

CONSTITUTION
of
Students in the Public Interest

9 March 2001



Preamble

We, the students of the University of Delaware, do hereby form the non-partisan organization known as Students in the Public Interest. Our purpose shall be to foster a greater understanding of and interest in political issues.

ARTICLE I

Purpose of Students in the Public Interest

The purpose of Students in the Public Interest shall be three-fold:

1. To bring together a sizeable number of students interested in politics, political science, and civic issues in a non-partisan environment to discuss, debate, and educate
2. To work with the variety of partisan student political organizations on campus, raising the potential for a greater caliber of political activities through more efficient, combined planning
3. To maintain a link with the Political Science Department and its faculty, drawing upon this source of expertise to politically enlighten the undergraduate community

While working toward the concrete goals mentioned above, Students in the Public Interest wishes that the interest it helps to generate in political issues will inspire further participation in and study of the political processes that are a part of our great democracy, through self-study, community involvement, and public service.

ARTICLE II

Affiliation with National Organization

SIPI is not associated with any national organization.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Full time, matriculated undergraduate students at the University of Delaware who demonstrate a commitment to the purpose of our organization, by attending our meetings and activities and paying any necessary dues, shall be considered members of Students in the Public Interest.

ARTICLE IV

Non-Voting Membership

Pursuant to its goal of fostering a greater understanding of and interest in political issues, SIPI encourages graduate students, faculty members, and UD alumni to become non-voting members, that they may further enlighten themselves of various political issues, and contribute to our group their knowledge and experience.

ARTICLE V

Duties and Privileges of Membership

Members of Students in the Public Interest, when involved in SIPI events, shall agree to be accepting of a variety of political creeds, in the interest of allowing the free expression of a diverse array of partisan views. This "all-partisan" nature of SIPI shall make for enriching and fair discussions, debates, and other activities. Members shall enjoy the privileges of stimulating political climate produced at SIPI meetings and events, and shall also have direct access to the SIPI Event Calendar, providing them with a comprehensive schedule of political activities occurring at UD.

ARTICLE VI

Non-Discrimination Clause

SECTION I. SIPI agrees to adhere to all policies and procedures of the University and all local, state, and federal laws. Members will become acquainted with policies and procedures in the Official student handbook and other policies and procedures provided by the University. SIPI is a viable, functioning organization, composed of at least six full time undergraduate students and we shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, veteran, handicap status, or sexual orientation.

ARTICLE VII

Absence Policy

Should a member be consistently absent from regular meetings and/or activities held by SIPI, the Executive Committee may choose to revoke his/her membership by a majority vote (the President having two votes, and the other officers having one).

ARTICLE VIII

Disciplinary Policy

Should a member prove him/herself unable to carry out the purpose of our organization, or infract upon this Constitution, the Executive Committee may revoke his/her membership by a majority vote (again, the President having two votes, and the other officers having one).

ARTICLE IX

Executive Committee

SECTION 1. The SIPI Executive Committee shall be the decision-making organ of SIPI and shall consist of its officers.

Election and Qualifications of Officers

SECTION 2. The officers of SIPI shall be elected annually by members via a secret ballot carried out by the Executive Committee and supervised by the Advisor in late autumn. Voting members may nominate other voting members as candidates. After being nominated, the candidate with the highest number of votes for a particular office is elected to that office. A single candidate may not be nominated for more than two offices, nor may a candidate hold more than one office simultaneously. In the event of a tie, the current Executive Committee shall review each tied candidate, and vote on the one who it deems most qualified for office. Elected candidates shall become officers during the following spring, after an Executive Committee transition period during the winter.

SECTION 3. The qualifications to hold office in the SIPI shall be as follows:

1. Be an outstanding, voting member of SIPI;
2. Be a full-time matriculated student during the following spring and fall semesters;
3. Be able to commit a minimum of five hours per week to SIPI business;
4. Be able to attend the weekly executive committee meeting.

President

SECTION 4. The President is the official representative of the SIPI. He or she has the duties of calling and running meetings and handling day-to-day affairs. The President shall be responsible for the registration of the Registered Student Organization and all required paperwork for the continuation of the organization, including the Annual Report, Summer Contact Information, Annual Survey, and RSO Questionnaire. The President will receive all information from the Activities and Programs Office from an undisclosed email database to be used to help SIPI function. The President will help to appoint all standing and special committees.

