

# The Constitution of Buckeyes Vote

## **ARTICLE I: NAME, PURPOSE, AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

### **Section 1: Name**

- 1) This organization will be officially known as Buckeyes Vote, which may be referred to as BV.

### **Section 2: Purpose**

- 1) Buckeyes Vote will advocate for the unique needs of Ohio State voters at the local, state, and federal level. Following the passage of Ohio House Bill 458 in January 2023, the voting rights of Ohio college students has been put at risk. Ohio HB 458 requires the use of Ohio issued photo IDs to vote in person, meaning the more than 18,000 out of state students are unable to vote in Ohio at their campus address. Buckeyes Vote will communicate with elected officials and serve as a voice for Ohio State students impacted by the change in identification requirement. Buckeyes Vote will also regularly hold voter registration drives to register Ohio residents to vote and educate students on the voting rights crisis in the state. Buckeyes Vote will also educate students on gerrymandering in Ohio and become involved in the redistricting process.

### **Section 3: Non-Discrimination Policy:**

- 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.
- 2) As a student organization at The Ohio State University, Buckeyes Vote 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>.
- 3) 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](mailto:titleIX@osu.edu).

## **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP: QUALIFICATIONS AND CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Definition of Membership**

- 1) A member of Buckeyes Vote shall be defined as any person who has completed the membership prerequisites.
- 2) Buckeyes Vote members are committed to fostering a diverse and safe environment for all of its members. Therefore, the organization, its leadership,

and its members are strictly prohibited from discriminating against anyone on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status, or other relevant characteristics.

## **Section 2: Membership Prerequisites and Responsibilities**

- 1) Induction Requirements
  - a) All prospective and current members of Buckeyes Vote shall be enrolled in an approved degree program at The Ohio State University and shall be in good academic standing.
  - b) All prospective members must attend at least six (6) weekly Buckeyes Vote or related advocacy events.
  - c) All prospective members shall enjoy the right to attend all official meetings, programming, and social events of Buckeyes Vote prior to becoming an official member.
  - d) All members and prospective members must attend one of our advocacy or voter registration events outside of regular weekly meetings.
  - e) Membership of Buckeyes Vote shall be open to all individuals upon completion of the above criteria.
- 2) Membership Responsibilities:
  - a) Actively participate in Buckeyes Vote meetings.
  - b) Actively participate in the events of Buckeyes Vote.
  - c) Participate and vote in all elections of Buckeyes Vote.

## **Section 3: Membership Code of Conduct**

- 1) All members and prospective members are expected to abide by all parts of The Ohio State University Student Code of Conduct at all official and unofficial events hosted by Buckeyes Vote.
- 2) Hazing of any member(s) or prospective member(s) of Buckeyes Vote, based on membership status, age, color, creed, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status by current or prospective member(s) shall not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- 3) Discriminatory language towards, or targeted harassment against, any member(s) or prospective member(s) of Buckeyes Vote, based on membership status, age, color, creed, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status by a current or prospective member(s) shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and shall be subject to an escalating series of sanctions, as follows:

- a) If a member engages in behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, violates the organization's constitution or by-laws, 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.
  - b) Any elected officer of the chapter may be removed from their position for cause. Cause for removal includes, but is not limited to: violation of the constitution or by-laws, failure to perform duties, or any behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, including violations of the Student Code of Conduct, university policy, or federal, state, or local laws. The Executive Board may act for removal upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Executive Board in consultation with the organization's advisor.
  - c) In the event that the reason for member 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 executive board, in consultation with the organization's advisor, may vote to temporarily suspend a member or executive officer.
- 4) Membership of Buckeyes Vote is a conditional privilege, based on adherence to the Ohio State Student Code of Conduct and Buckeyes Vote guidelines.

#### **Section 4: Membership Dues**

- 1) Buckeyes Vote does not charge dues to members or prospective members.

#### **Section 5: Removal of Membership**

- 1) If an official Buckeyes Vote member is violating the Membership Code of Conduct, defying the mission of Buckeyes Vote, or unnecessarily damaging the reputation of Buckeyes Vote, any member in good standing may bring up the offending member for consideration of membership removal.
- 2) The plaintiff member shall then leave the room, and the defendant member shall be given 3 minutes before the body explaining the reason(s) the defendant should lose membership;
- 3) Following both speeches, the defendant should leave the room, and the body will have up to 10 minutes to discuss the motion;
- 4) After the discussion has ended, a secret ballot of all members present (excluding the President, defendant and plaintiff) shall be taken;
- 5) A two thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote in favor by all present voting members shall be required to remove the defendant's membership.

## **Section 6: Voting Membership**

- 1) Voting membership is limited to currently enrolled Ohio State students. Non-student members, including, but not limited to, faculty, alumni, and professionals, can become general body members but cannot vote in elections or on constitutional amendments.

