

Constitution and Bylaws of The Jackson State University Elite Dance Ensemble

Article I

Name and Purpose

Section I

Name

The name of the organization is The Jackson State University Elite Dance Ensemble.

This organization had its beginnings as 'The Jackson State College Dance Guild' in 1965. In the year 1966, its name was changed to 'Dance Troupe' under the direction of Mr. Edward Fisher. Shortly after, its name was changed to 'Dance Ensemble' under the advisement of Mrs. Narah Dean Oatis. The acronym 'J-SUEDE' will be used alternatively for branding and trademark purposes.

Motto

The official motto is **"Talent, Dedication, and Cooperation"**

Section II

Purpose

This is a student organization comprising students who are interested in "Dance" as a form of recreation, competitive achievement, physical development, entertainment, recruitment, and community outreach. Members of the organization demonstrate several styles of dance, including but not limited to lyrical, modern, hip-hop, ballet, and interpretative.

- A. To develop a rich intellectual background in the art of Dance
- B. To develop symmetrical bodily forms, choreographed artistic dances, and promote the art of dance at Jackson State University
- C. To provide an emotional outlet for free expression
- D. To encourage self-expression and creativity through the art of Dance
- E. To facilitate the continuing education of dance as a traditional form of expression F.

To compete in dance competitions; local, regional, and national

G. To hold at least one annual performance on campus every year to exhibit growth showcasing as a group as well as individually.

Article II

Section I

Membership

Any student who has been selected during the tryout process, has a verified cumulative GPA of at least 2.5, and is currently enrolled at least part-time, can be considered for active membership.

Being an active member ensures that the student can attend all practices, participate in voting processes, and perform in performances as determined by the choreographer, President and/or Advisor, so long as they have acquired the appropriate uniform/costuming for that event.

Returning members are defined as students who have previously held active membership prior to the current academic school year. Returning members must be currently enrolled and registered Jackson State University students.

Returning members must have a verified cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 and are currently enrolled at least part-time for the semester.

If a returning member does not have a verified cumulative GPA of at least 2.5, they will not be eligible for active membership.

Prior active membership must be verified by an advisor(s) for students to obtain returning member status.

All applicants and returning members must pay annual membership fee to the organization to obtain active member status and prior to participating with the organization. Due dates for payment will be selected on an annual basis and are selected based on Jackson State University's academic calendar and organization needs.

Active membership shall last no more than eight (8) semesters unless that member is in good academic standing with the university and cleared by the Advisors to be a part of J-SUEDE.

Active members shall be in good academic and social standing at Jackson State University. Active members must properly conduct themselves when representing J-SUEDE and abide by guidelines published in the Student Code of Conduct.

Section II

Audition Process

J-SUEDE shall hold one audition process in the spring and may hold a second during the summer if decided upon by the current President and/or Advisor(s). It shall be held for all currently enrolled students and prospective students admitted to the university, wishing to obtain membership. Applicant members may NOT be added outside of the aforementioned audition periods.

The auditions shall occur on a week selected and approved by the President or Advisor(s) if the position is vacant. The audition process shall consist of an interest meeting, clinic, interview, and audition. The interview, clinic, and audition will take place over a period set forth by the current President or Advisor(s) if the position is vacant. If an in-person audition cannot be held, a virtual process will be decided upon by the President and/or Advisor(s).

The decision to have an Interest meeting shall be set by the current President or Advisor(s) if the position is vacant. It shall be set no later than three (3) days before the beginning of the tryout clinic.

During the time of the clinic, two (2) dance routines of contrasting styles will be taught by the choreographer(s) appointed by the President and/or Advisor(s). A technique combination will also be taught as part of the tryout clinic.

Each auditioning student will have an interview with members of the judging panel appointed by the President in consultation with the Advisor(s).

Each auditioning student will have an individual tryout where both dance routines and the technique combination will be performed and evaluated by a panel selected by the President in consultation with the Advisor(s).

Auditions must be recorded for further evaluation by the selected judging panel and advisor(s). Auditioning students cannot record or review a recording of their individual tryout if the audition is in-person.

