

## **The Constitution of the Helvidius Group**

### **Preamble**

The following Constitution establishes the rules of operation for The Helvidius Group, publishers of Columbia University's undergraduate *Journal of Politics & Society*, a non-profit student organization of Columbia University.

### **Mission Statement**

Founded in 1989, the *Journal of Politics & Society* strives to provide a forum for undergraduate research on the social sciences for students from Columbia University and around the world.

### **Article I**

The name of this organization, which first existed during the 1989–1990 academic year as the *Columbia Undergraduate Journal of Law and Public Policy*, shall be *The Helvidius Group*, hereafter in the Constitution referred to as *Helvidius*.

### **Article II**

#### *Section I*

The Purpose of Helvidius shall be to provide a forum for students of all undergraduate divisions of Columbia University and other undergraduate institutions around the world who wish to write articles and commentary analyzing, evaluating, and examining matters that relate to political studies, international affairs, economics, law, public policy, or other social sciences.

#### *Section II*

Through a national or international call for papers, Helvidius will solicit and accept submissions from other undergraduate students of colleges and universities in the United States or elsewhere. The specific list of colleges and universities contacted will vary each year at the discretion of the Editorial Board, but will include all members of the Ivy League at a minimum.

#### *Section III*

As the featured guest essay in the journal, Helvidius may solicit and accept submissions from legal professionals, public officials and figures, Columbia University faculty, and faculty from other colleges and universities at the discretion of the Editorial Board. No other published essay shall be written by anyone other than an undergraduate student.

#### *Section IV*

Although articles in the journal will treat issues of political and economic opinion, Helvidius shall have no political or group affiliation nor shall the group adhere generally to any particular political ideology.

### *Section V*

Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prevent Helvidius, at the discretion of its Executive Board, from engaging in additional projects related to its mission statement, provided that Helvidius continues to publish the *Journal of Politics & Society*. Such projects may include but are not limited to organizing academic conferences, moderating roundtable discussions, or publishing other material.

## **Article III**

### *Section I*

Helvidius does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, ethnic group, sex, sexual orientation, or any other status.

### *Section II*

Membership per se does not exist in Helvidius except as concerns the editorial staff (see Article IV). All submissions judged by the Editors to be generally relevant and of sufficient quality will be printed, limited only by funding and the time available to the Editors.

## **Article IV**

### *Section I*

Membership in Helvidius will be limited to its editorial staff, called the Editorial Board. An elected subset of the Editorial Board, the Executive Board, shall govern Helvidius. As Helvidius expands and its needs evolve, the configuration of the Editorial Board may change in accordance with voting procedures outlined in Article IV Section II (with the exception that there must always be an Editor-in-Chief position), but the following will serve as the functional staff hierarchy.

Part I – The Executive Board will be composed of not fewer than three and not more than five individuals, including the Editor-in-Chief and Executive Editor. The titles and duties of the remaining Executive Board positions are at the discretion of each Executive Board.

The Editorial Board will be composed of a variable number of Senior and Associate Editors. The Executive Board may at its discretion establish non-editing positions on the Editorial Board to assist in layout, Web design, fundraising, or other duties. This hierarchy of positions can change in accordance with the needs of the specific board in question. All members of the Editorial Board must be undergraduate students of Columbia College, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Barnard College, or the School of General Studies.

Every spring semester before the final day of classes, elections shall be held to determine the Executive Board for the following academic year. The eligible electors, as defined in Part II, shall first elect the Editor-in-Chief. They will then elect a slate of two to four Executive Board members from among the eligible nominees. The Executive Board shall determine the voting procedures to facilitate this process.

Part II – The Editor-in-Chief shall be a Columbia University undergraduate with at least two years of experience on the Editorial Board or at least one year on the Executive Board of Helvidius, nominated on the basis of his or her projected managing skill, editing ability, and interest in

international affairs, law, and/or public policy. If by chance fewer than two candidates meet these requirements, then the Editor-in-Chief position shall be open to all current Editorial Board members. He or she will be confirmed by a majority vote of eligible electors, defined as the current Executive Board and all other members of the Editorial Board with at least one year of experience on Helvidius. They will consider, in addition to the aforementioned qualities, the student's proven writing ability and previous service to Helvidius.

The Editor-in-Chief is ultimately responsible for the form and substance of the journal and any concurrent undertakings. He or she is also responsible for duties in positions not filled, for all official appointments, and for providing general leadership to the rest of the staff.

Part III – The Executive Editor shall be a Columbia University undergraduate with at least one year of experience (with exception outlined in Part V) on the staff of Helvidius, nominated on the basis of his or her interest in the social sciences, proven writing ability, and leadership experience. The incoming Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with the former Executive Board, will appoint him or her from among the elected slate of Executive Board members, unless dictated otherwise by the voting procedures described in Part I above.

In the event of the absence or incapacity of the Editor-in-Chief, the Executive Editor shall fulfill the role of Editor-in-Chief until such time as the Editor-in-Chief may resume his or her duties.

