

**THE**  
**CONSTITUTION**  
**OF**  
**SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL STUDENTS' UNION**



*Adopted by the National Leadership Team on behalf of all members of the South African Medical Students' Union on the 05<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.*

## **PREAMBLE**

*We, medical students in South African universities, recognize the injustices of our pasts, believe that South African Medical Students' Union (SAMSU) belongs to all its members, united in our diversity with no one being entitled to any position of leadership. We therefore, through our elected leadership, adopt this constitution as the supreme law of SAMSU so as to unite, network and connect all medical students in the country, improve learning conditions, represents medical students at all levels, promote academic excellence and health for all.*

## **CHAPTER 1 FOUNDING PROVISIONS AND DEFINATIONS**

### **1. TITLE, OFFICE AND OBJECTIVES**

1.1.a. The name of this organisation shall be SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL STUDENTS UNINON

1.1.b. Its abbreviation shall be SAMSU

1.2. The office of this organization shall be written on this constitution once it has been secured and this shall be in terms of section 24 of this constitution

### **1.3. OBJECTIVES**

- a) To support, network and connect medical students in South Africa.
- b) To represent medical students at any relevant body like HPCSA, DoH, DHET, NSFAS, and many more.
- c) To promote academic excellence in medical schools in South African universities.
- d) To improve learning conditions in South African Medical Schools
- e) To promote the health of medical students.
- f) To promote public health awareness.
- g) To prepare the future of medical students as medical doctors.
- h) To influence the policies in health and health education-related departments.
- i) To advocate for health funding of medical, clinical and educational purposes.

### **1.4. LOGO**

- a) The logo shall be the one on the cover page of this constitution.

### **1.5. REGISTRATIONS**

SAMSU shall be registered as a non-profit organization with the department of social development in terms of the non-profit organization's act.

SAMSU shall be recognized as an academic structure by the SRC, student governance and school directors/deans at universities.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

## **CHAPTER 2 MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

- a) All South African trained medical students, both citizens and international, qualify for SAMSU membership.
- b) All potential SAMSU members shall apply for the membership of SAMSU through filling out forms to the branch secretary.
- c) Branch secretaries shall send bulk membership forms to the secretary general.
- d) Membership fee shall be free of charge (R0,00).
- e) Members shall have the right to access to information about the organization.
- f) No member is entitled to any position of deployment.
- g) All members can contest for elections in their branch conference or national conference.
- h) All members must abide by this constitution.
- i) A member can resign by sending a resignation letter to the secretary general office withing 30 days prior to the date of resignation.

### **4. THE BODY OF GORVANANCE**

- a) The organization shall be governed through the principle of democratic centralism which is that the individual is subordinate organization, the minority is subordinate to the majority and that the decisions of the upper structures are binding on the lower structures.
- b) All members who join SASMU must be willing to be guided by this principle and it must be clearly indicated in the membership form.

### **5. MANAGEMENT**

- a) The organization shall have a hierarchy which is to determine how SAMSU is to be managed
- b) There shall be a National Leadership Team which is the highest decision-making body of SAMSU.
- c) The National Working Team shall be responsible for the day-to-day running of the organization and ensure that all decisions of the national working team meetings are executed.
- d) The national working team shall report to the national leadership team.
- e) The branch leadership team shall report to the national working team.
- f) The branch leadership team shall have a responsibility and duty to ensure that branches are active with all branch members participating in all events/programs of the organization.
- g) The decisions of the NLT, NWT and the position of the organisation shall be communicated through the communique signed from both the office of the secretary general and the office of the president.
- h) The office of the secretary general shall consist of the secretary and the deputy secretary.
- i) The office of the president shall consist of the president and the deputy president.
- j) All branch communiques must have signatures from both office of secretary and office of the chairperson.
- k) The finance team members shall be the treasurer general, secretary general and the president. The treasurer general shall be the chairperson of the finance team. All financial documents must be signed by at least two members of the finance team.

## **CHAPTER 3 MEETINGS**

### **6. TERMS OF OFFICE**

- The term of office for both the national leadership team and branch leadership teams shall be a period of one year after which elective conferences must be held.
- Outgoing leadership team members can stand for re-elections for as long as their services are required in the organisation.
- No member shall be allowed to run for the fourth time in leadership.
- Elective conferences of the branch must be held in February with the term of office starting in March for the newly elected branch leadership teams.
- February shall be the last month of the term of office for the branch leadership teams
- Elective conference for the national leadership shall be on April with the term of office for the newly appointed team starting on May of every year.
- March shall be the last month of the term of office for the national leadership team

### **7. NATIONAL CONFERENCE MEETING**

#### **6.1. Voting**

- a) All delegates are going to vote for the national leadership team.
- b) Delegates shall be two members deployed by the branch leadership teams at every university to attend the national conference.
- c) The national leadership conference shall be overseen and operated by an independent electoral officer appointed by the outgoing national leadership team.
- d) National leadership team shall publicize the election conference date to the members by the end of 14<sup>th</sup> week of the post-registration of the last registration date of medical students in all South African Universities.
- e) Decision-making will always be by means of the majority in every meeting of SAMSU.
- f) In cases where there are equal votes, the chairperson will vote for one of the two options since the chairperson has no voting power in all elections except for when there is equal votes.

