

Constitution of the *American Agora*

The following constitution establishes the *American Agora*.

1. The *American Agora* is a public affairs commentary and opinion publication dedicated to elevating discourse about important issues.
2. The *American Agora* is open to all people and will not discriminate in their membership selection on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, personal appearance, disability status, marital status, family responsibility, political affiliation, source of income, religious beliefs, or other rights secured by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
3. The *American Agora* is bound to adhere to University policies as well as local and federal laws.
4. The *American Agora* shall value the autonomy of individual writers and respect their right to choose the topics and arguments of their writing, unless such topics or arguments violate the principle of anti-discrimination, standards of professionalism, University policy, local law, or federal law.
5. Membership in the *American Agora* shall be granted as described in this constitution and in any *American Agora* by-laws.
6. The following shall constitute the Editorial Board of the *American Agora*.
 - a. Editor-in-Chief.
 - i. The Editor-In-Chief shall be the chief executive of the *American Agora*. They shall have the authority to decide whatever matters arise in the organization within the scope of this constitution and the by-laws of the organization.
 - ii. The Editor-In-Chief shall serve as the President of the Executive Board pursuant to American University Policy.
 - iii. The Editor-In-Chief shall appoint the other members of the Executive Board pursuant to American University Policy and representatives to the Student Media Board, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Editor-In-Chief.
 - iv. The Editor-In-Chief shall be elected as follows, except in the case of Article 13:
 1. The Editor-In-Chief shall be elected in the April preceding their term, in a date agreed upon by a majority of the Editorial Board
 2. The members of the entire club, excluding Guest Contributors, will elect the Editor-In-Chief.
 3. The election shall follow a ranked-choice format. Members of the club will rank their first, second, and third choices for Editor-in-Chief on a ballot. After counting the ballots, if a candidate receives the majority of first-ranking votes, they win the election. If no majority is reached with first-ranking votes, then the candidate with the least amount of first-ranking votes is eliminated from the election. On each individual ballot, the eliminated candidate will be removed, and the remaining candidates will move up in ranking. After recounting, if a candidate receives the majority of effective first-ranking votes, they win the

election. If no majority is reached, the process of eliminating the candidate with the least effective first-ranking votes, moving candidates up in rankings on each individual ballot, and recounting ballots will continue until a candidate wins a majority of effective first-ranking votes. That candidate will then win the election.

- v. In the event that the Editor-In-Chief resigns before the end of their term, an election for the new Editor-In-Chief shall occur as soon as possible using the same format described in Article 6(a)iv, and the new Editor-In-Chief shall take office immediately after the election ends and serve the rest of the term. Until a new Editor-In-Chief is elected, executive power shall reside in the Editorial Board as a whole, with decisions made by consensus.
- vi. The Editor-In-Chief may be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the Editorial Board, excluding the Editor-In-Chief. An election for the new Editor-In-Chief shall occur as soon as possible using the same format described in Article 6(a)iv, and the new Editor-In-Chief shall take office immediately after the election ends and serve the rest of the term. Until a new Editor-In-Chief is elected, executive power shall reside in the Editorial Board as a whole, with decisions made by consensus.
- vii. The Editor-In-Chief may temporarily assign another member of the Editorial Board to serve as Acting Editor-In-Chief for a period shorter than a full term. The Acting Editor-In-Chief shall have all the powers of an Editor-In-Chief, but the elected Editor-In-Chief will still be a member of the Editorial Board and can recall the Acting Editor-in-Chief at any time.
- viii. The Editor-In-Chief shall serve a term of the academic year and the summer before.
- b. Managing Editor.
 - i. There shall be as many Managing Editors as the Editor-in-Chief sees fit, who shall head the editorial branch, which manages the editing of submitted articles.
 - ii. The Managing Editor(s) shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Editor-In-Chief.
- c. Director of Administration.
 - i. There shall be one Director of Administration, who shall head the administrative branch, which manages the administrative duties of the organization.
 - ii. The Director of Administration shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Editor-In-Chief.
- d. A person may hold at most one position under this article.

