

**The Vietnamese Student Association  
Box 75 Stamp Student Union  
University of Maryland  
College Park, MD 20742**

## **Constitution**

**\*As revised September 11, 2006**

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Vietnamese Student Association do hereby establish this constitution in order so that our purposes are realized to their fullest extent.

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

**Section 1.** The name of this organization will be called the Vietnamese Student Association.

## **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

**Section 1.** The Vietnamese Student Association's purposes are as follows:

1. To introduce, preserve, and maintain the awareness of the Vietnamese culture and traditions through community services, cultural events which are sponsored by the Vietnamese Student Association with the collaboration of surrounding communities and the University.
2. The association also attempts to establish friendship and unity among students, the University, the Vietnamese community, and all supporters thereof.

**Section 2.** The Vietnamese Student Association will abide by all established University policies.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** Any student currently enrolled, or have been enrolled in the past (i.e., Alumni), are eligible for membership.

**Section 2.** In addition, the following requirements are necessary to constitute active membership.

1. Payment in full of any and all financial obligations as determined by the organization.
2. Active participation in activities sponsored by the Vietnamese Student Association unless the activity conflicts with either scholastic or personal affairs.

**Section 3.** The Vietnamese Student Association does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, personal appearance, age,

national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, or on the basis of the exercise of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

#### **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The Vietnamese Student Association will be governed by three bodies: The Executive, the Co-Executive, and the Administrative officers.  
*Barring the Executive officers, Treasurer, and Secretary, all additional subordinate positions are subject to modification each year according to the need of said positions or availability of student participation.*

1. The general member body of the Vietnamese Student Association shall elect the President and two Vice Presidents, here and thereafter shall be called the Executive Officers.
  - A. The elected President shall:
    - a. Preside at all possible meetings of the Vietnamese Student Association.
    - b. Present all motions to the general member body.
    - c. Be empowered to make decisions concerning all activities and finance.
    - d. Oversee planning and execution of all activities.
    - e. Work with the Treasurer on annual budget requests to the Student Government Association (SGA).
  - B. The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall:
    - a. Preside at all in-house meetings and functions which the President cannot attend.
    - b. Assist the President in coordinating events relating to the SGA, the Office of Campus Affairs, and any other campus governing bodies.
    - c. Be responsible for reserving needed spaces on campus as well as necessary paperwork for the functions of the Vietnamese Student Association with the Secretary.
    - d. Assist other officers when needed.
    - e. Make all decisions in the absence of the President.
    - f. Serve as the liaison with the SGA and attend SGA functions.
    - g. Serve as the liaison with other on-campus organizations.
  - C. The Vice President of External Affairs shall:
    - a. Preside at all off-campus meetings and functions with and without the President.
    - b. Serve as the liaison with other off-campus organizations.

- c. Coordinate events with off-campus organizations.
- d. Work with the Public Relations Director to contact off-campus organizations and to promote events of the Vietnamese Student Association.

2. The association will also maintain a Co-Executive body of officers consisting of:

A. The Treasurer

- a. Will coordinate the distribution of funds with the general approval of the President.
- b. Shall provide monthly accounting records, as well as upon request of the members of the officiating bodies.
- c. Will serve as a SGA liaison, attend SGA treasurer meetings and workshops.
- e. Will initiate fundraising activities as necessary for the Vietnamese Student Association.

B. The Secretary

- a. Shall maintain all membership information
- b. Will coordinate or assist in coordinating activities involving the enlistment of new members.
- c. Record all materials discussed at meetings, protocol, provide minutes of meetings, etc.
- d. Will be responsible for communications within the officiating bodies.
- e. Shall assist the Vice President of Internal Affairs with paperwork and forms for functions of the Vietnamese Student Association.
- f. Will work with the Public Relations on promoting membership drives.

C. The Public Relations Director

- a. Shall serve as the spokesperson for the Vietnamese Student Association.
- b. Will maintain the Vietnamese Student Association's image through different activities.
- c. Shall maintain a close communication between the association, members, and the public through publications, electronic mail, posting of flyers, and any such means appropriate.

