

[REVISED: March 22, 2015]

THE HARVARD SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

Preamble

The Harvard South Asian Association exists to meet the political, cultural, academic, and social needs of students who express interest in the region of South Asia and the South Asian diaspora. South Asia includes but is not limited to the nations of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Article I. Purpose The South Asian Association, hereafter referred to as SAA:

I.1 seeks to provide a vehicle to express a unified voice for South Asian interests on campus.

I.2 celebrates the cultural, religious, and regional diversity of South Asia.

I.3 promotes awareness of and represents the academic and political concerns of South Asians on campus.

I.4 serves as a forum for the open discussion of issues relevant to its members and to South Asia

I.5 exists to build a sense of community among its members and to build relations between its members and student groups on and off campus

Article II. Structure and Duties

Section 1

The objectives outlined in Article I shall be carried out by SAA Executive Board, the additional representatives of the membership, and the membership at large.

Section 2

II.2.i The Executive Board of SAA shall include the following elected officers: the President(s), Treasurer, Secretary, Academic/Political Chair, Cultural Chair, Social Chair, Outreach Chair, Publicity Chair, and Historian. Appointed Officers, not on the Executive Board, shall include the First-year Representatives and Director(s) of Ghungroo. Ad-hoc appointments may be created at the discretion of the Executive Board.

II.2.ii The order of succession within the organization shall be defined by the order in which offices are listed in II.2.i. In the event that the President(s) is unable to fulfill their duties because of extenuating circumstances, and in cases of conflict of interest, the order of succession will take effect and the officer next-in-line will assume the role and responsibilities that have been abdicated.

II.2.iii Descriptions of each elected and appointed office, and duties involved in fulfilling the office, are below.

Elected offices shall be as follows:

PRESIDENT(S) The President(s) shall work primarily to coordinate and administrate the efforts of the Executive Board, appointed officers, and members of the association. The President(s) must be able to respond to issues of importance to South Asians, and will speak and represent the association in both off campus and on campus affairs. In this effort, the President(s) must follow with the sentiments and concerns of the association and welcome any input that members have on SAA, its events, and its functions. The President, or one of the Presidents, will be responsible for the SAA Debit Card, which can be used for purchases made for the organization upon written authorization from the Treasurer.

TREASURER The Treasurer is in charge of all monetary transactions involving the organization. The Treasurer is responsible for publishing regular financial statements, as well as creating a budget report at the beginning of each year and a financial summary at the end of each year. In addition, the Treasurer is responsible for ticket sales at all events and will be responsible for securing funding and/or applying for grants for all of the organization's activities. The Treasurer should be available to answer any questions regarding SAA's financial situation. The Treasurer and President(s) will solely retain signing power for SAA financial accounts.

SECRETARY The Secretary is responsible for creating and maintaining membership lists and the SAA email account, keeping minutes at board meetings, and publicizing all events on e-mail. The Secretary will oversee and coordinate changes in the webpage, in conjunction with the webmaster, for the purpose of announcements, meetings, and general information. The Secretary will also publish a parent's newsletter in the fall and spring. The Secretary will work with the SAA Historian to publish an alumni newsletter each semester.

ACADEMIC/POLITICAL CHAIR The Academic/Political Chair is responsible for organizing all academic and political forums and lectures sponsored by SAA. This includes, but is not limited to, inviting ambassadors, dignitaries, academics, and other guests to speak at events of special interest, including the organization of forums in the spring and fall. In addition, the Academic/Political chair will focus on increasing political participation and activism of members both on campus and within the community. A primary focus of the chair will be to coordinate efforts with other ethnic, religious, and/or cultural organizations. The Academic/Political Chair should attempt to keep the membership abreast of all campus political issues and will coordinate SAA's response to such issues. The academic/political chair will also lead the South Asian Studies Initiative, a program under the academic/political committee that brings more faculty and classes concerned with South Asia to Harvard."