## ***Article III – Methods for Removing Members and Executive Officers***

### **Section 1: Course of Removal**

- 1) If a member engages in behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, violates the organization's constitution or by-laws, 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.
- 2) Any elected officer of the chapter may be removed from their position for cause. Cause for removal includes, but is not limited to: violation of the constitution or by-laws, failure to perform duties, or any behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, including violations of the Student Code of Conduct, university policy, or federal, state, or local laws. The Executive Committee may act for removal upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the executive board in consultation with the organization's advisor.
- 3) In the event that the reason for member 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 executive board, in consultation with the organization's advisor, may vote to temporarily suspend a member or executive officer.

## ***Article IV – Organization Leadership***

### **Section 1: President**

- 1) The responsibilities of the President include:
  - a) Maintain organization status with the University,
  - b) Develop the agenda for weekly meetings,
  - c) Lead weekly meetings
  - d) Hold office hours in conjunction with the Vice President,
  - e) Oversee membership development efforts and tracks membership status
  - f) Oversee both internal communication among the members of the organization and external communication with the University and other organizations.
- 2) The president is permitted to serve a maximum of two terms, but these terms cannot be completed consecutively.

## **Section 2: Vice President**

- 1) The responsibilities of the Vice President include:
  - a) Assume Presidential roles during meetings when the President is absent,
  - b) Assist the President as needed with primary leader responsibilities,
  - c) Oversee event and advocacy planning for the organization, including but not limited to:
    - i) National Voter Registration Week each fall semester,
    - ii) A second voter registration drive in the spring semester,
  - d) Formulate policy stances on issues of relevance to Buckeyes Vote and present these stances to be voted on by organization members,
  - e) Develop voter registration training and educational lessons on issues related to voting for members,
  - f) Maintain voter registration resource library with information on how both in state and out of state students can vote,
  - g) Provides news updates relevant to the organization as they arise to all club members.
- 2) The Vice President is permitted to serve a maximum of two terms, and these terms can be completed consecutively.

## **Section 3: Treasurer**

- 1) The responsibilities of the Treasurer include:
  - a) Approve and monitor the spending of the organization,
  - b) Maintain accurate and timely budget and bank records,
  - c) Apply for funding from the university, collect dues, and lead fundraising efforts,
  - d) Report once monthly to the Executive Board on the financial status of the organization in an itemized report,
  - e) Distribute funds to satisfy any outstanding financial obligations of Buckeyes Vote.
- 2) The Treasurer is permitted to serve a maximum of two terms, and these terms can be completed consecutively.

## **Section 4: Social Media and Outreach Chair**

- 1) The responsibilities of the Social Media and Outreach Chair include:
  - a) Manage presence of club on social media, including, but not limited to, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter,
  - b) Write and release web page posts on a consistent basis,
  - c) Write an email newsletter to email contacts with information on relevant news updates and the organization's recent work,
    - i) The newsletter must be released by the Chair within the first seven (7) days of each month during the autumn and spring

semesters, excluding any month where classes are not in session during the first week of the calendar month.

- d) Support the President with external communications by managing incoming emails and notifying the relevant Executive Board members when needed.

## ***Article V – Election/Selection of Organization Leadership***

### **Section 1: Officer Selection**

- 1) Yearly elections for new Buckeyes Vote officers shall take place on the second Tuesday of November during the regularly scheduled weekly meeting.
- 2) If the time allotted during the regularly scheduled meeting is not enough to accommodate each election speech, then the meeting may be extended to be longer than the regular meeting time, or elections may continue during the next regularly scheduled meeting, but the meeting should not be held earlier than the regular meeting time. Elections must not be held on a university break.
- 3) Terms of office for outgoing elected and appointed officers shall end at the final regularly scheduled meeting during the Autumn semester, with the elected officers assuming their responsibilities following that final meeting.
  - a) Incumbent and incoming officers shall meet at least once during the transition period in order to hand over all relevant materials and to advise on the responsibilities of the office;
  - b) The incoming Executive Board shall meet at least twice before the end of the Autumn Semester, during which time they will create a plan of action for the next academic year and vote to approved new appointed positions;
- 4) If an elected officer resigns, is removed from office, is separated from Buckeyes Vote, or is otherwise unable to fulfill their duties prior to the end of their regularly scheduled term, the vacancy shall be filled by vote of the Executive Board pending approval of the advisor.
  - a) Any person nominated to fill the vacancy must be notified of such by the Executive Board and given time to accept or reject the nomination.
  - b) The person filling the vacancy must be voted in by a majority of the Executive Board.
    - i) The person filling the vacancy must hold membership of Buckeyes Vote.
- 5) Appointed officers will be appointed during the final meeting of the outgoing Executive Board, in which the incumbent appointed officers will hold a vote on the new appointees. Once a vote is held, the new appointed officers will immediately assume the responsibilities of the appointed office, unless otherwise stipulated.

