

# CONSTITUTION OF THE ISMAILI STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## Preamble

*The Ismaili Student's Association (ISA) is an organization dedicated to developing the physical, academic, social, and cultural well-being of Post-Secondary institution members.*

## Article I: Name and Purpose

### *I.I Name*

The name of this student group is the Ismaili Students' Association, and it may also be referred to as ISA.

### *I.II Objectives and Goals*

To enhance the unity and quality of life of ISA members through conducting events and providing services balanced among the areas of education, social, cultural, sports, health, leadership development, and community relations. Doing so effectively and efficiently, in collaboration with partnering institutions and in accordance with the principles and ethics of the Aga Khan Council for Canada.

## Article II: Membership and Eligibility

### *II.I Membership and Eligibility*

There are three categories of membership. Conditions for eligibility and privileges for each category are described below. All members must first register with the ISA Executive. In addition, the following membership terms and conditions apply:

- . i) Full Member: All students registered at the University of Alberta are eligible for Full Membership. Full Members may vote at any General Meeting or Election. Full

members are also eligible to run for executive positions.

- . ii) Associate Member: Students not registered at the institution above, but for whom this school's ISA is the closest ISA to the school at which they are registered, are eligible to be Associate Members (e.g. students from nearby colleges or schools without their own ISA). Associate Members may not vote at any General Meeting or Election, and are not eligible to run for executive positions as they must, by University regulations, be part of the university constituent body. They may however, enjoy other privileges of membership such as preferential event costs given to Members and other privileges as determined by the Executive Committee (Executive).
- . iii) Honorary Member: ISA Alumni who are not eligible to be Full or Associate Members are eligible to be Honorary Members, as are other individuals who are ineligible for other categories of membership. Honorary Members may not vote at General Meetings or Elections, are not eligible to run for executive positions, however they may enjoy other privileges of membership such as preferential event costs given to Members and other privileges as determined by the Executive.

## *II.II Grounds for revoking Membership*

The ISA Executive together with the direction and approval of the ISA Advisor may begin the process of revoking the membership rights from an ISA club member if that member ("Defiant Member") at official ISA event or initiative is found to have engaged in activities or actions, directly or indirectly, that was physically, mentally, or emotionally harmful to other members or not in accordance with the principles and ethics of the Ismaili Constitution.

A 3-step process must be used to officially revoke the Membership of a defiant member:

- i) The Executive must first discuss a summary of the allegations and vote on whether they are objective, reasonable and can be confirmed by two witnesses. The ISA Advisor must also provide approval to proceed onto Step ii.
- ii) A written warning, approved by the ISA Advisor, must be submitted to the Defiant Member.
- iii) If the Defiant Member continues to engage in activities or actions described in *II.II*, a resolution can be submitted to the Executive to revoke the Defiant Member's ISA membership.

### **Article III: Eligibility and Election of Group Executive Committee**

#### *III.I Eligibility*

Only Full Members are eligible to run for office and cast votes in the Election. Only Full Members can receive a nomination form.

The individual running for ISA President should have either at least one year of experience on the ISA Executive or possess relevant leadership experience and skills. President should be, at a minimum, second year student.

#### *III.II Nominations*

- i) A candidate must be nominated by three Full Members from the University ISA.
- ii) The current term Executive will fix the date of the opening and closing of nominations. There will be at least 14 days in between these dates.
- iii) Nomination will close two full days before the election.
- iv) At a minimum, there must be someone to run for four out of the seven mandatory positions (there must be a candidate for President and Vice

President). If this condition is not met and the ISA Advisor has not granted an exception, the election will be postponed, until there are nominees for the required number of positions.

In the situation where an Executive Committee is elected without all mandatory positions filled and prior to another by-election to fill in the remaining positions, the Committee must either a) distribute the responsibilities among the elected officials as required or b) request whether the respective outgoing official for that specific position maybe interested in managing the position until a by-election is held.

- v) Prior to the elections, the organizers will arrange to have nominees meet with his or her respective outgoing Executive member responsible for that position to a) answer any questions the nominee may have and b) ensure that the candidate understands the role, responsibilities, and opportunities of the position.
- vi) A group may campaign as a slate but elections will be for individual candidates.

### *III.III General Election Rules*

Elections must be held at least one week before the final exam period at the end of the academic year. The new Executive must be in place prior to the end of the academic year.

