

PA Student Association

BY-LAWS

October 1, 2009

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name for the organization will be the Public Administration Student Association, henceforth referred to as PA Student Association or the association.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The mission of the Public Administration Student Association is to:

1. encourage camaraderie of members through social and networking opportunities;
2. form a representative medium to facilitate communication with faculty and staff in order to participate in the development of policy and practices necessary to improve the membership's quality of education;
3. provide auxiliary development opportunities and resources to members necessary for the implementation of sound governmental practices deserved by all people;
4. work with faculty, staff, NIU MPA Alumni, professional organizations, NIU and others to do all that is necessary to elevate and maintain the NIU MPA program as the premier local governance and nonprofit management graduate program.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members.

All graduate students enrolled in the Masters of Public Administration (MPA) program at Northern Illinois University (NIU) shall be considered full members. All other students of Northern Illinois University who request membership shall be considered general members. Membership includes both full and part-time MPA students, as well as students enrolled at Northern Illinois University, who request membership.

Section 2. Nondiscrimination Policy.

The association shall accept all students attending NIU as members without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or any other protected category as defined under federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Section 3. Rights of Members.

Only graduate students in the MPA program have the right to participate and vote in general meetings. Undergraduate students and graduate students have the right to participate in general meetings, but only receive the right to vote during special voting periods. All members have the right to receive a printed copy of the bylaws for a fee of \$0.50. Electronic copies are available on-line and free of charge.

Section 4. Prohibition of Preferential Treatment.

No part of the revenue of or activities for the PA Student Association shall be used to solely benefit a single individual.

Section 5. Conflict of Interest.

No PA Student Association member is permitted to be a participant, directly or indirectly, in any material arrangement, agreement, investment or other activity that would result in personal benefit to that individual at the expense of the association. Members are also prohibited from being material recipients, directly or indirectly, of any salary payments, loans, discounts or gifts from or on behalf of any person or organization engaged in a transaction with the association. All exceptions must be brought to the membership for approval.

Section 6. Compensation.

No member of the PA Student Association shall receive compensation for his or her services to the organization. A member may be reimbursed for expenses incurred as a result of his or her volunteer activity provided there is money set aside for that purpose.

ARTICLE IV MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings.

PA Student Association general meetings will be held at least once each semester. The agenda shall include a review of the minutes of the previous meeting and of any meetings the Executive Committee held in the interim. This agenda will include reports and information needed by the membership to take informed action upon old and new business.

Section 2. Notice of Meetings.

All PA Student Association members will be notified of association meetings by e-mail at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled date. Meeting information will also be posted in the MPA computer lab and on the Public Administration home page.

Section 3. Attendance.

Attendance of association meetings is open to members and other interested parties, including faculty members and administrators. The Secretary will record attendance and minutes for each meeting.

Section 4. Special Meetings.

Special meetings may occur as determined by the majority decision of the Executive Committee. The membership shall be notified of the date, time, and location of these special meetings no less than three (3) days prior to the scheduled date.

Section 5. Voting.

Only MPA student members of the association shall be entitled to one vote at a general meeting or election. A member may vote yes, no, or abstain.

Section 6. Undergraduate and Graduate Student Voting Rights.

Undergraduate and graduate students of graduate programs other than the MPA program are only allowed to vote during special voting periods.

Section 7. Special Voting Periods.

Special voting periods allow all members of the PA Student Association to cast their vote. Special voting periods will be considered when the act of all members' votes does not adversely affect the MPA program or division, and when the input of general members is deemed necessary.

Section 8. Quorum.

For purposes of voting, a quorum shall be required for all general membership meetings. A quorum is constituted by one-tenth (1/10) of the total number of members.

Section 9. Manner of Acting.

Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The act of or decision by a majority of the members present shall be considered to be an act of the PA Student Association. In certain instances when a decision is required before the next regularly scheduled meeting and it is impractical to call a special meeting, the officers of the association are authorized to poll members via telephone, e-mail, or electronic vote and tally their votes. A formal count shall then be presented at the next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE V**OFFICERS****Section 1. Number.**

The association shall have four (4) elected officers serving as members of the Executive Committee who are elected as provided for in Article VI of these by-laws. The available executive positions shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2. Qualifications.

