

STUDENTS FOR JUSTICE IN PALESTINE AT ROCHESTER
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY CONSTITUTION

Updated: September 30, 2024

ARTICLE I: MISSION

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be Students for Justice in Palestine at RIT, also referred to as SJP@RIT.

Section 2. Purpose

Coming off the momentum generated by the Spring 2024 Student Intifada, Students for Justice in Palestine at Rochester Institute of Technology was founded to make space for students and community members to agitate, educate, and organize around the broader Palestinian solidarity movement. Our goals are as follows:

- A. Educate community members on the history of the Palestinian struggle since 1948 through means such as public seminar and social media engagement.
- B. Identify local collaborators of the ongoing genocide in Gaza, like so-called “defense contractors”, and provide students with resources to avoid supporting these institutions while enrolled at RIT.
- C. Agitate, demonstrate, and otherwise make our voices heard on the RIT campus and within the greater Rochester community when necessary to enact lasting change.
- D. Express solidarity with members of the community that share our mission.

Section 3. Points of Unity

- A. Palestinians have the right to self determination on their homeland of Palestine.
- B. Zionism is a manifestation of settler colonialism which engages in an apartheid system against Palestinians.
- C. Palestinians are an occupied people, and as such have a right to resist their occupation by any means deemed necessary as described in the 1970 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2625.
- D. No autonomous action taken against the state in service of advancing the cause of a free

Palestine is condemnable.

- E. Palestinians and their descendents have a right to return which shall not be infringed as described in UN Resolution 194.
- F. The movement for a free Palestine is an anti-imperialist, anti-racist, anti-capitalist, internationalist, and intersectional movement. This makes it inseparable from the liberation movements of all oppressed peoples, including Black, Hispanic, and Native Americans, queer and disabled people, workers, and oppressed peoples of every nation.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership

Anyone, including current and past RIT students and members of the greater Rochester Community may be a member of SJP@RIT.

Section 2. Voting Members

A voting member of SJP@RIT must:

- A. Be a member of SJP@RIT.
- B. Have attended at least two SJP@RIT meetings during the previous 3 months.

Section 3. Alumni, Faculty, and Community Members

Following the lead of SJP chapters across the country, we reject the notion of ‘outsiders.’ In the struggle for collective liberation, we are all outside agitators to the status quo that oppresses us. All people, including alumni, faculty, and community members, are a part of this struggle, and we welcome them to our cause.

ARTICLE III: STRUCTURE

Section 1. Committees and Duties

There will be several permanent committees, necessary for the operation of SJP@RIT:

- A. Community Outreach Committee
 - a. Responsible for communicating with media.
 - b. Responsible for the creation of agitprop (posters, instagram posts) for

actions of the org and for important news in Palestine.

- c. Responsible for communicating with other student and community organizations.
- d. Responsible for organizing SJP sponsorship of and participation in other organizations' actions.
- e. Responsible for communicating with RIT admin.

B. Divestment Committee

- a. Responsible for all things related to the disclosure/divestment campaign.
- b. Responsible for all things related to career fair.

C. Political Education Committee

- a. Responsible for organizing political education events such as crash courses or more in depth teach-ins.

D. Administrative Committee

- a. Responsible for planning the weekly general body meetings including communicating with the other committees to include relevant initiatives in the weekly meetings.
- b. Responsible for the onboarding of new members.
- c. Responsible for ensuring sufficient criticism-self-criticism is practiced by members.

Section 2. Committee Formation

Any voting member may propose a new committee, with the support of an additional five voting members and one Committee Head. This support must be demonstrated with the names of the supporting members and Committee Head. The proposal must include the name and responsibilities of the proposed committee. The proposal will be given to the Administrative Committee, who must present this proposal at the next General Body meeting. The Committee will be formed if approved by a simple majority of present voting members.

Section 3. Committee Members and Duties

Each committee has several roles

A. Committee Head

- a. Oversee the operations of their committee.
- b. Assure work is completed in a timely fashion and to an acceptable standard.
- c. Communicate with other committee heads.
- d. Meaningfully contribute to the operations of the committee.
- e. Present any additional detail requested by the Administrative Committee at General Body meetings.
- f. Assure that sufficient criticism-self-criticism is practiced within the committee.

B. Committee Member

- a. Contribute to the work of their committee.
- b. Engage in meaningful discussion and self criticism with the committee body and head.

Section 4. Committee Qualifications

A. Committee Head

- a. A Committee Head must be a voting member of SJP@RIT.
- b. A Committee Head must attend at least one political education crash course if one is available.

B. Committee Member

- a. A Committee Member must be a member of SJP@RIT.

Section 5. Committee Structure

Any further internal structure of a committee is up to the membership of the Committee, so long as that structure does not conflict with that defined in this document.

