**Constitution – The Academic Team at The Ohio State University**

Approved by vote of general membership on 9/28/2017

**Article I: Name, Purpose, and Fundamental Policy of the Organization**

**Section 1: Name**

The name of the organization shall be the Academic Team. The full name is The Academic Team at The Ohio State University.

**Section 2: Purpose**

The purposes of this Ohio State University student organization are:

1. To compete in intercollegiate quiz bowl events. Quiz bowl, sometimes known as Knowledge Bowl or Academic Challenge, sees the team compete in tournaments that involve answering questions on a wide variety of subjects. The team typically competes in tournaments that use the NAQT tossup/bonus format. Main goals of the team include qualification for and successful competition at high-level tournaments (such as the NAQT ICT competition and the ACF Nationals competition) as well as attendance and success at regional and local events.

2. To provide a venue for students who are interested in academic question and answer competitions to meet, practice, and have fun. Practices involve reading and answering questions on a variety of subjects. Additionally, team traditions (such as “vanity packets” where team members have the opportunity to read their own humorous packets of questions to the team) and the camaraderie of a common interest group allows students who come to practice to have an enjoyable time away from classes.

3. To Participate in various ancillary and related activities. While the main focus is competing in intercollegiate academic competitions, a broader range of activities are also within this organization’s scope. They include hosting on campus quiz bowl tournaments, writing questions, and participating in or hosting “trash” (current events/pop culture) tournaments. It is important, however, that reading “trash” questions not get in the way of the organization’s main purpose of success in academic quiz bowl competitions. As such, no practice shall consist of more than one-third trash, and it is anticipated that in general practices will be less than one fifth trash.

**Section 3: Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a diverse community to reflect human diversity and to improve opportunities for all. The university is committed to equal opportunity, affirmative action, and eliminating discrimination. This commitment is both a moral imperative consistent with an intellectual community that celebrates individual differences and diversity, as well as a matter of law.

This organization does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, programs, admission, and employment.

**Section 4: Sexual Misconduct Policy**

As a student organization at The Ohio State University, the Academic Team expects its members to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains an environment free from sexual misconduct. All members are responsible for adhering to University Policy 1.15, which can be found here: <https://hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy115.pdf>.

If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the

appropriate resources at http://titleIX.osu.edu or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX

Coordinator at titleIX@osu.edu.

**Section 5: Anti-Hazing Policy**

Our student organization agrees not to participate in hazing. Hazing, defined by the Ohio Revised Code, means “doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. No person shall recklessly participate in the hazing of another.”

**Section 6: Good Sportsmanship Policy**

The Academic Team competes in intercollegiate quiz bowl tournaments. It is expected that all members will participate honestly and in the spirit of competition. While competition itself may be fierce, is imperative that the team maintain respectful, open, and cordial relationships with local high school teams and coaches, other college quiz bowl teams, and organizations like the Academic Competition Federation (ACF) and National Academic Quiz Tournaments (NAQT). Cheating, disruption of competitions, dishonest behavior, rudeness toward others, or unsportsmanlike behavior is unacceptable and reflects poorly on the team, the university, and the Quiz bowl community.

**Section 7: Fiscal Accountability Policy**

It is imperative that the organization maintain fiscal health and financial solvency. The organization shall strive to make long-term budget projections, make allowances for future expenditures, and pay bills and invoices promptly. All organization members must be accountable to the fiscal health of the organization and must recognize that any shortfalls could result in members being unable to afford tournaments or could require substantial out-of-pocket expenses. Wasteful or excessive expenditure of organization funds is unacceptable. All expenditures must be approved by the treasurer and must align with and further the purpose of the organization.

**Section 8: General Accountability**

Members agree to abide by the university’s Code of Student Conduct and by local, state, and federal laws. The Academic Team and its leadership does not condone the failure of any member to abide by the organization constitution or the Code of Student Conduct and by local, state, and federal laws. Members shall report any violations to the relevant authorities.

