

Students for Open Discussion Constitution

- I. The name of this organization shall be *Students for Open Discussion* at Iowa State University.
- II. The purpose of this organization is to facilitate open and civil discussion about complex worldly topics and encourage understanding between individuals with differing opinions. Meetings will involve a voted-upon discussion topic which will be introduced with a brief article or video followed by an open, respectful, educated discussion.
- III. *Students for Open Discussion* abides by and supports established Iowa State University policies, State and Federal Laws and follows local ordinances and regulations. *Students for Open Discussion* agrees to annually complete President's Training, Treasurer's Training and Adviser Training (if required).
- IV. Iowa State University and *Students for Open Discussion* 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.
- V. Membership shall be open to all registered students in good standing with Iowa State University and with *Students for Open Discussion* that intend and display behaviors that support the purpose of *Students for Open Discussion* and the Principles of Community at Iowa State University.
 - A. To qualify for membership, students open to membership must attend at least three meetings during the semester and participate in a designated fundraising activity.
 - B. Any participant at the weekly meeting will be asked to leave if they continuously violate the *Student for Open Discussion* Decorum and Meeting Protocol and were given adequate warning by an officer of *Students for Open Discussion*. If the individual is a member of *Students for Open Discussion*, then repeated violations at multiple meetings will result in a meeting of the officers, were they must unanimously vote to remove the membership of that individual. If dues were paid, they will not receive a refund.
 1. The latest information on what constitutes a violation of the *Student for Open Discussion* Decorum and Meeting Protocol can be found on the *Student for Open Discussion* STUORG website. Otherwise, Decorum and Meeting Protocol is a part of the organization's bylaws and are treated as such when being updated or changed.
- VI. Officers
 - A. The officers of this organization must meet the following requirements:
 1. Be in good standing with the university and enrolled: at least half time (six or more credit hours), if an undergraduate student (unless fewer credits are required to graduate in the spring and fall semesters) during the term of office, and at least half time (four or more credits), if a graduate level student (unless fewer credits are required in the final stages of their degree as defined by the Continuous Registration Requirement) during their term of office.
 2. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) as stated below and meet that minimum GPA in the semester immediately prior to the election/appointment, the semester of election/appointment and semesters during

the term of office. For undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, the minimum GPA is 2.00. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (half-time credits) must have been taken for the semester under consideration.

3. Be ineligible to hold an office should the student fail to maintain the requirements as prescribed in (1) and (2).
- B. The officers of *Students for Open Discussion*, once chartered, shall include:
1. President and Vice-president
 - a) Risk management
 - b) Preparing for meetings and leading the discussions
 - c) Deciding on which topics put on topic survey
 - d) Fill in any necessary responsibilities when needed
 - e) Represent *Students for Open Discussion* to Iowa State University and other organizations.
 - f) Vice-President aids president in any of their responsibilities as needed. However, the President must have a larger workload than the Vice-president.
 2. Treasurer
 - a) Maintain a club ledger.
 - b) Collect dues.
 - c) Cosign club checks with the Advisor.
 - d) Inform *Students for Open Discussion* of its financial status at each meeting and provide updates upon request.
 - e) Arrange and manage fundraising events in coordination with the president.
 - f) Solicit funding, if needed, from the Student Government.
 - g) Provide for the safekeeping of any financial assets.
 - h) Design and run fundraising campaigns.
 3. Secretary
 - a) Take meeting minutes (including an outline of the discussion) and share with members
 - b) Send out surveys and reminder emails.
 - c) Organize club folder and documents for easy access.
 - d) Updating constitution and bylaws.
 4. Social Media Coordinator
 - a) Maintains social media sites and posts club highlights
 - b) Guarantees positive web presence for club
 - c) Advertises club digitally in coordination with Social Outreach Coordinator
 5. Technical Communicator and Marketing
 - a) Creates newsletter and any other technical/advertising documents that pertain to the club.
 - b) Sends out newsletter to club members and non-members.
 - c) Manages advertising events.

C. Terms and Elections

1. Officers will hold their position for the duration of their attendance at Iowa State University, provided they are attending the Ames campus.
2. Only the President is elected by all *Students for Open Discussion* members. Elections will be held the first meeting of the second month of the semester prior to the semester that one or both of the presidents are expected to leave the position.
 - a) Elections done by secret ballot by all members present at meeting.
3. Other officer candidates will be selected by both presidents and the officer who holds the position in question prior to the semester that the officer is expected to leave so that the candidate may be trained in.

