



Disability Advocates Union

CONSTITUTION

LAST REVISED: August 2024

Article I – Name of Organization

Section 1. The official name of this organization is **Disability Advocates Union**. Campus Activities and University Relations have approved it. The name follows the [Cornell University Policy 4.10](#) on [Student Organization Branding](#).

Section 2. This organization is also called **DAU** and will be the official acronym.

Article II – Mission, Purpose, Aims of Organization

Section 1. The purpose of Disability Advocates Union shall be to advocate for the general advancement of disability rights at Cornell University.

Section 2. The goals of this organization are to create a space for people with disabilities to come together, discuss shared interests, advance community knowledge, and advocate for fair treatment regardless of disability status.

Article III – Membership Requirements and Limitations

Section 1. Membership eligibility.

- a. The organization shall consist of undergraduate and graduate students of Cornell University who are interested in the purpose of the Disability Advocates Union and who shall be approved by the Officers.
- b. Members of registered student organizations must be registered, matriculated students at their respective Cornell University campuses (i.e., Ithaca, Geneva, NYC Tech). Part-time students, non-matriculated students, students on a leave of absence, or students who are abroad may not serve as officers, e-board, and/or voting members of student organizations. It is the responsibility of the Advisor to collaborate with the President to ensure that all officers are full-time students on their campus. If one of your officers has a change in status that will require them to step down from their position, please contact the Campus Activities Office. General members may be students, faculty, staff, or community members.
- c. Approval results through the completion of the membership form, which solely consists of stating the reason for interest.

- d. Disability Advocates Union complies with [Cornell University Policy 6.4](#) of Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual and Related Misconduct. This policy is also outlined in the [Big Red Guidebook](#).

Section 2. General membership expectations.

- a. Members must attend at least 20% of regularly scheduled body meetings.
- b. Members are expected to assist with the planning, advertising, and implementing of events hosted by the organization.
- c. Members hold voting power during elections and when items are brought up to the organization to vote on. Their vote holds the same power as an Officer's vote.
- d. Members are expected to attend the organization retreat/training held within the first two weeks of classes.
- e. Members are invited to all social events hosted by the organization.

Section 3. New member recruitment.

- a. Recruitment for Disability Advocates Union occurs at the beginning of each semester.
- b. The organization recruits through ClubFest, social media, quarter cards, etc...
- c. Membership is granted based on application and interest in DAU.
- d. The first meeting post-recruitment is dedicated to training new members and getting to know existing members.

Section 4. The Officers reserve the right to remove any member (based on the unanimous decision of the Officers and Advisor) through the following grounds:

- a. Violation of rules and regulations outlined in the Cornell Student Policies and/or [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- b. Failure to uphold the provisions of the constitution and bylaws.
- c. Does not act in the best interests of the organization and/or is engaged in activity jeopardizing the organization's existence.
- d. Unexcused absences for a minimum of **100** required events.

Article IV – [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Section 1. All members must follow local, state, and federal laws, Cornell University rules, and the organization's constitution at all functions.

Section 2. All members will abide by Cornell University Policies, specifically [policy 6.4: Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual and Related Misconduct](#).

Section 3. In case of a violation and/or an active University investigation, the following are options:

- a. Members involved in an active University investigation may receive a temporary suspension or limited membership as determined by a unanimous decision of the Officers and Advisor.
- b. Members found violating university policy may be permanently removed as members as determined by a unanimous decision of Officers and Advisors.

Article V – Executive Board of Officers

Section 1. Elected Officers.

- a. The elected officers in Disability Advocates Union shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and any other officers listed in **Disability Advocates Union's** Standing Rules, Policies, and Procedures.

Section 2. President. The President shall:

- a. Coordinate all functions and activities of Disability Advocates Union.
- b. Chair all General Membership and Executive Board meetings.
- c. Ensure that Disability Advocates Union's activities and members follow all Cornell University policies.
- d. Secure Disability Advocates Union's registration with Cornell University each year.
- e. Maintain open communication with each officer and faculty/staff advisor.
- f. Install and remove all appointed officers with the approval of the Executive Board.
- g. Serve as a non-official member of each committee.
- h. Act as a spokesperson for the organization.
- i. Organize and run an officer transition and education program for new officers.
- j. Maintain contact with and solicit participation from organization advisors.
- k. Seek out new advisors, if needed, and acquaint them with the organization's history, traditions, and procedures.

Section 3. Vice President. The Vice President shall:

- a. Serve as Executive Vice President of Disability Advocates Union.
- b. Ensure that all the organization's activities and members follow all Cornell University policies.
- c. Maintain accurate records of Disability Advocates Union's Membership.
- d. Maintain records of participation in events for each Member.
- e. Oversee the review of each Member's requirements.
- f. Endeavor to improve Disability Advocates Union's retention of its Members.
- g. The Vice President will assume the role if the President cannot perform their duties for a meeting, event, or other purpose.

Section 4. Secretary. The Secretary shall:

- a. Coordinate the communicative functions of Disability Advocates Union.
- b. Record minutes of and attendance at each General Membership and Executive Board meeting.
- c. Appoint scribes to record minutes in committee meetings as needed.
- d. Manage and maintain all organization email listservs and social media.
- e. The Secretary will assume the role if the Vice President cannot perform their duties for a meeting, event, or other purpose.

