

SAMPLE BY-LAWS of XYZ University Association of Black Journalists

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the XYZ University Association of Black Journalists, believing that students working toward degrees in journalism at the University of XYZ should work together under the auspice of the NABJ in the education of its members with respect to the journalism field, as well as the pursuit of scholarship, internships and professional opportunities, do ordain and establish these By-Laws for the XYZ University Association of Black Journalists.

ARTICLE I: Name & Symbol

- Section 1** The name of the organization shall be the XYZ University Association of Black Journalists.
- Section 2** In this document, the National Association of Black Journalists shall also be referred to by the acronym "NABJ" and by the term "Association." And, the University of XYZ shall also be referred to by the acronym "XYZ" and by the term "University."
- Section 3** The XYZ University Association of Black Journalists shall also be known by the acronym "XYZABJ." The XYZABJ may also be referred to in this document as the "Chapter" or "Organization."

ARTICLE II: Purpose

- Section 1** The purpose of the XYZABJ, in terms of its relationship with the NABJ, shall be:
- (A) To work under the auspice of the NABJ in accord with such officers as the student representative, regional director and regional student representative.
 - (B) To educate its members and the University's community about the history of the NABJ, as well as the issues the Association seeks to address in the journalism industry.
 - (C) To interact and collaborate with fellow student chapters in journalism-related matters, and assist in the establishment of new student chapters.

- (D) To network with both aspiring and professional journalists.
- (E) To have representation at both the regional conference and national convention each year so that the Chapter may be publicized, and enlightened about the inner-workings of NABJ.

Section 2 The purpose of the XYZABJ, in terms of its relationship with its members, shall be:

- (A) To establish a strong union among black students pursuing degrees in journalism at the University of XYZ for the purpose of receiving guidance from both the NABJ and its professional affiliate chapters.
- (B) To promote academic excellence at the University of XYZ.
- (C) To meet for the purpose of exchanging journalism-related ideas and information through workshops, symposiums and lectures.
- (D) To inform members of journalism-related workshops, conferences and conventions, and assist members with short and long-range career planning.
- (E) To serve as a clearinghouse for journalism-related internships, jobs, scholarships, grants and awards.
- (F) To honor excellence and outstanding achievements in journalism by members and chapter alumni.
- (G) To commend those who positively address matters of diversity in the media regarding hiring, promotion, retention and coverage.

Section 3 The purpose of the XYZABJ, in terms of fostering excellence in journalism, shall be:

- (A) To protect freedom of speech and freedom of the press, as granted by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
- (B) To promote high standards and ethical behavior in the practice of journalism.
- (C) To exchange ideas and information with people and organizations concerned with people of color in the media.
- (D) To critique the media's portrayals of minorities in their respective presentations.
- (E) To work with local high schools to identify potential journalists, encourage their enrollment at the XYZ or other institutions with strong journalism programs, and teach them the benefits of the NABJ.

Section 4 The purpose of the XYZBJ, in terms of its relationship with the University's Journalism Department, the University and surrounding community, shall be:

- (A) To advocate for curricula, equipment and facilities that would properly prepare XYZ journalism graduates for their respective careers.
- (B) To work with professors and administrators to make the curricula of the University's Journalism Department relevant to the coverage of minority communities.
- (C) To promote a diverse faculty within the Journalism Department.
- (D) To sensitize local media to institutional racism in their coverage and employment practices.
- (E) To assist the local community in its understanding of media.

Section 5 The XYZ ABJ, as an entity, may take positions or act on issues of social, collegiate or professional concern only after approval by the majority of its members.

ARTICLE III: Membership

Section 1 Membership in the XYZABJ shall be open to students seeking degrees in Journalism, as well as students seeking degrees in English, Radio, Television & Film, Photography and Communication Design at the University of North Texas whom also:

- (A) Are in good academic standing with the University of XYZ.
- (B) Pay in full the annual membership dues, as dictated by Article VII, Section 2B and Article VII, Section 2C.
- (C) Are paid members of the NABJ.
- (D) Actively participate, and fulfill given duties, in at least one standing committee.
- (E) Do not act outside the mission of the NABJ or XYZABJ to the detriment of either entity.