- d. Will work the Secretary for membership drives.
- D. The Activities Director
- a. Will coordinate activities and projects generated and approved by the Vietnamese Student Association.
  - b. Shall be empowered to distribute tasks and responsibilities in relation to these events to the officers, as necessary.
  - c. Will work with the Secretary and Public Relations to promote events.
  - d. Will be responsible for preserving and documenting all of the Vietnamese Student Association's functions (i.e., photographs, video tapes, etc.).
  - e. Will assume the responsibilities of Family Night in the absence of a Family Night Director, if necessary.
- E. The Family Night Director
- a. Will coordinate the annual Vietnamese Cultural Show called "Family Night."
  - b. Shall be empowered to distribute tasks and responsibilities relating to this event to any officer.
3. The association shall also maintain an Administrative body of officers consisting of:
- A. The Faculty Advisor
- a. Is appointed and can only be changed upon the approval of all Vietnamese Student Association officers.
  - b. Must be informed and given documentation of all officer's meetings, general assembly meetings, as well as all paperwork involved in the Vietnamese Student Association activities.
  - c. Is directly involved and oversees the impeachment process.
  - d. Aids in the coordination of on-campus activities as needed.
- B. Two Senior Advisors
- a. Appointed and can only be changed upon the approval of all officers.
  - b. Assists in any event, promotes and offers advice to officers to ensure the success of the Vietnamese Student Association.

## **ARTICLE V – OPERATIONS**

### **Section 1. Voting Eligibility**

1. Those members meeting all requirements of active membership as set forth in Article III will be granted voting privileges.

**Section 2.** Term of Office

1. One full term of office officially starts two weeks after the spring semester and lasts until two weeks after the next spring term ends.
2. New Administrative Recognition paperwork has to be filed between election day and commencement.
3. During the first month that the new administration holds office, the previous administration shall maintain a strong influence and train the new officers, transfer files and paperwork, etc.
4. Any governing position is subject to a maximum of two consecutive terms.

**Section 3.** Election

1. Election will be held in the month of April.
2. Prior to election date:
  - A. An election committee shall be created by the President or his/her appointed designate. The committee shall coordinate events involved with the election of the next President and Vice Presidents. Any member currently enrolled at the University and will continue to be enrolled throughout the next term, will be eligible for candidacy. A committee composed of 2-5 designated members, appointed by the President, shall oversee the elections process and will not be eligible to vote.
  - B. All candidates running for office must submit an application to the election committee by the set deadline after fully reading and understanding the responsibilities of the office they are seeking to run for.
  - C. If more than three candidates are running for Presidency, the committee will choose the best three candidates. Those three will be in the election and must participate in a formal debate, based on the application review and their experience.
  - D. If the President wishes to run for another term, the Vice President shall automatically assume the role of appointing a committee.

- a. If the Vice President wishes to run, the Treasurer will appoint a committee, etc.
    - b. The order of appointing the committee will be as follows:
      - i. President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, Activities Coordinator, Senior Advisors, most active Vietnamese Student Association member.
  - E. All executive officers will be elected. Co-executive officers will be elected unless special circumstances arise that inhibit election, in which case the newly elected President will appoint Co-executive officers but must be approved by the Vice Presidents.
3. Election Process:
- A. New President and Vice Presidents will be elected by a majority vote of eligible voting members of the Vietnamese Student Association. All elections will be held on an annual basis.
  - B. If there is only one candidate for the position, he/she will need the majority vote (more than 50% yes) to be elected into office.
  - C. All voting shall be done by secret ballot to be collected and tabulated by the election committee, and a member appointed by the current President.
  - D. Members have to show University ID and registration to obtain voting ballots, however, active non-current University students may receive a pardon.
  - E. Members should attend the election debate in order to vote.
  - F. Members that cannot attend the election can cast their votes through absentee ballots only if approved by the election committee.
  - G. Results will be announced when all votes, including the absentee ballots, are cast.
4. Absentee Ballots:
- A. Absentee ballots shall be available for members that cannot attend the election but must be submitted five days prior to the election date.

