

Rensselaer Pride Alliance Constitution

PREAMBLE

We, students of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, having found the Rensselaer community unresponsive to the needs of those personally interested in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and other gender and sexual minority issues in today's society, do hereby establish the Rensselaer Pride Alliance, henceforth referred to as RPA.

Amended 4/9/2013:

Since the time of the founding of RPA, the RPI community has begun to embrace its LGBT* population. RPA seeks to make continuous improvements of campus relations with the LGBT* community where applicable.

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE

RPA shall exist to encourage the participation of the Rensselaer community in the promotion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, other gender and sexual minority (henceforth referred to as LGBT*), and ally intellectual and social interests, and to foster the development of understanding, appreciation, and pride in LGBT* history and culture.

Amended 4/9/2013:

In addition, RPA shall identify ways to improve the LGBT* campus climate, and work with the student body, faculty, and administration to make such improvements.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 2.1: Membership Policies

1. Membership- Membership shall be open to all members of the Rensselaer Union. It is the policy of the RPA to provide to the maximum extent feasible, equal opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability for all aspects of club activities.
2. Hazing- Reckless or intentional endangerment to health or forced consumption of liquor for the purpose of initiation into or affiliation with any Rensselaer Union organization is prohibited.

Section 2.2: Definition of Minimum Eligibility

1. It is the policy of the RPA that all officers, appointed officers, committee chairs, and Voting Members be activity-fee-paying students and/or their domestic partners. Only Voting Members can vote in business and election matters. Only Regular or Voting Members can run for and hold office.
2. There shall be 3 terms of membership annually that coincide with RPI's semesters:
 - a. For the purposes of this document, the Fall Semester begins one week prior the start of classes in the fall and ends on the first day of classes for the Spring Semester.

- b. The Spring Semester begins on the first day of classes in the spring and ends the day after spring commencement ceremonies.
 - c. The Summer Semester begins the day after spring commencement ceremonies and ends one week prior to the start of classes in the fall.
3. To be eligible for Regular Membership of RPA a person must be a registered student of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and have paid the Rensselaer Union Activity Fee for that semester or be the domestic partner of a person who has paid the Rensselaer Union Activity Fee.
4. To be eligible for Associate Membership of RPA a person must be a registered student of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute that has not paid an Activity Fee, the domestic partner or legal dependent of an RPI student, a member of the RPI alumni, faculty, or staff, or a registered student of Russell Sage College, Hudson Valley Community College or one of the other Hudson-Mohawk Consortium Schools currently enrolled in courses at Rensselaer.
5. Volunteer Membership is open to any person whose talents, skills, or knowledge will assist the organization in fulfilling its purpose, and who is not eligible for one of the aforementioned classes of membership.
6. The Executive Board of the Rensselaer Union may verify the eligibility of any member with the RPI's Bursar or Registrar.

Section 2.3: Attaining Membership

1. To attain Regular or Associate Membership, a person must attend one business meeting
2. To attain Volunteer Membership, a person must receive approval from the Executive Committee. Volunteer members may not constitute more than 5% of the club's total membership without specific permission by the Rensselaer Union Executive Committee.

Section 2.4: Renewing Membership

1. To renew Regular or Associate Membership, a person must attend at least one business meeting during the semester.
 - a. Membership is automatically retained during the summer session for those that were members at the end of the spring semester and are registered for the next fall semester.
2. Volunteer Membership is only for one semester. Every semester a volunteer member must reapply for membership.

Section 2.5: Voting Rights

1. All Regular Members shall be eligible for voting rights.
2. A member attains voting rights by attending two business meetings and attending one other club activity. Voting rights are given at the end of the last activity/meeting needed to satisfy this requirement.
3. Voting rights are lost when a member:
 - a. is no longer a Regular Member of the club.
 - b. requests their Voting Rights be removed by written communication to the Executive Committee.

Section 2.6: Membership List

1. RPA will not keep any official record of identifying information of individuals in its membership, including but not limited to names, Rensselaer Identification Numbers, email addresses, postal addresses or Rensselaer Computing Services IDs.
2. Officer list – An accurate list of members of the Executive Committee shall be maintained and provided to the Executive Board of the Union.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

Section 3.1: Authority

1. Executive Committee – All executive and operating authority for RPA shall be vested in the Executive Committee.

It shall:

- a. Consist of at least five persons elected at large from the membership. The size of the Executive Committee may be increased, for a period of one year, by a vote of a majority at any regular business meeting held at least three weeks prior to elections.
- b. Establish and administer the activities of all subcommittees and appoint their chairpersons.
- c. Establish and administer the budget, and collect and spend monies.
- d. Promulgate all by-laws and policies for RPA subject to approval, at a regular business meeting, by the membership.
- e. Maintain all records deemed necessary.

