



The Association of Catholic Tertiary Students (ACTS)

Constitution

1) Preamble

- a) ACTS is a religious society catering specifically (but not exclusively) to all Roman Catholic Students studying at the University of Stellenbosch (US)
- b) It is run by the students, that is, an elected Executive Committee, for the students, and acts under the guidance of the apostolic representative, the Chaplain
- c) A special student Mass is offered up every Sunday of the academic year of the university.

2) ACTS Vision and Mission Statement

It is our desire and baptismal commitment to unite all to the true fold, the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, by sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, through whose inestimable merit we are able to approach the throne of God. More especially, we look to providing a platform for students and others to learn about the faith, and establish a communion of brothers; students and parishioners alike.

3) Definitions

- a) An ordinary member is anyone who has paid his/her annual membership fee and complies with the Roman Catholic faith.
- b) To comply with the Roman Catholic faith means to observe and be intent on practising the Church's teachings.

4) Membership

- a) Membership is open to all Roman Catholic students as well as anyone who is interested in learning about the Roman Catholic faith.
- b) Membership may be granted to any student or scholar of other bodies, provided that 85% of the membership is comprised of Stellenbosch University students.
- c) An annual non-refundable membership fee is required in order to join the society. This will provide the Executive Committee with a budget necessary for running the society.
- d) Termination of membership to ACTS requires notifying the chairperson in writing.
- e) There are two levels of membership in ACTS – the Executive Committee, and the ordinary member.
- f) Membership to the society entitles each member to benefit from any services provided by the society, as well as participation in societal events.
- g) Every member of the society is responsible for their own frequent attendance of the student Mass on Sundays.

5) Office Bearers: The Executive Committee

- a) The number of Executive Committee members can vary from year to year, and will be entirely up to the previous Executive Committee.
- b) The following portfolios need essentially be filled:
 - i) Chairperson
 - ii) Vice-Chairperson
 - iii) Treasurer
 - iv) Secretary
- c) Other portfolios are optional and may include, but not limited to,
 - i) Public Relations and Transport
 - ii) Branch Representative (on the provincial committee)
 - iii) Marketing
 - iv) Liturgy and Devotion

v) Community Outreach

vi) Social

d) Election of office bearers

i) Nominations of Executive Committee candidates should take place no later than three weeks prior to the end of the third term.

ii) Members of the society will be notified of the Executive Committee election via announcement at Mass and an email two weeks prior to them taking place.

iii) Individuals can nominate themselves or either be nominated by other members of the society, and must be members of the society

iv) The outgoing Executive Committee will then review the nominated candidates and draw up a short list of those suitable under the guidance of the Chaplain.

v) The implementation of the election protocol is the discretion of the outgoing Executive Committee as guided by university statutes and the Chaplain.

vi) If the short list exceeds 10 candidates, the society members will ballot vote after Mass one Sunday to decide who the final committee will comprise of.

vii) If the quorum of members present at the voting is less than half of the registered members, the voting process can be extended to electronic voting during the following week.

viii) The new chairperson of the society needs to have been on the Executive Committee during the previous year and will be voted into office at the first joint sitting of both the outgoing and incoming Executive Committees.

ix) The allocation of the other portfolios is the exclusive privilege of the new Executive Committee.

x) The role of the member on the Executive Committee is not to be taken lightly and cannot be given enough emphasis.

xi) The outgoing chairperson is to facilitate the meeting.

6) Office Bearers and their Duties

a) The chairperson will, under the guidance of the Chaplain, facilitate Executive Committee meetings and validate all decisions made.

- b) The vice-chairperson will assist the chairperson in his/her absence to fulfil his/her duties.
- c) The treasurer will handle all the society's financial matters and will be the link between the university and the society's cash-point.
- d) The secretary will minute all meetings and essentially be the link between all members of the Executive Committee. He/she is also responsible for all other administrative duties.
- e) Co-opt office bearers can be appointed – in cases where at some stage it is necessary during the year to appoint extra office bearers to assist the Executive Committee in the execution of their duties.
- f) Should an Executive Committee member vacate their seat, be suspended, expelled or receive a vote of no confidence, it is up to the existing Executive Committee whether or not to hold a by-election or nominate another dedicated individual to the Executive Committee

7) Discipline

- a) All disciplinary procedures of ACTS are subordinate to those compiled in the constitution of the Societies' Union, Societies' Council and Student Regulations.
- b) The conduct of any member who openly disregards and loathes the Roman Catholic faith will also be looked upon as intolerable and should be seriously reprimanded.

c) Discipline of Members

- i) Under extreme circumstances of disrepute, members can be suspended, be expelled, and have their membership terminated.
- ii) Before any action is taken by the Executive Committee, a disciplinary hearing will be held between the infringer, the Chaplain and the Executive Committee.
- iii) Any member who is suspended or expelled has the right to appeal to the Executive Committee, in writing, within seven working days.
- iv) Any further appeal against suspension, expulsion or termination of membership will be directed to the Student Court
- v) It is possible for the society to make the discipline of the member subordinate to the Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC) of the US. Should this be done the CDC will handle the discipline and not the Executive Committee of the society. If the CDC makes a decision regarding the discipline of the member, the decision can not be taken on appeal to the Student Court, but the Appeal Committee of the CDC

d) Discipline of Office Bearers

- i) A member of the Executive Committee can be removed from office, if it is felt by the majority of the Executive Committee and the Chaplain, that he/she has not adequately fulfilled their portfolio commitments or actively participated in the steering of the society.
- ii) Discipline of an office bearer can also be made subordinate to the CDC in the same manner as indicated above in, par 7(c)(v).
- iii) If a vote of no confidence is taken against any member of the Executive Committee by common majority (two thirds), the Executive Committee member against whom it was made must vacate his/her seat with immediate effect.
- iv) The office bearer, against whom a common majority vote in favour of a vote of no confidence was made, has the right to appeal against it only on procedural grounds to the Student Court.
- v) The procedures for filling the vacancy of the office bearer against who the vote of no confidence has been made must be addressed under par 6(f) above.

8) Meetings

a) Annual General Meetings

i) All the members of ACTS will be notified at Mass, via email and/or postings to Facebook, as to when and where the Annual general Meeting (AGM) will be. The agenda does not need to be made known to the members, nevertheless, every member has the right to raise any issue and have it added to the agenda.

b) Executive Committee Meetings

- i) The Executive Committee should meet on a fortnightly basis, but, a meeting may be called within reasonable notification, by any member of the Executive Committee under the consent of either the Chaplain or chairperson, if deemed necessary.
- ii) The agenda of the meeting should be made available within a reasonable time.
- iii) If an Executive Committee member is unable to attend a meeting, he/she has the responsibility to inform the chairperson as soon as possible, no later than 24 hours before the meeting. Undue absences are to be regarded as serious infringements.

9) Constitutional Amendments

a) A two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee must agree to a constitutional

amendment. This assent to the amendment must be confirmed by a vote in favour thereof by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at the meeting regarding a constitutional amendment.

b) All members of the society must be notified off the time and place of a meeting that will be held to vote for a constitutional amendment.

c) Constitutional amendments must take place at a reasonable time and place.

d) The notice given to members must specify the reason for the proposed constitutional amendment.

e) A minimum of two weeks' notice needs to be given to all members.

f) Please note that the above procedural requirements are regarded as very important by the Student Court. Any constitutional amendment made that does not comply made that does not comply with the procedural requirements will not be valid.