D. Impeachment of officers

1. A president may be impeached if two-thirds of members and at least one officer agree to impeach them.
 - a) At any meeting, one of the officers must make a motion for an impeachment vote. Before taking the vote, the officer must outline a plan to either replace the president with another member immediately or to remove and replace the president at a given time.
 - b) After delivering the plan, members may immediately take vote by open ballot.
2. Impeachment of other officers is decided by a 4/7 vote by the officers only and with both presidents agreeing on the impeachment of the officer.
 - a) This can be done in person or digitally, as long as all officer members make a decision.

VII. Club advisor:

- A. Duties will consist of weighing in and assisting officers of club when needed. I.e, suggesting events, topics, fundraising opportunities.
- B. The advisor will be selected by officers.
- C. The advisor will serve at his/her leisure.
- D. If necessary, the advisor will be replaced by selection by officers.

VIII. Finances

- A. Manner of funds
 1. Funds may only be used to further the purpose stated in Article II. Examples may be food for meetings, transportation, advertising.
- B. Dues shall not be collected by *Students for Open Discussion*.
- C. If the *Students for Open Discussion* shall become dissolved, then all funds will be provided to Iowa State University for the purpose of increasing awareness of controversial worldviews.
- D. All monies 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. The Adviser to this organization must approve and sign each expenditure before payment.

- IX. Any amendments made to this constitution must correlate with the purpose stated in Article II and no amendment may change Article II. No change may be made that advocates convincing others to believe a specific worldview, but instead must focus on increasing awareness and understanding.
- A. The process to make an amendment goes as follows:
 - 1. One of the presidents declares that an amendment is being proposed first thing in a meeting.
 - 2. He/she describes the amendment and answers questions regarding the amendment.
 - 3. After he/she has answered all questions, they may put the amendment to an open vote.
 - 4. The amendment is added if $\frac{3}{5}$ of the members and both president vote to add the amendment.
 - B. Any updated constitution or bylaws don't come into effect unless it is approved by the Student Activities Center.
 - C. Any amended or ratified constitution must be submitted within 10 days to the Student Activities Center for approval.
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Students for Open Discussion Bylaws

- I. Adding and Changing Bylaws
 - A. Bylaws can be changed or added immediately with a unanimous vote among the officers. A call for for new or changed bylaw can be done by any officer at any time during a meeting. An open vote will then take place after a short discussion about the new/changing bylaw.
 - 1. Any changes in the bylaws must be announced to members via e-mail, website, and meeting announcements.
 - B. All bylaws must be updated in the constitutional document in the 8th and final weeks of the semester.
 - C. Decorum and Meeting Protocol may be changed on the website without immediately changing the bylaws in the constitutional document, provided that there is no active conflict regarding a participants conduct during a meeting(s). However, when the bylaws are changed/updated in the 8th and final weeks of each semester, they must include the updated Decorum and Meeting Protocol.
- II. Decorum includes but is not limited to the following.
 - A. Participants shall:
 - 1. Follow the present meeting protocol and respect the authority of whoever is facilitating the discussion as facilitator.

- a) Even if the meeting protocol is changed, the facilitator will announce changes so that all may abide by such changes.
 - b) The facilitator guides meetings, and they have the ability to decide who gets to speak and can no longer speak if necessary.
 - 2. Address each other with respect and promote civil and open dialogue.
 - a) Example: Joe feels that an open border policy would be a good solution for our “melting pot” nation. Jane feels that an open border policy causes economic and crime related issues. Jane asks Joe “what benefits do you see coming from an open border policies? For what reason do you think that those benefits outweigh problems associated with open borders?”
 - (1) In this example, Jane has asked a question with the intent to understand Joe’s opinion, not to belittle it or invalidate it. Jane has not attempted to insult Joe or tell him that his ideas are wrong. Jane’s questions are encouraging open dialogue and aren’t designed to shut Joe down.
 - 3. Be tolerant of all ideas shared, even if they seem offensive or uneducated.
 - a) Example: Nick mentions that he thinks kneeling during the anthem is fantastic and a great way to protest. Zane says, “While I disagree with your views, I’d like to know more about why you believe that.”
 - b) Maeve states her opinion on abortion, and Laura disagrees. Instead of aggressively rolling her eyes or sighing loudly, she stays silent while maintaining open and respectful body language.
 - 4. Actively consider all ideas with an open mind and have empathy while doing so.
- B. Participants shall not:
 - 1. Interrupt others while speaking via verbally or nonverbally.
 - a) Example: Nick says, “The reason why I think global warming is real--,” Zane interrupts, “I’m going to have to stop you right there...”
 - b) Example: Zane says, “It just surprises me how black men are shot by cops more than white men, it’s injustice,” The whole time Zane is saying this, both Nick and Laura are laughing in fake amusement while tapping the table with their pens.
 - 2. Knowingly use offensive names or terms to describe an individual or group, regardless of their presence.
 - a) While it’s impossible to forecast all possible terms that may be offensive, we strive to maintain a respectful and inclusive environment. We encourage anyone to come forward to any officer and express concerns towards language being used.
 - 3. Insult what another participant shares in any way.
 - 4. Form groups or factions that seek to disprove or remove other participants who hold views different from their own.
 - a) Example: Jane and Michael have very similar viewpoints, but they often disagree with Joe. They start to badger him before and after meetings as well as on social media with the goal of getting him to leave the club.

