The Ohio Innocence Project: Sanctioned Student Groups

OIP-u: [Ohio State University] Chapter

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Created: JUNE 2016

Article I: Name

§ 1.

§ 1.1. This association shall be known as OIP-u: Ohio State University Chapter (OIP-u: OSU)

Article II: General Provisions

§ 1.

§ 1.1. It shall be the purpose of OIP-u: Ohio State University Chapter to:

§ 1.1.1. Prevent Wrongful Conviction by promoting awareness of its existence on College Campuses and to generate student and community support for the Ohio Innocence Project, and its efforts to remedy for Wrongful Convictions.

§ 1.1.2. Host events designed to educate college students and the general public about the following topics: Wrongful Conviction; the causes of Wrongful Conviction; the plight of the wrongfully convicted; the efforts of the Ohio Innocence Project to prevent and remedy Wrongful in Ohio; and information related to Wrongful Conviction.

§ 1.1.3. Recruit members to help disseminate this information.

§ 1.1.4. Hold monthly, bi-weekly, or weekly meetings for members to discuss involvement in the organization and organizational activities.

§ 1.1.5. Support and promote the efforts of the Ohio Innocence Project through social media and campus media outlets.

§ 1.1.6. Participate in ONE annual fundraising event, the profits of which will be used to pay for resources for Exonerees—individuals who have been released from prison after having their convictions overturned.

§ 1.1.7. Host an annual event in October commemorating International Wrongful Conviction day.

§ 1.1.8. Host, at minimum, ONE other educational events during the academic school year to generate interest in the topic of Wrongful Conviction among
university students and to foster the growth of the associated student group. Examples of events: panel discussions, documentary film screenings, speaking engagements, and demonstrations.

§ 1.1.9. Designate representatives to attend the annual OIP-u Conference organized by the Ohio Innocence Project and held at the University of Cincinnati Law School in Cincinnati, Ohio.

§ 1.1.10. Create social media accounts and profiles to promote group events and the Ohio Innocence Project via social media. Share all posts on the OIP social media pages.

§ 1.1. It shall be the duty of OIP-u: OSU executive board to represent the members of OIP-u: OSU in all matters affecting OIP-u: OSU with the limitation that any representation reflecting the opinions or sympathies of OIP-u: OSU and The Ohio Innocence Project being made in the community outside the law school must be sanctioned by the Outreach Program Coordinator for the Ohio Innocence Project approved by two-thirds vote of OIP-u: OSU members, and follow within the guidelines of §§ 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.

§ 1.1.1. As a subset of the Ohio Innocence Project, all press releases, promotional materials, events and event topics must be approved by the Outreach Program Coordinator for the Ohio Innocence Project.

§ 1.1.2. Unless otherwise indicated, OIP-u: OSU will take no official stance on any social or criminal justice issues other than that of Wrongful Conviction.

§ 1.1.3. OIP-u: OSU must clearly maintain the understanding among members and the campus community that OIP-u: OSU is a non-legal advocate group associated with the Ohio Innocence Project, and that OIP-u: OSU does not actively engage in the review or litigation of Innocence cases.

§ 1.1.4. No member of OIP-u: OSU will promote or denounce prosecutors or defense attorneys and no member shall state an opinion with respect to these matters on behalf of OIP-u: OSU.

§ 1.2. Membership to OIP-u: OSU is open to any and all full and part time students of The Ohio State University who demonstrate a genuine interest in wrongful conviction subject matter and the desire to support and generate support for the Ohio Innocence Project.

§ 2.
§ 2.1. **CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:** Unless specifically stated otherwise in this constitution, the following guidelines shall apply to any candidate in any election sponsored by OIP-u: OSU.

§ 1.1.1. To be a candidate for any OIP-u: OSU elected or appointed office a person shall be enrolled as a full time or part time student.

§ 1.1.2. Any student wishing to run for an elected position must not anticipate graduation from school within 6 months of the Fall General Election.

