



The Society for Defense and Strategic Studies

At American Military University (AMU) and American Public University (APU)

Constitution and By-Laws

Updated: February 1, 2024

ARTICLE I: Organization Name

The name of this organization is the Society for Defense and Strategic Studies. Its acronym is spelled SDSS.

ARTICLE II: Purpose of Organization

1. The purpose of the Society for Defense and Strategic Studies is to assist and enhance the capabilities of students, alumni, and faculty members in the expansion of research, knowledge, advocacy, and professional development in the fields of intelligence, defense, global strategic studies, national/global/homeland security, foreign affairs, and other complex national security issues.
2. This collegiate-based organization aims to build a long-term network of professionals in the above-mentioned fields. It will invite students, alumni, faculty staff, and interested individuals to get engaged and connect with our organization as well.

ARTICLE III: Membership of Organization

1. Membership is available to all university students, alumni, faculty staff, and organizational partners.

2. Members are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA and to provide verification of GPA before membership in SDSS can be conferred.

Section 1: Dues and Fees

1. Members are not required to pay dues.

Section 2: Board Membership

1. Officers must have been enrolled in and passed at least three academic courses in related fields during their tenure at AMU/APUS.

ARTICLE IV: Officers

Section 1: President

1. The President's key priority shall be to ensure that the organization grows, thrives, and expands via its mission, goals, objectives, and projects.
2. The President will be required to act as liaison between organizational officers, advisory board members, general membership, faculty, AMU/APUS staff, etc.
3. The President shall ensure that the organization is in good running and operational order for the organization to grow; expand; create relevant projects; and build a stronger professional network.
4. The President shall ensure that organizational culture, standards, and outreach are of the highest quality and constantly maintained.
5. The President shall achieve working knowledge of the Student Organization Handbook and the Chapter Standards Program provided by the Office of Student Life at AMU/APUS.
6. The President shall be responsible for ensuring Chapter Standards are adequately implemented and counted towards the Official Organizational Medaling Status.
7. The President will compose and submit all forms to the Office of Student Life at AMU/APUS.
8. The President will preside at meetings of the organization and at both the business meetings of the Executive Board and Advisory Board.
9. The President will appoint, with the consensus of the Leadership Council, participants to committees deemed necessary by the Leadership Council.
10. The President shall ensure that delegation of responsibilities by officers and organizational members are conducted when needed.
11. The President while working with the Office of Student Life, will be responsible for the elections of incoming officers.

12. The President shall ensure that transparency and education regarding organizational leadership, skills, and understanding of the roles are maintained for the sake of organizational continuity and survival.

Section 2: Vice President

1. The key priority of the Vice President will be to support the efforts of the President in regards to the outlined description of the President's roles mentioned above in Section 1.
2. The Vice President will also assist the President in running and operating the organization as a whole.
3. The Vice President will be required to familiarize themselves with the President's functions and responsibilities in case the President is unable to either temporarily or permanently fulfill their duties and obligations to the organization as a whole.
4. The Vice President will be required to preside at meetings of the organization in the absence of the President. This also includes business meetings of both the Executive Board and Advisory Board.
5. The Vice President has procedural authority to break election ties if necessary.
6. The Vice President will be required to implement and work with organizational members to achieve successful outcomes of activities, projects, and events per the Chapter Standards Program.

Section 3: Treasurer

1. The Treasurer will be responsible for managing any funds received by AMU/APUS Student Affairs (aka Student Life).
2. The Treasurer will be responsible for distributing funds and payments that go towards the benefit of the organization's operations with consultation from the President and Vice President.
3. The Treasurer will be required to be in touch with Student Affairs (aka Student Life) regarding the status of the organization's funds in terms of financial balance and arranging financial payment transactions that goes towards operational expenses and endeavors of the organization as a whole.
4. The Treasurer will also play a support role that assists the efforts of both the President and Vice President in regards to the outlined description of the President's roles mentioned in Section 1 that also includes their efforts to run and operate the organization as a whole.
5. The Treasurer as **Third in Command**, will be required to familiarize themselves with the President's and Vice President's functions and responsibilities in case either one of them or both of them are unable to either

temporarily or permanently fulfill their duties and obligations to the organization as a whole.

6. The Treasurer will be required to assist in the successful implementation of organizational projects, goals, missions, and endeavors per mandate as well as according to the Chapter Standards Program provided by the Office of Student Affairs at AMU/APUS.

