

*VOX: Voices for Planned Parenthood Constitution*

March 2009

We, the students at the University of Delaware, do hereby form the organization known as VOX: Voices for Planned Parenthood for the purpose of educating the University community about reproductive health, freedom and related public policy issues. In addition, VOX members will translate their acquired awareness into activism and volunteerism both on and off campus.

**Article I: Organization Name**

The organization shall be known as VOX: Voices for Planned Parenthood (VOX).

**Article II: Object of Organization**

The object of this organization is to raise public awareness about reproductive rights and freedoms through peer education programs, to advocate for those rights and freedoms, and to participate in local outreach programs supporting our goals. VOX's agenda would include, but not be limited to the following: increasing awareness and services that prevent unintended pregnancies; improve the quality of reproductive health care; ensure access to abortion and other forms of birth control. VOX will accomplish their objectives with the cooperation of the University of Delaware and Planned Parenthood of Delaware.

**Article III: Affiliations**

We are affiliated with, and endorsed by Planned Parenthood of Delaware. Planned Parenthood of Delaware is an organization that educates men, women, and teens about the threats to reproductive health and rights and mobilizes them in support of reproductive freedom. Additionally, the VOX chapter at University of Delaware is affiliated with other VOX student groups nationwide.

**Article IV: Member Qualification**

Voting VOX members must be full-time matriculated undergraduate students at the University of Delaware who adhere to the mission of the organization. Members must be committed to the goals set forth by the group. VOX must have a minimum of six full-time undergraduate students at any given time. There is no maximum number of members. Members must adhere to the attendance policy [See Article VI]. Membership may be granted to other community members such as part-time or graduate students, University of Delaware alumni, or Planned Parenthood of Delaware employees; however, they may not participate in voting, holding positions, or heading of a committee.

#### Article V: Non-Discrimination Clause

The organization 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. This organization is a viable, functioning organization, composed of at least six full time undergraduate students and we do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, veteran, handicap status, or sexual orientation.

#### Article VI: Duties and Privileges of Membership

Members are expected to attend at least seventy-five percent of meetings. Members will be kept informed of club activities and will receive a copy of the minutes of each meeting. Members will be allowed to participate in all of the club's voting including, but not limited to the election of officers. Members in good standing may facilitate in VOX peer education programs, and any other activity sponsored by the organization.

#### Article VII: Non-Voting/Representing Membership

Community members, such as part-time or graduate students, University of Delaware alumni, and Planned Parenthood of Delaware employees are strongly encouraged to attend VOX meetings and events. Such individuals will not be allowed to vote in elections, hold executive board positions, or head committees. Non-voting individuals cannot account for the six-person minimum required to maintain the activity of the University of Delaware VOX chapter; however, they are still considered members of the organization and may participate in all events or activities.

#### Article VIII: Absence Policy

If a member misses more than twenty-five percent of the semester's meetings without an acceptable excuse, he or she will be demoted to non-voting member status until they achieve a better attendance record. Acceptable excuses include all listed in the University of Delaware student handbook and time needed for academic preparation i.e. the night before big tests, or any other excuse deemed worthy by the officers.

#### Article IX: Discipline Policies and Procedures

Members who miss more than twenty-five percent of the semester's meetings will not be allowed to vote or facilitate VOX peer education programs. Any member who misrepresents the club by inappropriate conduct or by using the club's name without having gotten prior consent shall be placed on probation for a one-month period. If in the probationary period the member does not

commit any further violations he/she shall be reinstated as a member in good standing. However, if he or she commits another violation during the probationary period the officers will vote to decide the member's future in the club with expulsion as an option. Officers who commit violations shall be subject to review by the rest of the officers, who shall decide the future of the officer in violation.

#### Article X: Officer Qualifications

All officers must be full-time undergraduate students at the University of Delaware. Prior to election, officers must be in good voting standing and have a minimum GPA of 2.25. Should an officer's GPA drop below a 2.25 or is in violation of the attendance policy (therefore losing voting privileges), the other elected officers must decide whether or not the member should be eligible to maintain their position. Potential officers must be able to complete the full term of their position [See Article XII]. For example, graduating second semester seniors or members who wish to study abroad for a semester (through any duration of their time in office) cannot hold an elected officer position.

