



BYLAWS

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ARTICLE I
NAME

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities, hereinafter referred to as the Commission.

ARTICLE II
MISSION STATEMENT

Section 1: The Commission strives to facilitate interculturalism and promote diversity and inclusion at Mississippi State University. The Commission advocates for the well-being, development, and advancement of all minorities and encourages a climate that enriches the campus experience for all.

ARTICLE III
PURPOSE

Section 1: The purpose of the Commission shall be to:

- A. Advise the University President on matters/issues that will enhance equality and workplace diversity and inclusion;
- B. Monitor the effects of all existing and proposed policies, procedures, practices and programs relating to or affecting diversity, equal opportunity or affirmative action to determine their impact on minorities;
- C. Conduct, sponsor, monitor, and encourage appropriate studies regarding the status and role of minorities at the University;
- D. Identify problems/issues related to the implementation of diversity and inclusion in the workplace and learning environment;
- E. Serve as an organization representing individual or group concerns of minorities on campus;
- F. Work with other University organizations to promote diversity and inclusion initiatives on campus;
- G. Sponsor informational and educational programs which will serve the best interests of minorities and the University;
- H. Serve as an informal channel through which employees and students may ask questions or express concerns related to diversity, equal opportunity, and/or affirmative action;
- I. Refer any individual student or employee with EEO/AA related concerns to the appropriate office;
- J. Recognize outstanding individuals through an annual awards program;
- K. Publicize information of interest to minorities and to the university.

ARTICLE IV
COMPOSITION

Section 1: The Commission membership shall include a total of twenty (20) voting and eight (8) non-voting members.

- A. The voting members shall include:
 - a. Five (5) Faculty Members
 - b. Five (5) Professional Staff
 - c. Two (2) Executive, Administrative, and Managerial Members
 - d. Five (5) Support Staff
 - e. One (1) Graduate Student
 - f. One (1) Undergraduate Student, alternating between a representative from the Gender Studies Program and a representative from Spectrum
 - g. One (1) Immediate past Commission Chair
- B. The ex officio non-voting members shall include:
 - a. A representative from the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (1)
 - b. A representative from the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center (1)
 - c. A representative from the Department of Human Resources Management (1)
 - d. A representative from the Gender Studies Program (1)
 - e. A representative from the Center for America's Veterans (1)
 - f. A representative from the Office of Student Support Services (1)
 - g. A representative from the Student Association (1)
 - h. A representative from Staff Council (1)

ARTICLE V
MEMBER APPOINTMENT AND VOTING PROCEDURES

Section 1: Nominations for new members shall be solicited in April of each year. At this time, an ad hoc committee of the newly elected officers shall be formed to review the nominations and fill vacancies on the Commission. Nominees will be sent information about the Commission and a questionnaire to determine their level of interest. The ad hoc committee will review all materials and compose a list of recommended appointees. The Chair will ultimately make final decisions on recommendations to be forwarded to the President.

Section 2: A list of recommended appointees shall be submitted in May of each year to the President's Office based upon recommendation of the Chair, and all members shall be officially appointed to this committee by the President.

Section 3: The length of appointment shall be three years for faculty; professional; executive, administrative, and managerial; support staff; and community representatives, and one year for student members and the immediate past chair. Terms will begin on July 1 and end June 30 of the appropriate year. Ex-officio members are exempt from this rotation.

Section 4: After serving a three-year appointment, an individual must wait one year before being considered for another three-year appointment. An additional year may be added if the individual is elected or re-elected as an officer.

Section 5: If a member wishes to resign, the request is made in a letter of resignation to the Chair. In the event that an unexpired term is vacated, a replacement shall be recommended to the President by the Chair based upon recommendations from the Commission. The replacement will only serve through the end of the term, but may be considered for appointment to a full term when nominations are solicited in April.

Section 6: Voting on a motion can only be done when a quorum of members is present. Fifty percent of the membership will be deemed a quorum. Motions shall pass with a majority vote of those present unless otherwise noted.

ARTICLE VI **FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

Section 1: The Commission will hold at least ten (10) monthly meetings during each fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). The day and time shall be determined at the beginning of the academic year by the Chair, taking into account the schedules of Commission members. The Chair may call special meetings. All members should be notified at least three (3) days in advance of a special meeting.

ARTICLE VII **ATTENDANCE**

Section 1: Regular attendance is expected. The Chair, upon vote of the Commission, may replace any member with two (2) unexcused absences during a fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). "Unexcused" is defined as not notifying the Chair in advance of meetings.

