

# Constitution of the South Asian Graduate / Professional Association (SAGA)

April 26, 1999 Draft

## **Article I: Name**

This organization shall be called the South Asian Graduate/Professional Association (SAGA)

## **Article II: Mission Statement**

SAGA's central mission:

1. SAGA shall be dedicated to creating and providing social, professional, and intellectual fora for graduate and professional students interested in a range of issues related to South Asia and South Asians
2. SAGA shall also work to increase awareness of and to promote issues affecting South Asia and South Asians at Yale University

## **Article III: Objectives**

SAGA's objectives are:

1. To organize campus events aimed at increasing awareness of South Asian issues and cultures at Yale University
2. To gather information about South Asia and South Asians and to disseminate this information to the Yale University community
3. To provide fora for social interaction among Yale students interested in South Asia
4. To facilitate networking among Yale students, alumni, academic departments and organizations concerned with South Asian issues

5. To advocate an increase in Yale University resources and interest central to South Asia and South Asians

## **Article IV: Membership**

### 1. Membership Criteria

- (a) Membership shall be open to all current students, faculty, staff and alumni of Yale University
- (b) To attain membership status an individual must contact a member of the administrative committee in order to place themselves on the official membership list
- (c) Members shall reapply each academic year

### 2. Membership Dues

- (a) There shall be no membership dues

### 3. Benefits

- (a) Members are eligible to cast votes at the general meetings of SAGA in order to:
  - i. determine the composition of the executive body
  - ii. amend the constitution
  - iii. participate in referenda on matters brought in front of the general membership by the executive body
- (b) Members shall be invited to attend and/or assist in participating in/organizing all SAGA events
- (c) Members shall have open access to SAGA's networking, social, and other resources

## **Article V: Governance Structure**

SAGA shall consist of a body of General Members and an Executive Body responsible for running the organization.

### A) Executive Body

#### 1. Composition/structure

- i) Executive Body members (EBM) must be graduate or professional students currently registered at Yale University
- ii) There shall be no more than fifteen (15) EBMs at any given moment
- iii) The Executive Body shall have a non-hierarchical structure; each EBM shall have one vote in making decisions central to SAGA

iv) The Executive Body shall be subdivided into committees specified under V:B

2. Election / removal

i) The Executive Body shall be elected each year at the SAGA Annual Meeting by the General Membership and serve for one year; there shall be no proxy votes

ii) Each EBM must have a majority of the General Membership votes under a multi-round voting scheme

iii) All candidates shall be self-nominated

iv) EBMs who voluntarily remove themselves may be replaced by the Executive Body

v) EBMs who do not attend two out of four consecutive Executive Body meetings shall be considered for replacement by the Executive Body

vi) An EBM may hold office for no more than two (2) consecutive years

3. Decision-making

i) The Executive Body shall decide what matters to present in referenda to be voted on by the General Membership

ii) Central decisions made by the Executive Body shall be determined by simple majority vote except for constitutional amendments (see VI:B:1) and special actions (see V:A:3:iii)

iii) Those issues which are deemed controversial by any single EBM will fall under the special actions category subject to 2/3 majority vote by the Executive Body

iv) SAGA shall hold its Annual Meeting in the spring of each year

v) Executive Body meetings shall normally be held once every two weeks

vi) Any Committee may call an Executive Body meeting for general decision-making purposes

vii) All votes cast for any matter shall be cast at meetings called for this purpose; there shall be no proxy votes

B) Committees

Types and functions of Committees:

1. The Administrative Committee

i) shall coordinate the efforts of all committees within SAGA

ii) shall encompass the functions of historian and secretary

iii) shall designate one of its EBMs as the treasurer

iv) shall keep track of SAGA membership

v) shall act as the representative of SAGA at Yale University and beyond

2. The Social / Cultural Committee

i) shall organize social events for SAGA members and guests

ii) shall promote South Asian culture by organizing cultural events

iii) shall collaborate with other organizations/groups to host social/cultural activities

3. The Professional / Networking Committee

- i) shall liaison with SAGA representatives from various academic departments at Yale University
- ii) shall collect career-related information relevant to members of SAGA
- iii) shall be responsible for setting up and maintaining networks between current SAGA members and alumni
- iv) shall organize information events relevant to the career and networking needs of SAGA members
- v) shall liaison with other organizations (undergraduate and graduate) at or outside of Yale University interested in South Asian issues

4. The Academic / Political Committee

- i) shall identify academic and political issues relating to South Asia and South Asians in order to organize relevant seminars and/or discussion sessions
- ii) shall identify those resources perceived as relevant to South Asian interests and advocate their existence at Yale University and/or beyond

5. The Public Relations / Information Committee

- i) shall collect and disseminate general information relevant to South Asia and South Asians
- ii) shall be responsible for updating and maintaining the SAGA webpage
- iii) shall be responsible for advertising SAGA events and activities to the Yale community
- iv) shall organize fundraising activities

C) Executive Body / Committee Relationship

- 1. At least two (2) and no more than three (3) EBMs shall serve as the co-chairs/ chairperson of each Committee
- 2. General members may also serve in Committees
- 3. Each EBM must serve as co-chair on at least one Committee
- 4. Each Committee shall have one chairperson who shall coordinate the activities of that Committee; a chairperson's vote is equivalent to the vote of the co-chairs and General Members in that committee
- 5. An EBM may only chair one Committee
- 6. Decisions for each Committee shall be made by simple majority vote of the co- chairs, General Members and chairperson of the Committee
- 7. Before organizing an event and/or using any SAGA funds a Committee must seek majority approval from the Executive Body.

## **Article VI: Ratification of and Amendments to the Constitution**

A) Ratification

- 1. This Constitution shall be ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of the Founding Membership

B) Amendments

1. Amendments to the Constitution must follow a two stage process requiring:
  - i) A two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Body to be referred to a vote of the General Membership
  - ii) A two-thirds majority vote of the General Membership present in voting at an advertised SAGA general meeting