

## CONSTITUTION

**Preamble:** We, the students and musicians at the University of Massachusetts (UMass) Amherst, hereby establish the co-ed *a cappella* performance group known as Choral Dilemma.

**Article I. Mission Statement:** To provide the UMass community with enriching, meaningful entertainment while expanding the spectrum of musical diversity by performing renditions of various genres of music.

**Article II. Association with other a cappella groups:** With the cooperation of other *a cappella* groups on campus, we will collaborate with said groups in arrangements and performances. Other groups will be notified at least one month in advance to a collaboration request.

**Article III. Membership criteria:** Members of this group will audition with the knowledge that:

- a) They must be enrolled and attending full-time at UMass. Select exceptions can be made given the following circumstances:
  - i) The individual is a graduate student with an occupation either on or outside University premises, but still studies at the University.
  - ii) The individual chooses to participate in a study-abroad program, in which case the individual's membership will be temporarily suspended until they return to study at the University.
  - iii) The individual provides officers with otherwise sufficient reason to make an exception.
- b) They must agree and comply with the mission statement of the group.
- c) They must attend rehearsals, performances and other group activities which are integral to the betterment of the group as a whole (select exceptions can be made following administrative approval).

**Article IV. Auditioning new members.** Auditions are held invariably at the beginning of each academic year, no more than two weeks into the semester. Auditions will be open to all who meet/respect the criteria outlined in Article III, and those with the most appropriate voice part (a good personality is also an enormous boost for chance of selection) will be selected as members of Choral Dilemma. Size of the group may vary based on various factors (number of individuals auditioning, graduating members, suspensions/expulsions, etc.).

**Article V. Duties, responsibilities, and privileges entailing Choral Dilemma membership:** Membership with Choral Dilemma allows an individual to rehearse, perform, and socialize/consort with other members of the group.

*Section I.* Necessary and indispensable responsibilities of all members are as follows:

- a) Arriving on time to/attend all rehearsals, performances, and events (unless officers are provided with a legitimate excuse for otherwise).
- b) To the best of their ability, keeping their voice in the best possible shape for singing (with consideration of cold seasons/flu seasons, allergies, etc.).
- c) Learning music during their own time so as to practice, fine-tune, and perfect it during rehearsal. Music scores will be uploaded to Noteflight or other similar databases, or otherwise made accessible for members to learn.
- d) Offering feedback and constructive criticism on rehearsals, performances, and arrangements, as this will:
  - i. Increase our functionality as a unit.
  - ii. Contribute to the improvement and cohesion of the group as a whole.

*Section II.* Various privileges of members include, but are not limited to:

- a) Voting.
- b) Group activities outside of rehearsals and/or performances, such as food arrangements, hang-outs, or other social gatherings.
- c) Membership on social media (i.e. group chats, Facebook pages, etc.).

These privileges can be permanently revoked in the case of repeated truancy, misconduct, or any other action that violates the statutes outlined in this Constitution.

**Article VI.** *Absence and Tardiness Policies:* Absence from and tardiness to rehearsals, performances, and other group activities will not be tolerated without a valid, verifiable excuse. In the event that repeated unexcused absences or tardiness occur(s), disciplinary action will follow, in addition to serious consideration by the officers so as to see whether or not the individual is qualified to remain a member of Choral Dilemma. Full commitment on the part of every member is required (with consideration to academics, jobs, and other mandatory duties), and all responsibilities should be taken seriously.

**Article VII.** *Non-Discrimination Clause:* Choral Dilemma agrees to adhere to all policies and procedures outlined by UMass Amherst and any/all local, state, and federal laws and legislations. Members of the group can familiarize themselves with these policies in the UMass Code of Student Conduct. This organization is a functioning organization of UMass Amherst composed of at least ten people and will in no way discriminate based on race, creed, religion, color, gender, age, ethnicity, handicap, sexual orientation, or other diverse factors.

**Article VIII.** *Officers:* The six officers of Choral Dilemma and their election criteria will be discussed in this article.

*Section I: Titles.* The six different officers will have the following titles:

*Sub-section I: **President.*** The President of Choral Dilemma will fulfill the following duties:

- a) Organizing and planning all rehearsals and rehearsal times.
- b) Initial contact with other *a cappella* groups for potential collaborations.
- c) Registry of the group as a Resident Student Organization (RSO)
- d) Handling of all the required paperwork for the continuation of the organization.
- e) Receiving of all information from the office of Student Activities and Involvement office.