A Chief Returning Office (CRO) and a Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) will be appointed by the ISA Executive to execute the election process. These members must be objective third parties who must be Full members of ISA. The ISA Advisor will work with the CRO and DRO to ensure the election process remains honest. The CRO and DRO will provide the candidates and voting members with information on the elections, campaigning and all associated procedures, one month prior to voting.

For the election to take place, a minimum of one third of Full Members must vote.

If there is only one candidate who accepts nomination for a position, the candidate must still follow the same process for election as the other candidates (i.e. Delivering a speech, answering questions etc.). The position will be acclaimed to that candidate only if half the votes are in favor of or indifferent to the candidate.

For positions in which there are two or more candidates the winner will be elected by majority vote – the person with the most votes wins.

There will only be one person per position elected.

If there is no member nominated for the Vice-President position, the runner up for the President position will have the option to become the Vice-President. If no candidate is found for the position of Vice-President, the ISA Advisor will provide a resolution within one week.

### *III.IV Tenure*

The Executive shall hold office for a period of one (1) year, May 1st to April 30th.

Any Executive member can hold the same position for a maximum of two years.

An Executive member, who during the course of his/her term of office, ceases to be a full time student, may continue to hold office and is still accountable to the Executive under the rules of the Accountability Policy.

Upon being elected, the New and Incumbent Executive will meet for a changeover meeting within two weeks of the General Election. The Incumbent President must ensure a package of briefing material is transitioned at this time (i.e. Agendas, minutes, planning notes, etc.)

The Incumbent Executive is still responsible for ISA activities until July 1st, however the

new Executive may begin informal preparations and activities for their term of office.

## **Article IV: Executive Committee**

### *IV.I Position Descriptions, Roles & Responsibilities and Operations*

- . i) President
- . ii) Vice-President
- . iii) External Member
- . iv) Internal Member
- . v) Sports Representative Female
- . vi) Sports Representative Male
- . vii) Education Representative
- . vii) ITREB Representative Female
- . viii) ITREB Representative Male
- . viv) Health and Lifestyle Representative

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

This section outlines the minimum rights and responsibilities of each Executive position.

- i) President: Although meetings are run by consensus, the President has the right to call for a vote on any issue. The President is ultimately responsible for all ISA activities and therefore is obliged to lead decision-making in what he/she feels is in the best interest of the club members. The President has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Ensure that the team works towards achieving the ISAs' mission statement;
- Facilitate the planning of two comprehensive planning meetings during the year:
  - o Meeting 1 objectives – build team unity; align the team towards the ISA mandate; plan key goals and objectives and programming for the term and looking towards the full year.
  - o Meeting 2 objectives – same objectives as for Meeting 1; evaluate team progress, issues and successes from Term 1;
- Act as the primary liaison between the ISA Advisor and the ISA and ensure that all project proposals, evaluations and other required documents are submitted and discussed with the ISA Advisor within the specified time frame;
- Act as the primary liaison between ISA Executive and M/Ks;
- Plan and facilitate ISA Meetings;
- Register an ISA bank account in collaboration with the Vice-President;
- Sign for, or be aware of, all transactions made through the ISA account;
- Keep in frequent contact with all Executive members to ensure that the Executive understands the needs and desires of the constituency and is evaluated on its performance (portfolio updates, suggestions, comments etc.);
- Enforce the Accountability Policy;
- Keep highly visible and accessible to the Jamat;
- Represent the ISA at all on-and off-campus functions;

- Attend students' union meetings as appropriate and act as a liaison between the students' union and ISA Executive/members;
- Attend the ISA Executive meetings including, but not limited to, the beginning year orientation, Regional full session meeting, and Mid- Year Orientation.

ii) Vice-President: The Vice-President position has three primary responsibilities: (1) assisting the President in his/her duties, (2) external communications with the university and community, (3) supporting other Executives in their roles. The Vice-President has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Carry out the duties of the President in the absence of the President;
- Assist the President with all aspects of his/her job;
- Register the ISA with the University of Alberta students' union;
- With the assistance of ISA Executives and members, identify members that excel in academic, sports, etc. for award nominations and serve as a resource for other students;
- Communicate regularly with and provides support to Executive Members;
- Attend the ISA Executive meetings including, but not limited to, the beginning year orientation, Regional full session meeting, and Mid- Year Orientation.
- Register an ISA bank account with the President in accordance with the ISA Finance Policy;
- Monitor all ISA funds;
- Check membership at events (i.e., elections and other events where membership merits reduced price/ preferential treatment);



