

**University of California, Berkeley**  
Middle Eastern, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian Coalition Constitution

**ARTICLE I. NAME OF COALITION**

The name of the coalition shall be “Middle Eastern, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian”, often referenced using its shorthand abbreviation “MEMSSA”.

**ARTICLE II. COALITION PURPOSE**

**Section 1. Coalition Purpose**

The MEMSSA coalition shall serve to unite, advocate on behalf of, and mobilize U.C. Berkeley organizations that explicitly indicate their intent on serving and/or representing one or more of the following identities: Middle Eastern, Muslim, Sikh, or South Asian.

**Section 2. Relationship with ASUC**

The MEMSSA coalition shall be solely managed by the office of the MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator. Through the office of the MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator, the coalition shall seek to improve accessibility to and implement specialized resources and programming specific to the MEMSSA community, by fostering a relationship with community stakeholders and administration.

The chair of the MEMSSA coalition shall be the MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator.

In the event that the MEMSSA endorsed candidate is not elected to the ASUC Senate, the current MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator shall appoint a five (5) member advisory board that may choose to do either of the following:

1. operate independently of the ASUC Senate in the upcoming academic year
2. seek to be temporarily housed under an alternate ASUC Senate office

For more information regarding the MEMSSA endorsement and slating, please visit *Article IV, Section 2*.

**Section 3. Relationship with SSWANA**

The [South Asian, Southwest Asian, and North African \(SSWANA\)](#) Initiative was advocated for and created by student activists that felt this student population lacked representation and resources at the University of California at Berkeley. As such, students will always be the heart of this initiative with the support of staff. The SSWANA Initiative seeks to provide personalized access to resources on campus, accessible programming, promote cross-cultural community building, and advocate for social justice in SSWANA communities through education and empowerment.

The MEMSSA coalition shall recognize the SSWANA Initiative as a formalized institutional unit that seeks to not only combat the underrepresentation of SSWANA identifying individuals, but also advocate for long-term institution specific policy changes. The coalition recognizes that MEMSSA and SSWANA have similarities in the communities and identities they seek to represent and mobilize, and as such shall work to foster a collaborative relationship with regards to advocacy and accessible programming and resources.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP.**

### **Section 1. Current Organizations**

As of January 2023, the following organizations are officially recognized as members of the coalition for the period of 12 months:

1. Afghan Student Association
2. Arab Student Union
3. Armenian Student Association
4. Bengali Student Association
5. Bears For Palestine
6. Bhagat Puran Singh Health Initiative
7. Egyptian Student Association
8. Faces of African American Muslims
9. Iranian Students' Cultural Organization
10. Jakara Movement Chapter at UC Berkeley
11. Middle Eastern - North African Recruitment & Retention Center
12. Muslim Student Association
13. Pakistani Student Association
14. Sikh Student Association
15. Yemeni Student Association
16. Iraqi Student Association
17. Saudi Arabian Student Association
18. African Maghreb Student Union

### **Section 2. Requirements for Eligibility**

Each organization shall formally apply for membership renewal during the first month of the calendar year. The membership should record the organization's intent to remain a part of the MEMSSA coalition, and affirm that they:

1. serve, represent, or identify with one of the following identities: Middle Eastern, Muslim, Sikh, or South Asian.
2. associate with the University of California, Berkeley with the intent to serve a portion of the student population
3. will actively participate in coalition affairs over the course of the next 12 months

Each new organization that is seeking to join the MEMSSA coalition shall fill out an application that records their intent to join the MEMSSA coalition and affirms that they:

1. serve, represent, or identify with one of the following identities: Middle Eastern, Muslim, Sikh, or South Asian.
2. associate with the University of California, Berkeley with the intent to serve a portion of the student population
3. will actively participate in coalition affairs until the next renewal deadline

Organizations are classified as either voting members of the coalition or as MEMSSA-Supported Organizations.

A new organization shall submit an application to join the MEMSSA coalition at any time during the calendar year, and will be officially recognized upon confirmation from the MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator.

### **Section 3. Rights of Members and Organizations**

In matters that are related to the MEMSSA coalition, and are explicitly indicated as voting matters, the following rights shall be recognized unless otherwise stated:

1. all [Registered Student Organizations](#), receive one vote, casted by the highest ranking member of the organization in attendance
2. The leadership of each Register Student Organization is expected to provide an endorsement of the candidate.
3. Voting power within the coalition shall be granted exclusively to cultural groups representing a MEMSSA affinity that are classified as voting members.

Members of the MEMSSA coalition, shall call a special meeting to remove their endorsement, in the event that the MEMSSA endorsed candidate or elected Senator does one of the following:

1. Violates the expectations outlined in *Article V. Section 1 and 2*.
2. Engages in behavior that violates the [U.C Berkeley Code of Conduct](#)
3. Engages in behavior that violates the [U.C Berkeley Honor Code](#)

### **Section 4. MEMSSA-Supported Organizations**

© Creative and professional organizations within the coalition shall be considered non-voting members and will instead be recognized as MEMSSA-Supported Organizations. While they will not possess voting/slating rights, they still hold the other benefits of coalition membership, including participation in discussions, events, and other MEMSSA Committee-led initiatives.

