

Rice Student
Volunteer
Program
(RSVP)
Constitution

Last Revised February 14th, 2016

I. Purpose

- A. The name of this organization is Rice Student Volunteer Program, abbreviated as RSVP. The purpose and mission of Rice Student Volunteer Program shall be:
 - 1. To provide resources to support the success of the various service organizations at Rice University; and
 - 2. To provide programming for the Rice student undergraduate body that promotes a global service perspective and provides critical service engagement experiences.
- B. RSVP shall strive to develop and promote methods of sustainable service throughout the service community at Rice University. RSVP shall encourage service organizations to engage in practices that best contribute to the community and ensure that student service organizations place the interests of the community before their own interests.
- C. RSVP shall strive to promote and teach the concepts of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) to the greater service culture present at Rice University. RSVP shall encourage service organizations to learn about the assets in their target service communities. By doing so, RSVP and other service organizations shall work to foster community development and empower communities through their service.
- D. RSVP shall collaborate with student service organization leadership to ensure that RSVP consistently strives to create a positive service environment at Rice University. RSVP shall meet regularly with service organization leadership to ensure that RSVP carries out its mission and to ensure that it continues to support all service organizations at Rice University.
- E. RSVP will link the resources that the Center for Civic Leadership (CCL) has to offer to the broader service community at Rice University. RSVP will work in tandem with the CCL to ensure that service at Rice University continues to be sustainable and beneficial to the Houston community.

II. Membership

- A. *Membership*: All currently enrolled undergraduate Rice University students shall be given the opportunity to volunteer with RSVP and become active members.
- B. *Eligibility*: Only student members who are not on Disciplinary Probation or otherwise prohibited from holding office in a registered student organization shall be eligible to seek and hold office.

III. Executive Cabinet

- A. *Cabinet*: The executive authority of Rice Student Volunteer Program shall be vested in the members of the Cabinet.
- B. *Responsibility*: The responsibility of the Cabinet shall be to guide and coordinate the components of RSVP in furtherance of the RSVP's stated mission and purpose. The Cabinet should be aware and adhere to all the rules and regulations of this constitution. The cabinet should meet regularly with the sponsor.
- C. *Organization*: The Cabinet shall be composed of the one President, one Treasurer-Secretary, one Publicist, one Outreach Chair, and one Programming Chair.

1. *President*: The President shall serve as the chief executive of RSVP. As such, the President shall be the general representative, spokesperson, and liaison for RSVP. The President's duties are, but not limited to, the following:
 - a) The President shall maintain relationships and contact with all Rice service organizations Presidents or liaisons that have been approved by the Student Association. The President shall meet with every service club leader on campus at least once during the semester.
 - b) The President shall preside at all Cabinet or general RSVP meetings, except when the President is absent, unable to preside, or where otherwise specified.
 - c) The President shall be responsible for ensuring that RSVP and all of its members follows this constitution accordingly.
 - d) The President shall be elected through the General Election through the Student Association Constitution detailed in IV.A.
2. *Treasurer-Secretary*: The Treasurer-Secretary shall be charged with, but not limited to, preparing RSVP's annual budget according to the procedures stated in VI and managing RSVP's funds appropriately. Additionally, the Treasurer-Secretary will be charged with updating and maintaining the records of RSVP.
 - a) The Treasurer-Secretary shall be selected through an application process detailed in IV.B of the RSVP Constitution.
3. *Publicist*: The Publicist shall be charged with, but not limited to, disseminating information about the activities of RSVP to relevant parties and members of RSVP in addition to any information that other service organizations request to be advertised through RSVP resources.
 - a) The Publicist will appoint members for his or her publicity team consisting of three to four people.
 - (1) This team shall be responsible for designing and disseminating such information with guidance from the Publicist.
 - b) The Publicist shall be selected through an application process detailed in IV.B of the RSVP Constitution.
4. *Outreach Committee Chair*: The Outreach Committee Chair shall be charged with, but not limited to, ensuring the Outreach Committee upholds the mission and goals of the Outreach Committee stated in III.A of the RSVP Constitution.
 - a) The Outreach Committee Chair shall be selected through an application process through the sponsor in the Center for Civic Leadership detailed in IV.C of the RSVP Constitution.
5. *Programming Committee Chair*: The Programming Committee Chair shall be charged with, but not limited to, ensuring the Programming Committee upholds the mission and goals of the Programming Committee stated in this Constitution.
 - a) The Programming Committee Chair shall be selected through an application process in detailed IV.D of the RSVP Constitution.

