

Constitution of MEChA (University of Pennsylvania)

Preamble:

We, the members of El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) at the University of Pennsylvania hereby establish these by-laws for the purpose of aiding Mexican American/Chicano students in adjusting to PENN by way of a social organization that is responsive to the needs of an individual or to the group as a whole. Furthermore, MEChA strives to insure that the presence of Mexican American/Chicano students continues at the University of Pennsylvania through positive interaction not only with Chicano students but with PENN students as a whole. Membership is open to anyone in the PENN community that wishes to learn more and participate in Mexican American/Chicano culture.

Article I

Name of the Organization

The name of the organization will be El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan. The name will be abbreviated as MEChA.

Article II

Organizational Structure

We the members recommend one administrative structure to be followed:

- A. An egalitarian administration which shall consist of a Board of Directors.

Article III

Membership and Eligibility

Membership will be divided into two categories:

- A. Honorary membership will be given to any individual who has expressed an interest in the University of Pennsylvania's MEChA (i.e., alumni, guest speakers, professors, etc.). Honorary members will be kept up to date on the organization's activities.
- B. Membership is given to any individual who is interested in the objectives of MEChA as stated in the preamble.

Voting eligibility is given to the following:

- A. Entering freshmen have voting power to elect a representative to the Board of Directors and to vote on other actions when they have attended at least 2/3 of the scheduled meetings of the academic year and have fulfilled his/her financial contribution for the current semester, the amount of which will be determined in the beginning of the fall semester.
- B. The remaining members that have attended at least 2/3 of the meetings in a MEChA year (defined as the period between elections), and have met their financial obligations, are eligible to vote and are referred to as Full Members.

Article IV

Specifications for the Organizational Structure

Only Full Members, i.e., those individuals who have been members for at least a year and have attended at least half of the meetings, are entitled to run for a position on the Board of Directors.

The following is a list of the positions of the Board of Directors. Election to fill these positions will take place within the second week of April by those who are considered to be Full Members.

Those persons wishing to seek election are first nominated by other members of MEChA.

- A. The Board of Directors (which will henceforth be referred to as the Board) consists of six elected Full Members.
 1. The **President** resides over the Board and initiates the discussion on activities and/or actions which have the authorization of the Board by a 2/3 vote.
 2. The **Vice-President** the Vice-President will substitute for the President at those events the President is unable to attend. The Vice-President will also assist the President in presiding over the general meetings of MEChA and over Board meetings.
 3. The **Secretary** will be responsible for the following duties: recording of minutes at all meetings, maintenance of a filing system and other administrative/parliamentary duties. In addition to these duties, the Secretary will obtain any necessary information to maintain a directory of MEChA members and update that directory.
 4. The **Treasurer** will write up an annual budget that he/she will present to the Student Activities Council (SAC). The Treasurer will also attend all SAC meetings or designate an alternate otherwise. Finally, the Treasurer is in charge of collecting dues from MEChA members and for maintaining records of the financial status of the group and the members.
 5. The **Admissions Representative's** main responsibility is to ensure that the presence of Mexican American/Chicano students remains constant at the University of Pennsylvania. He/She will also communicate with persons from the Admissions office at the University to assist them whenever the need arises.
 6. The **East Coast Chicano Student Forum Representative (ECCSF Rep.)** will communicate with other representatives from different universities in the East Coast about issues concerning Latino heritage and culture. The ECCSF Rep. will also be responsible for organizing trips to those universities that are hosting a conference. In general, there are four conferences per academic year (two per semester) which any member of MEChA can attend if he/she wishes.
 7. The **Latino Coalition Representative** will attend all Latino Coalitions meetings and communicate with other Latino Coalition representatives, representing the wishes of the MEChA general body in all capacities of governing for the Latino Community at Penn.

Article V *Committees*

Each committee will choose a committee head/chairperson from those considered to be Full Members. Each committee will report their actions to the general assembly at each meeting. The following five committees are strongly suggested to be maintained throughout the years; other committees may be formed according to the need of the general assembly.

- A. **The Admissions Committee:** An Admission Committee will exist to work alongside the Admissions Office in order to insure the continuation of Mexican American/Chicano student presence at the University of Pennsylvania.
- B. **The Freshmen/First Year Committee:** This committee will exist to bring all the students in their respective class together, to work towards creating closeness and networks throughout the University, and to ensure that all freshmen are guided to the proper counseling agencies at the University if the need so arises.
- C. **El Pipila Committee:** This committee is in charge of the publication of El Pipila, the official newsletter for MEChA at the University of Pennsylvania. It will provide information of interest regarding the organization and if financially possible, it will be published bi-weekly.
- D. **The Social Committee:** The Social Committee will be in charge of the organization and development of any social function. With the help of the Board, they will collect the necessary fees for such events. The Social Committee will also be in charge of organizing the Senior Banquet and Festival Latino. During the year, the Social Committee might also sponsor the showing of a film which may pertain to some aspect of Mexican American/Chicano life. There will be no fee for viewing the films.
- E. **The Fundraising Committee:** The Fundraising Committee will be in charge of researching and developing various fundraising projects for the purpose of advertising, club promotion and subsidization of group events as well as some community service organization to be decided at a later date when the need arises.

Article VI
General Meetings

A general meeting will be called when the Board so rules or when two registered voting members present a petition to the Board specifying the agenda for a meeting. The Board will then call a meeting within the next week. In addition, the Board will give adequate public notice of at least forty-eight hours prior to any meeting.

- A. The President will preside over all MEChA meetings.
- B. Outline of the general meetings:
 - 1. Roll call and reading of minutes from the last meeting - Secretary.
 - 2. Old business/correction of the previous week's minutes
 - 3. Reports:
 - A. The Board
 - 1. President
 - 2. Vice-President
 - 3. Secretary
 - 4. Treasurer
 - 5. Admissions Rep.

6. ECCSF Rep.

7. Other

B. Committees

1. The Admissions Committee

2. The Freshmen/First Year Committee

3. El Pipila Committee

4. The Social Committee

5. The Fundraising Committee

4. Announcements

5. Adjournment

Article VII

Board Meetings

A Board meeting is called whenever the President or any of the Board members feel that it is necessary to discuss certain issues prior to or after a general meeting. All Board members are obligated to attend such meetings.

Article VIII

Amendments

Amendments to the constitution may be proposed by the petition of two registered voting members of MEChA to the Board.

Such proposals must be ratified by 2/3 majority of the Full Members and eligible voting freshmen.

All amendments will be voted on no earlier than one class week and no later than three class weeks from the time the petition was presented to the Board.