

# **International House Constitution**

## **Article I - Name of House**

The name of this house shall be International House.

## **Article II - Derivation of Authority**

The International House shall recognize that it receives its right to function as a Special Interest House from the Center for Residence Life of the Rochester Institute of Technology in conjunction with RHA.

## **Article III - Purpose**

The purpose of the house is to provide an environment through which foreign and American students can learn the unique differences of each others' cultures. International House also helps incoming students adjust to campus life at RIT.

## **Article IV - Membership**

- Membership is open to students in good standing with the Institute. A member in good standing shall be defined as a student in good conduct standing with the Institute.
- Interested candidates may apply to the International House by filling out all parts of the membership application.
- Only active members are eligible to vote. Active members shall be those who fulfill all financial and social obligations. Social obligations shall be defined as participation in social events sponsored by International House. Financial obligations shall be defined as payment of dues at a time defined by the Executive Board.
- Dues shall be determined by a majority vote from the active members of the house, based upon an Executive Board recommendation. A simple majority is necessary. Standard dues (per quarter) shall be \$35 for on-floor members and \$15 for off-floor members unless otherwise decided by the E-board.
- A member may resign by submitting the intention, in writing, to the President. The resignation shall be reviewed by the Executive Board and shall become effective at that time.
- A member shall be declared inactive if they miss, without excuse from the Secretary, any three meetings in the quarter. The inactive member will then be reviewed by the Executive Board and a decision shall be made by the Board as to whether the inactive member should be expelled from the house.
- Any member with unexcused absences from majority of the social events in one quarter shall fail the mandatory events category of evaluation. (For further detail, refer to article XXIV Evaluation System)
- Membership of the house shall be determined and reviewed by the Membership/Evaluation committee of the house. See Article XII.
- An off-floor member is defined as a non-resident member having the same responsibilities and privileges as a resident member with the following exceptions:
  1. They will not be allowed to hold office.
  2. Their financial obligation is less than that of a resident member.
  3. They will be declared inactive after four unexcused absences from meetings or if they have not fulfilled all financial and social obligations.
  4. Off-floor members are not exempt from the housing selection process or guaranteed housing.
  5. Committee involvement is optional, but may not exceed participation in more than 2 committees.
  6. Off-floor members shall not be able to have keys to the lounges and kitchen.
  7. Off-floor members will be given key card access to the building.

- Both on and off floor member are required to pay house dues. Since off-floor members don't take full advantage of facilities, they are not required to pay amount equivalent of an on-floor member.
- No quota will placed on the percentage of International or American students to be admitted into the house. Membership will be determined and reviewed by the Executive board.
- Each Special Interest House (SIH) must maintain a clean, livable, presentable environment for all of its on-floor members. Each House and its members thereof, are responsible, with reasonable assessment, for all damage to RIT property unless an individual is found responsible.
- Each house must maintain their facilities, at all times, to a maximum potential of benefit to its members, and is responsible for making proper adjustments if this requirement is not met.

## **Article V - Membership Development**

- Houses must retain, from one year to the next, at least one third (33%) of their members as on-floor members. If there is less than one-third retention, houses must enforce a standard exit conversation, focusing on the reasons for moving off-floor.
- Houses must have an off-floor membership option available to all students and should encourage it to applicants rejected due to space issues. Off-floor members are granted the additional benefit of being first in line to move on-floor if space becomes available.
- Houses must maintain full occupancy at all times. If a space becomes available, a House will be granted a grace period to fill that space, and make a "Good Faith" effort to do so. Houses will be encouraged to contact other Special Interest Houses (SIH) while looking for applicants.
- The Special Interest Housing Committee will define quantifiable standards for SIH membership among all Houses. Each individual House may set additional standards for their members, including, but not limited to, social obligations.
- Graduated alumni of Special Interest Houses (SIH) will be defined as SIH Members who have graduated from RIT while in good standing with their House. House alumni will be defined as SIH members who are enrolled as RIT students, but who have moved out of an SIH in good standing and are not off-floor members. Each SIH must, with its own standard, maintain updated information on all their alumni.
- Members in good standing who decide to leave the floor and become alumni will be given a certificate of completion at the final picnic of the year.

