

Pan-African Student Association

CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

Miami Dade College



P.A.S.A. MAKING TWICE THE NOISE!

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAW

Pan African Student Association (PASA)

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Pan-African Student Association at Miami Dade College, advocate the formation of a Pan African Student Association to facilitate a broad understanding among members of the history, societies and cultures of the African world; to access Pan-Africanist scholarship to apply to analyses of and engagement with contemporary social and cultural issues; to prepare members for the workforce and/or for upper division and graduate studies in Pan-African Studies and/or related fields; and add an inter-cultural dimension to other academic programs. It is our intent to create and nurture a global view of African people and a connection to African people and the issues that affect them wherever they are found in the world. In addition, we hope to give voice to issues and concerns that impact our local populations and build partnerships with other human groups who experience these same issues and concerns. All PASA members subscribe to this constitution and the regulations and policies of Miami Dade College.

ARTICLE I ABOUT ORGANIZATION

SECTION I: Name of organization

The name of this organization shall be the “Pan African Student Association”, hereinafter referred to as “PASA.”

SECTION 2: Purpose of organization

- A. Promote solidarity among all students of Miami Dade College generally, and in particular, among students of African descent.
- B. Represent the specific concerns of students of African descent in matters that affect them at Miami Dade College, promote their welfare and align with other student groups with similar concerns.
- C. Enable all students to share the cultural wealth of the African continent and the Africa Diaspora and encourage the spirit of multiculturalism within all Miami Dade College Campuses at large.
- D. Create a forum where members can debate, analyze and engage with each other on contemporary social, political and cultural issues within or affecting Africa, the African Diaspora or African derivative populations wherever they are found.

- E. Assist or facilitate interested members who wish to travel or study abroad in Africa, the Caribbean or wherever African populations are found.
- F. Strive to work hand in hand with other student organizations and Student Life on issues that concern all Miami Dade Students.
- G. Raise awareness and to arouse interest in the history, societies and cultures of Africa, the African Diaspora, greater Miami and within Miami Dade College

ARTICLE II

MEMBERSHIP PRACTICE

SECTION 1: Membership Practice

Active membership of this student organization shall be chosen without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, disability, nationality, origin, or age.

SECTION 2: Eligibility for membership

All students of good standing at Miami Dade College who are interested in Pan African affairs, who promise to adhere to the PASA Constitution, abide by the objective of the organization shall be eligible for membership.

SECTION 3: Categories of membership

There shall be two categories of membership that consist of four membership types.

1. Regular Membership: This membership category shall consist of the current students of Miami Dade College and they are eligible to vote on PASA elections based on their membership strength.
2. Auxiliary Membership: This membership category shall consist of Miami Dade College prospective students, Miami Dade College alumni, Miami Dade College faculties, and Miami Dade College staff. Auxiliary members are not eligible to vote on PASA elections.

SECTION 4: Membership dues

- A. All PASA members shall pay annual dues which can be paid monthly.
- B. A membership fee shall be revised annually by the PASA executive boards, advisors, and the membership director.
- C. The collection of membership dues shall be carried out by the treasurer or the membership director during PASA general meetings.
- D. In case of special circumstances, where the organization does not have sufficient funds to undertake an activity, the members will be asked to contribute extra money or services to facilitate the organization achieving the desired goal. The decision to collect extra assistance besides the membership fee shall be voted upon by the members themselves.

SECTION 5: Active Membership

- A. An active member of the organization shall be one who attends more than 60% of PASA meetings and participates in the organizations affairs and activities.
- B. PASA members are required to attend at least two community service events organized by PASA each semester.
- C. An unexcused absence is any absence from a regularly scheduled or mandatory meeting without giving written notice to the Secretary at least on the day in advance. A medical emergency is the only excused absence without prior written notification. Voice mail and e-mail will now be acceptable methods for notifying the Secretary in case of absence.
- D. Any PASA member may apply for a leave of absence; however this leave may be for no longer than a four-week period per semester. Such a request must include the reason(s) for the leave of absence and the effective dates (leave-return). The leave of absence authorization is to be imparted by a PASA Board member, requiring two-thirds vote for passage.

SECTION 6: Terminating a membership

- A. A decision to terminate any member shall require a 2/3 vote of full members present during meetings.
- B. A hearing must be heard.
- C. Suspension for a member who does not follow this constitution shall be carried out by 2/3 of the membership committee members and served by the secretary and vice-president.

