

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

Article I: Name

Fuego Dance Team

alias: LSA Fuego, as a membership organization of the Latino Student Alliance

Article II: Purpose

Fuego Dance Team promotes and exhibits Latino culture through the performance art of dance. The dance team choreographs and presents an array of dance forms from Latin American countries, including but not limited to: folkloric dances (festejo, samba, caporales, and tinkus), partner dances (bachata, salsa, and merengue), and reggaeton. The dance group's presence in the university is essential to cultivating a community aware of and engaged in the diverse and rich dance culture of Latin America. Additionally, the dance team represents the Latino Student Alliance at other universities and various community events to support and enhance the greater Latino community beyond U.Va.

Article III: Membership

New members are selected for the dance team by co-captains, through a lengthy audition process that occurs every semester in conjunction with the biannual cultural shows run by the Cultura committee of the Latino Student Alliance. Selection for the dance team is based on commitment, attitude, performance, style, stage presence, technique, ability and rapidity in learning, punctuality, and attendance. Should it benefit the dance team to switch to a shorter audition process, in the form of try-outs, an amendment will be made to the requirements for membership.

Article IV: Officers

Co-Captains:

Co-captains: Co-captains will both lead practices, choreograph, and organize performances. One co-captain will take the lead on logistical planning (Geril Garcia for the year 2011-2012): responsibilities include practice scheduling, email reminders, attendance and communicating guest performance requests. One co-captain will take the artistic lead on practice management (Maura Tousignant for the year 2011-2012): critiquing technique and performance, giving individual feedback, and cleaning choreography. Both co-captains will be involved in the other's "field", but this general split will help ease the work load on the officer and create clarity in management.

LSA Cultura Liaison:

This Fuego representative (Myra Morales for the year 2011-2012) will attend Cultura meetings regularly, to coordinate between the two groups in planning for each biannual show, and officially communicate each organization's plans and priorities to the other.

Article V: Elections

In the past, leaders of the dance team have emerged from those taking the lead on choreography and practice organization. In the future, leadership positions will be determined by previous co-captains, based on nominations by the general body. General body members can nominate any member of Fuego Dance Team who has been on the team for a minimum of one semester and has choreographed for Fuego to the position of

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

co-captain, and the current co-captains will determine their ability to serve in the position. The Cultura Liaison must have been a member of Fuego for at least one semester and have been involved in the LSA Cultura committee. All selections made by co-captains based on nominations will then be put to a majority confirmation vote by the general body.

Article VI:

N.A.

Article VII: Meetings

The dance team will meet on a weekly basis to work on learning pieces of choreography. Depending on the performance that the team is preparing for, practice schedule may range from once per week to several times per week. Practices will typically take place in gymnasium studios with mirrors, but this is subject to change based on space availability. Co-captains will meet on a weekly basis to plan choreography and practices. They will also communicate with the Cultura Liaison on a weekly basis to be updated on the progress of planning the biannual shows. General body meetings will fluctuate in frequency during the semester, but attendance is required and expected of members unless excused by an officer.

Article VIII: Finance

Dues of \$10 will be charged to all members each semester. These proceeds will go directly back to the dance troupe to fund costumes and toward procuring a sound system. The dance team may apply for appropriations and host fundraisers, such as dance classes for the general public, to help cover expenses for the biannual shows.

Article IX: Non-Discriminatory Statement, Title IX Compliance, Amendments & By-Laws

i. The organization will not restrict its membership, programs, and/or activities on the basis of age, color, disability, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation or veteran status.

ii. Sexual harassment, sexual violence, and retaliation are prohibited by federal law and University policy. The CIO acknowledges that by signing this agreement, the University has the authority to investigate reports of sexual harassment, sexual violence, and retaliation made against student members of the CIO, and to determine appropriate sanctions which may include suspension or termination of the CIO agreement, restrictions on the rights of the CIO to use University facilities, and access to University services and resources. The CIO's student members' failure to comply with the University's policy related to Title IX may result in the University severing all ties with the CIO.

iii. Fuego Dance Team will only perform at events in which the co-captains have confirmed the group's participation. Thus, the name of the dance team cannot be used in official performances without this confirmation.

iv. In the case that Fuego Dance Team is invited to perform at time-conflicting events, any LSA-sponsored event will take priority over others.

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

v. Members only audition for Fuego once and remain members until graduation or a transfer out of school. Members may choose to become inactive on a semester basis without threat of dismissal from the team. In the event that misconduct or behavioral problems become regular and/or extensive distress to the team, co-captains reserve the right to ask members to leave the team or discontinue choreography temporarily.

