



# **The Constitution of Shakespeare on the Lawn**

*As of Spring 2009*

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## ***Article I. Name & Purpose***

Shakespeare on the Lawn (hereafter referred to as SotL) is a student-run organization at the University of Virginia . Its purpose is to increase the availability and accessibility of Shakespeare to the general public, primarily through free performances of Shakespeare's works. In addition, SotL is intended to provide an environment for those interested in the theater to perform their craft.

For the purposes of this document, a SotL "project" is defined as an activity that may include (but is not limited to) performances, lectures, discussions, and readings. The final product of a SotL project must be available to the general public and must be advertised as such by SotL.

## **Article II. Membership**

### **Chapter I. Members**

- i. The voting membership of SotL shall consist of any University of Virginia student or any non-student who is involved in, or has been involved in, any of SotL's projects within the last 2 semesters and who fulfills membership requirements.
- ii. "Involvement" in SotL shall be officially determined by the Vice President and all project Directors each semester, and shall reflect the individuals listed in the programs of any SotL projects that semester. Any individual may petition the Vice President and Director for membership by describing their previously unrecognized involvement.
- iii. Membership in SotL is contingent upon attendance of at least two meetings per semester and active participation in at least two promotional events for SotL. Any member who fails to attend at least two meetings during the course of a semester shall not be a voting member until he or she fulfills the qualifications for membership again.
- iv. Upon fulfillment of the membership requirements, the Vice President shall announce new members to the general SotL membership.
- v. Membership in SotL shall not be restricted by reason of age, citizenship, color, disability, gender, race, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era. SotL shall retain the right to restrict membership based on an ability to perform the activities related to the organization's purpose.

### **Chapter II. General Meetings**

During both the fall and spring semesters, the general membership of Shakespeare on the Lawn shall meet at least once a month. These general SotL meetings are shall be intended primarily to keep all members informed of the state of SotL's current projects, to discuss SotL management issues, to propose and vote on new projects, and to elect officers when necessary.

- i. Meeting Regulations
  - a) In order for any decision made at any general body meeting to be binding, all of the following conditions must be met:
    - 1) At least 4 of the 5 officers and 50 percent of the voting members must be present. Those who submit absentee ballots at least two hours prior to the meeting may count toward fulfillment of this quorum.
    - 2) The meeting must have been announced at least 72 hours in advance on the general SotL mailing list (sotl@virginia.edu), with a proposed agenda. Any voting member may independently propose agenda items to the general SotL membership
    - 3) In order for an amendment to the constitution to be binding at a general meeting, it must pass by a 2/3 vote and 2/3 of members must be present (or approved absentee) for the quorum
  - b) The following motions must be on the announced agenda for a meeting if they are to be voted on at that meeting
    - 1) Election or removal of officers
    - 2) Constitutional amendments
    - 3) Election of SotL project proposals

4) Replacing a director for a project

- c) Excused absences from meetings may be given at the discretion of the president. An excused absence will count toward the membership requirement of 2 meetings per semester in the same way as an attended meeting. Anyone seeking an excused absence must request it of the President at least 24 hours before the meeting from which they wish to be excused.

ii. Voting

- a) Voting on a SotL issue can only take place at a SotL general meeting.
- b) Except as noted, at a general SotL meeting, a simple majority of voting members in attendance must vote in favor of a motion for it to be passed.
- c) The wording of any proposed motion on the agenda may be discussed and altered at the meeting before the final vote is taken.
- d) Any voting member is entitled to cast a secret ballot in any election if he or she so chooses.
- e) Any voting member shall be allowed to cast an absentee ballot provided:
  - 1) the member's excused absence from the meeting is approved by the President
  - 2) the member's ballot contains the full text/proposal of the vote. Absentee voters shall specify in their ballot whether their vote is for or against the intent of the proposal and/or whether their vote is for or against the wording of the proposal as it stands. If changes are made to the wording of the proposal during the meeting, the President shall determine if those changes they are significant enough to constitute a change in the intent spirit of the proposal. In such instance, absentee votes will change to abstentions. If the vote is cast exclusively for the exact wording of the proposal and the exact wording is changed, this vote will also change to an abstention. However, absentee ballots may provide objections and provisions for a change in their vote based on anticipated changes.
- f) An absentee voter's objections may be read before the group before the vote is taken if he or she so stipulates on his or her ballot.

