

NATIVE AMERICAN AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. Name

The Association shall be known as the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (hereinafter, the Association).

ARTICLE II. Objectives

The object of the Association shall be to promote Native American and Indigenous studies through the encouragement of academic freedom, research, teaching, publication, the recognition of Indigenous knowledges and methodologies, the strengthening of relations among persons and institutions devoted to such studies, and the broadening of knowledge among the general public about Native American and Indigenous studies in all its diversity and complexity.

ARTICLE III. Membership

Membership is open to all individuals concerned with Native American and Indigenous studies on application and payment of dues. The forms and conditions of membership are set forth in the Bylaws, Article I.

ARTICLE IV. Officers and Council

Section 1. The Council of the Association shall consist of the following officers: President, President-elect, Immediate Past-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and six Council Members.

Section 2. The President-elect shall be elected for a one-year term, at the conclusion of which the President-elect shall succeed to the Presidency to serve a one-year term. The Immediate Past-President shall serve for one year in that office. The Secretary, Treasurer, and the six Council Members shall each be elected to serve terms of

three years. Officers shall assume office at the conclusion of the annual meeting at which each is declared elected.

Section 3. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be eligible for re-election for an additional term of office. A Council Member shall not be eligible for re-election to that office for two years following expiration of the term of office. The President-elect shall not be eligible for re-election to that office for five years following expiration of the term of office.

Section 4. In the absence of the President, the President-elect shall perform the President's duties.

Section 5. In the event of a vacancy, through absence, death, resignation, or incapacity, in any elective office, other than that of President, the Council shall have the power to make interim appointment to the office for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 6. The Council shall conduct the business, set fiscal policy, and oversee the general interests of the Association. The Council shall fix the amount of dues and the date upon which any change of dues becomes effective. It may appoint such committees as it deems necessary. It shall call a meeting of the Association at a time and place it deems appropriate. The Council shall hold a business meeting approximately every twelve months, at a time and place to be determined by the Council, for the election of members to committees, for the approval of the budget, for the consideration of reports and recommendations from the officers and committees, for the discussion of policies and of instructions that should be given to the elected or appointed officers, and for the transaction of other such business as may come before it. It shall report on its deliberations and actions through the annual meeting and other media.

Section 7. The Treasurer will be responsible for arranging an annual external audit of the Association's finances.

Section 8. For purposes related to incorporation and related needs that arise, the steering committee that has guided this effort (Ines Hernandez-Avila, J. Kehaulani Kauanui, K. Tsianina Lomawaima, Jean M. O'Brien, Robert Warrior, and Jace Weaver) will serve as temporary officers for the Association until an elected council takes

office. These temporary officers shall follow the principles and procedures set out in this constitution and bylaws whenever possible. This temporary council shall make a report detailing its activities to the Association at the meeting tentatively scheduled for Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 21–23, 2009. At the completion of that meeting, this section of the constitution will be deleted from this document.

ARTICLE V. Elections

Section 1. The first election of the Association shall be conducted according to procedures set forth in the Bylaws Article III, Section 1. At the completion of that election, both this section of the constitution and that section of bylaws will be deleted from this document. The six council members elected will serve staggered terms as follows: the two candidates receiving the most votes will serve three years, the two candidates receiving the next most votes will serve two years, and the two candidates receiving the next most votes after that will serve one year.

Section 2. There shall be a Nominations Committee, consisting of six members elected by the membership-at-large for staggered terms of three years, two members to be elected annually. The committee shall yearly elect a chair from among the committee's membership for a one-year term.

Section 3. The Nominations Committee shall nominate candidates for the office of president-elect, secretary, treasurer, members of the Council, and members of the Nominations Committee. It shall present no more than two nominees for each elected position. Candidates shall be listed in alphabetical order without further distinctions.

Section 4. Nominations may also be made by petitions carrying in each case the signatures of at least twenty-five members of the Association in good standing and indicating in each case the particular vacancy for which the nomination is intended. The chair of the Nominations Committee must receive nominations by petition at least four weeks before the committee makes its own nominations.

Section 5. The chair of the Nominations Committee shall ascertain that all candidates nominated by the committee or by petition have consented to stand for election.