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

**Section 1: Open Practices**

In general, all are welcome at practices. Only disruptive individuals, or those specifically banned from attendance after due process (as described in Article III), shall be removed from practices.

**Section 2: Requirements for Active Membership**

Subsection A) Active members are those attending, or committing to attend, at least 8 practices per semester. For the purposes of this section, competing in (or aiding in the hosting of) a tournament shall count as attendance at 2 practices. Attendance of a substantial portion (>50%) of any practice shall count as attendance of the entire practice. Active members shall be listed on the organization roster. Active membership, once verified with an officer, shall be valid for the remainder of the academic year. No person new to the organization shall be an active member without previous attendance at 4 practices.

Subsection B) The organization’s active membership shall be limited to currently enrolled Ohio State students. Others nonstudent members, such as faculty, alumni, professionals, etc., may attend practices as honorary members.

Subsection C) To gain active membership status, a student shall verify with an officer that the requirements for active membership set forth in Article II, Section 2, Subsections A and B have been met. Once these requirements are met, the student will be listed in the organization roster.

 **Section 3: Rights of Active Membership**

Active members shall be permitted to vote in elections for officers and in other matters (such as voting on changes to the constitution. Honorary members are non-voting.

Active members shall be permitted to attend tournaments as representatives of The Academic Team at The Ohio State University. If funding or tournament constraints do not permit all interested members to attend a particular tournament, fair tryouts shall be held to determine which members shall attend. This is anticipated to be minimized as most tournaments are open to all interested members. Individuals who are not active members may compete (subject to tournament eligibility constraints) if slots are available after active members are given the opportunity to attend.

**Article III: Methods for Removing Members and Executive Officers**

**Section 1: Methods for Involuntary Removal of Members**

If a member engages in behavior that is seriously detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, violates the organization’s constitution or violates the Code of Student Conduct, university policy, or federal, state or local law, the member may be removed through a majority vote of the officers in consultation with the organization’s advisor.

Involuntary removal of a member is a serious step and should not be taken lightly. It shall be done only with due care and after due process.

Involuntary removal of a member implies that that member is no longer permitted to attend team events or practices.

**Section 2: Methods for Involuntary Removal of Officers**

Any elected officer of the chapter may be removed from his or her position for cause. Cause for removal includes, but is not limited to: serious violation of the constitution or by-laws, substantial failure to perform duties, or behavior that is seriously detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, including violations of the Code of Student Conduct, university policy, or federal, state, or local laws.

Involuntary removal of an officer is a serious step and should not be taken lightly. It shall be done only with due care and after due process.

Involuntary removal of an officer requires the unanimous consent of other officers, followed by a 3/4ths vote of all active members present at a regular meeting. At least 67% of all active members must be present at said meeting. Two week notification to membership of an upcoming vote is required. Following the vote, the advisor would also need to approve in writing of the removal after attempting to hear any concerns of the officer to be removed.

Involuntary removal of an officer generally implies that that individual is no longer a member and is no longer permitted to attend team events or practices, unless weaker sanctions are instead agreed to.

**Section 3: Temporary Suspension of Members or Officers**

The temporary removal or suspension of any member or officer (not to exceed 3 weeks) to prevent ongoing disruption, to allow time for perspective after an incident, or to allow time for due process of removal to occur, shall be permissible upon a majority vote of all officers and a 2/3rds vote of active members present at a regular meeting or at an event. At least 30% of all active members must be present at said meeting. Due to the temporary nature of this suspension, two week notification of membership of an upcoming vote is not required.

**Section 4: Voluntary removal of Members or Officers (e.g. Resignation)**

Subsection A) An officer may inform a member or another officer that substantial grounds exist for involuntary removal. A member or officer facing clear and inevitable involuntary removal may instead choose to resign or depart. Those who do this may be more likely to be welcomed at future practices or events, depending on the severity of any issues or transgressions.

