



Constitution for Bridges International

At [insert university name here]

ARTICLE I — NAME

The name of this student group is Bridges International. This student group is a student chapter (hereafter Chapter) recognized by Bridges International.

This student group has applied for and been granted Chartered status as a Chapter of Bridges International. As long as the student group pursues the purpose set forth herein, the student group has the right to use the name and materials of Bridges International that are designated for the use of Chapters within the ministry.

ARTICLE II — MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership Defined

Membership shall be open to all duly enrolled [Insert University] students. Membership and activities are open to all currently enrolled students.

Active membership shall consist of those members who regularly attend large group meetings and have been a member of a small group for the previous semester/quarter.

This Chapter may have associated members who are non-students, such as faculty and staff, community members, alumni and Bridges staff members. Associated members shall have all membership privileges except the right to vote or hold office.

Section 2: Loss of Membership

A member may lose the privileges of membership, including the right to attend meetings and events sponsored by Bridges International, under the following circumstances:

1. If the individual is causing overall disruption to the group, causing an obvious negative effect on the group as a whole.
2. If the individual poses a danger to other students.
3. If the individual's conduct rises to the level of harassment of another member of the group.

Under such circumstances, two or more members of the Leadership Team will meet with the individual, share the concerns, and ask him or her to leave the group. The accused member may then request a hearing before the full Leadership Team. The President will then call a

special leadership meeting; they will hear from the accused member as well as other witnesses, confer, and make a decision regarding the accused member's membership rights.

ARTICLE III – GOVERNANCE

Section 1: Officers

The officers of this organization will serve as liaisons with the University. The offices of this organization shall be the following:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

Term of office: An officer shall serve for one school term from the start of his/her term of office or until his/her successor is selected. The officers will be responsible for organizing and providing leadership for all meetings, activities and events of the Chapter, or any other activity intended to further the purposes and to communicate the messages of the Chapter.

Additional leaders: The current officers, in consultation with Bridges staff, shall select additional leaders that are able to serve the Chapter as needed for a one year term.

Leadership Team: the Leadership Team shall consist of the officers and additional selected leaders that provide direction for various aspects of the Chapter's purpose.

Section 2: Qualifications

Officers serve as representatives of the Chapter and organization of Bridges International. They must commit to lead the Chapter in a way which is consistent with the purpose and faithful to the messages of Bridges International.

All officers must also meet the school's eligibility requirements for leaders of registered student organizations.

1. **President and Vice President:** as the officers who will set the direction and vision for the Bridges group, the President and Vice President must also demonstrate that they are qualified to serve in these roles through:
 1. Attendance requirement: they must have been involved for at least one school term (semester/quarter), having attended 75% of weekly large group and/or small group meetings.
 2. Knowledge requirement: the president and vice president must complete the Chapter's leadership application, which shall determine the applicant's skill in providing spiritual leadership for the Chapter and knowledge of the Chapter's core messages.

3. **Alignment Requirement:** Officers must commit to lead the Chapter in a way which is consistent with the mission and faithful to the messages of Bridges, and will not undermine Bridges' mission and message. They will also commit to guide the Chapter to serve the University community, seeking to care for those in need.
1. **Secretary and Treasurer:** As the officers who help build the structure and organization of the Bridges group, the Secretary and Treasurer do not need to teach and direct the Bridges Chapter, but must demonstrate an understanding of the purpose, messages and literature of Bridges. They must also demonstrate the following:
 1. Consistency of attendance at the organization's events over the past semester/quarter;
 2. A demonstrated desire to grow in understanding the tenets of the Christian faith.
 3. A commitment to lead the Chapter in a way which is consistent with its purpose and to not undermine Bridges' mission and messages. They will also commit to guide the Chapter to serve the University community, seeking to care for those in need.

Section 3: Selection Process

1. Officers of this Chapter will be chosen either through election by active membership or selection by the previous year's Leadership Team. See Article V. Additional leaders will be selected from the active membership. They will be chosen based on their ability to meet the same qualifications as the officers, and their willingness to serve.
2. Applicants who meet the qualifications outlined above shall be eligible to be considered for a leadership position.
3. During any election or selection process, applicants will be asked about their faith, beliefs and views. Qualified applicants may be asked about their willingness to model the Chapter's core messages through their behavior so that the messages are communicated with integrity.
4. The staff members of Bridges serve an advisory role in the selection process, working with the current Leadership Team to consider and evaluate potential new leaders. The Leadership Team will then select individuals, inviting them to take the new leadership roles.

ARTICLE IV — MEETINGS

Section 1: Types of meetings

1. **Membership Meetings:** Formal meetings of the active membership to conduct a vote.
2. **Large and Small Group Meetings:** Regularly scheduled meetings for all members to attend.
3. **Additional Meetings:** Gatherings, in addition to regularly scheduled meetings, which are open to all members.

Section 2: Quorum for Membership meetings

In order to conduct a vote of the active membership, at least half of the active membership must be present at the meeting.

Section 3: Frequency of Meetings

Meetings shall be held to further the purposes of the Chapter. The Leadership Team, in consultation with Bridges International staff, shall determine the frequency, time and place, and agenda of the various meetings.

ARTICLE V — ELECTION of EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Section 1: Types of Elections

Elections, if held, will occur at the end of each term to select the following term's officers. Special elections may be held when an office is vacated in mid-term.