Section 2 Membership in the XYZABJ is open to students without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability.

Section 3 Members in good standing shall enjoy full membership privileges, including the right to vote, hold office and chair committees.

- Section 4** The XYZABJ Executive Board shall be the Chapter's final authority on any matters pertaining to the interpretation of qualifications and censorship of members.
- Section 5** Annual dues are set by the XYZABJ Executive Board prior to the start of the fiscal year. No dues shall be refunded to any Member whose membership terminates for any reason.
- Section 6** Membership shall not be a prerequisite for participation in the functions of the Organization. However, exceptions to this rule are elections and other events so declared by the XYZABJ Executive Board.
- Section 7** Benefits of membership, except voting privileges in elections, shall be extended to all Chapter advisers, but payment of dues is not a prerequisite.
- Section 8** Honorary membership in the XYZABJ shall be open to persons who have made superior contributions to the field of journalism or the XYZABJ.
- (A) Such persons may be nominated by a member of the XYZABJ during a meeting of the general assembly, and must be approved by a majority vote of members present.
 - (B) Honorary members are eligible to participate in all XYZABJ functions and receive all official XYZ NABJ communiqués.
 - (C) Honorary members shall not be required to pay membership dues.
 - (D) Honorary memberships shall not expire.
 - (E) Honorary members shall not be eligible to vote.

ARTICLE IV: Membership Meetings

- Section 1** Meetings of the XYZABJ shall be held bi-weekly during the University's fall and spring academic semesters.
- Section 2** The XYZABJ fiscal year shall start at the beginning of the fall semester and conclude at the end of the spring semester.
- Section 3** The Executive Board shall determine the customary times, dates and places of XYZABJ general assembly meetings for that fiscal year prior to the beginning of the fall semester.
- Section 4** Meetings of the XYZ ABJ shall not be conducted on days the University sets aside for the observance of holidays or on days the University forbids extracurricular activities.
- Section 5** During the last meeting in April, the general assembly shall conduct elections, by which the Executive Board for the following fiscal year shall be chosen.

- Section 6** Special meetings may be called by the president, or at least three members of the Executive Board, for the purpose specified in the notice.
- Section 7** Notice of all XYZABJ meetings concerning the general assembly must be communicated at least 36 hours in advance.
- Section 8** Notice of XYZABJ elections, during which the general assembly will elect the Executive Board for the following fiscal year, shall be communicated at least 21 days in advance.
- Section 9** Modes by which the general assembly shall be informed of meetings and other notices shall be through written correspondence, telephone calls and/or email.
- Section 10** The presence of at least three officers and at least three members shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the organization.
- Section 11** Each member shall have the right to vote in person. There shall be no voting by proxy.
- Section 12** Any concerns of fraud that may have influenced the outcome of a referendum must be seconded by a member before action is taken. If the motion is seconded, there shall be an inquiry investigated by the Executive Board, which shall conclude within 14 business days, excluding days the University sets aside for holidays and days the University forbids extracurricular activities.
- (A) Any members of the Executive Board accused of committing fraud in the referendum shall be secluded from the investigation.
 - (B) Should more than half of the Executive Board be accused of committing fraud in the referendum, then the investigation shall be yielded to the faculty adviser.
 1. The accusers, accused and voluntary witnesses shall submit signed statements within three days of knowing of the alleged act to the faculty adviser.
 2. The faculty adviser shall then try to mediate a resolution.
 3. If the faculty adviser fails to bring about a resolution, then within three days of the conclusion of talks, the faculty adviser shall make copies of the statements, mail the statements to the regional director, and distribute the statements to the membership at the next meeting of the general assembly.

ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Section 1** The XYZABJ shall be presided by its Executive Board, which shall consist of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, director of public relations, director of special affairs and Journalism Department faculty adviser, with the option of a broadcast and print adviser.