III. Meeting Protocol (Discussion Meetings)

- A. The beginning of the meeting will go in the order as follows:

1. Before meeting: the president writes the the 7 rules for discussion on whiteboard or projector via computer so that all participants can see.
 2. 5 to 10 minutes: Club announcements
 - a) Non-discussion content questions can be asked during this time.
 3. Sensitivity and Safe Place Disclaimer
 - a) Sensitivity Disclaimer: Some people may have experienced or know someone who has experienced the sensitive topics we may discuss in SOD. Please be respectful of this and keep in mind when commenting and sharing opinions. If at any point you yourself feel uncomfortable and unable to participate, please feel free to leave the discussion at any time, put your head down, or tune us out. We encourage you to practice self-care however that may look. That being said, the purpose of SOD is to initiate difficult dialogue in order to build connections between our members. We hope views will be challenged, difficult conversations will be held, and sensitive topics touched.
 - b) Safe Places Disclaimer: All in all, please know that SOD is encouraging of a safe and respectful space for all members to express themselves freely, and we encourage you to do so. While conversations are encouraged to continue outside of our SOD meetings, be respectful of members who do not wish to continue conversation outside of SOD because you may no longer be in a safe place. If any member feels as if SOD is no longer a safe place for them, please communicate with an officer.
- B. The process of the the discussion is limited by the following:
1. The facilitator decides the layout of the discussion guides the discussion.
 2. Non-facilitator participants may only speak while holding the ball. Anyone who wishes to speak may raise their hand after the speaker is done and the speaker may choose who to throw the ball to.
 - a) If the facilitator raises their hand at any time, the speaker must give the ball to the facilitator.
 3. To the facilitators discretion, those who speak too long will be asked to let others share.
- C. The last 10 minutes of the meeting are as follows:
1. The facilitator stops all discussion and asks participants to take out their SOD journals. For max 5 minutes, participants are asked to journal about their thoughts and experiences during the meeting.
 2. No more discussion of the topic may continue within the confines of the meeting.
 3. Repeat Safe Place disclaimer and provide resources for participants who may need them.

IV. Violations

- A. A violation of Decorum or Meeting Protocol is when an individual disrupts the Meeting Protocol or commits one of the acts described under Bylaw Section IIB. The individual must be informed by one of the officers that they violated the Decorum or Meeting Protocol for it to be considered a violation.
1. Disrupting the Meeting Protocol is when an individual makes it difficult or impossible for the meeting to continue. If someone chooses not to participate in

certain activities without disrupting those activities for others, then it is not a violation.

- B. Any violation after two violations in one meeting allows the officers present to make an open and unanimous vote to remove the individual from the meeting. If the officers don't vote to remove the individual, they may do so after every consecutive violation.
 - 1. If the individual has committed at least two violations previously in any one meeting that semester, then any violation after one in any one meeting can trigger a vote by the officers to remove that individual.
 - 2. Any individual who has been removed from a meeting before that semester can be voted out of the meeting after one violation.
- C. Any individual removed from a meeting can return to another meeting if they agree to uphold the Decorum and Meeting Protocol.
- D. Any individual who has been removed from two different meetings must have all officers agree unanimously to allow that individual to return. Any individual that does return in this way is treated as the individual in Bylaw section IVB.
- E. Any individual found harassing others or using personal information shared in meetings against them will immediately no longer be allowed to attend meetings and their membership will be permanently revoked. If necessary, the Iowa State University Police will be informed.