Columbia Association of South American Students

Constitution

Article I – Name and Purpose

Section 1
The name of this organization shall be the Columbia Association of South American Students (“CASAS” or the “Association”) and shall consist of South America students enrolled in the FU Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science (the “School” or “SEAS”).

Section 2
The Association shall:

A. Serve the Students as a representative body to discuss their issues and concerns.
B. Foster interaction, friendship, and respect among the Students by organizing events of interest.
C. Improve the South American students’ academic experience at Columbia University.
D. Promote the South American culture by organizing events of interest.
E. Maintain a dialogue with the Administration and Faculty of the School, advocating Students’ interests when appropriate.
F. Communicate with other recognized student organizations of the School and the Students in these organizations.
G. Disseminate information relevant to the Students’ interests.

Section 3
The Association shall have any authority necessary and proper to carry out its enumerated purposes in consistency with the rules and procedures of the School set forth by the Administration.

Article II – Membership

Section 1
The Association shall be composed of 8 officers of the Executive Board, and by the Members of the committees.

Section 2
Students at the School who are not Members, but are engaged in the Association’s affairs shall be considered associate members.

Article III – Officers

Section 1
The Executive Board of the Association shall consist of the following Executive Board Officers (“Officers”), each with responsibilities including, but not limited to, those listed below each office (Article III, Section 5).

Section 2
Each Officer shall be elected by the Association as required by Article VI and Article VII.

Section 3
The Executive Board term shall begin on the day of the first meeting of the Spring semester and end on the day of the first meeting of the following Spring semester.

Section 4
Only Members who will be registered Students of the School for the entire Executive Board term shall be considered for Officer election to the Executive Board.

Section 5
Executive Board Officers and duties:

A. President
i. Chair the meetings of the Association and Executive Board.
ii. Be responsible for the execution of all resolutions passed by the Association.
iii. Represent the Association at official functions and serve as primary spokesperson of the Association.
iv. Advise the committee chairs to help guide their priorities and agendas.

B. Vice President
i. Perform the duties of the President in their absence.
ii. Succeed the President in case of vacancy.
iii. Maintain connections with the Administration.
iv. Invite the Dean of the School, the Dean of Student Affairs and the President of EGSC to Association meetings at least once a year.

C. Secretary
i. Keep complete and accurate records of all Association meetings including, but not limited to, attendance, minutes, and resolutions.
ii. Determine quorum of half plus one of the Association’s voting Members at the beginning of each meeting.
iii. Present such records to the Association when asked.
iv. Prepare the agenda of each Association meeting in consultation with the Executive Board.
v. Conduct all correspondence for the Association as necessary.
vi. Be responsible for the upkeep of the Constitution and By-Laws.
vii. Arrange for food and beverage to be provided during Association meetings, if appropriate.
viii. Recruit associate members to participate in the Administrative Committee.
ix. Chair the Administrative Committee and be responsible for all the duties of the committee.

**D. Treasurer**
i. Be responsible for all allotted and generated funds of the Association.
ii. Keep all financial transactions according to standard accounting procedures.
iii. Prepare a financial report for the Association at the end of every semester.
iv. Inform the Officers and Association about the budget upon request.
v. Recruit associate members to participate in the Budget Committee.
vi. Chair the Budget Committee and be responsible for all the duties of the committee.

**E. Social Chair**
i. Coordinate the organization of all Student social events organized by the Association.
ii. Present a calendar of upcoming social events to the Association at all meetings.
iii. Recruit associate members to participate in the Social Events Committee.
iv. Chair the Social Events Committee and be responsible for all the duties of the committee.

**F. Alumni Chair**
i. Coordinate the organization of alumni events.
ii. Maintain contact with alumni organizations of the School and the University.
iii. Inform the Association about upcoming alumni-related events.
iv. Recruit associate members to participate in the Alumni & Career Affairs Committee.
v. Co-Chair the Alumni & Career Affairs Committee and be responsible for all the duties of the committee.

**G. Interschool Chair**
i. Act as external liaison of the Association to all other student governing bodies of the University.
ii. Maintain relations with University recognized groups and promote cooperation and collaboration in all activities.
iii. Coordinate the organization of interschool events.
iv. Recruit associate members to participate in the Interschool Committee.
v. Chair the Interschool Committee and be responsible for all the duties of the committee.

**H. Webmaster**
i. Coordinate the maintenance of CASAS website content as determined by the Association.
ii. Manage all Association listservs.
iii. Manage the Executive Board Mail List accounts.
iv. Manage the CASAS Events Google Calendar.
v. Draft the CASAS Newsletter to be sent out by the President.
vi. Take the lead on any designs of the CASAS website and/or logo.
vii. Recruit associate members to participate in the Digital Media Committee.
viii. Chair the Digital Media Committee and be responsible for all the duties of the committee.
Section 6
Additional responsibilities of all Officers:
A. All duties, regulations, and restrictions as required by the By-Laws of this Constitution.
B. Attendance at all Executive Board meetings.
C. Attendance at all Association meetings.
D. Volunteer and assist at CASAS Happy Hours and other qualifying events as designated by the President.
E. Perform timely transitions to their successors as Officers, no later than two weeks after election. This includes, but is not limited to, sharing of documents, processes, and methods.