- (A)** The president shall be the chief executive officer of the [XYZABJ](#), and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Calling and presiding over the meetings of the Organization, as well as the Executive Board.
 2. Implementing this Constitution and decisions made by the Executive Board and special committees.
 3. Having discretionary power in working decisions that can neither be conveniently submitted to the general assembly nor Executive Board. However, the president must notify the general membership of his actions within a week.
 4. Appointing chairpersons and members of standing committees as well as create ad hoc committees deemed necessary. He shall also have the power to remove chairpersons and members from such committees and terminate ad hoc committees for the duration of his term.
 5. Acting as an ex officio of every committee.
 6. Requesting information from the Executive Board, standing committees and members, as deemed necessary to operate the Organization effectively and efficiently.
 7. Overseeing all external affairs concerning the Organization by acting as its official spokesperson.
 8. Serving as a conduit for relaying information between the Chapter and other parties within the National Association of Black Journalists – most namely other student chapters, the national student representative, the regional director, the regional student representative, and the deputy student representative.
- (B)** The vice president shall be the deputy executive officer of the [XYZABJ](#), and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Assisting the president and assuming the duties of president in his absence.
 2. Establishing connections with on-campus organizations for the purpose of developing partnerships within the Chapter's mission.
 3. Establishing connections with off-campus organizations for the purpose of developing partnerships for community service within the Chapter's mission.
- (C)** The secretary shall be the chief record keeper of the [XYZABJ](#), and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Keeping records of all meetings of the Executive Board and general assembly, and making sure such records are archived orderly.
 2. Maintaining formal records of all correspondence and action taken by the Organization, and making sure such records are archived orderly.
 3. Keeping membership lists.
 4. Serving as a conduit for relaying information between the Executive Board and general assembly.
 5. Serving as the sergeant at arms during all meetings, as the chief interpreter of Robert's Rules of Order and the Constitution of the [XYZNABJ](#).

- (D)** The treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the [XYZABJ](#), and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Maintaining a complete, formal record of all monies received and expended by the Organization during the school year.
 2. Receiving and disbursing funds on behalf of the Organization, on order from the president and/or Executive Board.
 3. Providing a formal record of all monies received and expended by the Organization during the school year within a timely manner, as determined by the president.
- (F)** The director of public relations shall be the chief marketer of the [XYZ ABJ](#) and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Issuing news releases about the Chapter to campus and local media and specifically targeted campus-based organizations for the purpose of promotion.
 2. Inviting guests to Chapter meetings and ensuring appropriate accommodations are made for such guests.
 3. Formally thanking guests and organizations for attending Chapter meetings and providing services.
 4. Collecting material on Chapter events for historical record.
- (G)** The director of special affairs shall be the deputy spokesperson and lead event planner, and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Coordinating the time, date and place of all [XYZABJ](#) activities.
 2. Inviting guests to Chapter meetings and ensuring appropriate accommodations are made for such guests.
 3. Formally thanking guests and organizations for attending Chapter meetings and providing services.
 4. Recording information on Chapter events for historical record.
 5. Taking photographs at [XYZABJ](#) functions.
- (H)** The Journalism Department faculty adviser shall be the chief consultant of the [XYZ ABJ](#) and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Making known to the Executive Board actions taken by the Chapter that are neither in line with its mission nor the mission of the National Association of Black Journalists.
 2. Promoting an atmosphere and learning environment that is advantageous to members seeking degrees in Journalism, as well as English, Radio, Television & Film, Photography and Communication Design.
- (I)** The broadcast adviser shall a deputy consultant to the [XYZABJ](#) and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Generating ideas for programming that would properly instruct Chapter members as to the nature of the broadcast industry.
 2. Keeping Chapter members abreast of changes occurring within the broadcast industry.
 3. Alerting the Chapter of potential guests it may want to invite to speak before the general assembly.

- (J) The print adviser shall be a deputy consultant to the XYZABJ and shall have the responsibilities of:
1. Generating ideas for programming that would properly instruct Chapter members as to the nature of the print industry.
 2. Keeping Chapter members abreast of changes occurring within the print industry.
 3. Alerting the Chapter of potential guests it may want to invite to speak before the general assembly.

Section 2 Each officer on the Executive Board must be a member of the XYZABJ and the NABJ.

Section 3 No person may hold more than two offices on the Executive Board concurrently.

