**Still We Rise**

**Advisor:** Dr. Tanya Saunders, AAAS

**Presidents:** Sierra Reese

**Secretary:** TBD

**Treasurer:** Justice Harley

**Email:** [stillweriseswr@gmail.com](mailto:stillweriseswr@gmail.com)

**Purpose:** Still We Rise seeks to foster a safe environment and develop a revolutionary Black politic for Black Women and Black gender non-conforming individuals on campus. Still We Rise is inclusive of undergraduate, graduate, and pre-professional students. We intend to foster political strength among our members, discuss the issues we’re facing on-campus, contextualize our issues within a national and a global context, expose and analyze the issues we face, and organize ourselves to remedy these issues. Still We Rise is inclusive of all backgrounds, including, but not limited to gender, sexuality, race, ability, class, and religion. However, Still We Rise seeks to uplift the voices of multiply-marginalized Black gender non-conforming individuals and Black women, and we ask that any members that fall outside of this category respect the space being provided for these groups and allow their voices to be heard.

**Goals:**

1. Create a safe space for multiply-marginalized Black women and Black gender non-conforming persons to express themselves freely and enjoy themselves among like-minded and similarly marginalized persons.
2. Discuss and organize around issues that affect multiply-marginalized Black gender non-conforming persons and Black women.

**Ideas/Events**

* *Poetry Slams & Rap Jams*
  + Monthly social events where we recite poetry and raps we’ve written, perform poetry/raps that are written by Black Women
* *Regular meetings*
  + Biweekly
  + Mondays at 7:30 p.m. Location TBD.
* *Black Love* 
  + Focus on underrepresented Black people
    - Sexuality
    - Gender
    - Ability
    - Etc.
    - Photo campaign  
      
    - “Your Blackness is beautiful”
* *Hiphop Literacies: Black Women and Girls’ Lives Matter*
  + The Ohio State University
  + Frank B. Hale Jr. Black Cultural Center, Main Campus
  + March 30-31, 2016
  + Call For Papers/Proposals/Performers:
    - The purpose of the Hiphop Literacies conference is to bring together scholars, educators, activists, students, artists, and community members to dialogue on pressing social problems. This year our working conference theme is Black Women and Girls' Lives Matter. Participants of the Hiphop Literacies Conference join a community of those concerned with African American/Black, Brown and urban literacies, who are interested in challenging the sociopolitical arrangement of the relations between institutions, languages, identities, and power through engagement with local narratives of inequality and lived experience in order to critique a global system of oppression. Literacies scholars who foreground the lives of Hiphop generation youth see Hiphop as providing a framework to ground work in classrooms and communities in democratic ideals.
    - This movement converges with critical education/literacies and the current BlackLivesMatter modern civil rights movement "created in 2012 after Trayvon Martin's murderer, George Zimmerman, was acquitted for his crime, and dead 17- year old Trayvon was post-humously placed on trial for his own murder." (<http://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>). BlackLivesMatter converges with other efforts to address the legacies of slavery that still oppress Black people in the United States of America: state-sanctioned killing of Black people, state-sanctioned poverty, hatred and oppression of queer people, the prison industrial complex, school-to-prisonpipeline, ineffective schooling and more. This year's conference illuminates issues in the struggle to engender the fight for racial justice, so that the needs of girls and women are fully addressed as we continue the fight to dismantle institutional racism and promote healing for collective empowerment of Black and Brown communities.
  + Possible Topics include:
    - Black and Brown mothers/mothering in the fight for justice
    - Black and Brown girlhood
    - Black and Brown womanhood
    - Culturally relevant/sustaining/humanizing pedagogies of women/girls
    - Hiphop feminist education/outreach
    - Representations of Black and Brown women/girls and men
    - Health - physical, mental, spiritual, infant mortality
    - School to prison pipeline
    - Incarceration - Black and Brown women and girls
    - The incarceration of transwomen and girls and transmen and boys
    - Black and Brown Queer (femme, feminine etc.) and Trans identities particularly as they relate to experiences of girlhood and womenhood broadly (re)defined
    - Self and collective empowerment, coalition building, mentoring, networking
    - Social justice
    - Sexualities
    - Arts activism
  + In addition to scheduled talks and workshops by renowned scholars, activists, cultural workers, artists and educators, the conference will host presentations and performances by scholars, students and community members. The conference will also feature a performance by a nationally recognized Hiphop artist.
  + Abstracts of 300 words for 20 minute paper presentations are welcome as well as other formats (i.e., ethnodrama, performance, poetry, autoethnography, and fiction). We are also seeking regional and local talent to perform on the bill with a national artist (TBA) on the final night of the conference.
  + Send abstracts for papers, round tables and other formats to Hiphopliteracies@gmail.com by December 1, 2015.
  + Local/regional performers should send a link to their brief performance video and a bio (with contact info) to Hiphopliteracies@gmail.com by December 1, 2015 (put "performer" in subject line)

***Still We Rise Manifesto***

**Article I: Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy**

**Section I: Name**

This is the manifesto for Still We Rise, a revolutionary Black feminist group.

