

Constitution for the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers at the University of South Florida

Article I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers at the University of South Florida hereafter referred to as SHPE.

Article II. PURPOSE, GOALS, and AFFILIATION

The purpose and goals of this organization is to empower the Hispanic community to realize its fullest potential and to impact the world through STEM awareness, access, support and development. We abide by four values which are: Familia, Service, Education, and Resilience.

This organization is affiliated with no other organizations.

Article III. MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

A. Requirement for Membership

Only undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled at the University of South Florida are eligible for membership. 100% of active membership must be USF students and membership is open to all students. Associated members may be USF faculty, staff, or alumni and spouses and domestic partners of student members. These associated members shall not be given the rights and privileges of active USF students, including but not limited to voting rights, use of facilities, or equipment, and/or benefits from student-funded resources.

B. Length of Term for Membership

Membership will take effect when an interested party confirms membership on the organization roster as shown on USF's BullsConnect platform. Membership continues until an individual has been removed by the organization or is no longer eligible for membership. Associative membership continues until either the individual withdraws or has been removed by the organization.

C. Requirements for Continued Membership

Members are required to uphold the objectives, purpose of the organization, and to comply with University policies. They must also be currently enrolled students. These are the only requirements for membership.

D. Specifications for the Removal of Members from the Group

If any member fails to uphold the purpose and objectives of the organization, does not meet membership requirements, or does not comply with University policies, the member may be held accountable and in jeopardy of losing their membership. Reasons for removal of members must be presented to the Executive Board. Written notification shall then be presented with reason for removal to the member in question. The member in question has the right to speak to the board on their own behalf. Then, a vote is taken and the member may be removed by a 3/5's vote of the Executive board.

E. Voting Rights

Non-USF students do not have voting rights.

All active USF SHPE Members are eligible to vote during the yearly board elections whether election is in person or online. The requirements to be considered active will be determined by the current Executive Board and will be announced at least a month before the elections. These requirements will stand for any voting that takes place during the term.

Article IV. DUES/FEES

No local dues, fees, assessments, donations, or other charges are levied for membership.

Article V. QUORUM

A quorum shall be composed of 50% + 1 of current, active voting members. Quorum must be present for any vote to take place on organization issues or amendments to this constitution.

Article VI. OFFICERS

A. Officer Positions

The required officer positions include: President, Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of Finance, Vice President of Marketing, Vice President of Technology, Vice President of Professional Development, Vice President of Communications, Vice President of SHPE Jr., and Graduate Ambassador. These officers are elected to serve a one (1) academic school year term. These positions are included in the Executive Board. Optional officer positions may be created by a majority vote of the Executive Board to serve the organization. Optional officers are elected to serve a one (1) academic school year term. The duties and titles of these offices will be created and established in the organizational bylaws.

B. An Executive Board comprised of Officers will govern the activities of the organization, and the specific duties of the Officers will be as follows:

President: shall preside over meetings, oversee organizational functions, and act as a primary University liaison.

Vice President of External Affairs: shall assist the President with his/her duties and preside over the organization in the President's absence, be the liaison between corporate companies and SHPE USF, lead annual SHPE career fair.

Vice President of Internal Affairs: shall assist the President with his/her duties, be the liaison between USF students and the Executive Board, is responsible for member retention through socials and activities.

Vice President of Finance: shall receive, dispatch, and keep accurate records of all financial matters regarding the organization and submit the organization's annual budget to Student Government for A&S allocation. Handle all the grants and purchase orders needed by SHPE USF.

Vice President of Marketing: spread all SHPE USF information about events through social media, create flyers for events, head tabling opportunities, and maintain steady attendance to all SHPE events .

Vice President of Technology: shall maintain the SHPE USF website, lead HackJam and Hackabull, provide technical workshops, and be in charge of all technical aspects of SHPE USF.

Vice President of Professional Development: shall assist all USF students with professional development through different workshops and prepare students for the Career Fairs and interviews.

Vice President of Communications: shall send out weekly emails to inform students of SHPE events, take meeting minutes at every executive meeting, is responsible for SHPE USFs participation in the yearly Engineering Expo; and is in charge of keeping track of the strike system stipulated in Article VIII.

Vice President of SHPE Jr.: liaison between the SHPE Jr. chapters in different high schools throughout Tampa, responsible for SHPE USF outreach to the Tampa community.

