

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

And hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allah, and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, you became brethren; and you were on the brink of the pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make His signs clear to you, so that you may be guided. (Qur'an, Surah 3, Verse 103)

Constitution of the Muslim Students Association of Columbia University

We, the Muslim students of Columbia University, have agreed to and have adopted the present Constitution and do hereby establish an organization to be known as the Muslim Students Association, hereinafter called the Association.

ARTICLE 1: Aims and Purposes

SECTION 1.

The aim and purpose of the Association is to serve the best interests of Islam and of the Muslims of Columbia University and Morningside Heights. Towards this end, the Association shall:

1. Arrange and hold weekly Jummah prayers for students and members of the community throughout the year.
2. Arrange and hold other congregational prayers and Islamic religious celebrations at appropriate times.
3. Promote unity and joint action among Muslims through various religious, social, and other programs.
4. Strengthen interfaith relations on and off campus.
5. Endeavor to make Islamic teachings known to other communities.

SECTION 2.

The Association shall maintain an office at Earl Hall.

SECTION 3.

The Association shall be a non-profit organization. In all matters, Inshallah, the Association shall act in accordance with Islam and shall shun any practices that are contrary to Islam.

ARTICLE II: Affiliation

SECTION 1.

The Association shall be affiliated with the Muslim Students Association of the United States and Canada.[\[1\]](#)

ARTICLE III: Membership

SECTION 1.

A member shall be any Muslim or non-Muslim who wishes to be a member of the Association, and agrees to obey the constitution and the generally-accepted practices of the Association.

ARTICLE IV: Office Bearers

SECTION 1.

The elected officers shall be President, Vice President, all four Programming Chairs, Treasurer, Media Coordinator, and Events Coordinator. The Graduate Advisor shall be appointed by the incumbent executive board.

SECTION 2.

The Executive Committee shall serve a one calendar year term, beginning immediately after it has been elected until one week after the successive Executive Committee is elected. The former Executive Committee will facilitate the transition of the incoming Executive Committee by attending their first meeting.

SECTION 3.

The President shall:

- a. Set the overall agenda for the Association.
- b. Assume ultimate responsibility for all activities and undertakings.
- c. Act as the official spokesperson for the Association.

SECTION 4.

The Vice President shall:

- a. Serve as a Chief Operating Officer for the Association
- b. Be responsible for correspondence to and from the Association.
- c. Record, store, and distribute minutes from every Executive Committee meeting.
- d. Prepare the agenda of weekly Executive Committee Meetings.
- e. Oversee planning and execution of all Iftars and Ramadan related events.

SECTION 5.

The Graduate Advisor shall:

- a. Advise the Executive Committee in all matters.
- b. Represent the graduate students of the Association.
- c. Act as a liaison between existing graduate Muslim groups and the Association.
- d. Assist the executive committee in the planning and execution of events.

SECTION 6.

The Programming Chairs shall plan and organize programming for the Association. Specific positions do not preclude chairs from organizing events outside of their primary responsibilities.

The Religious Life Chair shall plan and oversee:

-halaqas, large and small lectures, dawah events, spiritual events, Jummah

The Community Affairs Chair shall plan and oversee:

-Fast-a-thon, community service programs

The Public Affairs Chair shall plan and oversee:

- politically relevant programs, interfaith events, events with on and off campus groups
- The Social Affairs Chair shall plan and oversee:
- Islamic social activities including Eid dinners, Town Hall meetings

SECTION 7.

The Treasurer shall:

- a. Oversee the finances of the Association and allocate funds, which includes providing a budget for each event to the relevant programming chair and determining reasonable amounts for co-sponsorship.
- b. Provide a monthly budget report to the Executive Committee.
- c. Collect donations and organize Islamic fundraisers.

SECTION 8.

The Media Coordinator shall:

- a. Send regular e-mails to the General Body with updates on events and other developments.
- b. Coordinate all publicity, through flyers, e-mails, social networking sites, as well as other suitable avenues.
- c. Maintain and update the Association website.
- d. Chair a committee of technically skilled and willing volunteers including a webmaster, to assist in these responsibilities.

SECTION 9.