Amendment I: Updated Officer Positions (March 2016)

Elected Positions

A. President

➤ **Representative**

The President (Alejandro Nava Moncada for the year 2015-2016) is be the main point of contact and point representative of Fuego Dance Team. The President is responsible for attending Latino Leadership Council (LLC) meetings and leadership workshops to give Fuego a voice in the Latino Community and to seek support from other groups. The President is also responsible for creating relationships between Fuego and the overall University community in order to foster more co-sponsorships or performance opportunities.

➤ **Performance Logistics**

The President will be responsible for seeking performance opportunities and coordinating performances within a week of initial contact. When Fuego is asked to perform, the President must bring it to the group during practice and through a google doc and the group must reach a consensus together with a majority vote on whether that performance is possible based on who can make it and how ready the routines are. The President will be the main point of contact when booking practice spaces, and will oversee the booking process.

➤ **Team Logistics**

The President is responsible for determining deadlines for important team dates. The following is a suggested timeline for a semester:

- 2-3 days *before* the semester starts: Hold first practices to learn choreography for the first performance (which in the fall tends to be in the first or second week of classes)
- First week of school: Coordinate with Publicity Chair to begin marketing for auditions
- Either the weekend of, or the week after the activities fair: Hold a weekend of auditions (which include a day for the workshop and a day of auditions)
- New Fueguito Initiation: Within a week of auditions (see Amendment IV for more details)
- First Social Event: Coordinate with Social Chairs
- Choreography Cram: Wednesday or Thursday night before first major performance
- Reminder to VP for booking spaces: 3-4 weeks before practice/event
- Elections: see Amendment II
- The President will coordinate due dates for choreography throughout the semester with the Artistic Director, and should aim to learn 1-2 dances every practice for the first 2-3 weeks.

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

- Should aim to have weekly meetings with the Executive Board in order to stay updated with what the team goals are for the semester
- A [Google] Spreadsheet with important dates, workshops, and performances is suggested in order for the group to remain organized and accountable.

➤ **Leader of Fuego**

The President is responsible for coordinating the rest of the Executive Board members and make sure the group is in good standing financially, socially, and in choreography.

B. Vice President

➤ **Public Relations**

The Vice President (Zena Sullivan for the year 2015-2016) is responsible for being Fuego's connection to the rest of the dance community. The Vice President makes conscious attempts to stay in contact with those other groups and does his/her best to integrate Fuego in the greater dance community by pushing for co-sponsorships or co-performances like Dance Marathon or Dorm Storms, etc. The Vice President is also responsible for attending LLC meetings if the President is not able to attend, or appointing someone to attend if no Executive members are able to attend.

➤ **Practice Logistics and Attendance**

The Vice President is responsible of booking practice spaces ahead of time and receiving any necessary training to do so. He/she is also responsible for keeping track of where group members are during practices. The VP will call/text/message a person that is missing who has not let the group know ahead of time of his/her tardiness.

➤ **Leader of Fuego**

Whenever the President is unavailable for extenuating circumstances, the Vice President is the next presiding point person.

C. Artistic Director

➤ **Choreography**

The Artistic Director (Brittany Crow for the year 2015-2016) is responsible for making sure the group has a full show ready for performance for whenever the next approved performance is. This can include (but is not limited to) choreographing 1 or 2 dances him/herself per semester, getting other members of the group to choreograph pieces, making sure the performance sets are at least 6 minutes long and diverse in style as well as in numbers. The Artistic Director has final say on whether a dance is performance ready or not. The Artistic Director, along with the choreographer of the individual dance, will provide feedback about quality and technique to the group members as they are preparing for a performance and may take whatever measures he/she believes are necessary to come out with the highest quality performance. The AD will also make sure that practice videos are available for the team to see and use for learning the pieces.

➤ **Suggested Basic Performance Set**

The following is a suggested order for a 5-7 minute set that most encompasses a fuller Latin-American set, representing dances from *all* of the Americas. (Can add or subtract dances depending on how long each piece is):

- Folkloric (Caporales, Tinku, Festejo, Diablada, Cumbia, Samba, Central American folk)

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

- Partner Dance (Salsa, Bachata, Bolero, Tango)
 - Caribbean Dance (Reggaeton, rumba, punta)
 - Urban (Hip-Hop, contemporary)
 - Another Partner Dance or Folkloric from another part of Latin America
 - End with Cuidado con el Fuego (Our “anthem” dance)
- **Leader of Fuego**
If the President and the Vice President are unavailable for extenuating circumstances, the Artistic Director is the next presiding point person.

