**Dominican Student Association**

**ARTICLE I NAME OF ORGANIZATION**

Section 1: Name:

The name of the association shall be the Dominican Student Association, a registered University of Florida “service special interest organization.” Hereafter referred to in this constitution as D.S.A.

Section 2: Offices:

The D.S.A. shall have an office(s) as Student Government may determine.

**ARTICLE II**: **PURPOSE STATEMENT**

Section 1:

The purpose of the D.S.A. is as follows:

The D.S.A. shall represent the interests of Hispanic students at the University of Florida’s related activities, issues, and problems whenever possible. To organize cultural events that will promote Hispanic heritage with a special focus on the culture and history of the Dominican Republic at the University of Florida and the Gainesville Community.

**ARTICLE III: COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

Upon approval by the Department of Student Activities and Involvement, D.S.A. shall be a registered student organization at the University of Florida. D.S.A. shall comply with all local, state and federal laws, as well as all University of Florida regulations, policies, and procedures. Such compliance includes but is not limited to the University’s regulations related to Non-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment (including sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking), Hazing, Commercial Activity, and Student Leader Eligibility.

**ARTICLE IV: NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Section A. Non-Discrimination

D.S.A. agrees that it will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act.

Section B. Sexual Harassment

D.S.A. agrees that it will not engage in any activity that is unwelcome conduct of sexual nature that creates a hostile environment.

Section C. Hazing

D.S.A. agrees that it will not initiate, support, or encourage any events or situations that recklessly, by design, or intentionally endanger the mental or physical health or safety of a student for any purpose including but not limited to initiation or admission into or affiliation with any student group or organization.

Section D. Responsibility to Report

If this organization becomes aware of any such conduct described in this article, D.S.A. will report it immediately to Student Activities and Involvement, the Director of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, or the University’s Title IX Coordinator.

**ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in this organization is open to all enrolled students at the University of Florida. Non-enrolled students, spouses, faculty, and staff may be associate members; however, they may not vote or hold office. All members and associate members are free to leave and disassociate without fear of retribution, retaliation, or harassment.

**ARTICLE VI**: **OFFICERS**

Section 1: Executive Board

The officers of the D.S.A. Executive Board shall be the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Faculty Advisor. These offices shall be elected positions.

Section 2: Term of Office

1. Shall be no longer than 1 year; re-election is possible.
2. If an executive board candidate, with the exclusion of the president, is scheduled to graduate and/or study abroad halfway through their term of office, the said candidate is required to have a running mate whom shall qualify to fulfill the role for the full term.

Section 4: Responsibilities of the Executive Board

The Executive Board shall be responsible for the duties and authority as pertains to such offices, except that such duties may be varied or expanded by the Executive Board. In addition, the duties of the officers are itemized as follows:

The President:

1. Shall serve as the representative of the D.S.A. as needed.
2. Shall be responsible for all financial affairs of the organization.
3. Shall preside at all Executive Board meetings and general body meetings.
4. Shall appoint Committees for approval by the Executive Board and/or members.
5. Shall authenticate by his/her signature – when necessary – all documents.
6. Shall prepare and defend the organizational and special events budget in front of the Student Senate Budget and Appropriations committees.
7. Shall be Committee Chairman of the Executive Finance Board
8. Shall be in constant contact with the Faculty Advisor and Executive Board.
9. Shall maintain active and good relations with the Student Body Treasurer’s Office.
10. Shall serve as the official spokesperson for the Dominican Student Association.

The Vice President:

1. Shall, in the absence of the President, have all authority and responsibilities vested in the President.
2. Shall become President of D.S.A should the President resign or be removed from office.
3. Shall seek and coordinate events with other UF organizations including but not limited to umbrella organizations, non-umbrella Hispanic organizations, and Greek – lettered organizations.

The Treasurer:

1. Shall keep all financial records of the organization.
2. Shall report the financial status of the organization to the Executive Board.
3. Shall, upon request, make available all financial records to the general members.
4. Shall preside at all Executive Finance Board meetings.
5. Shall maintain active and good relations with the Student Body Treasurer’s Office.
6. Can call meetings of the Executive Finance Board as deemed necessary.
7. Shall oversee the Hispanic Heritage Month budget.
8. Shall, in the absence of the President, Vice-President, have all authority and responsibilities vested in the President.

