

AVALON COOPERATIVE CONSTITUTION

Last Update: August 2005

PREAMBLE

WE THE CO-OPERS OF AVALON, IN ORDER TO KEEP OUR HUMBLE ABODE RUNNING SMOOTHLY AND COOPERATIVELY, DEEM THIS DOCUMENT THE NEW CONSTITUTION FOR AVALON COOPERATIVE.

AVALON COOPERATIVE IS MEMBER OWNED AND OPERATED. THE PURPOSE IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE STUDENT HOUSING CORPORATION (SHC) AND THE INDIVIDUAL COOPERATIVE HOUSE IS TO INSURE ACCESS TO THE GOODS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES OF THE INDIVIDUAL COOPERATIVE HOUSE AND SHC, AND NOT TO GAIN A PROFIT.

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Section I.01 *Who is a Member?*

- (a) A member is any contract holder who lives in Avalon. No one may live in Avalon without first signing a contract with the Student Housing Corporation. Temporary Guests of active members are dealt with according to the discretion of the house.

Section I.02 *Honors College Theme House*

- (a) While Avalon has open membership, it is an Honors college themed house. In 1998, the HC supplied new furniture and other assistance to the entering occupants of the house. In exchange, the house made a contractual obligation with the HC to fill the house with HC members for three years (1998-2001 school/summer). This obligation has since expired, but Avalon still houses many Honors College students and considers itself honors College themed.
- (b) The Avalon. HC contact person is Sally Spaniolo, 103 Eustace-Cole Hall, 355-2326.

Section I.03 *Becoming a Member*

- (a) After touring the house, a potential Avalon. Co-oper should submit an application to SHC and indicate Avalon. as his/her house of choice. Upon completion of initial financial and background checks, SHC then approves the applicant for move in.

- (b) Selection Process:

(i) Current house members must reserve spots for the summer and the following school year prior to the deadline set by SHC (usually the first Saturday in November).

(ii) Anyone (including prospective new members) may sign for an unreserved space beginning on the date set by SHC (usually early December).

(iii) Reservations expire on the date set by SHC (usually the first Friday of February), meaning that interested returning co-ops with reservations must sign a contract by the end of the business day in order to guarantee a space in the house.

- (c) Room Pick:

(i) Signing a contract to live in Avalon. does not mean being guaranteed a particular room, but a space in the house. It cannot be guaranteed ahead of time if this space is in a single (7 spots total) or double (8 spots total) room.

(ii) Seniority goes to experienced Avalon. co-ops who have lived in Avalon consecutive past semesters, excluding those who fail to sign a contract before rooms are assigned. Amongst themselves, the qualified Avalon. Co-ops with seniority must determine a reasonable way to choose rooms. (Appendix A)

(iii) The order of room pick for those without seniority (i.e., new members as well as those who did not reserve a space or sign a contract on time) will be coordinated by the membership officer based on the dates of contract signings, with priority going to those who signed earlier. In case of disputes, selection should be made in a random lottery manner.

- (d) Contract signing obligates an individual to live in the house and requires a \$200 share deposit. Quoted from membership contract: “Member will buy a \$200.00 share to capitalize SHC, interest-free for the duration of the occupancy. If occupancy is continued from a previous contract, a new share will not be required. Upon termination of occupancy, this share will be forwarded by SHC to the member, subtracted all charges legitimately allowed by the house constitution. A processing delay will be required before repayment of this share. The member understands and agrees that this share is contingent upon fulfillment of all member obligations as outlined in this contract.”
- (e) Application process continues until all spots for the house are filled.

Section 1.04 *Member Rights*

- (a) All members are entitled to a single or double room, as appropriate, and the furnishings that come with the room: desk, desk chair, dresser, bed frame with ends, and mattress. Rooms will be supplied with a clean carpet and with decent, non-offensive room décor.
- (b) House members have the power to determine work schedules for the house and determine a proper distribution of house jobs amongst the members of the house (see Appendix B). Each year the house members should attach a description of house jobs, including work times for each job, to this constitution, to serve as a guide for incoming members.
- (c) House members have the power to determine a budget for the house, under the direction of the house treasurer and staying within SHC policies.
- (d) House members may punish members for negligence or tardiness of work duties (see Section 1.05.a) and for absence from house meetings (see Section 1.05.c).
- (e) The house must elect officers to attend each of the required SHC meetings (Board of Directors, Treasurer, Membership, Education, and Maintenance). The house must also assign a facilitator to serve as the spokesperson for the house. House members may recall these officers by a 2/3 house vote.
- (f) House members have the power to remove delinquent members from the house. If a member at any time becomes delinquent in work duties or house meeting attendance, chronically fails to fulfill contractual obligations to the house, or commits another grave offense, the house members are empowered to release that person from the house contract and compel that person to leave the house. State and local laws regarding eviction shall be observed. In recognition of the grave nature of eviction, a ¾ vote of the total active membership in favor of the eviction is required.