Elected officers must:

1. Meet the basic membership criterion.
2. Complete one (1) semester of coursework prior to assuming office.
3. Be in good academic standing as defined by the MPA program and NIU standards.
4. Be available and willing to attend meetings as required.

In addition, the President must:

5. Complete two (2) semesters of coursework prior to assuming office.
6. Be enrolled full-time.

Section 3. Terms.

All officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the membership as outlined in Article VI. Each officer is elected for a term of one (1) year that expires when the new officers assume their positions. Officers are eligible for re-election but may only serve a maximum of two (2) terms in a specific position.

Section 4. Duties of Officers.

- A. The President shall be the chief elected officer of the association, while presiding over the meetings of the association and the Executive Committee. The president shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Ensuring that the association abides by its bylaws and established policies.
 - 2. Representing the association to other organizations, groups, or interested individuals.
 - 3. Attending or designating another association representative to attend pertinent meetings.
 - 4. Appointing ad-hoc committee chairpersons.
 - 5. Developing Executive Committee meeting agendas in collaboration with members of the Executive Committee.
 - 6. Receiving reports from other officers, committees, and members and then reporting back to the membership on the affairs of the Association.
 - 7. Appointing up to four (4) members-at-large to the Executive Committee, in order to maintain equal representation for first-year and second-year students serving on the Executive Committee. The remainder of the executive board will vote to approve these nominations.
- B. The Vice-President will assume the role and duties of the presidency during the absence or disability of the President, and shall ascend to the position in the event a permanent vacancy in the presidency arises. The primary responsibilities of the Vice-President are:
 - 1. Chairing the Social Outreach Committee.
 - 2. Assisting the President in the above-mentioned duties.
 - 3. Serving as Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee.
 - 4. Assisting the Secretary in disseminating information to the student body.
 - 5. Appointing members-at-large to the Social Outreach Committee.
- C. The Secretary is the custodian of records for the association. The Secretary's main responsibilities are:
 - 1. Keeping records of meetings, policies, activities, membership, and any other necessary information.
 - 2. Taking minutes of all general meetings and teleconferences of the Executive Committee, including a list of motions and voting results. Preparation of minutes may be delegated to another member of the association, with the Secretary responsible for approval.
 - 3. Reviewing the policies of the association and presenting to the Executive Committee any policies that may have to be amended, rescinded, or reaffirmed.
 - 4. Serving as the secretary of the Executive Committee.

- D. The Treasurer is responsible for monitoring the financial condition of the association. The Treasurer's main responsibilities are:
1. Overseeing the fiscal affairs of the association.
 2. Presenting to the members an annual budget for the organization that is developed in collaboration with the Executive Committee and any other relevant committees.
 3. Monitoring budgetary performance and recommending modifications as necessary.
 4. Reviewing for approval all actions and policies with financial implications.
 5. Securing and/or maintaining funding from the Northern Illinois University Student association.
 6. Providing a discretionary budget for the Social Outreach Committee.
 7. Serving as the treasurer for the Executive Committee.

Section 5. Vacancies.

The Executive Committee shall fill all officer vacancies that occur in the interim between annual elections. The Executive Committee will choose individuals from among the association membership.

Section 6. Removal of an Officer.

An officer may be removed from his or her position by a majority vote of the Executive Committee if he or she:

1. Is expelled from the MPA program and/or Northern Illinois University.
2. Is convicted of a criminal offense (other than minor traffic violations).
3. Is absent from three or more meetings in a single semester.
4. Conducts himself or herself in a manner which adversely affects the association, the Division of Public Administration, or Northern Illinois University that is considered by a majority vote of the membership to be unacceptable.

In the event an officer is removed from his or her position, the vacancy will be filled as outlined in the previous section.

Section 7. Faculty Advisor

A faculty advisor will be assigned by the Chair of the Division of Public Administration. The faculty advisor will:

1. Convene the first meeting of the academic year.
2. Serve on the Executive Committee but will only vote in the event of a tie.
3. Serve as the liaison between the Executive Committee and the MPA faculty.

ARTICLE VI ELECTIONS

Section 1. Election of Officers.

The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the PASA membership. Annual elections shall be held no later than the second Monday of April. All newly elected officers shall assume their rights and responsibilities on the first Monday following spring graduation.

Section 2. Announcement of Election

Announcement of the election shall occur at least one month prior to the election. The announcement will occur via email to all public administration students and other members.