Section 2: If a member has an ongoing conflict (class, teaching, long-term illness, etc.) that prevents regular attendance at meetings, the Chair will have the authority to recommend a replacement for that member.

ARTICLE VIII **OFFICERS**

Section 1: The officers shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer whose duties are:

- A. Chair – to preside at all regular meetings and special sessions of the Commission and to represent the Commission to its various constituencies, the University, and the

public. The Chair shall have and exercise the duties associated with the position; notify members of meeting times, places, and agenda; and have general supervision over the annual budget. The Chair shall collect information about the Commission and preserve it for future reference and remembrance in the MSU Archives. The Chair shall only vote on Commission issues as a tiebreaker. A non-voting member who is serving as Chair can vote as a tiebreaker.

- B. Vice Chair – to assist the Chair in the normal operations of the Commission, to serve as Chair in the absence of the Chair, to fulfill assignments as made by the Chair, and to serve as Chair of the Awards Committee.
- C. Secretary – to ensure that the minutes of the meeting are maintained and distributed and assist the Chair with correspondence as required. The secretary will also serve as historian and will work with the MSU library to archive information.
- D. Treasurer – to maintain an accounting of Commission funds and help the Chair determine the annual budget, including the monitoring of all income and expenditures and applying for grants when needed. The Treasurer shall approve all expenditures in accordance with the approved budget and shall audit the books at the end of the fiscal year. The Treasurer shall work in consultation with an individual assigned from the President’s office to maintain this budget.

Section 2: Nominations for officers shall be solicited prior to the March meeting of each year and will be open for two weeks. Members can self-nominate or be nominated by a fellow member. All nominations will go to an ad hoc elections director who will be selected at the March meeting.

Section 3: Election of officers must be done during a regular meeting or special session, usually at the April meeting by ballot, and cannot be done by e-mail. By two-thirds vote, the Commission shall designate a chair (preferably serving their third year of appointment), a vice chair (preferably serving their second year of appointment), a secretary, and a treasurer.

Section 4: All officers serve a one year appointment, and are eligible to be re-elected for another one-year term. The term of office for all officers is from July 1 to June 30 of the year of appointment. All officers are limited to two consecutive terms.

Section 5: In the event of a vacancy in any of the offices, the Commission shall select a member to complete the vacant term and shall duly report the change to the President.

ARTICLE IX **COMMITTEES**

Section 1: The following standing committees and their duties are hereby ordained:

- A. Community Engagement – to have the responsibilities for planning and coordinating volunteer opportunities on the behalf of the Commission;

- B. Diversity Awards – to solicit nominations for yearly recognition of outstanding individuals. The Chair of the Awards Committee will be the Vice Chair;
- C. Fundraising – to research and solicit potential fundraising and grantwriting opportunities on the behalf of the Commission;
- D. Planning and Programming – to have responsibility for planning and conducting programs on behalf of the Commission and to develop, revise, and monitor goals and objectives, both short and long term, of the Commission;
- E. Public Relations - to serve as the liaison between the Commission and University Relations and other media in the promotion of the Commission and its programs, work, and goals. This committee will also designate a webmaster to work in conjunction with a liaison in University Relations to regularly update the website.

Section 2: All committees are recommending bodies to the Commission, and ad hoc committees may be established by the Chair, as need or interest requires. Non-commission members may be asked to serve on committees.

Section 3: All voting Commission members will be required to serve on at least one committee per year. Officers and the immediate past chair are exempt from this requirement, except the Vice Chair who will chair the Awards committee. Each committee must have a minimum of four members. The selection of members and committee chairs will occur at the first meeting during each academic year.

Section 4: All Commission members will be required to assist with the planning and execution of the MSU Diversity Conference.

ARTICLE X

BYLAW AMENDMENTS AND REVIEW

Section 1: These bylaws may be amended by two-thirds vote of the Commission members, either at a regular or a called meeting, or through a special mail or email ballot. Proposed amendments must be circulated via mail or email to Commission members at least two weeks before the voting will be conducted. Amendments may be proposed by Commission officers, by a majority of Commission members, or by an ad hoc committee established for that purpose.

Section 2: Every two years, in odd numbered years, the chair shall form an ad hoc committee to review the bylaws, make revisions, and bring forward its recommendations to the Commission for a vote.