

# Virginia Atheists and Agnostics Constitution

## Preamble

We, the members of Virginia Atheists and Agnostics (VAA), hereby establish this constitution to outline the goals, regulations, and bylaws of Virginia Atheists and Agnostics. Furthermore, be it proclaimed that this constitution will serve as the fundamental governing document of Virginia Atheists and Agnostics.

## Article I: NAME

The title of this organization is Virginia Atheists and Agnostics; abbreviated by the acronym "VAA."

## Article II: PURPOSE

The primary goal of the Virginia Atheists and Agnostics is to eliminate the stigma of atheism at the University of Virginia. Along with that goal, VAA establishes the following purposes: 1) to enrich University of Virginia campus life by sponsoring educational events and fostering student dialogue on matters of faith, science, and reason, 2) to engage University of Virginia students in issues of national and international import surrounding freedom of conscience and secular education, and 3) to provide a safe and open space for discussion on issues facing Atheists and Agnostics.

## Article III: MEMBERSHIP

Anyone is eligible for official membership in Virginia Atheists and Agnostics. The organization will not restrict membership or activity by reason of age, citizenship, color, disability, gender, race, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam eras. Notwithstanding these requirements, the members are restricted to those who have attended at least two meetings in the space of two semesters. Candidates for membership must be willing to actively participate in the meetings and activities of the organization and must promote a hostility-free atmosphere. Members must submit name and relevant information to the secretary. Meetings and activities are open to anyone, regardless of membership, unless otherwise notice as a members-only event.

## Article IV: OFFICERS

The offices of Virginia Atheists and Agnostics will include the President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer. The President and Treasurer of Virginia Atheists and Agnostics must be full time students at the University of Virginia.

Various functional officer positions may be created by the officers, and appointed by the majority vote of those present at an executive meeting.

The PRESIDENT shall:

- 1) Preside over meetings.
- 2) Act as a liaison between the Student Council of the University of Virginia and VAA.
- 3) Organize activities, speakers, etc.
- 4) Have the final word in all organizational policies.

The VICE-PRESIDENT shall:

- 1) Assist the president in all of his/her duties.
- 2) Preside over meetings and activities in the absence of the president.
- 3) Advise the president on all organizational policy matters.

The SECRETARY shall:

- 1) Assist the president and vice-president.
- 2) Keep records of meeting handouts, member information, and other documents.
- 3) Type letters and other related items for distribution.
- 4) Maintain the e-mail and membership lists.

The TREASURER shall:

- 1) Assist the president and vice-president.
- 2) Keep track of the VAA account balance.
- 3) Plan a yearly budget for submission to Student Council appropriations

The FUNCTIONAL OFFICERS shall:

- 1) Perform the duties of their functions as defined upon the creation of the position.
- 2) Report to the organization's officers and members on issues related to their functions.

#### Article V: OPERATIONS

Officers will be elected by a majority of all official members of VAA who are in good standing and present at an election meeting. Elections will take place during the second to last week of classes in the FALL semester. However elections may not take place less than 72 hours after members have received notice of the election meeting. Elections will be conducted by secret ballot.

Terms of office are for one calendar year starting the day after the last day of finals of the fall semester. Officers may be re-elected an unlimited number of times. Any official VAA member is eligible to run for election, but only full-time graduate or undergraduate students at the University of Virginia may run for the position of President or Treasurer.

#### Article VI: IMPEACHMENTS AND REVOCATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Officers may be removed from office if all of the following criteria are met:

- 1) One or more of the official members of VAA has filed a written formal complaint.
- 2) The other officers of VAA unanimously agree that there is reason for VAA to vote on removing the officer from his/her position.
- 3) After hearing a plea and explanation of guilt or innocence to the charges by the officer being impeached, a majority of present, official members of VAA vote by secret ballot to remove the officer from his/her position.

If an officer is removed from a position, the other officers will appoint a member of the organization to

take the person's place.

Membership status of an official VAA member may be revoked if all the following criteria are met:

- 1) One or more of the official members of VAA has filed a written formal complaint.
- 2) The officers of VAA unanimously agree that there is reason for VAA to vote on the revocation of membership status.
- 3) After hearing a response to the formal complaint from the member whose membership is being revoked, a majority of present, official members of VAA vote by secret ballot to revoke the person's membership status.

#### Article VII: MEETINGS

The officers will hold officer meeting once a week at a location and time to be decided by the officers. All members of the organization are welcome at the officer meetings. The officers will hold facilitated discussions on topics related to atheism weekly at a time and location to be decided by the officers.

#### Article VIII: FINANCES

The activities, etc. of VAA will be funded by:

- 1) Submitting an annual budget to the University of Virginia Student Activities Fund.
- 2) Holding fund-raisers and/or other moneymaking activities.

The officers of VAA will determine how to delegate the use of VAA funds. Expenditures of all funds must be made in a non-discriminatory fashion.

#### Article IX: AMENDMENTS AND BYLAWS

Any official member of the organization may propose amendments to the VAA Constitution. A majority of officers at an executive meeting must agree to allow the proposed amendment to be put to a vote by the members at a regular meeting. Amendments will be read aloud by an officer and debates may take place. The debates and voting on a proposed amendment may not take place less than 72 hours after members have received notice. The Vice-President will conduct the debates. Anybody may participate in the debates, but only official members may vote. Amendments are passed by a majority vote, by secret ballot, of present, official members of VAA. The bylaws of VAA are to be written and amended by the officers of the organization.

#### BYLAWS:

##### 1. Communications policy:

Any content on the website, blog, and e-mails to the VAA list serve is subject to the discretion of the VAA officers. The officers may remove any content on the website or blog without prior notification to the author of the content.