

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

MSA SOUTHEAST CONSTITUTION

Section I: Mission Statement

MSA Southeast is a network of MSAs across the Southeast region of the United States that aims to unite Muslims for the sole pleasure of Allah swt. We strive to help strengthen the individual's connection with their creator, and the way of life prescribed by Him. Through helping to change and improve on the self, we seek to change the condition of our ummah.

We seek to instill a lifelong commitment of working on the self (inner) and for the ummah (outer).

We aim at establishing a brotherhood and sisterhood that will remain for many years. We will make every attempt to work with other groups and organizations for the greater good of the ummah (and humanity), while maintaining our independence (and coming under no other authority besides Allah, and no control of another organization or group), so long as it does not compromise the deen of Islam.

We will strive to work together despite our differences. We seek to build a cohesive alliance that will build bridges over walls, take action despite the pressures to stay passive, speak out for truth and justice despite the comfort of silence, stand up for what is right despite the ease to sit while the wrong goes on. We will choose that which earns the love of God, over the love of people. We will seek to nurture empathy while living in an apathetic culture. And we will strive to struggle, as it was the way of the prophets, in order to fulfill our mission of reviving Islam in our hearts, our minds, and the ummah at large.

Functions

- Increase awareness and love of Allah, His prophet (saAws) and His deen (Islam).
- Challenge stereotypes and correct misinformation
- Strengthen the brotherhood and sisterhood, and the bond between Muslims locally, in the region, and throughout the world
- Promote unity and conduct joint activities among Muslims by building a cohesive coalition between all MSA's in the Southeast.
- Increase unity and activism for the pleasure of Allah swt.
- Outreach to Muslims in high schools and junior colleges.
- Help MSAs provide da'wah on campus
- Be a resource for MSAs across the region

Goals

- Help Muslim students get closer to Allah swt through establishing a routine of self development, gaining knowledge, developing their five daily prayers, building their relationship with the Words of Allah (the Quran), and connecting their lives to Sunnah of the prophet (saAws).
- Serve as a network pool for all MSA's—help campuses start MSA's, invite speakers, handle fitna, assist in conducting activities, including financial support, etc.
- Act as one voice to take a united stance on to urgent situations, both global and local.
- Coordinate regional and statewide events to increase the level of the Muslim student voice.

- Create a Website to share information, communicate, research ideas for posters, flyer, etc.
- Connect with other Muslim organizations and community members.
- Establish a lasting infrastructure.

Section II: Organizational Structure

Article I

The Executive Board

An executive Board member counts as one of the two delegates from each respective campus.

- Amir (a)
- Vice Amir (a)
- Event Coordinator
- Communications Director
- Outreach Coordinator
- Finance Director

Elections

The delegates of MSA Southeast are responsible for electing a new Executive Board at the end of every school year, with the exception of the inaugural year of MSA Southeast. Once the board is chosen, they will decide among themselves who will serve in the position of Amir (a). Executive officers should be at least two of each gender (a process to facilitate this is outlined below, and can be substituted by another process that fulfills the same requirement).

Elections Committee:

The elections committee will be formed two months prior to the date of elections. Its function is to oversee the elections process, to verify voter and nominee eligibility, and to ensure accurate count of the ballots. The elections committee should consist of at least three people, two of who should not currently (at the time) be on the board, and who have not accepted board nominations for the coming school year. Elections committee members become ineligible for board positions (for that coming year) when they agree to be on the elections committee. The Elections committee must be comprised of people from different MSAs and should be selected based on their involvement and trustworthiness. If people from three different MSAs are not available, then there may be up to (but no more than) two individuals serving from one MSA. The elections committee selection must take place openly, over either in an MSA Southeast Action Meeting, or over the MSA Southeast email list. One member from the board, who will be ineligible to run for office in the coming year, should be in touch with elections committee and present during committee meetings, email communication, and vote counting. Elections committee members are not to discuss nominees prior to elections taking place

Nominations Process:

Each school will nominate two qualified and eligible (see below) people from their MSA (one brother/male and one sister/female). Nominees are chosen by the board of each MSA but members of all the MSAs present at the MSA Southeast Elections Meeting will collectively decide (via ballot vote) which of those two get elected to the MSA Southeast Board.

Board Nominee Eligibility Requirements:

- 1) Nominees must be currently attending college, and take at least two college courses during their term.
- 2) Any MSA member nominated for an MSA Southeast Board position must have attended at least two (2) MSA Southeast network meeting and/or committee meetings/conference calls during the

previous year. In the event that nobody from the given MSA fits that criteria, one such meeting will then suffice to make an individual eligible.

