

**The
Constitution
of the
International Students' Union
of
Østfold University College (ISU HIOF)**



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I. Letters of Introduction from the Architects of the Constitution:

August, 2011:

In early June, 2011, Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh (Vice President of Academic Affairs and Welfare, ISU Norway) contacted the International Office at the Østfold University College for establishing a local branch of ISU, namely ISU HIOF at the Østfold University College. The International Office supported the initiative and forwarded the communication to the 14 international students currently enrolled at the Østfold University College.

Out of the 14 students, three students took interest in establishing ISU HIOF (The International Students' Union of Østfold University College), namely, Nikolay Pukhovskiy (Russia), Manish Shrestha (Nepal), and Satya Ram Twanabasu (Nepal).

Nikolay P. and Manish Sh. worked on the draft of the constitution and sent the first draft to Mashhood A. Sh. on 19th July, 2011. Mashhood A. Sh. sent the comments and suggestion back the same day, while Satya R. T. also joined the work on the constitution draft. Later there were several telephonic and email discussions over the constitution between Mashhood A. Sh. and the three students from HIOF (Satya R. T., Nikolay P., and Manish Sh.).

Satya R. T., Nikolay P. and Manish Sh., sent the second draft to Mashhood A. Sh. on 26th July, 2011.

The constitution draft was presented to the General Assembly on 19th August, 2011. Thirty One (31) students were present, and the constitution was approved and accepted with two-third majority, with minor changes, as the constitution of ISU HIOF. The ISU HIOF was officially established as soon as the constitution was approved.

II. Constitution

ARTICLE 1: Organization

- 1.1 The organization to which this Constitution refers is known as The International Students' Union of Østfold University College, abbreviated and referred to hereafter as "ISU HIOF".
- 1.2 ISU HIOF is an independent, democratic, non-religious, non-racial, non-partisan, nonprofit, student-run organization committed to the interests of all international students studying at the Østfold University College.
- 1.3 ISU HIOF shall consist of Legislative authority – General Assembly and Executive authority – Executive Board.
- 1.4 General Assembly shall consist of all ISU HIOF members, which is the primary-decision making body of ISU HIOF.
- 1.5 ISU HIOF embraces diversity and welcomes all international students to its activities and proceedings. ISU HIOF does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, gender, political or sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, language fluency, or country of origin.
- 1.6 The official language of ISU HIOF is English.
- 1.7 ISU HIOF is an autonomous part of ISU Norway.
- 1.8 The Executive Board shall enforce the decisions of the General Assembly.
- 1.9 The Executive Board shall consist of President, Vice-President, Public Relations, Academic Affairs, and Welfare Officer, Secretary, Treasurer, Webmaster, and three (3) Organizing Officers.
- 1.10 ISU HIOF shall secure funding for its activities from such sources as: the ISU Norway, Student Parliament, the National Secretariat, SAIH, LNU, individual donations and applications to other funding organizations.
- 1.11 ISU HIOF shall operate a bank account with any Bank of choice, where all funds of ISU HIOF shall be kept.

ARTICLE 2: Objectives

- 2.1 The main objective of the ISU HIOF is to ensure the rights and welfare of the current and the future international students at the Østfold University College.

- 2.2 To oppose and bring to light any discrimination, injustice, inequality or intolerance that obstructs the achievement of these purposes above.
- 2.3 Represent the interest of all international students for the concerns including, but not limited to, general welfare, accommodation, language etc.
- 2.4 ISU HIOF, where deemed necessary or appropriate, shall aid, assist, collaborate, or participate in actions, activities, or events of diverse nature, that advances ISU HIOF as an organization, improve the quality of life of international students, or are in keeping with the bylaws or intentions of the Constitution.
- 2.5 Keep contact with and assist other organizations with similar or compatible objectives.
- 2.6 Help the international students in settling down, and guidance throughout their stay in Norway.
- 2.7 Promote unity amongst international students in HIOF, socially, culturally and otherwise.
- 2.8 Maintain good relations between international students and the community in which they live and study.
- 2.9 Organize and participate in different activities and events for the international students at HIOF.