ARTICLE III MEETING AND ATTENDANCE

SECTION 1: Types of meetings

1. Board of Directors: The advisors, executive board members, and committee directors (chairs) are required to meet at least once in a month to monitor organizational process, conduct business.
2. Organizational Meetings: The members, advisors, and executive board are required to meet twice a month to inform membership and invite opinions and concerns.
3. Special Meetings: It is necessary that all members and officers of PASA attend the special meeting. The meeting shall be scheduled only for the purpose of PASA promotional events, retreats, and conferences.
4. Emergency Meetings: With unanimous consent of the executive members present, the executive board shall be able to call for an emergency meeting.

SECTION 2: Organizational Meetings

The Pan African Student Association shall have an organizational meeting once every two weeks. The PASA members shall meet throughout the academic year and each meeting time and place shall be publicly posted at least, one week in advance of the meeting. It is the Secretary's responsibility to submit a posting request to the campus student life office and it shall be the Publicity Committee's responsibility to provide the flyers for such announcement.

SECTION 3: Quorum

A quorum is defined as 2/3 of the voting membership.

SECTION 4: Method of conducting meetings

Robert's Rules of Order shall provide the template for the meeting agenda, and also govern the conduct of business for the organization. Each business meeting will begin with a roll call to confirm a quorum, followed by a reading of the official minutes of the prior meeting as recorded by the Secretary.

SECTION 5: Executive Board Attendance

1. All PASA Board members are required to attend the entire scheduled general and Executive PASA meetings for each fall and spring semester during his/her term in office.
2. In the event that a PASA Board member fails to meet the attendance requirements, he/she may be removed from office upon a motion of Impeachment by another PASA Board member on the grounds of neglect of the duties of the office.
3. The vacant seat will not count toward the quorum until the replacement Board member has been sworn in with the majority vote of the present and voting Executive Board non Board members by closed ballot.

ARTICLE IV ADVISORS AND OFFICERS

SECTION 1: Choosing an Advisor:

There shall be a Board of Advisors that consists of five faculty or staff of Miami Dade College which shall be chosen with the 2/3 of majority vote of the officers present. The president is to formally approach the person selected to be the association's advisor and ask for approval to be the association's advisor.

In event of inadequate support from any advisor, the association has the right to vote for a new advisor with the 2/3 majority of the officers.

Two requests for active involvement must be produced to the Advisor before impeachment.

A faculty advisor is to:

1. Attend PASA meetings.
2. Be available to advise the officers upon necessity.
3. Support and promote the Association.
4. Have tenure of 1 year, which can be renewed.

SECTION 2: Officers:

When a Miami Dade College student accepts a position as an officer in the Pan-African Student Association, that student also agrees to fulfill the responsibilities of the position as it is outlined in this constitution.

The executive board of PASA will have the President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Public Relation Officer.

SECTION 3: Powers and Duties

1. The executive board shall have the power to implement a new rule that is not outlined in this constitution. Such rule shall not conflict with the PASA constitution and must be abolished as soon as the term for the said officers is over.
2. The Executive Board or officers shall have the power to pass legislation and to approve appointments, as well as having such additional powers and duties as prescribed by this Constitution.
3. The Executive Board, by a 2/3 majority vote of its total current membership shall have the power to consolidate, create, or disband an ad-hoc committee as it deems necessary; and they shall use whatever means possible to meet those ends.
4. PASA Executive board shall not disband any standing committee that is outlined in the constitution; but they shall be able to setup sub-committees to reinstate the responsibilities of the standing committees outlined in the PASA constitution. Abolishing a committee in the PASA constitution shall require an amendment of the constitution which shall be carried out as stated in Article X, Section 1 of PASA constitution.
5. The Executive Board shall have the power to impeach and remove any of its members by a 2/3-majority vote of its current total membership for reasons deemed necessary by the Executive Board. Impeachment of an officer must be carried out in accordance as with the Article VII, Section 7 of PASA Constitution.
6. The Executive Board shall approve the PASA Budget by a 2/3 majority vote of its current total membership. The Treasurer shall submit the budget request to the Senate for approval at the beginning of the Fall Term. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping the Board informed about all budgetary deadlines.
7. The President has the power to veto any legislation or act that he/she deems in conflict with the will of PASA's members and PASA constitution. The Executive Board, not including the President, can override a Presidential Veto with a 2/3 majority vote of its current total membership.
8. If a Board member is not satisfied with the Parliamentary procedure, he/she has the right to bring it before the Executive Board to vote on whether or not it will pass.
9. Whereas, to promote the PASA members inclusion into the decision making process of the general meetings, any vote that does not affect/deal with the alteration of the

Constitution, or the organizational structure in general, will be open to any eligible PASA member to participate in the vote tally. Thus, increasing the inclusion level of the member in the substantive decision-making, at the discretion of the Vice President.

