Ohio Innocence Project - Collegiate Chapter

**OIP-u: The Ohio State University Chapter**

**CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS**

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**Article I: Name**

1. 1. This association shall be known as OIP-u: Ohio State University Chapter (OIP-u: OSU)

**Article II: General Provisions**

1. 1. It shall be the purpose of OIP-u: Ohio State University Chapter to:
      1. Prevent Wrongful Conviction by promoting awareness of its existence on College Campuses and to generate student and community support for the Ohio Innocence Project, and its efforts to remedy Wrongful Convictions.
      2. Host events designed to educate college students and the general public about the following topics: Wrongful Conviction; the causes of Wrongful Conviction; the plight of the wrongfully convicted; the efforts of the Ohio Innocence Project to prevent and remedy Wrongful in Ohio; and information related to Wrongful Conviction.
      3. Recruit members to help disseminate this information.
      4. Hold monthly, bi-weekly, or weekly meetings for members to discuss involvement in the organization and organizational activities.
      5. Support and promote the efforts of the Ohio Innocence Project through social media and campus media outlets.
      6. Host an annual event in October commemorating International Wrongful Conviction day.
      7. Host, at minimum, ONE other educational events during the academic school year to generate interest in the topic of Wrongful Conviction among university students and to foster the growth of the associated student group. Examples of events: panel discussions, documentary film screenings, speaking engagements, and demonstrations.
      8. Designate representatives to attend the annual OIP-u Conference organized by the Ohio Innocence Project and held at the University of Cincinnati Law School in Cincinnati, Ohio.
      9. Create social media accounts and profiles to promote group events and the Ohio Innocence Project via social media. Share all posts on the OIP social media pages.
   2. It shall be the duty of OIP-u: OSU executive board to represent the members of OIP-u: OSU in all matters affecting OIP-u: OSU with the limitation that any representation reflecting the opinions or sympathies of OIP-u: OSU and The Ohio Innocence Project being made in the community outside the law school must be sanctioned by the Outreach Program Coordinator for the Ohio Innocence Project approved by two-thirds vote of OIP-u: OSU members, and follow within the guidelines of §§ 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.
      1. As a subset of the Ohio Innocence Project, all press releases, promotional materials, events and event topics must be approved by the Outreach Program Coordinator for the Ohio Innocence Project.
      2. Unless otherwise indicated, **OIP-u: OSU** will take no official stance on any social or criminal justice issues other than that of Wrongful Conviction.
      3. **OIP-u: OSU** must clearly maintain the understanding among members and the campus community that **OIP-u: OSU** is a non-legal advocate group associated with the Ohio Innocence Project, and that **OIP-u: OSU** does not actively engage in the review or litigation of Innocence cases.
      4. No member of **OIP-u: OSU** will promote or denounce prosecutors or defense attorneys and no member shall state an opinion with respect to these matters on behalf of **OIP-u: OSU**.
   3. Membership to **OIP-u: OSU** is open to any and all full and part time students of The Ohio State University who demonstrate a genuine interest in wrongful conviction subject matter and the desire to support and generate support for the Ohio Innocence Project. Membership is not contingent on an application process.
      1. To be added to the OIP-u email list and GroupMe for updates on upcoming meetings and events, OSU students can join by reaching out to any listed OIP-u leadership on the OSU Office of Student Life Student Activities page via their OSU email.
   4. Methods for Removing Members and Executive Officers
      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), {00312468-1} the executive board, in consultation with the organization’s advisor, may vote to temporarily suspend a member or executive officer.
2. 1. **CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:** Unless specifically stated otherwise in this constitution, the following guidelines shall apply to any candidate in any election sponsored by **OIP-u: OSU**.
      1. To be a candidate for any **OIP-u: OSU** elected or appointed office a person shall be enrolled as a full time or part time student.
      2. Any student wishing to run for an elected position must not anticipate graduation from school within 6 months of the Fall General Election.
      3. A certified candidate is defined as a candidate who meets the “candidacy requirements.”
         1. Candidacy Requirements:
            1. Submission of notification of candidacy (see § 2.2.1.)
            2. Attend the election or specified general meeting (see § 2.2.2.)
   2. **ELECTION GUIDELINES**: Unless specifically stated otherwise in this Constitution, the following guidelines shall apply to any election sponsored by **OIP-u: OSU**.
      1. Candidates for **OIP-u: OSU** Executive Cabinet positions of: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Professional Development Chair must submit notification of candidacy to the existing **OIP-u: OSU** and/or interim representative President no later than the first week of March of each year with the exception of the year in which the organization is founded (discussed below in 2.7).
      2. ELECTION: The election shall take place at the mandatory election meeting (or specified general meeting) which shall be held between March 1st and March 31st of each year with the exception of the year in which the organization is founded (discussed below in 2.7).
      3. ELECTION PROCESS: Election ballots for Executive Cabinet positions will be distributed at the mandatory election (or specified general meeting) to all members of the **OIP-u: OSU** whereby candidates for opposed positions may speak for 5 minutes to plead their position, views, duties, and future for their respective Executive Cabinet position sought and how their election to the Executive Cabinet would benefit the **OIP-u: OSU**.
         1. Ballots shall immediately be collected on the election meeting, with the exception of the highest-ranking Executive Cabinet member who is not seeking an elected position or re-election.
         2. Two existing members of **OIP-u: OSU** Executive Cabinet who are not running for an elected position of re-election shall count the ballots.
         3. Candidates must win by a majority.
         4. In the event of a tie the highest-ranking Executive Cabinet member not seeking an elected position or re-election whose ballot was not counted, shall have their ballot entered as the deciding vote to “break the tie”.
         5. Winners of the election shall take office April 1 of that year, or immediately if it is the first election help by the newly formed organization.
      4. A properly run general election is one which meets the requirements of this Constitution; any amendments thereto; the student Honor Code, as defined herein, or supplemented hereafter, and any other policies, or regulations promulgated by the Executive Cabinet or faculty and adopted by the Executive Cabinet. In the event that the general election is not properly ran, a new election shall be held as soon as deemed practical by the Executive Cabinet.
   3. All outgoing officers of the Executive Cabinet shall make themselves available for the period of one (1) month, or until the end of the Spring Semester, following the expiration of their term of the sole purpose of acting as advisors to their replacements. This provision applies to both elected and appointed officers.
   4. REMOVAL: Any elected or appointed **OIP-u: OSU** official shall be subject to removal from office for either malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in office. Any **OIP-u: OSU** member in good standing may present a petition charging one of the above listed abuses to:
      1. The highest-ranking member of the Executive Cabinet that is not charged with the abuse being petitioned.
   5. No student may service in more than one (1) elected or appointed office at the same time unless there are not enough members in **OIP-u: OSU** to avoid this outcome.
   6. The President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Professional Development Chair shall be elected by a majority vote as provided for in § 2.2.1.
   7. In the case of newly formed OIP-u Chapters, notices of candidacy will be due approximately one week after the chapter hold its first meeting. General elections will take place approximately one month after the chapter holds its first meeting.
      1. If the general election takes place during fall, candidates will run with the understanding that term will end on April 1 of the following year, after new elections are held.