ARTICLE 3: Membership

- 3.1 A member of ISU HIOF is a student with a valid HIOF student ID and meeting one of the following requirements:
 - 3.1.1 Any student not holding a Norwegian citizenship.
 - 3.1.2 Any student holding a dual - citizenship.
 - 3.1.3 Any student with at least one parent of non-Norwegian descent and who has notified both ISU HIOF and Student Board that he is a member of ISU HIOF.
- 3.2 All members (according to Article 3.1) shall have the right to vote and the right to file for candidature as ISU HIOF Executive Board members.
- 3.3 Any Norwegian (having both parents of Norwegian descent) student of Østfold University College can be a member of ISU HIOF (with approval of the President or the two-third majority of the Executive board). He/she shall have all the member rights (except for the voting rights during General Assembly) and can also be elected as Executive Board member under Article 4.26.

- 3.4 All members shall be entitled to participate in ISU General Assembly (see Article 4) and all activities arranged by ISU HIOF.
- 3.5 The ISU Executive Board, with two-third majority has the right to ban members from activities for a period of up to 4 weeks. Further exclusion will be subject to approval by the ISU HIOF General Assembly.

ARTICLE 4: Legislative Authority (ISU HIOF General Assembly)

- 4.1 The General Assembly is the primary decision-making body of ISU HIOF. It will carry out and approve changes in the Constitution of ISU HIOF (with two-third majority), and elect the Executive Board.
- 4.2 There shall be at least one General Assembly per semester as soon as this is considered convenient by the Executive board.
- 4.3 A General Assembly is called either by the President, or the two-third majority of the Executive members or any member who obtains 10% of the members' signatures for support.
- 4.4 Notice will be sent to the all ISU HIOF members at least 10 days before the GA.
- 4.5 An agenda must be available to all members at least 10 days before the GA.
- 4.6 It is the responsibility of the Executive members to ensure that the General Assembly is advertised explicitly among the international students, so that a maximum number of members participate.
- 4.7 The GA shall be opened by the President.
- 4.8 The Executive Board will appoint a chairperson; subject to approval by the GA.
- 4.9 The GA will approve and follow the agenda.
- 4.10 The Executive Board will present report about activities performed and the ISU HIOF's financial status. Other topics can be included on request.
- 4.11 All participants in the GA shall have the right to speak. Speakers shall address the GA through the chairperson.
- 4.12 The chairperson has the right to remove 'the right to speak' from any participant who disrupts or obstructs the proceeding of the GA.
- 4.13 Speakers shall adhere to the matter being considered. The Chairperson shall bring back to order any speaker failing to do this.

Voting Procedures during the General Assembly

- 4.14 For a ballot to be valid there must be the presence of at least 9 ISU HIOF members with the voting right.
- 4.15 The variety of alternatives for discussion about a particular subject shall be put forward to the GA during the time allocated. A discussion will follow the suggestions made.
- 4.16 A vote shall be taken for the preferred option. Any option that receives at least more than 50 percent of the votes (excluding abstentions) shall be chosen.
- 4.17 If there are more than 2 alternatives and none of the options receives at least more than 50 percent of the votes, there shall be a consecutive ballot between the two alternatives which received most votes during the first ballot.
- 4.18 No interruptions shall be allowed during the vote or the count.
- 4.19 Secret ballots shall be taken on request by any 1 member (with voting rights) of the GA.
- 4.20 A voting committee consisting of at least two independent persons shall be appointed by the General Assembly. The voting committee shall be responsible for counting of the votes.

Election of the Executive Board

- 4.21 The Executive is elected by the General Assembly at the beginning of the semester. The President shall be elected at the General Assembly of the autumn semester.
- 4.22 Any member can file for candidature in the Executive Board (See also article 3.3 and 4.26)
- 4.23 Nominated candidates must either be present or have indicated their willingness to work in the Executive Board in written form to the General Assembly.
- 4.24 All elections for Executive members shall be by secret ballot.
- 4.25 Nominations and elections of each position shall be done separately in the following order: 'President', 'Vice-President', 'Public Relations, Academic Affairs, and Welfare Officer', 'Secretary', 'Treasurer', 'Web-Master', and three (3) 'Organizing Officers'.
- 4.26 Any Norwegian student can be elected as Secretary, Web-Master, and Organizing Officer.

