

# The Black Students in Public Affairs ('BSPA') Constitution

## **Article I Introduction**

The Organization shall be known as the (Black Students in Public Affairs), and herein after shall be referred to as the 'BSPA'.

## **Article II Mandate**

The organization shall work towards implementing and maintaining our vision and mission.

Our vision is to provide support for racialized students to explore and develop their interest in public affairs. In addition to providing students with the resources to pursue their future career endeavors.

Our mission is to create the next generation of Black change makers through mentorship, scholarship, and community. We want to offer Black and racialized students a safe space to discuss their opinions on current events and their implications on the private and public sectors both domestically and internationally. BSPA aims to look at current issues from a wide variety of perspectives to create an all encompassing experience in the world of Public affairs.

## **Article III Structure**

1. The General Membership shall be the legislative body of the organization and shall be composed of all members.
2. The Executive shall be the administrative body of the organization and shall be composed of members elected by the General Membership.

## **Article IV Membership**

1. The Organization's General Membership shall be open to all undergraduate students at Carleton University. The club's membership cannot be exclusive towards any group of students at Carleton University.
2. The Organization may grant graduate students at Carleton University and others in the community membership in the Organization, however they must not have voting rights in elections and must have a membership classification in Article III - Structure.
3. Membership in the organization shall be valid from May to April.
4. Only full-time undergraduate students enrolled at Carleton University may serve on the Executive. Graduate students may only serve a non-voting, advisory capacity.

5. In the event that a member of the organization violates the organization's Constitution or CUSA's Constitution and disciplinary action is being considered, the Executive shall report it to the Clubs and Societies Commissioners.

## **Article V Executive**

### **President(s) -**

- Maintains relationships with other organizations and acts as the official voice and representative of the club;
- Provides overall leadership and direction to the club organization;
- Establishes short and long range objectives and goals with the executive committee;
- Coordinates club activities with the executive committee;
- Presides at meetings of the club and its executive committee;
- Structures the organization to ensure continuity by providing opportunities for new leadership to develop;
- Approves all club press releases, newsletters, electronic communications and other publications;
- Exercises overall financial responsibility for the club; co-signs bank accounts with the VP finance;
- Ensures completion of annual reports of the club's activities by mid-July or immediately following the annual meeting.

### **VP INTERNAL**

- Assists the president(s) in their duties;
- Handles and maintains records of club correspondence;
- Maintains official records of meetings;
- Informs officers of deadlines for reports, and future correspondence;
- Maintains a record of executive and general members electronic information;
- Coordinates programs with president(s) and executive committee;
- Provides timely advance information on forthcoming events and ideas for newsletters and publications and electronic communications to the VP communications;
- Maintains complete and up-to-date copies of the club's bylaws and other organizational documents.
- Maintains and updates all club documents
- Regularly checks club correspondence such as email
- Develops a strategic plan to increase BSPA's best organizational practices

- Acts as a resource for executives looking for information about anything relating to administrative matters, resources available to use as a club, or logistics including and beyond events;
- Develops a strategy to maintain and increase membership.

## **VP FINANCE**

- The VP Finance oversees the yearly budget and distributes funding for initiatives;
- Collects dues, and receives proceeds from tickets and other moneys;
- Assists the president(s) and other executive members in preparing and maintaining program budgets and financial controls;
- Maintains and supervises club bank accounts; co-signs bank account with the club president(s);
- Pays all club bills on time;
- Files annual financial reports;
- Prepares and submits the annual financial report as well as regular financial statements to the club president and executive committee.
- Garners alternative forms of funding for BSPA by creating and maintaining relations with local businesses
- Research sponsorship funding and partnerships and find new ways to create sponsorship revenue for club initiatives
- Manages and supervises sponsorship efforts through fundraising activities, partnership marketing, donations and seeking continuity of existing partnerships
- Researching different grant, scholarship and bursary opportunities

## **VP EVENTS**

- Coordinates and conducts club programming i.e. Frosh week, monthly members meetings, networking events and workshops;
- Plans events which engage and promote the well being of the club and build social connections among members;
- Develops a strategic annual events plan (including deliverables) with measurable outcomes to be shared with the BSPA leadership team;
- Collaborates with other members of the executive committee to create and execute exciting, interesting events for the clubs constituency;
- Maintains a list of events and event statistics throughout the year in the online club annual report form;
- Liaises with VP communications for promotion on BSPA's social media platforms and CUSA's clubs and societies websites and social media platforms;

- Focuses on enhancing student knowledge about public affairs through developing and planning events and workshops for BSPA members;
- Works with VP Outreach to recruit guest speakers, plans logistics and works with VP Finance to ensure sponsorship.