10. Only those in physical attendance at the actual meeting will have their respective vote count.
11. Four of the five PASA executive board members must be in attendance at the meeting to constitute a quorum. Only those votes conducted with a quorum shall be legitimate.

SECTION 4: The entire officers are required to:

1. Attend all executive meetings. Each officer is allowed to have 3 excused or unexcused absences throughout the semester except assigned on a special duty.
2. Attend at least 80 percent of the events organized by PASA throughout the semester.
3. Help organize all the events.

An officer who fails to carry out his/her responsibilities after two requests for active involvement have been issued can be asked to resign from PASA upon the approval of the 2/3 majority of the members. Based upon the decision of the 2/3 majority of PASA officers, the position of the resigned officer may or may not be filled by the end of the academic year.

If an officer fails to resign after been asked to do so by the executive board, the board shall have the power to follow up with the impeachment. Copies of the requests for active involvement must be sent to the Board of Advisors, Student life office, and the Dean of Students.

SECTION 5: Responsibilities of the officers:

The Executive officers shall:

1. Oversee the welfare of the organization.
2. Manage the financial resources of the organization.
3. Keep proper record of the organization's activities.
4. Establish and maintain good relationships with other organizations in Miami Dade College and communities around the college.
5. Maintain discipline, harmony, unity and cohesiveness among the members.
6. Where necessary delegate activities to sub committees.
7. Be familiar with the PASA constitution.

President

- Have the power of executive veto over all actions of the Executive Board. A 2/3 majority vote of the total membership of the Board shall be necessary to override a Presidential Veto.
- Shall be responsible for all PASA function.
- Be responsible for fiscal planning and for the yearly budget for the PASA Executive Board.
- Make appointments to all student-faculty committees and vacant Executive Board position, subject to Executive Board approval.
- Have the authority to negotiate all contracts on behalf of the PASA Executive Board.
- Call and preside over all meetings of the Executive Board, which shall meet at least once a month.

- Convey the wishes and ideas of the Executive Board pertaining to any student issue matter for proper legislation and debate.
- Have the power to call an emergency meeting of the Executive in accordance with the Constitution.
- Have a line item veto when approving the fiscal budget.
- Have such other powers and responsibilities as prescribed in this Constitution.
- Be a joint signatory to withdraw cash from PASA's account with the treasurer.

Vice-President

- Succeed to the Presidency should the office become vacant, at which time he/she shall have the power to nominate his/her successor to the Vice-Presidency, subject to the approval by a 2/3 vote of the current total membership of the Executive, not subject to the President's veto.
- Serve as acting President during the President's absence or upon the request of the President, possessing all powers of that Office.
- In charge of overseeing all communications in order to promote PASA activities.
- Preside over all general meetings which shall meet every two week.
- Actively involved in the leadership of the PASA.

Secretary

- Maintain all records and files of the Executive Board.
- Be responsible for the correspondences of the Executive Board.
- Take accurate minutes at the meetings, which shall be distributed to PASA members by the next regularly scheduled organizational meeting.
- Must provide meeting minutes to the president for approval at least three school days before each meeting.
- Notify the Executive Board and PASA members of all non-regularly scheduled meetings in writing from at least three school days prior to the meeting.
- Perform all other secretarial duties as required by the Executive Board.
- Type any official letters or document needed by PASA.
- Be responsible for coordinating all work order /request with the campuses and Student Life.

Treasurer

- Present to the Executive Board reports on the financial health of the organization.
- Oversee and coordinate the budgeting process.
- Formulate a budget to be submitted to the Board for approval.
- Submit a report to the PASA President and the Executive Board at the beginning of the Fall and Spring semesters on any reallocations of the funds.
- Utilize funds only upon written authorization of the President in accordance with provisions of the budgeting process.
- Have the power to audit and review the records of any program that is funded by the PASA budget.
- Assist the Public Relation Officer and the Director of Fundraising to coordinate the activities of the fundraising Committee.
- Be a joint signatory to withdraw cash from PASA's account with the President.