Section 4: Organization Standards Officer

1. The Organization Standards Officer is responsible for maintaining standards and code of conduct throughout the organization and its membership.
2. The Organization Standards Officer is responsible for setting up and maintaining rules and administration/moderation protocol of the Facebook group and other digital social media infrastructure.
3. The Organization Standards Officer is responsible for verification and vetting of new and existing membership such as GPA, actual affiliation with AMU/APUS, and other areas of due diligence that is deemed necessary.
4. The Organization Standards Officer will also play a support role that assists the efforts of both the President and Vice President in regard to the outlined description of the President's roles mentioned in Section 1 that also includes their efforts to run and operate the organization as a whole.
5. The Organization Standards Officer will be required to assist in the successful implementation of organizational projects, goals, missions, and endeavors per mandate as well as according to the Chapter Standards Program provided by the Office of Student Affairs at AMU/APUS.

Section 5: Secretary

1. The Secretary will record and retain meeting minutes.
2. The secretary will be responsible for the accurate recording of all documents submitted to the Office of Student Life at AMU/APUS and will record all activities and events per the Chapter Standards Program.
3. The Secretary will provide copies of university documents to the President and/or the Executive Board upon request.
4. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining the membership list and providing it to other officers and the chapter advisor(s), as requested.

5. The Secretary is responsible for the composition and submission of all forms required on a regular basis by the Office of Student Life as required by the governing body.
6. The Secretary is responsible for working with the President or whomever is in charge of the coordination and distribution of New Member Welcome Letters and Membership Newsletters via organizational email accounts(s).
7. The Secretary will also play a support role that assists the efforts of both the President and Vice President in regards to the outlined description of the President’s roles mentioned in Section 1 that also includes their efforts to run and operate the organization as a whole.
8. The Secretary will be required to assist in the successful implementation of organizational projects, goals, missions, and endeavors per mandate as well as according to the Chapter Standards Program provided by the Office of Student Affairs at AMU/APUS.

Section 6: Technology and Digital Network Officer

1. The Technology and Digital Network Officer is responsible for the maintenance, development, and acquisition of both technological and digital networking capabilities, capacities, and functions for the SDSS organization.
2. The Technology and Digital Network Officer will coordinate with the Office of Student Life at AMU/APUS to update web content that pertains to the SDSS organization.
3. The Technology and Digital Network Officer will monitor and maintain functionality of SDSS digital infrastructure mentioned in Article XI.
4. The Technology and Digital Network Officer will work and coordinate with the Chief and Managing Editor of the Fulcrum Global publication and www.fulcrumglobal.us website on any web and design related issues.
5. The candidate running for this position has to show proof of proficiency in designing and maintaining a website using WordPress before being considered as a candidate as well.
6. The Technology and Digital Network Officer will also play a support role that assists the efforts of both the President and Vice President in regard to the outlined description of the President’s roles mentioned in Section 1 that also includes their efforts to run and operate the organization as a whole.
7. The Technology and Digital Network Officer will be required to assist in the successful implementation of organizational projects, goals, missions, and endeavors per mandate as well as according to the Chapter Standards Program provided by the Office of Student Affairs at AMU/APUS.

Section 7: Social Media Officer

1. The Social Media Officer is responsible for updating relevant content on the organization’s digital social media infrastructure as mentioned in Article XI.
2. The Social Media Officer will regularly post updated and relevant content on the organization’s digital social media infrastructure as mentioned in Article XI.
3. The Social Media Officer will work with the Chief and Managing Editor of Fulcrum Global to promote the website features and its digital published works.
4. The Social Media Officer will also play a support role that assists the efforts of both the President and Vice President in regard to the outlined description of the President’s roles mentioned in Section 1 that also includes their efforts to run and operate the organization as a whole.
5. The Social Media Officer will be required to assist in the successful implementation of organizational projects, goals, missions, and endeavors per mandate as well as according to the Chapter Standards Program provided by the Office of Student Affairs at AMU/APUS.

Section 8: Professional Development Officer

1. The Professional Development Officer will be responsible for distribution, training, and facilitation of information, skills, resources, events, etc. that can be helpful for SDSS members in the professional world as well as those seeking employment in related fields.
2. The Professional Development Officer will also play a crucial role in building up the organization’s professional and academic network in both the APUS and non-APUS communities.
3. The Professional Development Officer will also play a support role that assists the efforts of both the President and Vice President in regard to the outlined description of the President’s roles mentioned in Section 1 that also includes their efforts to run and operate the organization as a whole.
4. The Professional Development Officer will be required to assist in the successful implementation of organizational projects, goals, missions, and endeavors per mandate as well as according to the Chapter Standards Program provided by the Office of Student Affairs at AMU/APUS.