## **Article III. Officers**

### **Chapter I. Collective Officer Definitions and Duties**

- i. There shall be five (5) officers in SotL: the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Webmaster, and Publicity Officer.
- ii. The officers shall hold a monthly officers meeting prior to the monthly SotL general meeting. An official officers meeting shall require the attendance of all elected officers. At the officers meeting, the agenda for the general meeting will be determined but not finalized. Staff are encouraged to attend officers meetings and voice their opinions. Voting members are permitted to attend officers meetings.
- iii. The officers have the power amongst themselves to:
  - a) appoint staff positions. These include, but are not limited to, Alumni Chair, Social Chair, Weapons Master, Fundraising Chair, and Historian.
  - b) Establish a working budget for SotL at the first officers meeting of the academic year. This budget must take into account any budgets previously created for that year (for example, a budget submitted to Student Council.) The officers shall calculate at this point 5% of the working budget. This amount, or \$200, whichever is higher, shall be the maximum amount available to be allotted to any one small SotL project for that year. The working budget shall set financial guidelines for that academic year and following summer. Any and all revisions to the working budget must be approved by all officers.
- iv. All officers are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the content of SotL's constitution.
- v. The following officers may not be a director or producer for a major SotL project (as defined in VI. I) while holding said SotL office: President, Treasurer, and Publicity Officer.
- vi. The officers shall serve as a resource for all SotL projects.

### **Chapter II. Individual Officer Duties**

- i. President: The President of SotL is in charge of maintaining the group. The president shall:
  - a) Maintain the status of SotL as a Contracted Independent Organization (CIO) at the University of Virginia (UVA);
  - b) Act as liaison and representative to Student Council and any outside University or community-based organization, as the need arises;
  - c) Keep order during and moderate all meetings pertaining to SotL business, excepting those exclusively pertaining to a SotL project;
  - d) Interpret and clarify SotL's constitution to any individual who requests it or in any necessary circumstances;
  - e) Uphold all constitutional procedures;
  - f) Schedule and reserve space for all monthly officers and general meetings;
  - g) Compile the monthly SotL general meeting agenda with input from the officers and general membership;
  - h) Distribute SotL general meeting time, location, and agenda to the general SotL membership 72 hours prior to the meeting.
  - i) President shall confer with small project directors at least every two weeks during period of said project and update the general membership on the status of the project.

- ii. Vice President: The Vice President is in charge of assisting the President in his/her duties. In addition, the Vice President shall:
  - a) Coordinate SotL's presence at the Student Activities Fairs with the Publicity Officer.
  - b) Coordinate storage space for SotL's physical assets and maintain a current inventory of said assets. He or she must also provide this continuously updated inventory to the Treasurer.
  - c) At the beginning of the fall semester, report to the general SotL membership the earliest date on which SotL may request the reservation of any performance space within the University of Virginia for the next academic year.
  - d) Keep a current list of voting members, updated based on attendance at every general meeting, and shall report this list to the SotL general membership and the webmaster.
  - e) Record minutes at all general meetings and shall distribute these minutes to the general membership within 36 hours of each meeting.
  - f) At the conclusion of every SotL project, collect a report from that project's Producer pertaining to the status of all SotL property including, but not limited to, alterations, damages, and new acquisitions.
  - g) Serve as Secretary of Shakespeare on the Lawn during the transition of old and new officers with regards to any financial institution
- iii. Treasurer: The treasurer shall oversee the acquisition and dispensation of funds, and must approve a budget for any SotL project and any changes to said budget. In addition, the treasurer shall:
  - a) Oversee and pre-approve all fund-raising activities, including, but not limited to, any necessary funds from the University of Virginia , UVA Student Council, and the community of Charlottesville.
  - b) Take advantage of grant opportunities at his/her discretion.
  - c) Provide at SotL general meetings a monthly financial report and provide an updated financial report, current to the date the request was made, to any voting member of SotL within one week of said request.
  - d) Coordinate the finances of any and all SotL projects with the producers of each project.
  - e) Be responsible for relations with, and serve a liaison to, SotL's financial institution (i.e. bank).
  - f) coordinate reimbursements from any SotL funds to individuals and organizations, including payment of SotL storage space fees.
  - g) Keep a record of all SotL's current and past liquid and physical assets.
- iv. Webmaster: The webmaster is in charge of maintaining SotL's World Wide Web (WWW) site and maintaining the general SotL mailing list. In addition, the webmaster shall:
  - a) maintain a current copy of the SotL constitution on the SotL website and update it according to changes noted in the meeting minutes.
  - b) Maintain a current list of voting members on the SotL website.
  - c) Be a resource on digital equipment and technology resources (including, but not limited to, recording and photographing shows) for directors, the historian, and the general SotL membership, should any of them require such assistance.
  - d) Maintain and promote all activities related to SotL's online merchandising vendor.
- v. Publicity Officer: The publicity officer oversees promotion of the name of SotL and all SotL projects to the University and surrounding community. In addition, the publicity officer shall:
  - a) coordinate with directors and their staff to promote all SotL projects.
  - b) Coordinate with officers and staff to promote SotL as an organization and to attract new members.