- Ensures that any cheques issued by the ISA are signed by both of the following: President, Vice-President
- Sign-off on the budget for each Program Plan submission to the ISA Advisor;
- Reimburse any members for expenses incurred during the planning and organization of an event; Request reimbursement from the students' union where applicable;
- Responsible for any ISA fundraising, cash management and cash disbursements;
- Responsible to submit the Financial Tracker (Section 4.o) to the Executive and ISA Advisor;
- Compile an annual budget report, including a statement of actual expenditures and revenues, at the end of the term of office.
- Attend the ISA Executive meetings including, but not limited to, the Regional full session meeting.

iii) Internal Representative: The Internal representative is responsible for creating, maintaining, and using multi-media tools to enhance communication between the Executive and its members, ISA and the university community, as well as other ISAs across the region.

- Create, distribute, collect, and enter data for the Yearly Survey (See Appendix 4 for example Survey);
- Create and/ or maintain the ISA Database (with contact information of all registered Members) and provide members with contact information of M/Ks, Executive as well as all registered members;
- Create and maintain ISA email distribution lists;

- Take minutes at all Executive meetings;
- Market events (e.g., creation of emails, announcements, posters etc.);
- Keep a record of evaluations, minutes, agendas, event planning documents, database, email account etc. to ensure effective organization, planning, reporting and succession;
- Attend the ISA Executive meetings including, but not limited to, the Regional full session meeting.

iv) The Sports Representatives (Male and Female): The role of the Sports

Representative includes promoting the physical well-being of its members through physical fitness events. The Sports Representative has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Organize intramural activities for ISA members;
- Organize participation in inter-university sport events and designate team captains;
- Create awareness among membership of on-campus sports facilities and recreational activities;
- Promote physical well-being through regular fitness activities
- Attend the ISA Executive meetings including, but not limited to, the Regional full session meeting;
- Assist in transition of new students into Post-Secondary institutions.

v) Education Representative, ITREB Representatives (Male and Female): Promote key education messages through AKEB programs and referral to campus services including the importance of attaining academic excellence to enter into good graduate and professional programs, promoting AKDN and other emerging career areas, encouraging students to take humanities and social science courses and multi-disciplinary programs and degrees, the importance of acquiring and

managing knowledge within the ethics of our faith throughout our lives.

- Work closely with ISA Executive and Campus M/Ks to organize and promote pre-identified AKEB programs on campus such as the graduate school application program.
- Promote the pursuit of academic excellence (e.g., referral to campus tutorial and other services), and the development of scholastic resources (e.g., exam banks in accordance with campus guidelines, etc.)
- Identify, promote and encourage students to partake in services offered on campus (e.g., study skills, writing labs, tutorial services, funding, post-graduate access, career guidance, etc.). Promote services and events to students via email and campus JK announcements.
- Coordinate the completion of Post-Secondary registration forms in September with the support of the campus leadership (ISA Chair/Executive and M/Ks).
- Work with the ISA's and Campus M/Ks to promote the role of the Education Representative amongst students so that they are aware that they can be approached in confidence to discuss academic, funding, and/or career planning issues. The Education Representative would in turn refer students to external campus services or their AKEB Vice-Chair, Post-Secondary to help address their issues.
- Actively participate in and attend Campus J.K. and ISA functions, regularly attend ISA Executive meetings to provide updates on campus-based and AKEB education related initiatives and solicit feedback from campus leadership.
- Liaise and provide regular updates to regional AKEB Vice-Chair, Post-Secondary via monthly conference calls and occasional face-to-face meetings.

vi) Health and Lifestyle Representative: The role of the Health and Lifestyle Representative is to provide education on healthy lifestyle choices and stress management. The responsibilities of this individual are:

- To work with AKHB to promote health and wellness for ISA members
- Work with the ISA executive to create awareness and promote a healthy lifestyle
- Attend the ISA Executive meetings including, but not limited to, the Regional full session meeting

#### *IV.II Other Executive Members*

ISA Advisors are members on and report to the AKYSB. They are committed to assist and work together with the ISA Executive, add value to the team, ensure it achieves its Mission and has a successful year. Advisors are partners that you can rely on throughout your term of office for direction and support in all matters as they arise. Specific Advisor roles and responsibilities are:

