

Constitution of the South African Association of Political Studies (SAAPS)

The Constitution was originally adopted in July 2001 at the founding conference of SAAPS, held at the University of Durban-Westville, Durban. The original Constitution was amended on 1 September 2010, and again in 2017.

1. NAME

The name of the Association is the “South African Association of Political Studies” (SAAPS).

2. DEFINITIONS

The Council: The National Council (NC)

The Executive Committee (EC): The Executive Committee of the National Council

The Association: South African Association of Political Studies (SAAPS)

3. OBJECTIVES

The Objectives of the Association are:

3.1 To perform an educational function by promoting knowledge and understanding of national and international political affairs through teaching, workshops, discussion, study and research groups, seminars, colloquia, conferences, publications and research, and by such other means as may be approved by Council; and

3.2 To encourage contact and to stimulate co-operative relationships amongst individuals and institutions both local and international concerned with the scientific study and research of national and international political affairs.

4. LIMITATION

The Council may only publically express by resolution of Council its opinion upon any aspect of any problem or question that impacts upon the objectives of the Association and members as set out in Article 3. This limitation shall apply to and be binding upon the Association and its members.

5. ASSOCIATION - CORPORATE BODY

The Association is, and in terms of the Constitution shall continue to be, a body corporate with perpetual succession and is, in its own name, capable and shall continue to be capable, of suing and being sued and of acquiring rights and incurring obligations.

6. MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Any individual or institution interested in the realisation of the objectives of the Association as set out in Article 3 may become a member.

6.2 Membership of the Association shall comprise:

6.2.1 Individual membership

Individual membership of the Association is open to all individuals who support the Association's objectives as set out in Article 3.

6.2.2 Student membership

The Association may admit to its activities bona fide students at the tertiary level. The annual membership fee for such student members shall be less than that for other members as determined by Council. Student members shall have full voting rights.

6.2.3 Institutional membership

Educational or other institutions, having objectives compatible with those of the Association, may be accepted as institutional members of the Association.

6.3 Membership fees

Council shall determine membership fees from time to time. Changes in membership fees must be ratified by the next General Members' Meeting. Membership fees are payable annually and their validity coincides with the Association's financial year (Art. 11.3). Membership shall be renewed on an annual basis and may be paid for up to several years in advance as determined by Council.

7. HONORARY MEMBERS

The Council may appoint honorary members at its discretion. Honorary members and Lifetime Achievement Award winners attain free, lifetime membership.

8. OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The officers shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary, all of whom shall be elected by ordinary majority vote of all members at the biennial General Members' Meeting of the Association.

9. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The President or the Vice-President or, in their absence, another member of the Council appointed for this purpose, shall preside at all meetings of the Council and of the Executive Committee.

The Treasurer shall receive and have custody of the funds belonging to the Association and shall dispense them as directed by the policy of Council.

The Secretary conducts administrative duties including the taking of minutes and the compilation of a membership database as requested by Council.

10. NATIONAL COUNCIL

10.1 Composition

Council shall consist of the following members, directly elected, co-opted or ex officio:

10.1.1. President

10.1.2 Vice-President,

10.1.3 Treasurer,

10.1.4 Secretary

10.1.5 Three Additional Members, preferably younger scholars

10.1.6 Co-opted Members as required by Council

10.1.7 immediate Past President (ex officio)

10.1.8 Editor of the Association's official journal (ex officio)

10.2 Election procedures

10.2.1 At least six (6) weeks before a Biennial Conference and a General Members' Meeting is due to be held, the names of the retiring members of the Council, together with the notice and agenda of the General Members' Meeting, shall be circulated to all members of the Association.

10.2.2 Nominations shall be called for the positions of all officers, namely a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary, as well as a maximum of three (3) additional members. Such individual nominations shall be signed by a proposer and a seconder, who shall both be paid-up members of the Association, and shall reach the Secretary at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the General Members' Meeting, together with the candidates' acceptance of the nomination.

10.2.3 The names of the candidates thus proposed shall be put before the General Members' Meeting and all members present shall be entitled to vote. Where more nominations are received than vacancies, voting shall be by secret ballot.

10.3 Eligibility for re-election on Council

All members of Council shall be subject to re-election or co-option every two years. No member of Council shall serve for more than six (6) years continuously in the same position.

10.4 Appointment of President and ratification

Should a President resign or leave office before the end of a term, or if the General Members' Meeting fails to elect a new President, the Council shall identify a suitable candidate. Such a candidate must be ratified by an election, an electronic vote if necessary, in which all paid-up SAAPS members may participate. The candidate will be ratified if a majority of 50 percent plus 1 of the votes are in favour of the candidate. The same procedure can also apply to a Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary.

10.5 Vacancies

The Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Council shall fill vacancies that may from time to time arise in the Council, subject to ratification by the biennial General Members' Meeting. Such vacancies shall only be filled for the completion of the original term to which the office bearer who vacated the particular position was elected.

10.6 Sub-committees

Council may appoint sub-committees as it deems fit.

10.7 Meetings

10.7.1 A General Members' Meeting to constitute the Council and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting shall be held in accordance with Article 13.

10.7.2 Extraordinary Council Meetings may be convened at the President's discretion or at the request (in writing) of five members of Council. Such requests shall state the object of the meeting and shall be submitted to the Secretary. The President shall designate the date and venue of the meeting. The notice of the date, venue and object of any extraordinary meeting shall be given to all members of the Council.

10.7.3 The Council shall meet (in person or by any audio-visual or electronic form) at least twice a year. Five members of the Council constitute a quorum. A proxy (in writing) may be given by any member who is not present - to any member who is present.