Section 3. Nominations.

Concurrent with the announcement of the election, nominations shall be solicited. Nominations shall be open for no more than one week after official announcement of an election. All nominated individuals shall be informed of their nomination and will be required to submit a brief biography highlighting their interest in their respective position and potential ideas for the organization. The form must be returned within one week of the nomination notice. Should a form not be returned by the specified deadline, a candidate shall be ineligible for office. All forms must be posted for the membership's consideration within 24 hours after the deadline.

Section 4. Voting.

Voting shall be conducted online through the Public Administration E-Community or some other online program determined at the discretion of the current officers. Voting shall begin at the start of the business day of the designated election date and be open for 72 hours afterward. All votes must be anonymous. Votes shall be compiled and results announced via email within 24 hours of the close of an election.

Section 5. Special Elections.

Special elections may be called as necessary in the event that no sitting majority of officers exists or to fill a special position created by the Executive Committee. Special elections shall be exempt from sections (1) and (2) in the case of electing or replacing the full set of officers.

ARTICLE VII

COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committee Membership.

Committees shall be comprised of PA Student Association officers and members-at-large.

Section 2. Committee Responsibilities.

Each committee is responsible for:

1. Clearly defining the tasks to be accomplished.
2. Establishing timelines for the achievement of goals and objectives.
3. Recruiting members who are committed to the tasks at hand and willing to expend the time to accomplish them.
4. Scheduling time for the committee to meet, whether this be face-to-face, over the phone, or through e-mail.
5. Obtaining the resources necessary to accomplish the tasks of the committee.

Section 3. Executive Committee.

The four (4) elected officers of the association and members-as-appointed shall be regarded as the Executive Committee. The duties of this committee include:

1. Providing consultation and guidance to the President and other committees on matters related to the affairs of the organization between meetings of the MPA Student Association.
2. Approving any extraordinary expenditure of funds.
3. Remaining informed of the activities of other standing or ad-hoc committees.
4. Performing other leadership duties as necessary.
5. Assessing and presenting the needs and issues of the student body to the faculty.
6. Working with faculty and other students to organize professional development activities and Colloquium events.

Section 4. Social Outreach Committee.

The Vice President and members-as-appointed shall be regarded as the Social Outreach Committee. The duties of this committee include:

1. Planning and implementing social events, fundraisers, networking opportunities, and all other events aside from general meetings.
2. Facilitating involvement of members-at-large and remaining aware of their needs.
3. Incorporating suggestions from the membership regarding future events.
4. Reporting activity to the Executive Committee and the membership.
5. Approving expenditures of budgeted funds designated by the Treasurer.

Section 5. Ad-hoc Committees.

The President shall have the authority to create and suspend additional committees and appoint members as necessary. Ad-hoc committees will stand until suspended.

ARTICLE VIII

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Section 1. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the PA Student Association will be July 1st to June 30th.

Section 2. Contracts.

The members of the Executive Committee must obtain membership approval before entering into any contract with another organization.

Section 3. Checks, Drafts, etc.

All checks, drafts or other orders for payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the association, shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the President. If one of these officers is unavailable, the Vice-President is also an authorized signatory.

Section 4. Deposits.

All funds of the association shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the association in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Executive Committee may select.

ARTICLE IX

BOOKS AND RECORDS

The PA Student Association shall keep correct and complete books and records of accounts and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its members and various committees. A record of the names and addresses of members will be kept in the Division of Public Administration office and will be available on-line. Any member or interested party may inspect the books and records of the organization at a reasonable time for any purpose.

ARTICLE X

AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by a majority vote of the membership present at any regular meeting or special meeting, providing that at least seven (7) days notice is given on intention to alter, amend, repeal, or to adopt new bylaws at such a meeting.

ARTICLE XI

DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1. Recommendation for Dissolution.

A recommendation that the association be dissolved shall only be made by a majority vote of the membership. Notice of the election to dissolve the association shall be given to voting members no less than seven (7) days prior to the execution of the articles of dissolution.

Section 2. Distribution of Assets.

In the event that the PA Student Association is dissolved as an organization, all debts and obligations must first be satisfied from the assets of the of the association. Any remaining assets are to be returned to their source of origin or distributed to the MPA program and NIU.

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