#### Article XI: Officers and Roles

##### Section 1: President

This organization shall have a President with the duties of calling and running meetings and handling day-to-day affairs. The President shall be responsible for all required paperwork for the continuation of the organizations, including the End of the Year Report (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. This information is to be used to help your RSO function; distribution of this information should be done at the discretion of the President, with the best interest of the organization in mind. The President will help to appoint all standing and special committees, serve as the official liaison to Planned Parenthood of Delaware, and oversee all VOX related activities within committees and on and off campus.

##### Section 2: Vice Presidents

The VOX group has two vice presidents: Vice President of Advocacy and Vice President of Education. The Vice Presidents shall serve the role of President in the absence of the President or the President is unable to serve their duties. The Vice Presidents will serve as co-Presidents if the President should resign. The Vice Presidents will receive information from other registered student organizations and the activities and program's office through an email database.

##### Section 2A: Vice President of Advocacy

The Vice President of Advocacy will work closely with Planned Parenthood of Delaware, the President of VOX, and the Vice President of Education, as well as other VOX members. He or she is responsible for promoting, organizing, and facilitating programs that advocate for reproductive freedom. The Vice President will also be responsible for keeping members, students, and the community aware of current issues, legislation, and developments in the area of the pro-choice and reproductive rights movement.

#### Section 2B: Vice President of Education

The Vice President of Education will work close with Planned Parenthood of Delaware, the President of VOX, and the Vice President of Advocacy, as well as other VOX members. He or she is responsible for securing peer education training for VOX members, as well as promoting and scheduling peer education programs. He or she is also responsible for overseeing peer education program development and obtaining program supplies and equipment.

#### Section 3: Treasurer

The treasurer shall be responsible for all group expenditures and revenues. The treasurer shall have any checks signed by the activities and programs office for the purpose of the organization and maintain all group ledgers. The treasurer shall also be responsible for requesting funds from the allocation board. More information about duties of the treasurer can be found at <http://www.udel.edu/student-centers/AandP/forms/treasurers/index.html>. The treasurer will also be responsible for completing a treasurer's training.

#### Section 4: Secretary

The secretary shall record the events of all meetings of this organization and shall maintain minutes of those meetings. The minutes should be made available for all members (regardless of their attendance at a given meeting). The secretary shall take attendance of those present at group meetings as necessary. The secretary shall serve as acting historian in order to pass on accurate records of what the group has done over the past year and who was involved. The secretary is responsible for keeping record of all events, peer education programs, etc. The secretary should also be responsible for checking the organization's mailbox and for dissemination information about other activities offered by the other registered student organizations and business promotions. The secretary shall also maintain the membership list and email database.

#### Section 5: Public Relations Chair

The public relations chair shall be responsible for promotion of the group and their events. This would include making posters, flyers, and brochures, as well as obtaining proper University approval for all VOX advertisements. He or she is also responsible for entering information onto the University Events web page, submitting press releases to the appropriate media and maintaining working connections with other RSOs.

#### Section 6: Recruitment Chair(s)

The recruitment chair shall be responsible for promotion of the group with the intentions of finding new members. Recruitment is an open process, and not limited to one time of the year. The recruitment chair position may be a dual-headed position, which is to be determined by the President on consideration of the size of the group and how many new members the group wishes to obtain. The office of recruitment chair may be coupled with another position, except president or vice president (this is a unique trait to the recruitment chair position). For example, a member may hold the position of recruitment chair and the web master position, if desired and elected. It is recommended, but not required that the recruitment chair(s) have a committee for other members to become involved in the recruitment process for new members.

#### Section 7: Web Master

The web master shall be responsible for the monthly upkeep for the RSO website, and have it approved by the executive board. He or she will also be responsible for entering information onto the University Events webpage.

#### Article XII: Election of Officers

Officer elections will be held at the end of the fall semester. Positions will be held for the next two consecutive semesters [Spring to Fall terms]. Exceptions will be made for the formation of the club. The first official set of elections will then occur at the end of the next fall semester. Officer transitioning will happen after the elections, but before the next semester begins and the officer term officially starts. Should further transitioning need to occur, transitioning may run over into the start of the position term.

Any voting member of the organization can nominate officers. Voting will occur by secret ballot, and the outgoing President will tally all the votes. A simple majority is required to win an elected position. In case of a sudden vacancy an emergency election will be held to fill the position.

