

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT VETERANS ORGANIZATION AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT VETERANS ORGANIZATION AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

ARTICLE I. INTRODUCTION

SECTION I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be Student Veterans Organization at Syracuse University, hereinafter referred to as SVOSU.

SECTION II: MISSION STATEMENT

The SVOSU mission is to provide veterans, military connected students, and military family members who attend Syracuse University or SUNY ESF the resources, support, and advocacy needed to succeed in higher education

To help provide veterans and military-connected students, faculty and staff the opportunity to continue to serve through community outreach, involvement, and volunteering.

SECTION III: OBJECTIVES

To achieve its mission, the SVOSU will:

- Assist new student veterans achieve a smooth transition to college life by providing advising and counseling.
- Serve as an outreach mechanism for student veterans, school administrators/faculty, and the campus community.
- Assist veterans in identifying and accessing the many services and benefits available to them by providing information and support.
- Educate campus and community members regarding current issues facing our veterans.
- Work with other campus and community organizations who support our mission and advocate on behalf of our veterans.
- Build camaraderie and provide a peer and professional network for student veterans.
- Work closely with other veteran advocacy groups (IVMF, VFW, American Legion, IAVA, etc.) to improve the relationships within the community and elsewhere and attend non-university events to increase knowledge and enhance perspectives.
- Build a positive military community and become involved on campus and in the community by conducting social, fundraising, networking, and advocacy events.

ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall consist of the SVO Officers and advisors.

SECTION I.I: SVO OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

PRESIDENT

Represent SVOSU on campus and in the community, effectively engaging individuals and organizations to foster relationships and positive connections.

The President shall be aware of and ensure compliance with all relevant Student Association (SA) and Student Veterans of America (SVA) policies and procedures; the President shall serve as a liaison between the SVOSU and SVA, and keep members and officers informed of SVA opportunities and priorities.

The President shall attend necessary meetings, training and information sessions, and maintain communication with pertinent personnel.

Generate and disseminate relevant, timely, and appropriate communications intended to keep SVOSU officers, pertinent staff and faculty, organization members and supporters informed of events and SVOSU initiatives.

Oversee all events sponsored by the SVOSU by coordinating and delegating responsibilities to other officers, active members, and/or committees. Special emphasis must be placed on availability and presence at said events.

Set agendas of meetings; effectively facilitate inclusion of guest speakers, obtain and coordinate catering when necessary, and procure alternate accommodations when appropriate.

Conduct meetings in an organized and efficient manner.

When appropriate, seek to express gratitude to outside entities for their general support and participation in special events.

The President shall have the authority to sign contracts and conduct financial transactions on behalf of the organization. Additionally, the President shall attend budget hearings as necessary.

The President shall be present at all Executive Board and General Body meetings, and all events in which the SVOSU participates as an organization. In the event of an absence, the Secretary shall note the absence and the provided reason for the absence. Every effort shall be made to remain for the entirety of a given event, and leaving early or arriving late shall be considered an absence if a given reason is not approved by the remainder of the Officers.

VICE PRESIDENT

Assist the President with duties as appropriate.

Assume all Presidential duties in the event the President is unable to be present or is otherwise unavailable.

The Vice President shall be aware of and ensure compliance with all relevant SA and SVA policies and procedures, attending necessary meetings, training and information sessions, and maintaining communication with pertinent personnel.

Establish committees as necessary to achieve the objectives of the SVOSU, actively and appropriately supervise to ensure progress and satisfactory performance.

Oversee Treasurer activity to ensure financial compliance, and ensure committees are in compliance with the financial policies of the SVOSU and relevant financial institutions.

Supervise all SVOSU Liaisons (See Section III).

The President shall have the authority to sign contracts and conduct financial transactions on behalf of the organization. If the President is unable to attend budget hearings, the Vice President shall take their place.

The Vice President shall be present at all Executive Board and General Body meetings, and all events in which the SVOSU participates as an organization. In the event of an absence, the Secretary shall note the absence and the provided reason for the absence. Every effort shall be made to remain for the entirety of a given event, and leaving early or arriving late shall be considered an absence if a given reason is not approved by the remainder of the Officers.

