

THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF
THE SOUTH ASIAN MEN'S COLLECTIVE (SAMC)

Preamble and Pledge

*As a member of the South Asian Men's Collective, I shall make it my duty to support and foster both the brotherhood of SAMC and the greater South Asian community. As part of the Collective, I will uphold the SAMC Code of Conduct and Mission Statement, and consequently adhere to the primary goal of the Collective: **to empower through solidarity both our members and the communities we serve.***

Article I. Name

The name of the organization shall be the South Asian Men's Collective. For all purposes henceforth, it may also be referred to as "SAMC" or "the Collective."

Article II. Purpose

SAMC will provide all interested members of the Harvard community with an outlet for addressing issues of social justice, poverty alleviation, and economic development in South Asia. SAMC will present opportunities for direct involvement in addressing said concerns that yield tangible results. A critical core value of the Collective will be to instill in members a commitment to service and giving back to the South Asian community that has contributed so much to our lives.

SAMC will also work to strengthen a sense of brotherhood between members and create a supportive arena for dialogue and discussion. The SAMC community will provide members with mentors, peers, and friends. Furthermore, the Collective will seek to build a multi-ethnic network of service-oriented students on campus, thereby empowering members with both an internal sense of brotherhood and a larger sense of solidarity with other groups to which they might not otherwise be exposed.

Additionally, SAMC is concerned with the political, social, and cultural issues *regarding South Asian men* on Harvard University's campus and in the larger community. The group will seek to further greater awareness and understanding of these issues in the Harvard community by appropriate means such as social events, meetings, seminars, fundraisers and other activities. SAMC will provide an outlet for members of the Harvard community, particularly South Asian males, to address concerns of the dichotomy between identity and heritage; the interrelationship amongst men and women in the community; and of masculinity as challenged in the American landscape.

Article III. Membership

1. Membership in this organization shall be open to all students in good standing currently enrolled in Harvard College, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or physical disability. Membership shall also be extended to include those students of graduate and professional schools of the University.

2. All members are required to maintain the Code of Conduct set forth in Article IV.
3. All members shall pay such dues of twenty (20) dollars per semester. Said amount is subject to change, as per the consensus of the membership and only at the start of each academic year.
4. Attendance to weekly, general meetings of SAMC is expected and mandatory. You must attend at least half of the semester's meetings to be considered active and remain on the Google Group. Membership shall be retained until the student severs relations with the University whether by graduation or otherwise. Membership will be retained during the vacations and recesses of the University.
5. Any member may resign at any time by filing a written resignation with the Secretary.

Article IV. Code of Conduct

1. We shall hold ourselves to the principles and practices set forth in this Constitution.
2. We shall always represent the South Asian community with enthusiasm and pride.
3. We shall lend a hand to any member in need of assistance.
4. We shall treat all members with respect.

Article V. Officers

1. The officers of the group shall consist of a Chairperson (Chair), Treasurer and Secretary.
2. All officers shall be registered undergraduates in Harvard College.
3. To preserve the fraternal nature of the Collective, the three officer positions are created to give structure and direction (i.e., to ensure the goals of the Mission Statement are fulfilled), not with the intent of rigidity. The oversight of SAMC shall be delegated to the Chair, but all decisions directly affecting the membership shall be duly considered and agreed upon by a consensus of the active membership.
4. The duties specified in this Constitution for all three officers are subject to change as per the consensus of the Collective.
5. The Chair shall be the chief executive officer of the group and shall have general supervision and control of its activities and programs. Additionally, the Chair shall serve as SAMC's primary contact person to the greater college community, including but not limited to, other student groups, faculty, and the administration.
6. The Treasurer shall have general charge of the financial affairs of the group. He or she shall keep accurate records of these affairs. The Treasurer will be responsible for reporting to the Collective the state of SAMC finances, collecting membership dues, reimbursing members for their expenses, applying for grants for various projects and events as needed, brainstorming innovative methods for charity-raising, and sending any raised monies to charities.
7. The Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the group and of all activities and programs. He or she will handle all formal correspondence between members and officers of the group. The Secretary's responsibilities include taking meeting minutes, managing email listservs, and keeping track of membership in conjunction with the Treasurer. Furthermore, in order to maintain an accurate and updated history of SAMC, the Secretary shall document (and when possible, photograph) all events held by SAMC, keeping track of planning methods, successes, failures, etc. This will ensure that each successive generation of SAMC will be able to build upon the work of previous members.

8. The Chair and Secretary share two joint responsibilities. A minimum of once a semester, they are responsible for updating SAMC Alumni (via the special Google Group) as to the current state of the organization. Additionally, the Chair and Secretary are responsible for updating both the Members-Only and Public SAMC Histories. This should be done at minimum at the conclusion of every semester but preferably more often.
9. So as to allow for flexibility in the implementation of SAMC events, Event Chairpersons may be chosen on an event-driven basis. Any SAMC member may lead an event and will be chosen by election by the membership at a time prior enough to the event to allow for adequate planning. These chairpersons may assemble a team of members willing to dedicate their time to planning the event. Chairpersons will be responsible for the event's success, reporting regularly to the membership with regard to event-planning progress, creating a task list and delegating duties, and ensuring that said tasks are being completed in a timely manner.
10. In the event of an officer resignation or an officer taking time off from school (study abroad, leave of absence, etc.) emergency elections shall be conducted as soon as possible to fill the position. Formal election procedures (as outlined in Article VI) should be followed as closely as possible.

