

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NIGERIAN UNION OF NORTH FLORIDA  
INCORPORATED, TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Article 1. Name, Location, and Goals

Section 1: Name. The name shall be the Nigerian Union of North Florida Inc., hereinafter call the “Union” with acronym NUNF.

Section 2: Location. The Union shall maintain its headquarters at such a place as may from time to time be designated by the Executive Committee.

Section 3: Goals. The Union shall act as a forum:

1. For the enhancement of the general well-being and interests of all Nigerians and people of Nigerian origin and their families residing in or visiting the north Florida area.
2. For the promotion of the African culture in general and the Nigerian culture in particular.
3. To foster, maintain, and promote permanent ties between Nigerians, American, and others that cut across the cultural, socio-political, economic, and educational arenas as a means of substantially improving the standards of living, socio-political consciousness, and educational opportunities of the Nigerian peoples at home and abroad.
4. To galvanize and unify all Nigerians in the North Florida area, encourage a sense of belonging, and the recognition that unity in diversity can be the source of great strength.
5. To assist in the transformation of the Nigerian society in accordance with the wishes of the Nigerian people.

Article 2. Membership

Section 1: The membership of the Union shall consist of Regular members, Student members, Associate members, and Honorary members.

- Section 2: Only Regular members shall be eligible to hold the office of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- Section 3: All citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and members of their immediate family, who have attained the age of 18 years and who are resident within the geographic area of north Florida shall be eligible to be Union members.
- Section 4: To be eligible for admission as a Student Member, an applicant shall be of Nigerian lineage and be enrolled as a full time student at the time of application.
- Section 5: An Associate Member is anyone who is not of Nigerian stock but yet subscribes to the goals of the Union and wishes to be considered for membership. The application of an associate member must be approved by the Executive Committee. At least 51% of the members of the Executive Committee must cast affirmative ballots for the application to be approved.
- Section 6: An Honorary Member shall be a person who is not of Nigerian lineage but who has made outstanding contributions to the NUNF or the interests of Nigeria and Nigerians in general. Honorary members shall be selected by the Executive Committee. At least 75% of the members of the Executive Committee must cast affirmative ballots for extension of an invitation. Acceptance of such invitation shall constitute election as an Honorary Member.

Article 3. Fees and Dues

- Section 1: The annual dues of the Union shall be established by the Executive Committee subject to the approval of a majority of the Union members present at the annual general meeting. The initial dues structure approved by members of the Union is as follows: Regular members \$25, Associate members \$15, Student Members \$15, Honorary Members \$10. The fiscal year shall run from January 1 to December 31. Contributions from honorary members are welcome.
- Section 2: Any member who has not paid the annual dues shall not be eligible to vote, run for elected office, serve on any of the Committees, or enjoy other Union privileges.
- Section 3: Dues are payable on January 1 of each year and are past

due on January 31. Additional late fee of \$1 per month will be due after February 28.

Section 4: There shall be a Union fund established to which shall be added all moneys received from fees, dues, and any income from any other source including the investment of the Fund. The Treasurer and the President shall be the only authorized signatories to all Union accounts.

Article 4: Officers and the Executive Committee

Section 1: The elected officers shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Publicity Secretary. The Executive Committee shall comprise the elected officers and the living immediate past president who shall be a non-voting ex-officio member.

Section 2: The terms of the elected officers shall be two (2) years, and they shall be eligible for re-election for only one term of office. All elected officers shall be eligible for re-election for only one term. All elected officers can run for a maximum of two terms for the same position and shall assume office on January 1 following the year of election.

Section 3: In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of President, the un-expired term shall be filled by the Vice President until an election can be held to fill the vacancy. In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of Vice President or any other elective office, the Executive Committee shall appoint an officer from their ranks and/or the Union membership at large to fill the un-expired term until an election can be held.

Section 4: The Executive shall recommend the appointment of an External Auditor to the Union members at the annual general meeting. The audited accounts shall be presented to the Union for approval at the annual general meeting. The Executive shall recommend the remuneration for the audit for the succeeding fiscal year for approval by the Union membership at the Annual General Meeting.

Article 5: Election of Officers

Section 1: The Executive Committee shall elect an Electoral Committee consisting of a chairperson and three (3) other members for a total of four (4) members. The Electoral

Committee shall be constituted no later than June of the year of election. The Electoral Committee shall accept nominations from members in good standing and present a list of one or more eligible candidates for the office of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Publicity Secretary during the September meeting. Written consent to hold office must be received from each person nominated otherwise the nomination shall be considered void.

