

The Constitution of Black Student Union

Hope College

Revised - August 2008

Preamble

In order to conduct our organization affairs in an efficient and business like manner, we, the members of the Black Student Union, do hereby adopt and agree to abide by the following constitution.

Article I

Name

The name of the organization shall be the Black Student Union.

Article II

Place

The location of the organization is Hope College, in Holland, Michigan.

Article III

Mission

Our mission is to promote equality on Hope College's campus by utilizing Black history, experiences, issues, and perspectives.

We will accomplish our mission by providing events on this campus that deal with Black heritage and culture. This will help educate and stimulate the community of Hope College, as well as to strengthen our identity.

We strive to create an environment in which Black culture and heritage will be visible and accessible to our fellow students, thereby opening an avenue for understanding, learning, and appreciation. We feel that this is a step towards eliminating biases from fear, stereotypes, and intolerance.

We welcome anyone committed to or interested in our mission regardless of race, religion, sex, or nationality.

Article IV

Membership

Section 1: There shall be the following classes of membership:

- A. Active Member
- B. Inactive Member
- C. Friend of Black Student Union

Section 2: An active member is any student, native or foreign born, who is enrolled as a degree-seeking student at Hope College and pays student activity fees. Members are expected to attend a minimum of four weekly organizational meetings. If a member is not able to attend a weekly organization meeting, he/she is expected to notify the executive board by way of email, blackstudentunion@hope.edu.

Section 3: An inactive member is a member who is unable to meet full membership as defined (Article 4 Sec 2). Inactive members, once recognized by the executive board, have the right to vote but are not allowed the right to hold office. To be recognized as an inactive member, the inactive membership form must be completed and submitted to the executive board secretary by the second organization meeting of each semester. Once approved by the executive board, the student will be recognized as having inactive membership status. Inactive membership forms are attached to the constitution and can be obtained through the executive board members, the Black Student Union office, and/or online.

Section 4: A Friend of the Black Student Union is any person on the faculty or Staff at Hope College, former member of the Black Student Union, or area community member who wishes to support the mission of the Black Student Union. This membership status does not include the right to vote or hold office. Friends of the Black Student Union are invited to attend organizational meetings and events and offer support to the mission of the Black Student Union.

Section 5: Conduct of Membership: It is the duty of active and inactive members of the Black Student Union to uphold the constitution. Members are expected to display an attitude and act in such a way that does not jeopardize the welfare of the organization. Any violation of these membership requirements is subject to evaluation by the executive board. Members may request a meeting with the executive board to discuss and/or resolve any issues with the organization and/or membership. Such requests must be submitted by way of email to blackstudentunion@hope.edu at least one week prior to the organization meeting and forwarded to the director of the Office of Multicultural Education and BSU adviser(s).

Article V

Executive Board

Section 1: The Executive Board shall consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Activities Chair, Public Relations Chair, Historian, Webpage Coordinator, and Adviser(s).

Section 2: The President shall chair the Executive Board, preside over all meetings, serve as the liaison between the Black Student Union and other organizations and the campus community, and serve as the official representative of the organization. He/she will hold regular meetings with the adviser(s), countersign all contracts and other instruments of the organization, and approve all checks written for the organization.

Section 3: The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence, fulfill other such duties as assigned by the President, and perform the duties of other executive board officers in their absence. The Vice President shall maintain an accurate list of all members and their home and campus information.

Section 4: The Secretary shall type and distribute the agenda for each meeting of the organization, keep accurate minutes at each meeting, prepare and submit a copy of all minutes for the year to the historian, send out any correspondence to members and prospective members, maintain copies of the bylaws and checks, respond to all mailings, and maintain a calendar of events.

Section 5: The Treasurer shall submit an annual budget to the President, the Executive Board, and the members for approval, maintain acquisition forms, receive all statements of the organization's account and report on the financial status of the organization monthly to the executive board and the organization. The Treasurer shall also have charge of all funds of the organization, plan and perform any fundraising activities, and provide the organization with budget projections.

Section 6: The Social Activities Chair shall coordinate all fellowship activities for the members and perform any other social activities as may be appropriate and necessary.

Section 7: The Public Relations Chair shall handle all press releases, radio and television spots, posters, duplicating and printing for the organization, and perform any other public relations activities as are appropriate and necessary.

Section 8: The Historian shall collect copies of all minutes of the year, collect a copy of the year's budget and financial statements, create a scrapbook containing the year's events, take pictures at events, maintain contact information of former members, monitor historical Hope and Black Student Union facts and events, and prepare an annual historical report to the organization. The Historian shall also serve as the sergeant of arms at all meetings and whose duties include noting tardiness of members.

Section 10: The Webpage Coordinator shall maintain the online webpage. His/her responsibilities include designing and maintaining the upkeep of the webpage, collecting all material needed, and submitting all information to the webpage coordinator located in Student Development.

Section 11: There shall be a faculty and/or staff adviser(s) who shall provide the organization with information, counseling, and appropriate guidance.

Section 12: Executive board members are allowed two unexcused absences from all meetings per semester. Any absence after will result in a dismissal from their executive board position and title. The position will then be up for nominations at the next general meeting. The election and voting process will be determined by the executive board. Absences and tardiness will be excused if reason is submitted by way of email to the secretary at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. If the secretary is expected to be absent, he/she will notify the president. Extreme circumstances will be viewed on a case by case basis.

Section 13: During an executive board meeting, any board member(s) can address the delinquency of other board member(s) at which time the executive board will resolve the concern at the executive board's discretion while all members are present.

Section 14: Any Executive Board member who decides to relinquish their position after August 1st (for the coming year) must find and train a replacement for their position before they can be relieved of their position.

Article VI

Elections and Voting

Section 1: All nominations shall occur the week prior to the academic year's spring break. Speeches and elections shall be submitted no later than the last meeting prior to the week following spring break. The speeches shall include a formal statement as to why their candidate's leadership will be effective for the organization. An officer shall be elected by a majority vote the week prior to nominations. The voting process shall be determined by the executive board. All elected members will serve for an entire academic year, April 30 -May 1. Following elections, the exiting executive board will work closely with newly elected board members to facilitate the transition into the next fiscal year (see Section 3).

Section 2: Candidates to be nominated for president shall only be eligible if the candidate has served at least one year prior to elections on the executive board.

Section 3: Eligible voters shall be only active and inactive members.

Section 4: During the transition between the exiting and newly elected executive board members, the exiting board members will facilitate the transition by presenting the board member binders along with the constitution, provide training for each position, and an outline of the year's events.

Article VII

Amendments

Section 1: These bylaws may be amended by a three-fourth majority vote of eligible

voters. Constitutional changes should be proposed at the first meeting for information and discussion and at the following meeting for action.