

The Constitution of the  
**Union of Vietnamese  
Student Associations  
of the Midwest**  
(UVSA-Midwest)

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# Article 1 – The Establishment

## **Section I: Founded**

The Union of Vietnamese Student Associations of the Midwest was founded on the seventeenth of March 2007.

## **Section II: Name**

The organization shall be recognized as the Union of Vietnamese Student Associations of the Midwest. It may be referred to as Tổng Hội Sinh Viên Việt Nam Trung Tây or UVSA-Midwest.

## Article II – Mission Statement

The Union of Vietnamese Student Associations of the Midwest, a non-profit, non-partisan, community-based organization, was founded in 2007 as a means for Vietnamese youth organizations from across Midwest United States to network with one another, share common resources, and collaborate on philanthropy projects. The UVSA- Midwest shall be an independent organization and shall not be governed or controlled by any other organization. UVSA-Midwest is committed to empowering emerging youth leaders within the Vietnamese community in the Midwest United States. Also it shall maintain and promote the Vietnamese culture. The UVSA-Midwest staff is composed of college and graduated students.

Servicing the Vietnamese American community in Midwest United States, UVSA-Midwest works as an umbrella organization and collaborates with individual student associations and other related Vietnamese community related organization to conduct events and projects. To these ends, we organize conferences and retreats focused on leadership, cultural identity, social and community issues in addition to a collective philanthropy project that involves the participation of all member groups.

In the case that UVSA-Midwest dissolves, all remaining funds shall be donated to the current Collective Philanthropy Project.

# Article III – Offices

There shall be four different offices in the UVSA-Midwest Staff:

1. Board of Advisors/Board of Directors
2. Executive Board
3. Council of State Representatives
4. General Staff

## **Section I: Board of Advisors**

There shall be seven members of the Board of Advisors, consisting of two former UVSA-Midwest staff, four established leaders from other community organizations, and the current President. The Board of Advisors will be led by one of its members to be elected as the Chairman.

## **Section II: Executive Board**

The Executive Board consists of:

- President
- Internal Vice-President
- External Vice-President (Midwest Regional Representative for UNAVSA)
- Treasurer
- Secretary

## **Section III: Council of States Representatives (CoSR)**

The Council of States Representatives consists of one representative from each of the eight states that are a part of UVSA-Midwest. The current eight states in the Midwest Region of United States are as follows:

- Minnesota
- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Iowa
- Ohio
- Kentucky

## **Section IV: General Staff**

The General Staff consists of Vietnamese interest organization staff and members at individual campuses and youth organizations, project directors, and event coordinators.

# Article IV – Power & Duties

## Section I: Board of Advisors

The Board of Advisors is responsible for:

- Monitoring that the organization's actions remain consistent with its mission and purpose
- Providing ongoing support and guidance for the Executive Board
- Enhancing the organization's public image
- Clarifying, interpreting, and explaining bylaws
- Serving as court of appeals
- Assessing its own performance
- Terms of the Board of Advisors shall be two years, as voted by the Executive Board and pending ratification by two-thirds of the CoSR. Terms of Advisors may be renewed unlimitedly at the end of each two-year term.
- Terms of the Chairman of the Board of Advisors shall be two years, as voted by the Board of Advisors.
- The Board of Advisors has the principal responsibility for fulfillment of the organization's mission and the accountability for its operations. It is in charge of establishing a clear organizational mission, overseeing the implementation process, and providing adequate supervision and support to the Executive Board.
- Monitoring and doing a yearly budget review of organization expenses.