#### **7.2. BRANCH CONFERENCE MEETING**

- a) All branch conferences will be led and overseen by the deployed member of the national leadership team deployed by the national working team.
- b) Such a deployed member is responsible to ensure that all attendees are qualified members in terms of this constitution.
- c) Only branch members shall have the right to attend branch conferences of each university.
- d) Each branch must deploy two delegates to attend and vote at the national conference.
- e) Delegates must attend the national conference to elect the national leadership team members.
- f) National leadership team will appoint the independent electoral officer who must be a leader in another organization with similar purpose.
- g) Independent electoral officer will oversee the elections of the national leadership team.

- h) All elected members can only be disbanded by the national leadership team as the highest-decision making body.
- i) At least 50% plus must be women in every elected leadership team.
- j) National leadership team shall have the powers to disband every elected leadership team if it has less than 50% of it being women. In such cases, the national leadership team shall deploy the interim leadership team.
- k) Members can stand for re-elections for as long as their work is still required by the organization and provided, they are available to serve again.

## **8. NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

- a) National leadership meetings must be held at least once in every two weeks.
- b) National leadership is elected by the branch leadership teams' delegates at every national conference.
- c) National leadership team is the highest-decision making body of SAMSU

The national leadership team shall compose of

### **1. Executive National Leadership Team**

#### **a. President**

- Preside over NLT and NWT meetings
- Uphold and abide by the constitution
- Call meetings to order and adjourn meetings at the appropriate time
- Announce business according to the adopted meeting agenda
- Recognize members who are entitled to speak
- State and put to vote all questions that are legitimately raised, and announce the results of all votes
- Maintain order throughout the meeting and rule on points of order
- Head of all branch chairpersons
- Receives monthly updates from branch chairpersons
- Conduct the meeting expeditiously and in a fair manner

#### **b. Deputy President (DP)**

- Assisting the President in the club/society's activities, e.g. events and meetings
- Helping to oversee the club/society committee structure
- Running meetings in the absence of the club/society President, and taking accountability for decisions that are made.
- Completing any tasks as delegated by the President
- Helping to strengthen the relationship between the committee and members, and inspiring and encouraging them to achieve the club/society's agreed goals
- Representing the club/society to other groups and external organisations
- Completing any necessary paperwork

#### **c. Secretary General (SG)**

- Correspondence

- Meeting preparation and documentation
- Organising meetings
- Maintaining records
- Administration
- Answering and directing phone calls
- Ordering and maintaining supplies
- Supervising new employees
- Communication between committee members
- Filing
- Formulating presentations and reports
- Liaising with relevant organisations and clients
- Maintaining company schedules
- Make travel arrangements
- Takes monthly report from branch secretaries
- Head of all branch secretaries

**d. Deputy Secretary General (DSG)**

Assist the secretary general

- Work with the media and communication to ensure the information communicated to the public are a true reflection of the information from the office of the secretary general as the highest centre for communication

**e. Treasurer General (TG)**

- Budgeting
- Advise the board on financial strategy
- Fundraising
- Reporting
- Bookkeeping
- Financial management
- Financial policy development
- Generate financial reports
- Prepare timely financial reports
- Ensuring cash flow is adequate
- Filing Income tax returns
- General financial oversight
- Keeping financial records
- Produce financial statements
- Providing fundraising advice to the organization
- Risk management
- Audit
- Compliance
- Provide ideas for financing
- Recruit the next treasurer
- Strategic planning
- Receives monthly updates from branch treasurers
- Head of all branch treasurers

## **2. Non-executive Leadership Team**

### **a. Head of Academic Transformation**

- Arrange programs to promote academic excellence
- Research about possible bursaries and sponsorship for unfunded students
- Arrange for mentorships and networking for academic purposes

### **b. Head of Health, Gender and Wellness**

- Advocate for safety for students
- Advocate for a healthy lifestyle
- Arrange community outreach programs for health promotions with events organizer
- Arrange health promotion programs for members and other students
- Lead all health, gender and wellness officers in branches

### **c. Head of Sports and Recreation**

- Oversees sports and recreation activities that occurs inter-branches
- Updates the NLT on the status quo of the sports and recreation activities
- Lead all sports and recreation officers from branches
- Arrange equipment and all property needed for successful sports and recreation activities

### **d. Head of Media and Communication**

### **e. Head of Event Organizer**

## **9. NATIONAL WORKING TEAM MEETINGS**

- a) National working team shall comprise of the national leadership team and the branch leadership teams from all institutions affiliated to SAMSU.
- b) National working committee shall have a meeting in at least once in every month.
- c) Branch leadership teams must take mandates from the national working meetings.

