***UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK***

***CONSTITUTION* for LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION**

**(LASO)**

***ARTICLE I*** ***Name of the organization***

The name of this organization shall be Latin American Solidarity Organization (hereafter referred to as LASO) of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

***ARTICLE II*** ***Purpose of organization***

 The purpose of LASO shall be:

Section 1: To promote a feeling of solidarity and pride among Latin American students and other members within the School of Social Work.

Section 2: To increase Latin American awareness within the School of Social Work (also referred to as SSW).

Section 3: To focus on and improve educational, cultural, and social development within the Latin American community.

Section 4: To provide the student body with knowledge of Latin American cultures and their diverse ethnic heritages through various activities.

***ARTICLE III* *General Membership***

Section 1: Any student, faculty, or alumni of the University of Maryland School of Social Work may become a member of LASO after attending a meeting.

***ARTICLE IV* *Officers***

Section 1: All decisions, votes, or nominations will be determined by a majority vote among the LASO membership (hereafter referred to as the General Membership).

Section 2: LASO will be co-chaired by 3 officers. The co-chairs will be responsible for upholding the Constitution of LASO and translating the contents of LASO to the members of LASO and to the University of Maryland School of Social Work community.

Section 3: The co-chairs’ shared duties & responsibilities shall be:

 Subsection 3a (*General*)

1. To act as the official spokespersons for LASO.
2. To maintain communication with the Student Government Association (SGA) of the School of Social Work.
3. To maintain communication with LASO Faculty Advisor.
4. To recruit and inform potential LASO members
5. To delegate and appoint duties and responsibilities to members.
6. To liaise with community organizations, as well as with other University of Maryland student organizations.

Subsection 3b (*Financial*)

1. To work with University officials on LASO financial matters.
2. To oversee all expenses required for the efficient running of LASO.
3. To create and maintain a financial budget.
4. To record and keep track of all financial matters.
5. To file and report all financial records.

Subsection 3c (*Events & Projects*)

1. To organize, prepare, and conduct meetings at least once a month on an agenda generated from what the members seek to discuss.
2. To reschedule meetings, events, etc should the need arise.
3. To advertise meetings, guest speakers, special events, projects, etc through use of the SSW online bulletin.
4. To publicize events throughout the SSW campus, specifically on the physical bulletin boards located throughout the SSW.

Section 4: The incoming prospective LASO officers will be nominated by any of LASO members, with the final decision being made by the General Membership of LASO during the spring semester (with the majority vote). If there should be an open spot, nominations will be made by the existing officers, with a final vote from the general membership of LASO. The retiring officers will serve as mentors to the incoming officers until the term is over.

Section 5: In the event of an impeachment of a LASO officer, a three-quarter (3/4) vote from the General Membership is needed for impeachment. The person being impeached will not be eligible to vote in this matter.

Section 6: The LASO officers shall invite the Faculty Advisor to all Officers’ Meetings.

Section 7: The LASO officers shall share in the responsibilities of the organization.

 Section 8: The LASO officers shall act as the faculty representative body of LASO.

Section 9: LASO officers shall act as the focal point for LASO within the University of Maryland School of Social Work and the University of Maryland community at-large.

Section 10: LASO officers are to organize and delegate responsibilities for projects and events as agreed upon by the General Membership.

***ARTICLE V* *Meetings***

Section 1: Monthly meetings- The officers shall meet for at least one organizing/ planning meeting each month.

Section 2: At least one general LASO group meeting will be organized and held each month. Subsequent meetings will depend on the level of LASO membership participation, student body needs, and current events impacting the Latino Hispanic community and Social Work profession, as well as unforeseen but essential learning opportunities.

***ARTICLE VI* *Finance***

Section 1: LASO shall receive $1000.00 per semester (via student activity fees/SGA). The SGA Treasurer and SSW financial administrator maintain records and monitor the expenses incurred for the sponsorship of LASO activities and events.

 Note: Funds left over from the fall semester (via LASO) shall carry over to the spring semester and any unused funds left upon the conclusion of the spring term shall be returned to the SGA General Budget.

Section 2: Fund usage- All use of LASO funds must be approved by membership. This may be done through the approval of a general budget, which must be submitted to the general Student Government Association.

***ARTICLE VII Faculty Advisor***

Section 1: The Faculty Advisor shall be selected from the faculty or administration of the School of Social Work.

Section 2: The Advisor shall act as a liaison between the LASO and the School of Social Work Administration.

Section 3: The Faculty Advisor shall be confirmed annually by a majority vote.

Section 4: The Faculty Advisor is encouraged to attend and participate at the general LASO meetings.

