents of Classes

- Work with the President and Campus Director in coordinating agendas for respective class meetings.
- Conduct all duties of the Class President if absent or ill.
- Will serve on Placement Committee.

#### Secretaries of Classes

- Record minutes and prepare typed agendas at respective class meetings.
- Is in charge of maintaining record books (*including meetings, activities, etc.*).
- The secretary will type and email minutes to all meeting participants within one week of the meeting.

## **Section II. Senior Class**

Due to issues facing the Senior class, originally required meetings and officer positions will be suspended for the Spring semester. Instead, a representative will be elected. Said representative will maintain dialogue between his/her class and the Cohort and will attend all scheduled Council meetings.

**Section III. Freshman Class**

Due to issues facing the Freshman class, originally required officer positions will be suspended for the Fall semester. The Campus Director will preside over the freshman meetings. The Sophomore Vice President will attend and act as a liaison between the two classes.

**Section IV.** All officers will perform duties usually pertaining to and/or deemed necessary by the Council or Campus Director.

**Section V.** A Fellow can only be placed on the officer voting ballot in he/she is in good standing with the Cohort. Officers will lose their respective office if placed on probation or otherwise deemed not in good standing with the Cohort.

**Article VIII. Voting**

**Section I: Procedure for Voting During Meetings**

Adhere to Robert's Rule of Order.

**Section II: Election Procedure & Time**

-October meeting: nominations are made

*(Nominee will accept or decline as nominations are made or after the meeting)*

-November meeting: election of officers takes place

-December meeting: announcement of new officers

**Article IX. Ratifying and Amending Constitution**

**Section I: Ratifying**

The constitution will be ratified by majority vote of the cohort of Teaching Fellows.

**Section II: Amending**

Amendments may be proposed to the Constitution Committee by any Teaching Fellow or by the Campus Director.

Upon review by the Constitution Committee and the Campus Director, such amendments will be brought before the Cohort at a regularly scheduled Cohort Meeting.

Amendments will be voted upon at the next regularly scheduled Cohort Meeting and will require a majority vote.

The Cohort may vote to suspend the by-laws and vote at the time an amendment is presented by majority vote of a quorum of Teaching Fellows and consent of the Campus Director.

When deemed necessary by the Constitution Committee and the Campus Director, amendments may be voted on after being sent to all Teaching Fellows electronically and voted on by ballot.

### **Committee Objectives**

Bulletin Board—will update the board every month reflecting our current activities

Buddies—organizes events for the sophomores and their freshman buddies; explains what and when to write them over the summer

Columbia Orientation—travel to Columbia for the CERRA Teaching Fellow orientation for all new South Carolina fellows in June

Constitution—reviews our constitution, making sure we are abiding by what was set in 2002, and submits any changes or amendments to the cohort

DR Presentation—comprised of Juniors to organize a presentation based on their trip to the DR and what was learned

Fundraising—comprised of Sophomores who organize what the sophomore class and cohort will fundraise to raise money for the DR

Interviews—assist with the CERRA Teaching Fellows regional interviews in January

Newsletter—will develop online newsletter to inform COE faculty about the activities of Teaching Fellows

Publicity—will design a new Winthrop Teaching Fellow brochure to be handed out to freshman during Preview Days at Winthrop and at the

On-Campus Recruitment—participates in the preview days held at WU to talk to the incoming freshman about our program and our goals

Scrapbook—takes pictures at all events or asks pictures to be donated by the cohort to document each year, or can document the most recent DR trip for the following classes and other Winthrop staff to see

Social—assists in two events (one per a semester); committee will decide who will be working on each event

Sophomore Experience—juniors will work with the sophomore class to explain projects proceeding the DR trip

Sunshine—Celebrates birthdays and other exciting news from the cohort, sunshine box

Webpage—upload up to date pictures (from the latest DR trip) and also events; this needs to be worked on monthly or as needed