

# The Raven Society Constitution

(As last amended October 24, 2017)

## Article I: Name

The name of this society shall be the Raven Society of the University of Virginia (the “Raven Society” or the “Society”).

## Article II: Objectives

This Society shall endeavor to bring together outstanding students, faculty, administrators, and alumni of the various schools of the University, that they may derive the benefits of mutual acquaintance, and that by cooperation they may be able to sustain more effectively the honor and dignity of the University; to advance its welfare and interests as opportunities may occur; to encourage diligent scholarship; and to stimulate intellectual activity beyond the limits of systematic work in the classroom.

## Article III: Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Society shall be President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Banquet Chair, all of whom are Raven student members, and an Archivist.

Section 2. The duties of the officers shall be the usual duties pertaining to such offices respectively and such duties as the Society may provide in the Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 3. A vacancy in any office shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by vote of the Raven Council.

## Article IV : The Raven Council

Section 1. There shall be a council, to be known as the Raven Council (the “Council”), consisting of at minimum nine student Raven members, at minimum three Raven members chosen from the faculty or administrative staff, one Raven member chosen to represent the alumni from the alumni, the faculty, or the administrative staff who has broad experience with alumni affairs at the University, one additional member-at-large chosen from the general membership of the Society, and the Archivist.

Section 2. The purpose of the Raven Council is to foster the objectives of the Society and to increase the Society's usefulness in promoting the quality of life at the University. To this end, the Council shall have all powers not expressly reserved by this Constitution or by the By-Laws to the membership or to the officers. It shall diligently perform all duties laid upon it by the provisions this Constitution of the By-Laws, and shall make an annual report of its activities to the membership.

Section 3. The at minimum nine student Raven members shall consist of the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Banquet Chair, and at minimum four student members-at-large appointed from the Raven membership by the President. The President shall serve as the Raven Council chairman and the Secretary as the secretary.

Section 4. The at minimum four student members-at-large shall be appointed following the annual spring banquet for a term of one year. The President shall make every effort to ensure that the appointed students are representative of the Raven Society membership. The at minimum three members-at-large chosen from the faculty and administrative staff and the alumni representatives shall be appointed from the Raven membership by the President following the annual spring banquet for a term of three years. The By-Laws may establish a process for ensuring that the three year maximum terms of the members from the faculty or administrative staff terminate in staggered years.

Section 5. Vacancies in the membership of the Council shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term. The President shall fill any vacancy in the appointed student membership, and the Raven Council shall fill any other vacancy.

## **Article V: Election of Officers and Members of the Council**

Section 1. The officers, other than the members-at-large and the Archivist and the alumni representative, shall be elected in the spring of each year. The general membership of the Society shall be notified of the time and place of that meeting no less than two weeks prior to that meeting. At this meeting the Raven Council shall submit a list of nominees for the positions to be filled. Further nominations may be made from the floor.

Section 2. Elections shall be by voice vote unless the members present direct a vote by ballot. Vote of a simple majority of members present constituting a quorum shall be sufficient to elect.

Section 3. The persons elected shall assume their duties immediately after the spring banquet.

Section 4. The President shall appoint the student members-at-large, the members-at-large chosen from the faculty and administrative staff, the alumni representative, and the Archivist.

## **Article VI: The Raven Fund**

Section 1. The Society shall maintain a fund, to be known as the Raven Fund, from which grants may be made to sustain and enrich the quality of academic endeavor at the University.

Section 2. Donations received by the Society for the purpose stated in Section 1 shall be placed in the Fund and shall be administered through it by the Council in accordance with any directions given or conditions set by the donors. From assets of the Fund not subject to such directions or the provisions of Article VII (“The Raven Fellowship”), the Council may make modest grants, as defined in the By-Laws, at its discretion; larger grants shall be subject to a vote of the membership of the Society on the recommendations of the Council. Grants may be made to the University, its schools and departments, to organizations, or to individuals.

Section 3. The assets of the Fund shall in no way be commingled with, but shall be kept separate from, all other assets of the Society, and separate financial records of its operation shall be kept.

Section 4. The Society shall solicit contributions to the Fund only in accordance with procedures set by the Council, which shall ensure that the Society’s efforts conform, insofar as is practical, to the fund-raising policies of the University.

## **Article VII: The Raven Fellowship**

Section 1. The Society shall award a fellowship, to be known as the Raven Fellowship, to encourage University undergraduate and graduate students to undertake scholarly, intellectual and creative projects.

Section 2. From assets of the Raven Fund not subject to contrary directions given or conditions set by the donors, the Council may award fellowships subject to restrictions set out in the By-Laws. Fellowships may be made to University undergraduate and graduate students.

Section 3. Procedures and additional criteria, if any, for the selection of the Raven Fellows shall be specified in the By-Laws.

## **Article VIII: Membership**

Section 1. General Qualifications

- a. Persons proposed for membership shall possess those qualities that assure that they will subscribe to and advance the objectives of the Society. These include integrity, high character, sound judgment, definite promise of intellectual attainment, capacity for leadership as demonstrated by participation in extra-curricular activities, and willingness to serve the best interests of the University. It is hardly to be hoped that every candidate will exhibit all of these qualities to a marked degree, but these qualities suggest the ideal toward which the Society shall strive.
- b. In view of the diversity of the Society's membership, some variation must be accepted in the qualifications of members from the various schools and classifications. The significance of participation in extra-curricular activities shall be judged not so much by the number as by the substance and the level of participation. Furthermore, involvement in numerous activities is hardly to be expected of students who have been in residence for relatively brief periods. For certain professional students and graduate students real distinction in scholarship and promise of future achievement may alone constitute sufficient qualifications for membership.