§ 1.1.3. A certified candidate is defined as a candidate who meets the “candidacy requirements.”

§ 1.1.3.1. **Candidacy Requirements:**

§ 1.1.3.1.1. Submission of notification of candidacy (see § 2.2.1.)

§ 1.1.3.1.2. Attend the election or specified general meeting (see § 2.2.2.)

§ 1.2. **ELECTION GUIDELINES:** Unless specifically stated otherwise in this Constitution, the following guidelines shall apply to any election sponsored by OIP-u: OSU.

§ 1.2.1. Candidates for OIP-u: OSU Executive Cabinet positions of: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Activities Director must submit notification of candidacy to the existing OIP-u: OSU and/or interim representative President no later than the first week of April of each year with the exception of the year in which the organization is founded (discussed below in 2.7).

§ 1.2.2. **ELECTION:** The election shall take place at the mandatory election meeting (or specified general meeting) which shall be held between April 15 and April 31 of each year with the exception of the year in which the organization is founded (discussed below in 2.7).

§ 1.2.3. **ELECTION PROCESS:** Election ballots for Executive Cabinet positions will be distributed at the mandatory election (or specified general meeting) to all members of the OIP-u: OSU whereby candidates for opposed positions may speak for 5 minutes to plead their position, views, duties, and future for their respective Executive Cabinet position sought and how their election to the Executive Cabinet would benefit the OIP-u: OSU.

§ 1.2.3.1. Ballots shall immediately be collected on the election meeting, with the exception of the highest-ranking Executive Cabinet member who is not seeking an elected position or re-election.
§ 1.2.3.2. Two existing members of OIP-u: OSU Executive Cabinet who are not running for an elected position or re-election shall count the ballots.

§ 1.2.3.3. Candidates must win by a majority.

§ 1.2.3.4. In the event of a tie the highest-ranking Executive Cabinet member not seeking an elected position or re-election whose ballot was not counted, shall have their ballot entered as the deciding vote to “break the tie”.

§ 1.2.3.5. If there are no Executive Cabinet members not running for re-election, then the above tasks shall fall to the Advisor.

§ 1.2.3.6. Winners of the election shall take office May 1 of that year, or immediately if it is the first election held by the newly formed organization.

§ 1.2.4. A properly run general election is one which meets the requirements of this Constitution; any amendments thereto; the student Honor Code, as defined herein, or supplemented hereafter, and any other policies, or regulations promulgated by the Executive Cabinet or faculty and adopted by the Executive Cabinet. In the event that the general election is not properly ran, a new election shall be held as soon as deemed practical by the Executive Cabinet.

§ 1.3. All outgoing officers of the Executive Cabinet shall make themselves available for the period of one (1) month, or until the end of the Spring Semester, following the expiration of their term of the sole purpose of acting as advisors to their replacements. This provision applies to both elected and appointed officers.

§ 1.4. REMOVAL: Any elected or appointed OIP-u: OSU official shall be subject to removal from office for either malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in office. Any OIP-u: OSU member in good standing may present a petition charging one of the above listed abuses to:

§ 1.4.1. The highest-ranking member of the Executive Cabinet that is not charged with the abuse being petitioned.

§ 1.5. No student may run for more than one (1) office in any one (1) election. No student may service in more than one (1) elected or appointed office at the same time unless there are not enough members in OIP-u: OSU to avoid this outcome.

§ 1.6. The President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Activities Director shall be elected by a majority vote as provided for in § 2.2.1.
§ 1.7. In the case of newly formed OIP-u Chapters, notices of candidacy will be due approximately one week after the chapter hold its first meeting. General elections will take place approximately one month after the chapter holds its first meeting.

§ 1.7.1. If the general election takes place during fall, candidates will run with the understanding that term will end on May 1 of the following year, after new elections are held.