TREASURER

Maintain accurate records of all money spent and received by the SVOSU and give a budget update at all meetings.

Shall conduct a bi-annual financial audit; the first audit shall be conducted by the Faculty Advisor and the second shall be conducted by another of the Executive Board advisors.

Conduct all financial transactions on behalf of the SVOSU or delegate to appropriate individuals as necessary.

Oversee financial activities of all committees, liaisons, and special appointees.

Help prepare budget proposals, requests, and appeals; attend budget hearings.

Adhere to the financial policies and procedures of the Student Association (SA) Finance Board.

The Treasurer shall serve as the liaison between the SVOSU and the SA and the SVA concerning financial matters. The treasurer should be familiar with all relevant SA and SVA policies and procedures.

The Treasurer shall be aware of all dates & deadlines for SA funding and grants.

Delegate authority and specific, relevant duties to committees when appropriate.

Shall manage the SVO store both physically and electronically. Shall bring to the Executive Board's attention the need to reorder stock for the store.

Shall maintain relationships with the Syracuse University Bookstore merchandise manager as well as the Office of Marketing and Communications.

Assist other Executive Officers as needed.

Delegate authority and specific, relevant duties to committees when appropriate.

SECRETARY

Keep accurate minutes, in the form of notes, at every General Body, Executive Board, and Officer meeting.

Post General Body minutes or make them otherwise available to all members of the SVOSU (see Section VII). Executive Board and Officer meeting minutes shall be made available in a manner accessible only to Officers/the Executive Board.

Keep a record of attendance at all meetings, and at events, special programs, etc. as deemed appropriate by the President.

Maintain written records of organization activities and save any documentation of club members or Alumni who have excelled in any way for the enhancement of Syracuse University and/or student veterans.

Maintain and amend SVOSU e-mail distribution lists and e-mail mechanisms as necessary.

Oversee SVOSU elections (See Article IV).

Assist other Executive Officers as needed.

Delegate authority and specific, relevant duties to committees when appropriate.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Attend SA meetings when necessary, keeping attentive notes of information relative to the SVOSU, and report back the Executive Board and members at next meeting.

Act as spokesperson for the SVOSU when the President and Vice President are unavailable.

Oversee public relations and collaboration with other Student Organizations, Veteran Advocacy Groups, etc.

Use social media and networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, OrgSync, etc.) to inform the public of activities and accomplishments of the SVOSU.

Oversee and approve all official communications on behalf of the SVOSU, to include communications published through social media.

Supervise members appointed to maintain website and curate content appropriately.

Delegate authority and specific, relevant duties to committees when appropriate.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Plan, direct, and coordinate participation in organizational events and activities designed to enhance interaction with, and service to, the campus and wider community.

Ensure all events conducted with outside entities comply with pertinent rules and regulations.

Increase awareness of the SVOSU mission and involvement in the SU and Syracuse communities through recruitment.

Develop community outreach plans and identify potential opportunities to enhance and promote the SVOSU mission.

Responsible for planning and executing effective tabling events in order to increase awareness and encourage participation in the SVOSU.

Responsible for the procurement of promotional merchandise (pens, small mementos, pins, etc.) to distribute at tabling and other pertinent events.

Delegate authority and specific, relevant duties to committees when appropriate.

SECTION I.II: QUALIFICATIONS FOR BECOMING AN OFFICER

Must be an SU or ESF student.

Must maintain a GPA of 2.5 for any officer and 3.0 for President and Vice President.

Must be a member in good standing for at least 1 semester and/or have specific skills or relevant experience that qualifies you to hold an officer position.

Military experience is required in order to be considered for Presidency or Vice-Presidency.

Military experience is preferred but not required for all other positions.

The office of President and Vice President must be full time, on-campus students.

Waivers and exceptions to requirements may be provided on a case-by-case basis with majority approval by officers and Faculty Advisor.

SECTION I.III: TERMS OF OFFICE

Officers of SVOSU shall be elected annually, during the third week of March.

Officer training will take place after elections during the month of April and will continue until the end of the semester.