- 4.27 If a position remains vacant after elections, the Executive Board may appoint a member for this position. Notice shall be given to all members after the appointment.
- 4.28 Executive members can be removed from their position by a two-thirds majority during an Executive meeting in case of:
- 4.28.1 Economic frauds (which will be reported to the police).
 - 4.28.2 Actions contrary to the interests of ISU HIOF.
 - 4.28.3 Actions damaging the ISU HIOF organization.
 - 4.28.4 Failing to attend Executive meetings on a regular basis.
 - 4.28.5 Taking actions/decisions without the approval of the President, or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
 - 4.28.6 Having contributed very little, or not at all, by the middle of semester.
 - 4.28.7 Failing to take transparent, unbiased and professional minutes of the meetings (applies to the Secretary or whoever takes the minutes of the meetings, as delegated by the President)
- 4.29 If an Executive position becomes vacant after the removal or resignation of an Executive member the Executive may appoint a member for this position. Notice shall be given to all members after the appointment.
- 4.30 The election procedure can be changed by the election committee if considered appropriate. Changes are subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 5: Executive Authority (The Executive Board)

- 5.1 The Executive Board members shall be elected at the General Assembly (See also Article 4.27 and 4.29).
- 5.2 The Executive Board members shall hold at least one meeting in two months.

Obligations of the Executive Board members

- 5.3 General obligations of the Executive Board members:
- 5.3.1 ISU HIOF Executive members are responsible for taking initiative in proposing specific tasks and ensuring that they are carried out in furtherance of the Objectives of ISU HIOF.
 - 5.3.2 The Executive members should be involved in decision-making processes that pertain to any international students at the Østfold University College.

- 5.3.3 The Executive members should be loyal to ISU HIOF.
- 5.3.4 It is the responsibility of every Executive member to know, observe, and enforce the bylaws and the intentions of the Constitution.
- 5.3.5 Executive Board members are obliged to attend Executive Board meetings. In case of absence they have to inform the President.
- 5.3.6 The Executive Board shall approve two representatives for National Assembly (President and Vice-President, preferably).
- 5.3.7 Executive Board members are obliged to attend Executive meetings, unless extenuating circumstances arise. In case of absence they have to inform the President.
- 5.3.8 Provide all members with information about ISU HIOF and ISU activities as soon as possible.
- 5.3.9 Any Executive member can access and use the email address, Facebook, and any other social media account of the organization, with approval from the President or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
- 5.3.10 The public content of ISU HIOF (on website, blog, Facebook, etc.) needs to be approved either by the President, or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
- 5.3.11 The agenda for the Executive meetings needs to be approved by the President or the two-third majority of the Executive members.

Obligations of the PRESIDENT

- 5.4 General obligations of the President:
 - 5.4.1 Represent ISU HIOF to local authorities.
 - 5.4.2 Delegate responsibilities.
 - 5.4.3 Acting as chairperson at ISU HIOF Executive meetings and General Assemblies.
 - 5.4.4 Motivate, assist and navigate Executive Board members in their tasks.
 - 5.4.5 Representation of ISU HIOF at meetings of the ISU Norway.
 - 5.4.6 Act as representative of, and prominent spokesperson for, the ISU HIOF at various forums.
 - 5.4.7 Endorses financial decisions.

- 5.4.8 The President shall be responsible for scheduling, managing, and leading Executive meetings. The President can delegate this responsibility to any other Executive member, at his or her discretion.
- 5.4.9 Sign the bank account and all other official documents and papers.
- 5.4.10 Signs off on minutes.

Obligations of the VICE-PRESIDENT

- 5.5 General obligations of the Vice-President:
 - 5.5.1 Assist the President in all listed duties.
 - 5.5.2 Function as President in the absence of the President. In this case the Vice-President will receive all rights and duties of the President until the most immediate elections, where a new President is necessarily elected once more.
 - 5.5.3 Serve as integral part of the Executive, assisting other Executive members in ensuring that the goals, objectives, and intentions of the ISU HIOF are acted upon and fulfilled in a reasonable period of time.
 - 5.5.4 Representation of ISU HIOF at meetings of the ISU Norway.
 - 5.5.5 Report directly to the President.

