

The Rhetoric Society at the Ohio State University (RS@ OSU)

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Article I: Purpose

- A. The Rhetoric Society at the Ohio State University is an organization for graduate and undergraduate students interested in Rhetoric.
- B. The purpose of the organization is as follows:

The Ohio State University chapter of Rhetoric Rhetoric Society of America is a community of rhetoricians, providing support for rhetorical scholarship, teaching, and practice. The OSU chapter's aims include professional development, interdisciplinary research, diversity and social justice, community engagement, and ethical pedagogies.

Article II: Membership

- A. General Membership
 - a. The majority of active members must be graduate students
 - b. Only currently registered students are eligible for active membership, and membership in the organization is open to persons interested in promoting the organization's purposes.
 - c. There must be at least 5 active members at all times.
 - d. Only active members may vote, preside, officiate, or solicit funding on the organization's behalf.
 - e. At least five members must be active members of Rhetoric Society of America.
 - f. All other persons, including but not limited to, faculty, staff, and community members, are eligible for associate membership.
- B. New Membership and Recruitment
 - a. Any and all new members will be given full disclosure during recruitment, including but not limited to the disclosure of:
 - i. Organizational documents (Constitution, Bylaws, Manuals, etc.)
 - ii. Organization events and activities
 - iii. A list of responsibilities of members
 - iv. A copy of the University Hazing policy, prescribed by the Office of Student Life.
This document is available here:
 - b. <http://studentconduct.osu.edu/for-students/hazing/>
 - c. All members, including but not limited to new members and recruits, reserve the right to refrain from participating in any activities without consequence, based upon personal/religious beliefs, personal values, or moral reserve as defined by the member.
 - d. Any and all interaction/activity between members and/or new members relating to RS@OSU will be limited to guidelines stated by university policy, as well as local, state, and federal laws.
- C. Non-Discrimination Policy
 - a. Similarly, to Ohio State University, RS@OSU is committed to ensuring an inclusive and equitable environment for its members to participate. Consequently, we are committed to building and maintaining a diverse community to reflect human diversity and to improve opportunities for all. RS@OSU is also 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.

- b. RS@OSU 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.
- c. As a student organization at OSU, The Rhetoric Society at the Ohio State University 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

D. Membership Removal

- a. RS@OSU reserves the right to expel a member who is not following the policies of the organization, as outlined in this Constitution, with a majority vote of attending and active members.
- b. Officers will evaluate and present the reasoning for removal to attending and active members before the issue is put to a removal vote. An emergency meeting may be called to vote upon removal depending on the severity of the incident at hand.

E. Mediation Procedures:

- a. In the case of violations of constitutional policies and/or a conflict between members within the organization the highest-ranking officer that is not involved in the conflict, with the assistance from the advisor (if applicable), will facilitate an informal mediation procedure.
- b. The mediator shall:
 - i. Arrange for a mediation meeting outside of the regular organization business meeting.
 - ii. Explain their role as the impartial party and the objectives of mediation.
 - iii. Set ground rules.
 - iv. Allow each party to express their views by allowing the conversation to go where the parties wish it to go.
 - v. Collect any available resources that might assist in the resolution (financial documents, emails, photos, etc.).
 - vi. Remain an impartial third party, not suggesting resolutions but leaving the responsibility for the resolution to the parties involved.
 - vii. Set resolution goals that seek a mutually beneficial outcome agreed upon by all parties.

Article III: Officers

A. Officer Position Legibility

- a. Only full-time, officially registered active graduate student members shall be eligible to serve as appointed or elected officers in RS@OSU.
- B. Constant Positions
 - a. The President/RCL Liaison
 - 1. Who will preside over meetings, serve as a liaison to departments and organizations on campus, and serve as spokesperson for the organization.
 - 2. Who will encourage recognition and awareness of the group in the RCL department and assist other officers.
 - b. The Vice-President/RSA Liaison
 - i. Who will be responsible for assisting the president in their duties, as well as serve as a contact point to the Rhetoric Society of America (RSA) assisting the treasurer with coordinating RS@OSU finances.
 - c. The Secretary
 - i. Who will record meeting notes
 - d. Treasurer
 - i. Who will handle all organization finances.
 - ii. Who will have access to the CSA account.
- C. Contingent Positions
 - a. Web Team/ Technology Coordinator
 - i. Who will maintain a website and a Facebook group for the organization, work with the Secretary to maintain a digital archive.
 - ii. Who will update and maintain an OSU RSA listserv.
 - b. Reading Group Coordinator
 - i. Who will organize monthly reading group meetings and publicize these meetings through email and social media.
 - c. English Department Liaison
 - i. Who will encourage recognition and awareness of the group in the English department and assist other officers.
- D. Committee and Officer Organization
 - a. Committees may be formed and dissolved by the executive board to focus on specific tasks, issues, or other needs the organization might identify.
 - b. The organization can choose to reorganize office duties based on the needs of any given year by a membership vote of majority (50% +1).
 - c. The procedure for filling unexpected vacancies shall be as follows:
 - i. Nominations will be taken at the meeting following the vacancy.
 - ii. Nominations can be proposed by any active RS@OSU member.
 - iii. Elections will occur at this meeting and will be run like a regular election (See article VII)
- E. Officer Removal
 - a. In the case that there are organization members who feel that any of the officers are not doing a satisfactory job, they may bring their concerns to a regularly scheduled Rhetoric Society at The Ohio State University (RS@OSU) forum and suggest that the officer(s) step down for the remainder of the year. They must be prepared to explain to all those in attendance why they feel that the officer(s) should leave the position, and to submit a written request for impeachment detailing the perceived failures of the officer(s) in question. The officer(s) shall be given a chance to reply to the request both vocally at the meeting in which the request is made, and in a written form to be completed and circulated through email within one week of the original meeting. One person attending the impeachment meeting shall volunteer not to vote on the impeachment and shall compile both written statements on a ballot that will be circulated to all English graduate

