

## **ECU Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates (ECU COTAD) Constitution**

### **Article I - Name of Organization**

The official name of this organization shall be the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity - ECU Branch of the National Organization of COTAD.

### **Article II - Purpose of Organization**

**Section 1.** The purpose of this organization is to increase discussion, awareness, and education about diversity both within and outside of the profession of Occupational Therapy. The profession of Occupational Therapy lacks diversity in the workforce, and it is imperative that we educate ourselves in order to better serve our future patients and communities.

“COTAD Chapters are designed to support occupational therapy students to work together to develop and promote diversity and inclusion within occupational therapy education programs and in the profession. Each Chapter is designed to create opportunities and resources to foster open conversation and increase awareness of different lived experiences to increase cultural humility. We envision that each Chapter will provide a safe environment where students gather to have open dialogue about current affairs, unconscious bias, and the impact of culture on occupation. Chapter leaders and members chair will have the opportunity to work alongside leaders in COTAD and connect with other students around the country, collaborate with COTAD to create presentations, events, and share resources with other programs to communicate the desire to increase diversity within the occupational therapy workforce and prepare clinicians to serve diverse client populations.” -<https://www.cotad.org/about-cotad-chapters>

The national chapter of COTAD seeks to achieve this purpose by:

- Connecting with individuals, organizations, and others to get the word out about occupational therapy and issues related to diversity and inclusion.
- Establishing COTAD Chapters on campuses across the country to better equip student leaders for careers as culturally humble and inclusive practitioners.
- Matching OT students and new practitioners from under-represented backgrounds with mentors who provide professional guidance and support.
- Sharing ideas, resources, and support for those in academia to improve faculty training, recruitment, and retention.

### **Article III - Membership**

#### ***Section 1. Qualifications and categories of membership:***

*As required by the Guidelines for Student Organizations, at least 75% of membership of the student*

*organization must include current East Carolina University students. Active members and Executive Committee are able to make decisions regarding the membership of community and other non-student members of an organization. Community or other non-student members may be temporarily suspended with a majority vote of the Executive Committee.*

***Non-Discrimination Policy: Membership in this organization is open to all ECU students and will not be restricted on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status.***

**Section 2.** Students in good standing with the University (2.0 cumulative G.P.A.) are eligible for membership after attending or participating in an organization event/meeting. As a member, one is required to attend organization meetings regularly, pay dues if required, and actively support organization projects. Membership will be revoked by  $\frac{1}{2}$  vote of officers plus  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote from the general membership if actions are deemed inappropriate by the membership.

**Section 3:** Faculty or Staff members may participate in organizations as associate or guest members. Associate members may participate in meetings and events, but may not hold voting rights or be considered for office.

#### **Article IV - Officers**

**Section 1.** Election of officers will require a majority vote from the general membership. If a candidate fails to receive a majority of votes, a run-off election will be held within the top two candidates that received the most votes. No one person can hold the office of President and Treasurer during the same term. Each office must have a separate individual student.

**Section 2.** The officers shall be elected by ballot to serve for one year (April-April) until their successors are elected, and their term of office shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected. A member may only hold an office for two consecutive terms.

**Section 3.** All officers shall comprise the Executive Committee of the organization. The Executive Committee shall meet in addition to regular organization meetings. The Executive Committee shall appoint such committees that are needed to carry out organization goals. The officers and individual duties shall be:

A. Chapter Chair: It shall be the duty of the Chapter Chair to:

- Preside over all meetings
- Prepare the agenda for each meeting
- Oversee all organization activities
- Attend COTAD trimester calls
- Attend COTAD office hours as needed
- Attend capsule events
- Call on members to speak

- Act as a mediator when necessary
- Make the final decision in the case of a tie vote
- Represent the organization on campus
- Ensure that the organization is operating in conformity with the standards set forth by East Carolina University and Student Activities and Organizations
- Cosign organization checks with Treasurer
- Maintain communication with faculty adviser

B. Co-Chairs: It shall be the duty of the Co-Chairs to:

- Preside over meetings in the absence of the Chapter Chair
- Preside over all committee heads
- Schedule meetings/events with appropriate University offices
- Coordinate organization promotion and publicity of events
- Supervise the organization and oversee all organization activities
- Oversee fundraising efforts
- Work with the treasurer on the organization's budget
- Help other officers when needed
- Schedule rooms for meetings and events
- Contact all guest speakers about events