Section 2: The Electoral Committee shall make available to the voting members no later than September of the year of election a schedule of events for the election of officers. Additional nomination for all the offices may be made by petition signed by at least 3 members who are eligible to vote.

Section 3: All nominations shall close 30 days before the date of election. The Publicity Secretary shall contact all members with a list of nominees for the various offices.

Article 6: Voting

Section 1: Voting for offices and amendment to the constitution shall be by secret ballot during the November general meeting. The candidate receiving the simple majority of the votes for an office shall be declared elected. If there is no clear majority winner, the top two vote getters will stand for a run-off election.

Section 2: Only members whose dues are paid up at the close of nominations, including late fees, are eligible to vote. The Secretary of the Union shall keep a register of all members and those whose fees are paid up. Honorary members are not eligible to vote or hold any office but may serve as non-voting members on Committees.

Article 7. Government

Section 1: The government of the Union shall be vested in the Executive Committee hereinafter referred to as the Executive.

Section 2: The Executive shall establish policies for the operation of the Union consistent with the provisions of this constitution.

- Section 3: The Executive shall meet at the time of Annual General meeting and at such other times and places it may determine.
- Section 4: The President shall preside at the meetings of the Executive and of the Union. In the absence of the President the Vice President shall preside at meetings that are duly noticed. A majority of the members of the Executive shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 5: The Executive shall act upon all proposals received from its Committees or the membership on matters intended as policies or recommendations of the Union. Approval by the Executive will be required before policies or recommendations shall become official.
- Section 6: Any Union member who is eligible to vote may initiate a petition to determine if any officer shall be removed from office. The petition must include at least 20 percent of all eligible voters and shall clearly state the reason why the officer is to be removed from office. The Executive, at the officer's request may, by a simple majority vote require a hearing before a three-member independent committee in a manner that it deems fit.

Within 30 days after receipt of the petition the following question as well as a summary of the reasons for the proposed removal together with the officer's response shall be submitted to each eligible voter with the following question:

Shall (name) be removed from the office of (office)?

Should the affirmative carry a majority, and provided at least 51% of all eligible voters cast ballots, the office shall be declared vacant and the vacancy filled in the manner prescribed under article 4 section 3.

## Article 8 Meetings

- Section 1: The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held in November of each year. The exact date shall be determined by the Executive. One or more other meetings may be held each quarter at the discretion of the Executive. The presence of at least 10 members of the Union including at least 2 members of the Executive at any meeting shall

constitute a quorum.

Section 2: A report of the financial condition of the Union and reports of principal officers and committees shall be presented at each AGM.

Section 3: The Rules contained in the current edition of the Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Union in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and any special rules of order the Union may adopt.

Section 4: The President shall preside at all meetings of the Union and the Executive Committee. The Vice-President shall preside in the absence of the President. The Secretary shall preside in the absence of both the President and Vice-President. Except for the AGM, the members shall nominate any other elected officer to preside at any meeting where all the three aforementioned executive officers are absent.

#### Article 9. Councils & Committees

Section 1: The Executive Committee shall comprise the elected officers and the living immediate past president, to give general direction to the Union and formulate policies and recommend the Union's position on various issues.

Section 2: There shall be a Programs, Services, and Welfare committee to develop programs, offer services, and be the custodian of the welfare of members of the Union in whatever shape or form this may take and in accordance with the aforementioned goals and objectives of the Union. The committee will be chaired by the Vice President and will include the Publicity Secretary.

Section 3: There shall be a Membership and Publicity Committee to canvass for membership and give the widest possible publicity to the Union's activities, meetings and services. The Committee shall comprise the Union's Secretary who will be the chair, and Publicity Secretary.

Section 4: There shall be a Budget and Finance Committee to be chaired by the President. Other members will be the Vice President and the Treasurer.

Section 5: Each committee shall include four (4) additional dues-

paying members of the Union. Members of the Union shall serve on committees on a voluntary basis or may be appointed by the Union President.

Section 6: All council/committee decisions shall be presented for consideration by the Executive Committee and if approved shall become effective.

Article 10. Amendments

Section 1: Proposals to amend this constitution, after adoption, may be made by the Executive or by petition signed by at least 20 members who are eligible to vote.

Section 2: Any proposed amendment to the constitution shall be submitted by letter to the voting members and shall be on the order of the business of the next succeeding Annual General Meeting but no less than 30 days to the date of the AGM. Such amendments may be further amended by a majority vote at the meeting in any manner pertinent to the original amendment.

Section 3: An affirmative vote of two-thirds of all ballots cast shall be necessary for the adoption of any amendment to the Constitution.

Section 4: Amendments so adopted shall take effect 30 days after adoption unless otherwise indicated in the amendment.