Section 1.05 Member Responsibilities**(a) Work Requirement:**

- (i) All active members of Avalon are required to participate in work duties as decided upon by the house. These include both performing weekly work duties by the assigned deadline and completing “work weekend” projects once per semester no later than a week after the assigned weekend.**
- (ii) House members are automatically fined for negligence or tardiness of work duties. The fine system is \$5 the first time, then \$10, then \$15. All fines are assessed by the work manager and reported to the fined persons and to the treasurer. Any fined person has the right to appeal a fine at the next consecutive house meeting. An appeal is passed by a majority vote of the house. Continued delinquency can result in removal from the house as specified in Section 1.04.F.**

(b) Financial Responsibilities:

- (i) Each member’s share of expenses for the upcoming month, as determined by the treasurer and the house in the budget, must be paid by the 1st of the month. On the 5th of the month, a 5% late charge is added to the total amount owed. On the 12th of the month the SHC begins filing papers for removal from the house.**
- (ii) Any fines imposed for violating house rules, negligence or tardiness of assigned work, absence from house meetings, or any other offense(s) shall be added to the member’s share of expenses due at the beginning of each month.**
- (iii) All items on the “Thing-Getter List” (see Appendix B) are automatically approved house purchases to be paid for by all house members. Adding/removing items from this list must be discussed and voted on at house meetings.**
- (iv) All items not on the “Thing-Getter List” must be voted on at house meetings. Prior to the meeting, a price estimate for the item must be obtained. Then the price estimate can be presented at a house meeting for a vote.**
- (v) All overdue accounts must be paid by the time of moving out of the house. If not paid, the treasurer will assist the SHC in collecting overdue bills by any legal means necessary.**

(c) House Meeting Attendance

- (i) Attendance at all regularly scheduled house meetings is required by all members of Avalon. Missing more than ½ hour of a meeting is considered an absence from the meeting.**

(ii) House members are automatically fined for being absent from house meetings. Each house member is entitled to miss 1 house meeting each semester without a fine. For each subsequent absence the house member will be fined. The fine system is \$5 the second absence, then \$10, then \$15. All fines are assessed by the work manager and reported to the fined persons and to the treasurer. Any fined person has the right to appeal a fine at the next consecutive house meeting. An appeal is passed by a majority vote of the house. Continued delinquency can result in removal from the house as specified in Section 1.04.F.

(d) House Rules:

(i) All members are expected to abide by all house rules passed by a majority of the house. Anyone who violates a house rule can be fined.

(ii) Additionally, house members are expected to follow the rules set forth by SHC, including honoring Co-oper's Rights and performing Co-oper's Responsibilities (see Appendix C).

(e) Moving out of the house:

(i) When moving out of the house, the exiting member's room must be returned to an appropriate condition, so that an incoming member can move directly in. This includes: Removing all personal belongings and trash from the room, leaving clean walls and carpet, repainting/fixing the room if it is determined to be objectionable by the other members of the house, and ensuring that all furniture for the room (1 dresser, 1 desk, 1 desk chair, 1 mattress, and 1 set of bedsprings/bed ends per person) is present in the room and in working condition.

(ii) All fees must be paid and all jobs must be completed before leaving the house.

(iii) Failure to follow above conditions can result in fines and/or money being taken from the member's returnable share. When this happens, it is the treasurer's responsibility to notify the fined person of the amount and reason for any fines.

Article II. Governance

Section 2.01 House Meetings

(a) The house facilitator will conduct house meetings. The facilitator should strive to set days and times agreeable to all house members.

(b) Quorum for house meetings shall be ½ of the contract-holding members in residence. House members properly excused from the meeting will not be counted in the total number of house members when determining quorum. Meetings cannot be held without quorum. In the case that a house meeting fails to meet quorum, the quorum for the next meeting will be set at one-half of the members attending the last meeting that obtained

quorum. This allows business to be conducted if certain house members are continually absent.

- (c) Decisions at a house meeting are made by a simple majority vote of those members in attendance, unless otherwise described in this constitution.
- (d) Any member may call an emergency house meeting by notifying the facilitator. Notice of 24 hours is required. Because attendance is not required at these meetings, only one topic or a series of closely related topics may be discussed.
- (e) Meetings should be conducted informally although the facilitator is empowered to impose forms of parliamentary procedure if the meeting becomes unmanageable or unproductive.

Article III. Scope of the Constitution and Amendment Process

Section 3.01 Scope of the Constitution

- (a) This constitution supersedes all previous constitutions and all policies at variance with it other than SHC policies. Except where limited by the constitution, the house members are generally empowered to make all decisions and policies on house matters within SHC policies.