Obligations of the PUBLIC RELATIONS, ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, AND WELFARE OFFICER

- 5.6 General obligations of the Public Relations, Academic Affairs, and Welfare Officer:
 - 5.6.1 Be responsible for monitoring the policy of HIOF regarding international students and inform the Executive members about them.
 - 5.6.2 Serve as a responsible person for the reception and presentation of the petitions from the international students to the President.
 - 5.6.3 Act a first person of contact for students who have concerns about student life, academics, housing or other issues that relate to their quality of life as a student at HIOF.
 - 5.6.4 Be responsible for helping and guiding students in any practical problems they may face at the HIOF.
 - 5.6.5 Cooperate with other Executive members to prepare and publish articles about the members and the ISU HIOF.

Obligations of the SECRETARY

5.7 General obligations of the Secretary:

- 5.7.1 Keep and take care of ISU HIOF correspondence.
- 5.7.2 Send the notices and agendas on time.
- 5.7.3 Write the reports of all meetings, distributing them to the Executive members and noting the attendance at the Executive Board meetings.
- 5.7.4 Present the reports of the previous meeting for the approval and signature to the President.
- 5.7.5 Taking transparent, unbiased and professional minutes of the meetings.
- 5.7.6 Maintain an updated list of all ISU HIOF members.
- 5.7.7 Assisting the President in writing reports.

Obligations of the TREASURER

5.8 General obligations of the Treasurer:

- 5.8.1 Maintain and control the finances of ISU HIOF.
- 5.8.2 Work on fund-raising activities.
- 5.8.3 Write detailed financial report and present them to the Executive Board at the end of every semester.
- 5.8.4 Present the budget and the accounts at the General Assembly.
- 5.8.5 Sign the bank account in addition to the President (if needed).
- 5.8.6 Manage receipts and return records.
- 5.8.7 Advise the President on financial matters.

Obligations of the WEB-MASTER

5.9 General obligations of the Web-Master:

- 5.9.1 Update and maintain the ISU HIOF homepage.
- 5.9.2 Ensure to reach as many members as possible with information via the internet.
- 5.9.3 Maintain an updated e-mail list of all members.
- 5.9.4 Maintains and update the ISU HIOF website with current information regarding upcoming events, social welfare, health concerns, and any other pertinent information for international students.

- 5.9.5 Keep private information of the ISU members secure (on the website).
- 5.9.6 Strive to improve the quality of the ISU HIOF website to the best of his or her ability.
- 5.9.7 Be responsible for maintaining the Facebook group/profile/page, and other online visibility.

Obligations of the ORGANIZING OFFICERS

- 5.10 General obligations of Organizing Officers:
 - 5.10.1 Inform members about all ISU HIOF activities.
 - 5.10.2 Co-ordinate and arrange all ISU HIOF activities.
 - 5.10.3 Present a financial report of their activities to the Treasurer.
 - 5.10.4 Write the reports of events/activities.
 - 5.10.5 Be the link between ISU HIOF members and the Executive Board.

Article 6: Status of the Constitution

- 6.1 The Constitution shall be made available to all the members.
- 6.2 The Constitution shall be binding on the Executive board and all members of the organization.
- 6.3 Issues, measures, or decisions found to be strictly contrary to the language or intent of the Constitution shall require the formal amendment of the Constitution.
- 6.4 Any action contrary to the Constitution shall be subject to approval by two thirds of the General Assembly
- 6.5 Procedure for amendment of the Constitution:
 - 6.5.1 Amendment proposals should be sent to the Executive Board at least 10 days before the GA.
 - 6.5.2 The Executive members should approve the constitutional changes to be proposed in the General Assembly by simple majority, before calling for the General Assembly. The Constitutional changes cannot be proposed in the General Assembly without the prior approval of the majority of the Executive members.
 - 6.5.3 The support of at least two thirds of the members present at the General Assembly shall be required to amend the Constitution.

ARTICLE 7: Dissolution of ISU HIOF

7.1 Dissolution of ISU HIOF is possible if all members with voting right are present at General Assembly and unanimously decide to dissolve ISU HIOF. All property and resources will be returned to their origin.