Subsection B) A member may be removed voluntarily by agreeing in writing with an officer that he or she no longer wishes to participate, or that he or she no longer meets membership requirements as set forth in Article II, Section 2, or that there are other grounds for removal. At this point the member will be removed from the roster of active members and any other sanctions agreed to shall be put into place.

Subsection C) An officer may resign and maintain good standing (e.g. active membership status) within the organization after giving the other officers reasonable notice that he or she is unable to continue fulfilling the duties of the office. Reasonable notice is defined as one month, barring unforeseen circumstances like family emergencies.

Subsection D) An officer resign effective immediately, but without maintaining good standing, upon agreeing in writing with the other officers that he or she no longer meets membership requirements, that he or she is no longer able to serve, that he or she wishes to immediately resign, or that there are substantial grounds for involuntary removal. At this point that person will no longer be an officer. They likely will also no longer be a member in good standing although weaker sanctions agreed to may instead be put into place.

**Section 5: Removal or Suspension in Special Cases**

In the event that the reason for member or officer removal is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or cannot otherwise be shared with members (e.g., while an investigation is pending), the organization’s advisor, in consultation with Ohio Union Student Organization Staff, the relevant member or officer, or other officers (if applicable or possible) may vote to suspend or remove a member or officer.

**Article IV: Organization Leadership**

**Section 1: General Information**

The organization has three official officers, in addition to a faculty advisor. The primary leader is the president. The secondary leader is the vice president. The fiscal officer is the treasurer. The leaders are elected by vote of membership as described in Article V. The duties of the advisor are described in Article VII. The duties of the president, the vice president, and the treasurer are described in this article, under Sections 2, 3, and 4. Temporary positions (of Tournament Director and Captain) are described in Article X, Section 5. Note that all officers, in addition to their listed duties, are required to follow university policy and regulations related to their office (such as the president and treasurer attending mandatory trainings). Finally, it should be noted that all officers are expected to set a good example to the rest of the group by coming to at least 75% of practices and by having their actions reflect positively on the organization to the outside community.

**Section 2: President**

The president of the organization shall serve as the organization’s primary leader. The president shall organize practices, reserve rooms, and coordinate the work of the other officers and the rest of the membership. The president shall be the senior officer in charge of meetings. The president is further responsible for recruitment and marketing of the organization, including participating at Fall and Spring involvement fairs. Further, the president shall be responsible for coordinating scheduling, maintaining team equipment, and sustaining team communication – although these duties are also an important focus for the vice president. The president is also responsible for interfacing with the Ohio Union Student Activities staff and with the advisor. The president has primary responsibility over ensuring a smooth officer transition from year to year. Finally, the president shall coordinate with the treasurer to verify that the treasurer is properly maintaining the organization’s fiscal integrity.

**Section 3: Vice President**

The vice president is the organization’s secondary leader. The vice president shall assist the president in official duties. The vice president shall be particularly responsible for developing the organization’s schedule, maintaining team equipment, and sustaining team communication. The vice president shall also be the senior officer in charge of meetings if the president is not present.

**Section 4: Treasurer**

The treasurer is the lead fiscal officer of the organization, with responsibility over the team’s budget, bank account, payments, accounting, and fundraising. The treasurer is an officer and may also assist the president and vice president with their duties as needed. The treasurer will investigate funding sources and work to ensure the organization’s fiscal responsibility. The treasurer will maintain a working budget, accounting statements, and financial projections; these will be available to membership and other officers upon request and should be emailed to the other officers and the advisor at least once per semester. The treasurer shall produce an annual report on the organization’s budget and organized accounting statements; these will be gone over with the membership in a brief presentation during officer elections at the end of each year. The treasurer shall ensure that during officer transitions, the incoming treasurer is given any needed assistance. The treasurer will also preserve records and transfer them to the incoming treasurer. The treasurer shall always act with integrity and transparency and rigorously adhere to Article 1, Section 7. The treasurer is responsible for ensuring that team expenses are not approved or incurred for which the organization does not have funds to pay for – and all expenses must further the organization’s mission and involve proper documentation (i.e. invoices or receipts).

