

ABS Constitutional Revisions and Timeline

Spring 2011

The Association of Black Students, in its current form, is less than 10 years old. Throughout those ten years the ABS has taken on the identity of its various presidents. In fact, the only person elected in some years has been the President. Structurally, the ABS has not been poised to truly provide a voice to the African American students on this campus. To exacerbate this problem, the constitution and by-laws have fluctuated from year to year, resulting in an identity crisis for the association.

Through the years a few themes have continued to emerge as important goals/roles for the ABS. They include:

- Managing the African American Programming Fund;
- Representing African American students on campus committees and conversations;
- Advocating for African American interests on campus and beyond;
- Networking and connecting the African American community on campus and sometimes beyond; and,
- Being a collective voice and clearinghouse for African American student organizations and initiatives.

The 2010-2011 Executive Board has been intentional about focusing efforts around one theme: “creating a strong community, one organization at a time.” This theme is common amongst other ABS or Black Student Union (BSU) organizations, and is a theme consistent with the current and emerging needs of the African American community. RSO support, leadership, funding, and outreach are one of the best ways to ensure a vibrant and thriving community of scholars and organizations. It is also consistent with the goals of the Cultural Center, and the collaborative and leadership-focused development of their programs.

The following constitution has been developed by current ABS leaders and advisors. At the core of the revisions is a need to continue the experiment in RSO support that the ABS has developed this year, while strengthening other goals of the ABS as it relates to advocacy and leadership development for African American students. It is important that the ABS establish some consistency moving forward, while allowing ample flexibility in the management of new or changing needs of the students. This constitution should allow for this.

February 23 – April 1 will allow for a review of the proposed changes by the university community and current ABS leadership, including the Council of Presidents. Below is the specific timeline for approval and ratification of the new constitution.

Timeline*:

February 23 – February 28:	Review of Constitution by ABS Executive Board and Advisors
February 28 – March 6:	Review of Constitution by Council of Presidents
March 7:	Council of President’s Meeting, 7:00pm
March 8 – March 29:	Campus community review and feedback (changes due by midnight)
March 30:	ABS Meeting
March 30 – April 3:	Revised constitution posted for public viewing prior to ratification
April 4:	Council of President’s Meeting and Constitutional Ratification, 7:00pm
After April 4:	Elections for ABS will begin. More detailed information to follow.

****Feedback and changes will be incorporated throughout the process leading to final ratification. Students should utilize their organizational President, the ABS Chief of Staff Breion Goldsby-Harris, or ABS Advisor Dr. Michael Anthony to discuss the constitutional changes or revisions. All meetings of the ABS Executive Board and Council of Presidents are open to the public.***