

**CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENTS' CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF THE WESTERN
CAPE PROVINCE (DRAFT)**

BACKGROUND

The "Students' Christian Organisation" (SCO) was formed by the merging of the Students' Christian Movement of Southern Africa (SCM) and the Students' Christian Association of Southern Africa (SCA) on 5 July 1997 at a meeting of both the SCA and SCM Councils at Fort Hare University. At this meeting an interim constitution for SCO was adopted for a period of two years. On 3 July 1999, this final constitution was adopted by the SCO Council.

This constitution is to be read in conjunction with the document entitled "Standing Orders of SCO" and "SCO Policy Documents".

ARTICLE 1: NAME

The name of the organisation shall be the "Students' Christian Organisation", herein after referred to as the SCO.

ARTICLE 2: AIMS

2.1 To lead students to accept the Christian faith in God –Father, Son and Holy Spirit according to the Holy Scriptures.

2.2 To encourage students to live as true disciples of Jesus Christ their Lord in accordance with the Scriptures by:

2.2.1 Promoting the earnest study of the Bible as the inspired word of God to zeal to live a sanctified life, prayer, Christian fellowship and stewardship.

2.2.2 Urging students to devote themselves to the extension of the Kingdom of God within their own environment and throughout the world by brotherly service and evangelistic witness and training them for this purpose.

2.2.3 Fostering loyalty to the church of Christ as a whole and to a local church in particular and to enlist them in prayer and action for the fulfillment of Christ's prayer: "that they may be one." John 17:21

2.2.4 Assisting members to form a biblical, consistent and Christ-centered worldview, with which to approach academic disciplines and contemporary issues.

2.2.5 Stimulating an awareness of their responsibilities for serving the community and for working for righteousness, justice and peace throughout the society.

ARTICLE 3: STATEMENT OF FAITH

3.1 We believe that: -

3.1.1 The Holy Bible (the Old and New Testaments) as originally given by God, are divinely inspired, entirely trustworthy and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

3.1.2 There is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This sovereign God created the universe and pronounced it good.

3.1.3 Our Lord Jesus Christ is God visible in a body, born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a sinless human life. During his earthly ministry he worked miracles and taught about the Kingdom of God. He died in our place to atone for our sin. He was buried, and on the third day arose from the dead. He ascended into heaven. He is the only Mediator between God and humankind and Saviour of the world.

3.1.4 Humankind, male and female, was created in the image of God, with consequent dignity, delegated authority and creation stewardship. As a result of the fall, all people are lost and sinful, subject to condemnation and in need of salvation.

3.1.5 Salvation is available only through the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ and his salvation are received by repentance and faith, not by human effort, as the Holy Spirit brings about the new birth.

3.1.6 The Holy Spirit convicts and draws sinners to Christ and imparts new life to them, indwelling, empowering and equipping each believer, who is thereby enabled to live a holy life, to witness, and to serve the Lord Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, evangelism, discipline, compassion, justice and righteousness.

3.1.7 All believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are spiritually united with each other. They comprise the Church, the Body of Christ, of which he is the Head.

3.1.8 The Lord Jesus Christ will return personally in power and authority. All the dead will be raised: those who are saved to eternal life and those who are lost to condemnation.

3.2 This Statement of Faith shall be signed and assented to without reservation by all members of Council, Committees constituted by Council, all staff members, volunteer staff and committee members of branches and members of branches.

ARTICLE 4: BASIS OF MEMBERSHIP

4.1 A Christian group at any institution of learning may be a member of the SCO by affiliation. An affiliated branch shall comply with the following requirements:

4.1.1 It shall adopt the name "Students' Christian Organisation". In exceptional circumstances, an alternative name may be used for a certain period if agreed to by the National Executive. If an alternative name is used, the branch's affiliation to SCO must be clearly stated in its publicity material.

4.1.2 It shall adopt and include in its local branch constitution articles 2 and 3 of this constitution.

4.1.3 It shall apply to the Natex for affiliation.

4.1.4 Power to vote and hold office shall only be for members who acknowledge and have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and as God according to the Bible and agree with and assent to the Statement of Faith of the SCO.

4.2 An individual shall be a member of SCO through subscription.

4.3 A branch may levy subscription fees on its members.

4.4 A student Christian group may apply to the Natex to be accepted as an Associated branch should it for whatever reason not want to become an affiliated member. An Associated branch may participate fully in all the activities of the SCO but has no voting powers.

4.5 Any individual who subscribes to articles 2 and 3 may become an Associate Member under conditions and with voting powers as may be determined by council for Associate Members.

