

# Constitution of Equality

## Preamble

The organization Equality is based on the principle that gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and transsexual people, as well as people who identify with other sexual orientations and gender identities are entitled to equality, equity, safety, and freedom of expression.

## Article 1

The name Equality will be used in reference to the group outlined in the following articles. This document was revised and submitted to the Student Services Committee in 2008.

## Article 2

This organization is comprised of people with a diverse array of sexual orientations and gender identities that are inclusive of, but not exclusive to: lesbian, bisexual, gay, and heterosexual, as well as transgender, transsexual, and cisgender identified people.

The purpose of Equality is to affirm self-identified lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and transsexual identified people, their allies, and anyone else whose identity intersects with this community. Equality exists as a social, activist, and educational organization that addresses issues related to this community within the University of Minnesota, Morris and broader society.

Equality is also committed to fostering a safe environment for its members by respecting the rights of individuals, including the right to self identify and to confidentiality. Membership in Equality and/or participation in its events can in no way be an indicator of sexual orientation, gender identity, or behavior.

## Article 3

All individuals shall have equal access to Equality programs, facilities and membership without regard to race, ethnicity, physical disability, religion, color, sex, national origin, class, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

All individuals are welcome to participate in Equality meetings and/or events as frequently as they wish as long as they adhere to the rules of confidentiality and respect for others during such meetings and/or events.

In order to be considered a member of Equality during a particular academic year and to have the right to vote, a person must be enrolled at UMM and have attended at least one

meeting within the last academic year prior to the vote.

Individuals who are not enrolled at UMM but have attended at least one meeting in the past academic year are considered non-voting members. They are welcome to participate in discussions, event planning, and any other related activities, but cannot vote in elections or at other times when a vote is necessary.

New members are welcome in Equality without obligation. By participating in Equality programs members are agreeing to respect the individual rights of other members, including their right to confidentiality and self-identification.

Any member of Equality may relinquish their membership at any time without justification or prejudice.

All members of Equality are encouraged to participate in events both on and off campus, such as conferences, political lobbying, and other social and political actions related to Equality's purpose.

Only voting members are entitled to receive funds from Equality's budget to pay for such events. Additionally, members who receive funds for such activities are expected to attend and/or participate in the scheduled event under reasonable circumstances with the intention of gaining useful knowledge and/or skills. They are also encouraged to utilize and share such knowledge and/or skills with Equality and the UMM campus community upon returning.

## **Article 4**

Only voting members are eligible to hold offices in Equality. If circumstances make it feasible or necessary, voting members may hold more than one office. Members may also hold offices jointly.

The offices of Equality and their primary duties include, but are not limited to:

*Co-chair(s)*: an administrative position that involves facilitating and organizing meetings, acting as a representative of Equality, and taking on an active leadership role in the organization.

*Secretary*: an administrative position involving moderating, maintaining, and managing the email list-serve and organization roster, and reminding members of upcoming meetings and events.

*Treasurer*: a resource management position involving responsibly managing Equality's budget with attention to the organization's future, and attending meetings and making decisions related to Equality's budget.

*Diva*: an office management position involving holding at minimum five office hours per week in the Resource Center for Gender and Sexuality, reasonably advertising

such office hours, being responsible for mail, voicemail, and other resources, and maintaining Resource Center space.

*Publicity Coordinator:* resource management position involving creating and distributing advertisements for Equality meetings and/or events.

*MCSA Representative:* representative position involving regularly attending Morris Campus Student Association meetings and representing concerns and values upheld by the constitution of Equality and the interests expressed by its members.

Rules for elections:

- A. Officers will be elected to office no later than the fourth week of the fall semester.
- B. Officers will be elected by a simple majority of voting members present at the Equality election meeting, provided there are at least 6 voting members present including at least half of the current Equality Executive staff.
- C. Only voting members may cast a ballot in office elections.
- D. The length of term will be from the time of election to the election the following year.
- E. All members will be given advanced notice of elections at least two weeks prior to the election.
- F. In the event that all Equality executive staff offices remain vacant due to graduation, resignation, or other circumstances, it will be the responsibility of Equality members to decide upon interim officers in a manner deemed appropriate to carry out Equality affairs until a vote has taken place to fill such vacancies.

All individuals running for officer positions within Equality are required to read and understand the principles of the Constitution of Equality prior to declaring their candidacy. Equality members are also highly encouraged to do so.

An officer may at any time relinquish office. If this occurs, an election to fill the vacancy will occur. The length of term for such an election will be for the remaining period of the previous officer's term. An officer of Equality may be recalled if a majority of the voting members feel that the present officer is unable to fulfill the duties of the office. Recall of an officer may be decided upon as a matter of policy (see below).

All voting members will have equal representation in creating Equality policy. All proposals and/or resolutions will be submitted to members for debate and discussion. Policy issues must be approved by a simple majority of voting members present after which a written statement of intent will be drafted and adhered to until such time as the policy is revised or nullified.

## **Article 5**

A majority vote will be needed to amend the Equality constitution.

Any member may propose discussion of policy revision, including new policy. This proposal

must be submitted to the Equality Executive staff in writing a minimum of one week prior to its discussion and vote at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Upon receiving a proposal to amend the Equality constitution, the Equality executive staff is required to make it available to Equality members for consideration with notification that a vote will take place at least 4 days before the matter is voted upon. It will then be decided upon by a simple majority of voting members present.

Amendments to the Equality constitution are subject to approval by the SCC (Student Services Committee).

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