

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSTITUTION FOR
Engineers Without Borders Maties
(EWB Maties)

Version number: 2

APPROVED BY THE STUDENT COURT ON:

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Commented [1]: Please familiarise yourself with the procedures on Stellenbosch Campus, the Student Court approves societies constitutions

Preamble and Mission Statement

1. OBJECTIVES

EWB-International is an international federation of national EWB Member Associations. Their mission is to facilitate Member Associations through collaboration, exchange of information, and assistance, endorsing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

EWB-South Africa is a registered non-profit company and Member Association of EWB-International. EWB-SA contributes to meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals through capacity building in community projects. EWB-SA acts to guide, motivate and aid the individual student chapters, such as EWB Maties, to set up groups for the organisations' volunteers to attend and carry out EWB's mission.

EWB Maties' key focus areas are to generate, use and transfer engineering knowledge that benefits society. This mission will be carried out by partnering with developing communities worldwide in order to improve their quality of life. This partnership involves the implementation of sustainable engineering projects, while involving and training internationally responsible engineers and engineering students. The activities of EWB range from the construction of sustainable systems that developing communities can own and operate without external assistance, to empowering such communities by enhancing local, technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills. These projects are initiated by, and completed with, contributions from the host community working with our project teams.

EWB Maties also promotes research at universities that involves finding new technologies and systems that directly or indirectly benefits developing communities. It strives to fully implement the resultant research into development practice. EWB Maties further strives to promote the role of engineering, education and development. It aims to make students aware of their ability to affect change as engineers.

Definitions

2. DEFINITIONS

In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise indicates:

- 2.1 "Council" means the governing Council of the University;
- 2.2 "Executive Committee" means the Student governing body of the Society;
- 2.3 "EWB" is the acronym of Engineers Without **Borders**;
- 2.4 "Member" means an ordinary member of the Society who is not in arrears with the payment of the subscription, (if any) and who has not been excluded or suspended from the Society or from the University;
- 2.5 "Society" means the Society, Club, Association, Union or Organisation duly constituted in terms of this Constitution;
- 2.6 "Staff member" means a person employed by the University on a full-time basis, temporarily or permanently;
- 2.7 "Societies Council" means the joint staff or student committee constituted by the Council and responsible to the University Student Development and Services Committee for the control of University student societies;
- 2.8 "Student" means a person registered as a student of the University for the current academic year in any course;
- 2.9 "University" means the Stellenbosch University, words in the singular number include the plural, and words in the plural number include the singular.
- 2.10 "University day" means any weekday (Monday to Friday) during the academic year that is not a public holiday.

3. SOCIETY NAME

The name of the Society is:

Engineers Without Borders Maties

The shortened name of the Society is:

EWB Maties

Membership

4. MEMBERS

- 4.1 Members of the Society may be either ordinary members or honorary members;
- 4.2 The following persons may be ordinary members of the Society:
 - 4.2.1 Any student of the University;
 - 4.2.2 Any staff member of the University, with the approval of the Committee;
 - 4.2.3 A University staff member who is also associated with EWB cannot participate in any EWB Maties competitions;
 - 4.2.4 A University staff member who is not a student cannot be a member of the Committee;
- 4.3 Honorary Members:
 - 4.3.1 The Society may, on the recommendation of the Committee, nominate any person to be an honorary member of the Society. Any nomination for an honorary member will be submitted by the Society for approval by the Executive Committee as well as obtaining approval from EWB-SA;
 - 4.3.2 Any member becomes an honorary member upon leaving the Society and/or the University, provided they are given official approval by the Society;
 - 4.3.3 An honorary member may be elected for life;
 - 4.3.4 An honorary member shall be:
 - a) entitled to vote at any meeting of the Society;
 - b) entitled to be a member of the society;
 - c) obliged to pay membership fees each year;
 - d) exempt from being on the executive board for the society;
 - 4.3.5 When considering a person for election as an honorary member, the society shall also take into account whether the person has made any significant contribution to the promotion of the objectives of the society or EWB-SA;
- 4.4 The Executive Committee may, for good cause, exclude or suspend any ordinary member of the society;
- 4.5 Any member who has been excluded or suspended may, within seven days of receipt of written notification of such exclusion or suspension, appeal against such decision to either the Executive Committee or the Societies Council;
- 4.6 Any decision of the Executive Committee or Societies Council based on a member who has been excluded or suspended is subject to appeal to the Student Court within seven days of receipt of written notification thereof;
- 4.7 The appeals in terms of Section 4.5 and Section 4.6 above, shall be subject to, and in accordance with, the provision of Section 20 below;
- 4.8 All persons by becoming members of the Society submit themselves to the rules and discipline of the Society and the University;
- 4.9 All persons by becoming members of the Society submit themselves to acknowledging that their actions represent the values and beliefs of the Society and the University.

