

# Statutes for the Student Democracy at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences

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## Chapter 1: Purpose and Scope

### § 1-1 Purpose

The Student Democracy at NMBU has the purpose of protecting the students' interests and bringing forward their inputs.

### § 1-2 Scope

These statutes apply to all organs of the Student Democracy at NMBU and are constructed in accordance with national laws and regulations. Instructions taken up in chapter 8 cannot go against these statutes.

## Chapter 2: Structure of the Student Democracy at NMBU

### § 2-1 At a Central Level

The highest democratic organ in the Student Democracy at NMBU is the Student Parliament. The daily operations of the Student Parliament are carried out by the Student Parliament's Student Board.

### § 2-2 At a Faculty Level

At the Faculty level, the Student Democracy consists of Student Councils. Student Councils are constructed of the committees and positions that come from the model for Student Councils approved of at Student Parliament 6 on 14.11.2016.

The Faculty general assembly is the highest student democracy organ at a faculty level. Between faculty general assemblies the student councils stand for the daily operations and representations of the faculty's student democracy.

The Student Council at Campus Adamstuen is delegated the power of communication and representation over the Welfare Committee in Oslo and Akershus.

## **Chapter 3: The Student Parliament**

### **§ 3-1 Powers and Functions**

The Student Parliament represents all students at NMBU, and decisions made in the Student Parliament are made on the behalf of all students. The Student Parliament has the responsibility to inform about decisions made. Closing of the meeting must follow the provisions in §3-6.

### **§ 3-2 Composition**

The Faculties at NMBU are constituents of the Student Parliament. The Student Parliament consists of 25 representatives. These representatives are distributed according to the democracy model approved of at Student Parliament 6 in 2016.

The division method for the mandatory seat allocation follows this formula:

$$\frac{V}{2^{s+1}}$$

V= Number of students at the faculty

S= Number of student representatives the faculty is allocated

Updated number of students can be found in the Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH) every fall. The average of the number of students for the spring semester and fall semester make up the basis for the following year's representative distribution in the Student Parliament.

This calculation basis is presented for orientation before the fall faculty general assemblies.

### **§ 3-3 Election of representatives**

Student Parliament representatives and substitute Student Parliament representatives are elected for one (1) year at a time at open student general meetings in each faculty. The date for the general meetings is decided as a general rule in the date plan adopted by the Student Parliament. The Student Council head and deputy head are responsible for the implementation of the general assembly at their faculty.

The choice is made by written or digital voting. If there are not more candidates than the number of positions, the election can be carried out by acclamation. One must try to ensure representation from several genders and different fields of study.

### **§ 3-5 Meetings and Summoning**

The Student Parliament must hold at least 3 meetings per semester. The Student Board is responsible for summoning the Student Parliament. Summoning and case papers should be made available to all students at least 7 days before the meeting. Electronic decisions are the exclusion of this statute cf. §3-10.

The provision that the summoning and case papers need to be made available for all students in the first paragraph entails that they need to be translated to English. If there is uncertainty about the translation, the Norwegian version will be the basis for understanding. Further specification is outlined in the instructions for the Student Parliament.

All students with a valid semester registration have the right to send in cases to the Student Parliament. This must be done at the latest 14 days before the meeting if the case is to be handled. This provision does not count for cases to be handled under "other." Further specification is outlined in the instructions for the Student Parliament. Extraordinary Student Parliaments is held if at least 3 members of the Student Board, at least 13 representatives from the Student Parliament, or at least 25 students desire it. Extraordinary Student Parliament is to be made known to the

public at least 7 days before taking place, and should only handle the case(s) that were the reason for its summoning.

### **§ 3-6 Representation at the**

Representation at the Student Parliament

The following people are required to attend Student Parliament, and are required to give a written notification before the meeting if they cannot attend:

- The Student Parliament's Representatives
- The Student Parliament's Student Board
- The Student Parliament's organizational secretary
- The Student Parliament's chairmen

At least one representative from the following organs must attend the meeting:

- The Student Representative in the University Board
- The Student Representative in the SiÅs board
- The International Student Union (ISU)
- The Control Committee

All students at NMBU have the right to attend the Student Parliament.

### **§ 3-7 Closing of a Meeting.**

The Student Parliament's meetings are open. The Student Parliament can decide to close a meeting with a qualified majority from the representatives in attendance. Translators or other support functions can stay in the meeting if at least one of the student parliament representatives requires them to.