**Article III: Members as Representatives to Other Student Organizations**

1. 1. All members of **OIP-u: OSU** are encouraged to attend and join other student organizations of interest on campus, and to promote those student organization’s objectives as well as those of **OIP-u: OSU.**
   2. Members of **OIP-u: OSU** are also strongly encouraged to join other student organizations aligned with **OIP-u: OSU** member’s interest of law and to promote that student organization’s objectives as well as those of **OIP-u: OSU.**

**Article IV: The Executive Branch**

1. 1. Executive Cabinet shall be defined as the following offices: (1) President, (2) Vice President, (3) Treasurer, (4) Secretary, and (5) Professional Development Chair.
   2. Members of the executive cabinet are required to attend the Annual OIP-u Conference hosted by the Ohio Innocence Project at the University of Cincinnati College of Law which will take place during late summer of each year.
2. 1. Primary executive power shall be vested to the President.
   2. It shall be the duty of the President to:
      1. Communicate with and Coordinate Events with Outreach Program Coordinator for the Ohio Innocence Project.
      2. Coordinate and supervise members of the Executive Cabinet.
      3. Be the president officer at all Executive Cabinet meetings and member meetings.
   3. If a vacancy occurs in any **OIP-u: OSU** office, except the President, the President shall notify all **OIP-u: OSU** members that the Cabinet position(s) is open. Submissions will be accepted in the same manner as Article II - § 2.2.1, and election for the open position(s) will be voted on (following the guidelines under Article II - §§ 2.2.3 – 2.2.4)
   4. Candidates for the office of **OIP-u: OSU** President shall be voted on by the entire membership of **OIP-u: OSU**, with the exception of the outgoing **OIP-u: OSU** President (or next highest-ranking out-going Cabinet member) whose vote will only be cast in the event of a tie. (see Article II - §§ 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.4)
   5. Candidates for the office of Vice President shall be voted on by the entire membership of **OIP-u: OSU** with the exception of the out-going President (or next highest-ranking out-going Cabinet member) whose vote will only be cast in the event of a tie. (See Article II - §§ 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.4).
   6. The Vice President shall act as the President in the President’s absence.
   7. If a vacancy of the office of President should occur, the Vice President shall become President.
3. 1. The Treasurer shall, upon request, have the right to examine the financial records of this organization.
   2. The Treasurer shall prepare the budget at the direction of the President; keep strict and accurate records of all **OIP-u: OSU** income and expenditures in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; solicit and collect all budget requests from groups outside of **OIP-u: OSU**; and make regular reports to the Executive Cabinet of **OIP-u: OSU** regarding the financial state of **OIP-u: OSU**.
   3. Any funds generated through fundraising efforts will be recorded by the treasurer and deposited by the treasurer into the account maintained by the **OIP-u: OSU**.
4. .
   1. The Secretary shall be responsible for calling role at meetings, taking minutes and relaying this information to the Ohio Innocence Project Outreach Program Coordinator upon request.
   2. The Secretary shall be responsible for handling the group’s social media accounts, and for developing promotional and advertising materials for OIP-u: OSU events.
   3. The Secretary shall also provide a bi-annual report to the Ohio Innocence Project Outreach Program Coordinator summarizing the group’s fundraising efforts and promotional activities. (One report per semester).
   4. The Professional Development Chair shall be tasked with the development and implementation of the professional development program and follow up on viable suggestions for **OIP-u: OSU**.
   5. Each **OIP-u: OSU** Cabinet member is chiefly responsible for their own elected position, but are strongly encouraged to assist other Cabinet members in the directives and goals of this organization.
5. **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**: 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.
6. As a student organization at The Ohio State University, OIP-u 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>.

f 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)