

CONSTITUTION OF THE LINGUISTICS STUDENTS ORGANIZATION OF
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1.0 The name of this organization is the Linguistics Students Organization (hereinafter the “LSO”).

Section 2.0 The purpose of the LSO is to promote interest in and communication about linguistics and related fields. It aims to foster cohesiveness in the greater linguistics community by providing opportunities for academic, social, and professional development and interaction.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.0 LSO membership is open to all Michigan State University students. The organization will not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight. Also, only MSU students may be officers and/or voting members.

Section 2.0 Membership shall be automatically granted to graduate students (both Masters and Doctoral) in Linguistics upon entrance into the program. Members shall have voting rights within the LSO upon payment of dues and shall receive notification of all LSO activities. Such persons shall also be eligible to receive reduced rates on any LSO sales or publications, where such rates are available, and any other such benefits that the LSO is able to provide. A person remains in good standing by obeying the rules of the group written in the constitution.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

Section 1.0 The elected Executive Officers of the LSO is the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Student-Faculty Liaison, Colloquia Co-Chairs, Scribe, Webmaster, Graduate-Undergraduate Student Liaison, and the representative to the Graduate Employees Union (GEU). All officers shall serve for a period of one (1) calendar year, which shall begin immediately following the regular annual election.

Section 2.0 Elections are to take place at a meeting after April 1 and no later than April 15, with the exception of the Co-Chairs of the Colloquia Committee, which must be elected during a separate election in the month of May. The

current President shall, at the time at which an election is to take place, appoint a member of the LSO as Supervisor of Elections. Any voting member present at meeting in which elections take place may make nominations. Attending voting members may nominate themselves for any office in which nominations are open. A nominee must currently be a full-time student in good standing with the University and must plan to be a full-time student during the prospective term (excluding summer sessions). A person must be present to accept or decline the nomination at the time that such nomination is made.

The order of elections shall be as follows: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Student-Faculty Liaison, Scribe, Webmaster, Graduate-Undergraduate Student Liaison, and the representative to the Graduate Employees Union (GEU).

All voting members may vote and such voting shall be by secret ballot. The ballots are to be collected and tallied by the Supervisor of Elections. The nominee with a relative majority vote shall be declared the winner. In the event of a tie between nominees, another vote shall be taken a week later. If the tie should persist, the currently elected Executive Board will decide which nominee is the winner. If there is only one nominee for a respective office that nominee must receive a vote of confidence. Each voting member must record either a “yea” or a “nay” on their ballot. In order to take office, such nominee must receive more “yea” votes than “nay” votes. Any ballot that does not contain either a “yea” or a “nay” will be deemed a null vote. Once a winner has been decided, the Supervisor of Elections shall announce the winner. Any nominee who does not win may run for another Office. If there are no nominees for a given position, the responsibility shall be that of the elected Executive Officers, who shall appoint a representative to complete a task related to said position as needed. Issues pertaining to Election Procedure not addressed by this Constitution shall be left to the discretion of the Supervisor of Elections.

Section 3.0 Duties of the officers:

Section 3.1 *President:* By virtue of the respective Office, the President acts as integral part of the LSO and as such, plays a critical role in the development and maintenance of efficient, beneficial, and enjoyable graduate student life. Working towards the future, the President should help lead and direct the LSO towards progress. The President is ultimately responsible for all actions of the LSO. The President oversees the activities of the LSO and works together with the Director of Graduate Students (DOGS) to coordinate joint projects and discuss any student matters. The President is responsible for discussing any problems with students and advising students as to the options for resolving problems. Other responsibilities of the President include organizing and informing LSO members of meetings

(including LSO business meetings, Brown Bag, the Meet-and-Greet, and the End-of-the-Year Picnic) and department-related events pertinent to LSO, and overseeing all LSO elected positions and committees. The President is also responsible for maintaining a good relationship with the Department and other departmental organizations, such as the undergraduate student organization, qUALMS (this responsibility may include active participation in any fundraising efforts, joint events, or the like). In the event that an elected LSO officer fails to complete a task, the responsibility falls onto the President or Vice President for completion.

- Section 3.2 *Vice-President:* The Vice President plays a crucial assisting role to the President. Apart from being an active presence at all LSO-related events and meetings, the Vice President takes over the responsibilities of the President in the case that the President is not able to attend a meeting or an event. The Vice President is expected to assist the President with all Presidential responsibilities, as needed.
- Section 3.3 *Treasurer:* The treasurer is responsible for collecting membership dues, maintaining the LSO account, reporting the account balance and a summary of purchases to date at every LSO business meeting, and for managing the funds raised through fundraising activities. The Treasurer is also responsible for reimbursing members who make purchases on behalf of the LSO.
- Section 3.4 *Student-Faculty Liaison:* In conjunction with the President and Vice President, the Student-Faculty Liaison is primarily responsible for making sure graduate students' interests are presented to the faculty. As such, this student representative shall attend faculty meetings (unless the faculty deem the meeting confidential or plan to discuss otherwise faculty-specific issues). Faculty meetings are organized by the department convener, a position that changes on a yearly basis. That said, the Student-Faculty Liaison should be in direct and frequent contact with the department convener. This student representative is expected to send a summary of relevant issues discussed in the faculty meetings to all students. The faculty generally meets several times per semester. In the case that an issue arises and there are no scheduled faculty meetings, the Student-Faculty Liaison shall meet with the Director of Graduate Students (DOGS) to discuss the issue.
- Section 3.5 *Scribe:* This student representative is expected to send a summary of relevant issues discussed in the LSO meetings to all students. Said summary must be sent within two weeks of a given LSO meeting.
- Section 3.6 *Webmaster:* The webmaster manages the LSO website and is responsible for regularly updating sections relating to events, meeting times, colloquia dates, and student profiles. The webmaster is also the first point of contact

for all emails sent to the LSO. In the case that an email cannot be answered by the webmaster, the email is forwarded to and dealt with by the President or Vice President.