**Section 5: Communications Director**

The communications director will assist the president and vice president in recruiting efforts and coordinating social events for members within the organization. These events can include gatherings not directly related to Academic Team activities or regular club meeting activities.

**Article V: Election / Selection of Organization Leadership**

**Section 1: General**

The selection of organization leadership takes place in a vote in mid-April of each year. At least three officer positions (president, vice president, treasurer) are filled at this time. The date of the vote will be announced at least two (2) weeks in advance. The vote is a vote of all active members present at a regular meeting. At least 67% of all active members must be present at said meeting. The officers are appointed for one year.

**Section 2: Eligibility for office**

Any undergraduate OSU student who is an active member, is willing and able to serve for the entire upcoming school, and has participated with the team in at least 2 tournaments (either by helping host or by competing) shall be eligible to run for office. University policy requires said officers be full time students with a GPA of 2.0 or higher; additionally students are not permitted by university policy from serving as officers of more than three student organizations. Any candidate who has misgivings about inability to meet any of these requirements or inability to serve for the entire year shall disclose these concerns to membership and to current officers. Current officers can permit candidacy by unanimous consent in ambiguous situations. If the officers decline to permit candidacy and a member still desires to run, the dispute shall be settled by decision of the advisor. If possible and reasonable, rulings will be biased in favor of allowing an interested member to run.

**Section 3: Candidacy**

Eligible members may declare candidacy for office by informing a current officer that they intend to run for office. While the same individual may run for more than one office, no one may hold two offices at once. Candidacy shall be declared at least one week prior to the vote to allow time for ballots to be printed; the official list of candidates shall be made available to membership at least one week prior to the election as well.

**Section 4: Elections**

Candidates shall be asked to make a speech immediately prior to the vote. The time allotted for each candidate to speak shall not exceed 5 minutes. After speeches, voting will be conducted by secret ballot. The candidate with the majority of votes wins the election. If no candidate gets a majority, a runoff will be held between the top two candidates, with brief speeches allowed to the two runoff candidates. The president shall be elected first, followed by vice president, followed by treasurer. This allows multiple members to run for, say, both president and vice president (or even all three offices). The presidential candidates would speak in this situation, and then the winning presidential candidate would remove his or her name from consideration for any other office. Then, new speeches may be made for vice president before the vice presidential election. The same process then is used for the treasurer election.

**Section 5: Vacancies**

In the event of any vacancies due to the resignation or removal of any officer, a new election will be held. If there is a two or more week advanced notice that an officer will be removed (due to, for example, voluntary resignation), an election will be announced for a new officer to fill the departing officer’s role. The new officer will fill that role for the remainder of the academic year. The date of the vote will be announced at least two (2) weeks in advance. The vote is a vote of all active members present at a regular meeting. At least 67% of all active members must be present at said meeting.

If a vacancy occurs suddenly, then an election will be held once two week notice has been given of the upcoming election. An acting officer may be appointed by the advisor or unanimous consent of the remaining officers if needed.

**Section 6: Special Cases**

In the event of special cases, unforeseen circumstances, or other irregularities, the officers and any other interested members should meet with the advisor to determine a fair path forward.

**Article VI: Executive Committee: Size and Composition of the Committee.**

Given the current size and scope of the organization, the elected officers (president, vice president, and treasurer) are the executive committee and are responsible for direction of organization business in consultation with the advisor.

**Article VII: Advisor(s) or Advisory Board: Qualification Criteria.**

**Section 1: Advisor Description**

The organization shall have an advisor. The advisor must meet the qualifications in Section 3 of this article.