## Section II: The Executive Board

Provides governance to the organization and represents the organization in the community. No officer shall for reason of his office be entitled to receive any salary or compensation, but nothing herein shall be construed to prevent an officer or director for receiving any compensation from the organization for duties other than as a director or officer. Compensation will only be awarded for services and duties provided that are unrelated to the members role in the organization. In the case that the previous rule is broken, it will be pursued to the fullest extent of the law. Board Duties are as follows:

1. Planning
  - a. Maintain the organization's mission and review the staff's performance in achieving it
  - b. Review and approve the organization's plans for funding its programs and activities
2. Organizing
  - a. Elect, monitor, advise, support, reward, and when necessary, change management
  - b. Ensure that the human resources are sufficient to achieve long-term objectives
3. Operations
  - a. Review the results achieved by the organization and compare them with the organization's mission
  - b. All major issues concerning the organization must be voted by the Executive Board with a simple majority consensus
  - c. Ensure that the financial structure of the organization is adequate for its current needs and long-term strategy
  - d. Executive Board shall be a two-year term, beginning with the Executive Board elected in 2010, whose term will end 2012

A. President

- a. Maintain general active management of the business of the organization
- b. Ensure the effective action of the board in governing and supporting the organization, and oversee board affairs. Act as the representative of the board as a whole
- c. Speak to the media and the community on behalf of the organization
- d. Recommend committees to be established. Ensure that each committee has a chairperson, and maintain communication with the chairperson to ensure that their work is executed
- e. Ensure that board matters are handled properly, including preparation of meeting materials, functionality of committees, and recruitment and orientation of new Board of Advisor members

B. Internal Vice-President

- a. Act as the President in the absence of the President
- b. Be in charge of all intra-organizational issues, such as roles and responsibilities of board members
- c. Shall replace the President when the President fails to fulfill his or her duties
- d. Shall oversee the Council of Sates Representative (CoSR) activities
- e. Shall assist the President on the above or other specified duties

C. External Vice-President

- a. Act as the President in the absence of the President and the IVP
- b. Shall assist the President on the above or other specified duties
- c. Act as the official liaison of the organization to the community
- d. Oversee community service projects
- e. Be in charge of all public relation issues
- f. Act as the representative for Union of North American Vietnamese Student Associations (UNAVSA) for the Midwest region

D. Treasurer

- a. Manage the board's review of and actions relating to its financial responsibilities
- b. All funds will be deposited solely to the organization's bank account
- c. Any investments made need to comply with the legal requirements of a non-profit organization
- d. Must be one of the officers who shall sign checks or drafts of the organization. No special funds may be set aside that shall make it unnecessary for the Treasurer to sign the checks issued upon it
- e. Shall render, at stated periods as the Executive Board shall determine, a written account of the finances of the organization; such report shall be physically affixed to the minutes of the Executive Board

E. Secretary

- a. Prepare the agenda for every board meeting
- b. Keep minutes of all official board meetings, and provide it when necessary
- c. Shall present to the membership any communication addressed to him/her as Secretary of the organization
- d. Shall submit to the Board of Directors any communications which shall be addressed to him/her as Secretary of the organization
- e. File any certificate required by any statute, federal or state
- f. Give and serve all notices to members of this organization
- g. Be the official custodian of the records and seal of this organization
- h. May be one of the officers required to sign checks and drafts

### **Section III: Council of State Representatives (CoSR)**

Members of the CoSR will be responsible for:

- Planning inter-state activities and events, providing its organization's members the opportunity to network with members of other organizations, and ensuring the individual organization's are informed of and involved with UVSA-Midwest activities and events
- Assessing, monitoring and aiding the needs of the Vietnamese interest organizations within UVSA Midwest
- Disseminating information from UVSA Midwest Executive Board to member organizations within each states

The CoSR shall convene every two years to elect a new State Representative. The CoSR shall convene every year for voting on general matters.

### **Section IV: General Staff**

The Executive Board appoints general staff coordinators where the Board deems applicable and necessary to establish a Program Director or Event Coordinator for a specific program or event. These positions are only official upon ratification by two-thirds of the CoSR. General staff shall organize and develop programs concurrent to the organization's overall mission. Terms of the General Staff members are one year, and can be renewed by recommendation by the Executive Board and upon ratification by two-thirds of the CoSR

# Article V – Membership

## **Section I: Member Organizations**

The membership of UVSA-Midwest shall consist of individuals active in the Vietnamese American youth community, as well as the colleges and universities with a functioning and active Vietnamese interest organization or Vietnamese youth organization.