students. Impeachment shall be determined by a popular vote of all RS@OSU members and announced by the non-partisan volunteer at the next meeting, whether it be regularly scheduled or called in emergency.

Article IV: Meetings/ Events

A. Timing

- a. Executive board meetings should take place at least once a month and will be scheduled by the board at the previous meeting. (Exceptions may be made to this policy, depending on circumstances that may dictate the need for additional, or fewer meetings, etc).
- b. The frequency of executive board meetings will be decided by consensus of the elected officers board of RS@OSU, and a change to the schedule of meetings can be requested by any elected officer. Such a request will then be decided by a consensus vote of the elected board.
- c. Meetings of the officers will be scheduled at the discretion of the president.
- d. If an active member thinks that extenuating circumstances require a special official meeting, they should request that the officers schedule one.
- e. Open forum meetings of the whole organization will be held no few than two times per semester. The schedule of the open forums will be decided by the officers.
- f. Members will be notified of meetings through email by the Secretary
- g. Adequate advanced notice for any meeting must be given to all members of the Organization.

B. Accessibility

- a. All meeting, events, and advertising will include contact information for anyone that may have accessibility requests.
 - i. When planning an event, the venue coordinator shall solicit accessibility needs from attendees so that appropriate arrangements can be made.
 - ii. Advertising should provide accessibility information about the event (smoke-free, wheelchair accessible, food concerns, etc...)
 - iii. The location should be chosen with potential accessibility needs in mind.
 - iv. Event coordinators should take food allergies into account when planning for an event.
 - v. Captioning and listening devices should be sought by either the English department or the OSU disability services.
 - vi. Handouts should be made accessible and distributed in advance if possible.

Article V: Voting

- A. Only active members may vote.
- B. For the purposes of voting, a quorum consists of eight members, as long as the meeting has been publicly announced via email.
- C. For the purposes of voting, a majority consists of 50% +1 vote of members present.

Article VI: Finances

- A. All organizational funds are to be handled exclusively through the Council on Student Affairs (CSA) office and per CSA policy.
- B. The organization will not have an off-campus account.
- C. The payment of dues is not necessary for membership.

- D. Officers cannot spend \$200 or more for a single purchase without the approval of a majority (50%+1) of all executive board members.
- E. Any purchase under \$200 must be approved by the majority of the officers attending an executive meeting.

Article VII: Elections

- A. Initial Election
 - a. Officers will be elected at the final meeting to take place at least six weeks before the end of each spring semester by popular ballot.
 - b. This meeting will be publicized via email, and special notification will be given that elections are taking place.
 - c. No one involved in conducting the elections may be an official candidate.
 - d. Nominations for officers will take place over email.
- B. Contingency
 - a. If no one is nominated for a position, the officers have the power to appoint a member to fulfill the term.
 - b. In the case of a tie, a second round of ballots will be distributed, and the winner will be determined by popular vote. In case of a second tie, the sitting officers will vote to appoint one of the two candidates in the tie.
 - c. New officers begin their terms of office one month following the election, in order to best provide a period of transition between the old executive board and the new group of elected officers.

Article VIII: Amendments to the Constitution

- A. Amendments should be formally proposed during an official RS@OSU meeting. Voting shall occur at the meeting following its introduction.
- B. Any active member can propose an amendment to the RS@OSU constitution.
- C. An amendment is passed by a super-majority (66%) vote of membership attending that meeting.
- D. All amendments are subject to approval by the Office of Student Activities.
- E. Amendments will take effect upon approval when appropriate. Larger amendments should take effect by the following semester.

Article IX: Parliamentary Authority

- A. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, by Sarah Corbin Roberts, shall be used in all cases not covered by this constitution.

Article X: Accessibility of this Constitution

- A. Printed or digital copies of the constitution will be available to anyone upon request.
- B. The constitution should be checked using an accessibility tool like:
 - a. <https://wave.webaim.org/> Any accessibility issues should be fixed before changes to this constitution are made final.

Article XI: Advisor

- A. RS@OSU must retain an advisor at all times.

- B. The advisor must be a full-time faculty or staff member at The Ohio State University, and they will be chosen by the organization.
- C. The advisor must be from either the Communication Arts and Sciences Department or the English Department.
- D. The elected officers shall select the advisor.