10.7.4 Six (6) weeks' notice of the biannual Council meetings and two (2) weeks' notice of Extraordinary Council Meetings shall be given to all members of the Council.

11. FINANCES

11.1 All membership subscriptions, grants, bequests and other income shall belong to the Association and shall be administered by Council.

11.2 Accounts kept by the Treasurer and audited by a registered public accountant, shall be presented annually not later than six (6) months after the close of the financial year, to a meeting of the Council, or failing that, to a meeting of the Executive Committee. In addition, all accounts and financial statements for the preceding two years shall be presented to the biennial General Members' Meeting.

11.3 Unless the Council or the Executive Committee otherwise determine, the financial year of the Association shall be the period of twelve (12) months ending on the thirtieth (30) day of June in every year.

12. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

12.1 There shall be an Executive Committee to manage the affairs of the Association between Council Meetings. The Executive Committee shall have all the powers and all the functions of the Council when not in session. The Executive Committee shall consist of a minimum of five members appointed by Council from the ranks of office bearers.

12.2 The President shall decide the date and venue of Executive Committee meetings, teleconferences or other forms of electronic communications. Two weeks' notice of its meetings shall be given to all members of the Executive Committee. The quorum shall be three (3).

13. CONFERENCE AND GENERAL MEMBERS' MEETING

13.1 The Association shall hold a biennial Conference at a date and venue determined by the Executive Committee acting on behalf of Council. A General Members' Meeting shall also be held during the biennial Conference and paid-up members present shall constitute a quorum. Six (6) months' notice of the dates on which both the Conference and the General Members' Meeting are to be held shall be provided to all members of the Association.

13.2 The programme of the Conference and the agenda for the General Members' Meeting shall be ratified by the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Council. Members of the Association may make proposals regarding the agenda of the Executive Committee, provided that such proposals reach the Executive Committee at least two (2) weeks before the General Members' Meeting.

Urgent matters for consideration by the General Members' Meeting can be submitted to the Executive Council thirty-six (36) hours before the commencement of the meeting. Such a proposal must be in writing, and the urgency has to be demonstrated and must have, in addition to the proposer, the support of at least five (5) members and their signatures. The Executive Committee has the discretion to reject non-urgent matters and refer such proposals to the next full meeting of Council.

13.3 A Special Members' Meeting for the discussion of urgent matters may be convened at the Council's or the Executive Committee's discretion or upon request (in writing) of at least fifteen (15) individual members of the Association. Such requests shall state the object of the meetings and shall be submitted to the Secretary. The President shall designate the date and venue of the meeting. A Special meeting can also be held by electronic means and for a period longer than one day. Two (2) weeks' notice of the date, venue and object of any Special meeting shall be given to all members of the Association. Only the matter for which the meeting was called for shall be discussed at such a Special meeting.

14. LIABILITY

14.1 No office-bearer or committee member of the Association shall be personally liable for any breach of contract, damages caused or civil action against the Association.

15. OFFICIAL JOURNAL

15.1 The Association shall publish a journal, *Politikon*, which shall serve as the official publication of the Association.

15.2 The Council shall appoint an Editor(s) for the journal, for an initial term of three years. He/she shall be an ex officio member if the Council for the duration of his/her editorship, if not already a member of the Council. The Editor shall not simultaneously be a member of the Council Executive.

15.3 The Editor is accountable to Council and shall provide Council with full and regular reports regarding the affairs of the Journal. Council must approve the editorial policy from time to time. Council shall respect the independence of the Editor regarding the professional content of the journal but reserves the right to approve or amend the editorial advisory board of *Politikon*.

15.5 Succession

After the completion of two years or five years of an editor's term, where applicable, Council shall appoint an assistant editor to work with the editor in the last year of the latter's term. The assistant editor then succeeds the editor once the editorial term expires. This will ensure a smooth transition, and build in a mentoring element. In addition, the editor's term should be capped at six consecutive years, i.e. an initial three (3) year appointment, with the possibility to extend for a maximum of a further three (3) years. This shall not disqualify a former editor from serving in this capacity again at some point in the future, but not for more than six (6) consecutive years.

16. AMENDMENT

Any clause of this Constitution, or any part thereof, may be amended at a General Members' Meeting or a Special Members' Meeting by resolution passed by an ordinary majority of the members present and entitled to vote. Notice of the meeting in terms of Article 13.3 must include the terms of the proposed amendment.

17. AFFILIATION

The Council may on behalf of the Association accept membership of, or enter into affiliation and co-operation agreements with any other similar organisation, subject to approval by the Council.

18. WINDING UP

In the event of the Association at any time being dissolved or liquidated, all assets remaining after redemption of its liabilities shall be transferred to another society, association or body with objects similar to those of the Association. Archival material shall be deposited in the Unisa SAAPS Archive. A Special Members' Meeting shall be convened for the purpose of winding up the Association.

19. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

19.1 The members of the Council elected at the General Members' Meeting in 2016 shall continue to be the members of the Council until the General Members' Meeting in 2018 has elected a new Council in terms of this amended Constitution.

19.2 The separation of the offices of the Secretary and Treasurer in the amended Constitution means that the incumbent Secretary/Treasurer must indicate which one she wants to continue with. It shall be regarded as creating a vacancy in the other office, which shall then be filled in accordance with Article 10.5.

19.4 This document is an amendment to the SAAPS Constitution adopted in 2001 and amended over time, and shall come into effect immediately after a majority vote by a Special or General Members' Meeting of the Association in terms of paragraph 16.