

Constitution of the Vietnamese International Students Association at Iowa State University (VISA-ISU or VISA)

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We, the Vietnamese International Students Association (VISA) members at Iowa State University (ISU), establish and adopt this constitution to form an efficient organization, ensure equal representation of each member, and secure an environment that stimulates intellectual, social, and recreational integration and interaction. This constitution will guide our actions and activities toward our best mutual interests. Vietnamese International Students Association at Iowa State University will abide by Iowa State University regulations and state and federal laws.

Article I: Name and Affiliation

The organization's name is the Vietnamese International Students Association at Iowa State University (shortly VISA-ISU or VISA).

Article II: Purpose

VISA serves as a registered ISU organization to unite the Vietnamese International students and alumni at Iowa State University (and across the United States) and preserve Vietnamese cultural, historical, language, and cuisine remarks. We also welcome any ISU students interested in learning more about those perspectives of Vietnam. We respect the American and local community, identity, and culture. As such, our official operations and activities are bilingual, in Vietnamese and English. We strongly encourage and endorse consistently practicing both languages in all our activities. **However, due to the nature of our organization as a cultural and identity-based one, where most of the organization's members are Vietnamese International, we respect the members' choice to develop and maintain connections in their mother tongue – Vietnamese.**

1. Create a united community among the Vietnamese International students and alumni at Iowa State University and between the members and other students, faculties, and staff at Iowa State University.
2. Maintain a concentrated and well-organized "playground" to improve the scholarly, social, cultural awareness, and personal development of VISA members.
 - a. Strengthening the connections among the available on-campus Vietnamese International students and alumni.
 - b. Be ready to welcome and assist the incoming Vietnamese International students' transition to ISU.
3. Promote the Vietnamese cultural, historical, language, and cuisine remarks to the local community and integrate the best of both cultures.

Specifically, we will do these through:

1. Willingly participate in events provided by Iowa State University and International Student and Scholars Office's organizations.
2. Host team building, leadership, social and community-collaborated events.

Article III: Statement of Compliance and Zero-Tolerance Policy

1. VISA does not tolerate any form of harassment, abuse, or misconduct, including, but not limited to, sexual assault, domestic violence, school violence, academic misconduct, or discrimination. Refer to <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/harassment/definitions.htm> for definitions and types of harassment.
2. At no time shall this constitution or VISA make procedures contrary to an affiliated organization's constitution/by-laws unless both parties reach an agreement/ settlement.
3. VISA-ISU will operate as a non-profit organization solely for cultural and educational purposes.
4. All sections of this constitution shall bind every member of the Association. Any violation of Article III shall result in a permanent ban of the member from any activities of VISA and may result in legal proceedings according to ISU regulations, and local, State, and Federal laws.
5. VISA abides by and supports established Iowa State University policies, State and Federal Laws and follows local ordinances and regulations. VISA agrees to annually complete President's and Treasurer's Training.
6. Iowa State University and VISA do not discriminate on the basis of genetic information, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, race, ethnicity, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or status as a U.S. veteran.

Article IV: Membership

1. Membership shall be open to all registered students in good standing at Iowa State University who are interested in Vietnamese culture and language.
2. Members are registered students who enroll in VISA through the ISU student organization's portal and pay the semester due as requested (\$15 annual membership fee or \$10-semester fee). Members must comply with VISA's constitution, ISU regulation and policy, and State and Federal law.
3. Members will receive regular emails from the organization regarding future events, policies, and meetings. Membership benefits include access to all organization events, socials, fundraisers, and related opportunities.
4. New members are accepted anytime during the academic year.

Article V: Legislative Body

Section A: Members

The Legislative Body will be composed of all members of the Association. Only members attending an official Association meeting have the right to vote for the proposal presented during that meeting.

Section B: Proposals

The Association will provide opportunities during regularly scheduled meetings for new legislation, events, and program ideas to be brought forward by any active member of the Association. Proposals may also be submitted to a member of the Executive Board prior to an Association meeting.