Section 5: The Faculty Advisor must be committed to Latin American issues and to LASO.

Section 6: The Faculty Advisor will advise in LASO events, projects, and fundraisers.

Section 7: The Faculty Advisor will serve as a resource for references within the Latin American community.

Section 8: The Faculty Advisor will inform LASO of Latin American issues in the community, especially in Baltimore, MD, Washington, D.C., and rural areas.

Section 9: The Faculty Advisor does not have the power to vote on the Executive Board, only to advise.

***Section VIII Amendments***

Section 1: Proposed amendments to LASO Constitution are to be ratified by majority vote of the General Membership.

Section 2: Proposed amendments to the LASO Constitution may be repealed by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the General Membership.

***BY- LAWS***

***Article I. Relationship with Student Government Association***

1. LASO, along with other student organizations of the University of Maryland School of Social Work fall under the guidance of the Student Government Association (hereafter referred to as SGA).
2. LASO shall provide the SGA with the organizations Constitution and By-Laws (updated as necessary), budgets, Faculty Advisor (s) names, and a current list of officers to be recognized as a Student Government affiliated Student Organization. This information should be turned in at the first SGA meeting in the Fall semester.
3. LASO shall review and update its Constitution and By-laws each academic year. Revisions will be presented at an SGA meeting, requiring a quorum to review and vote.
4. LASO shall further provide SGA with minutes from all meetings, fund raising plans (as applicable), activity plans, and day, time, and place of the organization’s scheduled meetings.
5. At least one LASO officer must be in attendance at all monthly SGA General-body meetings. One person from LASO must attend unless prior notification has been given to an SGA representative.
6. All funds must be utilized for activities provided which are relevant to course of study and advancement of the University of Maryland School of Social Work. All activities must be advertised to and be open to all registered students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.
7. LASO must publicize all meetings and events to the students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.
8. Neither students at the University of Maryland School of Social Work nor any interested participant from the other schools within the University of Maryland or the community at large can be refused from attending a LASO- funded event.
9. Funds will not be available to LASO unless it has complied with (b)- (h)
10. LASO may not request additional funding from SGA unless it has complied with rules stated in (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and (h).

***Article II. Fund Usage***

1. Copies of LASO budgets shall be forwarded to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, the Faculty Advisor for LASO and the SGA Executive Board.
2. LASO events that incorporate meals or food can be attended by staff and administration who should be prepared to pay a fee for attending the event with the exception of Faculty Advisors who have been identified by the Student Organization.
3. Any funds not used by LASO by the end of a given academic year (month of May) will be returned to the General SGA budget.
4. If the organization does not submit its budget, then LASO must submit a written request, at least two weeks prior to a planned event, to receive SGA funds. The proposal submitted to request for funds for a planned event will be reviewed and voted upon for approval at the monthly SGA General-body Meetings; a 2/3 vote of the SGA’s Executive Board and any students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work in attendance at that meeting must occur in order for funds to be granted for the proposed event/activity.
5. In attempting to secure a guest speaker for an event, SGA requests to attempt to negotiate the fee to reduce the excessive use of SGA funds for this purpose.
6. LASO, along with all other student organizations, can request any and all funds available to the SGA for events that incorporate the students of the University of Maryland School of Social Work or other student affiliated organizations on campus.

***Article III. Public Relations***

1. All events and meetings should be publicized at least 2 weeks in advance within the University of Maryland School of Social Work utilizing at least two more of the following:
2. The SSW Daily Bulletin
3. LASO’s bulletin board
4. Fliers
5. E-mail
6. USGA News
7. LASO shall properly maintain its bulletin board throughout the school year.
8. Fliers posted for special events cannot be posted on the entry doors of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, in the elevator within the school, or on painted surfaces.
9. Fliers must be removed after the event has taken place.
10. LASO can be fined if it does not comply with (a), (b), (c), or (d) above.
11. Copies of all fliers should be filed with the SGA and Office of Student Affairs for future use and/or reference.

***Article IV. Organization Access in the School***

1. LASO shall be provided with its own Bulletin board within the University of Maryland School of Social Work on which it may announce events, provide information, and communicate with its members and the general student and faculty body.
2. At least two (2) officers of LASO shall be provided with keys to the SGA office.
3. LASO shall have its own storage space as well as file drawer within the SGA office. Copies of all minutes, fliers, advertisements, correspondence, updated Constitutions, member lists, or other documents from each academic year must be stored in the LASO files. The Officers shall maintain this file.
4. LASO shall have a page within the School of Social Work web site on the World Wide Web. Members should update the page with changes in the Constitution or purpose, planned events, and summaries of activities and meetings.

**Updated Fall Term 2011**