

United States Society Constitution

1 NAME

1.1 United States Society

The name of the Society shall be United States Society (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Society’).

2 AIMS

2.1 The Society is not-for-profit, meaning: the assets and income of the Society shall be applied solely in furtherance of the aims of the Society, and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Society except as bona fide compensation expenses incurred on behalf of the Society.

2.2 The aims of the Society shall be to:

- i. Provide a community for future, current and former University of Sydney students either undertaking American Studies or interested in American Studies in general
- ii. Foster informed discussion and engagement with United States politics, history, society and culture, and their relevance to Australia and the Indo-Pacific region
- iii. Promote awareness and understanding of the Australia-United States alliance, including through events, panels and discussions with academics, policymakers and industry professionals
- iv. Support exchange and international students from the United States by providing a welcoming social community and connection to American culture whilst studying at the University of Sydney

2.3 The Society will undertake the following activities to achieve its aims:

- i. Hold regular social events, including film nights, trivia and casual meetups, for students undertaking or interested in American Studies
- ii. Organise talks, panels and discussion groups on American politics, history, society and culture, and their relevance to Australia and the wider Indo-Pacific region
- iii. Produce, during semester time, regular communication via social media
- iv. Facilitate mentoring and networking opportunities between current students, alumni, and members of the broader American Studies and Australia-US policy community

3 **MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 Classes

The classes of annual membership shall be:

- i. Ordinary Membership
 - (a) All Ordinary Members of The University of Sydney Union shall be eligible for Ordinary Membership of the Society. An Ordinary Member must be a current Ordinary Member of the USU who has formally joined the Society and maintains a relevant affiliation to the USU, including current students of the University of Sydney
 - (b) Only Ordinary Members shall be entitled to:
 - i. Hold Executive positions within the Society;
 - ii. Nominate or second candidates for Executive positions; and
 - iii. Vote in Society elections, Meetings, or on any official Society motion
- ii. Associate Membership

All holders of a current and valid USU membership other than those who qualify for Ordinary Membership shall be eligible for Associate Membership of the Society. Associate Members are not eligible to hold Executive positions, vote in elections or vote at meetings of the Society.

iii. Honorary Membership

Honorary Membership can be granted to any person by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting. Honorary Membership may be terminated by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting. Honorary Members are only eligible to hold Executive positions, vote in elections, or vote at meetings of the Society if they qualify for Ordinary Membership of the Society and hold a current and valid USU membership.

3.2 Eligibility

- i. Applications for Ordinary Membership will not be processed prior to an Annual General Meeting if received after notice has been given for the Annual General Meeting, which is a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior as per 8.a.iii.
- ii. Applications for Ordinary Membership will not be processed prior to a General Meeting if received after notice has been given for the General Meeting, which is a minimum of seven (7) days prior as per 7.a.iii.

3.3 Membership Fees

There is no membership fee payable upon joining the Society. Upon registering through the appropriate channels, a person shall be deemed an *Ordinary Member* or *Associate Member* of the Society and henceforth be bound by this Constitution.

4.1 The elected members of the Executive shall consist of:

- i. a President
- ii. a Vice President
- iii. a Treasurer
- iv. a Secretary
- v. an Events Director
- vi. a General Executive

4.2 The appointed members of the Executive shall consist of:

- i. Up to two (2) Marketing/Design Officers

4.3 Appointments to the Executive of the Society shall be subject to the following:

- i. The elected members of the Executive shall appoint Ordinary Members to the appointed positions listed in Part 4.2 upon the approval of the AGM minutes by the Clubs and Societies Office of the University of Sydney Union.
- ii. Nominations for said positions shall remain open for at least fourteen (14) days.
- iii. Notice of available positions shall be given by the Secretary by inclusion of the particulars of the position in an email to the Society's database, and by other means as the Executive thinks appropriate.
- iv. Appointments shall be on the basis of merit.
- v. Elected members of the Executive must be members of the Society prior to the notice given for the Annual/General Meeting, which is a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior

5.1 Powers

The Executive shall have power to manage the Society in accordance with the Constitution

5.2 Duties

The duties of the Executives shall not be limited to those stipulated in Part 5. All executive members shall endeavour to assist the Society in any other fashion when and where required.