Section C: Voting

The quorum necessary to conduct business shall be 5% of the current Association membership. All policies and election procedures must have a 10% Association participation to be considered valid. During the Association meetings, voting will be based on a majority poll (at least 60% of approval). When the issue is brought to question, the voting members will raise their hands for, against, or abstain from the vote. In the event of a tie, the Executive Board members and the Advisor shall cast a vote to resolve the tie.

In specific and functional-related votings (Executive Board Elections, Removal of general members, Impeachment, Replacement, and Resignation of Executive Board Members and the Advisor, etc.), if the quorum and participation requirements of the Legislative Body are not fulfilled, the Executive Board can temporarily bypass the requirements to ensure the operation of the Association. Refer to the corresponding Section and Article for more instructions on specific voting.

Article V: Executive Board

Section A: Positions

At a minimum, the Executive Board will comprise a President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. Other necessary positions may be created and added to the Constitution by a majority vote of the Legislative Body. All executive positions are elected and subjected to removal procedures, as detailed in Article VI and Section F, G of Article V.

Section B: Integrity of Executive Board Members

1. VISA's Executive Board members shall not use the organization's money and property for their personal or profitable benefit.
2. VISA's Executive Board members shall support other Board members and the general members outside their primary responsibility.
3. VISA's Executive Board members shall consult the Board and the Advisor immediately if unsure about their role or designated task.
4. VISA's Executive Board members shall abide by the constitution.

Section C: Duties

- The Executive Board will consist of all elected Officers.
- The Executive Board will serve as the Association's official representatives in any pertaining situation.
- The Executive Board will collectively discuss and execute any Association's business.
- The Executive Board will design and supervise programs desired by the Association. Programs should effectively serve the needs and desires of the Association.
- Executive Board members are expected to regularly attend and contribute to every general and Executive Board meeting.
- Executive Board members are responsible for fulfilling assigned tasks on time.
- Executive Board members should promote the organization via social media and in person.

Section D: Officers and Responsibilities

Advisor

- Maintain communication and meet with officers regularly. Keep updated with the Executive Board of the Association's activities.

- Authorize event forms, approve budgets and plans, and consult with and advise the Executive Board for the successful operation of the club.
- Ensure that the organization complies with the standards set forth by Iowa State University and the Student Engagement.

President

- Notify members of and preside over Executive Board meetings. Preside the Executive Board members.
- Notify members of and preside over the Association and Association general meetings.
- Maintain communication with and between the Advisor and other officers.
- Represent the Association on campus.
- Ensure compliance of the Association's operation to the principles outlined in the constitution.
- Maintain and update the Association's Constitution, Operation Manual, and other documents.
- Coordinate with the Vice President to pick up Association mail and reports on their contents at Executive Board meetings.
- Send out regular and irregular emails regarding announcements, updates, changes, future general meetings, Executive Board meetings, philanthropy, and social events at least 24 hours in advance.
- Set goals, visions, and agendas for the Executive Board members and the Association. Align the Association's operations with the goals, vision, and agendas.
- Promote communication and coordination among the Executive Members and general members.
- Preside over Association elections processes, including ballot counting.

Vice President

- Preside over the general and Executive Board meetings alongside/ in the absence of the President.
- Responsible for attending all Executive Meetings and general meetings.
- If the President vacates his/her position, the Vice-President assumes their responsibilities for the remainder of the term or until a new appointment.
- Actively assist the President in fulfilling all their responsibilities.
- Pick up Association mail and reports on their contents at the Executive Board meeting.
- Announce Association activities at general meetings.
- Responsible for Risk Management:

[a] help minimize potential risks for club activities,

[b] recommend risk management policies or procedures,

[c] to submit documentation to ISU's Risk Management Office and

[d] to ensure that proper waivers and background checks are on file with Risk Management for events (if applicable).

- Announce Association activities at general meetings.

