

# The African Initiative - Constitution

## Article I Name

- (a) The name of the organization shall be The African Initiative.

## Article II Purpose/Goals

- (a) To raise awareness of the challenges African communities in African countries face, and how it has an impact on their lives.
- (b) To support and share the stories of local, African-owed NGOs
- (c) To share with the Plattsburgh community the stories of individuals in local African communities as a way of better understanding said obstacles
- (d) To collaborate with local NGOs in African communities in order to bring about awareness of the obstacles local African communities face
- (e) To host fundraisers in order to raise money for partner NGOs
- (f) To give students the opportunity to become a part of a bigger movement, which aims to bridge the gap between SUNY Plattsburgh students and local African communities

## Article III Officers

### Section A: Officer Positions and Responsibilities

- (a) **President:** The main liaison between the VP for Organizations and the club. They must attend the mandatory SA club meeting held every semester.

Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Presides over meetings of the organization
- Calls special meetings of the organization
- Facilitates executive board meetings
- Prepares and files any report required
- Appoints committee chair people
- Maintains contact with organization adviser
- Maintains contact with organization alumni
- Maintains contact with affiliated university department or community partner
- Maintains contact with (inter)national organization(s)
- Represents the organization to the University
- Serves as a spokesperson for the organization
- Serves as a secondary signatory on financial accounts
- Assists all executive officers

- Provides follow-up to organizational tasks
- Organizes executive board retreats
- Coordinates executive board officer transitions
- Represents organization at official functions
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making processes
- Provides encouragement and motivation to fellow officers and organization members

(b) **Vice President:** Assists president in any way fit. They will perform duties of the president in the absence or inability of the president to do so.

Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Assumes the duties of the President in his or her absence
- Serves as an ex-officio member of standing committees
- Directs Constitutional updating and revisions
- Facilitates election of officers
- Recruits new members
- Serves as Parliamentarian
- Represents organization at official functions
- Remains fair and impartial during organizational decision making processes
- Performs other duties as directed by the President

(c) **Treasurer:** Serves as the liaison between VP for finances and the club. They handle the club's financial matters. Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Is familiar with accounting procedures and policies
- Serves as the primary signatory on financial accounts
- Serves as chair of the finance committee
- Keeps all financial records of the organization
- Prepares an annual budget
- Prepares all budget requests for funds
- Prepares and submits financial reports to the members
- Maintains a financial history of the organization
- Provides advisor with summary of financial records at the end of the academic year
- Advises members on financial matters (i.e. vendors, ticket selling procedures)
- Prepares purchase orders, requisition forms, or supply requests
- Coordinates fundraising drive
- Coordinates solicitations
- Files reports on all stolen or lost equipment
- Maintains an inventory of all equipment and its condition
- Represents organization at official functions
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making processes

(d) **Secretary:** Takes any records the club sees fit, such as attendance or meeting minutes. Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Obtains appropriate facilities for organization activities
- Keeps a record of all members of the organization
- Keeps a record of all activities of the organization
- Prepares an agenda with the President for all meetings
- Notifies all members of meetings
- Prepares organization's calendar of events
- Keeps the organization informed of both organizational and university business
- Keeps and distributes minutes of each meeting of the organization
- Creates and distributes agendas for each meeting of the organization
- Maintains attendance at all meetings
- Serve as the organization's recognition and appreciation coordinator
- Maintains organizational records, storage, and office
- Prepares and files any report required *f* Handles all official correspondence of the organization
- Collects organization mail from the adviser or wherever mail is received
- Represents organization at official functions
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making process

(e) **Public Relations Coordinator:** Publicize and promote club-related activities, particularly the progress and stories of the NGOs. Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Works with Publics Relations Committee and the Executive Board to best educate campus community by sharing progress as a club
- Presides over Public Relations Committee meetings
- Calls special meetings of the Public Relations Committee as needed
- Promotes club activities
- Helps create club awareness among students
- Represents organization at official functions
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making process

(f) **Fundraising Coordinator:** organize social events/fundraisers that highlight the organization. Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Works with Fundraising Committee and the Executive Board to organize and execute plans for fundraisers
- Maintaining social calendar
- Keeping record of fundraisers and their planning
- Work with treasurer to plan fundraisers
- Represents organization at official functions
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making process

(g) **Historian:** Keeps record of the club's accomplishments and activities for the year. Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Keeping all records/documentation of the club's activities in a folder neatly
- Updating club records weekly
- Maintains alumni relations
- Creates and distributes club newsletters
- Takes club pictures for web-page/newsletter, etc.
- Represents organization at official functions
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making process

#### Section B: Terms of Office

- (a) The officers of the organization shall be the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations, Social Chair, and Historian.
- (b) The election of the organization officers shall be conducted according to the rules outlined in Article VII.
- (c) To be eligible for the office of President, Vice-president, Recorder or Treasurer, a candidate must meet the following requirements:
  - Attend SUNY Plattsburgh for both the Fall and Spring semester of his/her term in the office
- (d) The term of office of the Student Body Officers shall be one academic year, beginning with the first day of Fall Semester classes, and terminating the last day when Spring Semester classes end.

### **Article IV Membership**

#### Section A: Voting Member

- (a) A voting member is defined as a member who pays the Student Association fee
- (b) Voting membership is open to anyone that is a Student Association member and has paid the SA fee.

