

# The Constitution of Jewish Voice for Peace at Northwestern University

(Last Amended October 17th, 2024)

## Article I - Introduction

### Section I - Name

The name of this organization shall be Jewish Voice for Peace at Northwestern University. This organization will utilize the acronyms JVP and JVPNU in publicity materials and communications. Jewish Voice for Peace at Northwestern University is affiliated with Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP, JVP National) operating in Berkeley, California. The website for JVP National is [www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org](http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org).

### Section II - Purpose

As a chapter of JVP National, JVPNU aims to support the liberation and equity of all people. The primary mission is to mobilize anti-Zionist Jewish students in support of Palestine. Through direct organizing actions, external education, and communal solidarity, JVP members will further advance the rights of and stand in accountability and solidarity with Palestinians and other marginalized communities.

### Section III - Objectives

To engage in pro-Palestinian, anti-Zionist activism from a Jewish perspective while remaining accountable and secondary to Palestinian student- and community-based organizations. To educate students and community members on the history of Israeli military occupation, settler colonialism, and continued genocide in Palestine through teach-ins and discussions. To build and maintain a safe space on campus for anti-Zionist Jewish students to come together in community and solidarity.

## Article II - Organizational Structure

### Section I - Executive Board

#### A. List of Executive Board Positions and General Responsibilities

The appointed officers of the organization shall be the President, Treasurer, co-JVP National Representatives, and Committee Chairspeople.

##### i. President

The President shall be a symbolic position. They shall serve as a representative for the organization with the Student Organization Finance Office, Student Organizations and Activities, and other university functions. They shall be an active member in the organization and participate in committee projects.

##### ii. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial tasks including, but not limited to, maintaining a budget for funding from the university and JVP National, maintaining

and updating the ledger, and handling transactions with SOFO. They shall be an active member in the organization and participate in committee projects.

iii. JVP National Representative

The JVP National Representative shall serve as a representative of JVPNU with JVP National. They will be responsible for communicating with the national JVP Student Network and JVP National staff about current projects and needed resources. They shall simultaneously serve as one of two committee chairs for a given committee. There shall be three (no more than four) JVP National Representatives at a given time.

iv. Committee Chairperson

The Committee Chairperson shall serve as a liaison between their designated committee and the larger general body of the organization. They shall be tasked with determining meeting times for their committee each quarter, maintain agendas and notes for each meeting, and act as a representative for the committee in bi-weekly all-member meetings. Each committee shall have two chairpersons, with no more than a total of eight chairpersons at a given time. The chairperson not serving as a JVP National Representative is expected to onboard new committee members, when applicable.

B. Qualifications for Becoming an Officer

All active general members who are in a committee are welcome to hold an officer position. The expectation is that those interested in becoming an officer have been a general member for at least one quarter, but this is flexible.

C. Terms of Office

The President, Treasurer, and JVP National Representatives shall hold their positions for one academic year, beginning in spring quarter and ending at the end of the following winter quarter with the option to remain in such position. Appointments will occur for these positions during the winter quarter. Those interested will be asked to nominate themselves for the position and will be elected upon approval of a simple majority of the general body. The Committee Chairpersons (who are not JVP National Representatives) shall be appointed by individual committees each quarter with the option to remain in such position into the next quarter. Those interested will be asked to nominate themselves for the position and will be elected upon approval of a simple majority of committee members.

D. Procedure for Filling Vacated Offices

In the event of the removal or resignation of an officer, the general body or committee membership (for Committee Chairpersons) will allow for nominations at the soonest all-member or committee meeting. The election process will follow the same structure as in Article II, Section I, Subsection C, no matter the time in the quarter or academic year.



## Section II - Committees

### A. Committee Identification and Appointments

The four committees encompassed in JVPNU shall be as follows: i) Organizing and Activism, ii) External Education, iii) Spiritual and Community, and iv) Media and Digital Education. Any member may join any committee. Members are strongly encouraged to only participate actively in projects for one committee, but may join more committees at their discretion. Each committee will have two chairpersons: one JVP National Representative and one appointed by the committee (see Article II, Section I, Subsection C). Each committee will meet bi-weekly at a time chosen by their respective chairpersons.

#### i. Organizing and Activism

The purpose of this committee is to organize direct action projects that aim to advance Palestinian interests through a specifically Jewish lens and work in solidarity with Palestinian partners and other activist organizations on campus. Specific duties may include working with on-campus partners and community-based organizations on long-term campaigns, mobilizing for actions led by Students for Justice in Palestine and other activist organizations, and working on Jewish-specific campaigns regarding Palestine and Israel.

#### ii. External Education

The purpose of this committee is to organize in-person and hybrid events that educate the Northwestern and Chicagoland communities about anti-Zionism and the history of and ongoing areas of concern regarding Palestine and Israel with a specific focus on Jewish students and community members. Specific duties may include organizing discussion events that educate and mobilize reflection within Jewish Zionist students, organizing speaker events and screenings related to Israel and Palestine, Judaism, and Zionism, and serving as a resource for students who may be interested in learning more about anti-Zionism or are reflecting upon their own Jewish identities.