The Events Coordinator shall:

- a. Work closely with the Programming Chairs and the Columbia University Event Management office to arrange for space reservations and requests (e.g. AV, technical and furniture).
- b. Be responsible for pre-calendaring and reserving space for the upcoming semesters.

SECTION 10.

At weekly meetings, the Executive Committee shall discuss all relevant matters and strive to meet a consensus on every decision. The President shall have the final say on all decisions.

ARTICLE V: Finances

SECTION 1.

Membership dues, if any, shall be determined by the Executive Committee. Association dues may be different for earning and non-earning members.

SECTION 2.

The Executive Committee may accept any contribution in any form, from any source, consistent with the purposes of the Association and the principles of Islam, with the discretion of the Treasurer.

ARTICLE VI: Amendments

SECTION 1.

A proposal for amendments shall be signed by twenty members or ten percent of the members, whichever number is larger and submitted to the Executive Committee. Alternatively, the Executive Committee itself may propose amendments.

SECTION 2.

When amendments are proposed, the Executive Committee shall call an initial General Body meeting to discuss the proposed amendments and a subsequent General Body meeting to vote on those amendments.

SECTION 3.

An affirmative vote by 2/3 of the members present at the specified General Body meeting shall be necessary for the adoption of all amendments.

ARTICLE VII: Impeachment Procedures

SECTION 1.

Impeachment procedures are provided as an utterly final resort, and every attempt should be made to correct any problem through other avenues.

SECTION 2.

An Executive Committee member may be removed from office for neglecting responsibilities (e.g. excessive absence), misdemeanor, misappropriation of funds, fraud, corruption, violation of the Constitution, and cover-up of such offenses, etc. In addition, an Executive Committee member may be removed for violating Islamic principles or laws that deem them unworthy to serve as a leader of Muslims, or for representing the Association in a fashion that is uncharacteristic of Islamic principles.

SECTION 3.

The Executive Committee shall hold a strictly private, confidential meeting, during which the issues are thoroughly discussed and the member in question is allowed ample time to defend himself or herself. After the meeting, Executive Committee members will no longer discuss the matter, neither among themselves nor with others. The following day, a second meeting, again strictly private and confidential, will be held to vote on impeachment. The member in question will neither vote nor be present during the voting. A written vote will be taken, and of the voting members, at least 2/3 must vote affirmatively for the impeachment to be carried out.

SECTION 4.

Regardless of the outcome, after the proceedings, Executive Committee members may not discuss any details of the proceedings with any outside individual or third party.

SECTION 5.

At all times, the Executive Committee shall keep in mind the Islamic injunctions against suspicion and backbiting.

SECTION 6:

The Executive Committee may appoint a person in the interim to hold the open position. This person must have been nominated in the previous elections for the position. In the event that no nominees exist, the Executive Committee may vote on an active member.

ARTICLE VIII: Elections

SECTION 1.

Annual elections shall be held near the end of the Spring Semester, in order to elect the Executive Committee for the following year.

SECTION 2.

The candidates as well as the nominators shall be members of the Association and students at Columbia University. They should have attended three general body meetings and two board meetings to be eligible for candidacy.

SECTION 3.

A member who has not attended at least three general body meetings shall have no right to vote in the election.

SECTION 4.

All election officers shall have the right to vote as members, excluding those involved in the operation of the election.

ARTICLE IX: Muslim Advisory Council

The Muslim Advisory Council shall consist of at least three persons, all of whom must be adults of age 25 or above and considered knowledgeable about Islamic principles, values, and teachings. At least one of these persons must be a Muslim woman. These persons shall be selected and contacted by the MSA Executive Board in power, and shall serve as the advisory council on moral and religious affairs in which both the Executive Board and the General Body agree to place their trust concerning moral and/or religious dilemmas which may be a source of significant conflict for the MSA Executive Board and/or General Body.

ARTICLE X: Final Advice

It has been narrated by Abu Musa, may Allah be pleased with him, that our Beloved Messenger, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

“A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other.”

And all praise is for Allah, Lord of all the worlds.

[1] On April 10th, 2009, CU MSA renewed affiliation with MSA-National.