5.3 Attendance

Attendance of Executive Members at General Meetings is obligatory. Any Executive Member who does not attend two consecutive meetings without leave can be dismissed from the Executive by a two-thirds majority vote of those Ordinary Members and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership in attendance at a General Meeting.

5.4 Role of President

(a) The President shall:

- i. Plan the Society's activities in consultation with the Executive.
- ii. Liaise with the Executive and any Committees formed by the Society.
- iii. Call regular meetings of the Society and the Executive in accordance with the Constitution.
- iv. Chair any and all meetings of the Society *save* when there is a conflict of interest or attendance is impossible, in which case the Vice-President shall take the chair.
- v. In conjunction with the Executive, organise the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in accordance with the Constitution and ensure an adequate handover, including any documents and materials, to the following Executive.
- vi. Ensure that the Society maintains its aims through ensuring the regularity and quality of its events.

vii. Ensure that the rest of the Executive are fulfilling their responsibilities as outlined below.

viii. Represent the Society within and outside of the University where required.

5.5 Role of Vice-President

(a) The Vice-President shall:

- i. Assist the President in the execution of their duties and the planning of the Society's activities.
- ii. Take the Chair at any and all meetings of the Society when the President is absent or has a conflict of interest.
- iii. Oversee and coordinate the activities of the appointed Executive members and any subcommittees formed by the Society.
- iv. Ensure an adequate handover, including any relevant documents and materials, to the following Executive.

5.6 Role of Treasurer

(a) The Treasurer shall:

- i. Maintain the Society's finances in accordance with the Treasurer's Handbook produced by the Clubs and Societies Office of the University of Sydney Union.
- ii. Present Pre-Event, Post-Event, Other, and Capital Expenditure funding forms to the Clubs and Societies Office of the University of Sydney Union in accordance with the Treasurer's Handbook
- iii. Be responsible for all the budgeting of the Society, in coordination with the President for the finances of the Society in general and other Executive Members for specific events, including:

1. Producing at the start of each club year (i.e. October onwards) a budget for all proposed events and how they would fit under the Society's University of Sydney Union funding
 2. Producing documents pertaining to the extension of the funding cap if seen fit under point 5.6 (a) i).
- iv. Present to the Annual General Meeting of the Society a report detailing the financial activity and status of the Society.
 - v. Ensure an adequate handover, including any documents and materials, to the following Executive.

5.7 Role of Secretary

(a) The Secretary shall:

- i. Keep minutes of the proceedings of all Society meetings.
- ii. Maintain a list of current Ordinary Members, and a record of any Honorary Members in accordance with University of Sydney Union Guidelines, and make this list available to other Executive Members when and where required.
- iii. Conduct the correspondence of the Society.
- iv. Book meeting rooms of the Society.
- v. Maintain the Society's registration with the University of Sydney Union.
- vi. After all Meetings of the Society , submit the following relevant documents to the Clubs and Societies office:
 1. Minutes;
 2. Agenda;
 3. Attendance List;
 4. President's Annual Report;
 5. Executive List; and

6. Any other required documentation as needed.

5.8 Role of Events Director

(a) The Events Director shall:

- i. Organise/manage all social events of the Society
- ii. Assist in the organisation of inter-society social events in conjunction with the other Executives.
- iii. Ensure all events of the Society are as accessible, safe, inclusive, and equitable as possible
- iv. Complete and submit all required Risk Assessment Forms to the relevant USU Clubs & Societies channel (MyUSU as of 2026)
- v. Maintain accurate Event Attendance Lists for all society events and hand these directly to the Secretary for membership verification purposes.