- i) **Mentorship:** The ISA Advisor provides mentorship to the ISA Executive to enable the team's positive growth both personally and in their elected roles on the ISA. This includes helping to develop leadership and teambuilding skills, providing advice and feedback, facilitating the resolution of challenges and supporting the Executive to achieve its goals. Advisors will also promote a sense of community, institutional values, and the importance of service.
- ii) **Programming Guidance:** The ISA Advisor provides guidance and support for balanced and effective programming and for the development of external relationships with the Uma and other organizations both on and off campus. In addition, Advisors will provide relevant resources to evaluate program effectiveness and ensure maximum value is achieved.

- iii) **Programming Oversight:** The ISA Advisor is responsible for providing approvals to confirm all relevant project management procedures and guidelines are followed (including financial management, insurance confirmation, communications, resource management etc.). The ISA President should ensure that the ISA Executive is following these set procedures.
- iv) **Liaison between the Institutions and ISAs:** The ISA Advisor represents the ISAs to AKYSB and vice versa. Advisors will inform Institutions of ISA activities, accomplishments, challenges and needs. Advisors will also communicate to the Executive information related to institutional events, resources, initiatives, regulations and policies. Specific attention will be made to coordinate the efforts among the various Council Boards & Portfolios such as AKEB, ITREB and other AKYSB committees with the ISA. In addition, the Advisor is also responsible for coordinating AKDN institutional activities that are geared to the Post-Secondary age segment.
- v) **Liaison Between all ISAs:** Through the ISA Advisors, ISAs across the region and across Canada are able to connect and communicate best practices, unite in their common Mission, share challenges, ideas and create regional cohesiveness and cooperation.

#### *IV.III Impeachment/Removal and Replacement of Officers and Members*

In the event that an ISA Executive member is not fulfilling their responsibilities the following procedure should be followed. All steps of the process must be documented. That is, Verbal Warnings, Written Warnings, decisions to resign, as well as results of ISA Executive votes must be entered in the ISA minutes. Rationale for issuing Verbal and Written warnings must also be documented.

##### **Step 1 - Verbal Warning**

An informal discussion will be initiated by the ISA President if anyone of the

following occurs:

- An ISA Executive member fails to attend two consecutive meetings without notice (within 24hrs) to the President;
- After consultation, the President and the Vice-President feel that the Executive Committee member is not fulfilling their responsibilities;
- The President and Vice-President must consult before issuing a Verbal or Written Warning to any ISA Executive member;
- The President may be issued a Verbal Warning by the Vice- President and the Treasurer after they have consulted one another on the performance of the President;
- The Vice-President may be issued a Verbal Warning by the President and the Treasurer after they have consulted one another on the performance of the Vice-President;
- The President will document this Verbal Warning and the reasons for which it was issued. If the President received the Verbal Warning, it is the responsibility of the Vice-President to document the Verbal Warning and the reasons for which it was given;
- If after Verbal Warning the ISA Executive member is still not fulfilling her/his responsibilities, Step 2 will be carried out.

#### Step 2 – Written Warning

- The President will issue a Written Warning to an ISA Executive member if s/he, after consultation with the Vice-President finds that an Executive Committee member who has previously received a Verbal Warning still is not fulfilling their responsibilities;
- The President may be issued a Written Warning by the Vice- President and the Treasurer after they have consulted one another on the performance of the President;

- The Vice-President may be issued a Written Warning by the President and the Treasurer after they have consulted one another on the performance of the President;
- The President will document this Written Warning and the reason(s) for which it was issued. If the President received the Written Warning, it is the responsibility of the Vice-President to guard the Written Warning and document the reasons for which it was issued;
- If after the Written Warning the ISA Executive member is still not fulfilling her/his responsibilities, the AKYSB ISA Liaison/Advisor will speak with the individual to try and resolve the issue. After this has taken place, step three will be carried out.

