

Institute of Social Studies Scholars' Association

SCHOLAS Constitution

SECTION 1-GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Article 1: Definition

The association of student participants of the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam (from now on referred to as ISS) shall be known as SCHOLAS (**S**cholars' **A**ssociation).

Article 2: Membership

Membership of SCHOLAS includes all participants enrolled in the certificate, diploma, MA and PhD programmes of ISS. All members have the right to participate in SCHOLAS activities (exception are Annual General Elections, see Article 13a.).

Article 3: Aims

The aims of SCHOLAS are:

- a. To represent its members on all decision-making bodies
- b. To exercise its power to solve problems with regard to academic and welfare matter of its members
- c. To encourage the development and to maintain the bonds of international friendship and understanding among its members.
- d. To stimulate intellectual, social, cultural and sports activities among its members.

- e. To promote lasting contacts and cooperation with persons and institutions in the Netherlands and wherever else is considered appropriate by its members.
- f. To cooperate closely with participant representatives in the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Institute Council to ensure student representation at ISS.

Article 4: General Structure

The SCHOLAS shall comprise of the following bodies:

- The General Assembly (GA)
- The Coordinating Committee (CC)
- The Executive Committee (EC)
- The Teaching and Learning Committee
- The Working Committees (WC)
- The Ad-hoc Committees

Article 5: The General Assembly (GA)

- a. The General Assembly shall be the final authority in all matters concerning the SCHOLAS.
- b. All student participants are members of the General Assembly.
- c. Meetings of the General Assembly must be held at least twice in a year when deemed necessary by the Coordinating Committee, or by the signature of one third of the members of SCHOLAS submitted to the Coordinating Committee.

However, extraordinary/special meetings of the General Assembly may be called by the SCHOLAS President with 48 hours' notice to respond to urgent issues.

- d. Members shall be notified of a General Assembly at least one week in advance along with a provisional agenda. Which shall include:
 - 1. Report from Executive Committee which includes a general financial report
 - 2. Reports from Working Committees
 - 3. A.O.B
- e. Other items may be included in the agenda up to three days before the meeting, if submitted to the Chairperson of the Coordinating Committee.
- f. A quorum for any meeting of the General Assembly shall consist of one third of the members of SCHOLAS. If a meeting has not been able to proceed, the EC shall call for a new meeting with at least one week's notice. In the newly called meeting, quorum is not mandatory.
- g. The President of SCHOLAS shall preside over all meetings of the General Assembly. In her/his absence, the meeting shall be chaired by the Vice President, and where Vice-President is not available, the responsibility shall fall on the shoulder of any of the other EC members.

Article 6: The Coordinating Committee (CC)

- a. The Coordinating Committee shall provide the venue for participating in the formulation and adoption of policies and activities of SCHOLAS.
- b. The Executive Committee shall call for a meeting to inaugurate the Coordinating Committee not later than six weeks after taking oath of office.

- c. All meetings shall be presided over by a Chairperson elected by the members of Coordinating Committee at the inaugural meeting .The sole responsibility of the Chairperson is to have the power to convene meetings in consultation with the Scholas President and cast vote only in the case of a tie.
- d. The Coordinating Committee shall comprise of the Executive Committee, the Teaching and Learning Committee Participants' Representatives, one (1) elected Class representatives from Majors and Programs that are less than 24 students or two (2) from Majors and Programs that have more than 25 students , and the Chairpersons of the Working Committees.
- e. No member of the Coordinating committee shall hold more than one SCHOLAS position at the same time. If a member occupy more than one position, she/he have to decide which of the positions she/he will be representing at the committee
- f. The elected representatives of all committees, groups and programs shall report to the coordinating committee on all matters relevant to the functioning of SCHOLAS. The representatives shall likewise present to their constituencies the opinions and resolutions of the Coordinating Committee.
- g. The Coordinating Committee shall meet at least four times in a year.
- h. The quorum for the meetings of the Coordinating Committee shall be one half plus one of its total members of its members. If a meeting has not been able to proceed, the chair shall declare a new meeting as quickly as possible with at least one weeks' notice. In the newly called meeting a quorum is not mandatory. All communications shall be made by the Secretary.
- i. Each member of the Coordinating Committee shall have one vote. However, the chairperson will cast her/his vote only in case of a tie.