Part IV – All other Executive Board members shall be Columbia University undergraduates with at least one semester of experience (with exception outlined in Part V) on the staff of Helvidius, nominated on the basis of their experience with the workings of Helvidius, proven and projected managerial ability, and previous service to Helvidius, and appointed by the incoming Editor-in-Chief in consultation with the former Executive Board, unless dictated otherwise by the voting procedures described in Part I above.

Part V – Although one semester of experience is required of Executive Board members, if the Editorial Board members at the time of selection comes do not fit the necessary criteria, the Executive Board may decide to open the positions to students who have no experience working with Helvidius.

Part VI – Senior and Associate editorial positions are open to all Columbia University undergraduates with the sole requirements that the student express interest and enthusiasm in Helvidius and the *Journal of Politics & Society*, and is willing to undertake the editing and advertising work delegated. As it is the goal of the Helvidius Group to mold high-quality editors and to foster an editing process whereby Associate Editors can learn from more experienced editors on the board, Editing Groups will be created each year, consisting of at least one Senior Editor and two or more Associate Editors. These groups will work together to select papers, edit them, and present the final revision of papers to the Executive Board.

Part VII - Each Senior Editor has the integral role of ensuring that the *Journal of Politics & Society* maintains its standard of high-quality writing and thought. Each Senior Editor works closely with at least two Associate Editors on editing and vetting their assigned papers. Additionally, Senior Editors, along with the Executive Board, are in charge of the final selection and editing of papers

and may be called upon to assist the Executive Board in various projects commensurate with their interests and abilities.

Part VIII – Each Associate Editor works both with the Executive Board on publicity and distribution, and with his/her assigned Senior Editor on editing and selecting the papers. Associate Editors may be called upon to assist the Executive Board in various projects commensurate with their interests and abilities.

Part IX – Helvidius shall have a Faculty Advisor, who if at all possible should be a professor of political science or law. He or she shall be nominated based upon his or her interest in upholding the purpose and goal of Helvidius, and shall be elected by a majority vote of the Editorial Board.

Part X – Helvidius shall make every effort to maintain contact with its alumni and consult with them on the future course of the organization.

### *Section II*

All official decisions by and for Helvidius shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the Executive Board with each board member having one vote. In the event of a tie, the Editor-in-Chief shall have two votes. These voting procedures will be adhered to during the nomination and confirmation of all positions, which shall be conducted in the fall semester after an application process conducted by the Executive Board. When voting is not possible, the Editor-in-Chief shall have the authority to make ad hoc decisions on behalf of the Executive Board, subject to their subsequent approval.

### *Section III*

Each Editorial Board member shall serve for one academic year, and may be reappointed or appointed to a different position by the newly elected Executive Board in the following year. The Executive Board shall determine the reapplication process, if any. The term of an Executive Board member shall commence at the end of the spring semester and continue until the end of the spring semester of the following year. Executive Board members may be reelected.

Graduating or otherwise non-returning Executive Board members should make every effort to ensure that their successors are fully trained for the responsibilities of their new position. This applies in particular to the outgoing Editor-in-Chief, who must work with the incoming Executive Board to ensure a smooth transition.

### *Section IV*

Impeachment of any Executive Board member will be by unanimous decision of the remainder of the Executive Board plus two-thirds of the eligible electors as defined above; impeachment of any other Editorial Board member shall be by unanimous decision of the Executive Board. A member of the Editorial Board can be impeached only on the grounds of negligence, or for making decisions or taking actions deemed destructive to the purpose or general undertaking of Helvidius.

### *Section V*

If a vacancy in the editorial staff should arise, whether from the impeachment, resignation, or incapacitation of a member, the Editor-in-Chief shall temporarily assume all of that member's duties. The Executive Board shall be empowered to immediately nominate and confirm a candidate

by a majority vote on the basis of the criteria for judgment set forth in Article IV, Section I for each position.

#### *Section VI*

The Executive Board shall be jointly responsible for all aspects of managing Helvidius, including but not limited to relationships with ABC and other organizations, fundraising, communications, and project management. The Executive Board shall determine a suitable division of labor at the beginning of each term.

### **Article V**

#### *Section I*

Executive Board meetings will be held twice per week (one of the meetings being with the rest of the Editorial Board), while Editorial Board meetings will be held weekly. Meeting times will be scheduled at the beginning of each term by the general consensus of the Editorial Board.

#### *Section II*

Members of the Editorial Board are required to attend Editorial Board meetings. Missing three Editorial Board meetings without prior dispensation from the Executive Board may be grounds for dismissal from the staff under the provisions of Article IV, Section IV.

### **Article VI**

#### *Section I*

The Helvidius Group, since Fall 2004, shares a unique relationship with Columbia University's Political Science Department. This relationship includes but is not limited to receiving advice and resources from the Department (including a relationship with the Faculty Head of the Political Science Department as well as the Administrative Assistant), connecting the Undergraduate Political Science website with the Helvidius website, and co-organizing and/or co-sponsoring a series of Helvidius-related events.

### **Article VII**

#### *Section I*

Amendments may be proposed by anyone on the Editorial Board and adopted only by a majority vote. No amendments shall be made to Article II, Section III and IV, and Article III, Section I.

*In accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Activities Board at Columbia.  
Amended Fall 2007.*