Vice President

SECTION 5. The Vice President shall serve the role of President if the President is absent, unable to serve the duties of President, or if the President resigns. The Vice President should also be responsible for checking the organization's mailbox and for disseminating information about other activities offered by the other Registered Student Organizations and business promotions. The Vice President will receive information from other Registered Student Organizations and the Activities and Programs Office through the Student-Leaders@udel.edu email database.

Treasurer

SECTION 6. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all group expenditures and revenues. Only the Treasurer shall sign checks written by the organization and will maintain all group ledgers. The Treasurer should also be responsible for requesting funds from the Activities and Programs Allocations Board. The Treasurer will have checks co-signed by the appropriate administrator.

Secretary

SECTION 7. The Secretary shall record the events of all meetings of the organization and shall maintain minutes of those meetings. The Secretary shall take attendance of those present at group meetings as necessary. The Secretary shall also maintain the membership list, email database, and other SIPI records and files.

Other Officers

SECTION 8. The Executive Committee may create officer positions other than those delineated above on an ad hoc basis as deemed necessary. Also, should the organization be unable to fill the positions of Vice President or Secretary, the organization may operate with the President and Treasurer alone constituting the Executive Committee.

Executive Committee Meetings

SECTION 9. Bi-monthly meetings of the SIPI Executive Committee shall be held at a time deemed appropriate by the President. All officers are expected to be in attendance.

Voting

SECTION 10. Questions arising requiring a vote by the Executive Committee will be treated as follows: the Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall have one vote, and the President shall have two votes. No vote shall be taken unless a quorum of at least three-quarters of the Executive Committee is present.

Resignation and Dismissal of Officers

SECTION 11. Officers who feel they are unable to fulfill their responsibilities may resign by letter to the President of SIPI, or in the case of a President's resignation, to the Advisor.

SECTION 12. Officers who fail to adequately carry out the requirements of their office may be dismissed from their responsibilities by an Executive Committee vote of no confidence, with at least three-quarters of the votes being for dismissal. Dismissal shall be by written notice.

ARTICLE X

Meetings

SECTION 1. When possible general meetings shall be held on a bi-weekly basis. The Executive Committee shall reserve the right to establish which meetings shall be open to participation by the general university community and which shall be for members only. The Executive Committee may also hold additional meetings, as it deems necessary. Meetings will take place on campus, in a locale accessible and convenient to members, as determined by the Executive Committee.

Dues

SECTION 2. The Executive Committee shall reserve the right to collect dues, should it find financial need for them. All voting members shall be responsible for paying dues. Policies involving the collection of dues shall be subject to the control of the majority of due-paying members, overseen by the Executive Committee.

By-Laws

SECTION 3. SIPI shall establish by-laws to carry out the policies set forth in this constitution. A vote by two thirds of the members shall be required to approve by-laws or changes in existing by-laws.

Procedures for decision-making

SECTION 4. SIPI shall look to the rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order to govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the by-laws or the special rules of order of this society.

Selection of an Adviser

SECTION 5. The newly elected SIPI Executive Committee shall convene each spring to assemble a pool of potential advisors. Emphasis shall be placed on maintaining the same Advisor from year to year for continuity purposes. The Executive Committee shall vote to select the Advisor. Any ties or uncertainties as to the vote for the Advisor shall rest on the sole discretion of the President.

Disbursal of Organizational Assets Should the Organization Become Defunct

SECTION 6. The University of Delaware shall inherit the assets of SIPI should it become defunct.

Quorum

SECTION 7. SIPI shall define the minimum number of members who have to be present at a meeting in order for business to be conducted legally to be thirty percent of its current members.

Ratification of this Constitution


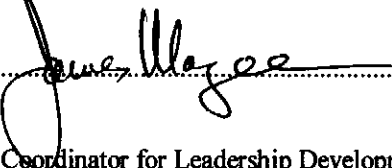

SECTION 8. Ratification of this Constitution of Students in the Public Interest shall take place by a two-thirds vote of the organization and with the approval of the Activities and Programs Office.

Amendment

SECTION 9. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee or by a two-thirds vote of the members. All proposed amendments must be advertised on-campus for at least one week, and all current members must be notified of such changes.

Signatures

SECTION 10. The SIPI President and Adviser as well as the Program Coordinator for Leadership Development shall sign below, certifying the legitimacy of this constitution of Students in the Public Interest.

President.....		4/2/01	Date
Adviser.....		April 12, 2001	Date
Program Coordinator for Leadership Development.....		Apr/ 27, 2001	Date