

NIGERIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

Revised: May 23, 2017

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of this association shall be the "Nigerian Student Association," hereafter referred to as NSA.

ARTICLE II: Purpose

NSA is an organization that unites the minds, culture, and fellowship of Nigerians and UH students as a whole; by developing members who strive to achieve academic excellence, portray Nigeria in a positive light, and ultimately improving the Nigerian community.

ARTICLE III: Affiliations

NSA wishes to express its desire to work and cooperate with like-minded organizations on campus. Any member of this association may freely become a member of any other organization of his or her choice. Membership of other organizations is hereby encouraged.

ARTICLE IV: Membership

Section 1

As a Registered Student Organization at the University of Houston we adhere to the University of Houston's Non-Discrimination Policy. The University of Houston is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity institution. The university provides equal treatment and opportunity to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status except where such distinction is required by law. Additionally, the System prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Section 2

This organization will not initiate, participate in, or be witness to any act that inflicts or intends to inflict physical or mental harm or discomfort or which may demean, disgrace, or degrade any person, regardless of location, intent, or consent of participant(s).

Section 3

The membership term shall be the duration of one year from August 1st to July 31st.

Section 4

Annual membership dues shall be prescribed by the executive board at the beginning of their term and shall remain the same until the end of their term.

Section 5

Individual membership begins when a person pays their membership dues in full and ends at the end of that same membership term.

Section 6

Membership shall be designated as Collegiate Members, Associate Members, and Honorary Members.

- a) Collegiate members are students currently enrolled in the University of Houston that are interested in learning about and promoting the Nigerian culture.
- b) Associate members shall be defined as persons that are not currently enrolled in the University of Houston that are interested in learning about and promoting the Nigerian culture. Associate membership applies to University of Houston faculty, staff, and alumni. Associate members do not hold office positions but may be given voting privileges in certain elections and meetings where a vote may be held.
- c) The executive board may award the title of Honorary Member to a distinguished member of the University of Houston community or to a non-University of Houston person whose achievements serve the principles of the association. Honorary members do not vote or hold office positions unless they are also considered an Associate member with voting privileges.

Section 7

Each member of the Executive Board including Committee Chairs shall be required to pay executive dues not exceeding an amount greater than 150 dollars to be decided on by the residing Treasurer when term in office begins (See Article V, Section 4). Said dues can be sponsored or donated by an organization, business, or individual and shall be paid before the school semester starts unless an arrangement is made prior and agreed upon by the Treasurer.

ARTICLE V: Executive Board Structure

Section 1

The Executive Board shall consist of the Executive Officers and the standing Committee Chairs. The President shall appoint other members to the Board as deemed necessary. The majority of the Executive Board must approve each appointee.

Section 2

The Executive Board shall:

- a) Coordinate the activities of NSA.
- b) Determine all questions of policy.
- c) Administer the affairs of NSA under the constitution.
- d) Prepare a calendar of events and present it to the membership at the first meeting of each semester.

Section 3: Vacancy in Office

- a) If the office of the President becomes vacant for any reason during the elected term, the Vice-President shall be the acting President and continue in that capacity until the end of the current term. If the Vice-President does not wish to become President, a special election of President shall occur. (See Article VIII, Section 5)
- b) All other vacancies in office, including a vacancy in a standing committee, shall be filled by the President, with a majority vote of approval from the Executive Board.

Section 4

The term of each office (including committee chairs) shall be the duration of one year from May 1st to April 30th.

Section 5

An Executive Board member cannot hold more than one Executive Board position concurrently.

ARTICLE VI: Executive Officers

Section 1

The elected officers of NSA shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian.