As of October 2023, the following organizations are officially recognized as members of the coalition as MEMSSA-Supported Organizations for the period of 12 months:

1. Muslim Tech Collaborative
2. Muslims of Haas
3. Ahlul Bayt Student Association
4. Threads Magazine
5. Palestinian Public Health

6. AMPD
7. Punjabi Art Collective

### **Section 5. Voluntary Removal**

In the event an organization no longer wants to be a member of the MEMSSA coalition, they shall not apply for membership renewal by the deadline indicated or the highest ranking member of said organization may inform the current MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator of their decision to leave the coalition.

### **Section 6: Maintenance of Balance**

The coalition shall take appropriate measures to avoid overrepresentation or underrepresentation of any specific MEMSSA group.

In the event that there is a significant disparity in the number of cultural groups representing different MEMSSA affinities, the coalition shall work towards promoting inclusivity and encouraging the formation of cultural organizations from underrepresented affinities.

The coalition shall periodically review the composition of its membership to ensure a balanced representation of MEMSSA cultural groups.

### **Section 7: Implementation and Compliance**

The coalition shall establish transparent procedures for the application, evaluation, and approval of memberships, ensuring fairness and impartiality.

The coalition's governing body shall monitor the implementation of this amendment and take necessary actions to address any violations of the stated principles.

Any cultural organization found to be in violation of this amendment shall face appropriate sanctions, including but not limited to, temporary suspension of voting rights or revocation of membership.

## **ARTICLE IV. SLATING**

### **Section 1. Candidate Requirements**

Individuals interested in receiving the MEMSSA endorsement for an ASUC Senate campaign shall meet the following requirements:

1. Be an enrolled undergraduate at the University of California, Berkeley
2. Intend on remaining enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley for the upcoming academic year
3. Associate with one or more of the following identities: Middle Eastern, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian
4. Intend on running an independent campaign, with no direct affiliation to any UC Berkeley parties

## **Section 2. Slating Procedure**

The process for slating, or endorsing a candidate shall meet the following requirements:

1. Prior to the start of the spring semester, the current MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator must designate a deadline by when interested candidates must report their intent to seek the endorsement
  - a. This deadline shall be prior to the end of the second week of instruction of the spring semester
2. Prior to the start of the spring semester, the current MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator must designate the date upon which the MEMSSA slating will occur
  - a. This date shall be prior to the end of the fourth week of instruction
3. As part of the slating, each candidate will receive up to seven (7) minutes for a candidate presentation in which they may use visual aids or supporting materials to explain their experience and platforms
4. Following the presentation, each candidate will answer the same seven (7) community-selected questions with a one (1) minute limit for each response
  - a. The community-selected questions shall be developed by the community present, prior to the start of candidate presentations
  - b. No candidates will be present during the time in which questions are proposed and selected. Candidates shall be asked to leave the room.
5. Each candidate will conduct their presentation and Q&A independent of the other candidates. Of the seven (7) pre-selected questions, all candidates will answer the same questions.
  - a. No candidates shall be present during the time in which another candidate is conducting their presentation or Q&A. All other candidates shall be asked to leave the room.
6. After all candidates have completed their presentations and Q&A, an accumulative ranked voting procedure shall select the single individual who will receive the MEMSSA endorsement
  - a. No candidates shall be presenting during the time of voting.

The accumulative ranked voting procedure shall meet the following requirements:

1. Each RSO that is formally recognized by the MEMSSA coalition, shall receive one ballot

2. The ballot will contain the name of each candidate, and the RSO must collectively rank the candidates based on their preference with one (1) indicating that a candidate is their most preferred candidate
3. Each RSO must rank all candidates
4. The rankings will then be tallied by the current MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator and a designated vote counter, appointed by the Senator, to confirm the votes
5. The candidate with the lowest total will receive the MEMSSA endorsement for the upcoming ASUC Senate elections
6. In the event of a tie, the tie-breaking procedure will be determined by the current MEMSSA endorsed Senator
7. The election totals will be available to all the candidates who sought the endorsement

## **ARTICLE V. OFFICE OF MEMSSA SENATOR EXPECTATIONS**

### **Section 1. Office Expectations**

The Office of the MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator shall seek to meet the following expectations:

1. Pursue an office recruitment strategy that seeks to represent the interest of all stakeholders within the MEMSSA coalition
2. Actively program for communities that have been traditionally underrepresented within the MEMSSA coalition
3. Dedicate 40% of interns and associates to MEMSSA related projects
4. Sponsor and organize a minimum of two (2) Town Halls per semester
5. Work to carry out the platforms in a tangible manner

### **Section 2. Senator Expectations**

The MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator shall seek to meet the following expectations:

1. Prioritize the platforms and initiatives that were communicated during the Senator's campaign
2. Seek the advice and counsel of MEMSSA leadership as necessary
3. Foster a working relationship with administration and other stakeholders for the University of California, Berkeley
4. Organize a minimum of two (2) meetings with leadership of MEMSSA Organizations per semester

### **Section 3. ASUC Elections**

The MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator shall seek to meet the following expectations:

1. Support the MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator candidate by providing a public endorsement of the individual, logistical support, access to prior campaign materials, and assistance with databasing

2. Not provide a public endorsement of other Senate or Executive candidates, as to assist the current MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator in securing representation within the ASUC Senate

## **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

### **Section 1. Amendment Procedures**

The Articles may be amended at any time during one of the four (4) mandatory leadership meetings. To submit a formal request for an amendment, one must submit a written amendment to the office of the MEMSSA endorsed ASUC Senator, and a simple majority vote shall take place at the next MEMSSA leadership meeting. A 50% quorum shall be necessary to conduct a vote on a proposed amendment