Commented [2]: Is society not supposed to be capitalised? Be consistent throughout the document if you are referring to Society as defined in Section 2

5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 5.1 An annual subscription payable by all members of the Society may be fixed by the Executive Committee.

Meetings

6. MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

- 6.1 A meeting of the Society may either be an Executive Committee Meeting, a Special Meeting or a General Meeting;
- 6.2 The following details the Executive Committee Meetings:
- 6.2.1 More than half the Executive Committee, including the Chairperson, must be present for decisions to be voted in;
- 6.3 The following details the Special Meetings:
- 6.3.1 A Special Meeting shall be convened at the written request of at least a quorum of the members of the Society or by the Executive Committee;
- 6.3.2 The request to convene a Special Meeting must entail the business to be considered at the meeting and all those who must be present at the meeting;
- 6.3.3 At least seven days' notice shall be given of the date of a Special Meeting;
- 6.4 The following details the General Meeting:
- 6.4.1 All Society Members must be informed of the date and location of the General Meetings within seven days of the intended meeting;
- 6.4.2 If deemed necessary by the Executive Committee, Honorary Members must be notified of the date and location of General Meetings;
- 6.4.3 Only the Chairperson of the Society is empowered to acknowledge Member suggestions and put them forward to be considered by the Executive Committee, thus Members cannot take charge of the Society without permission from Executive Committee;
- 6.5 All meetings of the Society shall be presided over by the Chairperson of the Society:
- 6.5.1 In the absence of the Chairperson, the meeting shall be presided over by the person upon whom the powers and duties of the Chairperson have devolved in terms of Section 15.2;
- 6.5.2 In the event of all persons referred to above being absent from the meeting, the meeting should be postponed to a further date when the persons mentioned above can attend;
- 6.6 The Chairperson at any meeting shall have both a deliberative and a casting vote;
- 6.7 All meetings shall be well advertised;

7. QUORUM OF MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

7.1 The quorum for any meeting shall be as indicated in relation to the number of the Society Members as follows:

10, if the number of members is less than 100;

15, if the number of members is between 101 and 200;

20, if the number is between 201 and 300;

Commented [3]: Please set a minimum number in the event membership is over 300

7.2 In the absence of the required quorum at any meeting, the business of the meeting shall be conducted without the necessary quorum, and the minutes of such meetings shall be made available to the Society members within seven days thereof:

7.2.1 Any five members may, within fourteen university days of the date of the meeting, lodge an objection against any decision taken at such meeting;

7.2.2 The Executive Committee shall within seven days of receipt of an objection give notice of a Special Meeting in order to obtain approval of the decision against which an objection has been lodged;

7.3 Any decision taken at a meeting conducted in terms of Section 6.3 shall be effective only if:

7.3.1 No objection thereto is lodged, after the elapse of seven days from the date of the meeting;

7.4. Any objection lodged in terms of Section 7.2.1:

7.4.1 Shall be lodged within the stated period of time or the right to object shall elapse;

7.4.2 Shall succinctly set out the grounds for the objection.

8 MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8.1 Meetings of the Committee shall be held regularly, but no less than twenty times during any Executive Committee's normal term of office;

8.2 Notice of Executive Committee meetings shall be given to all its members by the Chairperson;

8.3 The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be two-thirds of the Committee;

8.4 Every decision of the Executive Committee shall require a majority vote of those present in its favour;

8.5 A meeting of the Executive Committee shall also be convened at the request of one of its members;

8.6 The provision of Section 6.4 shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to a meeting of the Executive Committee.

