

The Penn Playwrights Constitution

Table of Contents:

Preamble	3
General Information	3
Mission Statement	4
Membership	4
The Board of Governors	4
Board Elections	6
Impeachment	8
Feedback Sessions and Special Events	8
Amendments to this Constitution	9
Ratification	9

Preamble

Penn Playwrights, a feedback playwriting group at the University of Pennsylvania that was founded in 2020, does hereby establish this Constitution in the Fall of 2020.

I. General Information

1. The official name of this organization will be the Penn Playwrights.
2. Penn Playwrights is affiliated with the Kelly Writers House at the University of Pennsylvania.
3. The student group will comply with all University of Pennsylvania policies and procedures, as well as local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

II. Mission Statement

1. The mission of Penn Playwrights is to create a sense of belonging for playwrights at the University of Pennsylvania by hosting feedback sessions on original projects and by organizing social events in order to bond as a creative community.

III. Membership

1. Membership is open to all active students, faculty and staff at the University of Pennsylvania without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
2. Members must be affiliates of the University of Pennsylvania whether it be as a student, faculty member, or staff member.
3. Members no longer affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania (i.e. graduated, transferred, etc.) will be considered “alumni”.
4. **How to Become a Member:** To be considered an active member, one must attend at least two events per semester.

IV. The Board of Governors

1. **General Responsibilities of the Entire Board:** To uphold the mission of Penn Playwrights, to attend board meetings, and to execute all duties of one’s assigned position.
2. **Board Meetings:** The Board of Governors shall meet at least once per month. The consistent time and place of these meetings shall be determined at the first board meeting of each semester.

3. **Quorum Requirement:** For a board meeting to take place, there shall be at least two-thirds (67%) of all board members present (representing a quorum).
4. **Term Length:** New board members shall serve two consecutive semesters, consisting of a fall and spring semester.
5. **Transition Meetings:** Once a board term is completed and elections have been held, retiring/incumbent board members are responsible for meeting with their successor for their specific position to give them helpful information, tips, and/or wisdom on how to successfully fulfill their position's responsibilities.
6. **Board Vacancies:** When board member vacancies occur for whatever reason (e.g. semester abroad, leave of absence, mental health reasons, etc), then The Board shall have the power to fill the available position(s). Any nominees to replace a position must be active members of the club and receive at least a simple majority (51%) of The Board. The replacements will only be considered "permanent" if the person(s) who vacated their position(s) will be gone for the remainder of the board term.
7. **The Board of Governors shall consist of the following positions, and their duties are as follows:**

Chair:

- a. To organize and preside over meetings
- b. To conduct board votes with an automatic abstention
- c. To break a tie vote when the need arises
- d. To maintain board and group communication
- e. To serve as the representative to Kelly Writers House
- f. To generally ensure that all responsibilities of the Board are fulfilled
- g. To perform any other duties not delegated to other board members
- h. To keep track of the club's active membership
- i. To provide vision and direction for the future of Penn Playwrights

- j. To maintain and create content for the club's website
- k. To serve a maximum of one board term as Chair

Vice Chair:

- a. To support all other board positions when board members are absent from meetings
- b. To create, manage, and post content on the club's social media platforms
- c. To preside over meetings if the Chair is absent or unable to execute their duties, and to assist the Chair whenever necessary
- d. To take notes during meetings when the Note-Taker/Historian is not present

Treasurer:

- a. To handle all financial transactions of the club
- b. To maintain thorough and accurate records of all transactions
- c. To produce financial reports as required by the club and by the Student Activities Council (SAC)

Note-Taker/Historian:

- a. To take notes and records action items during board meetings and group events
- b. To remind present members of our past and record our present through photos, videos, etc. for the benefit of future members

Social Chair:

- a. To organize social events for the Board and the general membership

V. Board Elections

1. **When Elections are Held:** Board members shall be elected once per academic year during the Spring Semester before Reading Days (which is right before final exams). Elections must be publicized at least 72 hours (3 days) in advance.
2. **Who is Eligible to Run/Vote:** Any active member is invited to vote in the election and run for the Board as a nominee if they wish. Nominees are running for specific positions. Nominees can run for as many positions as they would like, yet they may only be elected to one position. Nominees must declare their candidacy by the scheduled start-time of the election.
3. **Who Manages the Election:** The elections shall be run by the most senior board member who is not running for re-election. If all incumbent board members are running for re-election, then an external mediator who has read the election procedure may preside over the election and count the votes.
4. **Nominee Speeches:** All board nominees are expected to give brief, timed 3-minute remarks on (1) why they would like to join the Board, (2) what skills do they bring to the Board, (3) their other time commitments for the next academic year (e.g. study abroad, heavy course-load, leadership in other clubs, etc.), and (4) any other appropriate questions the outgoing board deems relevant.
5. **Voting Procedure:** Once all speeches are given for all positions, then the election organizer conducts the vote for every position, which can be done by paper/electronic one-response ballots or by a show of hands as long as voters' eyes are closed. All votes shall be conducted anonymously so people can vote their conscience.
6. **Voting Options:** Voters shall have three options for every candidate: YES, NO or ABSTAIN (abstain meaning indifference toward a candidate).

7. **Percentage Needed to be Elected:** Every nominee must receive a simple majority (51%) of the non-abstention votes to be elected to a position. If no candidate receives 51% of the vote for a specific position, there shall be a run-off election between the top-two candidates for a position. Candidates may be asked additional questions by voters if the election organizer allows it.
8. **Tie-Vote Protocol:** In the highly unlikely event of a tie, the election organizer has the deciding vote, unless they do not feel informed enough to make that decision. In that case, a run-off election would occur.
9. Once all votes are tallied, the election organizer announces the new Board and congratulates all the nominees for their courage.

VI. Impeachment

1. Any board member/member may be removed from the Board of Governors and/or the club for misconduct as defined by the group (for example, failure to perform duties, attendance, misuse of funds).
2. This removal vote shall require a two-thirds (67%) majority vote of the board for a member to be impeached.
3. In any impeachment case, the individual in question shall have at least one opportunity to defend their case before the Board of Governors.
4. If the person is not impeached, then they will be treated fairly as any other member.
5. Each case of misconduct will be determined on a case by case basis.

VII. Feedback Sessions and Special Events

1. Meetings shall take place twice a month: one meeting being a feedback session and one being a special event (whether it be a social meeting, writing session, etc.)
2. Feedback sessions consist of reading aloud submitted pieces and giving live feedback and commentary. These submitted pieces are read beforehand and comments are given online before the feedback session. These submitted pieces can be anywhere from a first draft to a final draft in terms of completion and readiness.
3. Norms of Feedback Sessions, which shall be clearly stated at the start of every feedback meeting, include:
 - a. All feedback should be framed constructively.
 - b. When giving any feedback, please use “I” statements.
 - c. The playwright is responsible for deciding what feedback—if any— they wish to incorporate when revising their piece.

VIII. Amendments to this Constitution

1. Amendments to the constitution may be proposed by any member of the club.
The Board may request that the amendment be put into writing and sent to the Chair. The Chair is responsible for informing the Board of any proposed written amendment(s) at least one week before it is put to a vote.
2. The Constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds majority vote (67%) of the Board of Governors, with full board participation and input. If a quorum of the Board can attend a discussion yet not everyone can attend, then the notes from

the meeting will be shared with the full Board and the vote may be conducted digitally.

IX. Ratification

This Constitution is hereby ratified on the seventh of December in the year 2020 by the unanimous vote of the current Board of Governors:

Dana Freeman N'2024, Chair

Jaden Cloobek C'2022, Vice Chair

Emily Wallace C'2024, Treasurer

Paige Ashley Brotherton W'2024, Note-Taker/Historian