Public Relation Officer

- Be responsible for all formal organizational contacts between the PASA and other entities whether they be on-campus or off-campus.
- Be responsible for advertising all PASA functions.
- Responsible for promoting all PASA's events.
- Assist the Treasurer and the Director of Fundraising to coordinate the activities of the fundraising Committee.
- Maintain a complete summary on all PASA events and functions.
- Provide support for the PASA activities.
- Promote PASA and its activities to Miami Dade College Students and the community.
- Check PASA's mailbox in the Student Life office daily.
- Keep all updated contact information of all organization's members.

SECTION 6: Qualifications for becoming an officer

To be eligible for a position in the Executive office, each candidate must be in good PASA membership standing and registered in at least six college credit hours in the college. Furthermore, no salaries shall be expected for being an executive board member. The Organization shall however reimburse members for any expense they incur during day to day maintenance of the organization. Such reimbursement shall be in accordance of the Student Life and must not exceed \$100. The board shall authorize payment after the relevant documents are presented.

2. Candidates can only run for one position of the executive office.
3. Minimum GPA of 2.5 is required for running in elections.

SECTION 7: Terms of office

The terms of office for officers shall be one academic year beginning thirty calendar days following election to the office. No official shall be elected to the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms with each term being one academic year long.

SECTION 8: Procedure for filling vacated offices

The rank order for succession of officers shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, treasurer, and Public Relation Officer. Succession shall occur immediately upon vacancy of the president office. If any other officer other than the president resigns, there shall be an election to fill the temporary vacated office. Succession for filling a presidency office if the member of the executive board fails to commit to the office of the presidency shall be in order of the date each committee is created.

It shall be Membership Committee, Publicity Committee, Fundraising Committee, Elections Committee, and Cultural Committee. Each person filling any vacated position shall be eligible for the seat for two more terms regardless of when he/she took over the office.

ARTICLE V ELECTIONS

SECTION 1: Times and Time Frames

Election of officers shall be held once per year during the end of the spring term at a time designated by the Election Committee, and approved by at least fifty-one percent of the voting membership.

SECTION 2: Nominations

The Election Committee shall monitor the nominating process that shall take place during a called meeting at which time nominations will be accepted from the floor. Candidates can only run for one position of the executive office. All candidates running for office must submit an election packet five weeks prior to the election date.

SECTION 3: Notification and posting of elections

The membership shall be notified of election results within 48 hours via publication on the PASA website and also by publication of flyers on the main wall bulletin boards of each classroom building on campus.

SECTION 4: Election procedures

No official business shall be conducted without a quorum of the voting membership present confirmed by a roll call conducted by the meeting chair. A quorum is defined as stated in ARTICLE III, SECTION 3.

Voting procedure shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order (voice, hand, or secret ballot). Members must be present in order to cast a vote.

SECTION 5: Resignation and Incapacitation of Executive Member

The executive board:

- A. In the event of the resignation of an executive member or otherwise unable to perform their duties, the principles outlined in ARTICLE V, Section 4 shall be implemented to fill the temporarily vacant office until the next general election. He or she will be eligible for the seat for two more terms regardless of when he/she took over the office.
- B. In case the president resigns or is unable to perform the stipulated duties, the vice president shall assume the office until the next election.
- C. Members of the executive board who intend to resign shall present their resignation letter to the president and the Board of Advisors. The president will in turn inform the executive board and thereafter, members. In case the president intends to resign before his tenure is over, he/she shall present a copy of the resignation letter to the Board of Advisors and the secretary. The secretary in turn will inform the executive board and members as soon as possible.

- D. The executive board shall be considered dissolved if 3/4 of the executive board resigns. In such a situation, the Board of Advisors shall call a general meeting to address the relevant issues at hand.
- E. A two-third vote of full members shall be necessary to dissolve prematurely the executive board.

SECTION 6: Retraction

Any Executive Board member who tenders a resignation may retract that resignation any time before it becomes effective. A letter explaining the reasons for retraction of the officer's resignation must be submitted to either the PASA President or Secretary, whichever is appropriate. The retraction of a resignation will be accepted automatically and it is to be considered effective.