### Step 3 – Resolution

- The ISA Executive member who continues to fail at fulfilling their duties is given the option to resign;
- If the Executive Committee member chooses not to resign, a vote will be held by the ISA Executive to determine whether or not this member may remain a part of the ISA Executive;
- The vote will be held at an ISA Executive meeting arranged solely for this purpose;
- At the meeting, the documentation pertaining to the Verbal and Written Warnings, including the specific reasons these warnings were issued will be presented to the ISA Executive. As well, further reasons, above and beyond what merited the warnings must be provided to explain why a resignation was demanded;
- The ISA Executive member being asked to resign must address the specific points brought up in this discussion and provide reasons why their resignation is not merited;
- After hearing both sides, the ISA Executive then has 10 minutes to ask questions

and discuss;

- After 10 minutes, the Executive Committee holds a secret ballot vote to remove the ISA Executive member;
- Two-thirds of the ISA Executive must vote for the resignation;
- If this quorum is not met, or in the event of a tie, the member will remain on the Executive;
- If the ISA Executive member is voted out of the Executive Committee, a decision regarding whether or not to hold a by-election for the vacant position must be made according to the rules under the Resignation and By-Elections section;
- Each ISA must inform the local AKYSB of such occurrences within 24 hours;

It should be noted that the AKYSB ISA Advisor **SHOULD** be an objective arbitrator and should be fully engaged throughout the process in order that Steps 2 and 3 be the last resort to resolving any conflicts.

#### *IV.IV Signing Authority*

Signing authority for all bank transactions for the ISA bank account belongs to the President and Vice-President of the executive.



## **Article V: Meetings**

### *V.I Purpose*

The purpose of General Meetings is to convey information to the membership, invite questions from the membership on ISA activities, and to provide a forum for discussion between ISA members and the Executive. General Meetings can be independent forums or may be held in conjunction with an ISA event.

### *V.II Process*

Members will have at least five days notice for all meetings and any full member who wants to include an item on the meeting agenda should notify the President of the ISA (in a written letter or via email) at least three days before the date of the meeting. The Executive prior to the meeting date will determine the form of the meeting, with respect to how agenda items are presented and discussed and by whom.

### *V.III Frequency*

There should be at least two General Meetings of the ISA every year:

- i) Introductory Meeting – to welcome new students and introduce the membership to the new Executive.
- ii) General Elections – before the end of the academic year elections must be held for the following year's Executive.

### *V.IV Achieving an Appropriate Quorum*

The Quorum for a General Meeting shall be 50% of the total number of full members. If quorum is not met, the meeting will stand adjourned until the following week to a suitable time agreed by the Executive. The Quorum for Executive Meetings will be  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the executive. If quorum for executive meetings is not met, then the meeting will be

postponed to the following week.

## **Article VI: Financial Information**

### *VI.I Fiscal Timeline*

- The ISA's fiscal year runs from May 1 to April 30
- The Vice-President will be responsible to make deposits every two weeks or when the an amount greater than \$500 has accumulated in the cash box, whichever is sooner
- Bank statements and other financial documents are to be kept in a secure location for 3 years before being shredded.

### *VI.II Budget*

- The Vice-President is responsible for creating and presenting the upcoming fiscal year's budget at the AGM. The budget will require a 2/3 vote to pass.

### *VI.III Expenses and Reimbursement*

- The President and Vice-President must approve all expenses under ISA's name prior to any fund exchanging hands
- Members may be reimbursed for approved expenses by cash as long as their reimbursement requests are made, with original receipts, within two weeks after the transaction.

## **Article VII: Amendments**

### *VII.I Amendment Process*

- The Operating Policy should be reviewed every two years to determine if amendments are necessary;
- A review committee consisting of the ISA President, a Full Member who applies for or is selected at random to assist in the process, an Executive Committee member (other than the President, elected by the Executive), will review the Constitution with the AKYSB Liaison/Advisor;
- The Review Committee will have four weeks to review the Operating Policy, evaluate its usefulness and suggest improvements to the ISA Executive;
- The ISA Executive will submit changes that they feel are appropriate to AKYSB through the AKYSB ISA Advisor;
- AKYSB will review the comments made by the ISA Executive and respond as appropriate, approving the changes or explaining non- acceptance of changes suggested.

## **Article VII: Dissolution**

### *VII.1 Dissolution*

- The group may be dissolved by a 2/3 majority vote at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose of which 90 days notice must be given in writing to all members. The group is automatically dissolved upon membership dropping below 10 members. Upon dissolution, the Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring that any remaining financial resources are donated to Aga Khan Foundation Canada and the bank account is closed down. Any resources or group assets will be donated to Aga Foundation Canada where appropriate but will not be distributed to individual members.