

The University of Texas at El Paso

Black Affinity Group

Constitution and By-Laws

Prepared by:

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
1.0	9/24/2020	Yannick Atouba, Carleton Brown, Deidra Hodges, Lorenzo Jones, Krista Powell, Calvin Stewart, Craig Thompson, Rodney Terry, Charlotte Vines, Stephanie Walton, Michael Williams,	The founding constitution and by-laws approved and adopted by the members of BAG

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Black Affinity Group at the University of Texas at El Paso is to provide effective leadership and promote the well-being and success of Black faculty, staff and students, while advocating for full equity, recognition, inclusion, and emancipation of our community members.

Article I. Name

- The organization name shall be University of Texas at El Paso “Black Affinity Group” or “BAG”.
 - It is the intent of the organization to abide by State and University laws and regulations.
 - This organization will seek state, federal, and private funds to support the initiatives of the organization and promote the well-being of its members.
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Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the organization is to

1. Promote unity, provide support, advocacy and build a sustained and engaged community among Black faculty, staff, and students.
 2. Provide an immediate and effective medium for addressing issues of concern to Black faculty, staff and students.
 3. Serve as fierce advocates for those suffering from inequality, racism, and injustice.
 4. Provide opportunities for faculty and student mentorship and build bridges linking the organization to the larger Black community.
 5. Ensure the successful recruitment, retention, promotion, career advancement, and matriculation of the Black population on campus.
 6. Develop and promote social and educational programs that heighten cultural awareness, promote social responsibility, inspire leadership, and enhance community service and development.
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Article III. Membership

- Membership is open to faculty, staff, post-docs, and PhD students who intend to advocate for the black population at UTEP.
 - Membership is open to all, regardless of religion, age, race or color, marital status, national origin, disability, and/or sexual orientation.
 - There are no membership dues.
 - Only “active members” may participate in decision making, be elected to office, vote, and debate issues relevant to the organization or represent BAG on or off UTEP campus.
 - An “active member” attends 50% or more of BAG events per semester. Members who fail to meet this requirement become “inactive members” who cannot vote on organizational issues until the requirements for “active member” status have been met.
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- Members must exhibit conduct that conduct themselves with the highest degree of respectability, be active citizens of the organization and always support the mission and purpose of BAG.
 - Member must maintain professional conduct as detailed in the BAG ***Personal Conduct and Conflict of Interest agreement***.
 - Members who fail to meet the above obligations can be expelled from the organization. The ejection of a member is decided by a 2/3rd majority vote of the entire executive board.
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Article IV. Executive Board

The BAG Executive Board officers shall consist of UTEP employees who have:

- Demonstrated the desire to positively impact the black population in El Paso and/or Nationally
- Committed to the success and growth of the Black Affinity Group and the health and wellbeing of its members
- Demonstrated an understanding of the struggle for justice, equality, and equity.

The executive board shall be composed of the President, President Elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Historian, and BAG Student Ambassador(s). The members holding these offices shall be the governing body. Each office shall serve for a term of 1 year. An officer may be re-elected to the same office for two consecutive terms. If an officer cannot fulfill their term or fulfill their responsibilities, the President can either appoint to fill the remaining term or call for a special election in accordance with Robert Rules of Order. Executive Board members must sign and abide by the BAG ***Personal Conduct and Conflict of Interest agreement*** (see separate document).

The executive board, on an annual basis, shall prepare a strategic plan that outlines the events calendar for the year, budget projections, and proposal writing plan with the funding agencies identified.

The executive board shall meet at a minimum of once a month. It is the responsibility of all officers to submit a written report at each meeting and an annual report at the last meeting of each term. The President shall call special meetings when necessary. The President is empowered to act on matters of expediency where the presence of the executive board is not obtainable. Decisions of the Executive Board are final for financial obligations of \$150.00 or less. Decisions of more than \$150.00 shall be brought to the membership at large for a vote of approval, except in the cases where the funds come from contracts and grants where the Principal Investigator and Co- Principal Investigators are response for financial decisions.

BAG Executive Board Offices duties shall consist as follows:

President

It shall be the duty of the president to preside over all of the meetings, to appoint all committees chairs, enforce observances of the By-laws, call special meetings, provide general supervision of the organization, and approve all outgoing correspondence and all financial activities from organization funds (accounts payable and receivable). The President shall make no motions or have a vote except in the case of a tie, when s/he may cast the deciding vote. If the President is unable to attend a meeting, s/he should see that the agenda is in the hands of the President Elect 48 hours prior to the meeting for her /him to become familiar with it. The President must appoint

a Parliamentarian and/or Secretary when the Parliamentarian and/or Secretary is absent. The President serves as the Immediate Past President upon completion of their term as BAG President. All outgoing executive board members must turn in respective materials to the incoming President for audit and to issue to the incoming Executive Board members and/or Historian before the first meeting of the upcoming term year.

President Elect

It shall be the duty of the President Elect to assist the President and serve in the place of the President when s/he cannot be present. S/he serves as the president-elected and will be automatically slated to become next president upon end of the President's term (max of 2 years). S/he shall be able to approve all financial activities from organization funds (accounts payable and receivable) in the President's absence.

Immediate Past President

It shall be the duty of the Immediate Past President to provide advice to Executive Board regarding past practices and other matters to assist the Board in governing the organization. The Immediate Past President shall support the president and the president-elect on an as-needed basis.

BAG Student Ambassador(s)

It shall be the duty of the BAG Student Ambassador to serve as liaison between BAG, UTEP Black Student Union, and other black student organizations on campus. S/he shall be encouraged to provide feedback to the Executive Board on matters that directly impact the purpose and goals of the BAG. BAG student Ambassador shall be a student who will assist the organization throughout the year to grow and strengthen its offerings and outcomes.