**Section II: Purpose**

Still We Rise seeks to foster a safe environment and develop a revolutionary Black politic for Black Women and Black gender non-conforming individuals on campus. We intend to foster political strength among our members, discuss the issues we’re facing on-campus and contextualize them within a national and a global context, expose and analyze the issues we face, and organize ourselves to remedy these issues. Still We Rise is inclusive of all backgrounds, including, but not limited to gender, sexuality, race, ability, class, and religion. However, Still We Rise seeks to uplift the voices of multiply-marginalized Black women and Black gender non-conforming individuals, and we ask that any members that fall outside of this category respect the space being provided for these groups and allow their voices to be heard.

**Section III: Non-Discrimination Policy**

Still We Rise encourages people of all backgrounds to attend meetings and events, but upon entering spaces being hosted by Still We Rise, we ask that attendees respect the voices of multiply-marginalized Black women and Black gender non-conforming individuals and allow their voices to be heard, as these groups have been silenced throughout history. In order to ensure that these groups maintain a space in which their voices will be upheld, those in attendance who are not in these groups are asked to refrain from speaking unless directly asked to by these groups.

**Article II: Qualifications and Categories of Membership**

In order to be a member of Still We Rise, one must attend one meeting. In order to have voting privileges, one must attend two meetings within one semester and be a Black woman, Black Trans-Woman, or Black gender non-conforming person. Whenever voting privileges and/or voting is mentioned in this manifesto, in meetings, or during events, know that we are referring to those eligible to vote.

**Article III: Organizational Leadership**

**Section I: Titles**

Still We Rise doesn’t advocate for any variant of hierarchical structures. While we have a president, treasurer, and secretary listed on our Ohio Union page, these people were only listed in order to attain an ‘active’ status for Still We Rise.

In an effort to overturn the power-over narrative, Still We Rise will be led by a collective. This collective will largely be running the organization: deciding on event times, leading organizing trainings, managing finances, secretarial duties, and more. Those interested in being part of Still We Rise’s core group should attend 85% of all meetings and events. Further, only Black women and gender non-conforming individuals will be eligible to be part of the core group. Within the core group, roles will be assigned: core group, treasurer, secretary, social media chair, organizing committee, LGBPQA+ outreach chair, trans outreach chair, racial outreach chair, and community outreach chair. These roles are detailed in Section IV.

**Section II: Terms of Office**

Core group members are allowed to remain in this group for as long as they wish, so long as they are still affiliated with The Ohio State University and remain in good standing with Still We Rise in terms of attendance. If someone in a core group position leaves Still We Rise or is deemed ineligible for membership, their position will be up for election immediately. If someone in one of these positions wishes to leave Still We Rise, they must give the group two weeks’ notice before resignation.

**Section III: Type of Selection**

Core group members will be able to join at their will, so long as they have attended 85% of all meetings and events for the semester they wish to join.

**Section IV: Duties of Leaders**

*Core Group*

The core group will be comprised of the treasurer, secretary, social media chair, organizing committee, LGBPQA+ outreach chair, trans outreach chair, racial outreach chair, and community outreach chair. We will not limit each position to one member, so members will be able to choose which role they fulfill. However, if core group members determine that there’s a position within the core group that needs to be created, they are more than welcome to foster that position within the core group.

The members in these positions will be required to update Still We Rise on decisions they’re making to ensure that everyone’s aware of what Still We Rise is doing. No decision may be made without bringing it to Still We Rise’s attention, and if a decision is made without the group’s approval, the member(s) complicit in this action may be punished by either suspension or expulsion.

Further, when needed, members in certain positions may be asked to assist other positions in their duties. Members will be allowed to partake in multiple positions, but core members should strive to consolidate members into separate positions in order to fulfill each role without overlap.

