

Constitution of the EcoMaties Sustainability Society

October 2009

Article I. Preamble

EcoMaties Sustainability Society is a student society at Stellenbosch University that aims to facilitate education and participation in current environmental issues amongst students.

The purposes of EcoMaties Sustainability Society are:


- A. To create awareness of environmental issues
- B. To undertake projects to address environmental issues
- C. To change attitudes and behaviour towards a sustainable lifestyle.

The society will act as a facilitator in creating awareness, encouraging interaction and implementing projects and events that make it easier for students to practice more sustainable lifestyles.

Article II. Mission Statement

EcoMaties Sustainability Society aims to promote environmental sustainability at Stellenbosch University and within the greater Stellenbosch community through education and action

Article III. Definitions

- A. Quorum – the minimum number of people that must be present for a valid meeting 
- B. Common majority – 50% plus 1 of active members present who are voting.


- C. AGM (Annual General Meeting) – Meeting once a year where the new executive committee will be elected and other matters of the society will be discussed with members.
- D. Ordinary members – members of the society that have no special role in the society. These members may be registered students at Stellenbosch University only. These members do not have voting rights.
- E. Active members – Members of the society that have attended at least 50% of the General meetings of the society.
- F. Associate members – members of the society are alumni, staff and faculty members, or other non-students that sign-up to be a part of EcoMaties Sustainability Society.
- G. Honorary members – may include founders of the society, patrons or donors to the society or other contributors to the society. This type of membership is offered to individuals by the Executive Committee.

Article IV. Membership

- A. Any registered student at Stellenbosch University may become an ordinary member of EcoMaties Sustainability Society. Alumni, staff and faculty members, or other non-students may join the society as associate members.
- B. If a member terminates his or her membership during the year or is expelled from the society, a membership fee paid by that member is non-refundable.
- C. A member that wishes to terminate his or her membership during their membership term, must say so in writing and present the written, signed document to a member of the society's Executive Committee.
- D. The initial membership list each academic year shall consist of the members of the Executive Committee elected the previous year and all those who indicate, in writing or by signing up on the EcoMaties website (if this facility is available), their desire to be members of the Society.

- E. Students may join the Society during the year by indicating, in writing at a meeting of the Society or by signing up on the EcoMaties website (if this facility is available), their desire to become members. At this time the Secretary shall record the date of the member's joining, and record the member's attendance from this date.

- F. For purposes of voting and carrying on other practical business of the Society, there shall be a distinction between members and active members. Active members are those members who have attended 50% of the Society meetings during the year. Only active members will have voting rights. Members may excuse themselves from a maximum of 10% of the Society meetings, and still be counted as an attendee of those meetings.

- G. The Executive Committee may offer honorary membership to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the society. These individuals may include founders of the society, patrons or donors to the society or other contributors to the society 

- H. Associate members and/or honorary members may not always be able to participate in society events. These events may be open only to ordinary members. In this situation, it will be stated that participation is restricted to ordinary members who are students.

Article V. Executive Committee

- A. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Marketing Communications Executive, Treasurer and Web Master (appointed by the President). The Executive Committee shall:
 - 1. Manage the society in accordance to each executive member's role and duties.

2. Facilitate meetings of the executive committee and members of the society.
3. Coordinate, or assign coordinators to, events and projects of the society.
4. Plan in each fourth term in broad outline, the Societies' program and activities for the following year,

Article VI. Duties of Executive Members

A. The Chairperson shall:

1. Preside over all meetings of the Society and of its executive committee,
2. Delegate tasks and coordinate the work of the members of the Society and committees that may be formed.
3. Represent the Society to the University and associated organisations or individuals.
4. Appoint the Web Master.
5. Create such committees as may be necessary to carry out the Societies' program and, with the guidance of the Executive Committee, detail the responsibilities of each committee.
 - a. Committees created by the Chairperson, unless otherwise specified, shall be bodies that gather information and make recommendations pertaining to specific projects and/or goals.
 - b. Recommendations shall be presented in writing to the Executive Committee.

C. The Vice-Chairperson shall:

1. Assist the Chairperson as requested in fulfilling the Chairperson's duties,
2. Assume the Chairperson's role when he/she is absent,
3. Oversee the activities of the various committees established by the Chairperson.

D. The Secretary shall:

1. Take the minutes of each meeting, distribute the minutes to members, and maintain the record of the minutes,
2. Conduct correspondence for the Society at the direction of the Chairperson.
3. Take attendance at each meeting and maintain a list of active members to be made available at each meeting.
4. Perform the role of Historian, when needed, by:
 - a. maintaining an archival record of the activities of the organization
 - b. being responsible for presenting information about the Society's history when requested.

