

# PenNaatak Constitution

## Article I: Name

- A. The official name of the organization shall be ‘PenNaatak: The Premier South Asian Theatre Arts Group of the University of Pennsylvania’.
- B. This may be abbreviated to ‘PenNaatak’ on all marketing materials, as well as material meant for external use.

## Article II: Purpose

- A. To increase awareness of, and to educate the Penn community about, South Asian culture and heritage. This shall be achieved by focusing on South Asian theatre and issues relevant to the South Asian Diaspora.
- B. To create an environment in which members of the Penn community are encouraged to explore and experience South Asian culture, literature and theatre.
- C. To provide students interested in Theatre and/or South Asia with an opportunity to learn from, present to, and interact with each other.
- D. To promote theatre from the South Asian Diaspora.

## Article III: Organization

- A. The General Body shall consist of all Members (as defined in Article IV) of the constitution.
- B. The Executive Board (hereon referred to as the Board) shall be ultimately responsible for the well-being of the organization. The Board shall consist of the following officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Technical Director, Creative Director, Secretary, Outreach Coordinator, and Treasurer. The order of these positions is arbitrary, as explained in Article V.

- C. Committees shall be formed and chaired by any Board member as and when the need arises.

#### **Article IV: Membership**

- A. Membership shall be open to all persons who have participated in a previous production and/or all persons participating in a current production.
- B. Membership lasts for three semesters, including the semester the individual was last involved with PenNaatak.
- C. Membership may be revoked for the remainder of the ongoing academic year by a 2/3-majority vote of the Board if it is deemed necessary for the proper functioning of the organization.

#### **Article V: Executive Board and its Officers**

*The Executive Board is a “flat” board. There is no hierarchy amongst its members, and the voice and opinion of each member must be given equal weight.*

- A. The Executive Board:
  - 1. For those officers who cannot fulfill their duties because of resignation or impeachment, or those who fail to meet University requirements that prevent him/her from holding office, reelection must be held for that office within 2 academic weeks of the resignation or impeachment, counted from the first academic day after the fact. In the interim, the Board may see to the fulfillment of vacated duties as they see fit. In the interest of time, nominations and elections may be held the same day as long as all PenNaatak members are given due notice.. At least half of the eligible voters are required to be present at such a meeting in order make the results of said re-election binding. The conventional election rules apply to re-election procedures.
  - 2. Failure to meet obligations of a Board position is grounds for impeachment. An officer may be impeached and removed by a unanimous vote of the remaining members of the Board. Impeached members may never stand for election to the Board again.

3. The Board shall serve to accept and approve submissions for productions. They shall then aid in the production financially, technically, publicity-wise and logistically.

B. Officers and their Duties:

1. Chair

- i. To dictate the direction of the PenNaatak while ensuring its long-term growth and well-being.
- ii. To oversee the proper functioning of the PenNaatak and its committees.
- iii. To chair all Board and General Body meetings.

2. Vice Chair

- i. To assist the Chair in fulfilling their responsibilities.
- ii. To oversee the proper functioning of the PenNaatak and its committees, as required.

3. Technical Director

- i. To provide technical insight and assistance for productions.
- ii. To head committees that aid the technical crew of any production that is sponsored by PenNaatak.
- iii. To act as the technical liaison between PenNaatak and the Theatre community at Penn.
- iv. To enlist technical crews for all productions sponsored.

4. Creative Director

- i. To find new scripts for future productions.
- ii. To maintain an easily accessible archive of all current material in both electronic and paper form.
- iii. To assist directors and actors in their professional development.
- iv. In the event that the creative director is the director of a Naatak production, a director mentor should be appointed. The mentor should be able to fulfill the mentoring duties normally fulfilled by the creative director for the duration of that production.

5. Secretary

- i. To prepare minutes of all Board meetings and General Body meetings.
- ii. To maintain the PenNaatak website, which should be updated every week with relevant information if any new events

concerning the Group have transpired.

- iii. To create and maintain listserves and the PenNaatak contact directory.

6. Outreach Coordinator

- i. To serve as the liaison between Penn's community and PenNaatak.
- ii. To maintain relations with other theatre and performing arts groups on campus.
- iii. To serve as Publicity advisor for all productions.
- iv. To serve as PenNaatak's representative to the outside community (i.e outside the University of Pennsylvania) including other South Asian Theatre Groups, Theatre Arts Council, The Indian-American Arts Coalition and the Asian-American Arts Initiative.
- v. To serve as the community liaison for all PAC and TAC-e collaborations.
- vi. To be responsible for maintaining an active presence on behalf of the group on online social networks, so that members of the Penn community always have up-to-date and relevant information about PenNaatak.

7. Treasurer

- i. To manage all financial affairs and fundraisers for PenNaatak.
- ii. To serve as Financial Advisor to all productions sponsored and to guide producers in financial matters.
- iii. To serve as PenNaatak's representative to the Student Activities Council (SAC), thereby attending all SAC meetings and reporting all relevant information to the Board.
- iv. To prepare and present the annual budget request to the SAC, and to record all contingency fund requests made on behalf of PenNaatak.
- v. To register PenNaatak at the Office of Student Life at the beginning of each academic year.

