

# *Sisters of the Academy Institute*

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Preamble**

For the sake of unity in principle, practice, and procedure, the Sisters of the Academy (SOTA) Institute promulgates this document for the Institute's government so that there may be one final rule by which SOTA will be governed.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANIZATION**

- Section 1.** The name of the organization shall be called Sisters of the Academy (SOTA) Institute
- Section 2.** The mission of the Institute is to facilitate the success of Black women in the Academy
- A. To create an educational network of Black women in higher education in order to foster success in the areas of teaching, scholarly inquiry and service to the community
  - B. To facilitate collaborative scholarship among Black women in higher education
  - C. To facilitate the development of relations to enhance members' professional development
- Section 3.** The Institute provides an organization for the mutual benefits of its members; to create an educational network of Black women in higher education that will foster continuous scholarship and academic achievements; and to impact Black people, schools, and communities
- Section 4.** Sisters of the Academy Institute is organized exclusively for educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making and distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code
- Section 5.** No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office
- Section 6.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this document, Sisters of the Academy Institute shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an

organization exempt from federal income tax under section 510(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code

**Section 7.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this document, Sisters of the Academy Institute shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code

## **ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** The Institute shall receive as members Black women who:

- A. hold a terminal and/or professional degree (Full Members)
- B. are matriculating doctoral students (Associate Members)
- C. are masters students (Academic Members)
- D. are practicing professionals and administrators not on research tenured tracks (Affiliate Members)

**Section 2.** Dues are required each academic year based on the inauguration month and respective member category

**Section 3.** Dues are to be determined by the Leadership Team, subject to the approval of the majority of the membership

**Section 4.** An active member is defined as one who pays the designated dues; actively serves on a SOTA committee; and participates in a majority of SOTA's functions. All active members shall benefit from all SOTA activities irrespective of member category

## **ARTICLE III DUTIES OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**Section 1.** The Leadership Team shall include:

- A. President
- B. Past President
- C. President Elect
- D. Secretary
- E. Treasurer
- F. Standing Committee Chairs
- G. Coordinator of Office Operations

**Section 2.** Any SOTA members who have been active in the Institute for two full previous academic years are eligible for the position of President Elect

**Section 3.** Any SOTA members who have been active in the Institute for one full previous academic year are eligible for the positions of Secretary or Treasurer

**Section 4.** The following Leadership Team members have a vote: President Elect, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee Chairpersons

**Section 5.** The President's duties shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. To preside at all meetings
- B. To open the meeting by taking the chair and calling the members to order at the appointed time
- C. To announce business before SOTA in the order in which must be acted upon
- D. To state and put to vote all questions that are properly brought before the Institute
- E. To announce the results of a vote
- F. To only vote in the event of a tie; except during the election of officers
- G. To authenticate by her signature, when necessary, all of the acts, orders, and proceedings of the Institute
- H. To provide good and sound leadership to members of the Institute as an entity in its endeavors
- I. To serve as the direct liaison between SOTA and the Brothers of the Academy (BOTA)
- J. To promote the academic and professional development of members of SOTA
- K. To serve as the chief spokesperson and point of contact for the Institute
- L. To represent and stand for SOTA at functions relative to the promotion and well being thereof and always obeying its rule
- M. To ensure that SOTA sets goals, objectives and designs a plan to achieve them
- N. To coordinate the time and location of SOTA meetings
- O. To prepare an annual report reflecting SOTA's previous years activities
- P. To collect and organize information for meeting agendas, and rank them by importance and the amount of time allotted to each item
- Q. To Chair the Leadership Team
- R. To provide informational letter to SOTA members and others on behalf of SOTA's interest

**Section 6.** The duties of the President Elect shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. To assume the duties of the President in her absence
- B. To supervise all Committees
- C. To carry out those duties assigned by the President
- D. To promote the academic and professional development of members of SOTA
- E. To serve as the second liaison between SOTA and BOTA

- Section 7.** The duties of the Past President shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- A. To convene the Nominating Committee along with two other active members
  - B. To lend advice and guidance to the President and Leadership Team

- Section 8.** The duties of the Secretary shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- A. To be present at all official SOTA meetings
  - B. To record the proceedings of SOTA meetings
  - C. To call the meetings to order in the absence of the President or President Elect
  - D. To collect reports of the proceedings of Committee meetings
  - E. To note on Committee reports the dates they were received
  - F. To assist the President with preparing the annual report
  - G. To have custody of the minutes and all other official documents that come before a deliberative meeting
  - H. To assist the President in the preparation of an agenda
  - I. To keep a list of all standing Committees
  - J. To keep updated e-mail, mailing and telephone list of SOTA members
  - K. To serve on the Membership Committee

- Section 9.** The duties of the Treasurer shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- A. To be present at all official SOTA meetings
  - B. To receive and deposit all money of the Institute
  - C. To make disbursements upon authorization of the President and keep a written record of funds
  - D. To work closely with the Secretary and Coordinator of Office Operations to insure that all financial records are accurate
  - E. To balance the SOTA budget through an up to date accounting system
  - F. To give a monthly itemized report of all money received and disbursed
  - G. To prepare fiscal reports as required by the IRS with the assistance of the Finance and Resource Development Committee
  - H. To have the books audited annually by an outside source should the account balance exceed \$25,000
  - I. To keep a record of all funds, including membership dues, grants, and donations
  - J. To actively seek sources of financial support for the Institute
  - K. To serve as a member of the Finance and Resource Development Committee

- Section 10.** The duties of the Standing Committee Chairs shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- A. To be present at all official SOTA meetings
  - B. To preside at all committee meetings
  - C. To organize and delegate committee duties