## Section 2. Eligibility

- a. To be eligible for nomination undergraduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Architecture, Commerce, Education, Engineering, Nursing and the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy must be at least third year students and at least in their second year of residency at the University. Students in the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (BIS) program in the School of Continuing and Professional Studies should have completed at least 30 credit hours towards their BIS degree at the University. Graduate Students in the Schools of Architecture, Commerce, Education, Engineering, Nursing and the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy and students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, School of Law, and the School of Medicine must be at least in their second year of residence at the University. Students in the Graduate School of Business Administration must be in at least their second semester of residence at the University.
- b. Undergraduate student nominees must show both a strong commitment to the University and academic excellence in their respective field(s) of study. The criteria for academic excellence shall be set forth in the By-Laws.
- c. Graduate student nominees pursuing a professional degree must show special promise of future distinction in the respective professions. Extensive participation in extra-curricular activities shall not be required.

- d. Graduate student nominees pursuing an academic degree must be of proven distinction in scholarship and research. Participation in extra-curricular activities shall not be required.
- e. Nominees from the faculty shall have been actively associated with the University in academic or administrative capacities for no fewer than seven years. They shall have made substantial contributions, beyond the routine requirements of their positions, to the advancement of knowledge, to the excellence of instruction, or the welfare of the University, and shall give promise of active participation in the activities of the Society.
- f. Nominees who are University administrators or administrators of University-related foundations shall have been full-time employees of either the University or a University-related foundation, or both, for a total of no fewer than ten years. They shall have made substantial contributions, beyond the routine requirements of their positions, to the welfare of the University and they shall give promise of active participation in the activities of the Society.
- g. Nominees from the alumni shall have been members of that group for not fewer than ten years. They shall have made genuine contributions to art, commerce, education, government, justice, literature, science, or social welfare and shall have achieved a measure of distinction commensurate with the ideals of the Society. They shall have evinced a continuing interest in the welfare of the University.

### Section 3. Procedures for Nomination and Election

Procedures for nomination and election to membership shall be specified in the By-Laws.

## **Article IX: Initiation**

Initiation to membership in the Society shall be in two parts:

1. A ceremony shall be conducted in the Poe Room soon after each membership election. This ceremony is to be conducted with dignity and shall include the reading of at least one stanza of Poe's "The Raven." Initiates shall sign the official roll of the Society, shall receive certificates from the Secretary, and shall be welcomed into the Society by the President.
2. A ceremony of initiation is to be held at the annual spring banquet of the Society for new alumni members. This ceremony shall include the administration of the oath of membership, the presentation of certificates of membership, and the welcoming of all new initiates into membership by the entire Society.

## **Article X: Emblem**

The emblem of the Society shall be a black enamel raven mounted upon a gold base of suitable design.

## **Article XI: Confidentiality**

All proceedings of the Society falling within the order of business in the By-Laws shall be confidential unless the Society by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present, there being a quorum, decides to make any matter public. However, individuals may on occasion be taken into the confidence of the Society at the discretion of the President.

## **Article XII: By-Laws and Amendments**

Section 1. At any meeting, there being quorum, the Society may pass By-Laws not in conflict with the Constitution.

Section 2. Proposed amendments to the Constitution must be submitted in writing at a meeting of the Society and tabled without debate. At a subsequent meeting an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present, there being quorum, shall be sufficient for adoption of the amendment, as proposed or amended.

Section 3. Amendments to the Constitution shall be incorporated into text of this document.

## **Article XIII: The Raven Award**

Section 1. Purpose of the Raven Award.

The Society shall confer an award, to be known as the Raven Award, in recognition of excellence in service and contribution to the University of Virginia. The Award shall be reserved to honor students, professors, or alumni of the University who have widely and sympathetically shared, supported and advanced the function of this institution. The Award shall not be conferred solely for some exceptional attainment in some limited field of student activity, scholarship, or professional specialization.

Section 2. Qualifications for Nomination.

- a. In the nomination of students, evidence of growth of scholarly interest is a necessary consideration, but effective contribution to the activities constituting the life of the University shall be an essential factor. Such participation and contribution shall be broadly defined to include leadership and constructive personal influence for the betterment of the morale of the institution. These criteria are an expression of an ideal of multi-faceted excellence as a student and as a person. Nominees must be in their last session of work for their degrees.
- b. In the nomination of faculty and administrators, distinction in several of the following broad fields of service shall be deemed necessary: teaching, scholarly or creative activities, administration, and contribution to student life and interests. Nominees shall have been full-time employees as faculty or administrators for a total of no fewer than ten years.
- c. In the nomination of alumni, a high degree of those qualities set forth as general qualifications for election to membership shall be required. Additionally, as alumnus shall have been of outstanding service to the University.

Section 3. Procedures for Nomination and Selection of Recipients.

Procedures for nomination and selection of recipients of the Raven Award shall be specified in the By-Laws.