#### iii. Spiritual and Community

The purpose of this committee is to create a spiritual and safe community space on-campus for anti-Zionist Jewish students. Specific duties may include organizing Shabbat dinners or events for Jewish holidays, offering internal opportunities to learn about Judaism and Jewish rituals through an anti-Zionist lens, organizing internal bonding activities, and working with anti-Zionist Jewish graduate students and faculty to expand the community.

#### iv. Media and Digital Education

The purpose of this committee is to manage JVPNU's promotional and social media strategies, communications, and digital anti-Zionist educational programs. Specific duties may include researching for and curating educational programs and posts for social media or newsletters, managing the listserv, creating promotional materials for

other committees, and responding to or redirecting emails and social media messages to the correct committee chairpersons.

### Section III - Advisor

The advisor, required for student organizations, must be a salaried staff or faculty member or full-time graduate student at Northwestern University and provide advisory support for the member of the organization. They must complete required paperwork and training with Student Organizations and Activities. Resources are available on the SOA website. They will be nominated by student leaders within JVPNU and will be selected based upon a simple majority of the general membership.

#### A. Roles and Duties of an Advisor

The advisor shall serve as a resource and support person for the members of JVPNU. The advisor is expected to be a Jewish Anti-Zionist or support anti-Zionist philosophies. They may attend all-member meetings at their discretion or when requested by the student leaders. They will be expected to serve a term of one (1) academic year, unless otherwise specified, and may renew their role at their discretion. In the case that the advisor resigns, the student leaders may nominate a new advisor at any time and will be selected based upon a simple majority of the general membership.

### Section IV - Dissolution of Organization

Dissolution of the organization may be considered when worldwide conditions for marginalized communities have improved to such an extent that activism is unnecessary. More locally, dissolution may be necessary in the event of a membership small enough to not fill all board positions or in the event of serious threats against the community. In the event of a dissolution, all documentation (living and archived) should be submitted to the university's archives and subsequently erased from all digital sources for the sake of security.

## Article III - Membership

### Section I - Membership Eligibility

Membership in this organization is open to all Northwestern University students in Good Academic Standing who have paid their Student Activity Fee. Faculty, administrators, staff members, and alumni of the University may also be included in meetings and events (but cannot vote on any decisions related to member positions, like who should be the next President). As a general member, individuals are expected to join at least one committee and attend at least one committee meeting each month, as well as attend general all-member meetings at least once per quarter. Members are expected to be anti-Zionist and identify with Judaism.



## **Section II - Executive Board Eligibility and Qualifications**

Any general member who has actively participated in the organization for at least one quarter is eligible to nominate themselves for vacated leadership positions. Those of any class year are welcome to fulfill positions but upperclassmen are more encouraged to nominate themselves (with adequate prior participation). Each leader is expected to maintain the standards laid out for each position in Article II, Section I.

## **Section III - Committee Eligibility**

All general members are expected to participate in a committee. Individuals will select one (or more, if applicable) committee to join at their soonest convenience.

## **Section IV - Executive Board Resignation**

Under reasonable circumstances, individuals may resign from any given leadership position. In this event, the individual will be expected to notify the other student leaders and/or their respective committee and may step down at the soonest general or committee meeting. Resignation does not require approval from the broader organization as long as adequate notice is given.

# **Article IV - Executive Board Selection Process**

## **Section I - Selection Timing**

Nominations for all officer positions (excluding Committee Chairpersons) will take place annually at the end of winter quarter and will be finalized at the beginning of the spring quarter. Nominations for Committee Chairpersons will occur at the end of each quarter and will be finalized at the beginning of the following quarter.

## **Section II - Nominations**

Any individual in good standing with the organization may nominate themselves for any given position. Nominations will occur during a designated meeting (general or committee) at the end of the respective quarter.

## **Section III - Election and Voting Procedures**

Voting will occur at the designated nomination meeting. Individuals present (of any number) will be asked to vote by a verbal affirmative or negative vote. If only one individual is running, a simple majority will be sufficient to approve their election. If more than one individual is running, the individual who receives the higher number of affirmative votes will receive the position. If a tie occurs, candidates will be asked to present themselves at the subsequent meeting for a second vote. All general members are eligible to vote for any position (excluding Committee Chairpersons). Committee Chairpersons will be voted for by their respective committee members.

## **Section IV - Notification and Posting of Elections**

Individuals are welcome to make their intent to run for positions at any time during the quarter for which they are seeking election.

## **Section V - Grounds for Removal**

Impeachment may be implicated in the case of inappropriate or harmful actions against other members or members of the broader Northwestern community with the consent of three-fourths of the general membership.