3) Presidents and/or Amir(a)s of MSAs are only eligible to be on the MSA Southeast Board if there are no other qualified candidates who are able and willing to be on the MSA Southeast board. In the event that no other MSA member from a specific MSA fit the criteria above (qualified, willing or able), a special request must be submitted detailing this and will be reviewed by the MSA Southeast Elections Committee.

4) Nominees must not be on the MSA Southeast Elections Committee during the year in which they are nominated for an MSA Southeast Board position.

Voting Eligibility, Process and Verification:

Any current student and member of an MSA can vote, given that they attended at least two (2) MSA Southeast meetings and/or committee conference calls since the previous (school) year. In the event that at least one person from a given MSA has not attended at least two such meetings, one will suffice to give one a single individual voting eligibility. In other words, ten people who attended one meeting do not all get the right to vote. Rather, only in the event that nobody from an MSA fits the criteria of two meetings can only one of those ten be given voting rights.

Prior to ballots being distributed the meeting, each nominee will have two minutes to briefly introduce themselves to the members present at the meeting and explain their involvement in their own MSA as well as with MSA Southeast. This is not a plea for votes or explanation of why one should be elected. Rather, it is to familiarize people with the nominees. Please keep in mind that, in Islam, leadership is not a title or position to be sought, but rather a responsibility that is given (in trust and with accountability) by the people.

After votes are collected, they will be counted separately by each member the MSA Southeast Elections Committee in the presence of MSA Southeast advisor(s). Exact vote counts will not be announced, nor will the board be announced until all requirements i.e. gender are met. The members present at the MSA Southeast meeting hold the right to request a recount of the ballots, and physically be present during the recount if any error or mistake is suspected. Such a recount require a motion to be called by one member present at the meeting, and then for a second to be called for the motion to be voted on. If 51% of the members present at the meeting vote on a recount, one will be granted.

Board Structure and Balance:

The MSA Southeast board must consist of at least two members of each gender (there must be at least two brothers and at least two sisters on the board). In the unlikely event that this is not naturally achieved through the voting process, school names will be randomly drawn until the appropriate balance is achieved. The school that is drawn from the pool of names will have their second qualified nominee (who is of the opposite gender) represent their MSA on the board of MSA Southeast. Board positions are decided upon by the board members themselves after being elected through mutual consultation and agreement.

The criteria needed to be elected is as follows

- attended a minimum of two official MSA Southeast Meetings and/or conference calls
- and/or received recommendation from three current MSA Southeast officers
- and then voted in by the delegates at the Election meeting

Article II

Delegates

Delegates are members of the MSA on their campus who are eligible to vote on matters at MSA Southeast Action meetings and elections. Delegates do not have to be board members. We encourage two-year delegate terms for the sake of continuity. Delegates should report back to their MSA's. Delegates vote on all measures and can propose additions to the constitution.

Article III

Webmaster

Webmaster is in charge updating and maintaining the MSA Southeast web-site. They also work with the board members to design flyers and posters for MSA Southeast events. This position is appointed by the board, and not voted on. There are no eligibility requirements for this position other than the ability to perform the tasks needed. This is not an official or executive board position.

Article IV

Frequency

Action and Planning Meetings must be held at least twice each semester, and at least once over the summer. The Amir, with consultation of the board, may decide to hold more than this if he sees fit.

Section III: Conduct/Responsibilities

Conduct

Each member shall avoid controversial/un-Islamic statements, exercise tolerance and respect the rights of others to their own opinion. Questions, comments, and concerns are to be given respectfully with one person speaking at time.

Responsibilities

Executive Board

- **The Amir (a)** — sees that the tasks of the organization are being met and helps all officers with their duties. He/she organizes the format and location of the meetings and facilitates discussion. Any modifications of the constitution can be made through a majority vote. The Amir (a) has the responsibility to override any decision that is not in the best interest of the Ummah.
- **Vice Amir (a)** — assists the Amir (a) and serves as Amir (a) if the present Amir (a) is unable to fulfill any duties. Gives input and feedback during meetings and in discussions, is involved in decision-making of all matters, promotes the seriousness of the organization, enforces constitution, and keeps meetings on topic.
- **Outreach Coordinator** – reaches out to other MSAs, helps them get involved with MSA Southeast, and assists them on their respective campus. Gives input and feedback during meetings and in discussions, is involved in decision-making of all matters, promotes the seriousness of the organization, enforces constitution, and keeps meetings on topic.
- **Event Coordinator** – Acts as link between conference and retreat committees and board, ensure events are on track, oversees logistics, brings events to the larger public, takes charge of events when necessary. Gives input and feedback during meetings and in discussions, is involved in decision-making of all matters, promotes the seriousness of the organization, enforces constitution, and keeps meetings on topic.

