

**CONSTITUTION OF  
TRINITY YOUNG FINE GAEL**

AS PRESENTED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY  
AT THE EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

1<sup>st</sup> October 2012

TRINITY



## **Article 1      The Society**

- 1 The Society shall be named Trinity Young Fine Gael.
- 2 The Society shall be affiliated to Young Fine Gael in the form of a Branch and shall adhere to its Constitution, provided conflict does not occur with directives made by Trinity College Dublin's Central Society's Committee (CSC). Should conflict exist, the CSC's directives shall overrule the Young Fine Gael Constitution
- 3 The aims and objectives of the Society are:
  - I To provide an avenue for political discussion and activism in promotion of the ideals and values of both Young Fine Gael and Fine Gael.
  - II To formulate policy representative of the membership of the Society.
  - III To work for the electoral success of Fine Gael.

## **Article 2      Membership**

- 1 Membership of the Society shall be divided into two categories: Ordinary and Honorary.
- 2 Ordinary membership can be obtained by any registered student who is currently engaged in academic studies or research, or any member of staff of Trinity College, provided that they comply with the rules set out in the Constitution of both the Society and Young Fine Gael
  - I By accepting membership of the Society, each member agrees to be bound by and shall submit to the rules and of the Society and of Young Fine Gael.
  - II Ordinary members who have attended two or more meetings of the Society shall be eligible to vote on all Society matters
  - III Ordinary members shall be entitled to be nominated and run for Committee positions
  - IV Ordinary membership may be revoked in the following circumstances:
    - (i) Ordinary membership may be removed from an individual at a meeting called for that purpose by a supermajority exceeding two thirds of those present. Ten days' notice must be given and a quorum of ten votes must be cast for a withdrawal of Ordinary membership to be binding. The member in question must also have been informed of their right to reply and of their right to appeal to the National Executive of Young Fine Gael, should the expulsion motion be approved.
    - (ii) Ordinary membership may be removed if the individual in question ceases to be a registered student engaging in academic studies or research, or a member of staff of Trinity College Dublin who leaves the employ of said college
- 3 Honorary membership of the Society may be conferred upon an individual at a meeting for that purpose by supermajority exceeding two thirds of voters present who must number at least ten.
  - I Honorary members shall not be able to serve on the Committee
  - II Honorary members, unless they satisfy the conditions stated in Article 2.2 above, shall have not have the right to vote on Society matters
  - III Honorary membership may be withdrawn in the same manner as Ordinary membership as outlined in Article 2.2

### **Article 3      Officers**

- 1 There shall be five officers on the Committee of the Society appointed in accordance with Article 6.8 hereunder.
- 2 The officers shall be elected from the ordinary membership of the Society.
- 3 A person may not hold the same office within the Society for more than three consecutive terms.
- 4 If Society funds have been misappropriated or misused and a full hearing of the CSC Executive of the persons involved establishes that there is sufficient evidence of personal liability, then the CSC may request the persons concerned to repay the money by a specified date. The CSC may ask the Senior Dean to declare the persons concerned indebted to the College. A student declared indebted to the College may not be permitted to register for the following academic year or to have their degree conferred.
- 5 An officer whose affiliation with the college has ceased before their term has expired shall be obliged to resign immediately.
- 6 The officers of the Committee shall consist of the Chair (who shall also act as the second Treasurer), the Vice-Chair, a Treasurer, the Public Relations Officer and the Secretary.
- 7 The Chair shall be the senior student officer. They shall be appointed by the ordinary membership at the AGM in accordance with Articles 6.8. They shall keep order at meetings and their decisions on matters of order shall be final. The Chair shall supervise the activities of all other officers of the Society and shall ensure that officers act in accordance with the decisions of the Society and the provisions of this Constitution. The Chair shall also act as the second Treasurer of the Society.
- 8 Should the Chair absent themselves from three consecutive meetings without furnishing the Secretary with an acceptable explanation in writing, they shall be deemed to have resigned from their position. The Vice-Chair shall then temporarily assume the position of Chair. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be held to elect the new Chair in accordance with Articles 6.8.
- 9 The Vice-Chair shall be appointed in accordance with Article 6.8. The Vice-Chair shall assume the position of Chair if the Chair resigns or is deemed unfit by the Society to fulfil his obligations and responsibilities until an EGM elects a new Chair, as stated in Article 3.8 above. The Vice-Chair shall also act as Chair in the temporary absence of the Chair, who shall notify the Secretary of such absences beforehand. The Vice-Chair is also entitled to hold another non-elected position on the Committee conferred upon them by the Chair.
- 10 The Secretary shall be responsible for all communications of the Society. They shall also record all those members in attendance and take minutes at all meetings organised by the Society and shall maintain a log of the addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of all members of the Society. The upkeep of the Society Library shall also be the responsibility of the Secretary. They shall be appointed in accordance with the Article 6.8.
  - I The Secretary's responsibilities to the CSC are as follows:
    - (i) To submit a detailed report of the Society's activities during the academic year to the CSC by the due date as stated by them, following the AGM.