Section 4 The Executive Board shall meet at least once before the beginning of the fiscal year, and then at least once a month until the conclusion of the fiscal year, as outlined in Article V, Section 2.

Section 5 Special Executive Board meetings may be called by the president or by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 6 The Executive Board may act when a quorum, consisting of no less than 60 percent of the Board, is present.

Section 7 The Executive Board shall have the power to set policy within the parameters of the Constitution, establish standing committees and pass resolutions. A majority of the officers present must approve such actions.

Section 8 Meetings by the Executive Board shall be recorded and explained to the full membership at the next meet general meeting.

Section 9 The Executive Board shall have the authority to rule on any emergency measures, but shall be required to inform the membership within a week of its actions.

Section 10 The Executive Board shall have no authority to disregard or amend any action approved by a vote of the general membership.

ARTICLE VI: Standing Committees

Section 1 There shall be standing committees that shall formulate policies that shall help dictate the direction of the Association. Such committees shall tend to such matters as bylaws, fiscal planning, media monitoring, membership, program, campus relations and community relations.

(A) The Fiscal Committee shall lead in the organization of fund-raisers and cooperate in the planning of events that may bring revenue to the Chapter.

(B) The Media Monitoring Committee shall:

1. Praise on-campus and local media for outstanding strides made to hire and promote people of color, as well as recognize

compelling work that exhibits the highest standards of journalism.

2. Nominate candidates for such Chapter awards as Officer of the Year, Member of the Year, New Member of the Year, Student Journalist of the Year, Professional Journalist of the Year and Teacher of the Year, as well as honorary awards.
3. Condemn on-campus and local media for discriminatory treatment of employees, shoddy journalism, and breaches in journalism ethics.

(C) The Program Committee shall organize a conference each year under a centralized theme that the XYZABJ shall host for the edification of its members, as well as other journalism majors, XYZ students who wish attend. The committee shall also oversee other chapter programs and special events.

(D) The Campus Relations Committee shall:

1. Suggest University events the Chapter can participate in, and partnerships the Chapter can make with other organizations for the sake of publicity.
2. Make recommendations as to how Chapter functions can appeal to journalism majors and University students who are not members of XYZABJ.

(E) The Constitution Committee shall

1. Consist of the secretary (chairman) and at least two (2) active members appointed by the President.
2. Propose needed changes to the Constitution.
3. Carefully review all proposed amendments
4. Circulate proposed amendments to the membership.

(F) The Community Relations Committee shall:

1. Pursue relationships with off-campus journalism associations for the benefit of Chapter members.
2. Arrange for the Chapter to assist non-profit organizations, as well as seek opportunities to promote NABJ to high school and other college students.

Section 2 The chairpersons and members of the committees shall be appointed by the president, according to Article IV, Section 1 A4.

Section 3 The president shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 4 By a majority vote, the Executive Board may establish additional standing or special committees.

ARTICLE VII: Finances

Section 1 The XYZABJ shall operate on a fiscal year that begins at the beginning of the fall semester and concludes at the end of the spring semester.

(A) Actions taken or money spent between the conclusion of the spring semester and the beginning of the fall semester shall be at the

discretion of the newly elected Executive Board and the applicable to the subsequent fiscal year.

Section 2 The XYZABJ dues shall pay for the administration of the Organization, its programs and other expenses the Executive Board deems appropriate or necessary.

(A) The XYZ ABJ dues structure shall be set by the Executive Board.

(B) A member's dues must be paid in full within one month of the first meeting of the fiscal year to gain the benefits of full membership in the Organization.

(C) A would-be member may pay his dues after the deadline, but the limitations of his membership, if any, must be dictated to him in writing by the Executive Board before payment is made.

Section 3 The funds of the XYZABJ shall be overseen by the treasurer.

Section 4 The president and faculty adviser shall also have access to XYZABJ funds.

Section 5 The treasurer shall continuously make an effort to keep the Organization's disbursements within its sum of money.

Section 6 All reimbursements from XYZABJ funds require a majority vote of approval at general assembly meetings.

Section 8 The XYZ ABJ shall be able to enter into contractual agreements, but only with the approval of a 51 percent majority vote by the general assembly.