Each auditioning student will perform an originally choreographed dance lasting no more than 1:00 minute & 30 seconds. The routine should demonstrate the execution of the assigned choreography to the best of their abilities.

Any members active during the previous season and are deemed eligible for continuing membership by the Advisor(s) and University policy must audition during the aforementioned audition periods to retain active membership.

Section III

Practices

All practices are mandatory and practice attire is required. This includes pre-season practice, workouts, and study hall.

All members should immediately sign the sign-in sheet upon entering but ensure that they sign before leaving.

Absences from practice, workouts, or performances of at least one week are not allowed and can result in a one-semester suspension of active membership. Unless the excuse has been verified with the President/Vice President before or within three days after the last day of absence. It is the responsibility of the active member to have their absence excused. Rehearsals, practices, and/or meetings for any other registered student organizations (RSO) are always considered unexcused absences and shall not be considered excused under any circumstances. Missing practice due to class schedule, health/medical issues, or verified academic department activities are excused.

Practice attire is defined as clothing suitable for athletic activity. Jeans, khaki pants, dress slacks, tight-fitting skirts or dresses, hard-soled shoes, or boots are prohibited during scheduled practices and rehearsals.

The President or Vice President must be notified of absence from practice/events at least one hour in advance. Failure to notify will be documented as an unexcused absence.

Any member who obtains more than 6 unexcused absences during the academic year are subject to lose active membership status.

Anyone who wishes to choreograph a dance must allow the President to view and approve the choreography before it can begin to be taught during practice. The choreographer has all creative rights over their choreography and oversees selecting a concept and attire for the performance, with the advice of the President and/or Advisor(s). Any choreography for the organization taught outside of scheduled rehearsal is prohibited.

Section IV

Any active member interested in joining a fraternity or sorority will be allowed to obtain membership and attend meetings required during the fall and/or spring semester of the year in which they are participating in MIP (membership intake process). Participation must be communicated to and verified by the Advisor(s).

Section V

Anyone who has already obtained membership to another organization can acquire membership to The Jackson State University Dance Elite Ensemble.

Section VI

In the event of any injury or permanent absence during the season, in which the presence of the dancer is essential to certain choreography, the choreographer may replace the dancer at the discretion of the President.

Section VII

In the event of any injury, sickness, or permanent absence during the fall or spring semester the member must submit correspondence to the Executive Board with reasoning and supporting documentation for their absence. A majority vote will determine if the member will be allowed to retain active membership.

Article III

Section I

Officers

There shall be a President/Captain, Vice President/Co-Captain, and Secretary/Drill Master. These officers will be the immediate Executive Board for the purposes of registration with the Center for Student Engagement and Leadership in the Department of Student Affairs.

The process of electing the Executive Board shall be done by rank choice voting of the top three selections for president by each active member. Eligible active members for the executive board will be determined by the Advisor(s) and interviewed during an audition process. The active member with the largest vote count will be the President-elect for the next academic year. The active member with the second largest vote count will be the Vice-President-elect for the next academic year. The active member with the third-largest vote count will be the Secretary/Drill Master elect for the next academic year. The newly elected officers will be announced at the end of the Spring Audition Process.

Elect members' term in office will begin during the subsequent academic year of election.

The organization shall elect one SGA Representative.

The organization shall elect one delegate to the Campus Activities Board.

This organization shall also select by popular vote Mr. and Miss Jackson State University Elite Dance Ensemble.

All officers, delegates, and Mr. and Miss J-SUEDE must have active membership during the semester they are elected and maintain active membership during their time in office.

All officers must have a verified cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 and are currently enrolled at Jackson State University.

All officers must be in good standing with the university.

If an elected officer fails to meet these requirements during their time in office the advisor(s) will open nominations and have a vote no later than 1 week after the officer is notified of their status.

A replacement will be selected by a majority vote of active members.

Eligibility to vote requires members to be currently active in the organization.

Social Media Policy

Each season a Social Media Representative will be appointed from the current eligible active or non-active members. Eligibility for this role will be determined by the executive board and in agreement with the current Advisors.