The President holds the authority to make the final decision in group discussions, with the knowledge that the decisions that they make will always be made for the best interest of the group.

*Sub-section II: **Vice President.*** The Vice President of Choral Dilemma will take the place of the President in the event that the President is absent, unable to perform their respective tasks, or offers their resignation as President. The Vice President will also fulfill the following duties:

- a) Acting as a resource for the President and the group when it comes to finding out needed information.
- b) Organizing, analyze, and present information received from other RSOs on campus.

The Vice President will also have a substantial influence in group decisions.

*Sub-section III: **Secretary.*** The Secretary will fulfill the following duties:

- a) Keeping organized records of all group activities
- b) Keeping track of attendance at all group meetings (rehearsals, performances, etc.)
- c) Serving as group historian by being able to produce and replicate accurate records of everything that has happened in the group thus far – from inception to present day – including, but not limited to:
  - i) Performances.
  - ii) Collaborations.
  - iii) Conflicts regarding the group.

**iv)** Interactions involving any exchange of money (records to be obtained from the Treasurer).

**d)** Maintaining group membership list and email database.

*Sub-section IV: Treasurer.* The Treasurer will fulfill the following duties:

**a)** Responsibly and efficiently handling all group expenditures and revenues.

**b)** Writing all necessary checks and have them signed by the office of Student Activities and Involvement.

**c)** Requesting necessary funds from the University's allocation committee.

**d)** Maintaining all group ledgers and account records.

*Sub-section V: Public Relations Chair.* The Public Relations (PR) Chair will fulfill the following duties:

**a)** Promoting the group.

**b)** Printing flyers, posters, brochures, etc.

**c)** Making sure that the group's voice is heard through the persistent use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, etc.)

**d)** Entering information onto University webpages and submitting appropriate press releases to the appropriate media sources.

*Sub-section VI: Music Director.* The Music Director will fulfill the following duties:

**a)** Arranging and finalizing all scores. It should be noted that arranging music is not a responsibility that falls solely on the shoulders of the music director – anybody who wishes to propose or submit an arrangement of any suggested song should feel free to do so.

**b)** Conducting rehearsals in a way such that rehearsal time is used in the most efficient and productive manner. The Music Director should make sure that members are using their rehearsal time to practice their music (in part sectionals, as a group, etc.) and hone their sound. Going off-task should not be a regular occurrence.

**c)** Making sure that everybody can obtain access to all available scores, whether via hard copy or electronically.

**d)** Making sure that the group's morale doesn't sink.

*Section II: Qualifications of Officers.* All officers must meet the criteria outlined in Article III and must be able to remain an officer for a full academic year. Officers must

also be regarded as responsible, driven, and fitting for their position by other members of the group.

**Section III: Election Process.** Towards the end of the spring semester, there will be a portion of rehearsal dedicated to nomination of members for Board positions. The following rehearsal, nominees should come prepared with a brief and concise explanation of their qualifications and potentiality for this position. At the end of this rehearsal, group members will vote using a secret ballot (Google Forms, physical paper, or otherwise). Each individual will be afforded one vote per position. At the end of the process, the president will count the votes, and those voted will assume their official positions the following fall semester, using the summer to prepare to hold office. In the event of a tie, a revote will occur, using the names of those individuals whose were tied.

**Section IV: Number of Titles.** With the exception of a President-Vice-President combination, any one individual is allowed to hold more than one title, given that a proportionate amount of dutifulness, responsibility and good judgment is seen to be exhibited by this individual.

**Section V: Disciplining of Officers/Officer Removal Process.** In the unfortunate event that an officer needs to be rebuked, disciplined, or removed from the group, action will be taken by the President and Vice President (unless it is one of these two officers which needs to be disciplined; in which case, disciplinary action will be taken by the Secretary and all following ranks). These officers will try to keep the situation under control and confer privately with the problematic officer. This private conference should be considered a warning to the officer. However, if problems persist, they will receive one final warning before any titles will be revoked. A meeting will be organized to discuss the following with the officer in question:

- a) Potential disciplinary action should the improper behavior not subside.
- b) Any misunderstandings that may have led to this conflict.
- c) What the officer should begin to do in order to avoid disciplinary action.

At this meeting, the questioning officers will present the problematic officer with verifiable, specific examples of repeated misconduct. The officer under investigation will be given a fair, unbiased, and legitimate chance to explain their behavior/defend themselves. By the time the end of this meeting is reached, everybody present should be on the same page as to current and future expectations. If, in spite of this meeting, problems yet persist and no ability to improve is exhibited by this officer, then all titles will be revoked with no further chance to appeal.