The Secretary:

1. Shall be responsible for the taking of the minutes of the Executive Board meetings and general D.S.A. meetings, as well as maintaining those records.
2. Shall be responsible for maintaining a current membership list, attendance list, and Executive Board directory.
3. Shall conduct the correspondence of the Executive Board, except when otherwise delegated.
4. Shall take the inventory of the D.S.A. property once a semester.
5. Shall turn in the office usage log to the Student Activity Center by the first of every month and deal with all matters concerning the DSA office.
6. Shall make sure the organization is a registered organization of the University of Florida and that all forms are properly submitted per the Student Government Handbook.
7. Shall make E-Board minutes and general body minutes available for posting within seventy-two (72) hours of the said meeting.
8. Shall, in the absence of the President, Vice-President and Treasurer, have all authority and responsibilities vested in the President.

Section 5: Dissolution and Creation of Positions

Committees, Cabinet Directorships and Executive Board positions shall be created or dissolved as deemed necessary by the Executive Board.

Section 6: Vacancies

If the President of the Executive Board is unable to complete his/her term, the Vice-President will take his/her place. All other positions of the Executive Board are open to the membership, except that the candidate for either Vice-President must meet the requirement of having been an active member of the Executive Board or cabinet for at least one semester.

The process for filling Executive Board vacancies shall be:

1. The Executive Board shall release applications to all members.
2. The Executive Board shall Interview all applicants.
3. The Executive Board shall elect top candidate by a majority vote.
4. The Executive Board shall recommend their top candidate to the general body.
5. General body must approve by a majority vote. However, if majority of the general body does not approve of the Executive Board’s candidate, the Executive Board will reconsider.

Section 7: Removal

A member of the Executive Board shall be removed by a (2/3) majority vote of the Executive Board for conduct consisting of: non-performance of the responsibilities as stated in this constitution. Members have the right to appeal to the Executive Board if they feel a Board member is not following his/her duties satisfactorily. Members also have the right to submit a written request to remove an Executive Board Member from the Executive Board. This request should state the reasons why they feel the Executive Board Member should be removed and this document should be submitted to the President or Faculty Advisor, which will then be taken under advisement by the Executive Board.

**ARTICLE VII: NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND VOTING PROCEDURES**

Section 1: Nominations

Nominations shall be taken from the general membership in two rounds during the two meetings prior to the election meeting. After which the nomination period will close.

Section 2: Speech Day

Speech day shall be held the same meeting as Election Day. Candidates running for the presidency and vice-presidency will be allowed (5) minutes for speech. All other candidates will be allowed (2.5) minutes. Parliamentary procedure shall be adhered to.

Section 3: Elections

Shall be carried out once an academic year and shall take place during the **month of April** at the end of the spring semester. The Elections shall be carried out with no fewer than 30% of the voting membership present. The Executive Board shall be responsible for specifying the exact date of the Elections. Advanced notice of elections shall be given to the Voting Members no less than (1) week in advance of the nominations unless it is an Emergency Election.

Section 4: Voting

Shall be conducted as follows:

1. Advanced notice for the elections shall be given as stated in the constitution.
2. NO ABSENTEE VOTING WILL BE ALLOWED.

Section 5: Voting Procedures

Ballots shall be obtained by the Faculty Advisor. There shall be (2) other proctors to assist with the voting process.

1. The number of ballots to be printed will be determined by the eligible membership as determined by the membership point system.
2. Voting shall be conducted as follows:
   1. The member will come forward to pick-up a ballot and verify his/her identity with their U.F. student I.D. and prove his/her voting membership.
   2. Positions up for election shall be voted in order of President, Vice-President of Operations, Vice-President of Programming, Treasurer, Secretary, Marketing Director, and Membership Director.
   3. After voting, the member shall place ballot in designated box.
   4. After all eligible members have voted, two of the proctors will count all ballots and final count for each position there by declaring the winners.
   5. Results shall be available to general members.
   6. Results shall be posted on the day of elections.
   7. ANY runoffs shall be the same day of elections.
   8. A runoff shall be held for the top two candidates if 51% of the votes are not held by one candidate.
   9. In the event of a run-off any members who leave the meeting has forfeited his/her right to vote in runoff.