## **10. BRANCH LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETINGS**

- a) Branch leadership teams must meet at least once a month.
- b) All members must abide by the branch leadership teams' meetings.
- c) BLT meeting shall follow the same procedures as the general rules of SAMSU meetings

### **3. Executive National Leadership Team**

#### **k. Chairperson**

- Chairs NLT and branch meetings
- Ensure branch resolutions are carried out
- Updates the president on branch developments
- Receives mandate from the president
- Represent the branch
- Member of the National Working Team

**l. Deputy Chairperson (DC)**

- Same as chairperson in the absence of the chairperson
- Head of branch disciplinary team

**m. Secretary**

- **Administrative Support:** Assist in the day-to-day operations of the branch by handling correspondence, scheduling appointments, and managing calendars. Prepare reports, presentations, and other documents as required.
- **Meeting Coordination:** Schedule and coordinate meetings, including preparing agendas, taking minutes, and disseminating relevant information to attendees. Ensure that all necessary materials and resources are available and that meeting rooms are prepared.
- **Record Management:** Maintain accurate and up-to-date records, including filing, archiving, and retrieving documents as needed. Ensure proper storage and security of confidential information.
- **Communication and Correspondence:** Serve as a primary point of contact for internal and external stakeholders, including clients, staff, and senior management. Answer inquiries, provide information, and handle requests in a professional and timely manner.
- **Policy and Procedure Compliance:** Adhere to established policies and procedures, ensuring that the branch operates in accordance with organizational guidelines. Keep updated on any changes and communicate them effectively to relevant parties.
- Updates the secretary general monthly on the status quo of the branch
- Receives mandates from the secretary general
- Advise secretary general on developments needed for the progress of the organisation
- **Financial Management:** Assist in budget preparation and monitoring, including tracking expenses, reconciling accounts, and processing invoices and payments. Collaborate with the finance department as necessary.
- **Event Coordination:** Plan and coordinate branch events, workshops, and training sessions. Arrange logistics, invitations, and materials, ensuring a smooth and successful event

**n. Deputy Secretary**

- Assist the secretary

**o. Treasurer**

- Fundraising
- Budgeting
- Administer funds
- Update the Treasurer General
- Receive mandate from Treasurer General
- Record keeping of all financial matters and transactions

**4. Non-executive Leadership Team**

**p. Academic Transformation Officer**

- Promote academic excellence
- Assist students with finding bursaries and sponsorship
- Updates head of Academic Transformation



- Receive mandate from Head of Academic Transformation Officer
- q. Health, Gender and Wellness
- Promote good health for members
  - Arrange community outreach with events organizer
  - Update Health of Health, Gender and Wellness
  - Receive mandate from the Head of Health, Gender and Wellness
- s. Media and Communication
- Maintain the good public image of the organisation
  - Receive mandate from Head of Media and Communication
  - Update the head of Media and Communication
- t. Event Organizer
- Organizes branch events
  - Update national event organizer
  - Receive mandate from national even organizer

#### **11. BRANCH MEETINGS**

- a) Branch leadership teams are in charge of the branch meetings
- b) Meetings are called by the branch secretary in consultation with the branch chairperson.
- c) All meetings are chaired by the branch chairperson or deputy chairperson in the absence if the chairperson.
- d) Treasurer will give annual financial report at every elective branch annual general meeting.

#### **12. NOTICES OF THE MEETING**

- a) The office of the secretary must release notice of the meeting at least seven days before the meeting indicating the agenda, date, time and venue of the meeting.
- b) Members who are going to miss the meeting shall have to send their apologies to the office of secretary.

#### **13. QUORUMS**

- a) At least 50% of the total members expected to attend each meeting shall be required to constitute a quorum for the meeting to start.

#### **14. PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS**

- a) The chairperson/president shall chair meetings with secretaries/secretary general taking minutes.
- b) The treasurer/treasurer general shall give financial report, fundraising plan and the financial position of the organization.
- c) The secretary shall be expected to have minutes of the previous meeting at every meeting.
- d) Roll call and apologies shall be recorded at every meeting.