D. Financial Officer

- **Finances**
The Financial Officer (Emerson Aviles for Spring 2016) is responsible for keeping Fuego financially stable. Dues are under the Financial Officer’s discretion along with the President. The Financial Officer is responsible for creating a budget at the beginning of each semester and presenting it to the Executive Board, and then is responsible for applying for the respective funds from either LSA, ODOS, or VPSA. The Financial Officer has the discretion to maintain a bank account for the group.
- **Leader of Fuego**
If for some reason the President, Vice President, and Artistic Director are unavailable for extenuating circumstances, the Financial Officer is the next presiding point person.

Appointed Positions

The President is free to appoint or not appoint a person to the following positions to further delegate roles through the team. Whether these roles exist depends on the current needs of the group and how many group members are active that semester.

A. Social Chair(s)

- **General**
The Social Chair is responsible for bringing the group together and organizing bonding activities for group members. These can include (but not be limited to) group dinners, parties, trips, retreats, etc.
- **End-of-the-Semester Dinner**
The Social Chair will organize an end-of-the-semester dinner in which the group will be able to bond for the last time as the current group and where the fourth years will be honored by the rest of the group. The logistics for this dinner are under the Social Chair’s and the President’s discretion.

B. Publicity Chair(s)

- **General**
This person will be responsible in creating flyers and social media events (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) for Fuego for the Activities Fair, auditions, performances, etc. The person should either get trained by the previous chair in Photoshop/Publisher/etc. and should be able to create flyers from scratch using this software. The Publicity Chair may request help from the rest of the group members if deemed necessary. Pub Chair(s) will coordinate with the Webmaster when the need to do something on-line is needed
- **Auditions**

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

The publicity chair(s) shall coordinate group efforts to get the group name and audition dates known to as many University students as possible and get the most diverse group of chispitas as possible.

C. Webmaster

The Webmaster is someone who is tech-savvy and who will be in charge of updating Fuego's online resources and social media. These currently include the website, YouTube channel, Facebook page, and Instagram. The webmaster will coordinate with the President, Social Chairs, and Publicity Chairs on whatever information is needed to update the online resources properly.

D. Warm-up assistant

This is a person that is always early to practices and is knowledgeable of warm-up routines.

E. Assistant Artistic Director

This is a person who is a very dedicated member of the group and very knowledgeable of all of the choreography, as well as a strong choreographer and good dance critic. This position may be appointed by the President if the Artistic Director feels overwhelmed with balancing school work and Fuego.

Oath of Office

I, (state name), on my honor, promise to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of my elected or appointed position. I promise to uphold the highest FUEGO values and the fiery passion with which I am entering this position for the entire year that I will hold this position for. I solemnly swear that I will provide a positive example of a leader who loves and cares about FUEGO, and that FUEGO will be my extra-curricular priority for the entire school year. I promise to be accountable and responsible to whatever is needed from me unless extenuating personal circumstances arise, and I am willing to be a crutch to my fellow teammates whenever they need me the most. I stand in front of you, my teammates, and I promise you that I will not let you down, that I will uphold these values, that I will not let my personal life interfere with FUEGO business in any form whatsoever, and that I will put forth my best to serve you and make the best FUEGO we can make, together. So help me God.

Amendment II: Modified Procedure for Elections & Role Transitions (March 2016)

In the past, leaders of the dance team have emerged from those taking the lead on choreography and practice organization, and later positions were elected by nominations from the group and a final decision by current executive board members. To accommodate for the evolution and maturing of the group, the following procedure for elections will be followed:

1. By the middle of February, the President will announce Elections and will coordinate with the group a day when to have them, and will ask group members to nominate others or themselves for one of the four elected positions of President, Vice President, Artistic Director, and Financial Officer, as well as for the appointed positions that he/she decides Fuego will need in the upcoming year
2. The nominees have time to accept their nominations in person until the day before Elections to have time to think about it.

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

3. Once a nomination is accepted, the candidate will come up with a short, 2-minute platform (1-minute for appointed positions) on why they believe they are right for the position, and will present this platform to the group the day of Elections. There should be time allotted for questions from the group afterwards.
4. Once all candidates present themselves for the elected positions, the group will discuss which of the candidates is more qualified until a decision is reached with a three-fourths majority vote for a candidate for that candidate to be elected for that position.
5. The President will be elected first, followed by the Vice President, then the Artistic Director, and finally the Financial Officer.
6. If a candidate is not elected for a position, they may run for another position.
7. After the four main positions are elected, then the appointed positions will present their 1-minute platform to the group, and the Incoming President will work with the Outgoing President to appoint the new positions after evaluating all the members running for each position.
8. At the very end, the newly elected and appointed positions will recite the Oath of Office, repeating after the Outgoing President, pledging their full commitment to the group.