5.9 Role of General Executive

(a) The General Executive(s) shall:

- i. Attend and actively participate in all Executive Committee meetings
- ii. Support the planning, promotion and delivery of Society events and activities
- iii. Assist other Executive members and portfolio holders in fulfilling their responsibilities as required
- iv. Assist with the recruitment, engagement and retention of Society members
- v. Undertake any other duties as reasonably delegated by the President or Executive Committee

5.10 Role of Marketing/Design Officer(s)

(a) The Marketing/Design Officer(s)

- i. Be responsible for all marketing of the Society

- ii. Give sufficient notice of all of the Society's *events* via email, social media, Union publications or a combination of all.
- iii. Manage all social media for the Society in consultation with the President.
- iv. Design and produce flyers and posters for all of the Society's events in conjunction with the relevant Executive organising a particular event
- v. Be responsible for the maintenance of the Society's website.

5.11 Role of Sponsorship Officer

(a) The Sponsorship Officer shall:

- i. Be responsible for gaining sponsorships from organisations internal and external to the University
- ii. Produce an annual Sponsorship Prospectus.
- iii. Assist and work directly with other Executive as required

6 **ORDINARY MEETINGS**

6.1 The Society shall hold a Ordinary Meetings as required.

6.2 Ordinary Meetings shall be called by the President, Secretary or Vice-President, or by the Secretary forthwith upon receipt of the written application of at least twenty percent (20%) of the Ordinary Members of the Society.

6.3 At least three (3) clear days' notice of the time and place of an Ordinary Meeting shall be given in one of the recognised publications of The University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's social media and, if possible, by a mail-out to all Members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

6.4 The President shall chair Ordinary Meetings. In the absence of the President, another Executive Member shall chair the Meeting.

- 6.5 Quorum at Ordinary Meetings shall be five (5) Ordinary Members if the Society's current membership is no greater than seventy (70) Ordinary Members, or ten (10) Ordinary Members if the Society's membership is greater than seventy (70) Ordinary Members. Quorum must include not less than three (3) Executive Members.
- 6.6 The agenda for an Ordinary Meeting shall include:
- i. Apologies and leaves of absence
 - ii. Minutes of the previous meeting
 - iii. Correspondence
 - iv. Reports of Executive Members
 - v. General Business
- 6.7 An Ordinary Meeting of the Society has power to carry motions relating to the affairs of the Society by a simple majority vote of those members present and voting, including:
- i. Giving direction to the Executive
 - ii. Determining the use of the finances and other assets of the Society
 - iii. Instituting Committees for any purpose of the Society and co-opting Society members onto any Committee

7 GENERAL MEETINGS

- 7.1 The Society shall hold General Meetings as required.
- 7.2 The Secretary may at any time, for any worthy purpose, call a General Meeting, and shall do so forthwith upon receipt of the written application of twenty percent (20%) of Ordinary Members of the Society stating the purposes for which the meeting is called. The business debated at a General Meeting shall be confined to the purposes named in the notice.

7.3 Except as required by C&S guidelines (Clause 9, 10, 12), the Secretary shall give at least seven (7) clear days' notice of the time and place of a General Meeting through one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's social media and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

7.4 Quorum at General Meetings shall be the lesser of one-third of the Ordinary Members or fifteen (15) Ordinary Members. If within thirty minutes from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be dissolved.

7.5 The procedure at all meetings shall follow the normal rules of debate.

7.6 The agenda for a General Meeting shall include:

- i. Opening and Welcome/Acknowledgement of Country
- ii. Apologies and leaves of absence
- iii. Minutes of the previous meeting
- iv. Business arising from the minutes
- v. Correspondence
- vi. Motions on notice
- vii. Reports of Executive Members.
- viii. Other reports
- ix. General business
- x. Date of the next meeting

7.7 A General Meeting of the Society shall have all the powers of an Ordinary Meeting.

7.8 A General Meeting of the Society may also carry the following motions on notice relating to the affairs of the Society by a two-thirds majority vote of those members present and voting;

- i. Granting Honorary Membership

- ii. Repealing motions and the effect of motions carried at an Ordinary Meeting
- iii. Amending the Constitution
- iv. Dismissing Executive Members for failure to adequately complete their Executive duties, provided that the Executive Member is given a reasonable right of reply
- v. Dissolving the Society.