## **Article VI - Personal Development**

- All Special Interest House (SIH) members must be informed of all pertinent RIT policies and regulations. Executive Board members of the Special Interest Houses (SIH) and Special Interest Housing Committee must support these policies. House members will not knowingly interfere with the RIT Judicial Process and/or any Campus Safety investigations, and will not knowingly violate any RIT policy or regulation.
- In order to hold an elected position, a person must be in good conduct standing with RIT. If not in good conduct standing with RIT, that person must withdraw candidacy for an election and/or resign their current position with their discretion to disclose the reason.
- The Special Interest Houses (SIH) will sponsor, attend, and/or promote educational programs for their members including, but not limited to, diversity awareness, cultural diversity, skill based, and team building programs.

## **Article VII. Officers**

- The officers of the house shall be: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director, Facilities Manager, and Webmaster.

- Qualifications for office shall be active floor members (see Article IV, Section 2) in good conduct standing. In order to be nominated for President and Vice-President, a candidate must have spent at least 2 quarters as a member of international house.
- One quarter is required for all other positions on the e-board.
- The officers shall be elected during the Spring quarter in a manner provided by the constitution and shall serve one calendar year beginning Spring quarter. Officers are eligible for re-election. If a position becomes vacant during any other time of the year, elections will be held and only on-floor members can be elected.
- No officer may hold more than one office simultaneously.
- An officer may resign from office by submitting the intention in writing to the Executive Board. The resignation becomes effective upon submission to the Executive Board.
- The Resident Advisor:
  1. Is exempt from elected positions.
  2. Is a full member of the house, but is not a member of the E-Board. However he/she is allowed to attend the weekly E-Board meetings.
  3. Has the responsibility to enforce Institute policy.
  4. Shall check with RIT as to the standing of prospective floor members.

### **Article VIII. Advisors**

- There shall be at least one (1) advisor.
- Role of the Advisor will be to follow the guidelines established by the Center for Residence Life.

### **Article IX. Duties of Officers**

- **President :**
  1. Preside over all regular and special meetings of the International House.
  2. Exercise general supervision over regular house activities.
  3. Supervise the appointment of all committees, regular or special. All committees listed hereafter are permanent. Special committees will be formed on a time to time basis depending on the circumstances.
  4. Preside over the Executive Board.
  5. May co-chair any committee.
  6. Will meet with the house advisors on a regular basis.
  7. Will work with the e-board to update the constitution when needed
  8. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.
- **Vice-President:**
  1. Will take over the duties of the President in temporary absence of the President.
  2. Is responsible for mandatory program committee meetings.
  3. Meets with the Executive Board to discuss programs, committees, and other responsibilities.
  4. Is responsible for informing Residence Life of any potential programs to be conducted by the house.
  5. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.
  6. Is chairperson of the Program Committee and will meet with the advisor to discuss program ideas.
- **Treasurer:**
  1. Will take over the duties of Vice-President or Secretary in the absence of either, or both.
  2. Will pre-approve and supervise all financial transactions of the International House and keep all financial records.
  3. Will plan a budget in special meeting with all committee chairs.
  4. Will collect all off-floor dues.

5. Report to the house on financial standing monthly.
6. Will meet with financial and house advisors regularly.
7. Is chairperson and responsible for the Fund raising Committee.
8. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.

- **Secretary:**

1. Shall take over the duties of the Treasurer in the temporary absence of the Treasurer.
2. Shall keep an accurate role of members and keep the minutes of all meetings.
3. Shall submit the typed minutes to the Executive Board, and House Advisor before the next business meeting.
4. Is chairperson and responsible for the Membership and Evaluation Committee.
5. The parliamentarian will be responsible to hear any suggestions for change to the constitution and making changes to the constitution with the consent of the executive board. They then have to inform the house of any major changes in the constitution and decide whether the changes are valid.
6. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.
7. Is responsible for providing service opportunities to the floor and managing any associated committee.
8. Shall be responsible for confirming all communication regarding all events. He/she shall remind the person responsible if there is any delay in such communication.

- **Historian:**

1. Shall take over the duties of the Secretary in temporary absence.
2. Shall keep an accurate visual and written record of the house.
3. Shall be responsible for preparing and presenting information / look-back presentation at an annual I-House event during the spring quarter.
4. Is responsible for initially creating / maintaining a working system for organizing and passing information to future generations of International House.
5. Is chairperson and responsible for the History Committee.
6. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.

- **Public Relations Director:**

1. Shall encourage, promote, and be involved with activities that increase the House's presence within the RIT community.
2. Shall be responsible for the creation and distribution of flyers and other promotion material for International House sponsored events.
3. Shall be responsible for having representation/table at the RIT Open Houses, in order to promote the House.
4. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.