Section 2: Duties of Executive Officers

a) President

- i. Shall preside over the general meetings and Executive Board meetings.
- ii. Shall be the chief executive officer of the association, and as such, shall be the chief spokesperson and manager of the association.
- iii. Shall have the power to enforce all sections of the constitution, as well as the promotion of agendas set forth and ratified by the Executive Board.
- iv. Shall help in the distribution of information and tasks to members, and appoint (in vacant offices listed in Section One of this Article) officers and committee chairs, with approval from majority of the Executive Board.
- v. Shall be vested with all other power(s) and authority granted to his or her office throughout this constitution.
- vi. Shall be the overseer of the Graduate Liaison Chair.

b) Vice-President:

- i. Shall be the deputy officer and chief assistant of the association. In the event that the President shall be absent, the Vice-President shall be the acting President, and continue in that capacity until the return of the President.
- ii. Shall manage the Executive Board. This includes but is not limited to the following:
 - Measuring accountability of board members.
 - Recognizing achievements of board members.
 - Handling personal disputes of board members.
 - Notifying and reminding board members of meeting dates and times.

c) Secretary

- i. Shall be the chief records holder.
- ii. Shall take and distribute minutes from each meeting outlining the proceedings and discussions that are held therein.
- iii. Shall maintain a current copy of the constitution at each meeting and shall be familiar with its contents.
- iv. Shall book meeting rooms and register events with Campus Activities.
- v. Shall perform his or her duty in regard to all other Secretarial connotations deemed appropriate by the Executive Board and members.
- vi. Shall be the overseer of the Recreational Chair.

d) Treasurer

- i. Shall be the chief banker of the association.
- ii. Shall have the task of keeping all money and funds in confidence and safety in regard to Treasure-like roles deemed relevant by the President.
- iii. Shall be accountable to the President for all funds in the office's possession.

- iv. Shall be responsible for a general accounting to members and the executive board.
 - v. Shall be in charge of allocations request from funding/co-sponsoring organizations on campus. (i.e. Activities Funding Board, Council of Ethnic Organizations, Student Programming Board, etc.)
 - vi. Shall be in charge of collecting and instating Executive Board dues at the beginning of the term
 - vii. Shall be the overseer of the Fundraising Chair.
- e) Parliamentarian
- i. Shall have the role of maintaining order in meetings (general and Executive Board) and events.
 - ii. Shall act as the chief whip of the association and shall have executive power following the hierarch of the President and the Vice-President.
 - iii. Shall facilitate constitutional amendment proposals at Executive Board meetings and update the constitution as necessary.
 - iv. Shall maintain a current copy of the constitution at each meeting and shall be familiar with its contents.
 - v. Shall ensure that each Executive Board member is active on the board, fulfilling their duty and what is required of them
 - Is able to implement ways to enforce this statement
- f) Cultural Director
- i. Shall be the chief coordinator of all cultural displays of NSA including, but not limited to:
 - Dances
 - Dramas
 - Poetry
 - Fashion
 - ii. Shall appoint special committees if necessary to assist in carrying out the activities of the above categories in which in turn shall report back to the Cultural Director.
- g) Public Relations Officer
- i. Shall have the responsibility of providing information to and for all members of the association.
 - ii. Shall have the chief task of advising the association and the public on all media and publicity affairs.
 - iii. Shall act as a spokesperson for the organization to external organizations (defined as groups on or off campus).
 - iv. Shall coordinate collaborations with external organizations.
 - v. Shall be the overseer of the Webmaster Chair.
- h) Historian
- i. Shall maintain current information about the political and socio-economic situation in Nigeria, and shall disseminate such information to members at regular meetings.
 - ii. Shall promote cultural and historical awareness of Nigeria at organized events of the association.
 - iii. Shall keep and display the history of NSA. The following may be used to this end (including but not limited to):
 - Photo albums
 - Scrapbooks
 - Slideshows
 - Display boards

- iv. Shall be responsible for the maintenance of any NSA office or space.
- i) Director of Membership
 - i. Shall recruit members to NSA throughout the year.
 - ii. Shall create and maintain a member list that consists of the contact information of the membership.
 - iii. Shall create and maintain the NSA membership point system.
 - iv. Shall create and collect membership forms.
 - v. Shall distribute membership cards.
 - vi. Shall report to the Treasurer.
- j) Director of Events
 - i. Shall coordinate and plan events of NSA.
 - ii. Shall assist the Sports and Recreation Chair in coordinating recreational events for the membership.
 - i. Shall report to the Secretary

ARTICLE VII: Committees

Section 1

- a) The Executive Officers will by simple majority, create appropriate standing committees that will facilitate the programs and desires of the members of NSA. Each standing committee will have a chair or co-chairs.
- b) The chair(s) of a standing committee will be appointed by the Executive Officers with the exception of a special election committee.
- c) The standing committees and their chair(s), in regard to powers and tenures shall be determined by the Executive Officers.
- d) The Executive Board shall have the power to create, oversee, and dissolve ad-hoc committees.
- e) Committee chairs shall have voting rights and attendance to E-board meetings is mandatory. Each chair must keep in touch with the E-board member assigned to them and keep up with any updates and responsibilities.