**Section 2: Advisor Duties**

The advisor shall consult with the student organization as described throughout the constitution. The advisor shall provide guidance and suggestions to the club leadership. The advisor may help to mediate and arbitrate disputes, as well.

**Section 3: Advisor Qualification**

The advisor must meet qualification requirements set by the university. Currently, advisors of student organizations must be full-time members of the University faculty or Administrative & Professional staff. It is hoped that if possible, the advisor would have experience with Quiz Bowl.

**Section 4: Advisor Selection**

It is expected that advisors will serve for many years – they serve indefinite terms. Advisors leaving due to situations involving inability or unwillingness to further serve (such as resignation or retirement from the university, or a belief that a more suitable advisor is warranted) shall be replaced by a new qualified advisor. The new advisor shall be selected by the officers, and if possible should be approved by the outgoing advisor. Approval also is needed by a vote, announced two weeks in advance. The vote requires the unanimous consent of all officers, followed by 2/3rds of all active members present at a regular meeting. At least 67% of all active members must be present at said meeting.

**Section 5: Special Cases**

The possibility of co-advisors or an advisory committee may be reasonable in some scenarios. If such a possibility is considered, the constitution must be amended as described in Article VIII, Section 2. Note that many sections of the constitution would need to be rewritten to replace “the advisor” with “advisory committee”, so this would be a major revision. Other special cases involving, for example, removal of the advisor against their wishes should involve consultation with Ohio Union student activities officials and a vote, announced two weeks in advance. The vote requires the unanimous consent of all officers, followed by 3/4ths of all active members present at a regular meeting. At least 67% of all active members must be present at said meeting.

**Article VIII: Method of Constitutional Amendment**

**Section 1: Minor Revisions**

Minor revisions to the constitution may be proposed at any time by any member. The in-force constitution, the draft proposed constitution, and a description of changes shall be made available to membership one week prior to a vote. Revisions are minor if they make small or non-substantive changes in the view of the officers. If any member objects to the classification of revisions as minor, the revisions will be re-classified as major. The vote (announced at least one week in advance) requires unanimous consent of all members present at a meeting (and unanimous consent of all three officers). After the vote, the new constitution shall come into force.

**Section 2: Major Revisions**

Major revisions to the constitution may be proposed at any time by any member. The in-force constitution, the draft proposed constitution, and a description of changes shall be made available in writing to membership two weeks prior to an announced debate and vote. The debate shall involve an opportunity for all members to comment on the changes and potentially modify wording. The vote requires the unanimous consent of all officers, followed by a 3/4ths vote of all active members present at a regular meeting. Prior to the vote, the advisor should be consulted regarding major revisions to the organization’s constitution. At least 67% of all active members must be present at said meeting. After the vote, the new constitution shall come into force.

**Section 3: Mandatory Revisions**

If it becomes clear that revisions due to changes in university policy are required, the officers, in consultation with the advisor and Student Activities staff at the Ohio Union shall make said revisions.

**Section 4: Proscribed Revisions**

No revisions shall be made to subvert, circumvent, weaken, or substantially modify Article I without the approval of the advisor and the Ohio Union Student Activities staff. This article represents fundamental policy of the organization. If the advisor and Student Activities staff have approved, the proposed change shall be announced and made available in writing to membership. A debate and vote shall take place two weeks later, and the vote requires unanimous consent of all members present at a meeting (and unanimous consent of all 3 officers). At least 67% of all active members must be present at said meeting. Note: if the text is required by the university to be modified or strengthened, changes may take place more smoothly as per Article VIII, Section 3.

