



# SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL SEMINAR IN AFRICAN STUDIES (SERSAS)

## CONSTITUTION

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The Southeastern Regional Seminar in African Studies (SERSAS) is a non-profit association of individuals residing in the southeastern United States and committed to teaching about and/or to the academic study of Africa.

### **1. Membership**

The Seminar recognizes individual participating members upon receipt of annual dues of \$5.00, formally notifies them of all activities of the Seminar, and consults them on major decisions affecting the group. Payment of annual dues entitles the individual when feasible to receive by mail in advance of Seminar meetings copies of the papers to be presented.

The Seminar also recognizes institutional contributing members who offer funds in support of authorized Seminar activities, according to the following categories:

- Smaller colleges and schools (\$100)
- Larger universities without formally-constituted programs in African Studies (\$250)
- Institutions with formally-constituted programs focused on the study of Africa (\$500)
- Sponsors (\$1,000 or more)

The Seminar steering committee (see below) determines the dues category for institutional contributing members. Contributing member institutions receive copies of papers presented to the Seminar, may delegate persons to represent and vote their positions on issues affecting the Seminar, and may host Seminar meetings, with or without coordinate locally-sponsored conferences on subjects related to Africa. Members are reimbursed for travel to and from Seminar meetings up to a mileage rate set by the Seminar coordinators (see below) for each academic year according to funds available and with the approval of the treasurer.

### **2. Activities**

The Seminar normally assembles two or three times each academic year at sites located roughly within the area bounded by Florida, Georgia, West Virginia, and Maryland, to hear and discuss formal academic presentations by its own members. Formal papers are prepared in advance of the meeting and are distributed to the members of the Seminar.

Meetings and programs are planned by the Seminar coordinators, and they may schedule such other related activities as may support the purposes of the Seminar and its members.

All Seminar activities are open to the public, and the Seminar coordinators will endeavor to attract as many participants as possible to its meetings.

### **3. Officers**

A Steering Committee of five Seminar members, nominated by its predecessor board and elected by majority vote of those present and/or submitting written ballots at the final meeting of each year, discusses policy for the Seminar, names two coordinators each year, and may present issues for decision by the membership at large, by

mail or at Seminar meetings. Each sitting steering committee will solicit nominations and volunteers for its successor and prepare a single slate of board members for approval by majority vote of Seminar members present or submitting mail ballots to the year's final meeting.

The Steering Committee determines the dues status of institutional contributing members.

The Seminar coordinators sit ex officio as two of the five members of the advisory board and chair its proceedings, jointly or singly.

The two Seminar coordinators are nominated by the advisory board at the last meeting of each academic year to serve during the following year. They are normally chosen to represent as broad and diverse a cross-section of the Seminar's constituency as possible.

The Seminar coordinators plan each year's programs, appoint ad hoc local arrangements chairpersons at the sites of planned meetings, and are responsible for the timely preparation and circulation of papers, proper notification of Seminar activities to members, and appropriate publicity.

The coordinators are responsible for maintaining the membership list and for such communications with the membership as they or the Steering Committee may wish.

A treasurer, also appointed annually by the advisory board, supervises the financial transactions of the Seminar through accounts maintained with an institution, financial or academic, selected by the Seminar Steering Committee. The treasurer must present to the advisory board written summary statements of all Seminar income by academic year (August 1 through July 31) and may disburse seminar funds by allowed category (postage, telephone, photoduplication, transportation of members to meetings, refreshments at meetings, and other approved expenses), reconciled with beginning and ending balances of the Seminar account. The treasurer also prepares a budget for each coming academic year for approval by the Seminar advisory board at the final meeting each year. The detailed records of all transactions made by the treasurer on behalf of the Seminar are to be made available to the Steering Committee upon request.

A quorum of the steering committee consists of those members present.

#### **4. Amendments**

These operating guidelines may be amended upon prior distribution of the proposed changes and upon majority vote of those present or submitting mail ballots to any meeting of the Seminar. A quorum for this and all other votes consists of those voting.

#### **5. Liability**

The Seminar has no liability for the health or welfare of its members or officers at any time, whether they may be acting in connection with Seminar activities or not.