Section 6. Joining Committees

Any member may join any committee simply by contacting the Committee Head, and may be a member of multiple committees. However, each member must understand that membership in a committee has an expectation of participation in the

committee.

ARTICLE IV: ELECTION AND IMPEACHMENT

Section 1: Election Timeline

Committee Heads are elected for vacant roles at the end of each Fall, Spring, and Summer semester. Newly elected Committee Heads officially take their positions at the start of the following semester in which they are elected.

Committee Heads will serve a term of 1 calendar year before needing to seek reelection.

Section 2. Nominations

Voting members may nominate themselves for Committee Head positions using an online form. This form must be open for at least one week.

Section 3. Elections

Voting members may vote in a ranked choice voting form online. For each committee, the candidate who is ranked number one overall wins the election.

If a candidate is elected to multiple positions, they must choose one position to take. The vacant roles will be filled by the candidates who came next in the ranked choice vote. This is excepted in the case of Interim Committee Heads, who may serve in multiple positions until the next candidate is elected.

Section 4. Impeachment

A Committee Head can only be impeached upon completion of a petition started by a member. Once a petition receives signatures from at least five voting members and one Committee Head, it must be presented to the Administrative Committee to start the impeachment process. The Administrative Committee will be responsible for alerting the impeached party. During the impeachment process, the Committee Head in question can not operate in their position. Responsibility will be shared among the Committee Membership for the duration of the impeachment proceedings

The Committee Head in question will then have the opportunity to form a defense to the claims. The defense must be formed over the course of no longer than two weeks. The defense and the petition must be submitted to the Administrative Committee, which must then make these public to all members. The Administrative Committee will determine a meeting for a vote to occur, at least one week and no longer than two weeks after this information has been made public. If at least two-thirds of members present vote to impeach, the Committee Head in question will be removed from their position immediately. If this threshold is not met, the Committee Head in question will return to their normal duties.

Following removal, a special election will be held to fill the vacant position, held in the manner described in Article IV Section 2 and Article IV Section 3.

Section 5. Resignation

A Committee Head may resign from their position by notifying the Administrative Committee Head. Resignation is effective immediately upon notification. The vacant position will be filled through a special election that will be held expeditiously in the manner described in Article IV Section 2 and Article IV Section 3. In the time between the resignation and the special election, the responsibilities of a Committee Head will be undertaken by the Committee Members.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 1. Meeting Frequency

General Body meetings will be held weekly during each semester at a time and location decided by the Administrative Committee.

Meetings of the Committee Heads will happen no less frequently than once per month at a time and location decided by the Administrative Committee.

Section 2. Additional Meetings

Additional General Body meetings may be called by the Administrative Committee with at least two days notice.

ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENTS AND BY-LAWS

Section 1. Proposal

Any member may propose an amendment to the constitution. A proposal must gather the signatures of at least 5 voting members and 2 Committee Heads.

Section 2. Submission

A proposed amendment must be presented to the Administrative Committee. A proposed amendment must clearly state the proposed changes to the constitution.

The Administrative Committee must make a proposed amendment public to members by the next weekly meeting after having it presented to them.

Section 3. Ratification

A proposed amendment will be voted on during the next General Body Meeting.

The ratification of an amendment must be approved by two-thirds of members present, and at least two thirds of Committee Heads.

Section 4. By-laws

By-laws may be used to add detail to the constitution. By-laws can be proposed by any voting member and presented to the Administrative Committee. They will be voted on during the next General Body meeting, and will be ratified if approved by a simple majority of present voting members. By-laws must only be used to clarify detail or add to the constitution, but not conflict with any section of this document logically or in spirit.

ARTICLE VIII: EMERGENCY PROCEEDINGS

Due to the nature of SJP, there may come situations of intense pressure and high risk. In these situations, the structure, decision making, and administrative procedures of the organization may need to rapidly change.

Section 1. Proposal

A proposal to enter a state of emergency may be proposed by any Committee Head with the support of at least 1 other Committee Head. This will be brought forward to the Administrative Committee Head, who will call an emergency meeting of the Committee Heads at the soonest possible moment. At this meeting, if a two-thirds majority of Committee Heads agree, a state of emergency will be declared.

Section 2. State of Emergency Proceedings

When a state of emergency is declared the following will occur:

- A. Membership will be notified as soon as possible by the Head of the Administrative Committee.
- B. Decision making for the organization will become consolidated in the Committee Heads. As much as is practical, input from membership should be taken into consideration, but final say lies with the Committee Heads. A simple majority of Committee Heads is sufficient to make any decision during a state of emergency.
- C. The state of emergency will end at the soonest time when it is deemed safe to do so by a simple majority of Committee Heads, at which point all proceedings defined in this document will come back into effect.
- D. If a state of emergency lasts for more than 4 weeks, then the state of emergency may be ended by the approval of at least 2 Committee Heads and two-thirds of voting members.