9 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SOCIETY

9.1.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held during the third quarter of each year;

- 9.2 The Executive Committee for the ensuing year shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting;
- 9.3 At every Annual General Meeting the following reports shall be presented to the meeting:
 - 9.3.1 The Chairperson's report on the activities of the Society over the past year;
 - 9.3.2 The Treasurer's report on the financial state of the Society.

10 VOTING

- 10.1 Ordinary, Honorary and Executive Committee members of the Society may vote at any meeting;
- 10.2 Voting shall be by a show of hands, or if the meeting so decides, by ballot;
- 10.3 No voting may be affected by proxy;
- 10.4 Except where otherwise provided in this Constitution all matters determined by a vote shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting;
- 10.5 The provisions of this section shall also apply, mutatis mutandis, to meetings of the Executive Committee of the Society.

Office Functions, Bearer Positions and Duties

11 TERM OF OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 11.1 The Committee shall serve for one year, or until the election of a new committee, whichever period is shorter;
- 11.2 Any person shall cease to be an Executive Committee member if:
 - 11.2.1 he/she ceases to be a member of the Society;
 - 11.2.2 he/she is excluded or suspended from the Society;
 - 11.2.3 he/she tenders his/her resignation in writing and such resignation is accepted by the Executive Committee.

12 FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 12.1 The functions of the Executive Committee shall be the following:
 - 12.1.1 To convene meetings of the Society;
 - 12.1.2 To deal with matters of urgency;
 - 12.1.3 To co-opt any member of the Society to the Committee either generally or for a special purpose;
 - 12.1.4 To conduct, generally, the affairs of the Society;
 - 12.1.5 To create and constitute such subcommittees as may be necessary for the better running of the affairs of the Society;
 - 12.1.6 To make, amend and suspend the by-laws of the Society in terms of Section 21 hereof;
 - 12.1.7 To recommend the annual subscription, if any, payable by the members of the Society;
 - 12.1.8 To exclude or suspend any member for good cause;
 - 12.1.9 To recommend to the Society, persons for election as Honorary Members;
- 12.2 The Executive Committee shall each year apply to Societies Council for such grants as it deems necessary for the ensuing year;
- 12.3 The Executive Committee shall notify the Societies Council by 15 October of each year, in writing, that the Society will still be operative for the next term. For this purpose, it is sufficient that the Societies Council is advised of the names of the office-bearers that have been elected at the Annual General Meeting;
- 12.4 In the event of a vacancy on the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee may transfer the functions entrusted to the absent member to one or more of the remaining members of the Committee or to a co-opted member.

13 MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

- 13.1 The Committee shall consist of at least the following five members:
 - 13.1.1 Chairperson;
 - 13.1.2 Vice-Chairperson;
 - 13.1.3 Treasurer;
 - 13.1.4 Secretary;

13.1.5 Marketing and Media;

13.2 Any vacancy on the Committee may be filled at a meeting of the Society or by co-option;

13.3 A person co-opted to the Committee in terms of Section 12.1.3 or Section 13.2 shall have all the rights, including the right to vote, of an Executive Committee member except that:

- a) co-opted persons may not exceed more than one-third of the members of the Executive Committee in number;
- b) only members of the Society may be co-opted to the Executive Committee;
- c) the term of office of a co-opted person shall not exceed that of the Executive Committee.

14 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

14.1 The Executive Committee members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting;

14.2 Any ordinary member of the Society may nominate themselves for membership of the Executive Committee.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON

15.1 The Chairperson of the Society shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and of the Society;

15.2 In the absence of the Chairperson, all his/her powers and duties shall devolve on the Vice-Chairperson, and if he/she too is absent, upon the Secretary;

15.3 The Chairperson shall submit a report on the Society's activities over the past year to the Annual General Meeting;

15.4 The Chairperson may convene a meeting of the Executive Committee whenever he/she deems it necessary;

15.5 The Chairperson may convene a meeting of the Society whenever he/she deems it necessary;

15.6 The Chairperson shall give due notice of all meetings of the Executive Committee and the Society;

15.7 The Chairperson shall pursuant to Section 12.3 above, submit to the Societies Council before 15 October of each year in writing the names of the office-bearers of the Society.