7.9 Vacant executive positions may be filled at a General Meeting following the ordinary procedures for election as per Section 9 of this constitution.

8 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

8.1 The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting annually in the month of October

8.2 The Annual General Meeting shall be convened for the following purposes:

- i. to receive a report and statement of accounts for the preceding financial period
- ii. to elect an Executive for the ensuing term
- iii. to transact any other business, notice of which shall be duly submitted to the Secretary

8.3 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) clear days notice of the time and place of the Annual General Meeting in one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's social media and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

8.4 The Annual General Meeting shall be held between 9 am and 9 pm at a place on a campus of the University of Sydney and/or by video conference. The Annual General

Meeting shall be chaired by either the President or an Executive Member not standing for election to any position.

8.5 Quorum at the Annual General Meeting shall be the lesser of one-third of the Ordinary Members or fifteen (15) Ordinary Members.

8.6 The agenda for the Annual General Meeting shall include:

- i. Opening and Welcome to/Acknowledgement of Country
- ii. Apologies and leaves of absence
- iii. Minutes of the previous meeting
- iv. Business arising from the minutes
- v. Correspondence
- vi. Motions on notice
- vii. Annual Reports
 - a. President
 - b. Treasurer
 - c. Secretary
 - d. Other Executive Members
- viii. Election of the Executive
- ix. General business
- x. Other business

8.7 Society meetings may not be held during the University closure period surrounding the Christmas and New Year Public Holidays, and notice must be called outside of this period.

9 **ELECTIONS**

9.1 The Executive shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in the month of October each year.

9.2 Only Ordinary Members and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership shall be eligible candidates for election or to vote in the election, provided that they have attended at least one valid event of the Society in the relevant year of registration.

- i. Valid events shall only include those held solely by the Society, that are ticketed, and are registered with the USU.

9.3 The term of the Executive shall commence immediately following the close of the Annual General Meeting and conclude at the close of the Annual General Meeting in the following year.

9.4 Any events that had been organised up to and immediately after the AGM by the outgoing Executive will still be carried out and arranged by those outgoing Executive.

9.5 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) clear days notice of the time and place of the annual elections in one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's social media and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail). The notice shall state:

- i. The day on which nominations open, which day shall be at least fourteen (14) days before the day of the elections;
- ii. The day and time on which nominations close, which shall be no later than the time of the meeting at which the elections are to occur;
- iii. The time, date and venue of the election;
- iv. That only Ordinary Members and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership and who hold a current

and valid USU membership and are compliant with the conditions of

9.2 shall be eligible to be candidates for election or to vote.

- 9.6 To stand for election, nominees must accept nomination.
- 9.7 Before an election, the Society shall nominate a suitable person, not being a candidate for election, to act as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be charged with the conduct of the election, and may appoint suitable persons, not being candidates for election, as Deputy Returning Officers.
- 9.8 The Clubs and Societies Manager shall serve as Electoral Arbiter and shall receive any appeals against the decisions of the Returning Officer.
- 9.9 Voting shall be by secret ballot and shall be Single Transferable Vote.
- 9.10 The General Body of the Society may, in a General Meeting, elect any Ordinary Member, who also holds a current and valid USU membership, of the Society to fill any casual vacancy that may occur in the Executive. (A casual vacancy occurs when an Executive Member is dismissed from the Executive or resigns before the term of office has expired).
- 9.11 During the Annual General Meeting, elections of Executive Members shall be carried out in the order that they are written in this Constitution.
- 9.12 In the process of electing a new member of the Executive, nominees must answer question(s) from the floor, should one be asked, as arbitrated by the Returning Officer.
- 9.13 Nominees who are not in attendance during meetings in which an Election is to be held may submit self-nominations to be read on their behalf at the meeting, should they qualify to run. No proxy voting is to occur.
- 9.14 Nominee validity shall be verified by the Secretary.