Section 3.2: Executive Committee Positions and Responsibilities

1. Each officer has the following responsibilities regardless of title:
 - a. Working as a part of the executive committee to meet the needs of the RPI campus while fulfilling the mission statement of the Rensselaer Pride Alliance.
 - b. Acknowledging that officers cannot represent the Rensselaer Pride Alliance without the unanimous agreement of the executive committee.
 - c. Maintaining the position that the Rensselaer Pride Alliance does not represent the entire LGBT* and Ally community and as a club can only represent its own members.
 - d. Upholding the Rensselaer Pride Alliance's stated purpose to educate the community in issues related to heterosexism, homophobia, cis-sexism, transphobia, gender and sexual identity, health issues, and sexual orientation when a part of an approved program.
 - e. Missing no more than three Business Meetings in any semester, assuming Committee members are notified of the meeting time at least seven days in advance.
 - f. Missing no more than three Executive Committee meetings in any semester, assuming Committee members are notified of the meeting time at least seven days in advance.
2. The President
 - a. Shall be the chief spokesperson for the club.
 - b. Shall call and preside over all Business Meetings

- c. Shall call and preside over all Executive Meetings if the Vice President is absent
 - d. Shall be responsible for coordinating all activities of the club.
 - e. May delegate their powers to any Regular Member.
 - f. Shall be responsible for the duties of the Vice-President if the office is vacant.
 - g. Shall act as the liaison between the Student Health Center and the RPA in the administration of the Safe Zone program
3. The Vice President
- a. Shall call and preside over Executive Committee Meetings.
 - b. Shall call and preside over Business Meetings in the absence of the president.
 - c. Shall be responsible for reserving rooms and spaces for all activities of the club
 - d. Shall be responsible for performing the duties of the other officers in their absence
 - e. Shall oversee all committee work, and when necessary report to the Executive Committee the status of the committees
 - f. Shall be responsible for outreach to graduate students, faculty, staff, and alumni.
 - g. Shall monitor officer performance and provide reviews each semester.
4. The Treasurer
- a. Shall be responsible for dispersing funds.
 - b. Shall provide any member/prospective member the requirements for membership and voting.
 - c. Shall ensure that new members know how to access all of the resources of the Rensselaer Pride Alliance community.
 - d. Shall maintain a working budget.
5. The Secretary
- a. Shall maintain and submit the officer list as required by the Rensselaer Union Executive Board.
 - b. Shall record and archive the minutes from Executive Committee and Business meetings as required by club policy.
 - c. Shall maintain the club archives, which may include, but are not limited to, membership and officer lists, club budgets, constitution, bylaws, correspondences, minutes, event information, awards, club policies and procedures.
 - d. Shall maintain the schedule of events for the RPA on a per semester basis.
 - e. Shall maintain electronic mailing lists related to the Rensselaer Pride Alliance and acting as a liaison between the RPA and the owner of its listservs.
6. The Public Relations Officer
- a. Shall be responsible for responding to all communication to the officer email list.
 - b. Shall coordinate publicity for the Rensselaer Pride Alliance, which may include recruiting people as necessary to create and distribute publicity materials.
 - c. Shall maintain a web presence for the Rensselaer Pride Alliance on the internet.
 - d. Shall document club events as best as possible (pictures, media, etc.)

ARTICLE IV: ELECTIONS

Section 4.1: Elections

1. Officers shall assume office upon the conclusion of the Fall Term each year.
2. The officers shall be elected in the following order: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and then the Public Relations Officer.
3. The highest ranking officer present shall run elections for each office. Should the presiding officer be running for any office, the next highest ranking officer shall run that election.
4. During the Election Meeting nominations for each office shall be accepted from the floor prior to the election for that office. Only Regular members may be nominated for office unless prior authorization is received from the Rensselaer Union Executive Committee. The nominee may decline any nomination. Nominations may be accepted from the floor as early as two weeks prior to the election meeting, as well as during the election meeting prior to the election for that position.
5. Immediately following the close of nominations for a particular office, the membership of the club may question each of the candidates individually. Rules for questions and discussion are defined in the RPA bylaws.
6. After all the nominees have been questioned, a vote shall be taken. A majority vote of the voting members present is required to elect an officer. Should a majority not be received, the candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be questioned again using the procedure in Section E and another vote shall be taken. If there is a tie, another vote shall be taken, and if there is still a tie, a coin shall be flipped.
7. All votes shall be taken by secret ballot and shall be counted by the presiding officer.
8. Voting members who will not be present for elections may submit to the Executive Committee their ballots for each office in a separate sealed and signed envelope prior to the election. The envelopes shall not be opened until voting for the office is complete.
9. Vacancies in any position shall be filled by election at the next regular business meeting. The term of office for the newly installed officer shall end upon execution of a regular election at the end of the Fall term.