- (ii) In the event that the Secretary fails in this duty, or the incoming Committee considers the report inadequate, the Committee shall censure the Secretary and the Chair shall appoint a sub-Committee to submit the report before the end of Trinity Term. No grants will be received from the CSC until this report is provided.
- 11 The Treasurer, along with the Chair in their position as the second Treasurer, shall have joint and equal responsibility for the upkeep of the Society's financial affairs. The Treasurer shall receive and pay monies on behalf of the Society, in addition to keeping a detailed account of the Society's financial transactions and status and shall report on that status upon request of the Committee. The Treasurer shall present a financial report to the Society at the Annual General Meeting. He shall be appointed in accordance with Articles 6.8.
  - I The two Treasurers shall jointly sign all cheques on behalf of the Society and shall only do so provided that they are in full agreement on the financial matter in question.
  - II The Treasurer must receive all receipts and/or invoices before a member is reimbursed for expenses for Society activities.
  - III The Treasurer's responsibilities to the CSC shall be as follows:
    - (i) To provide CSC with accurate account details and truthful information about the Society's financial affairs to the CSC upon request.
    - (ii) To obtain CSC grants for the academic year following their election.
    - (iii) To provide their successor with all the information reasonably required.
    - (iv) To ensure receipt of forms from the CSC for the estimated annual expenditure of the Society at the Annual General Meeting of the CSC.
    - (v) To forewarn the CSC of exceptional activities for which grants may be sought and to provide estimates of these as soon as practicable.
    - (vi) To submit to the Treasurer of the CSC before the end of the fifth week of Hilary Term the name of the person who has agreed to audit the annual accounts of the Branch for that year.
    - (vii) Shall, in the event of their resignation, provide the Treasurer of the CSC with a set of accounts of the date on which they left office with details of unpaid accounts, debtors and creditors, as well as any other information that may be reasonably required by their successor in his duty to provide proper financial management.
- 12 The Public Relations Officer (PRO) shall have overall responsibility for publicising all Society activities. The maintenance, control and development of the Society's social media pages and forms of communication shall also be the responsibility of the PRO. They shall be appointed in accordance with Articles 6.8.
- 13 In the event of an office being left vacant, there shall be a By-Election held to fill the position, with one weeks notice given to all members concerned. The only exception shall be the office of Chair, which shall be appointed via an EGM as stated in Article 3.9.

#### **Article 4      The Committee**

- 1 The Committee of the Society shall consist of five officers and three Ordinary Committee Members (OCMs).

- 2 The Committee shall have the right to co-opt OCMs during the course of the year, when vacancies arise, and shall have regard in doing so to creating a diverse and balanced range of opinion and expertise on the Committee.
- 3 The OCMs must also adhere to Articles 3.5 and 3.6
- 4 A committee member who, during their term of office, absents themselves from three consecutive meetings of the Society without furnishing the Chair or Secretary with an email explanation acceptable to the Society will be subject to a vote of confidence at the next meeting.
- 5 This committee member must have received an email of such a motion no less than one week prior to any Society meeting determining the issue. Nothing in this section however, shall limit the ability of the Committee to immediately and directly remove an officer against whom accusations of financial impropriety regarding Society funds have been proven.

## **Article 5 Meetings**

- 1 The Society shall hold at least one Branch meeting every two weeks during each academic term and shall hold at least one Committee meeting every three weeks.
- 2 The Secretary/Chair shall inform all the appropriate members of the Society about Society meetings with no less than three days notices in accordance with Articles 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 hereunder.
- 3 There shall be three classes of meetings: Branch, Committee and Public
- 4 Branch meetings shall adhere to the following:
  - (I) The quorum for such a meeting shall be eleven members.
  - (II) Branch meetings shall discuss the private business of the Branch. They shall also be used as a private forum to discuss the Society's policies. Only Society members shall be eligible to attend such meetings.
- 5 Committee meetings shall adhere to the following:
  - (I) The quorum for such a meeting shall be four committee members.
  - (II) Committee meetings shall discuss and make decision in relation to the structural, financial and organisational issues involved in running the Society. Only members of the Committee shall be eligible to attend such meetings.
- 6 Public meetings shall adhere to the following
  - (I) Public meetings shall provide a forum for speeches, debate on issues of policy and general importance and may be representative of Fine Gael and outside views. All registered students and staff members of Trinity College are eligible to attend such meetings.
- 7 A motion for deliberation at a meeting shall be presented in writing to the Secretary once it has been proposed and seconded by Society members present and entitled to vote at that meeting
- 8 A motion shall be ruled out of order by the Chair on the grounds that the motion:
  - (I) has no relevance or is inappropriate with regard to the discussion of the meeting. In such event, provision shall be made to discuss the motion at a future meeting

(II) If the motion is one of no confidence or censure, the member under consideration is not present or relevant notice has not been issued.