- **Finance Director** — responsible for finances, fund-raisers, and distribution of money including but not limited to reimbursements. Ensures that organization is financially sound. Gives input and feedback during meetings and in discussions, is involved in decision-making of all matters, promotes the seriousness of the organization, enforces constitution, and keeps meetings on topic.
- **Communications Director** — takes notes at every meeting and posts them on e-mail, and recaps the minutes from each previous meeting. Sends out updates on the web and Facebook, communicates with webmaster to get site updated, moderate the Google group, draft correspondences. Gives input and feedback during meetings and in discussions, is involved in decision-making of all matters, promotes the seriousness of the organization, enforces constitution, and keeps meetings on topic.

Delegates

- Delegates should attend meetings regularly.
- It is each delegate's responsibility to represent their MSA and address the issues of their school.
- Delegates are all responsible for participating in the development of MSA Southeast activities.
- New schools can vote in the second consecutive meeting that they are in attendance
- A school that misses 3 consecutive meetings will go back to the origin point (contact Amir (a)) and will not have voting rights until they are re-qualified.

Committees

The work of MSA Southeast will be facilitated via various temporary and standing committees to be determined by the board and delegates at the MSA Southeast Action Meetings.

The standing committees are:

1. Education and Spiritual Development Committee
2. Political Action Committee

Standing committees may be created or dissolved as deemed necessary, per the approval of the officers.

The members of each of the committee will determine from amongst themselves who the amir(a)s will be. The standing committees are to have at least one physical meeting a year, at the annual MSA Southeast Conference. All committees and subcommittees will be held accountable to the MSA Southeast Board via the MSA Southeast Vice Amir(a).

The recurring temporary committees are:

1. Retreats Committee
2. MSA Southeast Conference Program Committee
3. MSA Southeast Conference Workshop Committee

Additional temporary committees can be formed or dissolved as deemed necessary by the officers, advisors and delegates.

Advisors

Advisors are needed in order to have consistency in the work and ideals of MSA Southeast. Advisors are comprised of former board members and the founders of MSA Southeast. After a board's term ends, two members of the board will become MSA Southeast Advisors. One of these

will automatically be the amir(a). The other one will be voted on by the board members and can be either an official position or a non-executive position (such as webmaster). In the event the amir (a) can or will not serve as an advisor he/she may either appoint another member from the board, or allow the board to vote on the second advisor. Advisors will remain in the position for as long as they choose so long as they attend (virtually or in-person) an officers'-advisors' retreat at least once in two years (though they are encouraged and expected to attend once a year unless having a legitimate excuse). There will be a minimum of two officers'-advisors' retreats during each term. The first officers'-advisors' retreat must take place before the first MSA Southeast Action Meeting. The second officer-advisor retreat may happen at the discretion of all those involved, but prior to end of the term. All current board members and current advisors will be invited to both officers'-advisors' retreats, and their schedules taken into consideration when planning each retreat.

Section IV: Judiciary Procedures

Any violation of the constitution is subject to reprimand. Executive officers and delegates are all required to uphold the vision and must abide by the rules decided upon by MSA Southeast or will be asked to either refrain or leave the organization.

Article I: Dissolution of Fitnah

There is zero tolerance for fitna. Persons who engage or perpetuate divisions in the Ummah may face suspension or expulsion. The Amir (a) will speak to those who take part in fitna in private and ask them to refrain themselves. If destructive behavior continues the issue may be addressed in a meeting with all noninvolved delegates.

Article II: Misappropriation of Funds

Any abuse of funds will result in termination of position or any other related task within MSA Southeast.

Article III: Nonattendance

Executive officers that miss two or more consecutive meeting without contacting the Amir(a) will be asked to resign from MSA Southeast and that a new delegate be chosen to represent that school.

Article IV: Removal

If an executive officer is not meeting his or her duties specified in section 2, he or she will be asked to step down and the delegates will chose a replacement officer from among the current delegates. Voting power is non-transferable. This requires a majority vote of the executive board.

Article V: Amendments

Any modifications of the constitution can be made through a majority vote of the delegates (with valid delegate status and voting rights), with the exception of 'Section I: Mission Statement and Section IV-Article V: Amendments' of the constitution, which may only be modified with unanimous approval of all MSA Southeast Advisors. Additionally, no amendments can me made to the constitution which contradict or go against the 'Section I: Mission Statement' and/or 'Section IV

Article V: Amendments' of the constitution.

All revisions, edits, and amendments should be dated and marked and each new version should list its date of revision (ex: last revised on: January 7th 2010) at the top of the document as well as in the file name (ex: MSA-SE-Constitution-Rev01-07-2010).