ARTICLE V: DISCIPLINARY ACTION/SUSPENSION

Section 5.1: Petition

1. Petition for removal from club or removal from office may be made by any Executive Committee member or by written petition of 1/10 of the reported membership.

Section 5.2: Discipline

1. Any disciplinary action shall be subject to a hearing before the membership at the same meeting as defined in the bylaws
2. Disciplinary action may be proposed to the Executive Committee by any member and shall not require a second. Such proposals must be made, and the affected member or members notified, at least one week prior to the meeting at which disciplinary action is to be proposed. The affected member or members shall likewise be informed of the cause for disciplinary action.
3. The meeting for formal proposal for disciplinary action and hearing shall be held not more than three academic weeks after notification of the Executive Committee.

Section 5.3: Members

1. Member removal must be announced to the membership at least 2 weeks before a vote may occur.
2. Any member may be removed or suspended by a 2/3 majority vote at a regular business meeting.
3. Officers may be removed for failing to perform their assigned tasks as defined in Article III.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 6.1: Business

1. The club shall have a minimum of three Business Meetings in the Fall Semester and three in the Spring Semester.
2. All Business Meetings are open.
3. An Emergency Business meeting may be called by the petition of 10% of the members with Voting Rights or by the request of 2 officers. Following the petition or request, the President must call a Business Meeting within 1 week.
4. A simple majority vote of present voting members is required to conduct business. The President casts a vote only in the case of a tie.

Section 6.2: Executive Committee Meetings

1. An Executive Committee Meeting may be called at any time with one week notice by the Vice President. The Vice President shall preside over the meeting.
2. Quorum for an Executive Committee Meeting shall be two-thirds of the officers.
3. Executive Committee Meetings shall normally be closed. The officers may invite anyone by a simple majority vote.
4. Each officer has one vote. In the event that an office is vacant, there is no vote afforded to that office.
5. In the event that a decision of the club must be made before the question can be brought before the voting membership, the decision may be made a simple majority vote of the officers at an Executive Committee Meeting. The decision must be brought before the entire membership at the next Business Meeting for ratification. The decision of the officers stands until the Business Meeting.
6. Any action of the Executive Committee may be overruled by a majority vote at a regular business meeting.

Section 6.3: Election Meeting

1. The Election Meeting shall be held in the month of December each year.
2. The Election Meeting is open to members of the club and to any other member of the Rensselaer Union. Guests may be invited by a majority vote.
3. The Election Meeting shall be scheduled at least two weeks prior to the meeting and all members should be notified.

ARTICLE VII: POLICIES, STANDING RULES, AND BYLAWS

1. Policies, standing rules or bylaws may be adopted by the club following a two-thirds majority approval at any business meeting.
2. All policies, standing rules and bylaws must be available to any Activity-Fee-paying student or any interested member.

3. A copy of the Bylaws must be placed on file at the Rensselaer Union Administration Office within five (5) business days following their approval.

ARTICLE VIII: COMMITTEES

1. Standing Committees
 - a. The Executive Committee shall be a standing committee composed of the officers.
2. Ad-Hoc Committees
 - a. Shall be created by the Vice President and approved by the Executive Committee
 - b. The Chair shall be appointed by the President and approved by the members of the Executive Committee
 - c. All Ad-Hoc Committee chairs or representatives should attend Executive Committee meetings

ARTICLE IX: FINANCIAL

Section 9.1: Dues

1. RPA shall not require any dues from its membership.

Section 9.2: Distribution

1. All monies shall be administered by the Executive Committee. The president and treasurer shall act as the RPA designated signatories.

ARTICLE X: APPROVAL

This constitution shall take force when approved by a 2/3 vote of the membership and upon recognition and/or approval for funding by the Union Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

Section 11.1: Submission

1. Amendments to this constitution may be brought before the membership either by the Executive Committee or by written petition by a voting member

Section 11.2: Approval

1. Amendments shall take force when approved by a 2/3 vote of the membership, and upon approval by the Executive Board of the Union.