An effective and thorough turnover shall be conducted for each position. Turnovers shall be reviewed and approved by the Faculty Advisor.

Each elected officer shall serve a term of one year starting 1 May to 30 April.

During their terms, each Officer shall create and maintain turnover documentation to ensure a smooth transition for incoming Officers. The Treasurer should maintain especially detailed records of all SVOSU accounts, to include budgets, transaction ledgers, etc.

SECTION II: SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS

As necessary, the Officers can appoint designated VA Work-Study students in order to accomplish specific tasks to support the Organization. Appropriate examples would include publishing and maintenance of the SVOSU website, design and distribution of promotional material, etc.

Appointee duties and expectations shall be clearly outlined and agreed upon prior to instatement. Appointees shall report to the Vice President for direction and supervision.

SECTION III: COMMITTEES

SECTION III.I: TYPES OF COMMITTEES

Committees will be established as needed by the President and the other Executive Board Members.

Committees will be under the authority of relevant SVO Officers; however, the Vice President shall maintain direct supervision of all committees. Committees shall be charged with providing budgets, invoices, funding requests, etc. to the Treasurer prior to any expenditure on behalf of the SVOSU.

SECTION III.II: TEMPORARY/SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The formation of all committees is subject to membership approval and must fall within the mission and purpose of SVOSU. The continuation of committees must be constantly reassessed and based on the needs of the organization.

SECTION IV: ADVISORS

The SVOSU will be counseled and assisted by three advisors. The Advisors will consist of one faculty advisor, the Executive Director of the Office of Veteran and Military Affairs (OVMA), and the Director of the Veteran's Resource Center (VRC).

SECTION IV.I: SELECTION OF FACULTY ADVISOR

The SVOSU Faculty advisor must be nominated by any member of the club and be elected by a majority vote of the current Officers.

SECTION IV.II: QUALIFICATIONS

The advisor must be a faculty or staff member at Syracuse University and he/she must also have a sincere interest in the hardships and issues that student veterans face.

SECTION IV.III: TERMS OF OFFICE

The Faculty Advisor will serve a one year term from February 1st to January 30th. Continued service will be reassessed by the Advisor and Officers beginning November 1st of each year. In the event a Faculty Advisor does not wish to extend their service, he or she will submit a letter to the Executive Board no later than December 1st, which will be read at the following General Body meeting. At this time, nominations for a replacement will be collected by the Secretary for a period of five days following the meeting, and an Officer vote will be conducted prior to the end of the semester. Approval of the Officers' decision shall be accomplished through a General Body vote during the first meeting of the Spring Semester.

Should a Faculty Advisor quit his or her job, resign their duties as the Faculty Advisor, or be otherwise unavailable, an interim Advisor shall be appointed within 7 days, and a replacement shall be designated within 4 weeks.

SECTION IV.IV: ROLES AND DUTIES OF AN ADVISOR

The role of the advisor is to provide support and guidance to the members while adhering to the mission and purpose of the organization. The advisor is highly encouraged to participate in the meetings and events.

SECTION V: ORGANIZATION CONSULTANT

Every student organization is assigned an organization consultant out of the Office of Student Life. The Office of Student Life reserves the right to assign and change the organization's assigned organization consultant. The appointed person will be a professional staff member out of the Office of Student Life and will act as a resource and guide to the organization in the program planning process.

The President and Vice President shall be charged with maintaining communication with the consultant as necessary.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION I: MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Active SVOSU membership is open to all SU/ESF students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members who have an interest in student veteran issues. Associate members will consist of membership outside of the SU/ESF student community. Associate members may attend meetings, speak at meetings as members of the audience, and assist with program events under the supervision of an active member. Associate members may not hold office, vote, or otherwise conduct organizational business, nor solicit funds on behalf of the organization.

Appropriate rules and disciplinary procedures shall be further outlined in a separate document, and be made public in an appropriate manner.

SECTION II: EXECUTIVE BOARD ELIGIBILITY

Active SVOSU members in good standing, meeting the above described criteria will be considered for election to Executive Board positions.