Section 5. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Collect and distribute all monies of Disability Advocates Union.
- b. Keep clear records of all of Disability Advocates Union's financial activity.
- c. Provide regular reports to the General Membership on the organization's finances.
- d. Oversee the organization's budget, including allocating funds and keeping records of previous budgets.
- e. Prepare and submit applications for funding to the SAFC or any other necessary organization.
- f. The Treasurer will assume the role if the Secretary cannot perform their duties for a meeting, event, or other purpose.

Section 6. Outreach Coordinator. The Outreach Coordinator shall:

- a. Regularly post on social media about disability related topics
- b. Develop strategies to increase awareness of the club and our activities
- c. Pursue collaborations with various other clubs and organizations

Section 6. Term of Service.

- a. No individual shall hold a specific position as Officer for more than five semesters.
- b. Grounds for removal of an officer include
 - i. Violation of rules and regulations outlined in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
 - ii. Failure to uphold the provisions of the constitution and bylaws

Section 7. Elections.

At the end of each academic year, Disability Advocates Union may or may not hold elections, depending on the percentage of members who wish to.

- a. If more than forty-nine percent of members wish to do the latter, members will vote by paper ballot, collected and counted by three randomly chosen members not running for officer positions.
- b. Members running for an officer position, who receive eighty percent of votes, reserve the right to replace the officer position they ran for.
- c. Otherwise, the current officer must reach the end-of-term limit of their specific position, indicating a necessary replacement.
- d. In the event of the latter occurring, members running for positions may give a speech before voting takes place.
- e. A majority vote determines elections.
- f. In the event of a tie, there will be a revote by paper ballot in which the votes of the current members of the executive board receive double weighting.

Section 8. Responsibilities.

- a. Both elected and appointed officers shall be responsible for their duties as listed in this constitution.

- b. Each officer shall also establish and maintain a working relationship with the General Membership, Executive Board, and all other officers, advisors, chairs, committees, and staff necessary to perform their duties.

Section 9. Officer Transitions.

- a. Each officer shall maintain a record of their position, including budgets and activities of the office, to provide to incoming officers following elections.
- b. Outgoing officers shall also make every effort to assist in the transition process, including helping to ensure that incoming officers are aware of their responsibilities.

Section 10. Vacancies.

- a. Any officer may resign by submitting a letter to the Executive Board.
- b. In the event of a position vacancy, the President shall, with the majority approval of the Executive Board, appoint a replacement to serve until the next General Membership meeting, at which point a special election will be held to fill the position.
- c. A vacancy of the office of President shall be treated as a temporary absence as defined in this Article.
- d. Any person selected to fill a vacancy shall meet the eligibility requirements prescribed for that position.
- e. Current officers shall be eligible to run for the vacant position but must vacate their original position immediately upon election.
- f. In the event that a new vacancy is created by the special election, another will be held to fill that vacancy and so on until all positions are filled.

Article VI – Advisor

Section 1. Advisor selection.

- a. Any faculty or staff member at Cornell University capable of corresponding with the university in the official and legal matters of the Disability Advocates Union.
- b. A majority vote of active members selects Independent organization advisors.

- c. University/Department advisors are assigned by the university/department to oversee an organization.

Section 2. [Responsibilities of the advisor.](#)

- a. Attend general body and/or executive board meetings when needed
- b. Meet regularly with the organization's President to stay updated and serve as a resource
- c. Assist with the annual registration process
- d. Assist with the funding process

Section 3. Term of service.

- a. There is no limit to how long the advisor may hold the position subject to the advisor acting in the organization's best interests, does not violate any Cornell University Policies rules and/or Student Code of Conduct, and is not engaged in activity jeopardizing the organization's existence.

Article VII – Meetings

Section 1. Officers/Executive board.

- a. Hold officer meetings outside the regular meeting schedule as often as necessary, called by the President and/or Vice-President.

Section 2. All members.

- a. Hold general meetings once a week as decided by the organization members each semester based on academic obligations.

Section 3. Quorum and Referendum.

- a. Four members are the minimum number of voting members who must be present at a properly called meeting to conduct business in the group's name.

- b. All Officers must be present to transact business.

Article VIII – Amendments and Ratification

Section 1. This constitution shall become effective once uploaded to CampusGroups during the annual re-registration process.

Section 2. Ratification process

- a. The constitution on file in CampusGroups is uploaded annually during the re-registration process and is valid until amendments are made.
- b. This constitution must be ratified again once every academic year and re-uploaded to the CampusGroups group file.
- c. The officers will propose any changes to the document before ratification to allow time for organization members to review it.
- d. These changes will be voted upon by all Disability Advocates Union members who attend the meeting and must receive a majority vote.
- e. Any member may submit a written proposal to the President or Vice-President to amend anytime during the academic year.
- f. Submitted amendments will be voted upon at the next general body meeting.
- g. Any change to this constitution approved by a majority of the organization's members voting goes into effect.
- h. Any changes to the constitution must be shared with Campus Activities as a revised constitution for review.