Section 7
The 8 Officers shall constitute the Executive Board of the Association.

Section 8
The Executive Board of the Association shall meet at least once a month during the academic year.

Article IV – Committees

Section 1
All Members are required to serve on at least one committee during the academic year.

Section 2
The President shall approve Members to committees after the Members have made their preferences known and the Committee Chair have agreed.

Section 3
Committees shall meet at least once a month during the academic year.

Section 4
Associate members shall have the right to vote at committee meetings except by the conditions stated in the By-Laws.

Section 5
A. The Administrative Committee
   i. Chaired by the Secretary.
   ii. Keep complete and accurate records of all Association meetings including, but not limited to, attendance, minutes, and resolutions.
   iii. Advertise Association events through all available channels including, but not limited to, email, listservs, Facebook, and other social media.
B. The Budget Committee
i. Chaired by the Treasurer.
ii. Create, review and submit a budget proposal to EGSC at the beginning of each semester.
iii. Allocate and distribute funds to committees according to the Association’s interests.

C. The Social Events Committee
i. Chaired by the Social Chair.
ii. Plan, organize, and sponsor recurring and one-time social events (minimum 3 per semester).
iii. Advertise all the Association’s events.
iv. Plan, organize, and volunteer at all Signature Events, as required.

D. The Interschool Committee
i. Chaired by the Interschool Chair.
ii. Attend meetings of other student governing bodies of the University.
iii. Maintain good relations with all University affiliated student bodies by promoting cooperation and collaboration.
iv. Organize interschool events in cooperation with other student governing bodies.

E. The Alumni Affairs Committee
i. Chaired by the Alumni Chair.
ii. Keep an updated list of graduating engineering alumni and their contact information.
iii. Cooperate with the School and University alumni organizations in order to promote the social networking of Students.
iv. Organize alumni events in cooperation with the School and University alumni organizations.
v. Communicate regularly with the SEAS Office of Alumni and Development.

F. The Digital Media Committee
i. Chaired by the Webmaster.
ii. Maintain and update the CASAS website with current or upcoming event flyers, membership, contact information, and all other relevant content as determined by the Association.
iii. Manage subscriptions and tend to pending moderator requests to Association listservs.
iv. Assist in any redesigns of the CASAS website and logo.

Section 6
The Association may form and dissolve ad hoc committees for any purpose as it deems necessary. The Members shall vote and appoint the Chair of ad hoc committees.
Article V – Meetings

Section 1
The Association shall hold monthly meetings consisting of Members as defined in Article II.

Section 2
All Members shall be notified of all Association meetings at least five (5) days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3
The President or a simple majority vote of the Executive Board may call a special meeting of the Association to discuss issues that need specific and immediate attention.

Section 4
No regular and special meetings shall be convened on weekends or holidays.

Section 5
The agenda for all Association meetings shall include an opportunity for all Members to raise any issues before the Association. The President shall initiate and present these issues to the Association as he/she sees fit.

Section 6
In the event of an emergency that requires immediate action prior to a meeting of the Association, the President, consulting the Executive Board if possible, shall act on behalf of the Association. The President shall be responsible to the Association for these actions.

Section 7
All meetings of the Association shall be open to Members and associate members.

Section 8
No voting shall be conducted or considered binding unless conducted by a duly constituted quorum, defined as at least half plus one of voting Members.

Section 9
A simple majority of Member votes shall constitute the right to pass resolutions and close meetings except for amendments to the Constitution. Amendments to the By-Laws shall pass by simple majority of the Association Members or two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board. All resolutions and amendments to By-Laws shall be in effect immediately until repeated unless otherwise stated.
Section 10
All meetings of the Association shall be governed by this Constitution and the By-Laws. The Association may declare special rules consistent with the Constitution and the By-Laws. All other rules of order shall be determined by the President.

Section 11
Attendance to regular and special meetings shall be compulsory for all Members.

Section 12
In the event that a Member be unable to attend an Association meeting, that Member shall contact the President or Secretary at least one hour prior to the scheduled start of the meeting and assign a proxy to represent them during the meeting.

Section 13
Failure to excuse oneself prior to the start of an Association meeting shall be deemed an unexcused absence and result in a warning regarding Member status by the President or Secretary.

Section 14
Two unexcused absences without a proxy in one academic semester may result in removal as a Member and replacement by a newly elected representative, as outlined in Article VII.

