**The Western Sahel Student Association Official Constitution**

**Edited on: 04/13/2025**

**ARTICLE I- ORGANIZATION**

**SECTION I- NAME**

The student organization shall be named Western Sahel Student Association (WSSA)

**SECTION II - PURPOSE**

*The Western Sahel Student Association aims to provide a space where students of Mauritanian, Senegalese, Gambian, Malian, and Guinean descent (Western Sahel region) and those interested in the cultures of those countries to come together to meet the student’s academic, cultural, and social needs. We aspire to promote and maintain the awareness of the Western Sahel cultures on The Ohio State University campus through WSSA. The WSSA will also seek out opportunities to give back to their communities. Political or religious interference will not be tolerated by WSSA.*

**ARTICLE II - QUALIFICATIONS**

**SECTION I - MEMBERSHIP**

1. *Non-Discriminatory Clause*
	1. Membership shall be extended irrespective of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status.
2. *Registered Member*
	1. *To qualify for registered membership, students must meet the following criteria:*
		1. Attendance of at least 2 meetings each semester.
		2. Enrollment as a student at The Ohio State University. Members of the faculty, staff, and alumni are encouraged to join as honorary members.
		3. Payment of membership dues annually as determined by the executive board.
		4. Membership requirements must be verified by the entire WSSA Executive Board.
3. *Honorary Members*
	1. Honorary membership shall be extended to individuals who are interested in WSSA as well as show support to the organization.
	2. Honorary membership shall be determined by the executive board.
	3. Honorary members will not be eligible to serve as a WSSA Executive Board member in the future.
	4. Honorary membership shall be available, but not limited to faculty and staff of OSU, community leaders, and non-OSU college students.
4. *Membership Fees*
	1. Members of WSSA are obligated to pay a one-time, annual fee of USD 15. Membership dues can be paid anytime during the school year, but individuals will not be recognized as a registered member until dues are paid.

**ARTICLE III - EXECUTIVE BOARD POSITIONS AND DUTIES**

**Section I - Executive board positions and responsibilities**

1. *Roles and Responsibilities*
	1. All Executive Board members shall not miss more than two general body meetings per year unless excused by the president.
	2. If an Executive Board member is planning on being absent, they must notify the president of WSSA at least four hours before the meeting is to commence.
	3. All Executive Board members must be aware of the WSSA constitution and be mindful of the organization’s rules, agreements, and guidelines prior to accepting an Executive Board position.
	4. All Executive Board members have a duty to disseminate information to all e-board members upon the confirmation of events and programs to be shared at the next e-board meeting.
	5. All Executive Board members have a responsibility to seek out contacts, speakers, and events and complete whichever responsibilities they have for events.
	6. All executive board members will complete an event summary that will be used for reference for whatever program they will be leading.
	7. If an officer is unable to complete their duties for an extended period, the officers may vote to begin the impeachment process and an elected person to be removed from office *(See Section III).*
2. *President*
	1. The President will oversee the executive board to make sure all requirements and duties are being fulfilled. As well as always enforcing the constitution.
	2. The President will help the executive board members in fulfilling their duties wherever it is necessary.
	3. The President is the official spokesperson of WSSA in meetings, interviews, and interactions with other organizations.
	4. The President is responsible for communicating with other student organizations and maintaining a relationship with The Ohio State University Student Government as well as the WSSA Advisor.
	5. The President shall oversee forming an election committee, which shall be addressed under section III.
	6. If there is a tie in a vote, the President will be the tiebreaker.
3. *Vice-president*
	1. The Vice-President president shall perform all the responsibilities of The President when they are not present.
	2. The Vice-President shall coordinate and oversee general body meetings, thereby creating a quarterly calendar, and staying in constant contact with task forces.
4. *Treasurer*
	1. The Treasurer shall maintain all documentation and receipts of funds from WSSA accounts as well as maintain a ledger of transactions.
	2. The Treasurer shall maintain a record of the WSSA account, documenting the transfer of all funds.
	3. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the WSSA cash app and monitor all funds sent to the account such as membership payments and donations.
	4. The Treasurer must be a co-signer on all checks and financial transactions.
	5. The Treasurer shall produce a WSSA budget projection before each semester to estimate expenses, a mid-semester analysis to evaluate usage of funds, and an end-of-the-semester comparative analysis of projected versus actual fund utilization.
	6. The Treasurer oversees filling out all University-based grants.
	7. Responsible for collecting all pledged donations raised through fundraising and donating to the agreed-upon organization promptly. If more time is needed, inform the leadership so that necessary actions can be taken.
	8. The Treasurer needs to develop a fundraising plan for the academic year that will allow the WSSA to meet budgetary needs. They will do so by requesting donations from various college departments and coordinating on-campus fundraising events.
5. *Secretary*
	1. The Secretary shall take official minutes of all WSSA Executive Board meetings with accuracy and share the information with the E-Board for review of the E-Board meeting.
	2. The Secretary prepares the Executive Board meeting agenda before the meetings.
	3. The secretary is responsible for taking attendance at the start of every meeting.
	4. The Secretary is responsible for reserving rooms that are necessary for WSSA events as well as maintaining communication with the offices and completing necessary paperwork.
	5. The Secretary is responsible for sending the weekly email announcement to the WSSA emailing list.
	6. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining and updating the WSSA email list.
	7. The Secretary shall submit a weekly update to the President and Vice President of all transactions, reservations, and any other relevant information.
6. *Marketing chair*
	1. The social media chair works closely with the event coordinator.
	2. The Social Media Chair is responsible for publicizing all WSSA events by posting on all WSSA social media counts, posting flyers on campus, and informing faculty and staff about WSSA Events.
	3. Responsible for recording WSSA events for social media pages.
	4. Responsible for creating flyers for future events and social media posts.

