

The Constitution of the Young Communist League, USA

The Young Communist League, USA (YCL) is an independent, mass, public organization of young people in the United States. The YCL is devoted to the interests of all young people and is dedicated to the revolutionary cause of the working class of our country, the transformation of the United States through mass democratic struggle into a socialist society.

We try to develop communist working class political and moral convictions in our members and assist them in becoming militant fighters for the rights of the people and youth.

We teach our members to work and struggle together collectively, to reject the abuse of drugs and alcohol, to fight for the equality of all young people, against racism and discrimination.

Our task is to help our members become Communists. We learn to struggle through studying Marxism-Leninism and active participation in the day-to-day struggles of the working people and youth for a better life.

Our League promotes social, recreational and cultural activities among young people. The promotion of working class culture and the development of recreational and social activities that advance youth unity and struggle are an essential feature of our activity.

We strive to promote youth's understanding that the working class is the only class capable of leading the people against big business and to socialism. The YCL develops a feeling of loyalty to the working class among young people. The object of all activities of the League is to build the unity of the young generation with the working class in the struggle for peace, full employment, complete equality, trade union and democratic rights.

The Young Communist League recognizes the Communist Party, USA as the political party of the working class, the party of socialism in our country. We enjoy political and ideological guidance from the Communist Party. Our League works in unity and cooperation with the Communist Party for the immediate and ultimate interests of the working people and youth.

Young communists promote the unity of young people of our country with the peoples and youth of all countries. Our League promotes working class internationalism. We are proud of our relationship with the international youth and student movement and especially our relationship with youth of socialist countries.

Young Communists want a secure and peaceful future. The Young Communist League stands with all young people in the struggle to realize their highest aspirations: to live in peace and freedom, to work and love, to create and celebrate.

Socialism will bring these aspirations to life. In a socialist USA, where the monopoly corporations no longer

dominate the economic and political life, society's highest priority will be the well being of the people. Only by eliminating capitalism and the evils that grow out of it - racism, discrimination, sexism, homophobia and heterosexism, class exploitation, poverty and war - will the rights of young people be fully guaranteed.

Socialism will guarantee every young person the right to a job, free public education, and the ability of all to reach their fullest potential. By eliminating private profit, socialism will end forever the exploitation of one human being by another.

For these reasons the Young Communist League, USA is constituted and establishes the basic rules of its organization in the following constitution.

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Young Communist League of the United States of America.

Article II: Principles of Organization

Section 1

The principle of organization of the YCL is based on what is called Democratic Centralism. Democratic-Centralism means that decisions are arrived at only after the widest possible discussion by the membership. After such discussion a decision is arrived at and all members strive to carry out the decision.

Section 2

Should any member, club, or committee of the YCL disagree with a decision, appeal may be made to the next highest body. The decision may be reopened and rediscussed. Appeal may be made to each higher body up to and including the National Convention. The decision of the Convention, which is the highest body of the YCL, is final.

Section 3

After discussion in any club, committee, or convention, decisions are to be reached by majority vote.

Section 4

Elections of leadership are by secret ballot.

Section 5

Each body of the YCL shall elect from among its members a leadership collective which shall be responsible to that body.

Section 6

Every person who wishes to be a delegate to the convention, elected to any position of leadership in the club, state committee or National Council, must be a member of the YCL in good standing.

Section 7

Each body is subordinate to the next higher body: the Club to the state committee; the National Council to the convention. Where there are conflicting decisions, the decision of the higher body shall prevail.

Section 8

The YCL shall establish a press to make its views known and it shall be the duty of the members, clubs, state and national organization to circulate and financially support the pr

Article III. Membership

Section 1

The YCL is a voluntary organization. Any young person in the United States who is at least 14 years old is welcome to become a member. Special exceptions for persons under 14 years may be made by the club or the next highest body.

Section 2

All members shall belong to a club or organizing committee or work with the next highest body where local level organizations do not exist. All members shall be encouraged to participate in activities. All members shall pay dues.

Section 3

All members should strive to carry out the aims and objectives of the YCL in the course of everyday activity. This includes both within the YCL organization and in personal life.

Article IV: Structure

Section 1

The basic unit of the YCL will be the club. There will be four kinds of clubs: neighborhood, school, workplace, and interest.

Section 2

Each club shall elect at least the following officers: coordinator, educational coordinator and treasurer. Additional positions may be added if necessary. One person may assume more than one position.