## **Article VI: Elections**

- A. Elections shall be held once every academic year in the Spring semester for the following academic year on a date determined by the Board. The date of elections should be announced at least 2 weeks prior by written communication to all

members of PenNaatak.

- B. Elections will be run by outgoing members of the Executive Board. All group members present at the elections must have ready access to the Constitution at all times during the election.
- C. Nominations must be made one week prior to elections, except in a reelection in which case nominations and elections may occur on the same day if all members are duly informed. Nominations are made by giving official notice to the Chair in writing.
- D. An eligible candidate must meet each of the following criteria:
  - 1. He/she must be a Member of PenNaatak for at least one semester.
  - 2. He/she must be a Penn student.
  - 3. He/she must be present on Penn Campus for the whole academic year.
  - 4. He/she must be well-versed with the PenNaatak constitution.
- E. Each candidate may run for as many positions as he/she likes. Candidates may also be eligible to run for several positions, even if they have been nominated for one, under the Drop-Down Rule. In order to be eligible for the Drop-Down Rule, a candidate must fulfill each of the following criteria:
  - 1. The candidate must have been nominated for and have contested at least one position.
  - 2. The candidate must have lost the election for said position.

In addition, the candidate need not have been nominated for any subsequent positions in order to contest them under the Drop-Down Rule.

If a candidate is eligible under the Drop-Down Rule, he or she may decide whether or not to stand for any subsequent position according to the order of election. The candidate may choose to skip one or more positions that he or she does not wish to contest under this rule.

- F. All candidates will be given two minutes to speak. After all candidates have spoken, there will be a question and answer period (length of question and answer period will be at the discretion of the Board and specified at the start of elections),

after which there will be a vote.

- G. Board members may serve for any number of years consecutively.
- H. All voters must be current members of PenNaatak, as defined by the Constitution.
- I. Voting must be carried out by secret ballot. An incumbent Board member who is not running for a position will count votes. Such a Board member must declare his/her eligibility for vote-counting at least 1 hour in advance of the elections. In the case that all incumbent Board members are running for re-election, the Board shall appoint a member of the General Body in good standing to count votes.
- J. A candidate must receive at least 50% of the votes to win.
- K. If more than two people are running and no one receives at least 50% of the vote, there must be a runoff election between the top two vote-getters immediately (no additional speeches or questions/answers).
- L. In the case of a tie, the winner shall be the candidate that receives more votes from incumbent members of the Executive Board.
- M. All records from the election, except a list of candidates must be destroyed no less than one week after the end of the election., in order to resolve any immediate concerns.

## **Article VIII: Meetings**

- A. Board Meetings:
  - 1. The Board will hold weekly board meetings that will be chaired by the Chair. In the event that the Chair is absent from the meeting, it shall be conducted by the Vice Chair. In case the Vice Chair is also not present, an appointed Board member shall conduct the meeting. All Board members shall come to the meeting with a prior agreed-upon agenda.
  - 2. Board attendance at weekly board meetings is mandatory. Any absences must formally be excused by the Chair. After two such absences, the Board member in question will be warned by the Board, and may later be

impeached.

3. A quorum of 2/3 (rounded down) of the Executive Board is necessary for all Board meetings.

B. General Body Meetings:

There must be a minimum of two General Body Meetings called per year by the Board in order to facilitate proper communication, inform members of past, current, and future PenNaatak activities, provide a forum in which members can voice suggestions and concerns. All Board members shall attend the post-production meetings held by the Cast and Crew of a production. A designated Board member except for the Technical Director shall serve as facilitator of said meeting. General Body Meetings will be open to all and a quorum of 2/3 of total membership is required for voting purposes.

C. Transition Meeting:

After elections are held, and before the end of the Spring semester, a Transition Meeting should be held between the outgoing Board members and the incoming Board. During the meeting, all relevant materials and information should be passed along.

## **Article IX: Amendments**

- A. Any member of PenNaatak may propose an amendment to the Constitution.
- B. All amendments shall first be approved by the Board, after which they shall be presented and voted upon at a General Body Meeting.
- C. A 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority vote of the General Body is necessary to pass any amendment that has been approved by the Board.
- D. Any amendments rejected by the Board may be passed by appeal to the General Body, and such ratification is contingent upon a 3/4<sup>th</sup> majority vote of the General Body in favor of the amendment in question.
- E. Anything not mentioned in the Constitution is at the discretion of the Board.

## **Article X: Ratification**

- A. Ratification of a new constitution is subject to the approval of the Board and a  $2/3^{\text{rd}}$  majority vote of the General Body.
- B. Ratification may be carried out through an appeal to the General Body, and is contingent upon a  $3/4^{\text{th}}$  majority vote of the General Body.