

Asia-Pacific Folklore Frontier (APFF) Constitution and By-laws

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

Section 1- Name and Organizational History

1.1.1 Initial meetings among potential members were held under the working title “Group for Regional and Ethnic Studies in China (GRESO).” Starting from February 2016, the group was renamed as “Literature and Folklore in Greater China (LFGC)” in order to be more reflective about the relationship between Han Chinese and ethnic minority literatures in China. Starting from March 2021, the group was renamed as “Asia-Pacific Folklore Frontier (APFF)” to better capture the group’s current reality and future visions: cross-disciplinary & multi-cultural membership, common interests in indigenous/diasporic Asian people groups and advocate for (not just) truth-seeking, (but also) peace-making and life-giving scholarship.

1.1.2 The idea of “Asia-Pacific” was inspired by APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) and the TNAP (Transnational Asia/Pacific Section) of American Folklore Society, both of which engage many countries in East Asia and North America. The key concept “Folklore” is based on Charles Briggs’s “Disciplining Folkloristics,” in which he first questioned the paradoxical boundary-work of past folklorists—studying subaltern subjects while excluding them from academic conversation, and then proposed a disciplinary ideal—use ethnography of speaking as the method to distill vernacular theories that should be treated as having equal value as scholarship written in dominant languages and genres. Finally, the word “Frontier” aligns with the group’s orientation towards edge-cutting research and down-to-earth service.

Section 2 - Purpose

1.2.1 During each registration window, APFF officers come up with 2-3 goals as general direction for next year’s event planning.

1.2.2 All previous goals can be archived in the constitution for future reference:

2016-2017

1) Create a sense of community among graduate students of Chinese literature and folklore. 2) Share academic work with interested parties and invite speakers to enhance our networking and intellectual skills.

2017-2018

1) Explore and clarify ethical purposes of studying literature and folklore in greater China areas. 2) Advocate for the importance of understanding folk knowledge in the studies of Chinese literature.

2018-2019

1) Translate Chinese literature and folklore in a way that can enter the dialogue with global literature and folklore. 2) Effectively communicate literary and folkloristic ideas to benefit other fields such as pedagogy, history and anthropology.

2019-2020

- 1) Uncover and expand the interdisciplinary nature of (Chinese) literature and folklore through interdepartmental collaborations.
- 2) Verbalize and visualize subtleties and nuances in Chinese literature and folklore through the lens of Art History.

2020-2021

- 1) Continuing to build community amongst graduate students whose studies focus on China and the greater Sinosphere.
- 2) Improving professional skills and community among graduate students in the humanities whose research focuses on China and the greater Sinosphere and raising the visibility of literature and folklore studies by hosting opportunities to share research in a supportive environment.
- 3) Fostering cross-discipline relationships between faculty and graduate students by hosting talks by faculty from different departments who can offer expertise on research methods and professionalism relevant in the fields of literature and folklore.

2021-2022

Section 3 - Non-Discrimination Policy

1.3.1 As a student organization in a U.S. university, APFF and its members shall not discriminate against any individual(s) for reasons of age, ancestry, skin color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, sex, or veteran status or any other basis in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Ohio State University.

1.3.2 As a student organization related to Asian countries, APFF and its members shall not discriminate against any individual(s) for reasons of educational background, ethnic/regional origin, language proficiency, technology savviness, physical appearance, or health condition.

1.3.3 We do understand the situations of ignorance, misunderstanding and initial clumsiness trying to maintain a loving as well as functioning community. When things happen, members are encouraged not to judge from outside performance, but to find out the root causes and to deal with the issue together.

Article II - Membership

2.1 OSU teachers, students and alumni interested in the group can request to be included in the mailing list.

2.2 Registered OSU students whose research foci are related to the group's orientation can freely join the membership. If they stay active (attend the meetings and activities, send stuffs to the mailing list, etc.), they automatically become voting members. They will lose membership after they have graduated.

2.3 Past officers and advisors are encouraged to share experiences (officially or unofficially) with current officers and members when needed. But they should be aware that their statuses have become non-voting honorary members.

Article III - Organization Leadership

Section 1 - Titles and Duties

3.1.1 Officers shall work closely as a team and share responsibility for the administration of activities, with only the exception of the treasurer's control over financial matters. Below lists only some possible images of labor division (officers may feel free to simplify or modify):

3.1.1.1 The president functions like a project manager: prepare agendas for officer meetings; write group communication to general members; oversee the operation of each program; and outreach to faculties, alumni and campus units for opportunities and resources.