Section 2

The standing committees shall be (but are not limited to) Academic, Community Service, Fundraising, Webmaster, Recreational, and Graduate Liaison.

Section 3: Duties of Standing Committee Chairs

- a) Academic Chair
 - i. Shall coordinate academic activities, workshops, and events that assist in the academic growth of the membership.
 - ii. Shall report to the Director of Events
- b) Community Service Chair
 - i. Shall organize and schedule community service events and activities.
 - ii. Shall report to the Director of Events.
- c) Fundraising Chair
 - i. Shall plan and oversee all fundraising ventures.
 - ii. Shall create and distribute the NSA Solicitation Package.
 - iii. Shall write and distribute proposals to fund specific NSA
 - iv. functions.

- v. Shall collect membership dues and distribute membership forms.
 - vi. Shall report to the Treasurer.
- d) Webmaster Chair
- i. Shall publicize all NSA meetings and events through the use of the following (including but not limited to):
 - Emails to the membership
 - Fliers
 - Posters
 - Banners
 - Phone calls to the membership.
 - ii. Shall report to the Public Relations Officer.
 - iii. Shall keep the NSA website and Facebook page up to date.
- e) Recreational Chair
- i. Shall manage the sports teams of NSA.
 - ii. Shall coordinate recreational activities and events for the membership.
 - iii. Shall report to the Secretary.
- f) Graduate Liaison Chair
- ii. Shall have the responsibility of keeping graduates and NSA alumni updated and connected with the organization.
 - iii. Shall report to the President.

ARTICLE VIII: Elections

Section 1

- a) General elections of the Executive Officers will commence no later than the first week of April, with the Executive Board inaugurated no later than the end of April.
- b) An election committee will be formed at least one month prior to the general election to formulate guidelines for candidates and the election. Members of this committee cannot hold office, or seek office during their tenure on the committee. The Executive Board will choose members in an objective manner.

Section 2: Qualifications

Qualifications for each office shall be as follows:

- a) Candidate(s) must be a member of the association in good standing prior to the election.
- b) Candidate(s) must meet all guidelines of the University of Houston in regard to Student Organizations.
- c) Candidate(s) must file at least one week prior to the general election with the election committee declaring his or her intention to run.
- d) A candidate cannot run for more than one office.

An election committee prior to the election shall establish all other qualifications.

Section 3: Voting Procedures

- a) Voting will be done via secret ballot.
- b) Only paid members of NSA are eligible to vote

- c) Only candidates that meet the qualifications for office (Section 2) shall be placed on the ballot and allowed to run.
- d) The elected officers will be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Cultural Director.
- e) Voters must be given the choice of "Another NSA Member" on the ballot if they do not agree to the election of any of the candidates for a given position.
- f) The winner of a given position is the candidate that earns the plurality of the votes for that position.
- g) If "Another NSA Member" wins a given position, that position must remain vacant and procedures for the filling of vacancies will be left up to the incoming President.
- h) The results of the election must be available upon request.
- i) In the event of a tie, a special election must be held between the tied candidates.
- j) The top 5 positions (as stated in Section 3d) will then interview candidates for all remaining positions of office.

Section 4: Special Elections Following a General Election

- a) A special election shall be called by the election committee following a general election if the following occurs:
 - i. There is voting impropriety as deemed by the election committee.
 - ii. One half of the membership calls for a recall/re-vote. (This can be done through signed petition, emails, or a vote of the membership; the membership has exactly 1 week to call for a recall.)
 - iii. A tie.
- b) Special elections must commence no later than two weeks after the general election.

