

Article I: Title and Purpose

Section 1.

This organization shall be known as **Secular Student Alliance at The Ohio State University** (Formerly Students For Freethought at the Ohio State University), also known as SSA, and referred to as “the organization” within this document.

Section 2.

The purposes of the organization shall be to

- 1) promote and practice the open, rational, and scientific examination of the universe and our place in it,
- 2) and that ethics and morality can be meaningfully based on rational and humanistic ideals and values,
- 3) promote skeptical inquiry,
- 4) provide community for atheists, agnostics, humanists, skeptics, naturalists and other freethinkers,
- 5) organize activities, such as forums for discussion, guest speakers, and debates that educate the OSU and surrounding community,
- 6) foster acceptance of freethinkers, and
- 7) advocate for the separation between church and state.

Article II: Officers

Section 1.

The **elected** offices of this organization shall be President, Vice President, and Treasurer. These elected officers may appoint via majority vote additional officer positions as necessary. The combined board of elected and appointed officers shall be referred to as “the council” within this document.

Section 2.

Officers shall be elected at least a month before the end of each Spring term. Members shall be notified of a pending election at least one month in advance. Members eligible to vote must be a voting member at least one month in advance. Candidacies shall be

declared at least two weeks before elections. Only voting members that plan to remain voting members during the next year are eligible to run. Election shall occur by secret ballot of voting members who were members at the time of the announcement of the election (except with permission from the President) at a meeting with quorum. Voting may only take place in person at the election meeting except with permission from the President, accompanied by a written record of the member's vote. The candidate with the most votes wins; uncontested candidates win by default. Terms shall begin at the general meeting following the election, and shall last until the terms of the next officers begin. There is no limit on the number of terms an individual may hold office.

Section 3.

If for any reason an officer is unable or unwilling to fulfill their commitments, they may resign and the remaining elected officers may appoint, via unanimous vote, replacement(s) who will serve until the next election period.

Section 4.

Elected Officers:

The President shall

- 1) preside over general meetings, and organize and preside over planning meetings
- 2) be the official representative for the organization
- 3) ensure this Constitution is followed
- 4) break any tie vote
- 5) be responsible for performing all necessary administrative duties required of the organization by The Ohio State University

The Vice President shall

- 1) be responsible for overseeing all appointed officer positions and ensuring that necessary responsibilities are upheld by the individuals or committees to which they are assigned
- 2) preside over the election process and ensure that all necessary information is communicated to the new council before they take office

- 3) take on any responsibilities of the President in the event that he or she is absent from a meeting/event or unable, for any reason, to fulfill them

The Treasurer shall

- 1) be responsible for all financial matters,
- 2) be responsible for keeping business records,
- 3) keep the organization current with all paperwork that needs to be filed with the Ohio State University,
- 4) prepare a budget to be approved by majority vote of the elected officers for the following academic term by the last planning meeting of the current academic term
- 5) if there is not an appointed secretary, the Treasurer shall take on the roles of processing membership requests and keeping a current roster of all members.

Section 5.

Duties of the Council:

All general tasks and responsibilities of the council may be completed by or delegated to any elected or appointed officer. It is ultimately the joint responsibility of the President and Vice President to ensure that these responsibilities are upheld. Duties that must be fulfilled and/or delegated appropriately by the council include but are not limited to:

- Coordination and planning of public and/or private events
- Coordination of recruitment and public relations projects
- Collection and review of feedback and popular opinion from the general membership of the organization
- Communication and cooperation with other student and/or community organizations that share one or more of this organization's secular values

Section 6.

An appointed officer may be removed by a majority vote of the elected officers. Officers and members shall have the opportunity to present their sides at the meeting, before the vote. If the officer is removed, a new officer shall be appointed as quickly as possible.

Section 7.

An elected officer may be removed by a majority vote of the membership. Officers and members shall have the opportunity to present their sides at the meeting, before the vote. If the elected officer is removed, a new officer shall be appointed as quickly as possible by unanimous vote of the remaining elected officers. If the remaining officers cannot select a replacement, the membership shall elect a replacement by majority vote.

Section 8.

Officers may delegate their duties to other members of the organization and to each other. Delegation requires the consent of both the delegating officer and the member to whom the duty will be delegated. The delegating officer is still responsible for sufficient fulfillment of the delegated duty.

Article III: Membership

Section 1.

Membership shall be open to all Ohio State University students, faculty, and staff, and community members. All may be non-voting members. Only students may be voting members. To qualify as a voting member, a yearly \$5.00 in dues must be paid. Voting members may also receive discounts on merchandise or events.

Section 2.