**Article IX: Method of Dissolution of Organization**

The organization intends to exist in perpetuity, and we do not foresee likely circumstances in which dissolution would needed. However, should interest drop such that maintaining an active quiz bowl team at Ohio State is not possible, the club shall enter into inactive status. During the inactive status, the former officers shall continue to serve as points of contact and safeguard the organization’s reputation, integrity, and funds. The president, as well as the other officers, and the advisor, shall be responsible for making meaningful attempts to rekindle interest in quiz bowl at Ohio State during the inactive status of the team. Student activities staff shall be properly updated on any changes to the organization’s status. When enough interest has been generated to restart meetings, new officer elections will be held with new members, and the organization shall return to active status. Transitions to and from inactive status will only be approved with unanimous consent of all newly elected officers and the advisor. Officers who stay on during inactive status to oversee restarting of the team shall ensure a smooth transition to the new leadership and shall work especially hard to pass down team know-how and records.

Should it become completely clear (after attempts to restart the organization after inactivity, for example) that permanent dissolution is warranted instead of inactive status, the acting/most recent officers, in consultation with the advisor would wind down the organization. Student activities staff shall be properly updated on these events. Funds of the organization should be donated in a way that furthers quiz bowl if feasible. Furthering quiz bowl could involve funding other high school or college teams operating expenses with a particular focus on providing funds to cash-strapped organizations. If this is not feasible, funds shall be distributed to the university, with preference that the funds benefit other student organizations. Debts of the organization should not exist as the treasurer is responsible for ensuring that expenses are not approved or incurred for which the organization does not have funds to pay for. Tangible organization property may be processed as the advisor and officers see fit in dissolution cases, with the expectation that valuable organization property such as buzzers would go to further quiz bowl or trivia competitions at the university or at any other quiz bowl team (for example, team-owned buzzers could be donated to a needy area high school that wanted to own a club in the event of the dissolution of Academic Team at the Ohio State University).

**Article X: Additional Material**

**Section 1: Description of this Article**

This article shall contain any additional information, policies, or regulations as needed. They may be on a variety of subjects.

**Section 2: Organization History**

The president shall be responsible for maintaining the organization’s history, which shall be documented here. Any additions to this section will be considered minor revisions and shall be processed as such unless any member objects

**Section 3: Buzzers**

The buzzers owned and used by the organization are important to the team. The president shall be responsible for maintaining records of the organization’s buzzer systems. These records shall be documented here. Any modifications to this section will be considered minor revisions and shall be processed as such unless any member objects. It is worth noting that buzzers are valuable property and officers and team members must work diligently to safeguard this property.

**Section 4: Trophies**

Trophies or other prizes won through successful participation in tournaments will become property of the organization unless awarded to an individual instead of the team as a whole. The officers may decide to safeguard the trophies as property of the team for team history purposes and for marketing purposes (i.e. for display at the involvement fair). Disposal of trophies should they be not or no longer needed for this purpose will occur only if all members have had the opportunity to keep said trophy; members who participated in the tournament where the trophy was won (and competed with the team that won the trophy) shall be given the first opportunity to keep that trophy. Any disputes regarding this section shall be settled by the advisor. Note: some tournaments provide trophies to top teams and to individual high scorers; other tournaments award medals, trinkets, or used books. Monetary or valuable are virtually nonexistent; if they existed they would be property of the team unless awarded to the players individually.

**Section 5: Temporary Positions**

Temporary positions include Tournament Director and Captain. These positions are not officer positions (but may be held by an officer) but are instead short-term designations. They are a position related to a specific event or tournament. They are positions appointed by officers. The Tournament Director is responsible for hosting a specific tournament and has ultimate responsibility for the success of that tournament. The Captain is the senior member in charge of the organization’s participation at a particular tournament. The captain is responsible for the team’s transport and lodging arrangements, and during play is responsible for directing answers at tournaments requiring a captain.

**Section 6: Student Activities Staff**

The constitution occasionally refers to Student Activities or Student Organization management staff at the Ohio Union. These individuals are the ones who organize president and treasurer trainings. They may serve as arbiters during any particularly contentious disputes.

**Section 7: Practices**

Practice times and locations shall be chosen by the officers in consultation with the membership in an attempt to ensure that practices are well-attended and that members are satisfied with available practice opportunities.