IV. Cabinet Appointments

- A. *President*: The RSVP President, as the Chair of subsidiary organization RSVP, will be voted upon by the Rice University student body in SA General Elections as described in the Student Association Constitution. The Presidential candidate must have at least two semesters of experience with RSVP.
- B. *Other Cabinet Members*: All other members of the RSVP Cabinet, outlined in III.C of the RSVP Constitution, will be appointed through a collaborative effort by the previous Cabinet as well as CCL sponsor no later than three weeks after the President's election.
 - 1. RSVP will develop an application to be sent out to the general student body no later than one week before the incoming President's election.
 - 2. All individuals wishing to apply for a position on the Cabinet must fill submit the appropriate application and adhere to the interview process detailed by RSVP.
- C. *Outreach Committee Appointments*
 - 1. RSVP shall be responsible for creating an application and interviewing potential Outreach Committee member applicants.
 - 2. Outreach Committee members will be appointed by the outgoing Outreach Committee Chair and the outgoing President.
- D. *Programming Committee Appointments*
 - 1. RSVP shall be responsible for creating an application and interviewing potential Programming Committee member applicants.
 - 2. Programming Committee members will be appointed by the outgoing Programming Committee Chair and the outgoing President.

V. Outreach Committee

- A. *Mission*: The mission of the Outreach Committee shall be to fulfill the first component of RSVP's overall purpose, which is to provide timely and necessary resources that support the success of service organizations at Rice University.
- B. *Composition*: The Outreach Committee shall be led by one student selected through an application process with the Center for Civic Leadership. This student will manage a team of three to five students appointed by the Chair through the process detailed in IV.C.
- C. *Role of the Outreach Chair*: The Outreach Chair shall be charged with managing and creating the workshops and trainings listed under III.D. that correspond with the needs of service clubs throughout the year in collaboration with the whole committee. The Outreach Chair will also be tasked with the duty of disseminating training received from the Center for Civic Leadership to other Outreach Committee members.
 - a) The nature of the meetings will correspond with the needs of service clubs throughout the year delineated in III.D., and will be held with the CCL Staff with the expertise most relevant to the task.
 - b) The chair shall also practice workshops during meetings to ensure that they are equipped to present the prepared workshops in front of CCL Staff.
- 2. The Outreach Chair shall meet with the RSVP Cabinet regularly.
- D. *Role of Committee Member*: The Committee member will administer the trainings and workshops in collaboration with the Outreach Chair.

1. Tasks for committee members will be delegated by the Outreach Chair and is open to change throughout the club year.
 - a) Such tasks will include but are not limited to the following: curriculum development, reserving spaces, collaborating with community partners, food, etc.
 - b) Committee members should be actively reaching out to serve a mentor role you younger clubs.
- E. *Responsibilities*: The Outreach Committee shall be responsible for creating and holding workshops and trainings for the Rice University service community in unison with the Center for Civic Leadership. Suggested workshops are the following:
 1. Community Development
 - a) Asset Based Community Development
 - b) The Role of an Outsider
 - c) Service Language
 - d) Information on Target Communities
 - e) International Service
 2. Professional Service Club Development
 - a) How to manage and start a new service club
 - b) Building investment within your club
 - c) Leading Reflection
 - d) Connecting service clubs to faculty support
 - e) Institutional Memory
 - (1) Changeover documents
 - (2) Historical archives
 3. Logistical Support
 - a) Grant Writing
 - b) Risk Management
 - c) Travel Arrangements
 - d) Attending Conferences

