

(a number of CONSTITUTION

amendments have been made; amended  
copies are not yet available)

Students for a Democratic Society  
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PREAMBLE

Students for a Democratic Society is an association of young people on the left. It seeks to create a sustained community of educational and political concern; one bringing together liberals and radicals, activists and scholars, students and facul

It maintains a vision of a democratic society, where at all levels the people have control of the decisions which affect them and the resources on which they are dependent. It seeks a relevance through the continual focus on realities and on the programs necessary to effect change at the most basic levels of economic, political, & social organization. It feels the urgency to put forth a radical, democratic progr counterposed to authoritarian movements both of Communism and the domestic Right.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be Students for a Democratic Society.

ARTICLE II: AFFILIATION

Students for a Democratic Society shall be affiliated with the League for Industrial Democracy, Inc., a tax-exempt educational foundation concerned with the extension of democracy into all areas of social, political, and economic life.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership is open to students, faculty, and others who share the commitment of the organization to democracy as a means and as a social goal.

Section 2. S.D.S. is an organization of democrats. It is civil libertarian in its treatment of those with whom it disagrees, but clear in its opposition to any totalitarian principle as a basis for government or social organization. Advocates or apologists for such a principle are not eligible for membership.

Section 3. Dues. There shall be a national initiation of one dollar, supplemented by periodic dues, the amount and period of which shall be determined by the National Council.

Section 4. Associates. Individuals who do not wish to join the S.D.S., but who share the major concerns of the organization, may become associates with rights and responsibilities as defined by the National Council.

ARTICLE IV: CHAPTERS AND AFFILIATES

Section 1. Any group of five or more members may apply to the National Office for charter as a chapter.

Section 2. A chapter may be chartered at any meeting of the National Council. It must be considered for chartering at the first meeting of the National Council after it has submitted to the N.C. a membership list, a constitution or statement of principles, and notification of election of N.C. representative(s). In the period between the submission of the required information to the National Office and the next National Council meeting, the chapter may be given a provisional charter at the discretion of the President.

Section 3. Chapters are expected to operate within the broad terms of policy set by the National Convention and the National Council. Points of conflict should be referred to the National Council and a procedure established to make the issue public to the organization. In matters judged to be detrimental to the interests of the organization, the National Council shall have the power to cease whatever activity has been brought into question. The matter shall be finally resolved by the National Council in meeting or referendum.



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Section 4. Associated Groups. Independent groups can affiliate as "associates" of S.D.S. by vote of their membership and designation of their membership and designation of a liason representative to sit on the National Council with consultative vote. The representative shall be a member S.D.S. Such association is provisional until the approval of the National case between the group and the National Council.

Section 5. Fraternal Organizations. National or regional organizations whose programs and purposes are consistent with the broad aims and principles of S.D.S. can be invited by the National Council to be fraternal with the S.D.S. and have a fraternal vote on the National Council. Such organizations shall appoint a liason representative who shall be a member of S.D.S.

Section 6. S.D.S. welcomes the opportunity to co-operate with other individuals and organizations in jointly sponsoring specific action programs and joint stands on specific issues. The National Council shall be empowered to determine specific co-operative activity. (Co-operation does not imply endorsement.)

#### ARTICLE V: CONVENTION

Section 1. The S.D.S. shall meet in convention annually, at a time and a place fixed by the National Council, with at least three months prior notice being given to all members.

Section 2. The Convention shall serve to debate major issues and orientation of the organization, to set program mandates to the national staff, and to elect national officers. The Convention shall not be the policy-making body on specific resolutions.

Section 3. Representation. Chapters shall elect Convention delegates on the basis of one delegate for every five SDS members in the chapter, each delegate to have two votes at the Convention. Individual SDS members shall have the right to attend the Convention with one vote each. Delegates from associated and fraternal groups shall be elected by a procedure determined by the National Council. The NC shall draft Convention rules, accreditation procedures, and other requirements.

#### ARTICLE VI: NATIONAL COUNCIL

Section 1. The National Council shall be composed of (1) one representative elected from each chapter, except that chapters with more than twenty-five members shall have two representatives; (2) the seventeen National Officers; (3) elected liason representatives from associated groups (with consultative vote); (4) liason representatives from fraternal organization (with fraternal vote); and (5) national staff (without vote). In all cases, NC members and liason representatives must be members of SDS. No more than three members from one chapter or associated group may serve concurrently as National Officers.