- D. To prepare committee reports
- E. To submit committee reports to the Secretary
- F. To ensure that all activities of the committee are completed

**Section 11.** The duties of the Coordinator of Office Operations shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. To be present at all official SOTA meetings
- B. To coordinate the daily SOTA office activities
- C. To serve as an ex officio member of the Leadership Team
- D. To maintain regular communication with Leadership Team Members
- E. To assist the President and Treasurer in preparing the annual report
- F. To facilitate Leadership Teams access to information to complete their duties
- G. To coordinate and plan the logistics for Leadership Team and membership meetings

#### **ARTICLE IV VOTING PROCEDURES**

**Section 1.** The following Leadership Team members have a vote: President Elect, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee Chairpersons

**Section 2.** All official decisions must be approved by a majority of the body conducting the vote

#### **ARTICLE V ELECTORAL PROCEDURES**

**Section 1.** Nominations shall be made during the month of February; election of officers shall take place during the month of March; newly elected officers will take their positions April 1<sup>st</sup>. For 2004 – 2005 the President and President Elect will serve two year terms; all others will serve one year terms. For the following years, all officers will serve one-year terms

**Section 2.** Ballots may be received via e-mail and postal mail; voting will take place during the month of March

**Section 3.** Members of the Nominating Committee shall receive and solicit nominations from the SOTA general body

**Section 4.** Members who are not present may submit their nominations or vote via e-mail no later than two (2) hours prior or via postal mail no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the scheduled elections

**Section 5.** The campaign periods shall begin at the end of the nominating meeting and forty-eight (48) hours prior to elections

**Section 6.** Only active SOTA members shall vote on and elect the Leadership Team

## **ARTICLE VI AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1.** SOTA reserves the right to amend any part of this Constitution, with the majority approval of all members of the Leadership Team

## **ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES**

**Section 1.** The President may establish standing committees subject to the approval of the majority of the Leadership Team. A standing committee shall deal with regular and continuing matters

**Section 2.** The standing committees shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Marketing Committee
- B. Membership Committee
- C. Research Committee
- D. Finance and Resource Development Committee
- E. Community Outreach Committee
- F. Legislative Affairs Committee
- G. Professional Development Committee

**Section 3.** Marketing Committee – The functions of this committee shall be:

- A. Publicize all official SOTA literature
- B. Maintain communication media
  - 1. Website
  - 2. Brochures
  - 3. Newsletters
  - 4. Postcards
  - 5. Internet Listserve

**Section 4.** Membership Committee – The functions of this committee shall be:

- A. Serve as a contact for new members
- B. Coordinate SOTA membership outreach, informational sessions, and communication media
- C. Update Member Database (Secretary)
- D. Disseminate information to membership (Secretary)
- E. Develop paraphernalia and materials for SOTA (coordinate this effort with the Marketing Committee)

- Section 5.** Research Committee – The functions of this committee shall be:
- A. Maintain focus of scholarship and research for publication
  - B. Maintain network of collaborative research projects
  - C. Promote new research initiatives
- Section 6.** Finance and Resource Development Committee – The functions of this committee shall be:
- A. Conduct all monetary transactions
  - B. Actively seek sources of financial support
  - C. Serve as distributor of SOTA research project funding
- Section 7.** Community Outreach Committee – The functions of this committee shall be:
- A. Link scholarship with the community
  - B. Work with the community to develop programming vital to both academia and the community
  - C. To organize one community outreach activity at each Leadership Team and membership meeting
- Section 8.** Legislative Affairs Committee – The functions of this committee shall be:
- A. Lobbying for Blacks, Black women, and special issues regarding the Black community
- Section 9.** Professional Development Committee – The functions of this committee shall be:
- A. Establish a mentoring program
  - B. Maintain updated list of conferences to encourage membership participation
  - C. Actively promote members’ involvement in professional development activities
- Section 10.** The Nominating Committee shall be convened biannually to facilitate electoral procedures. The chairperson of this committee shall be the Past President
- Section 11.** Special Committees – May be convened at any time by the president to deal with specific matters such as to plan a special event. The special committee shall cease to exist after the task is completed

## **ARTICLE VIII DUES AND ASSESSMENTS**

- Section 1.** Dues are required each academic year based on inauguration month and respective member category
- Section 2.** Dues are to be determined by the Leadership Team

**ARTICLE IX  
ASSETS AND EARNINGS**

**Section 1.** No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof

**Section 2.** Upon the dissolution of the SOTA, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes

**ARTICLE X  
DISCIPLINE**

**Section 1.** SOTA reserves the right to temporarily suspend or permanently suspend any member of SOTA for a valid reason defined as any misconduct or misrepresentation of SOTA's mission, as determined unanimously by all members of the Leadership Team

# **EXAMPLE**

## **SISTERS OF THE ACADEMY INSTITUTE**

### **AGENDA**

**(date)**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

- I. Sisterly Reports
  - H. Leadership Team
  - I. Committee Chairs
- II. Old Business
- III. New Business
- IV. Announcements
- V. Adjournment

Notes:

**EXAMPLE**

**SISTERS OF THE ACADEMY INSTITUTE**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**(date)**

The meeting opened at (time, day, date) in (location)

The presiding officer was (name of officer)

Notes (in outlined form based on the meeting Agenda):

Meeting was adjourned at (time)

Minutes prepared by:

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*printed name*

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*office held*

**EXAMPLE**

**SISTERS OF THE ACADEMY INSTITUTE**

**Committee Report**

Name of Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Facts \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tabled Items \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation(s) from the Leadership Team \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Committee Chairpersons and Names of Committee Members submitting report

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_