- 9 The Chair shall call for a vote once they consider that there has been sufficient time for debate on the issue. A show of hands shall be sufficient to decide the matter, with a simple majority required to carry the motion
- 10 In the event of the vote being tied, then the Chair shall have the casting vote. Should a motion be defeated, it may not be presented to the Branch again in that session.

## **Article 6      Annual General Meetings**

- 1 Although the AGM is a Society meeting, attendance confers neither the right to contest elections nor the right to vote.
- 2 An AGM shall be held no later than the end of Week 10 of Hilary Term. An early AGM may be called and the Committee dissolved if a three quarters majority of all the members of that Committee vote in favour of such action. An AGM may only be postponed if a General Election or By-Election, Fine Gael Ard Fheis or Young Fine Gael National Conference is called and comes into conflict with the proposed date of the AGM. In that case it may be held no later than the end of the second week of Trinity Term
- 3 Nominations for positions on the Committee shall be open for two weeks prior to the AGM. Nominations shall be sent via email to the Chair/Secretary.
- 4 An Electoral Commission shall be appointed by the Committee no less than three weeks prior to an AGM. Such a Commission shall ensure that nominees are informed on the procedures for voting, those who are entitled to vote are informed no more than two days prior to the AGM of the candidates running for election and that the votes are counted and the results declared accurately and without interference.
  - (I) The Electoral Commission shall consist of no more than three members appointed from members and former members of the Young Fine Gael National Executive, Dublin Regional Council and former members of the Committee not seeking re-election but who are still members of the Society
- 5 An absolute minimum of fourteen days prior notice shall be given to all members informing them of the AGM, of the members of the Electoral Commission and of the procedure by which candidates may be nominated for election.
- 6 The Chair of the AGM shall not be an ordinary member of the Society who shall be appointed by the outgoing Committee.
- 7 The Agenda for the AGM shall be as follows:
  - i. Introduction of the Chair for the AGM
  - ii. Apologies
  - iii. Reports of the Officers:
    - a. Chair's report
    - b. Treasurer's report
    - c. Secretary's report
  - iv. Matters arising from these reports
  - v. Elections
  - vi. Any Other Business.

- 8 All voting shall be done by means of a single transferable vote cast in a secret ballot. In the event of a tie for a position, an immediate run-off ballot shall be held. If a tie is again the result, then the election shall be decided by means of a coin-toss.
  - (I) Voting shall take place after all the candidates running for one position speak. The result shall be announced to those in attendance before people running for other positions speak.
- 9 In the event that only one candidate is nominated to an office, nominations will be open to those who are ordinary members of the society in attendance. This shall also be the case if there are less than three people running for an OCM position. If an ordinary member places himself/herself up for nomination, they shall need to be seconded by another member. If an office is left vacant at the AGM, then the incoming Committee shall have the right to co-opt an ordinary member to fill that office.
- 10 The new Committee shall take effect as of the end of the AGM
- 11 Upon taking office, the Secretary shall inform both the National Youth Officer of Young Fine Gael and the CSC of Trinity College of the new Committee and their email addresses.
- 12 In the event of an AGM being declared invalid, an Extraordinary General Meeting, operating under the same rules as the AGM, shall occur before the end of second week of Trinity Term.

#### **Article 7 Amendments and Interpretation**

- 1 Any provision of this Constitution may be amended, by a three quarters majority of all those present and entitled to vote at an AGM or at an EGM called for the purpose of amending the Constitution.
- 2 Any amendments shall come into effect immediately on being approved by the CSC.
- 3 The rulings of the Committee in interpreting the Constitution shall be authoritative and a recorded in the minutes.
- 4 This Constitution shall come into effect immediately on being approved by the Executive of the CSC of Trinity College Dublin, and the Secretary shall send a copy to the National Executive of Young Fine Gael. The Constitution of Trinity Young Fine Gael in force immediately prior to the coming into operation of this Constitution shall, as of that date, cease to have any effect.