Treasurer

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to development seamless financial processes for the organization. S/he shall participate in budgeting creations, proposals, grant applications, receive all money for BAG, and make all disbursements as required by the By-Laws, state laws, UTEP Budgeting, and ORSP. S/he shall be familiar with PeopleSoft and will ensure all invoices ,as directed by the organization, are paid, acquire receipts for all money paid out, and keep an accurate record of all receipts and expenditures. S/he shall submit a written report of financial conditions of the organization at every monthly Executive Board and BAG meeting as well as an annual report for audit purposes. S/he shall be a permanent member of the Fundraising committee.

Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to report out all official correspondence to the organization, take roll call and all minutes of meetings and keep a file, to include digital files, of the same. S/he shall see that the minutes are in the hands of the President or designated 72 hours before the meeting. S/he also maintains all rosters for the organization, reflecting active and inactive member statuses. The President will appoint a Secretary when the Secretary is absent.

Parliamentarian

It shall be the duty of the Parliamentarian to have the general supervision over the legal actions of the organization. S/he shall aid the President to keep order at all times. S/he shall judge all parliamentary questions and settle them according to the By-laws and Robert's Rule of Order. The President will appoint a Parliamentarian when the Parliamentarian is absent. S/he shall serve as the Election Chair in accordance with RRO. The President may appoint an Election Chair if the Parliamentarian is slated for any Executive Board member position.

Historian

It shall be the duties of the Historian to send organization news and contributions to the UTEP Community Relations Department when requested. S/he shall disseminate to all of the public press, with the approval of the President, all noteworthy activities of the organization that are not confidential. S/he shall keep a memorandum of all organization news with as much detail as possible and have interesting records of organization history for all occasions. S/he shall also see that all souvenirs and newspaper articles are maintained and kept in accordance with organization's directive.

Article V. Elections

- Nominations and self-nominations for elected terms are open to active members in good standing (have attended greater than 50% of the BAG events and are not subject to any sanction, suspension or disciplinary action).
- Application for executive board, CV, cover letter. Distributed to active members in good standing at least 24 hours prior to the election.
- Prior to election night, nominees shall speak (for no longer than 3 minutes) or write (no longer than 800 words) to the membership describing their qualifications for the position.
- Officers of the association shall be elected by May 1st so that they can preside over the Juneteenth, June 19th celebration meeting in the same year.
- Voting will be conducted online via a secure system to validate membership of the voters. If there is a technical challenge, votes may be in-person, by phone, or by proxy.
- Officers must be elected by a simple majority. Since the officer is a member, he/she has the same rights and privileges as all other members and therefore may make motions, speak in debate and vote on all questions. However, since the president is required to be impartial while presiding over an assembly, the impartiality precludes the right to make motions, speak in debate and vote except when the is by ballot.
- In the event of a tie breaker, because the president cannot vote twice, the membership will continue to vote until someone receives the majority of the vote. Alternatively, if the president is to retain the ability to cast the tie-breaking ballot, he/she must withhold his/her ballot until the result is announced. If there is a tie, then the president announces the result of the vote with his/her ballot.
- Any officer shall be removed from office for probable cause by a majority vote (50%+1) of the entire executive board.
- President shall attend all executive board meetings. Missing 3 number of meetings without excused absence results in abdication of position.

- Candidates wishing to contest an election must submit a written complaint no later than midnight of the date of the election.
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Article VI. Advisory Board

An advisory board shall be formed to advise BAG on the actions and initiatives of the organization. The advisory board shall attend executive board meetings, participate in debates, but may not vote. Advisory board members can be anyone inside or outside UTEP (including BAG members), who has a vested interest in aiding the mission and purpose of BAG. Advisory board members may self-nominate or be nominated by any active BAG member. To be elected to the advisory board, a 2/3 majority vote of the entire executive board is required. Members serve for a 1-year term and may be re-elected indefinitely.

Article VII. Committees

Committees can be filled by any active member in good standing. The executive board shall notify the general body of committee openings and request nominees. Nominees shall present their credentials to the executive board. After debate, the President shall appoint committee chairs.

- **Advocacy** – This committee shall manage the BAG advocacy process for the black population at UTEP. Actions include: recording initial statements, evidence gathering, investigations, and recommendations for BAG response. In addition, the committee shall prepare a list of outside advocacy resources that can aid those requesting aid.
- **Awards** – This committee shall manage awards and scholarships administered by BAG. Actions include: setting eligibility requirements, advertisement of awards, collection and evaluation of applications, and recommending the top candidates for award. Final selection shall be made by ranked choice ballots of active member during a general body meeting.
- **Fundraising** – This committee shall manage fundraising activities. Actions include: developing annual calendar for fundraising activities, setting up and operating all fundraising activities, establishing and maintaining relationships with donors, reporting progress toward fundraising goals. The Treasurer shall be a permanent member of this committee.
- **Mentorship** – This committee shall manage the mentoring program. Actions include: designing the mentorship program (between faculty-faculty, staff-staff, and faculty/staff-students), pairing mentors and mentees, collecting participant data, and evaluating overall program efficacy.
- **Social/Community** – This committee shall plan social and cultural events. Actions include: developing a semesterly calendar of events, identifying speakers, planning agendas, and organizing and executing the events. The committee shall also develop and maintain an event planning guide which details the format, style, and best practices for BAG events.
- **Communications** – This committee shall manage all official BAG communications. Actions include: developing and maintaining the official BAG website, social media posts, and marketing materials. The committee members shall also moderate the listserv and work with University Communications on any press releases and/or new articles.

- Ad-hoc – At the discretion of the President, other committees may be appointed, as necessary.
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Article VI. Amendments

Amendments shall be made with a 2/3rd majority vote of the entire executive board.

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THE BAG