Section 5

- a) If the office of President becomes vacant and the Vice-President does not wish to become President, a special election of President must be held.
 - i. An election committee shall be formed to formulate guidelines for candidates and the election. Members of this committee cannot hold office, or seek office during their tenure on the committee. The Executive Board will choose members in an objective manner.
 - ii. All qualifications for office remain as in Article VIII, Section 2.
 - iii. Executive Board members shall be eligible to run. However, if elected, they must resign from their previous position immediately. The vacancy created in this instance shall be dealt with in the manner of all vacancies of office.

ARTICLE IX: Meetings

Section 1

General and executive board meetings of NSA shall be held regularly as determined by the Executive Board.

Section 2

The President may call special meetings at any time, in regards to emergency situations, after consultation with members and Executive Board members.

Section 3

Quorum with regard to Executive Board meetings shall consist of two-fifths of Executive Board members and either the President or Vice-President.

ARTICLE X: Impeachment of an Executive Board Member

Section 1

Any Executive Board member may indicate an intention to resign from his/her position by filing a written resignation with the Executive Board through the President. Said officer remains a member of NSA unless steps are taken to resign from the association.

Section 2

Any Executive Board member can be impeached for the following reasons (including but not limited to):

- a) Engaging in violations of the University of Houston in regard to Student Organizations (discrimination, assault, and other deviances) that may render negative attributions to NSA.
- b) Being deemed unfit, unwilling, unreliable, or incompetent to hold a position or otherwise not performing job duties.
- c) Theft and/or destruction of funds, materials, or facilities of NSA.
- d) Violating the constitution of NSA and/or violating other statutes deemed relevant within University guidelines.
- e) One-half of the membership calls for their removal.

Section 3

The procedure for impeachment of an Executive Board member shall be as follows:

- a) A date for addressing the impeachment must be communicated to the Executive Board with at least 2 weeks notice.
- b) An Executive Board meeting shall be held with 90% attendance of the remaining Executive Board members.
- c) The Executive Board member in questions shall be given the opportunity to voice their position at this meeting.
- d) Other Executive Board members shall be given the opportunity to ask questions of the Executive Board member in question.
- e) A vote for impeachment shall be conducted without the Executive Board member in question being present.
- f) The vote for impeachment shall pass if 4/5ths of the Executive Board members present vote in favor.
- g) If 4/5ths of the Executive Board does not vote for impeachment, the said Executive Board member shall retain their position and all privileges/rights therein.

ARTICLE XI: Removal of a Member

Section 1

Any member may indicate an intention to resign membership in NSA by filing a written resignation with the Executive Board through the President. In case of resignation, no fees or dues covering the remainder of the year shall be remitted/refunded to the member who resigned.

Section 2

Removal of a member is warranted under the following (including but not limited to):

- a) Engaging in violations of the University of Houston in regard to Student Organizations (discrimination, assault, and other deviances) that may render negative attributions to NSA.
- b) Violating the constitution of NSA and/or violating other statutes deemed relevant within University guidelines.
- c) Theft and/or destruction of funds, materials, or facilities of NSA.
- d) Malicious conduct deemed detrimental to NSA.

Section 3

- a) Before removal of a member can be considered, a petition must be signed by at least one-third of the membership and submitted to the Executive Board.
- b) The given member shall be given the opportunity to appear before the membership and plead their case.
 - i. Said member shall be given two possible dates for this appeal.
 - ii. After the appeal, or the second missed appeal date, the membership shall vote on removal.
- c) If three-fourths of the membership votes for removal, the said member will lose all member privileges/rights. No fees or dues covering the remainder of the year shall be remitted/refunded.
- d) If three-fourths of the membership does not vote for removal, the said member shall retain all privileges/rights of membership.

ARTICLE XII: Parliamentary Authority

Meetings and events, in regard to this segment of the constitution will be left exclusively to norms deemed relevant by the executive board.

ARTICLE XIII: Amendment of Constitution

Section 1

This constitution shall take effect immediately following acceptance of two-thirds of a quorum of members present.

Section 2

Any member may propose amendments, provided that it has the signature, or sponsorship of an officer of the executive board. The amendments must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Board members present.