**Section VI: Resignation of an Officer.** At the request of the group, any officer wishing to resign (from either their post as an officer or their membership in Choral Dilemma) must submit a proper notice of at least two weeks in order to allow the group time to appoint a new officer that could assume the forgone position immediately after the incumbent officer resigns. In the event that an officer unexpectedly resigns, the President and/or

Vice President will assume all necessary responsibilities of this position until the group has had sufficient time to nominate and elect a new officer.

**Article IX. Conflicts:** Conflicts in the group will be handled in the following manner:

*Section I:* Conflicts related to the well-being and progress of the group – that is, intra-group conflicts – will be addressed by the affected parties and brought to the attention of the President and Vice President. These officers will act in such a fashion that doesn't disturb the focus of the rest of the group, and will take necessary and appropriate disciplinary action (similar to that outlined in Article VIII, Section V).

*Section II:* Conflicts unrelated to the well-being and progress of the group – that is, interpersonal conflicts within the group – will be addressed by the affected parties and will be either:

a) Handled by the affected parties in a manner that solves the issue while not contributing to the loss of group focus,

or

b) Brought to the attention of the appropriate offices of the University (i.e. Dean of Students Office, UMass Police Department, or any other related offices).

Conflicts that are unrelated to the well-being and progress of the group will not be brought to the attention of the group (they can be discussed with the President and Vice President if necessary) so as not to hinder group performance and/or lower morale. Any individual(s) found in violation this law will be subject to disciplinary action by the officers and potential expulsion from the group.

**Article X. Probation, Suspensions, and Expulsions:** In the event that misconduct is shown by any individual, that individual will be given a warning. If the warning goes unheeded, the individual will be given another warning and will be subject to a probation period. During this period, if the individual continues to exhibit poor behavior, the individual will be issued one final warning and a threat of potential suspension if the behavior continues. A meeting similar to the one outlined in Article VIII, Section V will be set up, in which the individual under investigation will have a chance to explain their behavior/defend themselves. If further misconduct should continue, the individual will have their membership suspended for a period of no less than one month (further time may vary based on severity of misconduct and fair discretion of officers). At the end of this suspension period, when the individual returns, if the misconduct continues, the individual will be expelled from the group with no further chance to appeal.

Examples of misconduct that could lead to any of the aforementioned consequences are:

- a) Persistently negative attitudes that harm the morale of the group.
- b) Harassment of any kind from any individual.
- c) Neglect of responsibilities.

- d) Failure to treat all members with respect, fairness, and good-naturedness.
- e) Failure to abide by the rules and statutes established by this Constitution.

Any member who feels like another individual meets any of the criteria above should promptly notify the President and/or Vice President, and these officers will take appropriate action.

**Article XI. Rehearsals and Group Meetings:** Depending on members' schedules and availabilities, the group will meet between 2 and 3 times a week, which is the estimated amount of time necessary to accomplish the tasks fundamental to group advancement, with consideration to schoolwork, jobs, and other aspects of members' lives. The days, times, and locations of these meetings will be decided accordingly by group members. Amount of meetings may vary depending on:

- a) Impending performances.
- b) Exams.
- c) Other obligations.

It should be noted that all meetings are mandatory and are to be promptly attended on time by all members, unless given a prior legitimate excuse for otherwise.

**Article XII. By-laws:** A 2/3 or simple majority vote of the organization is required to establish, approve, and enforce any proposed by-laws or changes in existing by-laws.

**Article XIII. Disbursal of Organizational Assets in the event that Choral Dilemma becomes defunct:** The University of Massachusetts Amherst will inherit the assets of Choral Dilemma should said group become defunct for any reason.

**Article XV. Group Quorum:** A minimum of 60% of all members must be present at any given meeting in order for business to be conducted legally.

**Article XVI. Amending this Constitution:** A 2/3 or simple majority vote of the organization is required to establish, approve, and enforce any proposed amendments to this Constitution. Members must be notified of an amendment no less than one week prior to its ratification.

**Article XVII. Ratifying this Constitution:** A 2/3 or simple majority vote of the organization is required to ratify this Constitution, in addition to the approval of the office of Student Activities and Involvement.

Choral Dilemma President: \_\_\_\_\_

Choral Dilemma Vice President: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Activities Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_

This Constitution is effective \_\_\_\_\_.