- j. On issues where there is no consensus, a majority vote of those present and voting is sufficient for the Committee to act, taking into account the rules as laid down in Article 3.e.
- k. Decisions of the Coordinating Committee shall be binding and take precedence over the decisions of the Executive Committee and the Working Committees.

Article 7: The Executive Committee (EC)

- a. The Executive Committee shall be the chief administrator of the affairs of SCHOLAS, shall represent SCHOLAS in its relations within ISS as well as in its relations with outside institutions. It shall be responsible for the running of the affairs of SCHOLAS in accordance with the Constitution. The Executive Committee shall oversee the implementation of all the decisions of the General Assembly and the Coordinating Committee and shall submit reports to these bodies.
- b. The Executive Committee shall comprise of a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, who will be deemed office bearers of SCHOLAS.
- c. The **President** shall preside over meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee. She/He shall have a casting vote in case of a tie in the General Assembly or Executive Committee.
- d. The **Vice President** shall act as President and have a casting vote in the absence of the latter, shall coordinate activities of the Working Committees and Ad-hoc Committees, and shall ensure that reports are submitted to the Executive Committee, Coordinating Committee and the General Assembly.

- e. The **Secretary** shall give notice of all meetings of the General Assembly, Coordinating Committee, and Executive Committee and other associated activities to members and other institutions or persons concerned. He/she shall keep a record of these meetings, shall be responsible for all correspondences of SCHOLAS.
- f. The **Treasurer** shall collect, keep account of and disburse the funds of SCHOLAS; submit an income and expenditure account and balance sheet at the end of her/his term of office to the General Assembly, audited by the administrators of the ISS; be prepared to make available details of the general financial situation of SCHOLAS to the members and aid the Working Committees in their use of funds. She/he shall give quarterly financial updates to the Coordinating Committee.
- g. The Executive Committee shall at least hold meetings with the participants' representatives of the Institute Council (IC) and Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) twice in a year to exchange information and provide them with inputs relevant for the student participant community.
- h. Decisions on matters related to SCHOLAS activities in the EC shall be subjected to simple majority of EC members. In matters of dispute between Executive Committee, such matters shall be brought before the Coordinating Committee within 48 hours. In situations where immediate action is needed, the President shall take decision.

Article 8: Teaching Learning Committee Representatives (TLC)

- a. The Teaching Learning Committee Representatives shall represent SCHOLAS at the Institute Teaching and Learning Committee

- b. The election of Teaching and Learning Committee representatives shall hold at the same time with that of the executive committee of SCHOLAS
- c. The same eligibility criteria to contest for Executive Committee shall also apply to Teaching and Learning committee representatives
- d. The TLC representatives shall give reports of their activities to the coordinating committee and shall work together with EC in matters related to students academics
- e. The number of representatives shall be determine by the slots given to SCHOLAS by the institute Teaching and Learning committee

Article 9: The Working Committees (WC)

- a. SCHOLAS shall form Working Committees to conduct cultural, social and extracurricular activities. The Working Committees with names and responsibilities are laid down as follows.
 - h. Arts: To encourage and stimulate artistically inclined participants to pursue and display their inclinations and talents, in all possible artistic fields, through the organizing of exhibitions, participatory activities, workshops, etc.
 - ii. Editorial: To publish a quarterly journal through which all members may express their views and opinions and provide a medium through which short literary endeavors of the participants may be published.
 - iii. Environmental committee: To promote environmental awareness within the ISS community.
 - iv. Gender: To promote gender sensitivity within the ISS, to organize programs, workshops and other events towards this end; to address and intervene in problems and concerns of a gendered nature that occurred in the ISS; to promote awareness of women's issues in particular, but also of the ways in

which men and women are affected – as men, and as women – by events that occur locally and outside the ISS.

