

Movimiento Estudiantil Chicax de Aztlán (MEChA) Chapter Constitution

(last revised: April 30, 2018)

PURPOSE:

To commit ourselves to education and awareness of issues concerning the Chicax community through community service, social activism, and campus awareness. To participate as a chapter of MEChA, a nationwide, historical Chicax student movement.

BYLAWS :

MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicax de Aztlán)
University of Chicago Chapter Constitution

Article I: Name of Organization

Section I. The name of the organization shall be University of Chicago Movimiento Estudiantil Chicax de Aztlan and/or MEChA de UChicago.

Article II: Purpose

Section I. MEChA de UChicago outlines the following organizational objectives:

- a. To study, educate ourselves and the students, faculty, staff, and community at large about the political, cultural, social, economic, and philosophical issues that pertain to the Chicax community with an emphasis on Indigenous heritage.
- b. To raise awareness of Chicaxs within the UChicago community who have regionalized experiences of their identity and culture.
- c. To combine theory and practice in our activism and seek social and economic justice as a Chicax Student Movement.
- d. We will maintain a direct affiliation to National MEChA by using the following papers as guiding documents: the National MEChA Constitution, the Tierra MidAlt Constitution, El Plan de Santa Barbara, El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán, the Gender & Sexuality Caucus documents, and the MEChA position papers regarding philosophy, constitutions, outside organizations, goals & objectives.

Article III: Membership

Section I. UChicago MEChA outlines the following criteria for membership:

a . ELIGIBILITY

New membership shall be open only to students who are enrolled at the University of Chicago with at least a 1.75 G.P.A. regardless of race, gender, national origin, creed, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, ability, or veteran's status, who are in general accord with the above stated purposes.

b . VOTING

Any individuals wishing to join, who have met the above criteria, must have their presence recorded at two consecutive meetings in order to obtain voting rights. Voting rights will be granted at the third meeting. A member shall lose voting rights after two absences at official meetings in any given quarter. They must attend two consecutive meetings to reinstate voting privileges (reinstatement will take place on the third consecutive meeting).

- i . Exceptions will be given for those members who study abroad. If applicable, voting rights will be suspended during the quarter in which they are abroad and reinstated upon arrival to campus.
- ii . Students who are studying abroad Spring Quarter, but are still nominated for a position, may still accept their nomination. The acceptance of their nomination will be counted as a vote in their favor.

c . MEMBER REMOVAL

Any member may present a motion for removal of any member at any official meeting. At the following business meeting a 2/3 majority must approve the motion in order for the removal to take place.

d . MESA DIRECTIVA POSITIONS

All Officers must be active members of MEChA, currently enrolled at the University of Chicago, and full-time students:

Co-chair: Two co-chairs will assume all executive power and responsibilities for MEChA. If possible a mix of gender identities should be represented. One will be an internal liaison to both Student Government (though not required to hold any SG position) and other campus groups. One will be an external liaison to non-university organizations, the Tierra MidAlt region, MEChA Nationals, and political movements. One co-chair may be allowed to study abroad for one quarter so long as there is a replacement co-chair that will be elected the same day as general elections. One co-chair will be permanent in the position for the entire school year.

Secretary: Handles all paperwork including minutes, records of attendance, voting eligibility, internal and external correspondence, and emails to the membership prior to official weekly meetings. The Secretary is also responsible for disseminating information relevant to upcoming elections regarding endorsements, co-sponsorships, etc. (See Article V, § I, part c). This information must be sent to the Secretary by the member proposing the endorsement 24-hours prior to the weekly meeting.

Public Relations Chair: Responsible for publicizing MEChA events on and off campus. Serves as a point-of-contact and spokesperson to the media. Responsible for archiving MEChA events online & in Special Collections. Will oversee and manage MEChA's presence on social media.

Treasurer: Handles all funds and organization finances specifically responsible for annual allocations, SGFC requests, and will process reimbursements, payments, and purchase requests. Acts as liaison to CLI. Prepares annual budget report for the membership . Co-organizing with co-chairs in seeking funding and budget proposals.

Recruitment Chair: This position will be responsible for hosting one recruitment event per quarter and coordinating orientation week events and RSO fairs. Organizes social events as proposed by the membership.

Community Engagement Chair: Acts as liaison between MEChA and the greater Chicago Community. Responsible for all educational and community oriented programming.