VI. Programming Committee

- A. *Charge*: The charge of the Programming Committee shall be to fulfill the second part of RSVP's purpose, which is to create and bring programming to Rice University campus that promotes service and creates a connection between the student body and the greater Houston community. The Programming Committee will encourage student awareness of specific Houston-area needs.
- B. *Composition*: The Programming Committee shall be led by one student, known as the Programming Committee Chair, selected through an application process detailed in section IV.B. The chair will appoint and manage a team of three to five students to fulfill the charge of this committee as detailed in IV.D.
- C. *Role of the Programming Chair*: The Programming Chair shall delegate the execution and responsibility of specific events to specific committee members, develop leadership skills of committee members, and constantly seek out the creation of new events in collaboration with other service organization clubs.

1. The Programming Chair shall hold regular meetings with committee members to ensure timely progress of event planning.
 2. The Programming Chair shall meet regularly with the RSVP Cabinet.
- D. *Role of Committee Member:* The committee member shall participate in regular meetings with the chair and other members and carry out tasks delegated by the chair.
1. Such activities include but are not limited to: Contacting community partners, booking space, and publicity, etc.
 2. Each committee member will assume different roles for different events as delegated by the Programming Committee Chair.
- E. *Responsibilities:* The committee shall host no less than one event in each month of the academic year. A list of traditional events, together with more details about the logistics, can be found in the Appendix to the Constitution. However, the committee is not limited to or held to the list of traditional events.
1. Criteria for approving new events
 - a) The committee shall communicate with the Treasurer-Secretary each year to determine the amount allocated to creating new events.
 - b) The Programming Committee and the Cabinet have a shared responsibility and right to select new events. The President and the Programming Committee Chair must agree on budget and nature of the event in order for a new event to be approved.
 - c) To be considered by the programming committee and the cabinet, the proposed events must align with the mission of the RSVP constitution in I.A.ii. and fulfill one of the following:
 - (1) The event involves collaboration with a Rice service club, students, or community organizations. It can be proposed by the above parties or RSVP itself.
 - (2) The event increases awareness for a cause supported by existing service clubs.
 - (3) The event connects to long-term service opportunities for students at Rice University.
 - (4) The event serves as fundraiser for a specific service project or external community partner project.

VII. **Subsidiary Organization Policies**

- A. As a subsidiary organization, RSVP must adhere to the following policies:
1. *Nondiscrimination Policy.* RSVP shall not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, age, disability, or veteran status.
 2. *Anti-Hazing Policy.* RSVP shall not engage in any form of hazing, as defined by the Code of Student Conduct and any other applicable Rice University rules and regulations.
 3. *Conflict of Interest Policy.* The business of RSVP shall not be conducted in any manner that creates a conflict of interest or the reasonable appearance thereof. The President of RSVP must not simultaneously be the President of another club.

4. *Approval of Contracts.* No commitments or contracts shall be made by any member of RSVP on behalf of RSVP without the approval of both the sponsor and a majority vote of the Executive Cabinet.
- B. RSVP as a subsidiary organization shall recognize the primacy of the Student Association Executive Branch, the Student Senate, and ultimately, the Student Association.
 1. This organization shall be bound by the requirements of the Constitution of the Student Association and any associated rules and regulations.
 2. This constitution and any bylaws or policies adopted by this organization are subordinate to the Constitution of the Student Association.