Section 3.02 Amendment Process

- (a) The constitution may be amended at a regularly scheduled house meeting by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of the members present; amendments should be filed in the SHC office.

APPENDIX A: ROOM PICKS PROCEDURE

1. Room picks will be done based on a point system. Each member will receive points for the amount of time they have lived in Avalon. Fall and spring semesters are worth two points each, and summers are worth one point. Room picks will be decided based on the number of points accumulated while living in Avalon. The person with the most points will have top seniority and first choice, and so on.
2. If there is a tie, the decision is based on the original contract signing date of the members, priority going to those who signed earlier. If there is a dispute, a decision will be made with a random lottery.
3. New members with zero points will be given seniority based on their original contract signing date, giving priority to those who signed earlier.
4. Each member of Avalon has squatters' rights for their room. Members with higher seniority or more points may not remove a person from their existing room.
5. Members who are returning to Avalon after an absence of a full year (Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters) will lose all previous points and will be considered as a new member.

APPENDIX B: HOUSE JOBS

Note: Each House Job is assigned a point value. Each member of the house is needs two (2) points to complete their job requirement.

- 1) Facilitator: Conducts house meetings. Posts agendas at least five days before house meetings where everyone can add ideas to. Helps resolve disputes between residents. When absolutely necessary, makes an emergency decision for the house, but must account for any actions at the next house meeting. Washes dishes one night a week. (2 pts)
- 2) Education Officer/Social Coordinator: Represents the house at all SCH Education Meetings. Responsible for getting submissions for the Pine Press. Maintains a house scrapbook of photos, events, and activities. In charge of organizing parties and social activities. Takes minutes at regular meetings and posts them after the meeting. Cleans pantry and stove twice a semester. (2 pts)
- 3) Board Representative: Represents the house at SHC Board of Director meetings and any appropriate committee meetings. Reports relevant BOD/SHC affairs to the house. Collects and returns ballots for SHC-wide votes. Sorts daily mail. Forwards mail to previous residents. Recycles junk mail. Checks co-op mail box and posts SHC mail. Removes old posted mail from message board and kitchen board. (2 pts)
- 4) Treasurer: Draws up a proposed budget for the house and makes copies available to all house members to look over carefully. Maintains house fiscal records and keeps members informed of any dues in an appropriate manner. Posts financial standing of house and all members. Pays the bills for the house and collects money from members. Attends SHC Treasurer Meetings and works closely with corporate treasurer and the other house treasurers about SHC financial manners. (2 pts)
- 5) Membership Officer/Mediator: Tries to keep house at full capacity by maintaining close relations with Honors College. Organizes and heads membership drives. Stores them for future residents. Represents the house at SHC Membership meetings. Helps resolve disputes between residents. Cleans Refrigerator Twice a Semester. Takes out trash and recycling in living room and 3rd floor hallway. (2 pts)
- 6) Indoor Maintenance Officer: Attends SHC Maintenance meetings. Creates, posts, and checks the maintenance list in the kitchen regularly. Completes task him/herself if possible; otherwise reports maintenance requests to Stu at SHC when necessary. Oversees fall and spring grant proposals. Mops the kitchen, airlock and first floor hallways once a week. (2 pts)

- 7) Thing Getter/Recycling: Maintains a list where members can write down items needed for the house. Checks for common supplies that might be needed by the house. Makes a weekly trip out to get the stuff that's needed. Takes back returnables and uses money for house purchases. Takes out recycling weekly and makes sure it's organized. (2 pts)
- 8) Dishwashers: One dishwasher for every night of the week. Washes dishes at a relatively late time of night. Cleans countertops, table, and island. Puts away dishes already in drainer. (1 pt)
- 9) General Cleaners: Sweeps airlock and shakes out rugs. Vacuums, dusts, and sweeps common areas and hallways on first floor. Vacuums stairs and 2nd and 3rd floor hallways. (1 pt)
- 10) Outdoor Maintenance Person: Checks each week for major outdoor problems. Cleans up trash in lawn. Makes sure outdoor safety lighting is working. Mows lawn. Rakes mowed grass and leaves. Responsible for maintaining bushes, plants, flowers, and planting grass when needed. Shovels and salts stairs to main level, 2nd and 3rd floors as well as the walkway and driveway. (2 pt)
- 11) Job Manager: Makes sure everyone knows what jobs they need to do. Ensures all jobs are done in a timely manner and are done well. Fines those who do not complete jobs adequately or on time and those who do not attend house meetings according to house fine policy. Notifies those who are fined of fines as well as the house treasurer. Washes dishes once a week. (2 pts)

12) Garbage Person: Takes out trash in Kitchen twice a week or whenever full. (1 pt)

*Dishwasher Note: All house members are still responsible for washing their own breakfast and lunch dishes. If everyone doesn't do their own breakfast and lunch dishes, then they are giving more work to the people with dishwasher jobs. There is one dishwasher per night for the Fall and Spring semesters.