#### Section B: Active Member

- (a) An active member is defined as a member who actively participates in the organization's fundraisers, weekly meetings and projects, and pays the Student Association fee.

### **Article V Elections**

#### Section A: Elections

- (a) Elections will be held in the Spring semester in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April.
- (b) Elections will be held at a general meeting
- (c) Any member who has attended no less than three meetings shall qualify as an active member, and has the right to vote.
- (d) Anyone from the general member body of the organization is free to run for any available officer positions
- (e) Quorum vote for officer election will be twenty-five percent of membership

### Section B: Officer Impeachment

- (a) In the case of impeachment, the following conditions must be met before a recall election is held to recall an officer:
  - i. The officer in question must have met at least one of the following conditions:
    - Excessive absenteeism
    - Failure to perform duties
    - Violation of the terms of the bylaws stated in the constitution
    - Violation of the SUNY Plattsburgh student conduct terms
    - Violation of the Student Association Club and Organization Risk Management Policy (outlined in Article VIII)
  - ii. Before holding a recall election, the officer in question has to attend a meeting with the organization advisor, president and vice-president. He or she has the right to state his or her case at the meeting, and may be issued one verbal warning by the President.
  - iii. If issued a warning but the officer repeats the action, he or she is given the option to resign. If not, he or she has to attend the recall election.
- (b) The recall election will be held at the next weekly board meeting where the officer in question will be allowed to state his or her case to the board members. The board members will then vote and if the majority (2/3 or more) of the board is in favor of the officer's case, he or she is permitted to remain officer (on probation for a semester).
- (c) If the majority (two-thirds or more) of the board is not in favor of the officer's case, he or she must step down from his or her position on the board. A new officer will be elected in the officer replacement process (as outlined in Article V, Section C).

### Section C: Officer Replacement

- (a) Temporary replacements for recalled officers will be chosen at the discretion of the organization's board

- (b) Permanent replacements will be open to the general members of the organization and elected at a general meeting

## **Article VI Meetings**

### Section A: General Meetings

- (a) A weekly General Meeting shall be held once a week for the duration of each semester.
- (b) Notices of the General Meeting shall be emailed to the general members of the organization 24 hours beforehand; notices include when and where the meeting will take place as well as the agenda items.
- (c) A Special General Meeting may be called at any time at the request of the committee, or not less than twenty-five percent of the membership. A notice explaining the place, date, time and reason shall be sent to all members a week beforehand.
- (d) Quorum for this club will be twenty-five percent of membership or five members being present, whichever is the greater.

### Section B: Executive Meetings

- (a) A weekly Executive Meeting shall be held once a week for the duration of each semester
- (b) Notices of the Executive Meeting shall be emailed to the executive board members of the organization 24 hours beforehand; notices include when and where the meeting will take place as well as agenda items.
- (c) A Special Executive Meeting may be called at any time at the request of the President, Vice-President and/or Advisor. A notice explaining the place, date, time and reason shall be sent to all executive board members three weeks beforehand.
- (d) Executive Meetings are mandatory for all executive board members, and absence from weekly executive meetings must be noted to the President and/or Vice-President at least 24 hours beforehand.

## **Article VII Advisor**

### Section A: Advisor Function and Requirements

- (a) An advisor should be a full-time employee of SUNY Plattsburgh. This staff member serves as the primary advisor to the student organization.
- (b) Advisors are required to attend the various social events of the student organizations they advise, held during and after normal business hours.

- (c) Advisors may assist at the door of an event, checking identification of students as they enter and will supervise the cash operation of any event.
- (d) In the case of an emergency at such an event, the advisor should exercise his/her best judgment

#### Section B: Advisor Responsibilities and Duties

- (a) Take an active role in advising the student organization.
- (b) Know the general purpose of the organization and be familiar with all provisions outlined in the organization's constitution and bylaws.
- (c) Know the officers of the organization and the current members of the organization.
- (d) Meet with the organization's president on a regular basis (at least once per month).
- (e) Remain informed of all activities sponsored and conducted by the student organization and attend events as feasible.
- (f) Establish with the student organization president the manner and frequency in which the advisor will participate in the organization's activities, e.g., programs, social events, and meetings.
- (g) Be knowledgeable about and adhere to University policies and procedures which pertain to student organization and inform the student organization president of his/her responsibility to do the same.
- (h) Be knowledgeable of policies and procedures listed in the Student Association Club and Organization Risk Management Policy and review this code with the student organization president.
- (i) Offer guidance to the organization on goal setting, organization management, program planning, problem solving and group evaluation.
- (j) Know the organization's process for obtaining new members.
- (k) Report any activities that may or will violate University policies.

#### **Article VIII Risk Management**

- (a) All executive board members must be knowledgeable of policies and procedures listed in the Student Association Club and Organization Risk Management Policy and review this code with the student organization president.
- (b) The Student Association Club and Organization Risk Management Policy can be found at <http://organizations.plattsburgh.edu/sa/resources.html>

#### **Article IX Amendments**

- (a) This Constitution may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Members of the Organization.
- (b) Any amendment to this Constitution shall be attached hereto and made a part hereof for all purposes.
- (c) This Constitution and any amendments and changes hereto shall be filed by the club with the Office of Student Activities and shall be available to any Member of the Organization for inspection during office hours.

**Article X**  
**Responsibilities**

- (a) This organization shall be responsible for obeying all student association policies, school, state, country and federal laws.

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