Section 2: Nomination of Candidates

When an election is scheduled, any active member may nominate a candidate for office during the meeting or meetings prior to the vote. Any member may raise a question or concern to the Leadership Team regarding a present or proposed leader. The candidate must meet the qualifications for office listed in Article III, section 2, in order to be placed on the ballot (or selected for any leadership position in a given term).

Section 3: Form of Vote

Voting under this article shall be by secret ballot.

ARTICLE VI — CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Section 1:

The Leadership Team may seek to amend this constitution by general consensus.

Section 2.:

All amendments, additions or deletions must be filed with the Inter-school Governing Board within 2 weeks of adoption, and will become valid at the time of filing.

ARTICLE VII — DISMISSAL of OFFICERS

Leaders may be removed from their positions by a majority of the Leadership Team. Any member of the Chapter may make a complaint against any leader in the Chapter, including a member of the Leadership Team. Following the complaint, the Leadership Team (or members of the Leadership Team) shall meet to confer with the Chapter's Bridges staff for advice and counsel. They will also meet with both the complaining individual and the accused leader. No leader may be removed without first receiving a full and fair hearing from the Leadership Team. A leader complained against may only be removed by at least a simple majority agreement of the remaining members of the Leadership Team.

Any misrepresentation on the leadership application or a change in the leader's commitment to lead the Chapter to fulfill its purpose as stated in Article VII shall be grounds for the immediate review of the leader's position by the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE VII — ACTIVITIES and PURPOSE

Bridges International is a student organization that engages with international students through providing service activities, social networking, spiritual conversations, and student leadership development.

As a Christian organization, open to students from all religious backgrounds, it is our purpose to develop a diverse and caring community that serves the unique needs of international students while creating a safe space for those interested to explore faith and life, especially as they are seen through the perspective of Christianity and the Bible. For any who embrace the Christian faith, we encourage them to grow in faith and to thoughtfully and respectfully express their faith in a manner that serves and engages the Columbia community, New York City and the world.

ARTICLE IX — STATEMENT OF BELIEF

The Statement of Belief is the doctrinal foundation of this organization. The Statement of Belief for this organization is attached in Appendix I. **ARTICLE X — FINANCES**

The Chapter may raise revenues through contributions, fundraising activities or by applying for school funds available to student groups. Dues shall not be charged to members for participation. Students, however, may be charged for such services as special social gatherings, retreats and conferences.

The Chapter will hold to high standards of financial integrity. A member or several members of the Leadership Team will be responsible to carefully administer any school funds granted to the Chapter.

ARTICLE XI—ADVISOR

The advisor to Bridges International will be chosen by the officers in consultation with the staff members of Bridges International. The advisor must be a faculty or staff member at [Insert University].

APPENDIX I—STATEMENT OF BELIEF

The sole basis of our beliefs is the Bible, God's infallible written Word, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that it was uniquely, verbally and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit and that it was written without error (inerrant) in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks.

We accept those areas of doctrinal teaching on which, historically, there has been general agreement among all true Christians. Because of the specialized calling of our movement, we desire to allow for freedom of conviction on other doctrinal matters, provided that any interpretation is based upon the Bible alone, and that no such interpretation shall become an issue which hinders the ministry to which God has called us.

1. There is one true God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of Deity and the characteristics of personality.
2. Jesus Christ is God, the living Word, who became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. Hence, He is perfect Deity and true humanity united in one person forever.
3. He lived a sinless life and voluntarily atoned for the sins of men by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone.
4. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died.
5. He ascended bodily into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, where He, the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own.
6. Man was originally created in the image of God. He sinned by disobeying God; thus, he was alienated from his Creator. That historic fall brought all mankind under divine condemnation.
7. Man's nature is corrupted, and he is thus totally unable to please God. Every man is in need of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.
8. The salvation of man is wholly a work of God's free grace and is not the work, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness or religious ceremony. God imputes His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, and thereby justified them in His sight.
9. It is the privilege of all who are born again of the Spirit to be assured of their salvation from the very moment in which they trust Christ as their Savior. This assurance is not based upon any kind of human merit, but is produced by the witness of the Holy Spirit, who confirms in the believer the testimony of God in His written word.
10. The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to men. He convicts and draws sinners to Christ, imparts new life to them, continually indwells them from the moment of spiritual birth and seals them until the day of redemption. His fullness, power and control are appropriated in the believer's life by faith.

11. Every believer is called to live so in the power of the indwelling Spirit that he will not fulfill the lust of the flesh but will bear fruit to the glory of God.
12. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, His Body, which is composed of all men, living and dead, who have been joined to Him through saving faith.
13. God admonishes His people to assemble together regularly for worship, for participation in ordinances, for edification through the Scriptures and for mutual encouragement.
14. At physical death the believer enters immediately into eternal, conscious fellowship with the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his body to everlasting glory and blessing.
15. At physical death the unbeliever enters immediately into eternal, conscious separation from the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his body to everlasting judgment and condemnation.
16. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth - personally, visibly and bodily - to consummate history and the eternal plan of God.
17. The Lord Jesus Christ commanded all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to disciple men of every nation. The fulfillment of that Great Commission requires that all worldly and personal ambitions be subordinated to a total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us."