Graduate Ambassador: liaison between all the USF graduate students and SHPE USF, responsible for giving opportunities to graduate students and offering any help when needed.

C. All USF- students who are registered members of the organization must be allowed to run for an E-Board/Officer position regardless of college/major. President is recommended to have served previously at least one time on the SHPE USF Executive Board.

D. Committees and Directors

Committees may be created as necessary by the President for specific events and projects not to last longer than the current officer's term. Each committee will have a chair, as appointed by the Vice President that event falls under. Any member or officer may be selected as a committee chair. Any number of members may be on a committee.

Directors within the organization are appointed by the respective Vice Presidents, and their roles and responsibilities will be designated by the appointed officer as deemed necessary. The term for directors may span a semester or a year, provided that it terminates before or with the term of the executive board. It is at the discretion of each officer to determine the manner and quantity of directors needed for their respective portfolios. Additionally, it's possible for certain directors to operate under the jurisdiction of more than one

officer within the organization.

Article VII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. The elections for officers for the forthcoming year will take place in the Spring semester in April. Any student member may campaign or be nominated for any position on the Executive Board.

B. The President must notify members of the election timeline and nomination process at least two weeks prior to the elections meeting. Nominations may be sent in advance to the President or taken during the nomination meeting.

C. Nominees shall be given time to present themselves and give a one minute speech (two minutes for President) during the election meeting. Members of the organization may ask candidates relevant questions to their position. Discussion may occur after the questioning period. Voting shall commence afterwards.

D. Nominees are allowed to co-run for officer positions deemed necessary by the current executive board. Nominees co-running are allowed a two minute speech to present themselves. If co-running for a position, neither of the candidates may run individually for that position.

E. Walk-in nominations are allowed to be made only until the election process has started.

F. Elections will be conducted by ballot. The candidate for each office receiving a majority vote of members present at the elections meeting will be considered the victor. No member can be elected to more than one position on the Executive Board at one time.

G. If no candidate receives a majority vote, a runoff election must be held the following day. Members will be allowed to vote once during a two hour period in which the specific time would be at the discretion of the highest ranking member that did not run for a new officer position. In the event that no candidate receives a majority vote a second time, the current officers not involved in the run-off will make the final decision.

H. New officers take office at the last meeting of the semester, in which the elections take place, and remain in office until the next election.

I. If a position remains unfilled after the election process, the newly elected Executive Board will appoint a member to the position or re-assign duties to another officer.

J. In the event that a required officer position becomes vacant, an election to fill that position will automatically occur. In the event the President's position is vacated, the Vice President of External Affairs takes on the interim responsibilities of the President until the next election cycle. All other vacant officer positions will be nominated by the membership and voted on in accordance with Article VII. In this case, the victor will take office immediately following the election and will fulfill the term of the officer that is being replaced.

K. In the case that a virtual election has to be performed, (due to weather, disease, etc.) the Executive Board will decide on how elections will be run. The board may choose to have pre-recorded videos or a live election through Teams or similar video conferencing software. A voting ballot will be sent out to be filled out by eligible students in which the next executive board will be decided (eligibility discussed in Article III Section E).

L. Should a member win more than one position, the President will have the discretion to determine, as they see fit, how to allocate the positions among the candidate's victories, ensuring the effective functioning of the Executive Board.

M. All individuals elected for President or Vice President roles at SHPE at USF may not hold executive board positions in any other university student organization or Greek organization during their term. If an individual is elected to an executive board role in another organization in addition to SHPE at USF, they must decide within one (1) week of the SHPE at USF election results whether to accept the SHPE position. Should they decline, a runoff election to fill the vacated role will be held within two (2) weeks of the general SHPE at USF elections.

Article VIII. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

A. If an officer fails to maintain enrollment in the University, he or she shall resign immediately.

B. Additionally, Vice Presidents and the Graduate Ambassador hold the authority to rescind director appointments at any point during a semester or winter break, in alignment with chapter productivity. However, directors retain the right to appeal this decision, which will undergo review by the Vice President of Communications, the President, the respective Vice President, and the director in question.

C. Removed officer positions will be filled in accordance with Article VII G.

Article IX. ADVISOR(S)

A. A full-time USF faculty or staff member advising as part of their position responsibilities will serve as Advisor to the organization.

B. Nominations for Advisor will take place within the Executive Board. An Advisor will be chosen within two weeks of a vacancy. The Executive Board will choose the Advisor by a majority vote and invite him/her to serve as Advisor for the academic year.