### **VP RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY**

- Conducts secondary research including interdisciplinary research in areas related to public affairs and BIPOC intersections within public affairs.
- Builds and provides sufficient support to projects through implementing innovative research.
- Works closely with VP Communications and VP Events through providing research findings concerning current events and also active/upcoming projects.
- Stays up to date with current news and events related to public affairs and external issues affecting the BIPOC community to share with the executive team.
- Compiles and shares research and other data related to public policy to executive team
- Directs research initiatives to VP Events by transferring knowledge for outreach projects concerning academic affairs eg. workshops, seminars, etc.
- Oversees, edits and confirms the proper discharge of BSPA posts and electronic/physical print (eg. instagram posts, facebook posts, tweets, newsletter etc.) for accurate information.
- Advocates for policy change and ensures that student issues are addressed with regards to public affairs through awareness campaigns.

### **VP OUTREACH**

- Oversees all of the outreach programs within BSPA;
- Reaches out to the Carleton community, fosters discussion about public affairs and BIPOC issues and creates awareness about services on campus;
- Establishes mutually beneficial partnerships with like-minded organizations on and off campus; leverages these partnerships to promote BSPA's events and services;
- Sets up an annual partnership and outreach plan (including deliverables) with measurable outcomes;
- Works closely with VP Events on outreach programming such as networking and mentorship
- Manages and fosters relationships between the University, students, and the Ottawa community at large;
- Maintains a calendar of outreach activities, including community events, appearances, and other communication opportunities.

- Assist in the organization of special events, including donor/volunteer appreciation events and other fundraising initiatives;
- Act as a liaison with neighborhood and community groups to enhance Club and community relations and to build public trust.
- In addition to overseeing the current BSPA outreach programs, the VP Outreach is expected to be involved in further development of outreach programs such as the expansion of BSPA to other schools, and the planning and hosting of networking and mentorship programs.

## **VP(s) COMMUNICATIONS**

- Manages the club's digital platforms;
- Works closely with the VP administration to maintain records of correspondence;
- Finds ways to use technology to improve the organization's operations (e.g., communications and outreach);
- Develops an integrated strategic communications plan to advance BSPA's brand identity through developing a social media plan (including deliverables) with measurable outcomes and shared with the BSPA Executive;
- Publicizes club activities through email, social media and the club website;
- Develops BSPA's print and electronic communications including the BSPA newsletter, event flyers, posters and advertisements, website and new media;
- portfolio, which are related to marketing, social media management, and publications;
- Develops and manages the public image of BSPA and approves all press releases and advertisements,

## **Article VI Meetings**

### Meetings of the General Membership

1. Meetings of the General Membership can be called:
  1. At the request of the President, for a meeting to be held not less than one week from the date of publication of the notice;
  2. At the request of the Executive, for a meeting to be held not less than one week from the date of publication of the notice; or
  3. At the request of any five members of the Organization.
2. Quorum of the General Membership
  1. The presence of at least five members or the majority of members, whichever is less, shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of General Membership for the exercise of its powers.

## Meetings of the Executive Committee

1. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall
  1. Be held at regular intervals and are for the purpose of running the club.
  2. Votes by the Executive Committee on club business shall be declared by a simple majority.
  3. If an executive member is absent for three or more Meetings of the Executive Committee, that shall be considered grounds for impeachment

## **Article VII Elections**

The Organization has chosen to run elections for its Leadership Succession. The following are the steps necessary to be taken to run elections.

1. The Club executives will appoint a Succession Officer to run elections for the Club.
  1. A Succession Officer may be any one (1) of the following individuals:
    1. A neutral party to all elections being held within the club.
    2. A member of the Clubs Oversight Committee.
    3. A member of the CUSA Clubs Office.
    4. A club member or an external student non-member.
  2. All efforts should be made for a Succession Officer to be appointed on a consensus basis in the Executive Committee. When that is not possible, a recorded vote in a first past the post majority or plurality vote winner will be appointed Succession Officer.
  3. The Organization will work with the Succession Officer to set the date of final voting membership purchase, campaign start, campaign end, voting start, and voting end.
  4. Students-at-large will have the opportunity to join the club before the start of voting.
  5. Every voter has the right to cast their ballot in private.
  6. During counting, candidates may select an individual who is not a candidate to be present for counting and scrutinizing.
  7. Appeals, complaints, or conflict may be made to the Clubs Oversight Committee by way of emailing the Student Groups Administrator.
  8. Timeline:
    1. Day 1 - Announcement of campaign, voting, and results announcement dates
    2. Day 7 - Start of campaign
    3. Day 10 - last day to buy voting memberships for the club
    4. Day 14 - end of campaign