Section 15
Members may be represented by proxies up to four (4) times in a given semester; an unexcused absence will count against this four (4) time total.

Section 16
A proxy shall be a current Member.

Section 17
A proxy designated by a Member might vote on any Association resolutions on behalf of the person being represented.

Section 18
A member shall be considered absent without excuse if they are more than 20 minutes late past the meeting start time.

Section 19
The President or a simple majority vote of the Executive Board shall determine the Association meeting schedule for the summer academic term.
Section 20
During the summer academic term, quorum shall consist of those Members who attend the meeting.

Section 21
During the summer academic term, a simple majority vote shall constitute the right to pass resolutions or close meetings except for the amendments of the Constitution. Amendments to the By-Laws shall pass by simple majority of the Association or two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board.

Article VI – Voting

Section 1
Voting shall be conducted under the rules and regulations mandated by Article V.

Section 2
The President shall hold the discretion to end any and all debate on a resolution and shall initiate voting procedures as required.

Section 3
The Association shall first vote on the appropriate voting method for the resolution being discussed.

Section 4
Appropriate voting methods are:
A. Voice vote: The President calls for the affirmative vote first, negative vote is called for second and abstentions are called for third.
B. Show of hands vote.
C. Ballot vote: This vote is to be conducted by secret ballot administered by the Vice President. Primarily conducted to protect a voter’s right to secrecy.
D. General consent vote: Informal agreement of the group.

Article VII – Elections, Vacancies, Impeachment

Section 1
The Association shall hold elections for Executive Board Officer positions at the regular Association meeting before Thanksgiving break of the Fall semester. The Association shall follow the voting procedures as detailed in the By-Laws.

Section 2
Elected Officers shall begin their term of office on the first meeting of the Spring semester and end their term on the first meeting of the following Spring semester.
Section 3
Only Members who will be registered Students of the School for the entire Officer term shall be considered for election to the Executive Board.

Section 4
No member shall hold two offices simultaneously.

Section 5
Members can declare and be considered for only one Officer position in any given election. However, if a position remains vacant after candidate declarations, then Members may declare and be considered for those vacant Officer positions.

Section 6
In the event of a vacancy in the Chair of the President, the Vice President shall immediately become the President and the Chair of Vice President shall become vacant.

Section 7
For vacancies in other Chairs, the President shall appoint any Member to serve as an interim Officer until an election may be held. This new election shall follow the voting procedure as detailed by the By-Laws and shall take place no longer than one month after the vacancy has been acknowledged by the president.

Section 8
Members who fail to fulfill their responsibilities as stated in Articles II, III, IV, and V, may be issued a Warning by the President. Each subsequent infraction by a Member may result in Second and Third Warnings. Upon receiving a Second Warning, the Member is immediately placed on Probation for the remainder of the semester. If the Member receives a Third Warning, impeachment proceedings will immediately commence.

Section 9
Members may be impeached and removed from office for unethical behavior, failure to adhere to the regulations of the Association, and not fulfilling the responsibilities of the office. Three Warnings need not have been issued by the President for a Member to be impeached.

Section 10
Motions to impeach a member shall only be introduced by a written memo stating the reasons for removal. All Members shall be notified at least one week prior to impeachment proceedings. The decision may be given by simple majority vote of the Association or two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board.
Article VIII – Revenues and Expenditures

Section 1
The Association shall have the right to receive allotted funds by the University including, but not limited to Student Activity fees.

Section 2
The Association may, with the consent of the Administration of the School, introduce concessions or hold events for the Students of the University in order to generate revenue. The Association reserves the right to sell, rent, subcontract, or franchise the proceeds and/or management of such revenue-producing operations.

Section 3
The Association shall exercise exclusive control over the spending of funds obtained under Sections 1 and 2 of this Article. The Association shall spend such funds to further the purposes of this Constitution.


Section 1
This Constitution takes effect as of October 8, 2014 after it has been ratified by a simple majority vote of the Association.

Section 2
Amendments to the By-Laws shall pass by simple majority of the Association Members or two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board.

Section 3
For renewal of the Constitution, a ratification vote shall be conducted. All members and associate members of the Association have the right to vote. The renewed Constitution shall be in effect by a simple majority vote of the Association or two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board for ratification. Amendments to more than three articles of the Constitution in one calendar year shall be considered as a renewal.

Section 4
The members of the 2014-2015 Association shall elect an Interim Executive Board by no later than October 31, 2014. The election shall be carried out in a regular meeting by a simple majority vote. All of these elected officers shall carry the title of ‘Interim’ and they shall serve until the first meeting of Spring.
Article X – Sexual Harassment

All Board members must sign the Board Policy for Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault upon transfer of power. All members must sign the Community Standards Pledge before they are allowed to attend an official meeting. The outlined policies must be strictly upheld.