Section 6. The ballot shall be distributed to the full membership of the Association no more than six weeks after the completion of the nominations. No vote received after the due date specified on the ballot shall be valid. Election shall be by a plurality of the votes cast for each vacancy. The votes shall be counted, sealed, and held by the chair of the Nominations Committee, and they shall be kept for at least one year. In the case of a tie vote, the choice among the tied candidates shall be made by majority vote of the members of the Council.

ARTICLE VI. Amendments

Section 1. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of those voting in a referendum submitted to the voting members of the Association.

Section 2. Amendments may be proposed by the Council or by petition of at least ten per cent (10%) of the voting members of the Association.

Section 3. All proposed amendments to the constitution shall be communicated to the voting membership at least four weeks prior to the vote on the amendment.

BYLAWS

Article I: Membership

Section 1: Active members are those who have paid dues during the current calendar year.

Section 2: Only active members may present at the annual meeting, vote in elections, or stand for election.

Section 3: The Council will allocate resources to provide memberships to annual meeting participants who might not otherwise attend. These memberships will be limited in number depending on the financial ability of the Association and will be available by application to the Council.

Article II: Annual meetings

Section 1: The Council is responsible for developing the program for the annual meeting through an open call for papers.

Section 2: The Council shall select sites for annual meetings. In selecting sites, the Council should consider the fiscal condition of the Association, our ability to safely meet and freely conduct our business at the annual meeting site, the amount of local and regional support, proximity to Native and Indigenous communities, the adequacy of the conference facilities, the employment practices of conference hotels and vendors, and the ease of access to Association members. The Council will also consider a facility's compliance with the U.S. Americans with Disabilities Act (and its equivalents in other places) and other accessibility concerns. The Council shall, whenever possible, respond to invitations from institutional hosts with active members willing to host the annual meeting. The principles involved in the selection of the convention site shall include geographical rotation in order to maximize attendance, diversify participation, and insure a reliable budgetary surplus of meeting revenues over expenditures.

Section 3. In selecting sites for future meetings, the elected leadership will make it one of its first priorities to consider holding meetings of the association outside of the United States on a

regular, rotating basis, including in Canada, Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand and other Pacific Island nations, Mexico, and Central and South America. Along with being a major priority of the first elected council and future councils, this issue will be an agenda item for discussion at annual business meetings for either five years or until by a two-thirds vote of those at the annual business meeting it is retired, at which point this section will be removed from the bylaws.

Article III: Elections

Sec. 1. First election. Members of the Nominations Committee for the first election will be selected through a vote of the participants at the meeting at the University of Georgia, Athens, April 10–12, 2008. The six members selected in this vote will conduct the first election and serve as the first Nominations Committee of the Association. Committee members will serve staggered terms of one, two, or three years. The two members receiving the most votes shall serve three-year terms, the two members receiving the next most votes shall serve two-year terms, and the two members receiving the next most votes after that shall serve one-year terms. The Nominations Committee shall follow the principles and procedures set out in this constitution and bylaws whenever possible. Following the first election, the chair shall make a report detailing the committee's procedures to the Association at the meeting tentatively scheduled for Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 21–23, 2009.

Sec. 2. The Nominations Committee shall prepare a ballot to be sent to the Secretary no later than January 1 for polling of the membership with elections to be completed by March 1.

Sec. 3. The ballot shall present the names of any persons nominated by petition as specified in Article V, Section 4, of the constitution. Nominations by petition must be in the hands of the Nominations Committee no later than November 1.

Sec. 4. The Council may, by resolution, provide for additional nominations to be made for any position where there is a vacancy on the ballot through death or by resignation of a candidate.

Sec. 5. All persons elected to Association office in the annual election shall assume office at the end of the annual meeting.

Article IV: Amendment of the Bylaws

These bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed at any business meeting of the Council by a resolution adopted by two-thirds of the members of the Council, provided that such changes have been set forth in the notice of such meeting communicated to the Council members at least thirty days prior to the meeting. Council members unable to attend a business meeting for a valid reason may submit a proxy in writing prior to the meeting.

Adopted April 11, 2008, Institute of Native American Studies,
University of Georgia, Athens