

**Interdisciplinary Arts Council  
Columbia University School of the Arts  
CONSTITUTION**

**ARTICLE I. PURPOSE**

Section 1: The Interdisciplinary Arts Council, henceforth referred to as “the IAC,” is the official, representative student council of Columbia University School of the Arts. The IAC will act as the official liaison between the School of the Arts student body and the Administration.

Section 2: The IAC’s mission is to promote dialogue and collaboration among the School of the Arts Programs (Film, Theatre, Visual Arts, Writing, and Sound Arts) and to foster a nurturing community for students through a variety of activities.

Section 3: The IAC, in consultation with the Dean’s office, shall be responsible for the distribution of the biannual student activities fees that are charged to School of the Arts students. These funds shall be distributed as the IAC, in consultation with the Dean’s office, sees fit, in accordance with this Constitution and the mission of the IAC to support the School of the Arts community.

Section 4: The IAC shall be responsible for recognizing official graduate student groups within the School of the Arts community.

Section 5: The IAC shall be responsible for advocating School of the Arts graduate student interests to the Administration and University.

**ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP AND  
REPRESENTATION**

Section 1: The IAC Board shall be comprised of three students from the Film, Theatre, Writing, and Visual Arts MFA (including Sound Arts) programs, and one student from the Film Studies MA program, for a total of thirteen board members. Each board member must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student in the School and the Arts. Representatives from the five MFA programs will fulfill a term of four semesters in the IAC. Because of the shorter length of the MA program, the Film Studies MA representative must be enrolled as a first-year full-time student and will fulfill a term of two semesters on the IAC Board. Research Arts students are considered full-time students and thus, are eligible to serve on the IAC.

Section 2: If, during the IAC board application process, the board does not receive enough applications from students in any of the five School of the Arts programs who can fulfill the IAC meeting requirements, the IAC may select from the remainder of the applicants. Applicants selected in this manner will serve only until the next selection term, unless there is a vacancy in their Program's representation on the Board, in which case they may indicate that they wish to be considered for an additional term without having to re-apply or to be re-interviewed. The IAC also has the option to vote to leave the seat(s) vacant until the next election.

Section 3: Each representative shall serve as a voting member of the IAC Board. Each voting member shall have one vote.

Section 4: Excused absences or tardies are allowed within reason as determined by the IAC Board. Unexcused absences are not permitted in any number. An absence is considered unexcused when the board member is not present at the meeting and does not give an acceptable reason for their missed attendance in advance by email to the IAC President, IAC Secretary, Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs, and Assistant Director of Student Affairs. More than three (3) tardies of ten (10) minutes or more, without advance notice to those listed above, will be considered an unexcused absence. . In addition, any member of the IAC not fulfilling their responsibilities should be reported to the President and Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs.

Section 5: If a board member collects any number of unexcused absences or is not fulfilling his or her responsibilities, he or she will receive a written warning from the Administration and IAC Executive Committee.

Section 6: If the board member continues to receive unexcused absences and/or does not appropriately fulfill his or her responsibilities, a review will be conducted by the Executive Committee and Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs. The Executive Committee and Dean shall decide whether to put the member up for a vote of impeachment. Prior to the vote on impeachment, the board member shall be given the opportunity to make a statement, of predetermined and agreed upon length, in their own defense. Any council member may be removed from the board by a simple majority vote of the council. A board member must recuse him or herself from the discussion and voting process when it is related to his or her impeachment.

Section 7: If there is a vacancy on the Executive Committee, the IAC may vote to hold an election during the semester. If an election is held, the Board will follow the same procedure as that of end of the semester election. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the election, in such cases, each Board member will nominate and vote by email to the Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs and the Student and Assistant Director of Student Affairs only, i.e., nominations

and votes will not be sent to the IAC. The Dean or Assistant Director will inform the IAC of the total vote count for each nominee and for each candidate.

Section 8: At the end of his or her four-semester term, a Board member is eligible to run for an additional four-semester term if there are no first-time applicants to fill the vacant seat.

Section 9: As the IAC transitions to staggering four semester terms, a Board member is eligible to run for a shorter two-semester term in order to stagger Board member terms as indicated on the attached chart (Addendum A). In order to keep the staggered schedule in place going forward, in the case where an IAC Board member is unable to serve his or her entire four semester term, the IAC Board will have the option of electing members for shorter terms. Board members elected for these shorter terms may run for a full four (4) semester term after fulfilling their shorter term, if eligible.