#### Section 1: Officer Discipline and Termination

Officers who commit violations shall be subject to review by the rest of the officers who shall decide the future of the officer in violation. Violations include but are not limited to: inappropriate conduct while representing VOX; misuse of VOX and/or Planned Parenthood of Delaware's name, mission, or funds; failure to adhere to University of Delaware's policies and procedures as stated in the student handbook; and breaking any local, state, or federal laws. The officer in question will be given a notice of charges, the right to a fair hearing, and the right to appeal.

#### Section 2: Resignations

Resignations should be submitted in writing to the President as promptly as possible. If the president wishes to resign, he or she should submit a written resignation letter to the Vice

Presidents. In the event of a position vacancy, emergency elections will occur. Elections will occur in the same format as the normal election process; nominations by any voting member, and votes by secret ballot.

### Section 3: Officer Transitions

Officers elected at the end of the fall semester will take over the position in the following spring semester. During the fall semester after elections, the current officers are expected to train and transition their successors, i.e. introduction to the Activities & Programs Office and staff, reviewing policies and procedures, passing along important information, planning next year's events, etc. When the new officers assume their new positions, the previous officers shall hand down any documents or materials needed for the position. If further transitioning is needed after the assumption of the position, the previous officer should lend support as needed.

### Article XIII: Meetings

General meetings shall be held every other week. Officers should meet before general meetings to go over VOX business and organize how meetings should be run. The faculty advisor is invited to all general and officer meetings, however, it is not required he or she attends. General group meetings should be held a minimum of once a month, and executive board meetings should be held a minimum of twice a month.

### Article XIV: Dues

No dues are required of VOX members. Policies, activities, and finances of the club are subject to the control of the voting members [majority rules].

### Article XV: By-Laws

The by-laws are the policies set forth by the organization in this document. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of all voting members is necessary to approve or change the existing by-laws. A one week minimum advance notice must be given to the members of the organization about any potential changes or amendments made to the by-laws or constitution prior to the vote. The officers should review the by-laws every year at the start of their term to make sure all policies are relevant and effective.

### Article XVI: Procedures for Decision Making

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised Edition* shall govern the organization in all cases in which they are applicable and which they are not inconsistent with the by-laws or special rules of the organization.

#### Article XVII: Establishment of Committees

Committees shall be established as needed under the authority of the president. Any voting member in good standing can head a committee. Committees are to report their actions and accomplishments to the officers and other members of the group. Non-voting members of the organization are allowed and encouraged to be active members of any developed committee; however, non-voting members may not act as committee heads.

#### Article XVIII: Faculty Advisor

The faculty advisor for the organization must be a full time professional faculty or staff member at the University of Delaware. No part time staff members or graduate students may serve as the faculty advisor. Voting members of the group will nominate potential faculty advisors, a simple majority will win the vote, assuming the nominee accepts the position of faculty advisor. If for any reason the faculty advisor is not adequately fulfilling their duties as the advisor, the VOX members reserve the right to change their advisor at any time. (Note: The Activities & Programs Office is the principle on campus contact regarding policies and procedures for functioning as a student organization.)

The purpose of the faculty advisor is to have a professional assist with guidance of the organization, developing leadership skills, and should be in agreement with the mission and objectives of the organization. The faculty advisor may attend any officer or general meetings the group holds. While it is not required that the advisor attend meetings, it is strongly encouraged.

#### Article XIX: Disbursal of Organizational Assets

The University of Delaware shall inherit the assets of any Registered Student Organization should the group become defunct.

#### Article XX: Quorum

Quorum is defined as the minimum number of members present in order to conduct business. For officer meetings the quorum shall be fifty percent of the total officers. There is no quorum needed for general meetings because all minutes or organization business shall be provided to all voting and non-voting members of the organization. For any voting purposes, the voting quorum shall be seventy percent of the voting members.

#### Article XXI: Rules for Ratifying the Constitution

The constitution must be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the voting membership of the organization and with approval by the Activities and Programs Office.

**Article XXII: Rules for Amending the Constitution**

Adding articles/sections to the constitution requires a 2/3 vote of the executive board and advance notice to all members of the proposed change.

**Article XXIII: Confidentiality Clause**

VOX is an organization in affiliation with Planned Parenthood of Delaware. Some information or materials shared at meetings or events may be considered confidential and should be kept classified within the group's membership and advisors.

Article XXIII: Signatures

**VOX President:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Vice President(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Activities & Program Staff:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_