CULTURAL CHAIR(S) The Cultural Chair coordinates the different cultural events that SAA holds during the year. The Cultural Chair is also responsible for coordinating

celebrations of South Asian holidays and ceremonies, in conjunction with other relevant campus organizations, and must remain informed about the meaning and the occurrence of these particular holidays. In addition, the Cultural Chair is responsible for planning events which may include but are not limited to dance shows, music concerts, dramatic productions, and art exhibitions that celebrate the ethnic and cultural diversity of South Asia. In this vein, the Cultural Chair should also be attentive to bringing art and artists to Harvard. Along with this, the Cultural Chair should coordinate musical and art instruction with professionals in the area.

SOCIAL CHAIR The Social Chair is responsible for coordinating the various social events that SAA holds throughout the year, including, but not limited to, catered dinners, mixers and informal social events. As liaison, the Social Chair is responsible for coordinating efforts to hold joint social events with other colleges, the graduate school associations, and other students and community members within the Boston area. The Social Chair should also work specifically toward intercultural communication and affiliation through the arrangement of social functions between SAA and other ethnic, religious, and/or cultural groups. The Social Chair will also oversee the coordination of the annual mentor program between first-year and upper-class members of the organization.

OUTREACH CHAIR The role of the Outreach Chair is to coordinate communication with and seek out resources from individuals and groups beyond Harvard for SAA. The Outreach Chair will seek ways to increase the interaction of SAA with the surrounding community through community service events. Moreover, the Outreach Chair will maintain relationships and contact with Boston area collegiate groups, and with other area South Asian groups in the U.S.A. and South Asia. The Outreach Chair will serve as a liaison between the Executive Board and the Shades of Brown Program and its appointed Director.

PUBLICITY CHAIR(s) The Publicity Chair is responsible for conducting publicity campaigns for all events sponsored or co-sponsored by SAA. The Publicity Chair shall coordinate postering drives, send invitations to faculty and visiting dignitaries, and serve as liaisons between SAA and the media. Publicity campaigns may include, but are not limited to: electronic publicity, such as e-flyers and web announcements, as well as conventional publicity, such as posters, banners, programs, and press releases. The Publicity Chair will work closely with the Secretary to ensure that events are adequately publicized by way of the newsletter and mailing lists. The Publicity Chair is responsible for designing and creating all materials used for publicity.

HISTORIAN The Historian will centralize the documentation of all SAA activities. The Historian will be responsible for maintaining records and evaluations of events, taking and archiving photographs, and referencing past information for present use by the Executive Board. The Historian is responsible for the management and upkeep of the SAA office. The Historian will also serve as a liaison between the SAA Executive Board and the SAA alumni and will maintain the SAA alumni list and assist in coordinating fundraising and networking efforts with the alumni. The historian will work with the SAA Secretary to publish an alumni newsletter to be distributed in the fall and spring and will

also work with the SAA Treasurer to coordinate and manage all donations made by alumni to the SAA Gift Fund.

TECHNOLOGY CHAIR The Technology Chair will be responsible for updating and maintaining the website (harvardsaa.org). This will include uploading pictures, updating event information, chair descriptions, and more. The Technology Chair is responsible for staying up to date with new website features, and will work with the Presidents, Historian and Publicity Chair(s) to determine how the website, email lists, and social media can be used most effectively for SAA's purposes.

Appointed offices shall be as follows:

FIRST-YEAR REPRESENTATIVES First-year Representatives are responsible for coordinating events and activities pertinent to first-year students, eliciting participation and voicing concerns for the first year class. The First-year Representatives will attend all meetings of the Executive Board. Although the recommended number of first-year representative is between three and five, the Executive Board has the discretion to appoint fewer or more. First-year Representatives shall be appointed no later than mid-October of the academic year in which they serve.

DIRECTOR(S) OF GHUNGROO The Director(s) of Ghungroo shall work in conjunction with the Executive Board to coordinate SAA's annual cultural production. The Director(s) shall organize the performances and assemble the necessary technical staff to manage the production. The Director(s) will work closely with the President(s) of SAA or their designated appointee(s), who will serve as producers, and the appointed production staff. The Director(s) shall be appointed at any time before the end of October during the President(s) term.

Section 3

II.3.i The number of Presidents may not exceed two.

