



The Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir Constitution and By-Laws

Initial Preparation: September 2003

Last Corrections, Additions, and/or Deletions: Thursday, April 5, 2018

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Section I: Name and Entity

This is an organization of students and other interested persons, meaning non-students, in the Indiana University area. For all those that are like-minded in the study and performance of gospel music that glorifies Godly ministry, we shall be known as The Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir. Although Indiana University is included in the name, the organization operates as a separate and distinct entity from the university.

Section II: Purpose

The purpose of the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir:

- A. To provide for personal and group expression of praise and thanksgiving to God through song,
- B. To enhance the understanding and appreciation of the cultural importance of gospel music,
- C. To heighten the spiritual awareness among the members by conducting all rehearsals and engagements in a sacred manner and by performing in programs which have a religious base or nature.

Section III: Statement of Non-Discrimination

Participation in the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir organization must be without regard to arbitrary consideration of such characteristics as age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, national origin, race, or veteran status.

Section IV: Statement of University Compliance

This organization shall comply with all Indiana University regulations, and local, state and federal laws.

Section V: Anti-Hazing Policy

Hazing is strictly prohibited. Hazing shall be defined as any conduct which subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent.

Section VI: Personal Gain Clause

This organization, if raising funds, shall ethically raise and distribute profits from organizational functions to either the organization or to members who provide a service that directly benefits the organization. Individual members may not receive compensation from for-profit companies if acting as a representative of a student organization.

Section VII: Programs Involving Children

This organization, when working with children, will be aware of and abide by the University's Programs Involving Children (PIC) Policy.

Section VIII: Objectives

To participate in religious experiences by bringing gospel music to a variety of publics:

- A. Church groups and other religious organizations,
- B. Persons who are confined in institutions such as hospitals, schools, and prisons,
- C. Indiana University and other institutions of higher learning.

Section IX: Membership

The Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir shall consist of interested persons in the Indiana University area. Non-students may participate in the ministry.

- A. A person **BECOMES** a member of Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir by:
 - 1. Attending three (3) consecutive rehearsals
 - 2. Paying membership dues voted on by the Executive Board
- B. A person **REMAINS** a member of Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir by:
 - 3. Attending rehearsals regularly
 - 4. Adhere to all rules and regulations adopted by the Executive Board and in the Constitution and By-Laws
 - 5. Pays membership dues consistently as designated by the Executive Board

Section X: Control and Structure of Executive Board

Ultimate control and responsibility for the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir shall rest with the Executive Board.

A. General Duties of Executive Board Members

- 1. The Executive Board shall consist of eleven (11) positions: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer,

Parliamentarian, Chaplain(s), Historian(s), Head Director, Assistant Director(s) and Graduate Advisor(s).

2. The Executive Board shall conduct all business concerns of the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir. Meetings are held bi-weekly before official rehearsals.
3. Final authority of the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir for removing members due to negligence of bylaws shall rest with the Executive Board.
4. All Executive Board meetings shall be closed to the members of the organization.
5. The President and Vice Presidents shall keep the choir informed as to the Executive Board meetings.
6. The Executive Board shall oversee all nominations for positions on the Executive Board ensuring that they are handled according to the Constitution and Bylaws.
7. Create fundraising opportunities for the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir.

B. General Duties of the Advisor(s)

1. The Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir and its Executive Board shall be assisted by an Indiana University full-time faculty or staff member and/or graduate student(s).
2. The Advisor responsibilities shall be general in nature, however, there shall be specific duties such as those outlined below:
 - i. The Advisor shall perform those duties which are outlined by the Student Organization Accounts Office and Student Life and Learning,
 - ii. Be spiritual and have a relationship with Jesus Christ,
 - iii. Take an active role in the organization
 - a) Attend Executive Board meetings
 - a. At least two (2) per month
 - b) Attend engagements when available.
 - iv. Communicate regularly with the President and Vice President(s) concerning issues that pertain to the ministry.

C. Officer Duties

1. President:

- To open the session at the time in which the Executive Board is to meet by taking the chair and calling the members to order, to announce the business before the Executive Board in the order in which it is acted upon, and to ensure that everything is running smoothly within the organization.
- Shall be responsible for having contact with outside persons or organizations for scheduling engagements, shall ensure that all booking request go through President first then the board members, shall keep accurate account of the persons called with necessary

information to vote for acceptance or denial of proposed engagements, and must maintain a calendar of events at all times.

2. **First Vice President:**

- In the case of the absence of the President, the First Vice President must preside over the Executive Board meetings, and in the case of the illness or resignation or death of the President, the First Vice President becomes the President for the unexpired term. The First Vice President is in charge of chairing one of the two annual concerts, making announcements for the choir, and assisting the President when called upon.

3. **Second Vice President:**

- In the case of the absence of the President and the First Vice President, the Second Vice President must preside over the Executive Board meetings, and in the case of the illness or resignation or death of the President and First Vice President, the Second Vice President becomes President for the unexpired term. The Second Vice President is in charge of chairing one of the two annual concerts, making announcements for the choir, and assisting the President when called upon.

4. **Treasurer:**

- Shall have ultimate responsibility of keeping accurate account of all inflows and outflows of cash. Must adhere to all Indiana University rules and regulations provided by the Student Organization Accounts office. Shall present at every board meeting a financial statement.

5. **Secretary:**

- Maintain accurate records of all board meetings, maintain a roster of all members, call roll on request, read minutes, maintain minutes in a permanently bound volume, and assist President in preparing agenda.
- Send weekly emails which will include announcements, upcoming events, etc., to members of the organization.