Section 3.7 *Colloquia Co-Chairs*: The Colloquia Co-Chairs are responsible for overseeing, preparing, and organizing all Colloquia events held in the department. To the best of their abilities, the Colloquia Co-Chairs will invite speakers to the department to present their research. This occasion should be (as is possible) a weekly series. The Colloquia Co-Chairs are expected to work in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Students (DOGS) and other relevant faculty members to guarantee the highest quality of speakers, as well as determine a yearly and case-by-case budget for Colloquia events and speaker visits. Apart from inviting and scheduling speakers, the Colloquia Co-Chairs send out/post announcements about Colloquia, coordinate dinner for outside speakers, and prepare the receptions and coffee hours pertaining to Colloquia events. Lastly, the Colloquia Co-Chairs are responsible for overseeing the Colloquia Committee. If additional members to the Colloquia Committee are deemed necessary by the Colloquia Co-Chairs, the Co-Chairs are responsible for appointing said members.

Section 3.8 *Graduate--Undergraduate Student Liaison*: The Graduate--Undergraduate Student Liaison is responsible for maintaining the LSO's relationship with the undergraduates majoring in Linguistics, and in particular, maintaining a productive and cordial relationship between the LSO and qUALMS. As such, the Graduate--Undergraduate Student Liaison must work directly and frequently with the undergraduate student representative for qUALMS. Responsibilities vary year-to-year, but may include assisting in fundraising efforts, planning joint events (both academic and recreational), and relaying any relevant undergraduate concerns to the LSO.

Section 3.9 *Representative (Steward) to the Graduate Employees Union (GEU)*: This student representative keeps members of the LSO up-to-date on the goings-on of the GEU. The student representative is expected to send a summary of the relevant issues discussed in GEU meetings to all students.

Section 4.0 Impeachment shall be the method of last resort for correcting improper actions by officers of the LSO. Any action that is in conflict with the Constitution or By-Laws of the Linguistics Students Organization shall be an impeachable offense. Specific instances include:

- Actions which are in conflict with objectives of the Linguistics Students Organization found in Article I of this Constitution of the LSO.
- Failure of an officer to successfully complete assigned duties found in Article III, Section 3 of this Constitution of the LSO

Failure to perform in accordance with an instruction of the LSO or Michigan State University Letters of reprimand, informal counseling with the Director of Graduate Studies (DOGS), and other procedures approved by the Executive Committee may be used in lieu of impeachment as sanctions for committing an impeachable offense. Such sanctions can be imposed by a simple majority vote in the affirmative of the Executive Committee. The procedure to impeach an elected officer shall be the same as to pass a constitutional amendment. An elected officer may be impeached at any LSO meeting upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the attending members present, provided that the proposed impeachment shall have been read during at least one (1) preceding membership meeting of the LSO. All proposed impeachments must receive the consideration of the Executive Committee before being presented to the LSO. All members must be notified of the vote no later than seven (7) days prior to the day on which the voting shall occur.

ARTICLE IV: OPERATING PROCEDURES

- Section 1.0 The Executive Committee may schedule regular open meetings of the LSO as they see fit. Announcement of these meetings shall be made by email to all members at least three (3) days prior to the time of the meeting. At all open meetings, a quorum shall be a number equal to the number of members of the Executive Committee. The agenda for the meeting will be included in the email. If any member wishes to add a discussion point to the agenda, they must email the President or Vice President prior to the beginning of the scheduled meeting. In the case that a member wishes to bring up something that is not already on the agenda during the LSO meeting, members will first exhaust the discussion items on the agenda and then open the floor to additional points of discussion initiated by LSO members.
- Section 2.0 In case of questions concerning the proper conduct of meetings, Roberts Rules of Order (revised) shall be adhered to. A relative majority shall decide questions at meetings, except in the case of Constitutional Amendments.
- Section 3.0 LSO Committees:
- Section 3.1 *The Executive Committee:* The Executive Committee is composed of all elected officers. The Executive Committee is the governing body of the LSO and is responsible for all decisions concerning budget and policy by a relative majority vote.
- Section 3.2 *The Colloquia Committee:* The Colloquia Committee is composed of at least two members of the LSO (the Colloquia Committee Co-Chairs). Apart from the Co-Chairs, the Colloquia Committee can also include appointed members as deemed necessary by the Colloquia Co-Chairs. If

additional members are necessary, the Co-Chairs are responsible for appointing said members. The Colloquia Committee is responsible for organizing the weekly colloquium series together with the faculty advisor. The committee invites and schedules speakers, sends out announcements about colloquia, coordinates dinner for outside speakers, and prepares the receptions.

ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. All voting members may propose amendments to the Constitution of the Linguistics Students Organization at any business meeting of the LSO.
- Section 2. All proposed amendments must receive the consideration and approval by majority vote of the Executive Committee before being presented to the LSO for voting. Further, a copy of the existing and proposed amendments must be made available to the LSO at the meeting at which the proposed amendment is being announced. All members must be notified of the vote at least seven (7) days prior to the day on which the voting shall occur.
- Section 3. Amendments are approved upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the attending members.

ARTICLE VI: EFFECT AND SCOPE

This Constitution is the governing document of the LSO. Any statement, in part or whole, in any document authored by the LSO or Executive Committee found to be in conflict with this Constitution shall be deemed null and void, and this Constitution shall prevail. Any portion of this Constitution that is found to be in conflict with regulations of Michigan State University shall be deemed null and void. This Constitution shall be deemed in full force and effect as of September 22, 2013.