

# **Constitution of the Young Democratic Socialists of America at The Ohio State University**

## **Article I**

- (1) The name of this organization shall be “Young Democratic Socialists of America at The Ohio State University,” hereafter referred to as “the Chapter.”
- (2) Our purpose is to build a strong democratic socialist movement on campus and in our community through organizing, activism, and education.
- (3) Our mission is to educate and organize students and young people to advocate for social justice, freedom, and democracy. Within and throughout this struggle, we will articulate and defend the idea that true human liberation is impossible under capitalism. We seek social change that extends democracy to all aspects of life—social, political and economic. Ours is the struggle for democratic socialism. Our vision of socialism is profoundly democratic, feminist, anti-racist, and anti-fascist.

## **Article II: Membership**

- (1) Any person who is a registered undergraduate or graduate student at The Ohio State University may become a non-voting member of the Chapter.
- (2) Membership shall consist of non-voting members (referred to herein as “non-voting members”) and voting members (referred to herein as “members”).
  - (a) The only distinction between non-voting members and members shall be the ability to vote on organizational decisions.
- (3) Any person eligible for non-voting membership may become a voting member by
  - (a) attending not less than three consecutive meetings in the current academic year;
  - (b) attending not less than four meetings in the current academic year;
  - (c) a two-thirds majority vote of members present;
  - (d) or by notifying and proving to either the Secretary or a Co-Chair dues-paying status in the DSA or YDSA national organization.
- (4) Once a member has achieved voting status, their status shall continue into the next academic year.
  - (a) However, if this member fails to attend the requisite meetings required to achieve voting status laid out in Section 3 of this article during the following Fall Semester, their status shall revert to non-voting.
- (5) The Secretary shall maintain an accurate roster of members, including a list of meetings attended, for the purpose of establishing voting status.
- (6) Once a member has achieved voting status in this organization by any of the means established in Section 3 of this article, the Secretary shall report the admittance of the newly active member(s) at the next meeting.
- (7) Members may be removed by a 60% majority vote of membership present if found in violation of the Code of Conduct found herein.

### **Article III: Officers and Elections**

- (1) The officers of the chapter shall consist of two Co-Chairs, a Treasurer, a Social Media Director, and all standing committee chairs.
- (2) Co-Chairs are responsible for the administrative functions of the organization, as well as carrying out resolutions enacted by the Chapter.
  - (a) One Co-Chair shall preside as chair if a chair was not designated at the previous meeting by majority vote.
    - (i) If there is a disagreement between Co-Chairs about who is to preside, the Secretary shall preside as chair at the beginning of the meeting and shall only entertain a motion to select the meeting's current chair and then immediately yield to the selected chair upon agreement of this motion.
  - (b) The Co-Chairs shall be the main contact for the organization and are responsible for outreach to other organizations.
  - (c) Notwithstanding specially designated representatives, the Co-Chairs shall represent the organization at public events.
  - (d) One Co-Chair shall act as "President" for compliance with the Ohio State University's requirements for Presidents. However, this Co-Chair shall not have more power than the other Co-Chair.
    - (i) The designation of one Co-Chair as "President" shall occur immediately following officer elections.
    - (ii) The designation shall be made if both Co-Chairs agree to designate one Co-Chair as "President" for the purposes of university compliance.
    - (iii) If the Co-Chairs cannot agree, then the designation shall be decided upon as a special order at the next meeting by a majority vote of members present.
  - (e) This designation may be changed with the consent of a majority of members present.
- (3) The Treasurer is responsible for accounting, fundraising, and maintaining the Chapter's bank account.
  - (a) The Treasurer shall report on all expenditures, organizational finances such as resource room credit, bank account balances, and other relevant information regarding the organization's finances at every meeting.
  - (b) The Treasurer shall account for all expenses made by the organization.
  - (c) The Treasurer shall ensure that all approved expenses made on behalf of the organization by individual members are reimbursed in a timely manner.
- (4) The Social Media Director is responsible for maintaining and managing all social media accounts and spreading awareness of the Chapter online.
  - (a) The Social Media Director shall follow the political line of the organization as

closely as possible.

- (b) Both co-chairs shall have access to social media accounts at all times.
- (5) Committee chairs are responsible for leadership in their particular committee.
- (a) Committees may be formed around certain issues, jurisdictions, or campaigns, and may be created or dissolved as needed.
  - (b) The rules for the creation of committees shall follow those laid out in *Robert's Rules of Order*, the provisions of this Constitution notwithstanding.
- (6) The Secretary, in collaboration with the designated chair of each respective meeting, shall be responsible for taking meeting attendance, verifying each member's voting status, taking minutes, and distributing these minutes.
- (a) The Secretary for a given regular meeting shall be selected by a majority vote of members present at the beginning of each meeting.
- (7) The terms of office for all elected officers, save committee chairs (who may be removed at will by a majority of their respective committees) shall begin at the next regular meeting following their election.
- (a) The previous holders of these offices shall assist the newly-elected officers during this transition period, including but not limited to, handing over relevant documents, keys, passwords, and access to accounts, as well as teaching their successors the duties associated with their respective roles.
  - (b) The previous Treasurer and Co-Chairs are responsible for handing over authorization and access of all tax documents such as the organization's IRS employer identification number (EIN) and the Chapter's bank account.
- (8) Officers do not have more authority than other members, just more responsibility.
- (9) All officer elections shall occur by majority vote by secret ballot on a date in Spring Semester selected by a 60% majority of the members present.
- (10) Elections shall be run and ballots counted by an Election Commissioner who shall be elected by a 60% majority of the members present.
- (a) The Election Commissioner may be an existing officer if the membership desires.
  - (b) However, the Election Commissioner may not run for any office in an election they run.
- (11) The Election Commissioner shall run a fair election.
- (a) All candidates must notify the Election Commissioner of their intent to run at least one week before an election. No candidate may run after this deadline without the unanimous consent of the membership.
  - (b) The Election Commissioner shall circulate the names of those running and their platforms (giving equal space and consideration to each) at least five days before an election.
  - (c) Any member may make a motion to elect a new Election Commissioner in the event that the previous Election Commissioner ran or is currently running an

unfair or improper election.