E. The Treasurer shall:

1. Be responsible for managing all Society financial matters,
2. Maintain and keep current all Society financial records,

3. Report at each meeting on Society financial business and the status of the Society account,
 4. Deposit all funds in the Student Activities Fund at The University of Stellenbosch EcoMaties Business Office. All disbursements shall be made by cheques drawn upon this fund. All disbursements must be approved by President or Vice President before being drawn.
- F. The Web Master shall:
1. Maintain and update the Sustainability Society Website.
 2. Report as necessary on the status of the website to the Executive Committee.
- H. The Marketing Communications Executive shall:
1. Manage all marketing communications activities of the society

Article VII. Voting, Elections and Terms of Office

- A. Voting of the Executive Committee shall take place at the AGM in the fourth term of each year. Associate and honorary members may not run for executive committee positions. Members may nominate themselves to run for the Executive Committee.
- B. For elections and for all other business requiring a vote, 50% of active members plus 1 active member shall constitute a quorum.
- C. In the event that an active member knows in advance that he or she shall miss a vote, and has attended the previous meeting at which the issue at hand was discussed, that member shall be able to petition the executive board in writing for

permission to submit an absentee ballot. If approved by the Executive Committee an absentee ballot may be submitted in a sealed envelope to the Secretary, to be opened and counted during the vote in question. If the measure in question is altered between the time the absentee ballot is filed and the date of the vote then the ballot is no longer valid and should be discarded.

D. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Marketing Communications Executive shall be elected in that order at the beginning of the fourth term each year; nominations will be from the floor and all votes will be by secret ballot. The Chairperson will also appoint a Web Master at this time.

E. Ballots will be counted by the two highest ranking officers not themselves involved as candidates for office; if that is not possible, ballots will be counted by two active members appointed by the Chairperson who are not candidates for office.

F. Newly elected officers will take over the rights and responsibilities of their offices during the fourth term with the required guidance from the past year's officers.

G. Election dates must be communicated to members via email at least one week before the date of the election.



H. For elections and other business requiring a vote, a common majority is needed for a vote to be approved. For elections of the Executive Committee, a quorum is needed for voting to take place. For all other voting that takes place, any number of active members in attendance will allow for voting to take place.

Article VIII. Vacancies and/or Removal from Office

A. Officers who do not fulfil their duties or who cease being active members may be removed from office.

- B. The proposed officer may be an Executive, in which case the proposal must originate from the Executive Committee excluding that proposed Executive.
- C. In cases where the Executive Committee has proposed a removal from office, the matter will be discussed at the current meeting of the Executive Committee and settled by vote at the meeting following.
- D. Should an office for any reason fall vacant, a replacement will be proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by a common majority vote of active members.
- E. Should an officer be unhappy about his or her removal, they will have the right to appeal their removal to the Student Court.
- F. A member may propose that an officer be removed from office. The member should present the reason(s) behind their proposal in writing to a member of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will then look into the proposal and make the final decision of whether to remove the officer from office.

Article IX. Disciplinary Procedure

- A. Should a member act in any way that is detrimental to the Society, their membership may be terminated by the Executive Committee.
- B. A disciplinary hearing may be held by the Executive Committee to determine the member's future in the Society. The member must be present at this hearing.
- C. The final decision of whether to terminate a member's membership or not will be determined by the Executive Committee at the next meeting of the Executive Committee following the disciplinary hearing.

- D. Should a terminated member be unhappy with the decision of their termination, they may appeal the termination of their membership to the Student Court.

Article X. Meetings

- A. The AGM will take place once a year in the fourth term of the Academic year. Members will be notified of the meeting date, time and venue at least one week prior to the meeting.
- B. Executive Committee meetings will be ad hoc meetings of the executive committee. Various matters of the society will be discussed. These meetings will occur when it is necessary for the executive committee to meet. The Executive Committee will be notified of the meeting by email.
- C. General Meetings are meetings of the Executive Committee and other members of the society where general matters of the society are to be discussed.

Article XI. Amendments to the Constitution

- A. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any active member of the society.
- B. The Chairperson or presiding officer must be notified of amendments to be proposed so they can be placed on the agenda.
- C. Amendments must be presented in written form with copies for all Executive Committee members present, when discussed at a meeting of the Executive Committee.
- D. A vote on the proposed amendment will be taken at the next meeting of the Executive Committee following its presentation and discussion.

E. The amendment must then be accepted by the active members at a general meeting. Two weeks notice of this meeting must be given to active members of the society. A vote on the proposed amendment may only take place if a quorum of 50% of active members plus one active member is present to vote.

Article XII. Ratification

A. This Constitution and all amendments to this Constitution must be reviewed and approved by Student Court.

Compiled by Mr. G.C. Pearson (15391213) on 5/10/2009