C. Secretary: It shall be the duty of the Secretary to:

- Maintain an accurate record of all organization meetings and post for members
- Notify members of the place and time of upcoming meetings
- Maintain accurate records of meeting attendance
- Maintain membership and alumni directory
- Correspond when necessary with University administration and other recognized organizations
- Call to order emergency meetings
- Run social media accounts (e.g. Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook)

D. Treasurer: It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to:

- Maintain accurate record of organization transactions
- Collect dues if required
- Develop organization budget and present to membership for  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote
- Cosign organization checks with President
- Arrange fundraising opportunities for the organization
- Solicit additional funding if needed from the Student Government Association in conjunction with the Chapter Chair

E. Representative: It shall be the duty of the Representative to:

- Relay information to students in their cohort.
- Gather interests of topics or suggestions expressed by their respective classmates and then relay that information to the executive board.
- Attend executive board meetings.

**Section 4.** Officers may be removed from office by  $\frac{1}{2}$  vote of the other officers and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the general membership if actions are deemed inappropriate by the membership. The officer is permitted to speak before the Executive Committee and the general membership about the charges

made concerning his/her performance. The officer is not permitted to participate in the deliberation of the Executive Committee regarding the charges. In the event of an officer vacancy, a special election will be held at the next meeting to fill the open position.

#### **Article V - Advisor**

The advisor will assume those responsibilities as outlined in this constitution. The advisor will be selected by a majority vote of the Executive Committee and then presented to the general membership for a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote. Advisors not fulfilling responsibilities or abiding by the organization's purpose may be removed from the position by a  $\frac{1}{2}$  vote of the Executive Committee. Responsibilities of the advisor are as follows:

- Be available as needed

#### **Article VI – Meetings**

**Section 1.** The organization shall hold regular (monthly) meetings during the academic term except when holidays, examination periods, or other events make meeting impractical. Organization meeting day/time will be determined at the beginning of each semester by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the general membership.

**Section 2.** Additional meetings may be called by the President or by the Executive Board. At least seven days' notice shall be given to members. Elections for switching officers will occur in April.

**Section 3.** Attendance at organization meetings is expected. If a member must miss a meeting, correspondence with the secretary is expected. A quorum shall consist of fifty percent of the membership plus one, which must include at least one officer. Robert's Rules of Order (newly revised) shall govern all meetings.

#### **Article VII - Finances**

**Section 1.** The organization may establish dues that must be paid by all members. The amount of the dues will be determined at the beginning of the academic year by the Executive Committee and presented to the general membership for a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote. Dues must be paid by week 3 of the semester.

**Section 2.** The treasurer will be required to update members on the status of the budget at the beginning of each semester. This should include a summary of expenditures and credits during the past semester.

#### **Article VIII - Committees**

Special committees shall be appointed by the President at a given time as the Executive Board sees necessary. The Vice-President shall oversee and support committee heads.

#### **Article IX - Hazing**

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity, in keeping with ECU's expectation for in keeping with ECU's expectations for a positive academic and social environment, unconditionally opposes hazing. No individual member of our group or the group itself may engage

in or plan any activity that may be defined as hazing.

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity opposes any situation created intentionally to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule to its members or potential members. In addition, no individual or recognized organization may by physical or mental stress or by subtle or covert technique, impair, make captive, or destroy an individual's freedom of thought and choice.

**According to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 14-35, it is unlawful for any student in attendance at any university, college, or school in this State to engage in hazing, or to aid or abet any other student in the commission of this offense. For the purposes of this section, hazing is defined as follows: "to subject another student to physical injury as part of an initiation, or as a prerequisite to membership, into any organized school group, including any society, athletic team, fraternity or sorority, or other similar group." Any violation of this section shall constitute a Class 2 misdemeanor. Any violation of this section shall constitute a Class 2 misdemeanor.**

It is hereby incorporated as part of this constitution and will serve as a guide for action by the university and the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity if there is an instance of hazing by this organization or any of the members of this organization. It will be the duty of the officers of the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity to educate the membership of this policy.

#### **Article X – Amendments**

Amendments to this constitution must be submitted in writing at a regular meeting of the organization. Said amendment(s) will be voted on at a subsequent meeting. In order to adopt the amendment, a vote of 2/3 of the general membership is necessary.

#### **Article XI – Ratification**

This constitution shall become effective upon approval by a ¾ vote of the membership.

**Ratified constitutions must be submitted to the Department of Student Engagement within 10 days for final approval**