II.3.ii The following elected positions may be held by no more than two co-chairs: Academic/Political Chair, Cultural Chair, Social Chair, and Publicity Chair. The remaining elected officers may not number more than one per office, except for additional appointments made at the discretion of the Executive Board. These appointees will be considered members of the SAA Board and will be expected to attend all Board meetings and fulfill all Board duties, but will not be considered members of the Executive Board and thus will not have voting power.

II.3.iii The number of Director(s) of Ghungroo may not exceed three. Article III. Board Procedure Section 1

III.1.i The SAA Board shall consist of all elected officers, those appointed to elected offices, and the First-year Representatives. The Executive Board shall consist of all elected officers. Voting power shall be conveyed only upon members of the Executive Board.

III.1.ii The Board will meet at least once each week of the academic year, except under special circumstances, as deemed by the President(s). The President(s) or two-thirds majority of the Executive Board may, at any time, call an unscheduled meeting of the Board with 24 hours notice.

III.1.iii All meetings of the Board are open to the general SAA membership, unless a meeting, or portion thereof, is voted closed by a majority of the Executive Board.

III.1.iv All members of the Board are expected to attend all meetings and events, except under extenuating circumstances, to be approved by the President(s).

III.1.v It is the responsibility of the Secretary to track attendance of Board members at all events and meetings. Attendance records should be made public annually upon request.

III.1.vi

Any written statement made in the name of SAA must be approved by two-thirds of the Executive Board.

III.1.vi

The Executive Board shall be responsible for holding a general meeting for the membership at large at least once a semester. General meetings will be structured to inform members of SAA activities, solicit suggestions and concerns about the organization, and bring to the attention of the members important issues and actions.

III.1.vii The outgoing Executive Board shall be responsible for facilitating the transfer of office to the incoming Board members.

Article IV. Membership

All undergraduate affiliates of Harvard University are eligible for membership in SAA. Membership shall be defined by subscription to the official SAA email list by such undergraduate affiliates – this includes saa-list@lists.hcs.harvard.edu as well as the four class lists in use for the year in question.

Article V. Elections

Section 1

V.1.i All members of SAA that have a full year of studies remaining are eligible to run for an Executive Board office.

V.1.ii A person may hold only one elected office at a time.

V.1.iii In order to be eligible to vote, a student must be an official SAA member four weeks prior to elections. A good faith effort to include all potential members of the SAA

potential members of the SAA community will be conducted four weeks before candidacy statements are declared. Any questions about membership status will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the outgoing President(s).”

Section 2

V.2.i The elections shall be held annually before the end of spring term classes, and all terms for elected positions to the Executive Board will commence immediately after election.

V.2.ii The elections shall be announced and publicized at least two weeks prior to taking place.

V.3.i All candidates should notify the President(s) of their candidacy no later than two days prior to the election.

V.3.ii During the week prior to elections, the outgoing President(s) shall collect position papers from all candidates. Position papers shall be collected no later than two days prior to the election. In the event that one of the President(s) is seeking another elected office, the officer next-in-line in the order of succession (as per II.2.ii), contingent on their seeking elective office, will collect the position papers.

V.3.iii Position papers will be limited to one side of a regular letter page for all candidates except candidates for President. Position papers for the presidency may not exceed two sides of a regular letter page.

Section 4

V.4.i The election shall be administered by current officers not contesting any election for any office and a third party commission (of at least two and up to three people) appointed by the President(s) and approved by the candidates and the officers not contesting an election for an office. The names of the election commission must be released at least one week prior to elections.”

V.4.ii The order of elections shall be as follows: President(s), Treasurer, Academic/Political Chair, Cultural Chair, Social Chair, Outreach Chair, Secretary, Publicity Chair, and Historian.

Section 5

The election for President(s) shall be administered according to the following procedure:

V.5.i Every candidate or pair of candidates must be nominated and seconded from the floor.

V.5.ii Each candidate or co-candidacy pair for President(s) will be allowed five minutes for a speech. Each candidate or co-candidacy pair will be given 15 seconds notice prior to the end of their speaking time.