To become a member, one need only inform the President or other officer responsible for handling the member roster. Membership runs from the day of informing the council to the day after the end of the Spring academic term. At any time during the Spring academic term a standing member may express their desire to renew their membership for the following year.

Section 3.

Membership ends upon

- 1) end of the normal membership cycle without a prior request to renew,
- 2) the member's request,
- 3) the member no longer being a student, faculty, staff or community member,
- 4) majority vote of the membership at a properly announced meeting with quorum to revoke that person's membership.

Voting membership becomes non-voting membership when a voting member is no longer a student at Ohio State.

Section 4.

Members who are removed by a vote may not join the organization again until the next academic year. Members who are removed lose any officer positions they may have held within the organization.

Section 5.

The organization has the power to levee annual dues against the membership. The dues must be approved by a majority vote of the officers at a normal planning meeting.

Article IV: Meetings

Section 1.

General meetings shall occur at the discretion of the elected officers, however a schedule of meetings for an academic term must be created prior to the beginning of said term.

Section 2.

Planning meetings shall occur at the discretion of the elected officers. Prior notice of at least one week should be given to all members.

Section 3.

Officers may call special meetings at any time for important matters. Prior notice should be given to all members as soon as possible.

Section 4.

Voting may only take place at a meeting.

Section 5.

A quorum is 1/10 of the voting membership. If a quorum is not present, voting shall be postponed until the next meeting at which quorum may be waived on those issues that had been postponed. The number constituting 1/10 of the membership shall be determined by the officer in charge of keeping the membership roster.

Article V: Committees

Section 1.

Possible purposes of committees will be to

- 1) take care of distributing out work equally on any given issue that the committee is created to address,
- 2) brainstorm and create new ideas to present at the organization planning meetings
- 3) work through different ideas and issue and focus them so that they can be presented to the general membership in order to be voted on.

Section 2.

Any member or officer may propose the formation of a committee. The elected officers may create, structure and dissolve committees through a majority vote.

Article VI: Amendments to the Constitution

Section 1.

Any member may propose a constitutional amendment. Members shall be notified at least two weeks in advance of a pending vote on an amendment. The amendment shall be read aloud and discussed on the day of the vote and at the meeting two weeks previous. An amendment can be adopted only by a two-thirds majority vote of voting membership at a meeting with quorum.

Article VII: Statements of affirmation or condemnation

Section 1.

Statements of affirmation would be an official declaration made by the organization that they support a certain issue or action being taken by another group or individual.

Statements of condemnation would be an official declaration made by the organization that they denounce or condemn a certain issue or action being taken by another group or individual.

Section 2.

Statements of affirmation or condemnation do not have governing power over the organization. They only serve to let future generations of leaders and the public know where the organization stands on various issues.

Section 3.

Any member of the organization can propose an official statement of affirmation or condemnation at a meeting. For discussion on the issue, another member of the organization must second the statement. If there is sufficient support about the issue among the group, it will be put to a vote in the next meeting, where every member present will each be allowed up to but no more than 90 seconds to state officially why they are for or against the statement of affirmation or condemnation. The President shall be responsible for keeping time. After all members are giving the proper opportunity to speak, members may vote to allow another round of discussion, with discussion continuing only if a majority of members present feels it is necessary. When discussion has finished, a general secret ballot vote among the general membership will be taken.

Section 4.

A statement of affirmation or condemnation can pass only by a two-thirds majority vote of voting membership at a meeting with quorum.

Section 5.

A statement of affirmation or condemnation can be retracted in a process identical to the process for passing one.

Article VIII: Advisor

Section 1. The advisor must be a full-time Ohio State University faculty or administrative staff member. If the elected officers deem it so appropriate, they may appoint two full-time faculty or administrative staff members as co-advisors.

Section 2. The nature of the advisor's role shall be determined by the advisor. However, the authority of the President and the general membership of the organization trumps the authority of the advisor.

Section 3. The advisor may be removed by a vote among the elected officers. The advisor can voluntarily relieve his or herself of his or her duties. Prospects for a new advisor would then be contacted and a new advisor would be decided upon by the elected officers.

Article IX: Non-Discrimination

Section 1. This organization and its members shall not discriminate against any individuals for reasons of race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, age, handicap, or veteran status.

Article X: Dissolution

Section 1. The organization may be dissolved upon a unanimous vote of members present where the vote is taken. Dissolution may only occur at a general or planning meeting, not a special meeting.

Section 2. Quorum for a meeting with a dissolution vote is 3/10 of the current membership.

Section 3. The organization may not dissolve while in debt or with a balance in the bank.