Treasurer

- Attends mandatory treasurer training sessions each year (provided by the Campus Organizations Accounting Office).
- Prepares and submits a proposed budget to the Association and the Executive Board in the first Association meeting of each semester for approval.
- Maintains financial records for the Association. Coordinate with the secretary for keeping records.
- Maintains records of Purchasing Cards. Coordinate with the secretary for keeping records.
- Collects regular dues, any additional social dues, and any other payments as necessary.
- Collect project statements from the Campus Organizations Accounting Office.
- Pays all Association bills (upon approval of President/ Vice President/ Advisor).
- Subject to all expenditures. Expenditures must be approved by either President or Vice President.

Secretary

- Record Minutes of meetings.
- Posts and distributes meeting minutes to members through emails (usually within 24 hours of the meetings).
- Keeps track of attendance at meetings and events.
- Submit events through event authorization when necessary.
- Is responsible for tallying and presenting results of Association voting.
- Maintains the Association's email list and web page.
- Keep records of Executive Board meetings' Minutes, updates to the Association Constitution and Operation Manual, and all Executive Board members' tasks as directed in the Operation Manual.
- Reserve rooms for meetings and events.
- Coordinate with the President to maintain and update the Association's Constitution, Operation Manual, and other documents and to send out regular and irregular emails regarding announcements, updates, future general meetings, philanthropy, and social events.

- Coordinate with the External and Internal Relations chair for all correspondence between the Association and outside entities.
- Coordinate with the External and Internal Relations chair to maintain and develop the Association's social media activities.

External and Internal Relations

- Coordinate with the President and Vice President in facilitating relationships with other University Organizations.
- Take photographs and videos at VISA events and meetings.
- Create, design, and manage posters, posts, and other marketing materials.
- Is responsible for the media contents of the meetings.
- Manage all social media profiles and post necessary events, updates, and information.

Section E: Creating new Executive Board Positions

New Executive Board positions may be initiated at any time during the academic year if proposed by the Legislative Body and/or deemed necessary by the Executive Board/ Advisor. The proposal will be approved by at least 60% of the current Executive Board members and proceed with the election according to Article VI.

Section F: Impeachment, Replacement, and Resignation of Executive Board Members and the Advisor

- If the Advisor chooses to leave the organization, they must provide the Executive Board with a written statement at least two (2) weeks in advance. The Advisor must assist the Executive Board in finding a new Advisor and finalizing all transition processes and documentation.
- The Advisor may only be impeached if there is an 80% voting agreement among the Executive Board and an appropriate statement of reasons. The Executive Board will notify the Advisor through a written statement. The Advisor will be given two (2) weeks to submit a written appeal to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will review the appeal and notify the Advisor of their final decision within one (1) Executive meeting. If the Advisor position becomes vacant, the Executive Board will appoint a new Advisor within the permitted time by the University to function normally.
- The officer shall submit a written resignation statement to the Executive Board at least two (2) weeks in advance. The Executive Board members will discuss and approve the resignation within one (1) general meeting of receiving the resignation.

Any Executive Board member may be impeached by the Executive Board. The following procedures will apply in case of an impeachment:

- Any elected Executive Board member may be impeached and/or replaced by the Executive Board due to failure to perform constitutionally required duties and/or violation of Section G of Article V and/or Article III.
- General members may submit a detailed proposal to impeach or replace any Executive Board member

(including, but not limited to, the identity of the proposed Executive Board member and the reason for the proposal) to any other Executive Board members. If requested by those reporters, the Executive Board has the *responsibility* to keep the identity of the general member who submits the proposal *anonymous to other general members*. Violation of this will result in the termination of the violated Executive Board member.