- e) If the first 15 minutes lapses before the meeting starts at the time scheduled for it to start, the meeting shall be postponed to no later than 14 working days,
- f) In the postponed meeting, the meeting shall continue without a quorum.

#### **CHAPTER 4 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND UNIVERSITY BRANCHES**

##### **15. NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The national leadership team shall compose of

- 1. Executive National Leadership Team
  - a. President
  - b. Deputy President (DP)
  - c. Secretary General (SG)
  - d. Deputy Secretary General (DSG)
  - e. Treasurer General (TG)
- 2. Non-executive Leadership Team
  - f. Head of Academic Transformation
  - g. Head of Health, Gender and Wellness
  - h. Head of Sports and Recreation
  - i. Head of Media and Communication
  - j. Head of Event Organizer

##### **16. NATIONAL WORKING TEAM**

- a) National working team (NWT) shall compose of the national leadership team and the branch chairpersons and secretaries.
- b) The NWT are involved in the day to day running of the organization.

##### **17. BRANCH LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The branch leadership team (BLT) shall compose of:

- 3. Executive National Leadership Team
  - k. Chairperson
  - l. Deputy Chairperson (DC)
  - m. Secretary
  - n. Deputy Secretary
  - o. Treasurer
- 4. Non-executive Leadership Team
  - p. Academic Transformation
  - q. Health, Gender and Wellness
  - r. Sports and Recreation
  - s. Media and Communication
  - t. Event Organizer

##### **18. CO-OPTION, DEPLOYMENT AND DISBANDMENT**

- a) The national leadership team shall have the powers to disband branches that any member should the needs arise
- b) The national leadership team is the only structure with the powers to deploy or co-opt.
- c) Branch leadership can request in writing to the secretary general if they wish to co-opt

## ***CHAPTER 5 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES***

### **19. CODE OF CONDUCT**

- a) All members are expected to be honest, subordinate and loyal to the organization
- b) Bullying and harassment are prohibited
- c) All members must respect each other regardless of their positions, backgrounds or otherwise.
- d) Professionalism and medical ethics shall guide the conduct of the members

### **20. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

- a) All members who act outside this constitution shall face disciplinary hearing.
- b) The national leadership team shall appoint the disciplinary committee led by the deputy president.
- c) First offending member shall receive a verbal warning.
- d) A repetition of the same offence shall result in the member being given a written warning.
- e) Third time of a similar offence shall subject the member to a disciplinary hearing.

### **21. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

- a) Outcomes of the disciplinary hearing shall be suspension or expulsion.
- b) Members shall be suspended through a letter from the secretary general and deputy chairperson
- c) Expelled members shall re-apply for membership after a period of one year by send a motivational letter and apology to the secretary general office.

## ***CHAPTER 6 FINANCES AND PROPERTY***

### **22. INCOME AND PROPERTY**

- a) All incomes and property of SAMSU shall be owned by SAMSU.
- b) No member shall own any property or income of SAMSU

### **23. FINANCES AND REPORT**

- a) The branch treasurers are responsible for preparing the financial affairs of SAMSU and send them to the Treasurer General every month.
- b) The treasurer general is responsible for budget allocation
- c) The treasurer general is responsible for preparing the financial statements of SAMSU and submit all requirements to comply with all bodies concerned (e.g. SARS, DSD)
- d) The treasurer must regularly update the chairperson and secretary on the financial position of the organization.

- e) The president, secretary general and the treasurer general shall have the signatory powers to every transaction on behalf of the organization.
- f) The president, secretary and treasurer shall open the bank account in the name of the organization

**CHAPTER 7 AMMENDMENTS AND DISSOLUTION**

**24. AMMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION**

- a) Amendments to this constitution can only take place at an elective annual general meeting by means of two third majority of votes in favour of the motion to amend this constitution.
- b) After every amendment, the national leadership team must approve and adopt the amended constitution through the signature of the president and the secretary general.
- c) Secretary general shall be responsible for typing the amended constitution.

**25. DISSOLUTION OF THE ORGANIZATION**


- 26. SAMSU can only be dissolved when there are reasonable and undeniable facts that it is no longer of use to it members.
- 27. A two third majority of votes will be required at the annual national elective conference to dissolve SAMSU.
- 28. All incomes and properties of SAMSU shall be donated to another organization with similar objectives should a decision to dissolve SAMSU be made.
- 29. Before it can be dissolved, it must pay off all its debts.

**30. ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

- a) This constitution was adopted by SAMSU members and approved by the national leadership team on the 05<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.
- b) Signatures

Secretary General

Ambrose Lekalakala

  
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President

Thato Masekoa

  
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