Notes on Elections:

- The group should set aside around 2-3 hours for Elections to take place.
- Elections must happen by the end of March, with transition of roles happening no later than middle of April.
- The candidate for President must preferably be an active member of Fuego for at least two years.
- The candidates for Vice President, and Artistic Director must preferably be active members of Fuego for at least a year.
- The candidate for Financial Officer must be an active member of Fuego for at least a semester.
- Anyone can run for an appointed position (even graduate students)
- All candidates running for a position must uphold the promise that they will prioritize Fuego if they are selected for that position.

Amendment III: New Finance Procedures (April 2015)

It is under the President's and Financial Officer's discretion whether to take dues or not for a semester depending on group members' financial status and after preparing the budget for the year.

Amendment IV: Membership Updates (February 2016)

In recent semesters, the following initiation procedures have been followed and made into a tradition:

- **Member Initiation Procedures**
 - Old members (named "Fuegotes") will decide on the best night to initiate new members (named "Fueguitos") a week or so before auditions
 - Initiation will be called "callbacks" to throw off the auditionees (named "chispas"), and must happen within a week of auditions

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

- President will communicate through all mediums to the team when the initiation will happen
- Initiation is held in the Amphitheater, at night (around 8pm) and chispas (Future Fuegos!!!) will be told to dress in dance wear
- Fuegos will dress up in all-black, wear sunglasses, and act cool and intimidating towards the chispas
- Chispas will get on stage and dance or jam to a song of their choice, while Fuegos “judge” them in front of them, wearing the shades
- Once all the sparks go, they are directed to sit in a line and close their eyes while the group “deliberates”
 - To scare them, inform them that if they are either tapped on the shoulder or given something, they are in the team
- President thanks chispas for coming out to audition, but that regrettably not everyone can make it
- Meanwhile, Fuegos go get the chispas/Fuegos’ balloons (1 with their name, and 1 with “Fuego” written on it), and bracelets
- Fuegos’ things are handed out to them, and then they are asked to step forward and form a circle with their eyes closed. Fuegos will help them achieve this.
- President coordinates with Fuegos, asks Fuegos to open their eyes, and Fuegos rush into Fuegos for a huge group hug and congratulations.
- The group should take pictures during and after the initiation process
- WELCOME FUEGUITOS

Based on recent events that transpired regarding members leaving and returning to the group, membership requirements will be modified as follows:

- **Leave of Absence from Fuego**
 - A member is allowed to take a break from involvement in Fuego if school work or extenuating circumstances present themselves in their lives, and come back once they feel that they are able to take on their responsibilities in the team once again. They must communicate this with the team, especially the President before leaving, so that they are not considered to be quitting the team.
 - If a member is deemed to be in a Leave of Absence is not required to re-audition to re-join Fuego.
- **Quitting Fuego**
 - A member is considered to have quit if one or more of the criteria is met:
 - The member expressed his or her intention to leave the team permanently in verbal or written form
 - The member stops coming to practices without any explanation whatsoever, and cannot provide an explanation if/when he or she returns

Fuego Dance Team Constitution

- The member refuses to take part in any official team-related activities or communication. This can include (but is not limited to) walking off stage during a performance, leaving the main source of communication for the team, etc.
- If a member is deemed to be quitting Fuego by the Executive Board, the member (or ex-member) must audition in order to be considered to re-join Fuego.

Amendment V: Standardized Rehearsal Schedule and Policy on Additional Practices (April 2016)

In order to maintain a constant momentum in the artistic side of the team, as well as to keep team members constantly engaged throughout the year, the following modifications have taken effect starting the 2015-2016 school year:

- The team now meets for four hours a week, two hours typically on Sundays, and for two hours during another day in the week.
- The specific hours and second day of scheduled rehearsal shall be determined by the President and Vice President on the first weeks of school by polling the team members on the best time to meet.
 - Team members should be encouraged to always plan on the Sunday rehearsals to be at the same time, however.
- To the discretion of the President and the Artistic Director, the team may or may not hold more than one additional rehearsal during the week(s) of performances, especially first performances of the semester.
 - This will be dependent on how ready the team is for the performances, something that will be determined by both the Artistic Director and the respective choreographers of the dances that will be performed at that specific event.