SECTION 7: Impeachment

1. The Executive Board, excluding the individual subject to impeachment, shall be the sole agent to try all PASA impeachments. A conviction will consist of an affirmative vote of 2/3 of all Executive Board and non-board members of the PASA in attendance.
2. Any PASA officer may be removed from Office for just cause, which is defined as direct violation of or disregard of any part of this Constitution and/or gross misconduct unbecoming of a Student Leader at Miami-Dade College.
3. Any member of the PASA can request the consideration and investigate of impeachment of an Executive Board member, provided that he/she cites specific cause that is deemed appropriate by the Executive Board. On such a decision of just cause, the Executive can arrive at such a conclusion with a 2/3 vote of Executive Board members non Board members present and voting.
4. If the Executive Board votes to impeach an officer, he/she shall be relieved of his/her responsibilities immediately.
5. If the impeachment motion is successfully brought against the President of the PASA, the Vice President of the PASA will become the President.
6. If the impeachment motion is successfully brought against an Executive Officer other than the President, the runner-up in the member's election should be the replacement. If there is no runner-up, the matter shall be taken up under the appointment process.

ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: Types of standing (permanent) committees

- Board of Advisors: Advise the Board and committees of PASA functions.
- Executive Board: Establish goals, monitor goal progress, and set the meeting agenda.
- Fundraising Committee: Plan and execute avenues of revenue development.
- Elections Committee: Set the elections calendar, monitor voting procedure, report results.
- Publicity Committee: Develop news releases, press conferences and promotional events.
- Membership Committee: Recruit members, collect dues, and service the membership.
- Cultural Committee: Organize social/cultural activities and events.

SECTION 2: Ad Hoc (temporary) committees

The PASA board of directors shall stipulate the creation of Ad Hoc committees as deemed necessary by the board.

Ad Hoc committees shall be staffed by board nomination, and the committee shall exist only for a time period set by the board for completion of the committee's temporary assignment.

SECTION 3: Powers of the Committees

Each committee shall have the power to appoint its own officers with the approval of the executive board; but the power of such appointed officers shall be within the committee and shall not be vested upon PASA members.

With the approval of the executive board, the committee chairs shall have the power to dictate their responsibility on PASA members.

ARTICLE VII FINANCIAL RECORDS

- Miami Dade College shall have the right to audit the financial records of this organization.
 - PASA shall comply with all funding policies and procedures issued by the College or outside funding sources such as gifts, scholarships, endowments, or grants.
 - The dues for membership to PASA shall be established at the discretion of the voting membership at a level deemed appropriate for the organization's annual goals.
- A. The organization shall open accounts in the name of PASA as shall be necessary to run the affairs of the organization.
 - B. Any check made out by the organization shall be cosigned by the treasurer or the president
 - C. Each outgoing executive board shall pass over the books of account and legal documents to the incoming executive committee at the end of the fall semester

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: Amendments To The Constitution

- 1) All amendments shall be in agreement with Miami Dade College regulations, and subject to the approval of the Miami Dade College office of Student Life.
- 2) Amendment of the constitution shall undergo the following process:
 - A. A 3/4 vote of the total membership eligible to vote,
 - B. A 2/3 campus vote. (Campus vote are all MDC campuses that has PASA presence)
 - C. A full membership vote of all PASA Executive board,
 - D. A 4/5 vote of all PASA Advisor,
 - E. An agreement letter from the founder. In a situation where the founder is not available, an agreement letter shall be requested from the Dean of Student.

After a campus wins a ratification privilege, a campus vote shall be the supremacy to decide if an amendment is to be carried out.

- 3) All amendments approved shall be effective immediately.

SECTION 2: Ratification of the Constitution

The constitution shall come into effect after it has been ratified by three-quarters of the full members.

ARTICLE IX DEREGISTRATION

SECTION 1: Deregistration

In case of deregistration or liquidation of PASA, all the assets of the organization shall be sold. All proceedings shall go to clearing any outstanding dues. The balance shall be donated to charity.

ARTICLE X CODE OF CONDUCT

SECTION 1: Every member of PASA shall:

- i. Abide by this constitution.
- ii. Actively participate in the activities of the organization.
- iii. Promote unity and cohesiveness amongst all members.

- iv. No drunkenness during meetings.
- v. No physical confrontations during meetings.
- vi. No interruption or disruptions of the meeting without permission from the presiding officer.
- vii. Punctuality during meetings shall be imperative.