- Impeachment and replacement of an Executive Board member may be initiated by a majority vote of the Executive Board members (at least 60%).
- The Executive Board will notify the impeached member through a written statement. An Executive Board member facing impeachment will be temporarily released from all duties until final decision. If desired, that member will be given two (2) weeks to submit a written appeal to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will review the appeal and notify the member of their final decision within one (1) Executive meeting of receiving the appeal. They may also request a face-to-face appeal in the next Executive meeting.
- The Executive Board will appoint the position to any Legislative Body member who satisfies the requirements. The appointment must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board members (at least 60%). The appointed member will hold the position until the next election. The assigned member has the right to decline the nomination. In that instance, the Executive Board will re-appoint the position to other Legislative Body members who satisfy the requirements. If the second attempt is still unsuccessful, the position's responsibility will be equally taken over by the remaining Executive Board members. However, the President and Treasurer positions must not be vacant.
- To be eligible to be appointed for a vacant position in the Executive Board, the general members must satisfy the requirements in Section A, Article VI.

Section G: Removal of General Members

A member of ISU VSA will be removed or withdrawn under the following circumstances:

1. Members who abuse or violate the rights and privileges of other members.
2. Members who wish to voluntarily withdraw from their Membership.
3. Members who violate local, State, and Federal laws.
4. Members who violate Iowa State University regulations and policies.
5. Members who violate Article III of the Constitution.
6. Members who actively bring up sensitive topics (including, but not limited to, the Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policy and the Principles of Community of Iowa State University and Political beliefs) with the aim to divide or disturb the Association and its members.

Any VISA member has the right to report other member's violations directly to an Executive Board member with a written statement describing the violator, type of violation and instances of violation. *The reporting member has the right to stay anonymous to the Legislative Body and the charged member.*

The Executive Board will investigate through private meetings with both sides and reach a conclusion of whether or not to notify the Legislative Body for a vote for removal. The charged member may also submit a written appeal within two (2) weeks to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will review the appeal and notify the member of their final decision within one (1) general meeting of receiving the appeal.

If proceeded, the removal will be made with the approval of at least 60% of all the Executive Board Members and 60% of the Legislative Body in a general meeting. The proposed member may not attend this meeting and will be notified of the voting prior to the meeting and the final decision after the meeting through a written statement by the Executive Board Members.

Article VI: Elections and Terms of Executive Board

Due to the nature of the organization (new forming, limited number of members, etc.), the Spring 2025 Executive Board will assume responsibilities from the time of successful registration of the organization until further notice and by the end of the Spring 2025 semester.

Section A: Candidates Qualifications and Eligibility

- Must attend the majority (60%) of meetings and events. The current secretary will keep track of this requirement.
- Must be in good standing with the university and enrolled: a minimum of six credit hours for undergraduates, unless they are in their final semester of spring or fall and require fewer credits to graduate, and a minimum of four credit hours for graduate students, except in the final stages of their degree when the Continuous Registration Requirement dictates a lesser credit load.
- All members of the Association are eligible for all positions given he/she has a minimum GPA of 3.0 in the semester immediately before the election/appointment, the semester of election/appointment, and semesters during the term of office. At least six hours (halftime credits) must have been taken for the semester under consideration. The current President will monitor this requirement.

Section B: Nominations and Application

- Campaigning is allowed starting in the first half of the spring semester and must abide by ISU policies, rules, and regulations.
- Application/nomination forms will open in the second half of the spring semester.
- Applications/ nominations must be submitted through the Application form specific to the desired Board position two (2) weeks before the election date.
- Suppose a candidate/nominee wishes to go for more than one position. In that case, they must complete and submit all applications specific to those positions to any general members who satisfy the requirements.
- Other members may make nominations. Nominees may accept or decline nomination when being reached out by the Executive Board. Acceptance means the nominee is officially a candidate.
- The current Executive Board will evaluate the application forms and notify the Legislative Body of the applicant list one (1) week before the election date through regular email and other social media platforms.
- Irregular applications shall be opened in case of new positions.

Section C: Selection of Officers

- The election date will be announced no later than four (4) weeks in advance. It is usually the third or second meeting from the last spring semester general meeting.
- Running officers and candidates must show up in the election in formal clothing unless of an emergency.
- The current President and other Executive Board members will monitor election procedures.