Member organizations shall send at least one representative to the annual conference.

## **Section II: Contribution**

Every member and member organization has the duty to actively contribute to the goals and activities of the organization.

Membership fees can be assessed depending on future anticipated needs and shall be voted on by the CoSR.

# Article VI – Meeting

Meetings shall be held via conference call or at any time and place designated by the members.

## **Section I: Voting**

- On the daily operations of UVSA-Midwest, the outcome shall be decided among the Executive Board members
- On material UVSA of Midwest decisions, the outcome shall be decided by a vote, in which each
- Executive Board members, CoSR representatives, and General Staff members have a vote, with the decision based on a simple majority consensus
- Quorum shall be decided when at least two-thirds of either the Executive Board or two-thirds of the Executive Board plus the CoSR are present, depending on the matter to be considered

## **Section II: Order Of Business**

- Roll call
- Reading of the minutes of the preceding meeting
- Reports of committees
- Reports of officers
- Old and unfinished business
- New business and miscellaneous action items
- Adjournment

# Article VII – Election

## Section I: Voting

1. On the UVSA-Midwest Board of Advisors
  - a. Voting for each Advisor position shall be staggered such that two of the two existing Advisor positions will be up for reelection each year
  - b. Each active Executive Board member and CoSR member has one vote
2. On the UVSA-Midwest Executive Board
  - a. The elections for the executive board shall take place during the general meeting at the VIA-1 conference every other year
  - b. Each CoSR representative shall cast a vote representing the majority of the votes of the present members of the state
  - c. In the event of a tie, the current Executive Board shall cast the deciding vote, as determined by a simple majority
  - d. The suffrage shall be universal, direct, and anonymously
3. On the Council of State Representatives
  - a. Members of the CoSR are elected during the general meeting during VIA-1 annual conference, at years that are staggered from the election of the Executive Board
  - b. For states that do not have representatives present, the Executive Board will appoint a new Representative or re-elect the existing Representative

## Section II: Conditions for Candidacy

1. Board of Advisor
  - a. All of the directors elected shall be a resident of from Midwest States and a citizen of United States
  - b. Candidates must have a minimum of three (3) year of experience with the Vietnamese communities and/or VSA; except the current president
  - c. Must have a bachelor degree from an accredited American college or university
2. Executive Board
  - a. Candidates may run for the office of President, External Vice President, Internal Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary
  - b. Candidates must:
    - i. Be younger than 26 years of age at time of election
    - ii. Have served as a former or current member of the CoSR or have been an active member of UVSA-Midwest for at least 1 year
    - iii. Be approved by the elections committee and three-fifths of the current Executive Board

## Section III: Elections Official

The outgoing President will ensure that rules and regulations, as stated in the by-laws, are in place to guarantee a fair election.

## Section IV: Resignation, Impeachment and Replacement

1. Resignation
  - a. Members of the Executive Board can only resign with consent of two-thirds of the

Council of States Representatives and three-fifths of the Executive Board. In severe situations or circumstances, Executive Board members may resign with consent of more than one-half of the Executive Board.

2. Impeachment

- a. The CoSR shall have the sole power of impeachment of the Executive Board, with a two-thirds majority required to remove any officer from the Executive Board.

3. Replacement

- a. Appointed members of the Executive Board may be replaced with the consent of two-thirds of the elected members of the Executive Board.
- b. Appointed members of the CoSR may be replaced with the consent of three-fifths of the elected members of the Executive Board.

## Article VIII – Decision

Decisions of the Executive Board are only official if and only if it was approved by a three-fifths majority of the Executive Board members.

## Article IX – Amendments

The Executive Board or CoSR must officially propose amendments to the constitution. The proposed amendments must be approved by two-thirds of the CoSR and Executive Board, collectively.