v. Housing and Welfare: To enhance and maintain the provisions of housing and welfare facilities offered by the ISS, such as organizing child-care facilities for the participants, mediating problems and concerns of participants with the Facility Department of the ISS, organizing for the reception of new participants to the ISS, etc.

vi. International Relations: To promote understanding among the various nationalities represented in the ISS, and increase awareness of the achievements, concerns, problems and current issues of the various countries represented at the ISS.

vii. ISS Serve: To work towards answers to humanitarian crises all over the world.

viii. Social: To promote social, cultural and leisure activities for the members, such as social gatherings, trips and outings to visit places within and outside The Netherlands; to promote interaction at a social level with students of other educational institutions in the Netherlands.

ix. Sports: To organize and encourage sports activities among the members of SCHOLAS, as well as with participants of other educational institutions in The Netherlands.

b. Each Working Committee shall consist of interested members of SCHOLAS. The Executive Committee shall, within a week of taking office, invite participants to register as members of the respective committees. If no participant volunteers for a particular Working Committee, it shall be the responsibility of the Executive

Committee to ensure that the functions of that Working Committee are carried out until such Working Committee is formed.

- c. Each Working Committee shall elect from among its members, a Chairperson and a Secretary. The Chairperson shall be responsible for the routine functioning of the Committee and shall report its activities to the Coordinating Committee. The Secretary of the respective Working Committee shall be responsible for publicity of activities and shall coordinate the Committee's activities with the Vice President of SCHOLAS. No Committee member shall hold two positions.
- d. Within a month of its formation, the Working Committee shall submit a budget proposal and an annual activity plan to the Executive Committee.
- e. Each Working Committee shall meet at least once a month, and shall submit a financial report to the Treasurer of the Executive Committee and performance report to the Vice- President of the Executive Committee once every two months. The reports shall be made available to the Coordinating Committee and shall guide the re-allocation of funds when deemed necessary.
- f. Working Committees may be created or eliminated following a majority decision by the General Assembly. There shall be a maximum of Nine (9) Working Committees.

Article 10: Ad-Hoc Committees

Ad-hoc Committees may be appointed for specific tasks by the General Assembly or the Coordinating Committee. The elected Chairperson of the Committee shall report to the Coordinating Committee of the progress of the task for the duration of the Ad-hoc Committee.

SECTION III - FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Article 11: Conduct of Financial Affairs

- a. The Executive Committee is responsible for preparing the annual budget of SCHOLAS, based on the budget proposal submitted by the Working Committees as well as the availability of funds.
- b. The budget shall be approved by the Coordinating Committee. If found necessary later in the year, the Coordinating Committee can re-allocate funds.
- c. All expenditures and receipts of SCHOLAS shall follow proper accounting procedures.
- d. Requisition for withdrawal of funds can be made by the Chairperson and Treasurer of the respective Working Committees in the prescribed format to the Executive Committee. Thereafter the withdrawal of fund from the ISS Finance Office shall require the signature of the President, the Treasurer, the chairperson, and the Treasurer of the relevant Working Groups.
- e. The Treasurer of the respective Working Committees shall be jointly responsible submit all bills and receipts, shall be submitted to the EC Treasurer no later than 15 days of completing the activity in question

- f. The Treasurer shall give a quarterly financial report to the Coordinating Committee.

SECTION IV – ELECTIONS

Article 12: The Electoral Committee

- a. There shall be an Electoral Committee consisting of members who shall be selected by and from the representatives of the ISS Majors and programs within six weeks after the beginning of the new academic year. This meeting shall be called by the previous Electoral Committee Chair.
- b. Members of the Electoral Committee shall not run for any position contested or vote in the election.
- c. Members of the Electoral Committee, in collaboration with the Executive Committee, shall organize and conduct elections for all posts of the Executive Committee (EC) and Teaching Learning Committee representative's members.
- d. The Electoral Committee shall select a Chairperson and a Secretary from among its members.
- e. The activities of the Electoral Committee shall be regulated by the provisions of this Constitution. However the electoral committee may lay down electoral rules and procedures for conduct of elections, keeping in mind that such rules and procedures are not in contravention with the provisions of this constitution.
- f. The Electoral committee, subject to the provision of this constitution, will formulate and publicize the Electoral rules and procedures within one week of being convened

