CONSTITUTION

of

Language Assessment Student Organization (LASO)

Iowa State University, Ames, IA

Fall 2024

# ARTICLE I – NAME

## Section 1 – Name

1. The name of the organization shall be Language Assessment Student Organization (LASO) at Iowa State University.

# ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

## Section 1 – Purpose

1. The purpose of the Language Assessment Student Organization (LASO) at Iowa State University (ISU) is to provide community and professional development opportunities to ISU graduate students who are interested in the study of knowledge and expertise in the area of language assessment. Language assessment is a sub-discipline currently studied within the Applied Linguistics graduate program at ISU and requires knowledge of several fields, such as education, applied linguistics, and statistics. The goals of LASO are to provide a forum for the discussion and analysis of current and relevant issues in the field of language assessment and also a forum through which its members can learn more about specific language assessment subfields, tools, and skills of interest to them, especially those that are either not available or not easily acquired at ISU. To achieve these goals, LASO will organize regular meetings for members to discuss assessment- and testing-related topics, work on assessment- and testing-related projects (e.g., book reviews, test reviews, test development), and develop professional skills such as writing abstracts and preparing conference presentations. LASO will also invite other ISU PhD students and/or scholars/experts outside of ISU to give relevant talks and/or to offer practical workshops.
2. In the future and with the required approval by the relevant body at ISU, LASO might serve as a consulting group for those interested in language testing at ISU and for practitioners in the area of language assessment who might be interested in LASO’s language testing expertise.

# ARTICLE III – STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

## Section 1 – Statement of Compliance

1. LASO abides by and supports established Iowa State University policies, State and Federal Laws and follows local ordinances and regulations. LASO agrees to annually complete President’s and Treasurer’s Training.

# ARTICLE IV – NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

## Section 1 – Non-discrimination Statement

1. Iowa State University and LASO do not discriminate on the basis of genetic information, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, race, ethnicity, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or status as a U.S Veteran.

# ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

## Section 1 – Membership

1. Membership is open to all Iowa State students, faculty, staff, alumni, and emeritus faculty in good standing with Iowa State University.
2. Members shall be removed from the organization in any of the following circumstances:
	1. upon commencement;
	2. if they fail to pay the required membership dues (though they can continue to attend joint LASO/LARG meetings as a LARG member);
	3. if they behave in a way that the general members or the university deem as inappropriate. The improper behaviors are:
		1. Any sort of verbal and physical disrespect or foul language towards any other members of the organization or any members of the university at large.
		2. Any behavior during meetings of the organization which are deemed as inappropriate by more than half of the members of the organization.
		3. Any improper use of money which is allocated for the organization, either through member dues, fundraising, or ISU funding. All expenses must be approved by the treasurer and are open to scrutiny by any members of the organization.
3. An individual may appeal a recommendation for removal at a meeting set by the president. Removal will occur with one-half vote of the general membership.

# ARTICLE VI–OFFICERS

## Section 1 – Organization Structure

1. The Executive Board officers of LASO shall include required and optional officer positions and the organization's Advisor(s). The required officer positions shall be President, Treasurer, and Risk Management Officer. The optional officer positions shall be Vice President, Social Event Manager, Secretary, and Senior Officer.
2. The Executive Board shall appoint such committees that are needed to carry out organization goals.

## Section 2 – Officer Requirements

1. All LASO officers, whether holding a required or optional position, must meet the following requirements:
	1. Be a graduate student in good standing with the university and enrolled: at least half time (four or more credits), if a graduate-level student (unless fewer credits are required in the final stages of their degree as defined by the Continuous Registration Requirement) during their term of office.
	2. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 and meet that minimum GPA in the semester immediately prior to the election/appointment, the semester of election/appointment, and semesters during the term of office. In order for this provision to be met, the student must have met the enrollment requirements described above for the semester under consideration.
	3. Be ineligible to hold an office should the student fail to maintain the requirements as prescribed in (1) and (2).

## Section 3 – Officer Responsibilities

1. All LASO officers, like other active members, should be active in trying to locate scholars and students within and outside ISU who have expertise in a language-assessment relevant area and who could contribute to LASO through a talk, workshop, or webinar.
2. In addition, each LASO officer shall have the responsibilities as described below:
	1. President – Schedules meeting times and locations, creates agendas, sees that all voting requirements are properly upheld, and manages organization and communication of LASO events and activities, and departmental funding opportunities.
	2. Vice-president – Fills in for the president whenever the president is, for some justifiable reason, unable to perform their duties. Submits for voting possible talks and workshops which might require paying the speaker or workshop holder with LASO finances (regardless of their source). If there is no vice-president, these responsibilities shall be transferred to the president.
	3. Treasurer – Manages any funds the university bequeaths to LASO and funds coming from other sources, such as member dues and fundraising activities. Tracks and reports budget and use of funds each semester. Completes all training sessions required by Student Engagement throughout their term.
	4. Risk Management Officer – Helps minimize potential risks for club activities, recommends risk management policies or procedures, submits documentation to ISU’s Risk Management Office, and ensures that proper waivers and background checks are on file with Risk Management for events (if applicable). This position may be held by a separate officer or in conjunction with any of the above positions.
	5. Social Event Manager – Plans social events (e.g., fundraising activities) for members of the organization. Promotes organization events through digital, print, and/or social media. Ensures that the events run smoothly and successfully.
	6. Secretary – Takes notes at meetings and shares this information with LASO members, sends reminders about upcoming meetings and professional opportunities, assists with event organization as needed. If there is no secretary, these responsibilities shall be transferred to the president.
	7. Senior Officer – Provides advice on how to organize LASO events successfully based on their previous experience with the organization as a board member. This position is expected to give recommendations on topics such as funding opportunities, funding proposal reviews, and other applications or forms necessary to hold events at ISU.