- c) Coordinate SotL's presence at the Student Activities Fairs with the vice president. Upon ratification of these amendments, the current appointed publicity chair for 2004-2005 shall become the publicity officer for 2004-2005.
- d) Maintain a record of all publicity activities to include the attendance and duration of work completed by all current and potential members of SotL. This record should be send to the Vice President within 48 hours of the completion of the promotional event.

## **Article IV. Staff Positions**

SotL Staff positions are appointed at the end of each spring semester by the current officers and the officers elect. In the event that this results in a tie, the president-elect shall make the final decision.

### **Chapter I. Historian**

The historian shall document and preserve all SotL projects. The historian shall:

- i. Maintain and update a written history of SotL and all SotL projects.
- ii. Coordinate with the webmaster and directors to document projects. This may include, but is not limited to, video recording and photographing projects.
- iii. Be a resource for the Alumni Chair on SotL history as needed.

### **Chapter II. Alumni Chair**

The alumni chair shall act as a liaison to and a resource for SotL alumni. The alumni chair shall:

- i. Keep an updated contact list of alumni contact information.
- ii. Create and distribute a newsletter for and about SotL and SotL's alumni, no less than once a year.
- iii. Promote community between and among alumni and the general SotL membership.

### **Chapter III. Social Chair(s)**

The social chair(s) shall organize and promote social activities for SotL. There may be up to 3 social chairs at once. In the event that there are multiple social chairs, they may divide responsibilities as they see fit, provided that all responsibilities are filled. The social chair(s) shall:

- i. Organize social activities that may include, but are not limited to: parties, readings, and outings. He or she shall find venues for said activities and organize set-up and clean-up of said activities.
- ii. Promote SotL community between project participants and the SotL general membership.
- iii. Compile an updated contact list at the beginning of each semester and before the summer including the current SotL general membership and current project participants and report this list to the Vice President.
- iv. Organize a final ceremony for graduating and departing SotL members and participants at the end of the spring semester.

### **Chapter IV. Weapons Master**

The weapons master will be responsible for the purchase, upkeep, and storage of all SotL weapons including, but not limited to, swords and guns.

### **Chapter V. Fundraising Chair**

The fundraising chair will be responsible for overseeing Sonnetgrams and any other SotL fundraiser. He/she will also brainstorm new fundraising ideas and assist the publicity officer with advertisements for these ventures

## **Article V. Project Positions**

Every SotL project must have a director and producer. All directors and producers are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the content of SotL's constitution.

### **Chapter I. Director**

- i. Within the sphere his or her project, the Director shall have full creative and administrative authority.
- ii. The director of any project is ultimately responsible for all aspects of that project.
- iii. The responsibilities of the Director may include, but are not limited to, holding auditions and rehearsals, and ensuring the realization of a final product.
- iv. The director has the authority and right to act as representative and liaison of his or her project to the general SotL membership and outside entities for the purposes of his or her project.
- v. To assist in his or her duties, a director may appoint any number of project staff members as he or she deems necessary. The director may also remove and or replace any project staff member.
- vi. For any major SotL project, the director must appoint a producer. For small SotL projects, the director may also fulfill the duties of the producer.

### **Chapter II. Producer**

The producer of any project is responsible for the financial aspects of said project.

- i. For his or her project, the producer shall create a budget with the director, the SotL treasurer, and the project's staff members.
- ii. In working with the director, cast, and crew, the producer shall perform all scheduling duties, including securing space for and announcing all rehearsals and performances.
- iii. The producer or an appointed staff member must provide the Vice President with a full record of all SotL property used in his or her production, as well as any changes pertaining to the status of that property within a week of the end of the project.
- iv. The producer shall perform other duties as assigned by the director.

## **Article VI. Clarification on Projects**

The production of projects, as defined in Article I, are SotL's main purpose.

### **Chapter I. Major SotL Projects**

- i. Every academic year, SotL will produce two (2) and only two major SotL projects.
- ii. A major SotL project is a play that may or may not be written by William Shakespeare.
- iii. Every major SotL project shall have a director and a producer, and they must be different people.
- iv. Every major SotL project must have auditions that are open to the University and surrounding community. All auditions for a major SotL project must be advertised.
- v. All performances of major SotL projects must have free admission.
- vi. The president, treasurer, and publicity officer of SotL may not be a director or producer of a major SotL project while holding their SotL office.
- vii. Resource allocation including, but not limited to, the location of, funding for, and use of liquid and physical assets shall be determined for major SotL projects prior to such resource allocation for small SotL projects.

### **Chapter II. Small SotL Projects**

Any SotL project that is not a major SotL project is a small SotL project.