Applicants will apply for the position directly with the current president. All applicants will have their individual social media accounts reviewed during the application process.

All postings on behalf of this organization will be reviewed and approved by the executive board.

Each season the executive board will approve the current season's design graphic look.

J-SUEDE does not endorse Fan-pages or posts made on behalf or in support of this organization.

All postings tagged using this organization's social media handles will be closely monitored by the Social Media Representative.

This organization will abide by all Jackson State University policy regarding social media accounts.

Section II

Duties and Qualifications

President/Captain

The President shall preside over all meetings, coordinate practices and set the tone for the organization. He/she/they shall be an eligible member and in good standing in the university, with a verified cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 or higher and enrolled full-time. Presidential duties include overall charge of the organization. The President must be willing to listen objectively to the entire organization and enthusiastically participate in every meeting and work closely with the advisors and fellow officers. The President will be elected at the final meeting of the spring semester.

The President shall submit practice schedules for University approval and operating rules not outlined in this constitution, according to Robert's Rule of Order. Operating rules will be submitted to the advisor(s) and voted on by active members of J-SUEDE. Vice-

President/Co-Captain

Vice-President's duties include, but are not limited to, creation of and supervision of all sub - committees, working with the chairs of all the committees, and assisting them if need be. He/she/they shall be an eligible member and in good standing in the university, with a verified cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 or higher and enrolled full-time. The Vice-President must also work closely with fellow officers. In the case that the President fails to fulfill his/her/their duties, it then becomes the job of the Vice-President to fulfill those duties.

Secretary/Drill Master

Secretary / Drill Master duties will include holding all active members accountable to operating rules, can give constructive criticism, leading stretches and workouts, and can assign physical training activities for non-compliance with operating rules.

He/She/They shall be an eligible member and in good standing in the university, with a verified cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 or higher and enrolled full-time.

Mr. & Miss J-SUEDE

Mr. and Miss J-SUEDE shall serve as the "face" or role models of the organization. They must conduct themselves in an orderly and respectful manner as well as maintain a positive image at university events and in general. Mr. and Miss J-SUEDE will maintain a verified GPA of at least 2.5 and be currently enrolled full-time. Their duties shall include two mandatory community service projects, representing J-SUEDE at campus-wide events and participation in all events/functions hosted by the J-SUEDE. The organization will also contribute payment towards Mr. and Miss J-SUEDE's Coronation and/or Parade attire, so long as funds are available.

If either office of Mr. and Miss J-SUEDE is vacant due to lack of eligible members, an escort will be selected by the person elected to serve and approved by the Executive Board and Advisor(s).

Section III

Sub-Committees

Members of J-SUEDE can volunteer to be part of the different sub-committees. The number of individual representatives will depend on the amount of interest in each committee.

Sub-Committees shall be composed of active members appointed or approved by the current Vice - President/Co-Captian. Sub-Committee Duties

The subcommittee's chairperson will attend all meetings as requested by the organization. Should an administrative problem arise, the sub-committee will make itself available to resolve the problem. After meetings, each sub-committee will report their progress in completing their assigned tasks to the Vice-President/Co-Captain.

Article IV

Dues and Uniform Costs

Section I

Dues

Dues are set at a cost of \$250. Dues in total will include operating and/or travel costs of the organization as well as two (2) shirts.

Dues for members will NOT include uniform or optional apparel costs.

To cover the necessary expenses of J-SUEDE, dues must be paid at the beginning of the semester for a new or returning member to become active.

Dues for new and returning members will be decided by the advisor(s) and the immediate Executive Board members at the end of the spring semester, before the organization's recertification submission deadline date.

For members to become active for both the fall and spring semesters, dues must be paid on or before the first day of preseason camp. Any exceptions to this must be approved by the President and/or Advisors.

Dues will NOT be refunded. If a member wishes to obtain a refund from other expenses he or she has paid, they must do so by the 1st Monday in September.

Failure to pay dues will result in immediate dismissal from the organization.