Section 6: Ballots

Ballots shall include the name of the nominee for each position. Ballots shall also include a statement indicating that runoffs, should they occur, will be the day of the election. The ballots shall also be numbered to provide accountability.

Section 7: Eligibility

1. Eligibility for Executive Board: Only an H.S.A. voting member is eligible to be an officer, provided that the individual student meets the requirements specified in the Student Government Handbook. The candidates for President, Vice- President of Operations and Vice-President of Programs must have held a previous position in the Executive Board or Cabinet for one year.
2. Eligibility for Cabinet: Any student is eligible to be a Cabinet Director, provided that the individual student meets the requirements specified in the Student Government Handbook.

**ARTICLE VIII: FACULTY ADVISOR**

The Faculty Adviser:

1. Shall serve as consultant to the Executive Board and the association in general.
2. Shall be required to sign a statement of solvency of the association.
3. Shall serve as a liaison between the H.S.A. and the administration.
4. Shall be appointed by the Executive Board at the end of the spring term. The advisor’s term shall be from June to May of an academic year.
5. Shall be required to attend Executive Board, Executive Finance Board, and general body meeting when available. He/she may advise the Executive Board, but shall not be a voting member of the Executive Board.
6. Should the advisor no longer be able to fulfill his/her responsibilities, he/she shall inform the board with enough time for the Executive board to find a suitable replacement and said replacement must be approved by the Executive Board.

**ARTICLE IX: FINANCE**

D.S.A. will not require membership dues; however, it will raise funds through carwashes, shirt sales, tournaments, and similar activities, for travel to leadership conferences, and other operational expenses of the organization. Members are expected to participate in these fundraising activities. H.S.A. will also apply for Student Government funding.

**ARTICLE X. DISSOLUTION OF ORGANIZATION**

Section 1: Dissolution

The association may be dissolved at any time by vote of two-third (2/3) of voting members at a meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2: Distribution of Assets

At dissolution all monies received from STUDENT GOVERNMENT, after all debts incurred prior and during dissolution have been paid, must be delivered by the Treasurer of the H.S.A. to the Treasurer of STUDENT GOVERNMENT within (3) school days.

**ARTICLE XI: VOTING MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1: Definition of Voting Membership

A voting member of the D.S.A. is anyone who is currently registered as a University of Florida student and has attended at least three General Body Meetings and has .

\*General Meetings shall be defined as all regularly scheduled general body meetings, including the nomination and election meetings for that particular election.

Section 2: Definition of Non-voting membership

A non-voting member is considered to be anyone who is faculty, staff, or student spouse at the University of Florida. They are associate members who do not vote or hold office.

Section 3: Membership Responsibilities

The H.S.A. voting membership will elect the Executive Board in compliance with the provisions of this constitution.

Section 4: Membership Term

The H.S.A. general membership will be by school-year (May to April of the current school year). Members are free to leave or dissociate without fear of retribution or harassment.

1. At the end of each membership term all membership totals shall be reset.

**ARTICLE XII: MEETINGS**

Section 1:

Meetings of the general membership shall be held monthly or as determined to be needed by the Executive Board. A minimum of 5 general body meetings must be held from Fall – Spring terms.

Section 2: Special Meetings

Special Meetings will be called as needed by the Executive Board of the D.S.A.

Section 3: Quorum at meetings

A quorum at any meeting shall consist of the D.S.A. members present.

Section 4: Announcements

Any announcement to be made during a D.S.A. meeting must be considered with the President or Vice-Presidents of the D.S.A. prior to meeting time.

**Article XIV: AMENDMENTS**

Section 1: Amendments

This constitution may be altered or amended after a committee of interested members has drafted the desired revisions. These revisions are then presented to the general membership for approval, which will be determined by a raise of hands of majority of voting members in attendance at a D.S.A. meeting.

THE DOMINICAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION AGREES TO ADHERE TO LAWS LISTED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE AND OTHER LAWS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA. ANY HAZING BY THE D.S.A. MEMBERS FOR ANY PURPOSE IS STRICTLY PRHIBITED.

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