- The candidate will be given an opportunity to present a 2-3-minute speech followed by a Q&A session.
- The Legislative Body shall be voting members of the Executive Board Election.
- Voting will be conducted by writing in the ballot. Ballots will include space for writing in candidates.
- If running unopposed, the candidate receiving at least 60% of votes shall be elected to the position. In the event of a tie, the current Executive Board members and Advisor shall cast a vote to resolve the tie.
- For an officer who wins more than one (1) position, members will vote again to choose one (1) position for that officer, and the remaining position(s) will be given to the second-place candidate(s). If there is no other candidate for the remaining position(s), the current Executive Board will assign the position according to Bullet 6, Section F, Article V.
- The Advisor will be selected by the officers and then voted on by the Legislative Body. A majority vote (at least 70%) is needed to select an Advisor. *However, unless brought up by the Legislative Body or the Executive Board, the Advisor does not need to be re-elected annually.*

Section D: Terms of Office

The current Executive Board has the period from the election date to the end of that Spring semester to transfer the activities and responsibilities to the elected Executive Board of the next term.

All Executive Board Positions are elected in the second half of the Spring semester according to Article VI. The new Executive Board members shall begin their terms of office from the last day of that Spring semester to the last day of the next Spring semester (1 Academic year + 3 months of Summer).

The term of the Advisor will be one full year (12 months - from August to August).

Article VII: Finances

Section A: Association Dues

The Association's treasurer collects semester dues from general members in general meetings and deposits them into the Association's official account. The pre-determined amount per member is \$15 for the year and \$10 for the semester.

The Association may collect social dues for Association social functions. Social dues are not mandatory. The Association will vote on the social due amount during general meetings, needing a majority (60%) of the Legislative Body to set the maximum collected amount. All social dues will be collected by the Treasurer. No refunds of Association dues will be paid, except in special circumstances decided by the Executive Board.

Section B: Budget

- The funding sources will come from:
 - Dues from general members (\$15 for the year and \$10 for the semester)
 - Sales and fundraising
 - Sponsors and social collaborations
- The Treasurer and volunteer members of the Association will meet and propose the Association

budget for the academic year.

- This budget must be presented to the Executive Board and the Advisor.
- All money belonging to this organization shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for this organization at the Campus Organizations Accounting Office and/or approved institution/office (must receive authorization via Campus Organizations Accounting Office). All funds must be deposited within 48 hours after collection.

Section C: Expenditures

- The budget is mainly for event supplies, events, food, etc.
- A general expenditure plan for the event must be approved and signed by the Advisor of VISA before payment.
- All expenses must be approved by the President, the Treasurer, and/or the Vice President.
- The Executive Board does not need any further approval of the Association members to spend money. However, all expenditures must be recorded by the Treasurer unless specified by the Executive Board and/or the Advisor. All records will be open to access by the Legislative Body once requested.

Article VIII: Amendments to the Constitution and Ratification

Section A: Proposal

The amendments to the constitution must be presented by the Legislative Body member to the Executive Board for review. The Legislative Body will vote on the amendments in a general meeting.

Section B: Ratification

The amendments will be admitted if approved by 60% of the Legislative Body. Once passed, amendments must be posted immediately after the presentation and ratified during the meeting.

The constitution shall become effective upon ratification and make void any previous constitutions. The secretary shall then be responsible for adding the amendment to the constitution and prompt submission of an updated constitution to the Student Engagement.

The current President and the Executive Board members must carefully ratify the constitution annually at the start of their term.

Any ratification must be recorded in the Ratification Log below by the Secretary in the prescribed form “Section X, Article Y, Ratified by Z, [position] of VISA [term], in [month year].” in a reverse-chronological order.

Ratification Log

Article III, Section D - Article V: Re-written and Ratified by Huy Huu Nguyen, President of VISA 2023-2024, in January 2023\4.

All Articles: Re-written and Ratified by Huy Huu Nguyen, President of VISA 2023-2024, in December 2023.