4.6 Any individual who subscribes to article 2 and 3 and who is studying at an educational institution which has no SCO branch, may become an Individual Member of SCO under such conditions as may be determined by council.

4.6 No more than one branch may be affiliated to SCO at a particular institution.

ARTICLE 5: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Any member of the organization who does not abide by Article 2 and, or Article 3 of the constitution will have his/her membership terminated in writing by the local committee to which the member is immediately accountable to.

5.2 The termination of membership should be reported by the committee making the decision to the organisational structure it is immediately accountable to within 28 days of effecting the decision.

5.3. Any member of SCO shall terminate his/her membership through formally written, clear and approved resignation.

5.4. Membership of every SCO member shall expire at the end of that particular subscription year.

5.5. Membership will automatically be terminated by death of the member.

5.6. A member can appeal against termination of membership within 14 days.

5.6.1. All appeals should be acknowledged in writing within 14 days of reception.

5.6.2. The appeal should be held by the relevant local Council and the process should follow the organisation's hierarchical order until the National Council (which has a final word)

ARTICLE 6: BODY CORPORATE

6.1 The SCO shall be a body corporate having an existence independent of its members with perpetual succession, capable of holding property in its own name and of instituting or defending legal proceedings in its own name, no individual member thereof being liable to meet any debts, engagements or liabilities.

6.2 The organization shall continue to exist, notwithstanding changes in the composition of its membership or office-bearers. Office bearers are not personally liable for any loss suffered by any person as a result of an act or omission which occurs in good faith while the office-bearer is performing functions on behalf of the organization.

ARTICLE 7: THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**7.1 Composition of the Provincial Executive Committee**

The Provincial Executive Committee herein referred to as PEC shall consist of:

7.1.1 Chairperson

7.1.2 WC SCO Staff Representative

7.1.3 Secretary

7.1.4 Higher Institutions Section (HIS) Chairperson

7.1.5 Associates Committee Chairperson / **Associates Representative***

7.1.6 Schools Representative e.g. a leading teacher / member of a SCO schools branch committee

7.1.7 Treasurer* / Media & Publicity Officer* / Church Liaison Officer*

7.2 Election of the PEC

7.2.1 The Chairperson is appointed via consultation among SCO Associates who have been faithful supporters.

7.2.2 The Chairperson may appoint a Secretary from among the Associates body.

7.2.3 PEC members listed from 7.1.4 to 7.1.6 are elected/chosen by their constituencies. If formal and well-functioning structures don't exist in any of these constituencies, then the Provincial Chairperson in consultation with the WC SCO Staff Representative and National Director may appoint someone who they believe can contribute meaningfully to furthering the PEC objectives with regard to that constituency.

7.3 TERM OF OFFICE

7.3.1 The term of office of the PEC members shall be determined by the conditions of the committee on which they serve.

7.3.2 For any other members the term of office is 2 years, renewable for a further 2 years if agreed by the National Director and NATEX (i.e. 8.1.1 to 8.1.3 and 8.1.9)

7.4 Powers of the PEC

7.4.1 Raise funds for the work of SCO in WC

7.4.2 To appoint and dismiss staff in consultation with NATEX

7.4.3 To dismiss from office and Associate, Teacher, Student or Learner in a position of leadership whose conduct is in conflict with Biblical teaching.

7.5 Functions of the PEC

7.5.1 To develop vision, strategies and plans for the growth of the ministry.

7.5.2 To act on behalf of and be responsible to all supporters of SCO WC in the utilization of their gifts toward developing the work of SCO in the province.

7.5.3 To oversee the activities of staff of SCO WC.

7.5.4 To oversee finances and ensure that SCO WC is conducted in a financially sustainable way.

7.5.5 To ensure that there is accountability for use of resources within SCO WC.

7.6 Meeting of the PEC

7.6.1 The PEC shall meet quarterly

7.6.2 A special meeting of the PEC may be convened over and above the ordinary meetings, should the PEC deem it necessary or at the request of at least half the PEC members.

A quorum shall consist of 50% plus one of the office bearers.

7.7 Removal of Office Bearers From Office & Appeals

7.7.1 A Chairperson can be removed by NATEX if his/her conduct is in conflict with Biblical requirements of Christian leaders, or if they're not fulfilling agreed duties to an expected standard

7.7.2 An office bearer can be removed from the PEC by the Chairperson if their conduct is in conflict with Biblical requirements of Christian leaders, or if they are not fulfilling their duties to an expected standard.