V.5.iii All questions must be directed to every candidate or co-candidacy pair. Questions must be phrased such that every candidate has the opportunity to reply. The candidates for President(s) will be given one and a half minutes per candidacy to answer each question, with a maximum of five questions. All questions will be chosen from the floor by the third party observer. Each candidate or team of candidates will be given 15 seconds notice prior to the end of their speaking time.

V.5.iv In all cases where there are two people or teams running for a position, the speaking order will be determined by a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss will choose either the speaking or the question order. The other party gets the other choice. For more than two candidates, the order of speaking will be determined alphabetically by last name. If any of the candidates are running as a team, the last name to be used will be determined by coin toss. For the question and answer period, the candidates will be in alphabetical order from stage right to left, and the right to answer each question first will be rotated among the candidates. If a candidate or co-candidacy pair is running absentee, they may designate a representative to speak in their place. Absentee candidacies will be allowed to provide their representative with additional written material with which the representative may answer questions, subject to approval by the third party observer.

V.5.v The elections will be conducted according to simple majority procedure, in which a candidate or co-candidacy pair must have over 50% of the vote to win. In the event that no candidate or co-candidacy pair receives at least 50% of the vote, the top two candidates will continue immediately to a run-off vote. In the event of a run-off vote, the question and answer period will be extended to include up to three additional questions. When a candidate or co-candidacy pair is running unopposed, a vote of confidence will be held with the candidate out of the room.

V.5.vi Votes shall be counted by the President(s), or the officer(s) next-in-line as per II.2.ii, along with the election commission.

Section 6

The elections for all other position will be administered in the format of the Presidential election with the following changes:

V.6.i Each candidate will be allowed two minutes for a speech.

V.6.ii Each candidate will be given one minute to answer questions during the question and answer period. The order for answering questions will be administered as in section

Section 7

The election to the Executive Board shall be a trickle-down election. If a candidate is not elected for a given position, the candidate may contest any of the elections for the successive positions. Such candidates may participate in the respective speech and question and answer sessions and may distribute position papers at the time of the election.

Elections must be held in a timely manner to fill vacant offices on the Executive Board. Elections for such vacated offices will be announced at least one week prior to the election date.

Section 8

V.8.i The Executive Board has the right to make ad-hoc appointments to fill vacated positions until such time as an election can be held.

V.8.ii Elections must be held in a timely manner to fill vacant offices on the Executive Board. Elections for such vacated offices will be announced at least one week prior to the election date.

V.8.iii If the election does not fill the vacancy, then the Executive Board has the right to appoint an individual to the position, as per the guidelines indicated in Article VI.

Article VI. Appointments

Section 1

VI.1.i The Executive Board shall solicit applications for the appointed positions from the entire membership. For positions in which more than one person may serve, cocandidates are expected to apply as teams.

VI.1.ii All members of SAA are eligible for all appointed positions, except for members of the Executive Board, who are eligible only for non-Board appointed positions.

VI.1.iii The Executive Board shall select an appointed officer by majority vote, taking into consideration (when applicable) the recommendations of the corresponding outgoing appointees.

Section 2

All appointed offices not assigned specific liaisons will report directly to the President(s).

Article VII. Removal

Section 1

Failure to abide by the principles and by-laws of the Constitution and/or negligence of the duties required of any officer, elected or appointed, shall be cause for removal.

Section 2

VII.2.i Notice of such failure may be brought to the attention of the Executive Board by written petition by any member of the SAA, which will be read and presented at the Executive Board meeting following receipt of the complaint.

VII.2.ii Upon the presentation of such a petition, a motion to consider the removal of an

officer or appointee may be made any Executive Board member. If the motion passes by a majority vote, then the President(s) must immediately notify the officer or appointee that his removal is under consideration. The officer or appointee must then be given an opportunity to defend his right to his position in front of the Executive Board, within one week of the passage of the motion. The officer or appointee may then be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Board.

Article VIII. Amendments

Any amendment to the constitution must be approved by two-thirds of the Executive Board at a meeting and ratified by a majority of those present at the next general meeting. The membership shall be notified of voting at least one week prior to the general meeting.