- **Facilities Manager:**

1. Is responsible for setting the facilities policy, with the support of the Executive Board.
2. Is responsible for keeping the shelves stocked with necessary items (as determined by the members at the beginning of each school year).
3. Is responsible for renting out the facilities to outside groups, and for informing the house members when the kitchen will be occupied.
4. Shall take an inventory of the facilities area at the beginning of each quarter, and at the end of the school year.
5. Has the right to revoke any member's privilege to use the facilities. The facilities Manager will write down all reasons for the revocation and will give it to the member whose privilege is being revoked and a copy to the Executive Board. Also, has the right to fail any member who does not fulfill his/her duties or who is caught misusing the facilities.
6. Is chairperson and responsible for the Facilities Committee.
7. Is responsible for coordinating the House Dinner and the regular kitchen cleanings.

8. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.

● **Webmaster:**

1. Responsible for maintaining the International House Website.
2. Responsible to keep an updated list of alumni of International house (states whether in good standing).
3. Head of the International House Website Committee.
4. Responsible for collecting and preserving all related Medias, flyers and pictures.
5. Shall be responsible for all communication regarding any event chaired by him/her.
6. Responsible for website proposals, creation and maintenance of the I-House Website as well as special websites.

● **Off-Floor Representative:**

1. Work with the Public Relations to facilitate off-floor and alumni relations.
2. Maintain efficient communication with off-floor members via the website and e-mail.
3. May hold off-floor membership meetings in order to distribute and relay information solution to off-floor members.

## **Article X. Leadership Development**

- The leaders of the Special Interest Housing Committee will be defined as the Executive Board of Special Interest Housing Committee as well as the Executive Boards and/or Committee Heads of each SIH.
- Leaders must attend Special Interest Housing Committee Training programs. These programs will introduce and redefine leadership responsibilities and leadership methods.
- Leaders will be strongly encouraged to attend the RLI Leadership Certificate program.
- Elections of leaders will be unified among all Special Interest Houses and the Special Interest Housing Committee. An informational meeting will be held at the beginning of the Spring term, for those interested in running for an Executive Position in either a Special Interest House Executive Board of Special Interest Housing Committee's Executive Board. The purpose of this meeting will be to outline the responsibilities, which will be expected of, each position and provide a safety margin in case an applicant decides to revoke their candidacy. Elections will be held and finished by the fourth week of the spring term. Elected officials will, during the remainder of spring term, apprentice to their predecessor and attend informational retreats to further prepare them. At the beginning of the next academic year, the new Executive Board will assume full power, and a retreat will be held to reiterate their responsibilities as leaders.

## **Article XI. Executive Board**

- The management of the International House shall be vested in the e-board.
- The Executive Board shall be composed of the officers stated in the constitution (see Article V, Section 1).
- The Executive Board shall meet on a regular basis as determined by the president at a time convenient for all e-board members and report to the members at the following business meeting.
- If an executive board member resigns mid-term, the E-Board shall appoint someone to fill in that position until a special election is held in the manner of annual elections, as set forth in Article XXIV.
- The Executive Board will submit a quarterly statement of goals and objectives to the Center for Residence Life.
- The Executive board will be in charge of helping the new members learn the required set of responsibilities in order to be an active member, as well as learn the standards that they must uphold.

## **Article XII. Membership/Evaluation Committee**

- The Membership/Evaluation Committee shall be made up of the Executive Board.
- The Membership/Evaluation Committee shall follow the rules and regulations set forth by RHA.
- The Membership/Evaluation Committee is obligated to convene at least three (3) weeks before the end of each quarter and evaluate each floor member to decide whether they have fulfilled their obligation to the floor. Any floor member who has not fulfilled their obligation to the floor will either be placed on probation or terminated.
- A member is terminated when they fail to maintain good standing after being previously on probation.
- A member is placed on probation when they fail to maintain good standing as set forth in Article XXV.
- All members requesting to live in the house the following Fall quarter will be eligible to reside in the house the following Fall quarter except those members who have been placed on probation during the previous Fall and/or Winter quarter. Potential members will be evaluated during the second week of Spring quarter to determine eligibility during the following Fall quarter.
- Members on probation who are seeking floor membership will be given a chance for membership reinstatement by appealing to the Evaluation Committee 1 week following the announcement by the committee.
- Reinstatement of membership of a terminated or probated individual requires a 2/3 positive vote by the committee.

## **Article XIII. Selection Committee**

- The Selection Committee will follow all guidelines set forth by the Center for Residence Life.