9.15 Should no person nominate for a particular position on the Executive, nominations may be taken from the floor at any subsequent General Meeting where the vacancy is advertised appropriately through the Agenda and Meeting Notice.

9.16 Electoral Roll Management

- i. Before the AGM is called, a final list ('Electoral Roll') of those members who are eligible to vote—as determined by a collation of those event attendance lists submitted to the USU in accordance with C&S procedures—will be approved with the signature(s) of the President, Secretary, Vice-President(s) and Treasurer.
- ii. Those members listed on the electoral roll will be notified by email of their voting eligibility, where possible, alongside all official notification processes of the AGM.
- iii. The Secretary and President of the Society will make themselves available to respond to enquiries regarding individuals' voting eligibility during the notice period.

10 **ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION**

10.1 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of those Ordinary Members and Honorary Members who would otherwise be eligible for Ordinary Membership in attendance at any General Meeting, provided that:

- i. written notice of proposed changes has been given to the Secretary not less than seven (7) days before such a meeting,
- ii. the said changes do not contravene University of Sydney or University of Sydney Union guidelines,

- iii. the Secretary has given at least 14 days' notice of those proposed changes to all members through one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's social media and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail),
- iv. a copy of the amended constitution, and minutes of the meeting at which the amendments were made, are presented to the Clubs and Societies Manager of the University of Sydney Union within fourteen (14) days of the meeting,
- v. the amendments are approved by the Clubs and Societies Committee and ratified by the Board of the University of Sydney Union,

10.2 Constitutional amendments do not become effective until approved by the Clubs and Societies Committee and ratified by the Board of the University of Sydney Union.

11 **PROPERTY AND FINANCES**

11.1 All property of the Society shall be *vested* in the Executive and shall be dealt with in such manner as directed by the Society in a General Meeting.

11.2 The Society shall maintain a bank account.

11.3 All payments of the Society shall be by cheque or electronic funds transfer (EFT) and must be authorised online or signed by at least two members of the Executive, one of whom must be the Treasurer.

11.4 The signatories on the account shall consist of the President, Treasurer, and either a Vice President or Secretary, and/or other elected Executives as required.

11.5 The finances of the Society shall be maintained in accordance with the C&S Handbook for Treasurers produced by the Clubs & Societies Office of The University of the

Sydney Union, and submitted for audit by the Clubs & Societies Auditor immediately following the Financial Year End of the Society in the month of August each year.

11.6 Notwithstanding anything contained in this Constitution, all assets and funds of the Society shall be used solely to further the Objects of the Society, and no portion of those funds shall be paid or distributed to members of the Society except as compensation for out-of-pocket expenses.

11.7 The financial year of the Society shall run from the 1st September until 31st August.

12 **DISSOLUTION**

12.1 The Society may be dissolved by resolution of a two-thirds majority vote of those members present and voting at a General Meeting. If on the dissolution there remain any monies or property, they shall, with the consent of the Clubs and Societies Office, be transferred to a cultural, charitable or educational organisation as the Society in a General Meeting may resolve,

12.2 The Secretary shall *give* at least fourteen (14) clear days' notice of the time and place of such a General Meeting through one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's social media and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

13 **INACTIVITY**

13.1 The Society shall be deemed inactive after any continuous six-month period in which the Society does not hold any events or engage in financial activity. If, upon inactivity, there remains any monies or properties, the C&S Auditor and the C&S Manager shall become signatories of the Club account, and the Clubs and Societies Office shall control

such properties and held in trust. After a further six-month period, all money will be deposited into a USU- administered trust account and will be returned to the club should it reform. After a total of eighteen months' inactivity, all club funds will be transferred to the USU general account.

14 **RECOGNITION**

14.1 The Society shall comply with all requirements of the University of Sydney and the University of Sydney Union for recognition as a registered Society of the University of Sydney Union.

This Constitution was adopted on the ____ day of _____, 20__

President's Signature _____

Secretary's Signature _____