

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN AGRICULTURE FIRST CLASS SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION

Preamble and Supremacy Clause

We the members of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Benin, First Class Forum solemnly resolve:

- (a) To work together and relate with one another in harmony as one under the rules and regulations of the state and for the purpose of promoting welfare, social and economic interests and progress of the above-named association.
- (b) To operate in line and abide with the guidelines and provision contained herein and hereafter referred to as the constitution.
- (c) That the constitution shall be binding and supreme upon all members of the association.

ARTICLE I: NAME AND BOUNDARIES

A. The name of the association shall be **UNIVERSITY OF BENIN AGRICULTURE FIRST CLASS SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION**.

B. The association shall encompass all those who graduated with a First-Class Honours Degree from the University of Benin's Faculty of Agriculture irrespective of Department or graduation year.

C. The awards sponsored by this Association in Article IIIa below shall be called **UNIBEN AGR FIRST CLASS EXCELLENCE AWARDS**.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

A. Association membership shall encompass all those who gained admission into the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Benin, Benin City regardless of Department and graduated with a First-Class Honours degree.

B. A **Voting Member** is an alumnus of the Faculty of Agriculture who meets the requirements of article II A above. A voting member is entitled to one vote.

C. Membership shall not be denied on the basis of religious belief, ethnic background, views or opinions contrary to the goals and purposes of the association.

D. The association shall maintain a database of its members. Information stored shall include full name, preferred name (name being used on WhatsApp profile), email, phone number, current location, occupation/specialty, birthday, marriage anniversary date, among others.

E. Members should not be offended if others leave, however when a member exits the WhatsApp group voluntarily, they will be allowed back if:

1. (S)he wait to be added after a period of three (3) months, or
2. (S)he can be added back after 48 hours if they are willing to:
 - i. Pay an amount as a fine decided by the Excocs and,
 - ii. Tender a written apology for acceptance by the members of the group.

ARTICLE III: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- a. To celebrate the best students in academic performance in the faculty from 200 – 500 levels with awards named in Article IC.
- b. To offer and provide mentorship to the best graduating students in Article IIIa within their current or intended specialisation.

- c. To maintain a good working relationship among members and the Faculty of Agriculture (hereinafter referred to as the Faculty) as the Faculty would be our source of information for the Excellence Award winners.
- d. To organise virtual advisory service events and webinars for members at least once a year. This would include matters of interest such as study abroad, migration, career advancement/transitions, resume feedback and entrepreneurship.
- e. To encourage and support members in their fields of endeavour. This includes granting permission to entrepreneurs to advertise their goods/services, authors posting their recent publication, celebrating new job placements/promotions etc.
- f. To generate funds for the purposes of executing the excellence awards in Article IIIa, other initiatives mentioned above and operational expenses of this Association.
- g. To do all or any of the above things and anything considered by the executive committee as beneficial to members, the faculty, current students of the faculty or parties deemed worthy of the association's support.

ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. The executive members shall be called, the **AGR FIRST CLASS WORKING COMMITTEE**

B. The voting members of the association shall elect (or officially adopt unopposed candidates) an executive committee, hereafter referred to as **EXCO**.

C. The EXCO shall consist of 8 members and 8 portfolios namely:

- i. Chairman
- ii. Vice Chairman
- iii. General Secretary
- iv. Assistant General Secretary
- v. Financial Secretary
- vi. Treasurer
- vii. PRO
- viii. Welfare Officer

D. Except for roles i -iii, the appointed EXCO shall hold office for a term of two (2) years and their term of office shall begin immediately after the election. Until new EXCO's are elected, the old EXCO shall continue to be in office as Caretaker Committee.

E. The EXCO shall set up an electoral committee (ELECO) not later the 2 weeks before the expiration of their tenure. The members of the electoral committee shall be made up of both Voting members and EXCO member and shall not exceed six (6) persons.

F. Any EXCO member can be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the EXCO. Vacancies arising during the tenure of an EXCO shall be filled by bye-elections on our group platform.

G. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXCO MEMBERS

1. The **Chairman**: shall call for and preside at all meetings, shall act for and on behalf of the association, shall appoint any special committees necessary for the operation of the association business and shall act as the official spokesperson for the association. The Chairman shall also be a signatory to the association's account.

2. The **Vice Chairman**: shall in the absence of the Chairman, assume all of the duties of that office and shall be responsible for publicity and notifications of meetings of the association.

3. The **General Secretary**: shall keep a permanent record of all formal meetings and all legal documents and legal transactions of the association. The secretary shall transcribe the minutes of each meeting, maintain a file copy of same and submit a copy of these minutes to EXCO. (S)he shall also be a signatory to the association's account.

4. **Assistant General Secretary** shall serve as assistant to the General Secretary and act in the absence of same.

5. The **Financial Secretary** shall compile financial reports for the association that track all of the cash inflows and outflows of the association. (S)he provides current balances for all accounts, including bank accounts. The Financial Secretary records all association's transactions and provides detailed reports to EXCO and group members.

6. The **Treasurer** shall keep all financial receipts and a permanent record of all financial businesses of the association. An up-to-date financial report shall be submitted every quarter. The treasurer shall facilitate the preparation and submission of an annual budget containing estimated revenue and expenditure of the association. The Treasurer will also be a signatory to the association's account.