With the closing of a meeting, separate minutes will be recorded that are withheld from public disclosure.

### **§ 3-8 Decision Validity**

The Student Parliament can make valid decisions when at least 50% of the representatives are in attendance.

### **§ 3-9 Voting rights and Voting**

The Student Parliament's representatives have a voting right. If a main representative notifies of an absence, their appointed substitute has a voting right when in attendance. Decisions in the Student Parliament are normally made with a 50% majority. Decisions are made with hand raising, unless one representative asks for a written voting. With a voting tie, the Student Parliament can take a new vote. With a continued tie after a second voting, the case can be handled according to the proposed resolution.

### **§3-10 Speaking and Proposal Rights**

Everybody has a right to speak at Student parliament meetings. All students at NMBU has the right to propose cases at Student parliament meetings.

### **§ 3-11 Electronic Voting**

Electronic voting can be used to make decisions about single cases. Electronic voting is carried out in the method described in the instructions for electronic voting. The deadline to vote electronically is within 7 days.

Electronic voting cannot be used to vote on matters concerning the following:

- Elections
- Cases of mistrust
- Changing to the Student Parliament's committee documents and instructions
- Appointment of the student representatives to councils and committees
- Other matters of considerable nature

Main Student Parliament Representatives have voting rights with electronic voting.

Electronic voting cannot take place if one or some student parliament representatives wish to handle the case at a normal student parliament before the deadline. The desire must be justified.

### **§ 3-12 Position Resignation**

The Student Parliament representatives automatically resign from their position in the Student Parliament when they are elected to the following organs:

- The Student Parliament's Student Board
- The University Board
- The SiÅs Board
- The Student Board of the Norwegian Student Organization
- The Control Committee

Student Parliament representatives also automatically resign their seats if they are no longer students at the university.

If a Student Parliament representative changes faculty, that person can remain in office until supplementary elections can be held at the next general meeting. In that case, they will remain in office as a representative of their old faculty. Alternatively, they may resign their seat.

With position resignation, the position holder's deputy representative automatically inherits the position as a main representative.

### **§3-13 Temporary Position Resignation**

In the case of partiality, there will be a temporary place resignation. This means that the representative withdraws from their position in cases where it applies. In the case of temporary place resignation the deputy will take over cf. § 6-1

## **Chapter 4: The Student Parliament's Student Board**

### **§ 4-1 Powers and Functions**

The Student Board (AU) carries out the Student Parliament's daily operations and represents the Student Parliament between meetings. AU can make decisions in urgent cases, cases that are delegated due to earlier decisions in the Student Parliament, and appoint people to non-decision making committees. AU makes proposals in all cases handled by the Student Parliament, with the exception of Elections.

### **§ 4-2 Composition**

The Student Parliament's Student Board shall consist of the following members:

- President
- AU member
- AU member

The Student Board constitutes their areas of responsibility internally.

Working time and election periods are regulated according to functions § 5-1.

### **§ 4-3 Decision Ability and Voting Ties**

The Student Board can make valid decisions when at least four members are in attendance. With a voting tie in the Student Board, the president has a double vote.

#### **§ 4-4 Editorial authority**

Usually, The Student Board has editorial authority to correct typographical errors in all adopted documents, unless otherwise decided by the Student Parliament. The authorization only applies to minor linguistic changes. Changes in the content can only be made by a new decision in the Student Parliament. The date of changes must be listed at the top of the document, under information about when the document was adopted.

### **Chapter 5: Elections and Appointments**

#### **§ 5-1 Eligibility for the Student Democracy**

The overarching rule is that all Students at NMBU with a valid semester registration can run for positions in the Student Democracy. This applies unless otherwise specified.

#### **§ 5-2 Electronic Ballot Elections**

##### a) Election of the Student Parliament's Student Board

The Student Parliament's Student Board are elected through Electronic Ballot Voting, where all students with a valid semester registration have the right to vote. The Electronic Ballot Election take place in April every year. They hold their position for 1 year, between 1.7. until 30.6. Candidates who apply must be able to master Norwegian as a working language.