5. Day 15 - start of voting
6. Day 16 - end of voting
7. Day 17 - Results announced
9. The specified timeline can be modified by the Succession Officer upon consultation with the Executive
2. The Club will run a ranked ballot election to elect the following executive positions:
  1. President(s) - maximum 2 positions
  2. VP Internal
  3. VP Finance
  4. VP Research and Advocacy
  5. VP Events
  6. VP Outreach
  7. VP(s) Communications - maximum 2 positions
3. The ranked ballot election process shall be conducted as follows:
  1. Candidates on the ballot shall be organized alphabetically by last name, with a box to be marked with the number indicating their order of preference from most preferred (“1”) to least preferred.
  2. A final “no-confidence” option will be offered at the bottom of the ballot.
  3. If no candidate garners a majority of the vote of eligible ballots (50% + 1), discounting abstentions and votes of no-confidence, by the end of the first round, the candidate with the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated, and the voters’ next choice shall be applied
  4. This elimination process shall continue until one candidate ends with a majority of the vote (50% + 1) of eligible ballots, discounting abstentions and votes of no-confidence.
  5. Upon counting of the vote, the candidate with the majority of the ranked vote will be considered elected to the position.
4. In the event that an executive position is vacated, a by-election will be called within 30 days of the initial vacancy.

### **Article VIII Impeachment**

1. To remove a member, our Club will first consult the CUSA Clubs Membership Removal Committee (MRC)
2. The CUSA Clubs Membership Removal Committee (MRC) will advise on the next steps for the club
3. Should the CUSA Clubs Membership Removal Committee (MRC) advises that the club proceed with membership removal, the following steps will take place:
  1. Impeachment for Removing an Executive Role:

- a. Grounds for impeachment of a club member include any violation of the constitution, the governing documents of CUSA, committing an act (or acts) which negatively affects and/or harms the interests of the clubs and its members, and/or failure to fulfill executive duties.
  - b. Any member can bring forward a request for impeachment to any executive. Within 10 days of receiving this request, the executive will host a meeting with the General Membership. At this meeting, the complaint will be reviewed. The member bringing forward the complaint and the accused executive shall be given time to speak.
  - c. A vote for impeachment with the General Membership will be conducted. The accused executive shall not be permitted to vote. A simple majority will be needed to impeach the executive. Impeachment of an executive results in their removal from office and as a member of the club.
2. Membership Impeachment:
- a. Grounds for impeachment of a club member include any violation of the constitution, the governing documents of CUSA, and committing an act (or acts) which negatively affects and/or harms the interests of the clubs and its members.
  - b. Any member can bring forward a request for impeachment to any executive. Within 10 days of receiving this request, the executive will host a meeting. At this meeting, the complaint will be reviewed. The individual bringing forward the complaint and the person accused shall be given time to speak.
  - c. A vote for impeachment within the executive will be conducted. A simple majority of executives will be needed to impeach the member. Impeachment of a member results in their removal as a member of the club.

### **Article IX Amendments**

1. Amendments can be presented by a general member at a Meeting of the General Membership. As long as quorum is met, amendments can be ratified via a simple majority vote (50%+1) of the General Membership.
  - a. All amendments that are proposed during the Meeting of the General Membership must be voted on.
2. Proposed amendments may be distributed to the General Membership through an online platform. A simple majority vote of the General Membership through the online platform will result in the ratification of the amendment. The length of time that members will be



allowed to vote on this amendment through the online platform will be at least 48 hours from the date of distribution to the General Membership.

3. A proposed amendment can be sent from the General Membership to the Executive at any time. The following procedures apply to proposed amendments sent by the General Membership outside of a Meeting of the General Membership:
  - a. If the amendment has five or more signatories upon submission, the Executive must call for a vote on the amendment within 10 days of receiving the proposal.
  - b. If the amendment has fewer than five signatories upon submission, the Executive will initiate voting procedures for the proposal upon their discretion.
  - c. The vote can take place through the methods outlined in Article IX (1) or (2).

## **Article X**

Upon dissolution of the Organization all assets gained through CUSA shall be returned to CUSA and all other assets shall be given to Ottawa Food Bank.

**APPENDIX | History of Amendments to the BSPA Constitution**

**June 2024** - Constitution adopted in its entirety by Neema Waweru and Kendall Petersen

**July 2024** - Constitution amended by Kendall Petersen