*Treasurer*

Manages Still We Rise’s finances and ensures that Still We Rise doesn’t overspend its money. They will be in charge of handling donations and depositing them into Still We Rise’s bank account, taking money out of Still We Rise’s bank account when necessary, and remaining in communication with Still We Rise’s advisor when making such transactions. The treasurer will be expected to let members of Still We Rise know how much money is available to spend on events, and will be responsible for managing receipts for things bought by members of Still We Rise for Still We Rise meetings and events.

*Secretary*

Takes meeting notes and sends them to emails. The secretary will be responsible for managing Still We Rise’s email, including sending and responding to emails. Before sending out an email, the secretary will need approval from at least three Still We Rise core members. In charge of working with social media chair in preparing statements and assigning speaking roles if or when the press wishes to talk with Still We Rise. Further, the secretary will be in charge of taking attendance at meetings and events. If the secretary won’t be at a meeting or event, they’re in charge of making sure someone else fulfills this duty and gets attendance back to them. The secretary will be in charge of managing the membership roles.

*Social Media Chair*

In charge of running Still We Rise’s Facebook page. Before making a Facebook post, the secretary will need approval from at least three Still We Rise core members. In charge of working with secretary in preparing statements and assigning speaking roles if or when the press wishes to talk with Still We Rise.

*Organizing Committee*

The organizing committee will largely be responsible for training Still We Rise members to become organizers. The organizing committee will be in charge of logistics for rallies, protests, and sit-ins, and must take the input of all members into consideration when facilitating such events. The organizing committee will need to remain in contact with organizing groups on- and off-campus.

*LGBPQA+ Outreach Committee*

The LGBPQA+ Outreach Committee will focus on keeping in contact with LGBPQA+ organizations on-campus and in the surrounding area, with special attention given to organizations focused on People of Color.

*Trans Outreach Committee*

This committee will be focused on maintaining relations with the Trans community at OSU and in the surrounding area. The Trans Outreach Committee will focus on keeping the voices of Trans individuals at the helm of Still We Rise’s organizational efforts, and this committee is encouraged to, eventually, evolve into their own Black Trans organization.

*Racial Outreach Committee*

This committee will be dedicated to maintaining relations with other People of Color organizations on- and off-campus, specifically dedicated to keeping in solidarity with other People of Color, other Black organizations included, and keeping Still We Rise informed of other group’s events.

*Community Outreach Chair*

This committee will maintain relations with the Columbus and surrounding communities, facilitate monthly volunteer events, and serve as the bridge between campus and community.

**Article IV: Method of Selecting and/or Removing Core Group Members and General Members**

**Section I: Selecting Core Group Members**

Core group members will be able to join at their will, so long as they have attended 85% of all meetings and events for the semester they wish to join.

**Section II: Removing Core Group Members**

Core group members may leave the group as they wish, but they must give Still We Rise a two weeks’ notice to remain in good standing with the group. Not remaining in good standing may result in suspension from meetings. In order to remove a core group member, the majority of the group’s voting-eligible members, core group included, must vote to remove said member. Before voting, the justification for removing the member must be made, and said member will have the opportunity to defend their case.

**Section III: Selecting General Members**

There will be no selection process for general members. Attending one meeting will ensure that one becomes a member. To attain voting privileges, general members must attend at least two meetings.

**Section VI: Removing General Members**

General members may leave the group as they wish without any warning whatsoever. In order to remove a general member, the majority of the group’s voting-eligible members, core group included, must vote to remove said member. Before voting, the justification for removing the member must be made, and said member will have the opportunity to defend their case.

**Article VII: Advisor(s) or Advisory Board**

**Section I: Selecting Advisor(s) or Advisory Board**

The advisor(s) or advisory board for Still We Rise must be a Black Woman or gender non-conforming faculty or staff member at The Ohio State University. This advisor, advisors, or advisory board must be decided upon Still We Rise members.

**Section II: Removing Advisor(s) or Advisory Board**

Still We Rise members must have a majority vote to remove the advisor(s) or advisory board.

**Section III: Duties of Advisor(s) or Advisory Board**

Duties include, but aren’t limited to, assisting the treasurer with finances when needed, helping transition Still We Rise between graduating classes, and making sure that Still We Rise remains true to its purpose. While the advisor(s) or advisory board aren’t required to attend every meeting or event, it’s highly recommended to attend at least one meeting and one event.

**Article VIII: Meetings**

**Section I: Required Meetings**

Core group members are required to attend 85% of all meetings and events to maintain their standing in the core group. Those wishing to become members must attend one meeting during the semester in which they wish to be a member. Those wishing to become members with voting privileges must attend two meetings during the semester for which they wish to be a member with voting privileges.