SECTION III: COMMITTEE ELIGIBILITY

All members are eligible to participate in a committee and are highly encouraged to do so. Any member involved in a temporary/special committee is expected to uphold their responsibilities and contribute to the overall mission of the club and the committee.

SECTION IV: EXECUTIVE BOARD RESIGNATION

An Executive Board member may resign their position at any time. The board member that wishes to resign is required to notify the Executive Board and all advisors immediately of their resignation. The Executive Board member must write a detailed letter of resignation to be read off by the Faculty Advisor at the next General Body meeting.

SECTION IV.I: PROCEDURE FOR FILLING VACATED OFFICES

If an officer position is vacated for any reason, within seven days, the Executive Board will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the individual's term if less than fifty percent remains. If greater than fifty percent of the term remains, an interim appointment will be made, followed by an election for that position. The officer holding the next lowest position shall be offered the position first. The member that is being considered for office must abide by all outlines stated in section I.II.

Officer succession is as listed above.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICER ELECTION/SELECTION PROCESS

SECTION I: TIME AND PERIOD WHEN SELECTION OCCURS

Officers of SVOSU shall be elected annually, during the third week in March. Each elected Officer shall serve a term of one year starting 1 May to 30 April.

SECTION II: NOMINATIONS

A person may be nominated or self-nominated who is in good standing with the SVOSU. All nominations will be provided to the current Secretary no later than March 1st. Nominees and self-nominees will be required to provide a short biography, and a short essay outlining their qualifications. Nominees may also include a statement about their vision for the SVOSU, and how their service will benefit the organization, the veteran community, and the SU community as a whole. If desired, nominees may submit a short video outlining the above information in lieu of a written submission.

SECTION III: ELECTION PROCEDURES

Following the conclusion of the nomination period, the Secretary will inform the membership and advisors of the candidates via e-mail, OrgSync, or another agreed upon method intended to reach every member. The Secretary will work closely with the Public Affairs Officer to ensure this is done appropriately.

The candidates and their viewpoints will be published no fewer than two times to ensure maximum exposure to allow for informed decisions, and the informational phase of the election will last for fourteen days.

After fourteen days, eligible voters will be invited to cast their votes utilizing a Google poll or other similar anonymous method. (Only the Secretary will be privy to the votes.) Votes will be cast for five days, after which the Secretary will calculate the results, and generate an announcement identifying the newly elected SVOSU Officers. The Secretary will work closely with the Public Affairs Officer to accomplish this in a professional manner accessible to the widest audience possible.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

SECTION I: TYPES OF MEETINGS

General Body Meetings shall be held at the Veteran's Lounge at University College, Room 310, 700 University Avenue, unless otherwise stated. Meetings are considered informal. All members are encouraged to attend, and the Secretary shall make notes of each person who attends each meeting.

The Executive Board meetings shall include all advisors and SVOSU Officers. The President shall be responsible for disseminating meeting information to the Advisors no less than seven business days prior to the meeting date. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis; however, ample notice must be given whenever possible out of respect and courtesy.

The SVO Officers shall also meet on their own without the Advisors. Any Officer may call for a meeting, as long as sufficient preparation time is given, and all other Officers are informed and aware of the meeting.

Special meetings shall be conducted on an as-needed basis, and will include all relevant members.

SECTION II: TIME AND OCCURRENCE OF MEETINGS

General Body Meetings shall occur twice monthly during the academic year under typical conditions. Set days and times for General Body Meetings are not required, and Officers should consider varying meeting occurrences to facilitate maximum participation.

The Executive Board shall meet once monthly or more frequently as necessary.

The SVO Officers shall meet weekly at a time most convenient for all Officers.

SECTION III: PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

General Consensus shall govern the conduct of business for the organization.

SECTION IV: VOTING

Only active members in good standing shall vote. As mentioned before, the Secretary shall determine the method of voting.

SECTION V: MEETING MINUTES AND RECORDS

The Secretary is responsible for taking notes and/or meeting minutes in accordance with Article I, Section I.I

ARTICLE VI. IMPEACHMENT

SECTION I: GROUNDS FOR REMOVAL

An Officer or member may be impeached and removed from the SVOSU for failure to perform the required duties in a competent manner, or for conduct which reflects poorly upon the organization.