Gender & Sexuality Chairs : The Gender & Sexuality Chairs should be held either by a self-identified mujer or by a self-identified queer member or a member who is dedicated to combating both machismo and the heteropatriarchy in MEChA spaces. The constituency should bear in mind that the privilege heterosexual males inherently have could potentially make it difficult for them to identify and effectively organize around the issues affecting queers and mujeres in our community. The Gender & Sexuality Chairs will be responsible for at least one quarterly program dealing specifically with gender and/or sexuality issues, with there being at least one gender and one sexuality program per year. If an issue of sexual assault occurs within the chapter, the Gender & Sexuality Chair is responsible for executing the duties outlined in the Sexual Assault Policy (Article V , § II).

Decolonial Committee Heads: The Decolonial committee will plan events and discussions that question how our community and society at large participates in the marginalization of Afrolatinx and indigenous voices and lives. In doing this we must avoid primitizing or essentialist discussions and go beyond just cultural performances. 2-3 members will be voted in as Committee Heads, understanding that we must prioritize, but not be limited to, the voices of directly impacted individuals.

e . TERMS

All officer terms are for one academic year, regardless of number of quarters served. No officer may remain in the same position for more than two years (i.e. only one reelection permitted). All officers are allowed to study abroad for one quarter and remain in their position as long as they have a replacement for their position, which is elected at the same time.

- i. In the instance that an officer or prospective officer cannot fulfill their duties, they must notify a co-chair. An provisional election will take place the meeting after notification. Replacement officer will commence duties at the meeting after the election.

f . ELECTIONS

Officer elections will take place during the business meeting of 6th or 7th week in Spring Quarter. The election will be announced to the membership at least two weeks in advance by email. Only voting members may nominate members to positions and vote in the election. However, non-voting members may still be nominated.

Article IV: Meetings

Section I: MEChA de UChicago outlines the following criteria for meetings:

a. At least 8 official meetings must be held each quarter (fall, winter and spring). These meetings shall be determined by a consensus of the MEChA de UChicago members at the first meeting of each quarter. No meeting shall be held during Finals Week. Four of the eight official meetings shall be business meetings. The remaining four meetings shall be convivencia meetings with an emphasis on history, identity, culture, or related topics. At least one of the convivencia meetings must be focused on issues surrounding gender and sexuality.

b. Nonvoting individuals shall not be allowed in any MEChA meeting where MEChA business is being discussed unless sponsored by a voting member and approved by all voting members. In the instance that a non voting member is turned away their attendance will still be recorded and counted.

Article V: MEChA Chapter Guidelines

Section I. MEChA de UChicago outlines the following criteria for chapter activities:

- a. No informal social events shall be sponsored under the MEChA name (i.e. parties, dances, etc.).
- b. All members must maintain proper comportment at all MEChA sponsored events and gatherings in order to reflect MEChA's values and overall mission.
- c. The following guidelines would be in place for the following situations:
Sponsorships, Co-Sponsorships, Endorsements, and Campaign Endorsements - Information regarding endorsement, etc. must be sent to the Secretary 24 hours in advance of the weekly meeting at which the vote will occur in. The Secretary must distribute the information to members before noon on the day of the vote. Information will be presented and discussed. Only voting members who are present at the meeting may vote.

Section II. Sexual Assault Policy

Sexual Assault Procedure:

Person wishing to report assault should talk to a board member. In the event that the board member is not a co-chair, board member must ask survivor's permission to bring the case to a co-chair. A plan of action will then be crafted between the survivor and board member, with the board member serving as a resource in this process if need be. This board member would preferably be the Gender & Sexuality Chair (GS).

a. In the case of a removal the following steps will be followed:

The Mesa Directiva will hold a discussion concerning the case.

- i. Neither perpetrators nor survivors may be present. In the case that they are on the board, they will not be included in this discussion.

If one board member motions to halt the removal, a vote will take place. A two-thirds majority must be reached for the removal to be overturned.

- i. The vote will be silent and with anonymous ballots.
- ii. In the event that the removal is overturned, perpetrator will go through restorative justice process with consent of survivor.

In case of removal, the individual will be removed from all MEChA and MEChA affiliated spaces. The GS will negotiate terms with removed member. Board will discuss how perpetrator's roles will be redistributed and how reelections will proceed as constitution outlines.

b . In the case of Restorative Justice, a board member would mediate throughout the process. It is advised that one co-chair be involved in this process, but survivor's permission must be obtained before they are brought in.

- i. BYPIOU's method of Restorative Justice should be used as a guideline.

c. In the case that an individual with a known prior accusation of sexual assault wishes to become a member of MEChA, membership will be contingent upon participation in restorative justice. If there is an issue and a motion is made for that member's removal, a 2/3 vote will be required to pass removal.

Article VI: Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the MEChA de UChicago Constitution must be approved by a 2/3 vote of total voting and present members. Amendments to the constitution should be formally proposed at least one official meeting in advance of the meeting when the vote will take place.