7.7.3 An office bearer can be removed from a committee through a decision taken by the committee they serve under.

7.7.4 A removed person can appeal against such decision within 14 days of the judgement to the National Director who has the final say.

8.1.5.7 Administer elections of the next coming HIS Executive.

8.1.6 MEETINGS HIS Executive

8.1.6.1 The HIS Executive shall meet not less than once in each academic quarter.

8.1.6.2 A Special Meeting shall be called over and above the scheduled meetings, should the executive see it necessary.

8.1.6.3 The decisions in the meeting shall be taken by simple majority (50% +1) however, members are encouraged to reach consensus.

8.1.6.4 The quorum shall be 50%+1 of office bearers.

ARTICLE 8: HIGHER INSTITUTIONS SECTION

8.1 Higher Institutions Section Executive

8.1.1 Composition of the Higher Institution Section executive herein referred to as HIS, shall consist of

- 8.1.1.1 Chairperson
- 8.1.1.2 Vice Chairperson
- 8.1.1.3 Secretary
- 8.1.1.4 Students' Affairs Officer
- 8.1.1.5 Schools Liaison Officer
- 8.1.1.6 Projects Officer
- 8.1.1.7 Staff Representative
- 8.1.1.8 Up to two co-opted members

8.1.2 ELECTION OF HIS EXECUTIVE

8.1.2.1 Each Branch will second a name to the Provincial Students' council (PSC) via HIS Executive before each provincial LTC

8.1.2.2 During the LTC, confirmation of HIS Executive members shall take place during PSC meeting.

8.1.2.3 The members of the new HIS executive shall be elected/appointed to their portfolios at the first HIS meeting after the LTC. (The meeting should be within 14 days after the LTC)

8.1.2.4 The outgoing Chairperson shall convene and chair the meeting and the elections. After the new chairperson has been elected then they will assume the chairing of the meeting.

8.1.2.5 A branch from which the newly elected Chairperson comes from, should second another name to the HIS executive.

8.1.3 TERMS OF OFFICE

8.1.3.1 The term of office shall be one year.

8.1.4 POWERS OF HIS Executive

8.1.4.1 The HIS Executive shall act on behalf of the PEC in all matters.

8.1.5 FUNCTIONS OF HIS Executive

8.1.5.1 To actively promote the aims of the SCO within higher institutions of the Western Cape.

8.1.5.2 To encourage sound leadership within HI branches.

8.1.5.3 To help PEC in bringing about accountable leadership within HI branches.

8.1.5.4 To ensure that each HI branch submits accounts to PEC twice per year

8.1.5.5 To support fund-raising efforts among HI branch members to support the work of the SCO provincially.

8.1.5.6 Serve as a link between branches, provincial structures and national structures.

ARTICLE 9: ASSOCIATES CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

ARTICLE 10: FINANCE

10.1 The PEC shall ensure that proper accounts are maintained.

10.2 A new budget will be adopted annually by PEC.

10.3 Those responsible for administering provincial finances and any other accounts in the name of SCO (including HI branch accounts) shall send a copy of their cash flow statement to the Provincial Chairperson twice per year, in June and November.

10.4 The SCO shall receive and accept donations of any kind whatsoever, from any person or organization, provided that such acceptance shall not militate against the aims and beliefs of the SCO.

10.6 Branches and individuals should be encouraged to contribute to the regional and national finances of SCO.

10.7 The organization's income and property are not distributable to its members or office-bearers, except as reasonable compensation for services rendered. Members or office bearers have no rights in the property or other assets of the organization solely by virtue of being members or office-bearers.

ARTICLE 11: RELATIONSHIP WITH CHURCHES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

11.1 The SCO will foster loyalty of its members to the Church as the body of Christ and to the local church in particular.

11.2 The SCO may become a member of, federate with, affiliate to or incorporate any other organisation, which has a Statement of Faith and Aims similar to those of the SCO.

11.3 The SCO may cooperate with any organisation whose Aims are wholly or in part similar to those of the SCO and for such purposes as are consistent with the Statement of Faith of the SCO.

11.4 Any such relationship shall be approved by Council.

ARTICLE 12: AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

12.1 This Constitution shall only be amended by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at a meeting of not less than 40 Associates who have been supporters of the SCO for more than 3 full years.

12.2 Not less than thirty (30) days notice of the proposed amendment shall be given to all Associates.

Notes:

Words in smaller font & Italics are inserted from the SCO National Constitution

Word in bold with * are proposed additions to the Provincial Constitution