



Constitution of the Brown Muslim Students' Association

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، لِلَّهِمْ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

Purpose

The Brown Muslim Students' Association (BMSA) intends to build a unified community — built upon the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم (peace be upon him) — that is open to all those who identify as Muslim or are interested in Islam, regardless of degree of practice. The BMSA strives to follow the Prophetic example of standing for justice among communities locally and globally, foster greater Islamic literacy among its members and the broader community in collaboration with the University's Muslim Chaplain, and create strong bonds of sisterhood and brotherhood — appreciative of and enriched by differences — between members. Through these goals, the BMSA aims to enable members to build a deeper connection to Islam in every aspect of daily life.

Membership

Membership in the BMSA is open to all Brown University students who identify as Muslim, are interested in Islam, or have connections with Islam and the Muslim community, irrespective of degree of practice. Attending a BMSA event or joining one of its communication channels (e.g. listserv, WhatsApp group) as an enrolled student at Brown University qualifies an individual as a member.

In addition, when specified, certain BMSA events are open to the local community. The BMSA does not discriminate on the basis of any claimed or inherited identity. We recognize that students come from different backgrounds and varied levels in their own faith and practice; we welcome all.

Member Dismissal: Members may be removed from the BMSA, through feedback/due process identified below, should any of the officers or members feel that a member is disruptive from the purpose of the organization. This includes infractions perpetrated to the larger community like disrespect and bias. All removals will follow a procedure of notifying the member in question at least a week prior to the next meeting. Members have the right to speak on their own behalf and

officers should meet with the member to come to terms about how to proceed (removal, behavior change, staying etc). If officers and members do not come to terms, an organization hearing can be held.

When a member appears before the entire organization on grounds of removal, the Coordinator (or if the Coordinator is being questioned for removal, an E-Board member designated by the Muslim Chaplain) shall explain the charges and the reason to ask for removal. In order to preserve the impartiality of the Presiding Officer, the organization member who brought up the concern or the next Officer in the line of succession shall serve as point person advocating the member in question's removal. That member shall then have time to defend themselves, after which the floor will be open for questions. Removal of the member in question will follow a 2/3 vote by club members (voting should be done through a secret ballot). Votes should be counted by the Presiding Officer.

Note: These procedures are specific to the expectations of club members and independent of these University procedures and processes to address matters of discrimination. Removal from a club based on behavior in this policy are not considered disciplinary actions nor are they recorded as such by the University.

Leadership Structure

It is recommended that the Executive Board (E-Board) be managed by a Coordinator, and, in addition, include the following [positions](#):

- Communications & Finance Chair (*first-year position*)
- Education & Chaplaincy Liaison
- Service Chair
- Shia Programming Chair
- Social Chair

In addition, it is recommended that the E-Board reach out to the graduate student community to identify a point of contact to ensure the needs of the graduate Muslim student community are met.

E-Board Elections

A new E-Board for the next academic year will be elected each April and will serve from early August (the first E-Board meeting) to early May (the last E-Board meeting). Another election may be held after the Fall semester should a position not be currently filled. The first-year position is exempted from the April election process. Members are eligible to run for up to two positions. Furthermore, students who initially run for Coordinator- but are not selected- may run for general E-Board positions in the second round of voting.

- First Round: Voting for Coordinator
 - Candidates will be required to submit a short statement of interest to the general body, which will then elect the Coordinator by plurality vote.
- Second Round: Voting for Service Chair, Shia Programming Chair, Social Chair, and the Education & Chaplaincy Liaison
 - Candidates will be required to submit a short statement of interest to the general body, and members will vote. Positions will be decided by rank-choice voting.
 - Note about Education & Chaplaincy Liaison: In addition to the vote, the Muslim Chaplain, alongside the former Coordinator, will deliberate over candidates for this position. Both this joint deliberation and the general body's vote will be considered in the decision-making process.
- Communications & Finance Chair (*reserved for first-year students*)
 - The application will be announced during the First-year Social in early September; the E-Board will review applications and select the Chair. The Coordinator will guide the first-year student in this position for the first month or so of the Fall semester.¹

E-Board Election Vote Counting

Votes will be collected via an online form that will collect email addresses to ensure that each member only votes once. Only members (refer to membership clause) can vote. For the Coordinator vote, the previous Coordinator and the Muslim Chaplain will both count votes to ensure accuracy and transparency. For all other positions, the newly elected Coordinator and Muslim Chaplain will count votes.

E-Board Eligibility

To be eligible for Coordinator, candidates must have served on the E-Board for at least one semester. In special cases, if a member has not met this requirement, yet still wishes to run for the Coordinator position, they may make a written appeal to the Muslim Chaplain to describe their situation and allow the Chaplain to determine if they still may be able to run. The Coordinator must commit to one full year of service. The Communication & Finance Chair is reserved for first-year students. For all other positions, there is no previous service requirement, and candidates may serve as sophomores, juniors, or seniors.

E-Board Term Limits

E-Board terms expire at the last E-Board meeting in early May. E-Board members who would like to serve for a new term must run again. There are no limits to the number of terms a member

¹ Note that this process will be altered for the 2020-21 academic year, as first-year students will enroll in the Spring instead of the Fall.

can serve. However, there is no re-running for Coordinator: an individual may only serve as Coordinator for one year.

E-Board Decision-Making

The E-Board should adopt unanimous voting through mutual deliberation (Shura) for more significant decisions, such as selection of invited speakers. However, smaller, procedural matters may be decided by majority vote, with the Coordinator's vote serving as the tiebreaker. The format used for each decision is ultimately up to the E-Board's discretion.

E-Board Expectations

All E-Board members, as leaders of the undergraduate Muslim community, are expected to be conscious of Allah in their actions and roles and strive to embody Prophetic characteristics. The E-Board is expected to meet for at least one hour each week. However, this time commitment may increase around especially busy times, such as the senior banquet in the Spring.

Dismissal from the E-Board: If an individual consistently fails to perform their assigned tasks after multiple steps of mediation, the other members of the E-Board are permitted to complete an independent vote to dismiss the individual from the E-Board. To ratify this dismissal, the vote must be unanimous. The tasks assigned to this position will fall upon the Coordinator until the beginning of the following semester, when a new vote for the vacant position will occur, following all the guidelines outlined above.

Disclaimer: Collective E-Board Responsibilities

Certain E-Board responsibilities are collective in nature and not necessarily clearly divided among the members of the E-Board. For these tasks (e.g., planning the senior banquet, facilitating active engagement with the first-year class, etc.), it is expected that all E-Board members contribute.

More generally, the E-Board functions collaboratively. Therefore, while each role has its unique responsibilities, E-Board members are expected to work together on initiatives.

Amendment & Amendment Voting Procedure

When a new E-Board is elected, it will have the opportunity to propose amendments to the Constitution in April, which, in order to be adopted, must be ratified by two-thirds of voting general body members. Also, during the same time period, general body members will be able to submit their own amendment requests for the E-Board to consider proposing.

Similar to the procedure for E-Board election vote counting, the voting process for amendments to the Constitution will be conducted via an online form, and both the current Coordinator and

Muslim Chaplain will count votes to ensure accuracy and transparency. Note that the newly elected E-Board cannot vote to ratify changes to the Constitution. In addition, for Fall 2020, the previous E-Board (which created the Constitution) will not vote to ratify the Constitution.