##### b) Election to the University Board

Two student representatives are elected, one of each legal gender, with a deputy. They are chosen through an Electronic Ballot vote, where all students with a valid semester registration have the right to vote. The election takes place every year in April/May and in November. They hold the position for one year, from 01.07 to 30.06 for the spring election, and 01.01-31.12 for the fall election.

##### c) Elections to the Faculty Board

Two student representatives, one of each legal gender, are elected with personal substitute to the seven Faculty Boards (FS). These are elected by electronic urn election, where all semester-registered students at the relevant faculty have the right to vote. A student only has the right to vote in one faculty board election. The Electronic Ballot election takes place every year in April / May and November. The position time for the elected is 1 year and lasts from 01.07. to 30.06 for the spring election, and 01.01-31.12 for the autumn election. Candidates of a gender other than the representative who already sits on the board are eligible to stand for election at a given semester.

#### **§ 5-3 Other elections and appointments conducted in the Student Parliament**

The Student Parliament elects student representatives to central positions and committees at NMBU, to individual committees and to the board for student welfare organization. All elections are done by writing. In the case that only one candidate is running for one position, they can be elected by acclamation, unless at least one representative wishes to have a written voting process.

With a tie in voting between two candidates, a new voting round will be held. With a continued tie after a new voting round, the decision will be made according to the proposed resolution. If there is no suggestion made the decision will be made by drawing lots. Those chosen in this paragraph have minute requirements to the Student Parliament.

#### **§ 5-4 Resignation of position and Supplementary Elections**

Normally, a supplementary election will be held in the case of place resignation from positions elected by the Student Parliament. Supplementary elections follow the same election rules as normal elections. This can be adjusted in cases of urgent votes, a short time left of the time period of the position, or other reasons in which it is appropriate.

In the event of a resignation from a position elected at a general meeting, the substitute member will move to the permanent position. Alternatively, the Student Council can appoint a temporary representative who sits until the next general meeting. This also applies if positions are empty because they were not filled at the general meeting, as long as the general meeting has not decided otherwise.

### **§ 5-5 Resignation of position in the Student Board**

If a leader or member of the Student Board resigns during the term of office, the Student Parliament appoints a temporary member. The election is made according to the same election rules that apply to ordinary elections in the Student Parliament.

In the event of resignation before the autumn ballot election, the temporary member sits until a new member is elected in the ballot election. In the event of resignation after the autumn ballot box election, the temporary member sits for the remainder of the period and until a new Student Board takes office.

If the leader resigns, the leader's deputy will become acting leader until a new leader is elected by ballot.

## **Chapter 6: Impartiality**

### **§ 6-1 Impartiality**

For someone to be "partial" entails that there are circumstances that are likely to cause bias in the person's judgment. This can happen when a person is a part of a case or has strong personal consequences from the results of a case, or has close family with the previously mentioned.

In order to have good administrative practices, questions of partiality must be strict. This means that a lot must happen to name a representative partial. Those that are named partial must temporarily resign from the case, cf. § 3-12.

Cases of partiality are handled with a 50% majority voting from the relevant organ, and the person in question cannot vote. If more than one person in a case is questioned about partiality, none of the involved can partake in voting about their own or others' partiality, unless the organ is no longer a decision making organ in the case. In this case, all meeting members can participate.

## **Chapter 7: Mistrust**

### **§ 7-1 Mistrust**

Issues of mistrust can be brought up by Student Parliament representatives or other organs of the Student Democracy, and should be delivered to the Student Parliament's organizational secretary. When handling these issues at the student parliament, the one that the case is brought up against has the opportunity to present their own case.

### **§ 7-2 Ability to ask for a statement from the control committee**

If cases where mistrust are brought forward, both parties can ask for a statement from the control committee in sufficient time before the case is handled.

### **§ 7-3 Issues of mistrust against the representatives chosen by the student parliament**

With a 2/3 majority vote amongst representatives in attendance, the student parliament can decide that an officer is mistrusted, following statutes §§ 5-1 second paragraph, and 5-3. Those who are deemed distrusted must immediately resign as an appointee from the student parliament

### **§ 7-4 Issues of mistrust against the representatives chosen by Electronic Ballot Voting**

With issues of mistrust against representatives chosen through electronic ballot voting after statutes §§ 5-2 a and b, it is handled first by the Student Parliament. If it is proposed by a qualified majority amongst representatives in attendance, it will be handled through an electronic ballot vote where all students with a valid semester registration have the right to vote. The approval of the mistrust requires at least a 50% majority of votes. Those who have cases of mistrust approved against them must resign immediately from their position.