## **Article XIV. Programming Committee**

- The purpose of the Program Committee shall be to plan activities sponsored by the house.
- Membership to the Program committee shall be open to all active house members.
- The Vice-President shall be the chairperson of the Program Committee.
- The Program Committee may work in conjunction with other organizations such as the Center for Residence Life, International Student Services, etc.
- A mandatory social event is defined as follows:
  1. An event organized or supported by the house.
  2. It is publicized by the house.
  3. It should be brought up at a floor meeting at least two weeks before the event is to take place and be declared a social event at the time.
  4. It is open to all house members based on rules and regulations.
  5. A mandatory social event is a floor activity which should be a benefit to the house as stated in the goals and objectives. It shall not be financially restricted. It shall be required of all members unless a member notifies the Secretary and states the reasons for his/her inability to attend.

## **Article XV. Fund raising Committee**

- Work with programming and historian for events and sponsorship activities.
- Organize and implement events in order to raise funds for the House.
- Will be run by the treasurer

## **Article XVI. Public Relations Committee**

- To promote and advertise International House to the RIT community.

- To interact with organizations outside of International House, as a representative of the floor.
- To handle all International House promotional items which need to be approved by a majority vote of the E-Board.
- To prepare the table for the SIH Fairs and Open-Houses.
- Coordinating with other committees internally to promote chosen events both on and off-floor members.

### **Article XVII. Facilities Committee**

- Coordinate quarterly clean-ups
- Organize and implement House Dinners and kitchen cleanings, which are mandatory events and duties for the members as outlined in Article XXV.
- Brainstorming improvements, additions and changes to all I-House facilities.
- Planning an running events, projects and other facility related membership obligations.

### **Article XVIII. Website Committee**

- Purpose of this committee is to revise and update the website.
- Website will be responsible for expanding and upgrading website
- Will aid in brainstorming and updating of special websites
- Will be composed of volunteers and drawn from other committees as needed.

### **Article XIX. Committee Signup**

- All on-floor members except the president, secretary and webmaster are required to be a member of and participate in at least one committee. Committee sign-ups are at the beginning of each quarter. The committees are Programming, Selection, Fund raising, Facilities, Website and Public Relations.
- People will not sign up for more than two committees in any given quarter.

### **Article XX. House Development**

- Each Special Interest House will have a stated Vision, Mission, and set of goals. The Vision will be defined as what the SIH aspires to be. The Mission will be defined as a general plan to implement the Vision. The set of Goals will be defined as a set of quantitative steps to accomplish the Mission.
- Houses should also acknowledge and support the Vision, Mission, and Goals of RIT, RHA and Residence Life.
- Houses should keep records of all current and past information about their House and its activities. This information should contain:
  1. minutes of all meetings
  2. information on all its members
  3. including contact information
  4. a complete inventory of its possessions
  5. a record of all events hosted/sponsored by the House
  6. a list of House committees and their members
  7. a list of the House's executive board
  8. a financial ledger
- This information should be stored for the lifetime of the House unless an alternative length of time is chosen by the E-board.

## **Article XXI. Community Development**

- Special Interest Houses (SIH) must provide a positive and accepting social atmosphere and are responsible for holding socially related activities.
- Houses must hold a mandatory weekly meeting to keep members informed of recent events within the House.
- Houses must provide an area that all members can use equally for social activities, official and unofficial.
- Houses must keep in contact with their alumni base. Alumni must be informed of events and changes with the House.
- Encourages Special Interest Houses (SIH) to hold events designed to involve the other Houses and promote a sense of community.

## **Article XXII. Academic Achievement**

- Each house must maintain, a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average of a 2.9. If a House does not maintain an average GPA of at least 2.9, they will be notified and their academic support system (outlined later in this section) will be subject to review by Special Interest Housing Committee.
- Each individual member of a Special Interest House (SIH) Executive Board must maintain a Grade Point Average of at least a 2.4. Failure to do so will result in an evaluation process, consequences will be situational.
- Each House must maintain an academic support system in order to promote a learning environment in their House through Tutoring/Mentoring/Study Groups. Upperclassmen can help the younger students with coursework and studying. They will hold study sessions for larger groups of students. The E-Board has the duty to oversee and implement this.

## **Article XXIII. Meetings**

- Meetings shall be held regularly at a time and place determined by the Executive Board.
- Special meetings may be called by the President upon at least 24 hours written notice to the members.
- In order for any business to take place at a meeting a quorum shall be present. A quorum shall be defined as 50% plus one of the members in good standing. A quorum shall be presumed unless challenged from the floor by an active member in good standing.