Section II

Uniform Costs and Policy

Costs of uniforms for new and returning members will be decided by a majority vote of the advisor(s) and the immediate Executive Board members at the end of the spring semester or the beginning of the fall semester.

For members to retain active membership, all dues and fees must be paid on or before the first day of preseason camp.

The organization will provide all uniforms and costuming for all performances of this organization. Any costuming or uniforms not provided by the organization must be approved by the Advisor(s) before the last practice, prior to a performance.

Returning members who already have certain materials will not be required to purchase new ones unless they are not available, damaged, or are not suitable to wear. Determination of materials suitability will be decided by the President in consultation with the Advisor(s).

Section III

Total Costs

The total amount of dues and fees is estimated to reach up to \$400 but will not exceed this amount unless determined by majority vote of the Executive officers and Advisor(s) prior to the beginning of the academic year.

Article V

Removal Procedures

Section I

Non-functioning Officers

Non-functioning officers shall be removed from office if they refuse to uphold the duties of the office to which they were elected or fail to pay dues to the organization or due to lack of attendance/participation.

The active members of the group shall vote to impeach. Upon a majority vote of impeachment, the officer shall be notified.

The officer in question shall have a hearing with the Executive board and Advisor(s) to have the opportunity to answer reasons for impeachment and respond to the impeachment vote. The Executive Board and Advisor(s) shall vote a secret ballot and its decision shall be final.

If a non-functioning officer has been removed from office but still meets the requirements for active membership, they can remain an active member of the organization.

Voting Rights

Section II

General Voting Rights

Every active member of the organization, present during the active season, possesses the right to cast a vote on the Removal Process brought forth for consideration, regardless of their stance – whether in favor, opposition, or abstention.

Inclusivity and Participation:

The organization values inclusivity and encourages the active participation of all members in the decision-making process. Therefore, each member's vote holds equal weight, regardless of their status or position within the organization.

Procedure for Casting Votes:

Votes may be cast in person during general body meetings and/or by proxy as permitted by the organization's bylaws of Robert's Rules of Order. The process for voting shall be conducted in accordance with the established rules and procedures outlined in the organization's governing documents. If an active member does not participate in-person or by proxy, their vote will count as an abstention.

Transparency and Accountability:

The organization is committed to transparency and accountability in its decision-making processes. Therefore, all voting outcomes shall be recorded and documented for reference.

Section III

Proxy Voting

In the event that a member is unable to attend an in-person meeting where a vote is taking place by the approval notice of absence by the current Captain/President and Advisor, they may designate a proxy voter to cast a vote on their behalf. Proxy voting is permissible only with prior approval from the current President/Captain of the organization. The proxy voter must be an active member of the organization and may only vote on behalf of one absent member per meeting or vote.

Approval Process: For the proxy vote to be counted, the absent member must have informed the President/Captain of their inability to attend the meeting and provide their vote by written authorization on paper with their signature. The President/Captain will review the request and approve or deny it based on the organization's policies and guidelines.

Responsibilities of Proxy Voter: The proxy voter is responsible for representing the absent member's interests faithfully and casting their vote per the absent member's instructions. The proxy voter must adhere to the voting procedures established by the organization and may not cast a vote on behalf of the absent member without explicit authorization.

Recordkeeping: The President/Captain and Advisor(s) shall maintain records of all proxy voting requests, including the names of absent members, designated proxy voters, and the issues on which votes were cast.

Repeal of Proxy-Authorization: An absent member may revoke their authorization for proxy voting at any time before the vote is cast by notifying the President/Captain in writing by paper along with a signature. Once revoked, the proxy authorization is no longer valid, and the absent member's voting rights are restored for the meeting in question.

Section IV

Non-active membership

Active members shall be removed from active membership after being absent from 1 week of regular practice unexcused, obtain more than 6 unexcused absences during the academic year, have missed 2 scheduled performances unexcused, their cumulative GPA falls below 2.5, or they fail to pay dues.

If a non-active member wishes to choreograph a routine for the organization, they will be allowed to do so under the discretion of the current President. However, they will not be allowed to perform.