7. *Event coordinator*

1. The Event Coordinator and Recruitment Chair work closely with the social media chair.
2. Responsible for publicizing all WSSA events with the Social Media Chair.
3. Responsible for posting flyers with the Social Media Chair.
4. Responsible for looking for different ways WSSA can become more interactive on campus, as well as spreading the word for individuals to join us. Responsible for working with the secretary in maintaining an organized list of members and honorary members.

8. *Community Service Chair*

1. The Community Service Chair works closely with the rest of the board to plan and execute service events both on campus and in the greater Columbus areas.
2. The community Service Chair works closely with the Treasurer to spearhead fundraisers for different causes.
3. Responsible for leading all service events.
4. Responsible for publicizing service events to general body as well as ensuring their participating goes smoothly.

9. *Community Outreach Chair*

1. The Community outreach Chair works closely with the rest of the board to establish and maintain meaningful connections with the organization and external groups.
2. Act as the main point of contact between WSSA and other community organizations or leaders.
3. Seek out opportunities for cross-cultural engagement and shared programming.
4. Organize events that support recruitment, visibility, and representation.

**SECTION II- ELECTIONS**

*WSSA Executive Board elections will be held annually in the month of April. An election committee will consist of Alumni Executive Board members and the Advisor. A detailed election process will be presented by in the beginning of March. The deadline to register to become a candidate will be at the end of March.*

Election committee responsibilities

1. Ensure that the candidates understand election deadlines and rules.
2. Ensure the timely following of election registration.
3. Provide information to members and the executive board on any election matters.
4. The election committee cannot be candidates for the year.
5. Voters must be registered members of WSSA by the deadline for registration.
6. Candidate Eligibility
	1. All candidates must be an Ohio State student.
	2. Must be at least a rising second year at the time of election.
	3. Candidates for President and Vice President must have served on the executive board for at least one term.

**SECTION III - IMPEACHMENT OF ELECTED OFFICIALS**

*A complaint made about an executive board member must be stated at an executive board meeting. A majority vote of the executive board will be required to raise the complaint at the next general body meeting. A two-thirds vote will be required to impeach and remove the executive board member.*

**ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

*At least two executive board meetings and one general body meeting should be held per month and will be scheduled by the executive board.*

1. *Meeting Structures*
	1. E-Board meetings during the academic school year must be held bi-weekly (twice a month).
		1. In case of exams or schedule conflicts, the meetings may be rescheduled.
		2. If more convenient, meetings can be held on Zoom if agreed upon by other executive board members.
	2. E-Board meeting cancellations are to be determined by the President and Vice-President.
2. *General Body Meeting Structure*
	1. All members of executive board members are expected to be present at general body meetings unless excused by the President.
	2. Each executive board member must fulfill their role and remain interactive with the people at the event.

**ARTICLE V - FINANCES**

*The Western Sahel Student Association at The Ohio State University is not a profit-oriented group. WSSA does not and will not accept any donations from political groups. All money WSSA accepts is to provide for our members and to fund WSSA functions, events, and donations. If WSSA should accept any money on behalf of any charity it will be stated as such before any money is accepted to protect the organization.*

1. *Acceptance of Contributions*
	1. A record of all donations made to WSSA must be kept.
	2. WSSA shall maintain an expense account.
	3. The expense account shall be interest-free as its only objective is to collect funds for WSSA.
2. *Allocation and Withdrawal of funds*
	1. The withdrawal of funds can only be done by the signature of the President, Vice President, and Treasurer.
	2. All funding of WSSA activities will be voted by the e-board, these votes will only occur at closed-door e-board meetings.
	3. For purchases under 50 dollars, no vote is required and will only need the approval of both the Treasurer and President.
3. *Spending Decree*
	1. Under no circumstances shall WSSA involve itself or approve of funding activities and purchases that involve more money than what is available. This exists for the sole reason that WSSA does not incur any debt and maintains the financial integrity of the organization.
	2. In the event that WSSA is planning an event where there aren’t sufficient funds, the event will be canceled immediately to protect the organization and its financial integrity.
4. *Recordkeeping and Auditing*
	1. WSSA shall create and maintain a record of all financial activity at the end of each semester to show the WSSA advisor at the end of the year.
	2. The treasurer is responsible for maintaining the financial records of WSSA.

**ARTICLE VI - FACULTY ADVISOR**

*The advisors of the organization and their duties shall follow respectively.*

1. Attend one general body meeting per semester
2. Attend one executive board meeting and provide a semi-annual evaluation of the executive committee

**ARTICLE VII - REPLACEMENT OF OPEN POSITIONS**

1. In the case of an executive board position vacancy, excluding the Advisor, that position shall be up for an informal election.
2. The election will consist of an email sent to the WSSA mailing list, notifying members of the vacancy and that the executive board is currently accepting nominations for the position.
3. There will be an informal meeting with the candidates.
4. The executive board will select the candidate by a two-thirds vote.
5. In the case of a vacancy in the Presidential position, the Vice President not only replaces the President but also nominates the new Vice President.
6. In the case of a vacancy of the Vice President, the President nominates the new Vice President.

**ARTICLE VIII - NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

*This organization and its members will NOT tolerate any discrimination against any individual(s) for any reason. Our organization welcomes individuals regardless 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 basis.*

1. Any member of WSSA or member of the executive board that displays the behavior of discrimination will be issued a warning.
2. If any further behavior of discrimination is displayed by the same individual, removal from the organization is possible.

**ARTICLE IX - SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY**

*As a student organization at The Ohio State University, The Western Sahel Student Association expects its members to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains an environment free from sexual misconduct.*

1. 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.

**ARTICLE X – MEMBER REMOVAL PROCESS**

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 organization 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.