7. The following shall be positions outside the Editorial Board.

- a. Deputy Editor.
 - i. Deputy Editors shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Editor-in-Chief and work under the Managing Editor(s) in the editing department.
 - ii. Deputy Editors shall assist in the editing process in whatever way the Managing Editor(s) directs them.
- b. Associate Director.
 - i. Associate Directors shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Editor-in-Chief and work under the Director of Administration in the administration department.

- ii. Associate Directors shall assist in administrative duties in whatever way the Director of Administration directs them.
 - c. Staff Writer.
 - i. Staff Writers shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Editor-In-Chief and work in the writing department.
 - ii. Staff Writers may have their position changed to Guest Contributor at the discretion of the Editor-In-Chief.
 - iii. Staff Writers shall write and publish material for the *American Agora*.
 - iv. Staff Writers must accept the right of the *American Agora* to not publish any material for any reason.
 - v. Staff Writers must relinquish all rights to material published in the *American Agora* to the *American Agora* organization, subject to the discretion of the Editor-In-Chief.
 - d. Guest Contributor.
 - i. Guest Contributors shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Editor-In-Chief and work in the writing department.
 - ii. Guest Contributors may have their position changed to Staff Writer at the discretion of the Editor-In-Chief.
 - iii. Guest Contributors shall write and publish material for the *American Agora* on a less-frequent basis than Staff Writers.
 - iv. Guest Contributors must accept the right of the *American Agora* to not publish any material for any reason.
 - v. Guest Contributors must relinquish all rights to material published in the *American Agora* to the *American Agora* organization, subject to the discretion of the Editor-In-Chief.
 - e. Other Members.
 - i. The Editor-in-Chief may create new positions and appoint people to them as needed. Positions that persist indefinitely should eventually be codified under this constitution.
 - f. A person may hold any position under this article, regardless of any other position held by that person.
- 8. Pursuant to American University policy, a majority of members of the *American Agora* must be people officially connected with the University, including students, faculty, staff, and alumni.
- 9. Advisor.
 - a. Pursuant to American University policy, the staff/alumni advisor of the *American Agora* may provide advice to all members of the *American Agora* and act as a connection point between American University and the *American Agora*.
 - b. The staff/alumni advisor shall be invited by the Editor-in-Chief.
- 10. Meetings.
 - a. Formal meetings of members of the *American Agora* may be called by the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor(s), or Director of Administration.
 - b. If such a meeting is called, the Editor-In-Chief or someone they select will handle logistical organization for the meeting.

- c. If a member at such a meeting insists on using parliamentary procedure pursuant to American University policy, Robert's Rules of Order shall be used according to robertsrules.org.
 - i. If parliamentary procedure is used according to Article 10(c), the Editor-in-Chief shall be the presiding officer. If the Editor-in-Chief is not present, the Editor-In-Chief shall select another member of the Editorial Board to be the presiding officer. If no members of the Editorial Board are present, the meeting shall be canceled.
11. By-laws, a Style Guide, and a Code of Ethics for the *American Agora* may be written or amended by the Editorial Board.
- a. The adoption of any of these official documents, or an amendment thereof, shall require a majority vote of the entire Editorial Board.
 - b. All members of the Editorial Board must be notified if an official document is written or amended.
 - c. A formal list of all official documents shall be created and be made accessible to all club members.
12. This constitution may be amended upon a two-thirds consensus of the entire Editorial Board.
13. Election of the Editor-In-Chief and appointment of positions shall immediately follow the ratification of this constitution.
14. This constitution shall be ratified upon a two-thirds consensus of the Editor-In-Chief, Managing Editor, and Director of Administration.

RATIFIED February 27, 2020 by
Mark Lu, Editor-In-Chief
Lana Green, Managing Editor
Ben Mermel, Director of Administration

AMENDED May 1st, 2022 by
Anna Hickey, Editor-In-Chief
Kevin Sciackitano, Managing Editor/Acting Editor-In-Chief
David Leshchiner, Managing Editor
Meagan Keefe, Managing Editor
Ben Mermel, Director of Administration