Section 9: Advisory Board

1. The Advisory Board shall be comprised of 4-8 individuals (**or more**) made up of a combination of previous SDSS elected leaders, membership leaders, AMU/APUS faculty staff, alumni, Fulcrum Global Chief and Managing Editor, and professionals in relevant fields. At least one Advisory Board member (an AMU/APUS faculty staff member) shall be named Chapter Advisor to Support engagement with APUS Student Affairs.
2. The Advisory Board Members shall be recruited by the SDSS Executive Board.
3. The Advisory Board Members are required to serve a minimum of one year with the Society for Defense and Strategic Studies with an option to renew for an additional year(s) afterward.
4. The Advisory Board Members can play many valuable functions such as leadership consulting and mentoring, as well as being a resource and support mechanism that aids and contributes to the overall work and mandate of the SDSS Executive Board, which will help ensure operational success.
5. The Advisory Board Members will be required to make themselves familiar with the responsibilities, functions, operations, goals and vision set forth by the Executive Board.
6. Each Advisory Board Member can serve either a single or multiple purpose function that helps aid and support the Executive Board's mandate as well as additional alternative projects that benefit the organization's mission, goals, objectives, and vision.

Section 10: Standing Councils and Committees

1. The Leadership Council shall be comprised of elected officers, the immediate past-president, and members of the Advisory Board. The Leadership Council is the organizational board of the Society for Defense and Strategic Studies. The Leadership Council will be responsible for creating and maintaining any standing committees deemed necessary.

Section 11: Term Limits

1. The President of the organization may serve for two consecutive elected terms in office.

- a. If the President does not choose to serve a consecutive term, he/she will notify the Chapter Advisors and Executive Board.
 - b. After serving as elected President for one or two years, the President will serve the following year on the Leadership Council as an immediate Past-President to help ease the transition and offer advice.
2. Excluding the role of President, the officers on the Executive Board may serve consecutive terms in office.
3. Officers are eligible for election to a different position at the end of their term.

ARTICLE V: Nominations and Elections

Section 1: Nominations

1. The Nomination Committee will call for officer nominations and provide instructions to the membership on how to go about the process (information, nomination protocol, requirements for bio info, etc.).
2. Nomination for officer positions can be submitted by current members.
3. Suggestions for nominations can be made via email, or electronic message, to the Nominating Committee by the membership (can be self-nomination or nomination of a fellow member).
4. The Nomination Committee will collect and review nominations for eligibility.
5. The Nomination Committee will provide brief biographies of each nominee to the membership, with an election ballot sent by email or within The Quad or Facebook or via 3rd Party voting system.

Section 2: Elections

1. Additional campaigning, debates, or events shall be at the discretion of the Leadership Council and the Nominating Committee.
2. Members are required to vote via email or survey platform (i.e. Survey Monkey).
3. APUS academic year runs from January to December. Elected officers will hold officer during this time frame.
4. Elections will be held every calendar year in the month of October.
5. Officer elects will take office the following January.
6. The months of October- December will be considered a transitional period where the newly elected officers will work with the currently officers.
 - a. This time frame will be used for APUS Office of Student Life officer training sessions.

- b.* All vital organization information and paperwork will be handed over to new officers during this transitional time period

ARTICLE VI: Meetings

Section 1: Meeting Protocol

1. Chapter meetings will be held on a quarterly basis, presided over by the President or a corresponding officer.
2. There should be an agenda created by the Secretary.
3. Meetings may be held in a conference-style online discussion, via telephone conference, chat room, or other designated method to facilitate a sense of a formal meeting.
4. Announcements of the scheduled meeting and method to accessing the meeting will be sent to the membership a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting, with a reminder message sent two-three days before the meeting as well as on the same day.
5. A quorum consists of one officer, one advisor.

Section 2: Special Meetings

1. Special meetings may be called for policy decisions affecting the organization.

Section 3: Committee Meetings

1. Committee meetings may be held as required.

Section 4: Board Meetings

1. Board members should meet monthly.

ARTICLE VII: Finances

1. Chapter finances are managed and distributed by Office of Student Life at AMU/APUS.
2. Advisors, officers and members are strictly prohibited from collecting funds.