Article VI. Elections

1. Officers shall be elected annually by the members of the group. Elections shall be held during the first or second week of December.
2. The term of office shall start on the first day of January and end on the last day of December that same year. Outgoing officers are expected to help the new officers transition in over winter break, during January Reading and Exam Periods, and through at least the first month of the spring semester.
3. Any active dues-paying undergraduate member of the group may run for election. A maximum two-page position paper declaring candidacy must be submitted to the current Chair no later than one week prior to the date scheduled for elections, or by whatever deadline is announced. All position papers will be sent out to the membership over email the day after the deadline for review.
4. Active dues-paying undergraduate members of the group are eligible to vote. Dues must have been paid prior to a deadline specified by the Chair.
5. Elections shall be administered by a nonpartisan third party Facilitator, to be chosen by the Chair and agreed upon by the membership. The order of elections shall be Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Candidates who do not win a selected position may drop-down to the next position.
6. For each position, the following format of election shall take place: Each candidate will be given 2 minutes to speak. Following this, up to 5 questions can be posed by members to the candidates. All of this will be moderated by the Facilitator. After the question period, candidates will leave the room so that the members may deliberate for a maximum period of 15 minutes. After deliberation, a secret ballot vote, with each member having only one vote, shall be conducted.
7. Absentee ballots may only be cast if 24 hours advance notice prior to the time of elections is given to the Chair. Absentee ballots must be physically handed to the Chair in a signed and sealed envelope, and can only be opened by the Facilitator at the time of vote counting.

8. A candidate must receive votes equal to half of all members present (including absentee ballots) to be elected. If no candidate receives such an amount, the top two candidates will have a runoff.

Article VII. Yearly Charity

1. One charity will be chosen for every calendar year to be the recipient of all funds raised from SAMC charity events. Charity events that SAMC cosponsors with other student organizations may have a different recipient charity, as decided upon by SAMC and the other group(s).
2. The yearly charity will be chosen one week after the officer elections. The deadline for proposing charities will be the day of officer elections. Any member who wants to propose a charity must submit a one-page proposal ("Charity Information Form") to the Chair by that date. The following day the Chair will send out all Charity Information Forms to the membership for review. In the interim week, the member may send out additional information to the membership regarding his/her charity of choice over email.
3. Elections for deciding the yearly charity shall be conducted in the same manner as officer elections, with the exception of a third-party Facilitator. Elections shall be moderated by the outgoing Chair.

Article VIII. Meetings

1. Meetings of the group shall be held on a weekly basis, with a time, day of week, and location to be determined by the active membership at the beginning of each semester.
2. The Chair, the Secretary, Treasurer, or any Event Chairperson(s) may call special meetings of the group when necessary.
3. A simple majority of the active members shall constitute a quorum.
4. The Chair shall oversee all meetings and set the general agenda at his discretion along with any suggestions from members for topics they wish to discuss. A moderator shall be chosen to maintain order during open discussion. The Secretary or appointed stand-in shall be given the duty of preparing excellently detailed meeting notes to be immediately distributed to the membership at the conclusion of the meeting.
5. Notice of regular and special meetings shall be communicated to all members of the group by the Secretary.

Article IX. Amendments

1. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the entire membership.
2. Any three members of the group may propose an amendment. Proposals shall be filed in writing with the Secretary prior to a meeting, so that the group may debate the proposal. Amendments may be voted on at regular or special meetings.
3. The active membership shall assemble to review the constitution each semester, with time, date(s), and location(s) to be determined by the active membership.

The Undersigned hereby accept this Constitution as the Constitution of the South Asian Men's Collective, and devote themselves to its upkeep.

THE MISSION STATEMENT
OF
THE SOUTH ASIAN MEN'S COLLECTIVE (SAMC)

Since the passing of the INS Act of 1965, the South Asian population in America has grown tremendously. This influx has prompted an ever-increasing array of opportunities for South Asians in the United States, and the result is a community that continues to spread across the nation. However, for many individuals, especially males, this seemingly instant culture crystallization has also spawned a sense of uncertainty regarding their identity within the large diaspora—a diaspora whose boundaries and definitions are becoming increasingly vague over time.

More recently, South Asians in America, particularly males, have faced increasing challenges as a result of the backlash of the war against terror. Racial profiling and discrimination have pushed to the forefront of issues confronting South Asian males in the United States. Predominantly, for those individuals born and raised in the United States, these new concerns only add to the difficulty of establishing and negotiating an identity that is at once old and new, connected to their parents' homes and their country of birth, and that must strike a balance between such disparate elements.

South Asian males are also subject to questions of masculinity in much the same respect as any other subset of men in America. The inquiry, however, is made the more pressing and difficult as he strives to reconcile traditional American conceptions of manhood with his cultural background. South Asian society has historically been dominated by men, often to the point of excess. South Asians in this country, both male and female, seek to address the specter of the past in order to build for the future on the foundation of America's present.

Addressing these issues, the South Asian Men's Collective (SAMC) is an organization formed with the intent to foster a sense of brotherhood between the South Asian males on campus, and to assert its significance and potential. SAMC operates not to create a bland community of individuals loosely connected by eroded cultural ties, but a fraternal community that actively challenges and helps to reshape the cultural identities of its members, and uses its power to do service to the general South Asian community, in both America and elsewhere.