VIII. Budget, Blanket Tax, and Gifts

- A. As listed in the constitution of the Rice University Student Association, RSVP shall be a subsidiary organization that has priority access as an organization responsible for fostering participation in volunteer activities.
- B. As a subsidiary organization that receives blanket tax funds, RSVP as an organization must operate according to the conditions laid out in the Rice University Student Association Constitution, including the RSVP Chair being elected by the SA and Blanket Tax requirements.
- C. Budgeted Blanket Tax dollars will be overseen by the Blanket Tax Committee and those procedures laid out in the Student Association Constitution, Article X. This includes final budget approval, amendments to the budget, and dissolution of Rice Student Volunteer Program as a subsidiary organization.
 1. Rice Student Volunteer Program has priority to the Blanket Tax General Pool as an organization responsible fostering participation in volunteer activities, as stated in the Student Association constitution, Section IX.A.9.
 2. Rice Student Volunteer Program (as well as all other subsidiary organizations) is protected against retaliatory acts by the Blanket Tax Committee, as well as decisions made by the Blanket Tax Committee in anticipation of acts of the subsidiary organization that the Student Association finds unfavorable, laid out in the Student Association Constitution, Section X.A.7.
 3. *Club Funds.* All funds (other than internal gifts as outlined in the following section) gathered by the organization must be deposited into a club account through the Office of Student Activities within one business day of their receipt.
 4. *Misuse of Funds.* The RSVP sponsor shall refer to the relevant University office(s) any member reasonable suspected of spending club funds without authority, failing to deposit club funds appropriately, or otherwise misusing or abusing club funds.
- D. Internal gifts budgeted by Rice Student Volunteer Program shall be monies collected through any means other than Blanket Tax and do not need to be overseen by the Blanket Tax Committee.
 1. Internal gifts should be budgeted for expenses that are self-sustaining in nature in collaboration between the Treasurer-Secretary and the RSVP sponsor, as well as the rest of the Cabinet as necessary. This is to ensure that the expense is replicable if the internal gift is not a recurring gift.

2. Internal gifts should be budgeted for expenses separately than budgeted Blanket Tax dollars (one expense should be paid for with one type of income, not a combination).
3. In the case that an expense is covered by both types of income, the Treasurer-Secretary of RSVP must clearly show a breakdown of what portions of the expense are covered by each type of income. The Blanket Tax Committee should only account for those portions of RSVP's budget covered by Blanket Tax dollars.

IX. Extenuating Circumstances

A. Vacancies in Elected Positions

1. In the event that any elected position is vacant due to unforeseen circumstances or an unexpected resignation, RSVP Cabinet members shall internally elect someone from the existing Cabinet to fill the vacancy with approval from the current Sponsor.
2. The new RSVP Cabinet must then appoint new member(s) to fill in the subsequent vacancies in collaboration with the current Sponsor.

B. *Sponsor Replacement.* If the sponsor resigns, is replaced, or is otherwise unable to continue serving as the sponsor for the remainder of the academic year, the organization shall select an interim sponsor and notify the Office of Student Activities of the change within fifteen days. The year-long sponsor will be chosen within three months time during the interim's sponsors placement. The organization shall have 3 full months to select a new permanent sponsor and notify the Office of Student Activities within the 3 months time.

C. *Impeachment.* The Executive Cabinet may resolve to remove any officer within that Cabinet through a majority vote. The other 4 members not in standing for impeachment will be given a vote. Voting for impeachment must be in the presence of the staff advisor. Before voting can take place, a formal request for impeachment of a cabinet officer must be given to the staff advisor and the person in consideration for impeachment. After one week, Cabinet is required to meet with the staff advisor to hear final pleas before the vote. The only exception from this rule is the RSVP President position. The process of impeachment for the RSVP is detailed in the Student Association Constitution IV.A.7.a.ii.

1. *Conditions for Consideration of Impeachment.*

- a) Cabinet officer has been absent for executive cabinet meeting for more than four times and without prior notice for more than two times.
- b) Cabinet officer has not fulfilled responsibilities detailed in the constitution due to insufficient commitment.

X. Amendments

A. *Proposal of Amendments.* A proposed amendment to the provisions of this constitution may be originated by any member of RSVP.

B. *Approval by Student Association Parliamentarian.* Amendments approved by the membership shall be submitted to the Student Association Parliamentarian. Amendments

may not take effect until they are approved by the Parliamentarian or the Student Senate in accordance with the Constitution of the Student Association. The Date of Last Revision on the title page of this constitution shall be updated to reflect the date of approval by the Parliamentarian or Senate.