## **Section 2: Election Process**

- 1) Nominated for elected positions shall be taken from the membership of Buckeyes Vote.
- 2) Nominations shall be opened the last Tuesday of October and will remain open for each position until election speeches for each specific position on the second Tuesday of November during the regularly scheduled meeting.
  - a) All nominees shall be given the chance to accept or decline their nomination;
    - i) Nominees may decline nomination at any point before their election begins;
  - b) Members may be nominated for multiple positions;
  - c) Self-nominations shall be accepted;
  - d) Members may nominate more than one individual;
  - e) No member may run for more than 3 election positions during the same general election cycle.
- 3) The Election Process:
  - a) All nominees for a position will be given the opportunity to speak for a maximum of three (3) minutes in front of the members of Buckeyes Vote;
    - i) The allotted can be amended by a two thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority of the present membership;
    - ii) All nominees for the same position must be allotted the same amount of time to speak;
    - iii) The speaking time must include both a speaking time and question and answer sessions;
      - (1) All nominees for the same position must be asked the same questions and given the same amount of response time.
- 4) Voting Process
  - a) Officers will be elected in the following order, and seniority of officers will be considered in descending order:
    - i) President,
    - ii) Vice President,
    - iii) Treasurer,
    - iv) Social Media and Outreach Chair
  - b) After all speeches for a position have concluded, a vote of all members present physically or present via other means, excluding the incumbent President, shall be taken by secret ballot.

- c) An absolute majority (50% + 1) is not reached on the first ballot, a runoff election will be held between the candidates receiving the highest and second highest number of votes from the initial vote;
- d) All members present excluding the incumbent President will vote in the runoff election;
- e) In the case of a tie in the runoff election, the incumbent President shall cast a vote for one of the two runoff candidates.

### **Section 3: Appointments**

- 1) All appointed officers must be approved unanimously by the voting Executive Board members during the Autumn Semester unless otherwise stipulated, and most follow these requirements:
  - a) In the case that a current member of the Executive Board, or an appointed member of the outgoing executive board is seeking re-appointment, then they will recuse themselves from participation in discussion, voting procedures, or the decision making process related to filling the vacant position.
- 2) Any Buckeyes Vote member may be considered for an appointment to a position, with their permission, and by unanimous decision of the Executive Board.
- 3) At this time, there are no positions for appointment.
  - a) Additions of any appointed position must be agreed upon by all members of the Executive Board.

## ***Article VI - Executive Board: size and composition of the Committee***

### **Section 1: Executive Board Composition**

- 1) The Executive Board shall be comprised of the following positions:
  - a) President
  - b) Vice President
  - c) Treasurer
  - d) Social Media and Outreach Chair

## ***Article VII - Advisor(s)***

### **Section 1: Advisor**

- 1. Buckeyes Vote will have a maximum of one (1) faculty advisor
- 2. The rights and responsibilities of the Advisor include:
  - a. Be open to communication from all Buckeyes Vote members,
  - b. Maintain, at minimum, monthly communication with the Executive Board to ensure that the organization is adequately pursuing its intended mission,



- c. May attend any Buckeyes Vote meeting or official event to their choosing,
- d. Maintain any advisor duties required by the University and the Office of Student Life.

## ***Article VIII – Meetings and events of the Organization***

### **Section 1: General Membership Meetings**

- 1) Buckeyes Vote will meet regularly during Fall and Spring semesters.
- 2) Buckeyes Vote will meet every Tuesday within the above parameters at 7:30pm EST.
  - a) Opportunities presented for advocacy will count towards membership, but will not be classified as an official meeting of Buckeyes Vote.

### **Section 2: Executive Board Meetings**

- 1) The Executive Board shall meet regularly during Fall and Spring Semesters.
- 2) The President may call additional meetings at their discretion.
- 3) Attendance is expected for all Executive Board officers.

### **Section 3: Office Hours**

- 1) The President and Vice President must coordinate one (1) hour every week to dedicate Office Hours for the club.

### **Section 4: Quorum**

- 1) Quorum for all Executive Board meetings shall be a majority of all members present.

## ***Article IX – Method of Amending Constitution***

### **Section 1: Changes to this Constitution**

- 1) Technical and Substantive changes to the Constitution:
  - a) Any member of Buckeyes Vote in good standing may propose an amendment of this Constitution;
  - b) All proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Executive Secretary, President, and Vice President and be discussed at one general body meeting before the proposed amendment is voted on;
    - i) Technical and substantive amendments to this Constitution may only be considered by a two thirds (2/3) vote in favor by members present physically or present via simultaneous live, online platform at a general body Buckeyes Vote meeting;
  - c) Technical changes to this Constitution shall only be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote in favor by the members present present physically

or present via simultaneous live, online platform at the next Buckeye's Vote general meeting following the amendment proposal;

- 2) Grammatical, typographical, and semantic changes to the Constitution
  - a) Grammatical, typographical, and semantic changes to the Constitution may be made by a three fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) vote in favor by the voting members of the Executive Board at an Executive Board meeting.
  - b) Any grammatical, typographical or semantic changes approved by the Executive Board must be announced and detailed to the general membership at the next regularly scheduled Buckeyes Vote weekly meeting.
- 3) Constitutional Review
  - a) This Constitution shall be reviewed during the Spring Semester of every calendar year by the outgoing executive board.

## ***Article X - Method of Dissolution of Organization***

### **Section 1:**

- 1) If the organization fails to maintain at least five (5) members, the organization shall automatically be dissolved.
- 2) Any and all remaining Buckeyes Vote assets shall be turned over to the Office of Student Life to further other clubs.