## **Article XXIV. Elections**

- Elections shall take place on the fourth week of Spring quarter except in the case of a special election.
- Nominations for office shall be made from the floor prior to the election by any member in good standing. A person may be nominated for more than one office.
- The order of elections shall be President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director, Facilities Manager and Webmaster and Historian.
- Votes shall be cast by secret ballot. There shall be no voting by proxy. The Secretary shall count the votes.
- A voting quorum shall consist of one more than half the voting members.
- Induction of the officers shall take place immediately following the election.
- Premature Resignation from an office: In the case of a premature resignation from an office, an election

to fill the post shall take place during a subsequent house meeting.

## **Article XXV. Evaluation System**

- Peer Member Evaluation is for each individual floor member to evaluate the other floor members. The grading system is as follows:
  1. 1 point – member regularly displays exceptional motivation and participation with the house and house activities. Member contributes to the house a lot, is responsible, understands his/her duties and is an exceptional example.
  2. 0 point – member is good and carries out all duties, but doesn't display any extra effort. This member participates, but does not regularly go above and beyond.
  3. -1 point – member is rude, impolite, indifferent to others' feelings, doesn't show up for meetings, is not an active participant on the floor. Member shows less than average participation.
- International house on-floor members have the privilege of no more than two unexcused absences from the weekly meetings each quarter. More than three unexcused absences per quarter will result in failure in the attendance category of evaluation. More than five absences will ultimately result in failing the entire evaluation for that quarter. The Secretary reserves the right to decide whether an excuse is valid or not.
- Members are required to attend all meetings of the committee to which they belong, as well as fully participate in meeting the goals or putting together the activities planned by the committee. The chairperson for that committee will determine the status of each on-floor member on that committee in regards to whether they fulfill all that is required of them.
- If an on-floor member fails to participate and attend one of the quarterly house dinners, s/he ultimately fails the mandatory events portion of the member evaluation. A member will only be excused in the case of a personal or physical emergency (as approved by the executive board).
- The International House typically attempts to provide ten hours of community service activities of which three are required by each and every member of the house. In the event that the house provides less than ten hours of community service opportunities to its members, the entire community service section of the I-house member evaluation will be invalidated. Inability to achieve the required number of community service hours will result in failure of the community service events section of the member evaluation.
- There will be at least three kitchen cleanings per quarter and out of these members must attend at least one kitchen cleaning each quarter to pass their kitchen clean-up evaluation portion.
- Mandatory events as decided by the Vice-President are to be attended by all house members. Members must attend at least 2/3 of all the mandatory events of each quarter or termination.
- Failure in any two parts of the evaluation system will result in probation. If a member has been put on probation during more than one quarter in a year, their membership will be revoked and they will have to find alternate housing with the help of Center of Resident Life.

## **Article XXVI. Impeachment**

- Any officer of the International House can be impeached. Any Executive Board member deemed not in good standing will be impeached.
- Impeachment may be initiated by petition, in writing by 25% or more of the active members, when presented to the members in a regular meeting.
- Petition will be carried by the president or other officer by order of succession (ie. Prez, VP, Tr, Sec, etc)
- Conviction of Impeachment requires a majority vote by the members, a quorum being present.
- Conviction of impeachment shall result in removal from office and loss of all privileges thereof.
- The filling of an office vacated by impeachment shall be done by special election held in the manner of

the annual election.

### **Article XXVII. Amendments**

- An amendment to this constitution may be proposed by an active member in good standing, in writing, at any business meeting.
- The e-board may propose amendments, which must be approved by a 2/3 vote by the e-board prior to the house ratifying the amendment.
- The proposed amendment shall be voted on by ballot at the next business meeting, a quorum being present.
- Passage of the amendment shall require a 2/3 affirmative vote of all active members present.

### **Article XXVIII. By-Laws**

- By-Laws of the International House can be proposed in writing at any meeting by any member in good standing.
- An immediate vote shall take place by a show of hands and a simple majority is necessary for passage, a quorum being present.
- There will be no hazing of any kind within the International House in accordance with the New York State Hazing Laws.
- As described by Article IV. Section 2 of this constitution, active members must fulfill their financial and social obligations.
- Additional funds needed for social committees shall be determined and provided through any available means.
- A period of two weeks shall be allotted for payment of dues. After the due date, members will be penalized an additional \$1/day for two weeks after which the said member will become inactive until said dues are paid.