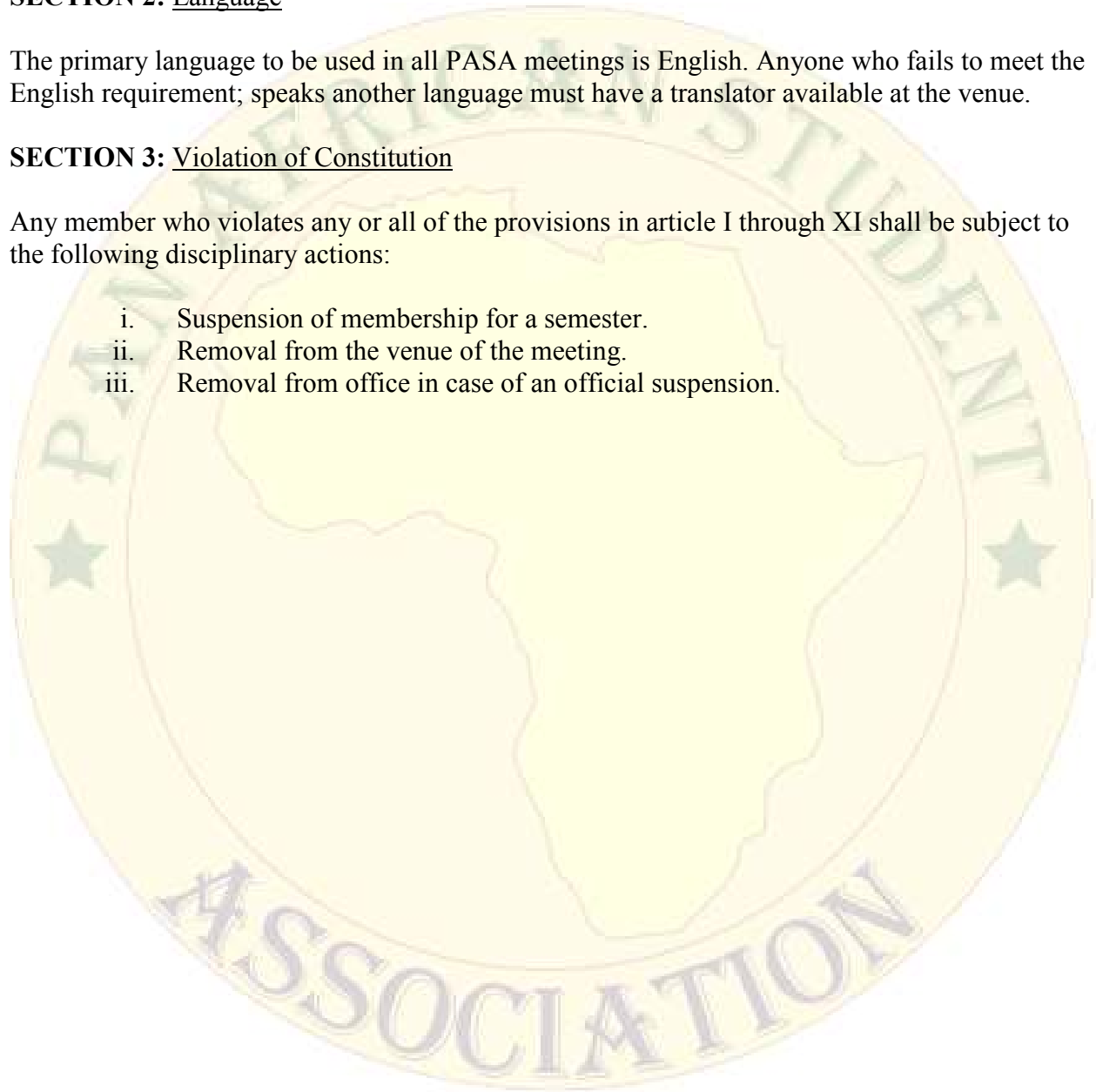
SECTION 2: Language

The primary language to be used in all PASA meetings is English. Anyone who fails to meet the English requirement; speaks another language must have a translator available at the venue.

SECTION 3: Violation of Constitution

Any member who violates any or all of the provisions in article I through XI shall be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

- i. Suspension of membership for a semester.
- ii. Removal from the venue of the meeting.
- iii. Removal from office in case of an official suspension.



ARTICLE XI
OATH OF OFFICE

I _____ do hereby affirm that I shall serve PASA to the best of my ability. I promise I shall do my best to protect the constitution and carry out my responsibilities according to its provisions. I hereby swear that I shall serve PASA without discrimination or prejudice. I promise to carry out my duties and responsibilities with honors bestowed on me by members and the constitution of PASA. So help me GOD

PASA Officer

Date of Signature

PASA Advisor

Date of Signature

PASA President

Date Approved by the Membership

Student Life Director

Date Approved by the Student Life

Dean of Student

Date Approved by the Membership