General Cleaner Note: General Cleaners are not responsible for cleaning up after parties and other social events. All personal effects left in common areas can be bagged. Bagged items may be thrown out or donated after 2 weeks. There is a separate general cleaner for at least 6 nights for the Fall and Spring semesters.

Bathroom Note: A group of about four people is responsible for cleaning a designated bathroom. This way each person only cleans the bathroom once a month. Bathroom duties include: Cleaning the shower, toilet, floor, sink, and anything else that is dirty. Taking out bathroom trash, checking rugs for odors, and washing them when necessary, stocking bathrooms with toilet paper, refilling soap containers, and washing common hand towels need to be maintained on a regular basis.

Fine Slip

Co-oper's Copy

Treasurer's Copy

Name: _____

Name: _____

Fine: 1st -\$5.00 2nd -\$10.00 3rd -\$15.00

Fine: 1st -\$5.00 2nd -\$10.00 3rd -\$15.00

Reason: _____

Reason: _____

Week of: ___/___/___ --- ___/___/___

Week of: ___/___/___ --- ___/___/___

Job Manager's Copy

Name: _____

Fine: 1st -\$5.00 2nd -\$10.00 3rd -\$15.00

Reason: _____

Week of: ___/___/___ --- ___/___/___

Fine Slip

Co-oper's Copy

Treasurer's Copy

Name: _____

Name: _____

Fine: 1st -\$5.00 2nd -\$10.00 3rd -\$15.00

Fine: 1st -\$5.00 2nd -\$10.00 3rd -\$15.00

Reason: _____

Reason: _____

Week of: ___/___/___ --- ___/___/___

Week of: ___/___/___ --- ___/___/___

Job Manager's Copy

Name: _____

Fine: 1st -\$5.00 2nd -\$10.00 3rd -\$15.00

Reason: _____

Week of: ___/___/___ --- ___/___/___

Appeal Slip

To be filled out by YOU:

Instructions: If you would like to appeal your fine, please fill out the following information and bring this slip to the next consecutive house meeting for a house vote. Thank you.

Reason for Appeal:

To be filled out by JOB MANAGER:

Name: _____

Fine Amount: _____

Reason for Fine: _____

House Vote on Appeal:

_____ Yes, # _____ No, # _____ abstentions

Results:

____ Fine ____ No Fine

Notified Treasurer: ____



Appeal Slip

To be filled out by YOU:

Instructions: If you would like to appeal your fine, please fill out the following information and bring this slip to the next consecutive house meeting for a house vote. Thank you.

Reason for Appeal:

To be filled out by JOB MANAGER:

Name: _____

Fine Amount: _____

Reason for Fine: _____

House Vote on Appeal:

_____ Yes, # _____ No, # _____ abstentions

Results:

____ Fine ____ No Fine

Notified Treasurer: ____

APPENDIX C: THING-GETTER LIST APPROVED PURCHASES

Common Areas	Kleenex, paper towel, light bulbs, vacuum bags, 13/30 gallon garbage bags, broom, dust pan, mop, bucket, hand towels, nails/screws, notepads for phones, superglue, batteries for public clocks, duct tape, scotch tape, trash cans
Kitchen	Brillo pads, antibacterial spray (Lysol,etc.), all-purpose cleaner (409, kitchen cleaner, etc.), dish soap, hand soap, oven cleaner, floor cleaner, dish scrubbers/sponges, paper bags, sandwich bags, wax paper, plastic wrap, aluminum foil, corn starch, vinegar, flour, sugar, salt, oil, shortening, baking soda, cooking spray, paper plates, paper cups, plastic silverware, napkins, bleach (for dishes), spices (within reason, something common that more than one person will use)
Bathrooms	Toilet cleaner, shower cleaner, toilet paper, bathroom cleaners (clorox, comet, drain-o, etc.), glass cleaner, sponges, toilet brushes
Miscellaneous	Stamps for house bills

APPENDIX D: CO-OPER'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

<i>CO-OPER'S RIGHTS</i>	<i>CO-OPER'S RESPONSIBILITIES</i>
Security in your home.	Lock doors and windows.
Access to house and SHC financial records.	Pay member charges.
Vote and voice opinions.	Attend meetings.
A clean house.	Contribute labor.
Improve and change houses.	Be open to other member's ideas.
Listened to and be heard.	Hear and listen to others.
Your own privacy and space.	Respect the privacy and space of others.
Capable officers.	Talk to and support officers.
Critique problems in house.	Work for creative solutions.