- i. A small SotL project shall have a director and a producer, and both positions may be filled by the same person.
- ii. The amount of SotL funds put toward a small SotL project may not exceed \$200 or 5% of the SotL working budget as determined by the officers at the first officers meeting of the year (see Article III.I.iii.b). In addition, the SotL treasurer shall pre-approve a budget for every small SotL project which includes internal and external funding of said project.
- iii. The director and producer of a small SotL project may request that the officers review the treasurer's decision with regards to the budget of said project. The officers may vote to amend the treasurer's decision with a 4/5 majority.

## **Article VII: Elections**

### **Chapter I. Officer Elections**

- i.
  - a) All SotL officers shall be elected by a simple majority of present and absentee voting members at the SotL General Meeting in March.
  - b) Officers shall be elected in the order listed in Article III, Chapter I.i.
  - c) In the event that no candidate acquires a simple majority, there will be a run-off election of the two candidates with the most votes
  - d) Any candidate who fails to win an office may run in any subsequent race
- ii. Elected officers assume their duties on the day at which the official CIO renewal process is completed during the spring semester.
- iii. All officers are elected for terms of one year. To be elected as an officer one must be a voting member of SotL as described in Article II and a student of the University of Virginia .

### **Chapter II. Director Elections**

All project directors must be elected at a general SotL meeting.

- i. Major SotL projects.
  - a) Directors for major SotL projects shall be elected at the February general SotL meeting.
  - b) All present and absentee voting members may vote for up to two (2) major SotL project proposals.
  - c) The two (2) proposals that receive the largest number of votes shall be the major SotL projects for the next academic year.
  - d) In the event of a tie, there shall be a run-off election, to be administered by the president.
- ii. Small SotL projects.
  - a) Anyone may propose to direct a small SotL project at any general SotL meeting. Anyone wishing to propose a small project must announce his or her intent to direct at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the show is to be formally presented for election.
  - b) All small SotL project directors shall be elected at a SotL general meeting by a simple majority of present and absentee voting members.

### **Chapter III. Special Elections**

- i. Special Elections for Officers: If an officer should choose to step down during his/her term, or should be removed from office as outlined in VIII.I, a special election shall be held at the next first possible general membership meeting to determine a replacement. The new officer shall assume his/her duties immediately after the election. The procedure for special elections is the same as the procedure for regular elections.
- ii. Special Elections for Directors.
  - a) If the director of a major SotL project should choose to step down or is removed before casting for his or her show, a special election shall be held at the first possible general SotL meeting to

elect a new director and major SotL project.

- b) If the director of a major SotL project should choose to step down or is removed after casting for his or her show, the project's staff and the officers of SotL shall select a new director. This director shall come from the project staff if the project staff so desires.
- c) If the director of a small SotL project should choose to step down or is removed, then there shall be a meeting of the SotL officers and the participants in said project to determine the continuation or dissolution of the project. If the project is continued, then this group must appoint a new director.

## **Article VIII. Removal of Officers, Staff, and Directors**

### **Chapter I. Removal of Officers**

- i. If the SotL general membership should feel that an officer has been delinquent in his/her duties, any voting member may propose on the agenda for a general SotL meeting to remove an officer from office.
- ii. For a motion to remove an officer to pass, at least two-thirds (2/3) of the current voting members of SotL must vote in favor of his or her removal, regardless of the number of people at the meeting.

### **Chapter II. Removal of SotL Staff**

The officers of SotL may replace at any time any SotL staff member with a unanimous vote.

### **Chapter III. Removal of Project Staff**

The director of any SotL project may remove any project staff member at any time, as he or she deems necessary. The director may remove the producer, provided that the producer is immediately replaced.

### **Chapter IV. Removal of Directors**

- i. If the participants in a project and/or the general SotL membership feels that a Director is being delinquent in his/her responsibilities, a vote may be called at a general SotL meeting by any member of SotL or any one directly involved with the project to replace the Director for that project. The proposal must be announced in accordance with the guidelines in II. II. i.
- ii. If the vote is called by a SotL voting member who is not directly involved in the project, his or her motion must be seconded by someone directly involved in the project.
- iii. To remove the director of a major SotL project, at least two-thirds (2/3) of the persons directly involved in the project must vote in favor of the removal, as well as two-thirds of the voting SotL membership.
- iv. To remove the director of a small SotL project, at least two-thirds (2/3) of the people directly involved in the project must vote in favor of his or her removal.

## ***Article IX. Enactment of this Constitution***

### **Chapter I. Ratification**

This constitution can only be approved at a meeting consistent with the guidelines outlined in this document. Furthermore, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at the meeting is required to ratify this document. If passed, the constitution shall take effect immediately after the vote.

### **Chapter II. Emendation**

This constitution can only be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at the meeting. If passed, amendments shall take effect immediately after the vote. This amendment can only be approved by a vote consistent with the guidelines outlined within it.