C. During officer elections, the organization will vote on whether to continue the Advisor appointment or not. The vote must be a majority of those voting in order to retain the Advisor for the next academic year.

D. The duties of the Advisor include: meeting with organization officers, reviewing the yearly budget, signing all required paperwork and advising on issues of risk management, organization leadership, and USF policy.

E. The Advisor can be removed for not carrying out the duties and expectations as defined in this document. Any member can bring concerns to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will meet with the Advisor to discuss the concerns. After this meeting, the Executive Board will vote on whether to remove the Advisor. If there is a majority vote, then the Advisor will be removed.

F. If an Advisor steps down, is removed, or is not re-appointed, the Executive Board will follow the process stated in Article IX, B.

Article X. MEETINGS

A. The President and Executive Board shall determine the time and place of General meetings by majority vote. The Executive Board shall determine the

frequency, time and place to meet for Executive Board meetings by majority vote. Members shall be notified with reasonable notice of the time and place before a meeting occurs.

B. Special meetings may be called upon by any Executive Board member and require at least 48 hour notice to all members.

C. The officer transitions meeting will be held within at least 2 weeks following the election of new officers.

Article XI. RULES OF ORDER

Meetings shall be run according to Robert's Rules of Order. Robert's Rules of Order will be used in instances not covered in this constitution.

Article XII. AMENDMENTS

A. Amendments to the constitution shall be submitted by members of this organization to the Executive Board in writing for consideration.

B. Written notification of the proposed amendment to all voting members must be made by mail or email, at least two weeks in advance of any vote on changes in the constitution.

C. A two-thirds vote of members present will be required for adoption.

D. Amendments must be submitted to, and are subject to review and approval by, the respective campus office responsible for student organizations for where the organization will primarily function.

Article XIII. ANTI-HAZING CLAUSE

"This organization prohibits its members, both individually and collectively from committing any acts of hazing as defined herein:

"Hazing" as defined by §1006.63, Florida Statutes, means any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for purposes including, but not limited to, initiation or admission into or affiliation with any organization operating under the sanction of a postsecondary institution, regardless of a person's willingness to participate.

"Hazing" includes, but is not limited to, pressuring or coercing the student into violating state or federal law; any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance; or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the student; and also includes any activity that would subject the student to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment, or other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the student. Hazing does not include customary athletic events or other similar contests or competitions or any activity or conduct that furthers a legal and legitimate objective.

In addition to Florida Statutes §1006.63, hazing as defined by the USF system also includes, but is not limited to, the forced use of alcohol; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; physical and psychological shocks; deception; verbal abuse; personal servitude; kidnapping; deprivation of privileges granted to others in the organization by use of force or duress; and any other activities which are contrary to academic achievement, the stated purpose of the local and/or (inter)national organization, and/or the mission, policies or regulations of the USF system or applicable state law."

Article XIV. ORGANIZATION AGREEMENT

The organization agrees to abide by Florida State Statute #1006.63 regarding hazing. Furthermore, the organization agrees to abide by all Center for Student Involvement policies as outlined in the student handbook, to check the organization's mailbox regularly, to communicate via email upon request, and to update the organization's records whenever there is a change.

If this organization applies for funding through the Activity and Service funding process within Student Government, this organization agrees to abide by all Student Government policies.

Article XV. POLICY COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

A. Each registered student organization's purposes and activities shall comply with applicable provisions of the United States Constitution, federal laws, the Constitution of the State of Florida, state laws, rules and regulations of the Board of Governors, the University of South Florida Board of Trustees, University of South Florida, and the University of South Florida Student Conduct

Code, and the purposes set forth in the Student Body Constitution, and the constitution of the Student organization.

B. The student organization and its officers are responsible and accountable for all actions of the organization.

C. Any violation of law, Board of Governors' rules and regulations, University of South Florida Board of Trustees rules and regulations, or University of South Florida rules shall be considered as offenses committed by the organization. Its officers or members shall be subject to action pursuant to the provisions of the University of South Florida Student Conduct Code.

D. Any violation by a student organization shall render the organization's registration subject to review and possible revocation. Benefits of registration include but are not limited to, use of university name and facilities, eligibility for activity and service fee funding, and participation in university events.

Article XV. CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

- A. This organization was created on May 27, 2021.
- B. Last Amendment: April 30th, 2025
- C. Last Reviewed: April 30th, 2025