16 SECRETARY

16.1 The Secretary of the Society shall have charge of the Society's records and minute book;

16.2 The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Society and the Executive Committee;

16.3 The Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Society;

16.4 The Secretary shall keep a copy of the Society's Constitution, as amended from time to time, in the minute book;

17 TREASURER

17.1 The Treasurer of the Society shall be responsible to the Committee for all the income and expenditure of the Society during his/her term of office

17.2 The Treasurer shall be entitled to draw upon the accounts of the Society;

17.3 The Treasurer shall draw up a budget of all expected projects for the upcoming year;

17.4 The Treasurer shall, at the end of each year, draw up a statement of income and expenditure for the past year;

18 PUBLICATIONS

18.1 All publications of the Society must comply with the Code of Conduct of the Societies Council;

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19 AFFILIATION

19.1 The Society may be affiliated for a period not exceeding one year at any time to any body, if such affiliation could assist it in pursuing and attaining its objectives;

19.2 Before seeking any affiliation in terms of Sections 19.1 above, the Society shall obtain the approval of Societies Council;

19.3 Only a member of the Society may be its delegate to any body to which it is affiliated.

Constitution and Amendments

20 APPEALS

- 20.1 Whenever provision is made in this Constitution for an appeal against any decision, the provisions of this clause shall apply;
- 20.2 An appeal must be lodged within the stated period of time or such right of appeal shall lapse;
- 20.3 Every notice of appeal must succinctly set out the grounds of appeal;
- 20.4 In the case of an appeal to the Societies Council the notice of appeal must be lodged with the Secretary of the Societies Council, and in the case of an appeal to Student Court the notice of appeal must be lodged with the Chairperson of Student Court;
- 20.5 Whenever the Societies Council or Student Court hears and determines an appeal it may in its absolute discretion decide whether or not any evidence and/or any representations from any party to the appeal will be permitted;
- 20.6 The decision of the Student Court, in all cases shall be final and binding on all the interested parties
- 20.7 Students of the University of Stellenbosch have the right to appeal any decision of the Society to the Student Court at all times.

21 BY-LAWS

- 21.1 The Executive Committee may make such by-laws for the Society as it deems to be in the interest of the better conduct of the affairs and management of the Society;
- 21.2 The Executive Committee may, in the interest of the Society, amend or suspend the by-laws;
- 21.3 The Executive Committee shall notify the Societies Council within 21 days of any action taken by it in terms of Section 21.1 and Section 21.2 above.
- 21.4 Any by-laws made by the Executive Committee shall not be inconsistent with this Constitution, the Societies Council Constitution and its by-laws and the Societies Council Code of Conduct.
- 21.5 Any dispute with regard to the meaning or interpretation of the by-laws of the Society shall, mutatis mutandis, be dealt with as provided for in Section 22.4, Section 22.5 and Section 22.6.

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22 CONSTITUTION

- 22.1 A copy of the Society's approved Constitution shall be kept in the Society's minute book.
- 22.2 A copy of the Society's approved Constitution shall be lodged with Societies Council.
- 22.3 The copy of the Constitution lodged with the Societies Council shall be regarded as correct and shall take precedence over all other copies in any dispute.
- 22.4 Any dispute with regard to the meaning or interpretation of this Constitution shall be referred to the Societies Council for decision.
- 22.5 Any decision of the Societies Council is subject to appeal within 21 university days to the Student Court.
- 22.6 The appeal in terms of Section 22.5 above shall, mutatis mutandis, be subject to and in accordance with the provisions of Section 20 above.
- 22.7 This Constitution shall at all times be interpreted by the Society.

23 AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

- 23.1 Any amendment to this Constitution shall be considered only at a meeting of the Executive Committee in accordance with the provisions of this clause;
- 23.2 At least seven days' notice must be given of the meeting at which an amendment to this Constitution will be considered;
- 23.3 The quorum of the meeting at which an amendment to the Constitution is to be considered shall be as according to Section 8.3;
- 23.4 Any amendment to this Constitution requires a vote in favour thereof of at least two thirds of the members present and voting in the meeting;
- 23.5 Every amendment to this Constitution shall be submitted for the approval of the Student Court;
- 23.6 After the amendment has been approved it shall be entered in the copy of the Constitution in the minute book of the Society under the signature of the Chairperson of the Society.

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Commented [7]: This is a very limited time in which to lodge an appeal with the Student Court which unduly restricts students' right of access to the Student Court. At least 21 university days should be given to a student to appeal to the Court.