ARTICLE VIII: Member Expectations

Section 1: Social Media Clause

1. All student organizations are expected to abide by policies and procedures outlined in the university’s Student Handbook and Student Organization Handbook.
2. To be considered an active member of the organization you must have a Facebook profile, as that is the primary source of SDSS activity and communication.

ARTICLE IX: Amendment

Amendments may be proposed during a meeting or requested by a member via email or electronic message to the leadership. There will be discussion during the meeting regarding the amendment proposal. An email will be sent to the membership regarding the proposed amendment.

Article X: Ratification

Proposed amendments to the constitution and its bylaws will be sent via email or electronic message to each member. Each member will review and send a return email with a single yay or nay vote to the organizational email address. Members shall have fourteen (14) days to review and vote on the proposed amendment before voting is closed. The Vice President will tally the votes and be responsible for notifying the memberships of the results within forty-eight (48) hours of the conclusion of the voting process. Ratification will pass by a simple majority vote. Ties shall follow the same procedure of electoral voting.

ARTICLE XI: Organization Digital Infrastructure and Assets

1. SDSS-Fulcrum Global Website / Bluehost Web Hosting:
 - www.fulcrumglobal.us
2. SDSS Facebook Group Page:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/APUS.SDSS/>
3. SDSS Twitter Feed:
 - sdss_apus
4. Fulcrum Global Facebook Page:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/Fulcrum-Global-1398490850246444/>
5. SDSS LinkedIn Page:
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/society-for-defense-and-strategic-studies-022182196/>

6. One Year Subscription for podcast editing software at Descript.
 - a. www.descript.com
7. Copy right ownership of podcast music from Premium Beat website:
 - a. www.premiumbeat.com account
 - b. Music Selections:
 - i. Orbiter Nine by Remember the Future;
 - ii. The Darkest Hour by Francesco D’Andrea;
 - iii. Speed and Adrenaline by Pavel Yudin;
 - iv. After Tomorrow by Remember the Future; and
 - v. Evolution by Musicalman.
8. SDSS e-mail account:
 - a. apus.sdss@gmail.com
9. Fulcrum Global email account:
 - a. info-sdss@fulcrumglobal.us
10. MailChimp Free Account:
 - a. www.mailchimp.com
 - b. User Name: apus.sdss@gmail.com
11. SurveyMonkey Free Account:
 - a. www.surveymonkey.com
 - b. User Name: APUS_SDSS
12. Stratfor World View database annual subscription:
 - a. www.worldview.stratfor.com
13. CiCentre SPYMEDIA database annual subscription:
 - a. www.cicentre.com
14. Six virtual courses purchased from www.udemy.com:
 - a. How to Manage & Influence Your Virtual Team;
 - b. Management Skills: New Manager Training in Essential Skills;
 - c. Management Skills – Team Leadership Skills Masterclass 2022;
 - d. Writing an Effective Desk Research Paper;
 - e. Report Writing: Learn to Write an Analytical Business Report; and
 - f. Ninja Writing: The Four Levels of Writing Mastery.
15. Brevo Subscription Account
 - a. <https://www.brevo.com>
 - b. User Name: apus.sdss@gmail.com

ARTICLE XII: Honorary Members and Partners of SDSS

Part of the SDSS mission is to reach out to industry professionals to help promote the society’s mission and obligations to its members. This supports the organization’s goal of generating a thriving and stimulating organizational culture that balances between the academic and real-world professional aspects of the national security, intelligence,

foreign affairs, and homeland security arenas. These individuals from outside of the AMU/APUS sphere are considered as being honorary members and/or partners of SDSS and are welcomed to participate in organization activities and discussions. The current list of honorary members and partners include the following:

1. **Max Daves** - CEO Founder of (idea)ology Group / Founding Partner of OTHIEL Advance Intelligence.

ARTICLE XIII: Current SDSS Leadership Team and Advisory Board Members

1. Organizational Leadership:

- **Sam Kessler** – President;
- **Brian Moody** – Vice President;
- **n/a** – Treasurer and Organizational Standards Officer;
- **Toni Scott** – Technology and Digital Network Officer;
- **Dustin Oaks** – Social Media Officer; and
- **Nabil Rahman** – Professional Development Officer

2. Board of Advisors:

- **Dan Opstal** – Advisor; AMU/APUS Faculty
- **Ron Brooks** – Advisor; SDSS Membership
- **Brian Moody** – Past President; and
- **Sam Kessler** – Fulcrum Global Chief and Managing Editor