## Section 4 – Officer Selection, Terms, Impeachment & Replacement

1. Any member may nominate any individual(s) in good standing with LASO and with ISU and who meet the academic requirements as stated above for any office. Election of officers will be held at the beginning of fall semester and will be decided by a majority vote from the general membership. If necessary, a run-off election will be held with the top candidates that received the most votes.
2. The term of office for all officers will be two full academic years (starting on Oct. 1 and ending on Sep. 30). Officers may serve a maximum of one full term in the same position.
3. Officers may step down earlier if they wish, at which point a mid-term election may be held (see point F). Officers wishing to resign are encouraged to resign after one year rather than in the middle of a semester.
4. Officers may be impeached if they behave in a way that the general members or the university deem inappropriate. The improper behaviors are the same as those defined for general LASO members in Article V – Section 1.B.
	1. An ad hoc committee will be formed by the general membership at this time, and the individual officer may appeal the recommendation for removal at a meeting set by this committee. Removal will occur with one-half vote of the general membership.
5. When necessary, mid-term elections to replace officers who resign or are impeached will be held in the same manner as the original election process. If an officer is elected after Oct. 1, their term will end on the same date as if they were elected before Oct. 1 of that year (e.g., if an officer is elected in November 2024, their term would end on Sep. 30 of 2026).

# ARTICLE VII–ADVISOR

## Section 1 – Faculty Advisor Responsibilities

1. The Faculty Advisor(s) will advise students as to which of the talks/workshop possibilities should be prioritized in view of the language-assessment field and the skills required to succeed in it. The advisor(s) will also review event authorization requests, payment requests, and other paperwork as required by Student Engagement.
2. LASO will have at least one faculty advisor at all times. Additional advisors are optional.
3. At the appropriate time for officer elections, any member of LASO may nominate any half-time or full-time, permanent English Department faculty members to serve as a faculty advisor. A majority vote from the general membership will decide a list of individuals to ask to be an advisor. The individual with the most votes will be asked first, the individual with the second most votes will be asked second, and so forth.
4. The President will gain consent from the faculty member.
5. Advisor(s) will continue to hold their position until they resign or are impeached.
6. The advisor may ask to be relieved of their duties at any point during the academic year with the expectation that they will continue to hold the position until the end of the term and until a replacement advisor can be found (if necessary).
7. An advisor may be impeached if they behave in a way that the general members or the university deem inappropriate. The improper behaviors are the same as those defined for general LASO members in Article V – Section 1.B.
	1. An ad hoc committee will be formed by the general membership at this time, and the individual advisor may appeal the recommendation for removal at a meeting set by this committee. Removal will occur with one-half vote of the general membership.
8. When necessary, mid-term elections will be held to replace advisors who resign or are impeached in the same manner as the original election process.

# ARTICLE VIII–FINANCES

## Section 1 – Financial Procedures

1. All monies belonging to this organization shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for this organization at the Campus Organizations Accounting Office and/or approved institution/office (must receive authorization via Campus Organizations Accounting Office). All funds must be deposited within 48 hours after collection. The Advisor to this organization must approve and sign each expenditure before payment.
2. The President, Treasurer, and other officers as needed will work together to submit funding applications to GPSS and other funding bodies on campus. All involved parties will make an effort to submit applications on time.
3. Purchasing cards can be held by any LASO officer if authorized by Campus Organization Accounting. Purchasing card holders will complete all required training and follow all procedures for responsible card use and transaction logging in Workday.
4. The Treasurer will maintain an internal ledger of all deposits, allocations, and expenditures each semester.
5. The Treasurer will work with Campus Organization Accounting to process all organization transactions in Workday.

## Section 2 – Dues

1. LASO will collect dues in the amount of $10 per academic year ($5 per Fall and Spring semester) per member, to help foster the aims of the organization. Dues payments will be made via cash or check and delivered directly to the Treasurer or left in the Treasurer’s ISU mailbox. If the Treasurer does not have an ISU mailbox, the Treasurer may request the use of another officer’s ISU mailbox. This money will be added to the funds provided by Iowa State University so that the organization can pay for language-assessment events and associated supplies and refreshments.

# ARTICLE IX–AMENDMENTS

## Section 1 - Amendment

1. Amendments to this constitution shall be developed by the Executive Board and passed by a three-fourths (3/4) majority affirmative vote of general membership.
2. After the constitution is amended or ratified, it will be submitted within 10 days to Student Engagement for approval.