Section 2. The National Council shall be the major policy-making and program body of the organization. It shall determine policy in the form of resolutions on specific views within the broad orientation of the organization; determine the program priorities and action undertaken by the organization consonant with the orientation and mandates set by the Convention; charter chapters, associated groups



and fraternal organizations; be empowered to suspend chapters, with the right of appeal to the Convention. The NC shall be responsible for the drafting of a budget, administration of budget, and organization of fund raising; interviewing and appointment of the National Secretary; appointment of committee chairmen and representatives to the L.I.D. and other organizations; co-ordination of relations with the L.I.D.; drafting an annual report; making arrangements for the convention.

Section 3. The National Council shall have the power to appoint standing committees to carry on its work between its meetings.

Section 4. The National Council shall meet at least four times a year. A quorum shall be 40% of the voting members. National Officers may designate specific alternates. Chapter and liason representatives may be represented by designated alternates from that group.

#### ARTICLE VII: NATIONAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

The President shall have the power to call a meeting of a temporary National Interim Committee, to be composed of the seventeen National Officers, for emergencies only. Decisions of this body shall be subject to National Council approval.

#### ARTICLE VIII: NATIONAL OFFICERS AND STAFF

Section 1. The National Officers shall be the President, the Vice-President, and fifteen other Officers, all to be elected at the Convention and to serve as members of the National Council. The Convention may on a year-to-year basis create other officers as seem necessary and shall designate their voting rights in the various bodies of S.D.S.

Section 2. The National Officers must have been members of the S.D.S. at least two months prior to election.

Section 3. The National President is the spokesman of S.D.S. He shall be responsible for carrying out organizational policy and shall convene the National Council. He shall be assisted by the Vice-President, and in case of vacancy the Vice-President shall assume his functions.

Section 4. The National Secretary shall be the chief administrative official of the organization, responsible to the President and the National Council. He shall be appointed by the NC for a stated period of time. The National Council may also create and fill additional positions of Assistant National Secretary to work under the direction of the President and National Secretary. Other staff positions shall be created and filled by the National Secretary.

#### ARTICLE IX: RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LEAGUE FOR INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

Section 1. The S.D.S. shall be autonomously constituted, though its policy and functioning shall be within the broad aims and principles of the L.I.D.

Section 2. The determination of policy, program, administrative procedures of S.D.S. shall be subject to the review of the L.I.D.

Section 3. Matters of difference not resolved by consultation shall be resolved through the internal democratic channels of the group concerned.

a. S.D.S. concerns shall be communicated by the Student NC to the L.I.D. Board of Directors through the Student Activities Committee.

b. L.I.D. concerns shall be communicated to the Student NC through the Student Activities Committee and shall be considered by the NC, special referendum, or annual Convention in a manner jointly determined by the NC and the S.A.C.

Section 4. S.D.S. shall designate four of its members, including its President, to serve on the L.I.D. Board of Directors with vote. In matters of policy they must represent the S.D.S. Convention or NC between Conventions, but their vote is not bound by that policy.

Section 5. The L.I.D. Board of Directors shall appoint, in consultation with the NC of the S.D.S. , a Student Activities Committee to serve as the liason representative of the Board in relation to S.D.S. he functions of the S.A.C. shall be:

- a. consultation on matters of finance and assistance in preparation of budget requests to the L.I.D.;
- b. consultation on matters of organizational development, policy, and administration;
- c. consultation on matters of intellectual or ideological importance of the SDS program

#### ARTICLE X: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

In all cases not covered by this Constitution, Robert's Rules of Order, Revised Edition shall be the authority governing S.D.S. business.

#### ARTICLE XI: POLICY AND DISCIPLINE

Section 1. Any member of the organization, including the Officers, may be expelled or relieved of duties by a two-thirds vote of the National Council. Due process shall be followed in all cases.

Section 2. Any two chapters, or one-third of the National Council, can initiate a national referendum on any question.

Section 3. All material sent out in the name of the organization shall have the approval of the majority of the National Council and shall have been submitted to all of the NC members.

#### ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by one of three procedures:

- a. by a two-thirds vote of the Convention in session on amendments introduced at the Convention, in which case the amendment will take effect at the following Convention;
- b. by a two-thirds vote of the Convention in session on amendments introduced by distribution to the membership at least a month before the convention, in which case the amendment will take effect immediately upon adoption;
- c. by a two-thirds vote of the membership on referendum, in which case the amendment will take effect immediately upon adoption.

Originally adopted in Convention, June 1962  
Amended in Convention, June 1963  
Amended in Convention, June 1964