## **Section VI - Procedure for Impeachment**

Active members, Officers, Advisor, or the Officer member being impeached must be notified at least one academic week in advance of the impeachment hearing. The person in question must have the option to be present during the hearing, and they must be informed of why their impeachment is being considered at least one week in advance of the hearing. If it is not the advisor being impeached, the advisor, as well as Hayley Kretchmer (hayley.kretchmer@northwestern.edu) from SOA, must be notified at least one week in advance of the impeachment hearing via email. The impeachment hearing must occur while classes are in session and take place on Northwestern's Evanston campus. The moderator of the impeachment hearing will be the President unless they are being impeached, in which case it will be the Vice President. The moderator cannot be the Officer being impeached. Three-fourths (3/4) of active members must be present in order for the impeachment hearing to begin. Each side will be given the opportunity to present their case and the active members may ask questions. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of active members present is needed for impeachment. Failure to notify SOA and the organization advisor at least one academic week in advance of the impeachment hearing may invalidate subsequent impeachment actions.

## **Section VII - Procedure for Appeal of Impeachment**

Any individual who faced confirmed impeachment has until the following general meeting (approximately two weeks) to submit an appeal to the organization's advisor. The appeal must be submitted in writing and explain the circumstances, with adequate evidence, for which their impeachment should be reconsidered. The student leaders will evaluate this appeal with the assistance of the advisor and may overturn the impeachment with a three-fourths majority of the student leaders. If the initial impeachment is not appealed within the two-week time frame, the impeachment will be finalized.

# **Article V - Meetings**

## **Section I - Types and Occurrence of Meetings**



JVPNU will hold two types of meetings: general all-member meetings and committee meetings. These meetings will rotate on a weekly basis, with a general meeting occurring bi-weekly and a committee meeting bi-weekly during the weeks that general meetings are not taking place. For all-member meetings, all members are invited to attend, but only student leaders are required to attend. For committee meetings, it is expected that all committee members are in attendance. Attendance may be waived with acceptable reasoning.

## **Section II - Meeting Records**

Committee meeting notes will be documented by Committee Chairpersons. All-member meeting notes will be recorded by a volunteer at each given meeting. These notes will be accessible to the entire organization through a shared digital documentation drive.

## **Article VI - Handling of Funds**

### **Section I - Student Organization Finance Office**

All funds collected will be deposited into JVPNU's organization Student Organization Finance Office (SOFO) account.

### **Section II - Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be the primary officer designated to handle organization finances.

### **Section III - Dissolution of Organization**

In the event of the dissolution of this organization, all remaining funds, after outstanding debts have been paid, shall be donated to the national Jewish Voice for Peace.

## **Article VII - Constitutional Amendments**

### **Section I - Amendment**

Any member within good standing with the organization is eligible to propose an amendment to the constitution at any time and announce such during any given general all-member meeting. Notice is recommended to be given before such meeting, but is not required. No minimum of members must be present in order to review or vote upon an amendment. All general members are eligible to vote on any given amendment. A simple majority of verbal affirmative votes is required for affirmation.

### **Section II - Ratification**

The amended Constitution shall become effective upon its ratification with a simple majority of affirmative votes. Upon ratification, all prior versions of the Constitution

will become null and void. After ratification, the amended version must be submitted to SOA.

## Article VIII - Constitutional Review

As a recognized student organization, we will participate in a constitutional review process every three (3) years. It will be updated according to the new sample constitution (if necessary) and will meet with the Student Organizations & Activities staff to review it.

## Article IX - Not-for-Profit Statement

This is not-for-profit organization. Any funds obtained through fundraising or other means must go back to the organization.

## Article X - Statement of Non-Discrimination

As a student group seeking affiliation to Northwestern University, we hereby state that this student organization does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of its community against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship or veteran status in matters of admissions, employment, housing or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates. Harassment, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based on any of these characteristics, is a form of discrimination. This includes harassing conduct affecting tangible job benefits, interfering unreasonably with an individual's academic or work performance, or creating what a reasonable person would sense is an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. While Northwestern University is committed to the principles of free inquiry and free expression, discrimination and harassment identified in this policy are neither legally protected expression nor the proper exercise of academic freedom. \*NOTE: Recognized student organizations at Northwestern University are required to be non-discriminatory in membership.

## Article XI - Statement of Non-Hazing

This organization will not engage in or permit hazing. The University forbids hazing and all other activities that interfere with the personal liberty of an individual. The University defines hazing as any action taken or situation created, whether on or off University premises and whether presented as optional or required, to produce mental or physical discomfort, servitude, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule for the purpose of initiation into, affiliation with, or admission to, or as a condition for



continued membership in, a group, team, club, or other organization. Hazing activities may also violate the Illinois Hazing Act 720 ILCS §5/12C-50

## **Article XII - Statement of Compliance with Campus Regulations**

This organization shall comply with all Northwestern University policies and procedures, including but not limited to, those policies set forth in the Northwestern University Student Handbook and The Guide to Student Organizations, as well as local, state, and federal laws.