Every effort should be made to remedy potential shortcomings as they arise. Written documents outlining concerns and plans for improvement must be generated whenever possible, and maintained for future records. These counselings will be conducted by any concerned Officer or Advisor.

Certain instances of misconduct or failure to perform duties may be deemed so serious corrective action may not be warranted. In this case, the charges shall be addressed immediately, see Section II.

SECTION II: PROCEDURE FOR INVOLUNTARY REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

In the event a member or Officer's conduct remains in question or they have not performed their duties adequately, even when steps necessary for improvement have been discussed and agreed upon (as set forth in Article VI, Section I), it shall be addressed as soon as is feasible and in a tactful and respectful manner. Adequate time must be given for improvement, and a second instance of the same shortcoming shall be sufficient for escalation.

The specific charge(s) shall be reviewed at a special Executive Board meeting, in which the member in question shall not be involved. Proof must be submitted to support the reporting party's claims. Following a detailed review, a 2/3 majority decision shall be made on whether to proceed with removal. Following this decision, the member in question will be notified, and invited to a second meeting.

If the member chooses to appeal, the Executive Board shall meet a second time and the member will be given an opportunity to defend him/herself.

Following the member's defense, the Executive Board shall vote in an anonymous manner decided upon by the Faculty Advisor. A 2/3 vote is required for removal.

SECTION III: PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL OF AN INVOLUNTARY REMOVAL DECISION

Following a decision to remove a member, said member has five days to submit an appeal of the decision in writing. The appeal shall be submitted to the Faculty Advisor, who will distribute the appeal to the remainder of the Executive Board.

The Executive Board will meet and consider the appeal. Should a majority conclude a reconsideration is in order, a General Body Meeting shall be convened as soon as possible. The appeal shall be presented to the General Body, and another vote, again directed by the Faculty Advisor, shall be conducted.

Should the General Body allow for a reversal of the previous decision, the member shall return to his or her duties in a probationary manner. The Executive Board shall have the power to remove the member summarily following a 2/3 vote in the event expectations and requirements are still not met.

ARTICLE VII. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SECTION I: AMENDMENT

Any active member can propose an amendment verbally, as in during a meeting, or in writing. Advance notice to the Executive Board is preferred but not required; an amendment may be proposed at any time.

The proposed amendment will be discussed and voted on at a special Executive Board meeting. A majority vote is required to approve further consideration of the amendment, and if further consideration is agreed upon, a vote will be conducted at the next General Body Meeting.

SECTION II: RATIFICATION

The proposed amendment will be presented at the next General Body Meeting, and will be voted upon during a five-day period, according to instructions and methods decided by the Secretary. A 2/3 vote by active members is required for an amendment to be approved.

Any approved amendments shall be considered effective immediately.

ARTICLE VIII – NOT-FOR-PROFIT STATEMENT

The Student Veterans Organization at Syracuse University is not a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

ARTICLE IX – FINANCIAL OBLIGATION

The SVOSU shall not impose dues or fees on members. Any debts or charges incurred by the organization or any member on behalf of the organization shall be covered by the funds on deposit. If there are inadequate funds available, the Executive Board shall convene to discuss remedies to the situation.

ARTICLE X – STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Syracuse University is an equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, or status as a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era to any extent discrimination is prohibited by law. This nondiscrimination policy covers admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs, services, and activities.

ARTICLE XI – STATEMENT OF NON-HAZING

This organization will not conspire to engage in hazing, as defined by New York Penal Law 120.16 and New York Penal Law 120.17, or commit any act that causes or is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any fellow student or person attending the institution.

ARTICLE XII – STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH CAMPUS REGULATIONS

This organization shall comply with the Syracuse University Code of Student Conduct.

THIS CONSTITUTION SHALL BE AGREED UPON BY ALL OFFICERS OF THE SVOSU

SIGNED AND AGREED UPON

President *Date*

Vice President *Date*

Treasurer *Date*

Secretary *Date*

Public Affairs Officer *Date*

Community Outreach Coordinator *Date*