6. **Parliamentarian:**

- Give advice to the chair, call any error in proceedings that may affect substantive rights of any member or may otherwise do harm to the alteration of the chair, see to it no procedural details are overlooked, interpret policies and procedures of the organization, anticipate parliamentary strategy, see to it all parliamentary requirements are

reserved, serve as the Chair of the Bylaws and Constitution Committee, and may be called upon by the President to explain or interpret points of law thus educating the membership.

7. **Chaplain(s):**

- Recite or lead the mediation, invocation, and inspirational expressions for the organization, provide spiritual guidance for the organization, and will be responsible for sending weekly bible verses to the members of the organization.

8. **Head Director (ess):**

- Responsible for proper conduction of all rehearsals and engagements, ultimate overseer of selections performed and rehearsed, and Chair of the Music Committee.

9. **Assistant Director (ess):**

- Acts in the absence of or as requested by the Head Director, and assist in the teaching of songs.

10. **Historian(s):**

- Shall be responsible for keeping visual records of engagements and functions that Voices of Hope participates in during that year, and continue to keep the website updated as things come up.

D. Voting

1. All business matters shall be voted upon by the Executive Board.
2. Voting shall be done by a majority (50% plus 1).
3. President does not vote unless he/she is breaking a tie.
4. Voting shall be recorded by the Secretary.

E. Committees

1. **Activities Committee:** Responsible for creating social functions for the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir including, but not limited to; lock-ins, community service, social gatherings, etc.
 - i. **Chairperson:** Any member of the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir appointed by the Executive Board.
2. **Bylaws and Constitution Committee:** Responsible for ensuring that all rules and regulations that have been adopted by the Executive Board and present in the Constitution and Bylaws are followed appropriately.
 - i. **Chairperson:** Parliamentarian
3. **Concert Committee:** Responsible for planning, organizing and executing annual concerts.
 - i. **Chairpersons:** First and Second Vice President

4. **Music Committee:** Responsible for making ultimate decision on selection of music for concerts. Will consist of all directors (esses) and musicians who together make decisions concerning music selections.
 - i. **Chairperson:** Head Director
5. **Praise Team Committee:** Responsible for organizing the praise team for concerts.
 - i. **Chairperson:** Chaplains

Section XI: Structure of Choir

A. General Composition:

1. Advisor
2. Graduate Advisor
3. President
4. First Vice President
5. Second Vice President
6. Treasurer
7. Secretary
8. Parliamentarian
9. Chaplain(s)
10. Historian
11. Head Director(ess)
12. Assistant Director(ess)
13. Musicians
14. Section Leaders: Soprano, Alto, Tenor
15. Choir Members

B. General Duties

1. **Attendance at the rehearsal immediately prior to a performance is mandatory. Nonattendance without proper notification will result in non-performance at that engagement.**
2. When traveling, all performing members must travel by transportation that is decided upon by the Executive Board unless you have spoken with a member of the board.
3. All of the following must be avoided and/or will not be tolerated during performances and rehearsals:
 - a. Excessive tardiness
 - b. Use of profanity
 - c. Use of alcoholic beverages and/or other drugs
 - d. Smoking, chewing of gum or eating during rehearsals or engagements
 - i. Use of profanity and/or chewing gum during rehearsals will result in a minimum fine of \$.50.
 - e. Playing, talking, and in general not paying attention during rehearsals or engagements.

Section XII: Dress Code

The proper dress that is required for engagements unless notified by the Head Director or President shall consist of what is decided upon by the Executive Board at the meeting preceding the engagement.

Section XIII: Rules as to Behavior of members during Rehearsals and Engagements

It is expected that choir members will at all times conduct themselves in an orderly fashion and manner, showing proper respect and consideration for themselves as well as others. If this general rule or any of the rules listed below are not observed and upheld, the member may be dismissed by the Executive Board.

1. All rehearsals will be opened and closed with prayer at which time all doors will be closed.
2. It is hoped that all members will attend all rehearsals and engagements. However, it is recognized that at times, it may become necessary to miss a rehearsal or engagement.
3. Rehearsals will be normally held on every Thursday of the week for approximately two hours. The Head Director may call additional rehearsals as needed.
4. The following reasons are acceptable reasons for missing rehearsals and engagements:
 - a. Academic purposes
 - b. Family Emergencies
 - c. Previously planned events
 - d. Illnesses
5. Individuals are to contact the President via email to the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir email account in the event of missing an engagement or rehearsal.

Section XIV: Elections

A. Nominations

1. All nominated individuals must fulfill all constitutional requirements for membership before being nominated for any position.
2. Nomination sheets shall be handed out and collected on the last rehearsal in March.
3. The Executive Board shall notify all individuals that are nominated for a position and the following rehearsal voting will take place.
4. All nominated individuals shall have three (3) consecutive days following to accept or decline their nomination. If there is no correspondence to the nomination, it is understood that the nominee has hereby declined their nomination.
5. All nominees shall prepare a one (1) to two (2) minute speech to be given on the day of elections before voting shall take place.

B. Voting

1. All individuals that have successfully fulfilled the requirements for membership outlined in the constitution are eligible to vote.
2. The current President during the time of the election will not have the opportunity to vote unless he/she is breaking a tie amongst any of the positions up for election.
3. In the event of the President running for reelection, and there is a tie between the candidates, the First Vice President will break the tie.
4. Voting will commence one (1) week preceding the nomination process.
5. All ballots shall be counted by the current President and Secretary.
6. Upon completion of the counting of the ballots, the Executive Board shall announce the newly elected officers for the following year.

Section XV: Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

All amendments to the constitution shall be brought to the board one (1) week prior to ratification, and require a majority (50% plus 1) vote before they are placed into the Constitution and By-Laws of the Voices of Hope at Indiana University Gospel Choir.