Article III: Members as Representatives to Other Student Organizations

§ 1.1. All members of OIP-u: OSU are encouraged to attend and join other student organizations of interest on campus, and to promote those student organization’s objectives as well as those of OIP-u: OSU.

§ 1.2. Members of OIP-u: OSU are also strongly encouraged to join other student organizations aligned with OIP-u: OSU member’s interest of law and to promote that student organization’s objectives as well as those of OIP-u: OSU.

Article IV: The Executive Branch

§ 1.1. Executive Cabinet shall be defined as the following offices: (1) President, (2) Vice President, (3) Treasurer, (4) Secretary.

§ 1.2. Members of the executive cabinet are required to attend the Annual OIP-u Conference hosted by the Ohio Innocence Project at the University of Cincinnati College of Law which will take place during late summer of each year.

§ 2.

§ 2.1. Primary executive power shall be vested to the President.

§ 2.2. It shall be the duty of the President to:

§ 2.2.1. Communicate with and Coordinate Events with Outreach Program Coordinator for the Ohio Innocence Project.

§ 2.2.2. Coordinate and supervise members of the Executive Cabinet.

§ 2.2.3. Be the president officer at all Executive Cabinet meetings and member meetings.

§ 2.3. If a vacancy occurs in any OIP-u: OSU office, except the President, the President shall notify all OIP-u: OSU members that the Cabinet position(s) is open. Submissions will be accepted in the same manner as Article II - § 2.2.1, and
§ 3. Election for the open position(s) will be voted on (following the guidelines under Article II - §§ 2.2.3 – 2.2.4)

§ 3.1. Candidates for the office of OIP-u: OSU President shall be voted on by the entire membership of OIP-u: OSU, with the exception of the outgoing OIP-u: OSU President (or next highest-ranking out-going Cabinet member) whose vote will only be cast in the event of a tie. (see Article II - §§ 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.4)

§ 4.

§ 4.1. Candidates for the office of Vice President shall be voted on by the entire membership of OIP-u: OSU with the exception of the out-going President (or next highest-ranking out-going Cabinet member) whose vote will only be cast in the event of a tie. (See Article II - §§ 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.4).

§ 4.2. The Vice President shall act as the President in the President’s absence.

§ 4.3. If a vacancy of the office of President should occur, the Vice President shall become President.

§ 4.4. The Vice President shall serve as communications liaison with the Program Coordinator as needed, and update the main OIP branch on developments of OIP-u: OSU on a weekly basis.

§ 5.

§ 5.1. The Treasurer shall, upon request, have the right to examine the financial records of this organization.

§ 5.2. The Treasurer shall prepare the budget at the direction of the President; keep strict and accurate records of all OIP-u: OSU income and expenditures in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; solicit and collect all budget requests from groups outside of OIP-u: OSU; and make regular reports to the Executive Cabinet of OIP-u: OSU regarding the financial state of OIP-u: OSU.

§ 5.3. Any funds generated through fundraising efforts will be recorded by the treasurer and deposited by the treasurer into an account separate from the group’s general fund.

§ 6.

§ 6.1. The Secretary shall be responsible for calling role at meetings, taking minutes and relaying this information to the Ohio Innocence Project Outreach Program Coordinator upon request.
§ 6.2. The Secretary shall also provide a bi-annual report to the Ohio Innocence Project Outreach Program Coordinator summarizing the group’s fundraising efforts and promotional activities. (One report per semester).

§ 6.3. The Secretary shall be responsible for handling the group’s social media accounts, and for developing promotional and advertising materials for OIP-u: OSU events, and aiding with member recruitment and development.

§ 7.

§ 7.1. Each **OIP-u: OSU** Cabinet member is chiefly responsible for their own elected position, but are strongly encouraged to assist other Cabinet members in the directives and goals of this organization.

**Article V: Non-Discrimination Policy**

1.  

1.1. This organization and its members shall not discriminate against any individual for reasons of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, planet of origin, or veteran status.