Cases of mistrust cannot be taken against student representatives in the University Board, as it goes against *Lov om universiteter og høyskoler* § 9-8. (The laws for Universities and Higher schools)

## **Chapter 8: Documents**

### **§ 8-1 Documents approved by Student Parliament**

The following documents are to be approved by the Student Parliament:

- Statutes with accompanying instructions
- Program of Principles
- Political documents
- Decrees/Resolutions
- Economic regulations
- Plan of Action
- Budget
- Schedule
- Working instructions for the Control Committee
- Instructions for Student Councils
- Working Instructions for the Student Board.
- Rules of Procedure and Agenda.
- Instructions for Elections of the Student Board and other elections.
- Positional instructions for the Buddy General
- Regulations for the allocation of welfare funds
- Rules for inclusion funds

### **§ 8-1-1 Statutes**

The statutes outrank all other management documents.

### **§ 8-1-2 Program of Principles**

The Program of Principles determines the organization's ground principles and executive political priorities. The Program of Principles outranks the rest of the Student Parliament's politics.

The Program of Principles shall be treated every 5<sup>th</sup> year. The Student Parliament can choose to treat the Program of Principles at any time. The Program of Principles shall be treated in two student parliament meetings: with a discussion case in the first meeting and a decision case in the second meeting.

### **§ 8-1-3 Political platforms**

Political platforms determine what the Student Parliament thinks of a certain topic. These shall not go against the Program of Principles, but outside of this, political platforms outrank the rest of the Student Parliament's politics. A document is valid for 5 years. Political platforms shall be

processed in two student parliament meetings: with a discussion case in the first meeting, and a decision case in the second meeting.

#### **§8-1-4 Resolutions**

Resolutions stipulates what the Student Parliament believes in a particular case. Resolutions can be processed directly. If one resolution is especially current, a decision can be made even if the resolution is sent in after the case paper deadline. In that case, The Student Parliament have to decide during the constitution with a qualified majority (2/3 of the votes) if they want to make a decision in the case.

#### **§ 8-3 Other Instructions**

The Student Parliament can approve of other instructions as needed.

### **Chapter 9: Dissolution of the Student Democracy at NMBU**

#### **§ 9-1 Dissolution**

Dissolution of the Student Democracy at NMBU must be approved of with a qualified majority amongst present representatives for two consecutive student parliaments. The decision goes into effect after the second meeting is adjourned. Proposals for dissolution must be made at least 4 weeks before it is handled for the first time, and the first student parliament meeting that handles the case is to be an open meeting where all students at NMBU are called in.

#### **§ 9-2 Merging with Other Student Democracies**

Merging of the Student Democracy at NMBU with other student democracies must be approved of with a qualified majority amongst representatives in attendance for two consecutive meetings. Proposals for merging must specify the point in time at which the merge will take place.

### **Chapter 10: Membership in the Norwegian Student Organization**

#### **§ 10-1 Membership in the Norwegian Student Organization**

The Student Democracy at NMBU is a member of the Norwegian student organization (NSO). Withdrawal must follow the protocol of NSOs statutes.

### **Chapter 11: Amendments to the Statues**

#### **§ 11-1 Submitting of Amendment Proposals**

Proposals for amendments of these statutes should be taken to the Student Parliament's Student Board at least 14 days before the meeting in which they will be addressed, and needs to be made public to all students at least 7 days before the meeting.

#### **§ 11-2 Decisions and Effectiveness**

With a qualified majority vote amongst representatives in attendance, the Student Parliament can decide that changes go into effect immediately after they are adopted

With a qualified majority, the Student Parliament can bring changed into effect. The Student Parliament's Student Board has the power to make editorial changes in these Statutes. Such changes must be presented for orientation during the first meeting after they are made.

### **Chapter 12: Definitions**

#### **§ 12-1 Majority Voting**

Simple Majority: This means that a proposal receives the most votes



50% majority: This means that a proposal receives more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the votes from participating voters

Qualified Majority: This means that a proposal receives  $\frac{2}{3}$  or more of the votes from the participating voters

Absolute Majority: A proposal receives more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total number of votes

Absolute Qualified Majority: A proposal receives  $\frac{2}{3}$  or more of the total number of votes