Section 3

Clubs shall organize social, cultural, sports and recreational activities for its members and beyond.

Section 4

Clubs shall set up educational programs.

Section 5

Clubs shall collect dues and initiate fundraising activities to support the YCL

Section 6

Each club shall decide on an area of concentration in which to do its work. This may be a particular neighborhood, campus, high school, workplace, or area of interest.

Section 7

The National Council and state committees may set up organizing committees for the purpose of establishing state or club organizations.

Section 8

State organizations may be established by the National Council. State organizations shall consist of all clubs and members in a particular state.

Section 9

The highest body in the state will be the state convention, to be held once every two years before the National Convention.

Section 10

The state convention will elect a state committee to carry out work between conventions.

Section 11

The state committee will meet at least twice a year.

Section 12

The state committee shall elect officers and establish committees.

Article V: National Organization

Section 1

The highest authority of the YCL is the National Convention. The National Convention shall be held every two years, or as deemed necessary by the National Council. Delegates to the National Convention shall be determined on the basis of guidelines set by the National Council. Any member wishing to be elected as a delegate to the National Convention must be a YCL member for a minimum of 3 months and in good standing.

Section 2

Prior to the National Convention, a pre-convention discussion period will be held.

Section 3

Each National Convention shall determine the numbers of members on the National Council. When considerations are made for the National Council representation of working youth, racially and nationally oppressed youth, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer youth, and young women will be guaranteed.

Section 4

Election to the National Council shall be by secret ballot.

Section 5

Vacancies in the National Council shall be filled by a majority vote of its membership.

Section 6

The National Council shall be responsible for establishing state organizations and for implementing the decisions of the National Convention. Decisions of the National Council shall apply to all members and organizations of the YCL.

Section 7

The National Council shall elect from its membership an executive committee, officers, and any other bodies it deems necessary, all of which are responsible to it.

Section 8

The National Council shall meet at least twice a year.

Section 9

The National Council shall make reports of its meetings available to the membership.

Section 10

Between conventions, the National Council is responsible for enforcing the constitution and is the highest body in the YCL.

Section 11

Organization-wide referendums are provided for the membership to be polled on major policy questions. Referendums are to be initiated by majority vote of the National Council. Once a referendum is presented to the membership, a six-week discussion period will ensue. Results of the referendum are to be tallied by a committee selected by the National Council

Article VI: Initiation Fee and Dues

Section 1

The initiation fee shall be \$1.00, which is to be sent to the office of the National Council.

Section 2

The yearly dues shall be \$12.00 for high school age and unemployed youth and \$24.00 for all others, which is to be sent to the national office.

Article VII: Evaluation and Appeal

Section 1

The status of any member or officer of the YCL may be subject to review for action contrary to the principles on which the YCL is founded. This applies to financial irregularities, to racism and religious discrimination, discrimination against women, discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and strikebreaking.

Section 2

Review of a member or officer should be made by the club or the next highest body. An evaluation committee should be established by the club or body. The committee should review the situation and make recommendations to the club.

Section 3

Any member who is to be reviewed must be so informed.

Section 4

After hearing the recommendation of the evaluation committee the club or body can make a decision by two-thirds vote on disciplinary action. Disciplinary action can consist of reprimand, educational task, suspension, or expulsion.

Section 5

All decisions are subject to review automatically by the next highest body.

Article VIII: Affiliations

Groups organized around cultural, social, sports and educational interests that wish to associate themselves and their work with the YCL may become affiliate organizations. Affiliation will be decided by majority vote of a club or state organization. The yearly affiliation fee will be determined by a vote in the club, based on whether the groups wishing to affiliate are able to pay the suggested fee of \$5.00

Article IX: Amendment

This constitution may be amended by a majority vote of any regular or special National Convention, or by two-thirds vote of the National Council. This vote must be preceded by a three-month discussion period.

Article X: Authority

The Young Communist League is not responsible for any political document, policy, book, article, or any other expression of political opinion except such as are issued by the authority of the National Conventions and the regularly constituted leadership of the League.

The Constitution of the YCL-USA



Young Communist League, USA

Adopted by the YCLUSA at its
2nd National Convention June, 1986, NYC

As amended at its
National Council Meeting August, 1989, NYC;
4th National Convention November, 1993, NJ;
7th National Convention November, 2002, IL;
National Council Meeting October, 2003, IL.