7. The **Public Relation Officer** shall serve in the capacity of gathering and disseminating information critical to the progress of the association.

8. The **Welfare Officer** shall be responsible for the welfare of the association and, also suggest ways by which this can be improved.

ARTICLE V: UNIBEN AGR FIRST CLASS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

- a. The proposed structure of the Excellence Awards is as follows:
 - ₦100,000 per academic year plus a certificate for best student in academic performance (using GPA) in the Faculty for 200, 300 and 400 levels irrespective of department.
 - ₦200,000 per academic year plus a certificate for the OVERALL best graduating student from 500L.
 - All first-class honours graduates shall be inducted into this Association and provided mentorship as needed.
 - Any overall best graduating student who did not make a first class will be offered and provided mentorship along with the financial award but will not be inducted into this Association.
 - In the event of a joint best student based on GPA, the financial award shall be split evenly among winners.
- b. The proposed financial awards described above is subject to review based on available funds.
- c. Correspondence and notification of the Excellence Award winners shall be by an official letter or by email from this Association's official email address firstclass.unibenagr@gmail.com or unibenagricexcellenceguild@gmail.com.
- d. The Dean's office of the Faculty shall be contacted to provide or verify the Excellence Awards winners mentioned in Article IC/IIIa above.
- e. Disbursement of Excellence Award funds shall be made either electronically, by check or by cash to the Award winner directly.
- f. The Excellence Award winners and all 3 (three) signatories to the account (Chairman, General Secretary and Treasurer) shall maintain communication via an ad-hoc WhatsApp group for the purpose of confirming receipt of funds and a short note of appreciation addressed to the Association. The ad-hoc group shall be shut down thereafter.

- g. The Excellence Award winners will be announced to all members of this Association on our group platform. The confirmation of receipt of funds and note of appreciation shall be shared with all members on the group platform.
- h. The signatories to the account shall be able to officially delegate another EXCO member to sign for them in their absence.

ARTICLE VI: FUNDRAISING

- a. Fundraising for the excellence awards in Article V shall be by donations from members of this Association and interested non-members.
- b. All contributions for core and related projects of this group shall be voluntary and members will not be compelled to support group initiatives with a specific amount. However, given the projects the group is to undertake, a minimum financial commitment contribution is required and described in Article VIc.
- c. The Commitment contribution is voluntary and independent of the donations in Article VIa. The suggested commitment contribution based on years' post-graduation are as follows:
 - i. Less than 3 years post-graduation shall be ₦5,000 annually.
 - ii. Between 3 to 10 years post-graduation shall be ₦10,000 annually.
 - iii. Greater than 10 years post-graduation shall be ₦15,000 annually.
 - iv. Minimum financial commitment contribution for any member unable to meet the proposed amounts above will be ₦1,000 annually.
- d. Of note, there is no limit to how much a member can give to support the excellence awards and other set projects.
- e. All donations and contributions shall be made only to the designated bank account of this Association.

ARTICLE VII: GENERAL

This article outlines a set of guidelines meant to regulate the UNIBEN AGR First Class WhatsApp group. Any violation of group posting rules could result in suspension or permanent removal of the member(s) involved. Content that violates the association's group standards will not be condoned and the member who made such post will be notified to delete such post. Generally, the following are encouraged:

- a. Be nice and respectful to others.
- b. Post in English or Pidgin English.
- c. Be professional. Aim for good quality in questions, answers and discussions.
- d. Endeavour to make your post in line with the activity or discussion for the day. This will help streamline the number of messages other members will have to read and enhance information flow.

A. Social behaviour

All members shall be civil in their social behaviour. There is no place for harassment or bullying of our group members or members of the EXCO, nor any place for disrespectful content. Members shall never harass or harm other members.

Discrimination is not acceptable. Discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, nationality, religion, technology, education, socio-economic status, and any other arbitrary exclusion of a group of people shall not be allowed. The use of sexualized language or imagery and unwelcome sexual attention or advances shall not be acceptable.

Members shall act peacefully. There is no place for insult and social honeypots. The EXCO shall carefully monitor group content and will respond to violations appropriately.

B. Disrespecting EXCO members

Insults, not following the instructions and similar disrespecting towards the group EXCOs shall result in a suspension or permanent ban of an erring member.

Blocking EXCO members makes private communication with you impossible. EXCOs must be able to communicate with members to resolve issues, explain certain situations, and to give you further instructions about posts. In such cases, other EXCO members may ask you to unblock the EXCO member in question, and failure to do so may result in permanent membership ban.

D. Ban

When banning (blocking/removing/revoking account membership), the following types of bans are practiced:

1. Kick: A user account is only removed from the group and not blocked. Such a member may return to the group at any time as will be deemed appropriate by the EXCO.

2. Temporary ban: A user account is blocked from accessing the group for few days or weeks. When a group EXCO member removes the user from the blocked list, the user may return.

3. Long term Ban: A user account is blocked from accessing the group for a few months to about a year.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENT OF REGULATIONS

- A. These regulations are subject to modification and until they are so altered, they are held binding on every member.
- B. Modifications to this constitution shall be by resolution of the house which should be supported by two-third of the house.