Article 13: Voting

- a. The electorate for Annual General Elections shall consist of all members of SCHOLAS who will be enrolled as of 1 January of the following year and who will have the right to cast only one vote for each panel.
- b. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

Article 14: Candidacy / Panels

- a. The positions of the Executive Committee shall be filled up by the election of a panel. A panel shall be composed of four candidates and shall specify who will occupy the posts of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer respectively.
- b. A candidate can run for election in only one panel.
- c. A panel shall be representative of the cultural diversity of ISS. Pursuant to this, a panel shall be representative of at least three different regions. Regions are herein defined as Africa, Asia, Latin America/Caribbean, and Others (Middle East, Europe, Australia and North America).
- d. A panel shall safe guard the gender/sex composition of the institute. Pursuant to this, a panel must be comprised of at least one woman and one man
- e. At least two Majors should be represented on a panel.

Article 15: Electoral Procedures

- a. Annual General Elections shall be formally announced by the Electoral Committee at the latest, 10 weeks into the start of the new academic year.
- b. A minimum of two weeks shall be allowed for the receipt of panel nominations after the announcement of the elections. All nominations shall be submitted to the Electoral Committee.
- c. The Electoral Committee must publicize the lists and candidates of nominated panels within twenty-four hours of the closure of nominations
- d. If the Electoral Committee receives no more than one panel nomination, that panel stands elected.
- e. If more than one panel nomination has been received, the Electoral Committee shall organize an election, within a time no later than 2 weeks after the closure of nominations.
- f. A minimum of two weeks after the closure of nominations shall be allowed for panels to present their electoral agenda to members.
- g. The Electoral Committee shall organize a public forum prior to elections at which nominated panels will formally present their electoral agenda to members.
- h. The panel with the most votes shall be elected. The Electoral Committee shall announce the results of the polling and the elected panel immediately after the counting of votes is finished. In the case the votes are equally divided, a runoff election shall be conducted not later than 7 days to the first election.

- i. Any complaint regarding the electoral process or request for recount shall be submitted to the Electoral Committee for its study and decision not later than 24 hours after the election results have been officially announced.
- j. The elected panel shall take office within four weeks after the election.

SECTION V – CODE OF CONDUCT

Article 16: Conduct of Office Bearers

- a. All office bearers of SCHOLAS must execute their functions as laid down in this Constitution and as directed by the General Assembly or Coordinating Committee.
- b. All office bearers of SCHOLAS must attend all meetings of its bodies to which they have been elected or of which they are members.
- c. An office bearer, who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the relevant body of SCHOLAS without reasonable cause, shall be deemed to have resigned from office. The said office shall be declared vacant and duly filled in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.

Article 17: Replacement of Representatives.

- a. The Coordinating Committee can recommend the removal of any office bearer who fails to abide by Article 16. Final decision on the recommendation shall be made by the General Assembly.
- b. With the departure, resignation or removal from office of any representative or representatives, the vacant position(s) shall be filled through an election process approved by the Coordinating Committee. The Electoral Committee shall be

requested by the Coordinating Committee to conduct the election process to fill such vacancy.

Article 18: Conflict Resolution

- a. In case of a conflict in any of SCHOLAS' bodies, the Coordinating Committee shall assemble a Mediation Group. The timeline for the findings of the Mediation Group will be determined by the Coordinating Committee.
- b. Each conflicting party shall appoint a member to the Mediation Group. A mediator shall be appointed by the Coordinating Committee.

SECTION V - AMENDMENTS

Article 19: Amendment Procedure

- a. Proposals for amendments to the constitution can be submitted by the Executive Committee; or by any member of SCHOLAS supported by at least ten other members. The amendment proposal shall be submitted to the Coordinating Committee which will deliberate upon it and submit its views to the General Assembly which will have the authority to approve the amendments.
- b. Amendments and alterations to this Constitution have to be approved by a two third majority of the members of SCHOLAS present at a General Assembly meeting, taking into account the rules in Article 2.e.