3.1.1.2 The vice president functions as a public relation personnel: design, print, and distribute flyers for each event; communicate with program attendees on their experiences and suggestions for improvement; and support the president and the treasurer as needed.

3.1.1.3 The treasurer functions as an accountant: keep account of organization funds and ensures they are used according to the needs of the organization and the rules set forth by the Council on Student Affairs and the Ohio Union.

3.1.1.4 The secretary functions as a webmaster: collect information to be incorporated in the newsletter; create online survey and calculate the result; take care of technology during videoconferences and other multi-media activities.

3.1.2 Officers shall balance between their academic work, teaching responsibility and organization administration. They may consult their academic advisers from time to time to make sure they invest in the right direction.

Section 2 - Terms of Office

One academic year is the minimum requirement for an officer's term. But at current stage, if this person is willing and if the active members agree, he or she may serve two or more years to maintain the group's consistency.

Section 3 – Election/Transition Procedures

Leadership candidates should come from active members in the past year and students who has declared relevant research interests. If more than one person run for one position, each candidate may write a brief statement on what he/she wants to do with APFF in the position he or she is running for. Officer positions are decided by a majority of anonymously cast ballots.

Section 4 - Method of Removing Officers

General members and elected or leaders are expected to meet certain standards and conduct themselves in a way that reflects well on the organization. In the event that a member or leader does not meet those expectations, fails to fulfill his or her duties, or in the case of academic misconduct, the committee may discuss the possibility of probation or removal from office. All other committee members must agree unanimously upon appropriate actions to be taken depending on the individual case.

Article IV - Advisor

The APFF advisor should be one of those whose expertise is related to the group's orientation and those who is willing to advise current members to the best of his/her capacity.

Article V – Principles of Using Programing Funds

Ideally, all events sponsored and organized by APFF should have something to do with the group's orientation and address active members' needs. Current leaders and members may consult with past event records for ideas and guidance:

Writing Accountability Groups
Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks (with Nick Kaldis), Autumn 2016 Discernment in Aesthetic Categories (with Levi Gibbs), Summer 2018 Closing Autumn First Half Presentations (with Tim Thurston), Autumn 2019
Symposium on Chinese and North American Folklore (CNAF)
1st DEALL-CFS Symposium on CNAF, Spring 2015
Encountering the Local: 2nd Visiting Scholar CNAF, Spring 2018 Ethnographic Voices from Southwest China: 3rd CNAF, Spring 2019

Professionalization Talks
Simple Strategies to Boost Productivity and Overcome Writer's Block, Spring 2018 Communicate Effectively and Resolve Conflicts with Difficult People, Spring 2018 Speed Reading and Memory Techniques Workshops (co-sponsored by GREALL and AAPPEAL), Autumn 2018
Meaningful Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue and Academic Civility (Prof. Liu), Autumn 2019 How to Receive Feedback Well (Prof. Sieber), Spring 2020

Interdisciplinary Lectures
Eric Shepherd's Lecture & Workshop on Folklore & Pedagogy, Spring 2019 (co-AAPEAL) (Under ICS Lecture) Erik Mueggler, "Rewriting Bondage: Literacy and Slavery in a Qing Native Domain, Southwest China," Autumn 2019
(Under ICS Lecture) Xin Conan-Wu, "The Reminiscence of "Home Mountain": Place-making as an Art," Autumn 2019

Article VI – Principles of Using Operation Funds

In the past, operation funds have been effectively used for survey, conference travel, and recruiting activities. Current leaders and members may consult with past records for ideas and guidance:

LFGC Annual Survey, Spring 2018
Mahogany Furniture and Thang-ga Painting, Spring 2019
Wei Liu's and Hui Yao's travel to AAS and Chinoppearl, Spring 2019 (co-AAPEAL)

Article VII – Expectations of Respectful Behaviors

Unacceptable behaviors during an event: interrupt the speaker in the middle of a talk; ask questions irrelevant to the content of the talk; unauthorized videotaping. Events that are reposted or reported by various units must include student org's full name.

Communication Standard: The more communication, the better. The more detailed, the better. The opener, the better. Communicate every little detail, even it seems unimportant at current moment, even it might be annoying to bring it up.

Article IX - Method of Amending Constitution

Proposed amendments must be in writing, must not be acted upon but read in the committee or general meeting in which they are proposed. Approval requires at least two-thirds of voting members present.

Article X - Method of Dissolution

Dissolution of the organization must be agreed upon by a two-thirds vote among active members. All debts must be paid before APFF's dissolution. All assets must be relinquished to the Ohio Union.

It is in keeping with the goals and responsibilities here stated that the APFF leadership adopts this constitution.