Each non-active member shall be given a letter of dismissal signed by the primary advisor. A copy will be submitted to the Center for Student Engagement and Leadership.

Section V

Dismissal from practice

The President or Vice President has the power to dismiss any member from practice only if that member is causing; excessive disturbance, violent outbursts, excessive cursing, or anything that may bring harm or negativity to the other members around them.

Blatant disrespect towards any member may result in automatic dismissal from the organization.

All members are required to participate and remain at practice and meetings during the scheduled days and times. Members may be excused early with prior notice to the President and approval from the Advisor present. Any dismissal prior to the official end of a practice or meeting must be approved by the President and/or Advisor. Unapproved dismissal will be considered and unexcused absence.

Section VI

Consequences

1st Offense: The member(s) be dismissed from practice that day and will then meet with Advisors. After meeting with the Advisors that member may be placed on probation.

2nd Offense: The member(s) be dismissed from the group for the remainder of the academic school year.

Article VI

Advisor(s)

The advisor's function is to assist in programming, budget planning, day-to-day rules and regulations, participation, and interpreting the university's policy to student members. The advisor(s), in addition to the President or approved executive board members, must approve all expenditures from the organization's budget. Advisor(s) are expected to be present at all activities sponsored by their respective organization.

Section I

The advisor is selected by the majority vote of active members of J-SUEDE. Center for Student Engagement and Leadership (CSEL) and the Department of Health, Physical Education, and recreation must approve any additions or changes in advisors.

Section II

The advisor(s) should have an interest in dance. They should be available for and desire to give support as needed for practices, performances, and university-sponsored activities.

Section III

J-SUEDE Ensemble may vote to have co-advisors if they so desire.

Section IV

The primary duty of the advisor(s)/co-advisors is to mediate and propose new ideas to J-SUEDE. They shall keep accurate records of active membership and review the academic and financial status of all auditioning students, applicants, and returning members.

Section V

Other duties of the advisors/co-advisors are facility reservations, ordering uniforms and costuming, critiquing dances, and any other needed assistance, and implementing/upholding necessary rules and regulations.

Section VI

The advisor(s) shall also be the primary signee and account holder for any financial account open under this organization. The President will be the secondary during their elected term.

Section VII

If there is any question regarding the jobs and duties of an advisor that is not specified within this constitution, the organization must refer to the Jackson State University handbook, Advisor's Agreement form, as well as the Guidelines for Student Organizations.

Article VII

Discrimination

Students have the right to be free from all forms of inappropriate discrimination. Jackson State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national or ethnic origin, disability, or veteran status in its educational programs, activities, admissions, or employment practices. (Please see Jackson State University Student Handbook for further information).

Anti-Hazing

Jackson State University is dedicated to maintaining an environment that promotes academic excellence and the collective responsibility of its community members towards achieving the mission of the university. Therefore, the university has a zero-tolerance policy for hazing to protect the safety and well-being of all students. (Please see Jackson State University Student Handbook for further information.) All current and former members agree to adhere to the NO Hazing policy for The Jackson State University Elite Dance Ensemble.

Code of Conduct

Any piece choreographed for J-SUEDE belongs to that choreographer as well as becomes “property” of J-SUEDE. And shall not be used or performed elsewhere that may negatively affect, discredit, or degrade the name or brand of J-SUEDE.

All choreographers understand that once they leave, graduate, or are no longer active/current members of J-SUEDE; J-SUEDE has the right to continue to use their choreography so long as it does not negatively affect, discredit, or degrade the name or brand of J-SUEDE or the original choreographer.

Article VIII

Rules of Order

Robert’s rules of order shall be the governing authority of this organization. Each member must abide by the Rules and Regulations set forth by the President during their elected term.

Amendments

This constitution and bylaws can be amended at the final business meeting of the spring semester with the concurrence of a three-fourths majority vote of active members.

Amendments shall be added to this constitution before submission to the Center for Student Engagement and Inclusion.

Amendments must align with and cannot counter in word or practice the Jackson State University handbook, Advisor's Agreement form, the Guidelines for Student Organizations, and established University Policy.