- B. Members are required to know about the debate and understand the platforms of the candidates through debate summaries which can be obtained from the election committee.
- C. Absentee ballots will also be collected and tabulated by the election committee.
- D. All candidates and current officers cannot be eligible for an absentee ballot.

**Section 4.** Resignations

- 1. If the President or Vice Presidents resign, elections will be held again.
- 2. Members up to the date of resignation may vote for the new President or Vice President.
- 3. Any officer who resigns must continue to hold office until the new officer is elected and gives up all rights and properties belonging to the Vietnamese Student Association.

**ARTICLE VI – FINANCES**

**Section 1.** The Vietnamese Student Association will finance the activities it engages in by the following means:

- 1. Membership dues paid by every member.
- 2. Submitting a budget to the SGA Finance Committee on an annual basis with the request of funding appropriate to the effective operation of the Vietnamese Student Association.
- 3. By conducting any other fundraising activities.
- 4. All finances shall be used solely for the functions and purposes determined by the Vietnamese Student Association.

**ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** The Vietnamese Student Association will have at least two general body meetings per semester.

## **ARTICLE VIII – IMPEACHMENT**

- Section 1.** Any officer who violates the constitution will be impeached upon the consensus of 2/3 the majority of the Vietnamese Student Association’s body of general members.
- Section 2.** Procedures:
1. If an officer wishes to impeach a violating officer, that officer must submit a written report to the faculty advisor stating why he/she believes the officer in question has violated the constitution. In addition to the report, a petition must be signed by at least ½ of the body of general members.
  2. If a member wishes to impeach any officer, that member must submit a written report to the faculty advisor stating why he/she believes the officer in question has violated the constitution. In addition to the report, a petition must be signed by at least 2/3 of the body of general members.
  3. The faculty advisor then will personally review the conduct of the officer in question, after which he/she will call upon the election of a new officer or veto the impeachment report. Only one appeal to the veto may be accepted.

## **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS**

- Section 1.** The constitution is binding to all members of the Vietnamese Student Association.
- Section 2.** The constitution must be distributed to all members and also after any changes have been made.
- Section 3.** Any modifications within the constitution will be approved by the members’ relative consensus (2/3 approval) of those who are present at the time of modification.
- Section 4.** The changes of the Vietnamese Student Association constitution must be initiated by the President or 2/3 majority of members.

## **AMENDMENTS**

1. The Vietnamese Student Association’s officiating body will have one mandatory meetings per month. The President can call upon any special meetings if necessary.
2. The cost of membership is determined by the officiating body.

3. Membership information will be confidential and shall only be used for the purposes deemed appropriate by the association. No information will be given out without the consent of the member.
4. The following are recommended for the successful operation of the Vietnamese Student Association:
  - A. Historians – photograph the group’s annual activities and archive photographs
  - B. One Family Night Director – direct the annual cultural performance
  - C. Community service chair – spearhead all charitable activity toward the Vietnamese community and ensure active group participation
  - D. One Webmaster – to maintain and revise the official website as necessary
5. A Senior Advisor:
  - A. Advises the officiating body when needed.
  - B. Does not have to be involved with planning and executing functions within the organization.
  - C. Shall use his/her knowledge and experience to advise the officiating body to the best of his/her potential.
  - D. Shall assist officers and members resolving any internal conflicts or difficulties.
  - E. Does not vote and is not part of the impeachment process, but is allowed to sign an impeachment petition.
6. This constitution may be revised at any time deemed appropriate to ensure that no problems arise but must be initiated by at least ½ of the officiating body.
7. All officers or candidates running for office must be undergraduate students.
8. Any dues set by the association may be waived and is not a requirement for voting or active membership.
9. All voting members must be undergraduates.