(A) Contractual agreements are effective immediately upon the signature of the treasurer, president or faculty adviser.

(B) Contracts that do not include the signatures of the treasurer, president or faculty adviser shall not be binding and the XYZ NABJ shall not be responsible or liable. Verbal contracts shall be committed to writing.

Section 9 Money from XYZABJ funds may not be spent to support candidates vying for election to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VIII: Elections

Section 1 During the last XYZABJ meeting in April, the general assembly shall elect the Executive Board for the following fiscal year.

Section 2 A nominating committee consisting of at least three members appointed by the President shall submit a slate of candidates for election at the April meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Section 3 Each member of the XYZ NABJ in good standing shall be eligible to seek office.

Section 4 A member may be a candidate for no more than two (2) offices.

Section 4 Officers shall serve a one-year term.

- Section 5** No officer shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office.
- Section 6** Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot and tallied by the faculty adviser and at least three members appointed by the faculty adviser.
- Section 7** Votes may not be cast by proxy.

ARTICLE X: Succession

- Section 1** If the president is unable to complete his term of office, then he shall be succeeded by the vice president.
- Section 2** Should the offices of president and vice president become vacant simultaneously, then the remaining Executive Board members shall call for special elections within seven days. And the faculty adviser shall appoint an interim president.
- Section 3** Should an officer, other than the president, be unable to complete his term, a successor shall be chosen by the president.
 - (A)** A president's choice may be denied should a majority of the Executive Board find the nominee not in compliance with XYZABJ standards for office.

ARTICLE XI: Impeachment & Censure

- Section 1** Any member of the XYZABJ suspected of violating these By-Laws or the Constitution of the NABJ may be impeached and/or censured through the following process:
 - (A)** A member of the Chapter must submit a petition in writing to an Executive Board member, outlining alleged complaints about the accused member(s).
 - (B)** Within three days of receipt of the petition, the officer who received the complaint shall submit it in writing to the Executive Board and each member named in the complaint.
 - (C)** Within seven days of receipt of the petition, the Executive Board shall meet and decide by a simple majority if impeachment hearings shall begin.
 - 1.** The accused shall be notified of the time and place of the meeting at least 36 hours in advance.
 - 2.** The accused shall be able to speak on his behalf and present witnesses in his defense.
 - 3.** Should the accused not be able to attend the meeting, then representatives may be sent in stead.
 - 4.** Should the complainant or accused be a member of the Executive Board, then he shall reclude himself from the vote for or against impeachment.
 - 5.** If the Board votes for impeachment, then the Board may also vote by majority on the kind of temporary restrictions, if any, that shall be placed on the impeached until the matter is voted upon by the general assembly.

- (D) Should the Executive Board vote for impeachment, the matter shall be taken up at a meeting of the general assembly within 14 days.
1. The accused and the general membership shall be notified of the time and place of the meeting at least 36 hours in advance.
 2. The president, or officer designated by the president, shall preside over impeachment proceedings.
 3. The plaintiff(s) and defendant(s) shall be allotted equal time to present their cases to the general assembly.
 4. The vote of guilty or not guilty shall be tabulated according to Article IX, Section 2B.
 5. The tally for guilty must equate to two-thirds or more of the vote.
 6. Should the defendant(s) be found guilty of violating either the Chapter and/or NABJ Constitution, then the defendant(s) shall be excused from the meeting.
 7. The general assembly shall then discuss and vote, according to Article VIII, on different measures of censure that may be imposed on the guilty party.
 8. The guilty party is to be notified of the censure within 24 hours.

ARTICLE XIII: Parliamentary Authority

In all matters not provided for in the NABJ Constitution, NABJ Operating procedures and in the [XYZABJ](#) By-Laws shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly revised.

ARTICLE XIII: Amending the Constitution

Section 1 These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the [XYZ NABJ](#) Chapter by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, provided that notice has been given at a previous meeting or by mail. Without notice, the vote required for amending is a majority of the entire membership.

Section 2 Barring a remand by the regional director or national student representative, then the amendment shall take effect immediately, unless otherwise provided.

Adopted December 19, 2003