**Section II: Frequency**

Meetings will take place on Mondays at 7:30 p.m. on a biweekly basis, and location is to be determined. Events will be hosted ad hoc. To find out when and where the next meeting or event is, we recommend emailing Still We Rise at [stillweriseswr@gmail.com](mailto:stillweriseswr@gmail.com) and checking our Facebook page for announcements.

**Article IX: Method of Amending Manifesto**

**Section I: Proposals**

Proposals may only be suggested by members with voting privileges. If such a member wishes to amend the Manifesto, said member must email the secretary with three pieces of information, listed below.

First is the part(s) of the manifesto they wish to amend. Members may propose to amend, at most, two parts of the Manifesto at each meeting. Members must clearly state the article and section number of the part(s) they wish to amend.

Secondly, the member must include, for each change, a one-paragraph reason as to why they wish to amend this part of the constitution.

Thirdly, the member must write that the proposed amendment should be. That is, they must re-write what they want the section(s) to say.

Upon receiving this information, the secretary will state that said member wishes to propose an amendment to the Manifesto in the next email to the group. At the next meeting, the member must present the section(s) they wish to amend, why they wish to amend them, and what they propose the amendment should be. A vote will be taken among present members, and if there is a majority vote for the amendment(s), the amendment will be made before the next meeting.

**Section II: Presentation**

Members wishing to present changes to the Manifesto must do so at the next meeting after the secretary sends out a preliminary email. Presentations will be limited to five minutes per proposal. Members wishing to propose amendments must share with the group the three aforementioned pieces of information for each amendment they wish to propose.

**Section III: Voting Requirements**

Voting requirements will be the same as listed in Article II.

**Article X: Method of Dissolution of Organization**

**Section I: Notice**

If the organization is to be dissolved, Still We Rise will give its members a semester’s notice via email and in-person at meetings.

**Section II: Assets and Debts**

Debts will be split between current voting members of Still We Rise. The treasurer(s) will be responsible for making sure Still We Rise doesn’t have any outstanding debts at the end of the semester for which it will be dissolved. Any remaining assets will be distributed evenly between remaining voting members of SWR.

**Meeting w/ Dr. Saunders (advisor!) and Dr. Morris.730 (teaches at Newark, Panther Scholar)**

* “revolutionary Black feminism”
  + what does this mean to us? define clearly
* What issues do we face?
  + focus on what we deal with here before moving to a global framework
  + avoid generalizing, points of convergence are key, analyze how different issues manifest and how we position ourselves in relation to them
* who will we welcome into the group?
* issues we may face...
  + develop a safe space (non-official, not a general body meeting) only for those who will be organizers/members of Still We Rise that are Black women and gender non-conforming persons
  + accept that part of this organization will be underground (core organizing group)
  + rules are guidelines, not limitations
  + allies telling white people to leave meeting?
  + pool w/ too many organizations
  + realistic demands, know our local community (i.e. up enrollment to stats)
  + academic job market operates every few months
  + admitting less into ASC/humanities, qualified applicants has increased white admission while admission goes down, OSU turning into a STEM school
  + do research!
  + the organizations that “do gender” should be held accountable to such -- while we are a resident Black feminist organization, it doesn’t mean that other orgs (Black, LBPQ, Trans, Female, etc.) should just expect us to pick up the brunt of what ppl in our organization will face b/c they, too, need to be held accountable for making sure our voices are heard w/i their organizations
* what does conflict mean?
* means will be different to get a common end, develop strategy to approach our administration -- never alone, always go in with the same goal
* what is our vision for OSU? establish ASAP
* don’t let OSU’s comparisons undermine the issues we face (what happens at Mizzou won’t always happen here, how Mizzou fixes their problems won’t necessarily be how we fix ours)
* “stir stuff up to build or wreck shit”
* we need administrative allies who directly affect university policy (leverage)
* \* rules are guidelines \*
* maintain organizational control, constatntly check that we’re practicing what we preach
* coalition-build and build consciousness
* BLM: what does this phrase mean to us? define ASAP
* dealing with identity politics, some may have a specific, narrow identity politic
* volunteer to facilitate a discussion(s), meet people where they are to get them where we want them to be
* Hale council: how does this play in?
  + ask them to do consciousness-raising
  + monthly events ^ ?
  + ask us to help w the events
  + a way to connect with admins ?
* SNCC: participatory democracy--go into meetings with unified strategy
* if Hale countil won’t support us, then make sure we maintain a broad enough framework to do it on our own