Section 10: Starting in the Fall 2015, the IAC Board membership elections will be staggered as follows: ODD YEARS: Film – one representative; Theatre – one representative; Visual Arts/Sound Arts – one representative; Writing – two representatives; EVEN YEARS: Film –two representatives; Theatre – two representatives; Visual Arts/Sound Arts – two representatives; Writing – one representative. A representative from the Film Studies MA program will be elected for two semesters each academic year. (The Board Terms Chart for the 2013 - 2014 and 2014 – 2015 academic years, dated April 2, 2014, is attached as Addendum A).

## **ARTICLE III. OFFICERS**

Section 1: The IAC shall elect for its Executive Board officers a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. These officers will comprise the IAC Executive Committee.

Section 2: The term length for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be a full year.

Section 3: All officers and board members shall have the power to initiate motions at IAC meetings.

Section 4: The President shall serve as Chair of the IAC, preside at all general meetings, and serve as the official representative of the IAC to the School of the Arts Administration and the University.

Section 5: The Vice President shall fulfill all the duties of the President and act on the President's behalf in the President's absence. Additionally, the Vice President shall be responsible for an end of year report that will include events held and budget information, to be submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs and filed in the IAC binder.

Section 6: For each meeting, the Secretary shall prepare an agenda and keep a record of the proceedings (minutes). Those minutes will be sent out to all IAC members within two days.

Section 7: The Treasurer shall prepare the annual budget of the IAC, manage the IAC's accounts and assets, and have updated budget information ready to be disclosed at every meeting. Additionally, the Treasurer shall be in charge of collecting acceptance reports filled out by students and student groups after an IAC-funded project or event. Those reports shall be presented to the IAC at a general meeting, then filed and stored in a folder.

## **ARTICLE IV. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Section 1: Nomination and election of new officers will take place during the penultimate meeting of the Spring semester. This process will be overseen by the Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs and the Associate Director of Student Affairs. Nominations will be made anonymously for each position, and each nominee will be asked to accept or reject their nomination. Voting shall be done anonymously, beginning with the position of President. All unelected nominees for President will automatically be nominated for Vice President; which each nominee can accept or reject. Once the President has been elected, voting will take place for Vice President, then Secretary, then Treasurer, in that order.

Section 2: In the event of a tie, there will immediately be a revote. Should the revote also result in a tie, the Officer will be named by the Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs by blindly selecting the name of one of the two nominees from a container.

Section 3: IAC members are allowed to nominate more than one person for each position.

Section 4: Each member shall be allowed to vote for only one nominee for each elected position.

Section 5: An IAC member can vote for himself or herself.

## **ARTICLE V. VOTING POLICIES**

Section 1: For all issues except amending the IAC constitution, a quorum shall represent one-half (1/2) the members of the IAC plus one (1).

Section 2: To amend the IAC Constitution, a quorum shall represent two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the IAC.

Section 3: Actions requiring a vote shall take place either via email (sent to the President and Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs) or at any meeting at which a quorum is present. The Secretary shall record the votes and announce the outcome. Voting for the election of officers will be conducted as outlined in Article IV.

Section 4: If there is a conflict of interest for a board member in any particular vote, that board member must recuse him or herself from the discussion and voting process.

## **ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS**

Section 1: General meetings shall be weekly, with the time and place to be determined by the Board.

Section 2: A representative from the Office of Student Affairs will attend each IAC Board meeting in a supportive role.

## **ARTICLE VIII. FINANCES**

Section 1: At the first IAC meeting of the academic year, the Treasurer shall present a report of the previous fiscal year's budget, revenues, and expenses.

## **ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS**

Section 1: The Constitution may be amended by approval of no less than 2/3 of all representatives present at a meeting of the IAC. The required quorum for a vote to amend the Constitution is 2/3 of the members.

Section 2: Proposed amendments shall be made available to all voting members at least one week prior to the vote.

Section 3: Amendments to the Constitution shall be binding immediately upon passage at the meeting.

Section 4: All amendments to the constitution will be made in consultation with the Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs.

## **ARTICLE X. ADOPTION**

Section 1: Adoption of a new Constitution shall follow the same procedure as amendments to the Constitution as stated above in Article IX, Section 1.

Section 2: This Constitution shall be binding immediately upon passage at the meeting.

Section 3: This Constitution shall supersede all previous constitutions.

Section 4: Any proposed adoption of a new Constitution will be done in consultation with the Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs.

## **ARTICLE XI. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Section 1: The IAC shall support and abide by all applicable Columbia University policies, and shall not discriminate against anyone because of race, color, religion, political affiliation, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Last updated on September 26, 2017