- (i) If this motion is passed by a 60% majority of members present, the election shall be voided and a new Election Commissioner shall be selected for elections to occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - (ii) If a specific grievance, such as failure to recognize the candidacy of an otherwise eligible candidate, was the basis for the motion to elect a new Election Commissioner, the grievance shall be corrected by the incoming Election Commissioner.
- (12) At least one co-chair must not be a man.
- (13) The Faculty Advisor(s) shall serve as ex-officio member(s) of the Executive Board, retaining all rights of that membership without the right to vote.
- (14) Any member may recommend the removal of an officer to the membership at any time.
  - (a) The member recommending removal may request either:
    - (i) immediate suspension pending a hearing,
    - (ii) immediate removal without a hearing,
    - (iii) or a hearing recommending removal of an officer.
  - (b) In the event of a request for immediate suspension pending a hearing, if a majority of members present vote in the affirmative, the officer shall be suspended until a hearing at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - (c) In the event of a request for immediate removal without a hearing, if two-thirds of the members present vote in the affirmative, the officer shall immediately be removed from their position. If this vote is greater than half of the members present but less than the necessary two-thirds for immediate removal, the officer in question shall be suspended pending a hearing at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - (d) Otherwise, the member shall be entitled to a hearing at the next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special hearing for the purpose of deciding upon removal of the officer in question.
  - (e) At a removal hearing the officer in question may be removed by a simple majority vote of the members present.
- (15) The two co-chairs, acting in unison, shall have the power to suspend an officer pending a hearing at the next regularly scheduled meeting on which the removal of the officer shall be voted upon.
- (16) In the event of a vacancy, a co-chair may serve as the acting officer of the vacant position until the vacancy is filled.
- (17) Vacancies shall be filled by a special election, administered by an Election Commissioner who shall be selected by and follow the same procedures as a regular officer election.

- (a) This special election shall take place two regularly scheduled meetings after the election of an Election Commissioner.

#### **Article IV: Decision-Making and Parliamentary Authority**

- (1) *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority for all meetings, rules within this Constitution notwithstanding. All meetings shall follow *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* unless a two-thirds majority vote to suspend the rules.
- (2) Any member noting that *Robert's Rules* are not being followed may demand at any time that the meeting comply accordingly.
  - (a) Upon this demand, the Chair must immediately comply.
- (3) A quorum shall consist of 50% of the average membership attendance of the last five meetings.

#### **Article V: Advisor(s)**

- (1) Advisor(s) shall be reviewed every year and the voting members will vote on whether or not to pick a new advisor or continue with the same advisor.
- (2) Advisor(s) may be removed by a majority vote of members present.

#### **Article VI: Meetings**

- (1) Meetings shall be held weekly during the academic year, with the day, time, and location decided at the beginning of the academic year by the membership.
- (2) Both co-chairs, acting in unison, shall also have the power to schedule a meeting for the organization.

#### **Article VII: Code of Conduct**

- (1) 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.
  - (a) No sexism, homophobia, transphobia, racism, xenophobia.
  - (b) No disruptive behavior that is deliberately intended to make meetings unsafe or unproductive.
  - (c) No hateful speech.
  - (d) Big tent organization — everyone is welcome to come, learn, and participate.
  - (e) We prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. If a member is found participating in activities that promote intolerance, they may be removed at the organization's discretion via voting procedures. 60% of the voting body or five members, whichever is higher constitutes a majority.

- (2) As a student organization at The Ohio State University, Young Democratic Socialists at Ohio State 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 (<https://hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy115.pdf>).
- (3) Rules of discussion shall follow those laid out in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.
- (4) Conduct on social media.
  - (a) Any account officially associated with this organization shall follow Code of Conduct and generally post in a way that promotes the chapter in a positive manner.
  - (b) Retweets, reblogs, reposts, etc. are not an endorsement of the account that originally posted.

### **Article VIII: Harassment Policy**

- (1) **Prohibited behavior.** Members shall not engage in harassment on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical appearance, disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, class, age, or profession. Harassing or abusive behavior, such as unwelcome attention, inappropriate or offensive remarks, slurs, or jokes, physical or verbal intimidation, stalking, inappropriate physical contact or proximity, and other verbal and physical conduct constitute harassment when:
  - (a) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a member's continued affiliation with DSA;
  - (b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for organizational decisions affecting such individual; or
  - (c) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile environment interfering with an individual's capacity to organize within DSA.
- (2) Grievances can be brought to the attention of any member(s) of the Exec. Board. They are responsible for mediation and conflict resolution between the conflicting parties. These responsibilities can be passed onto another member of the Exec. Board with the permission of the person reporting the grievance. For this purpose, every member of the Exec. Board must undergo grievance training.

### **Article IX: Amending the Constitution**

- (1) The constitution may be amended by circulating the suggested amendment(s) to the membership at one meeting and sending them to all members via email.
- (2) The proposed amendments, after being examined by the membership, shall be offered up at the second meeting, for discussion and voting. Notice of a vote shall be sent to all

members via the Ohio State University email, as well as via the official Chapter Slack/group chat, before the second meeting.

- (3) The amendments shall then be voted on and must receive a 60% majority of the membership present to be ratified.

*Approved:* April 17, 2019