

National Constitution

Chicano and Chicana students of Aztlán must take upon themselves the responsibilities to promote Chicanismo within the community, politicizing our Raza with an emphasis on indigenous consciousness to continue the struggle for the self-determination of the Chicano people for the purpose of liberating Aztlán. The following structure will make every MEChista accountable to its chapter, every chapter accountable to its central (where applicable), every central accountable to its region, every region accountable to its state (where applicable), and every state accountable to the national.

Article I: Name

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the National Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA).

Section 2. The official symbol of this organization shall be the eagle with its wings spread, bearing a macahuittle in one claw and a dynamite stick in the other with the lighted fuse in its beak. The acronym MEChA shall be above the symbol with the phrase "La Union Hace La Fuerza" below.

Article II: Organizational Objectives

Section 1. National MEChA outlines the following organizational objectives:

- A) To strive for educational, cultural, economical, political, and social empowerment within the Chicano community in order to liberate nuestra gente;
- B) To undertake the responsibility of retaining our identity and furthering our cultural awareness;
- C) To undertake the responsibility of uplifting and mobilizing Chicanos and Chicanas through higher education;
- D) To implement plans of action concerning Chicanos and Chicanas.

Article III: National MEChA Structure

Section 1. National MEChA Coordinating Council (NMCC): To more effectively achieve its organizational objectives, National MEChA collectively delegates specific powers, duties, and responsibilities to the NMCC.

Section 2. The NMCC will have the following powers, duties, and responsibilities:

- A) To maintain national communications among all recognized MEChA Regions;
- B) To facilitate the implementation of a National MEChA Advocacy Agenda developed annually at the National MEChA Conference;
- C) To be empowered to take national positions on behalf of National MEChA whenever it is deemed necessary or appropriate as suggested by recognized National MEChA Regions;
- D) To ensure that the MEChA National Constitution is abided by regionally and nationally with respects to process and organization;
- E) To serve as the primary interpreter of the MEChA National Constitution in cases of constitutional questions or disputes;
- F) To follow-up on resolutions adopted by officially recognized MEChA Chapters at the National MEChA Conference resolutions session meeting;
- G) To monitor the organization and progress of the National MEChA Conference by the

National MEChA Conference hosting campus;

H) To foster the growth and development of national MEChA leadership on a local and national level through special programs and projects;

I) To work on the constant internal and external development of National MEChA;

J) To meet at least three (3) times a year at different recognized MEChA Regions.

Section 3. NMCC Membership: There will be two (2) Regional MEChA Representatives (one male and one female) elected individualism per recognized MEChA Region for one (1) year terms.

Section 4. Regional MEChA Representatives will have the following duties and responsibilities:

A) To be empowered by their recognized MEChA Regions to represent their respective regions and make decisions on their behalf on the NMCC;

B) To be responsible for the distribution of information attained at all NMCC meetings to their respective regional MEChA chapters;

C) To attend all NMCC meetings and vote on all matters that come before the NMCC.

D) To be directly accountable to their respective recognized MEChA Region.

Section 5. NMCC Meetings:

A) The NMCC will meet at least three (3) times a year.

B) NMCC meetings will rotate from each recognized MEChA Region.

C) NMCC meetings will be hosted by recognized MEChA chapters within recognized MEChA Regions.

D) NMCC meetings will be facilitated by one of the NMCC Co- Chairpersons.

E) Quorum for all NMCC meetings will be two-thirds (2/3) of the recognized MEChA Regions.

F) All NMCC meetings shall be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order until an alternate method can be found.

Section 6. NMCC Voting and Decision Making:

A) Each recognized MEChA Region shall be allowed to cast only one (1) vote at NMCC meetings, with the exception of the election of NMCC officers.

B) All decisions of the NMCC, with the exception of the election of NMCC officers, require a two-thirds (2/3) approval of all recognized MEChA Regions represented on the NMCC.

C) Believing that the direction of the NMCC must be guided by the grassroots, all decisions of the NMCC may be reversed by recognized MEChA chapters in attendance at the MEChA National Conference by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote.

Section 7. NMCC Officers: There will be two (2) NMCC Co-Chairpersons (male and female and one (1) NMCC Secretary-Treasurer, elected among the NMCC membership, whom will serve as the officers of the NMCC.

Section 8. NMCC Officer Duties:

A) Co-Chairpersons

1. To facilitate all meetings of the NMCC (The Co- Chairpersons will alternate facilitation of meetings among themselves);

2. To prepare formal agendas, in consultation with the Secretary-Treasurer, for all NMCC meetings;

3. To keep consistent communication among all NMCC members;

4. To serve as the official representatives and spokespersons for general public relations of National MEChA to the media and other organizations or entities.

5. To serve as the neutral facilitators of the Resolution Circle at the MEChA National Conference;

B) Secretary-Treasurer

1. To keep the minutes of all NMCC meetings and present them at each subsequent meeting for official approval by the NMCC membership;

2. To assist the Co-Chairpersons in receiving and issuing correspondences

- regarding the activities, courses of action, and policies of the NMCC;
3. To record attendance at all NMCC meetings;
 4. To maintain a historical file of all official NMCC activities and functions;
 5. To help in the development of all NMCC meeting agendas;
 6. To help in all administrative duties of the NMCC.
 7. To be responsible for researching potential funding sources for National MEChA.

Section 9. NMCC Officer Elections: There will be an annual election for the NMCC officers at the MEChA National Conference.

Section 10. All NMCC officers shall be elected every year and are eligible for reelection for a second term. No officer shall be re-elected for more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 11. All candidates for NMCC officer positions must meet the requirements of the office.

Section 12. Only members of the NMCC may nominate another NMCC member for the positions of NMCC Co-Chairpersons or NMCC Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 13. Each NMCC Co-Chairperson (male and female) must be from a different recognized MEChA Region than their counterpart. The NMCC Secretary-Treasurer must also be from a different recognized MEChA Region than the two NMCC Co-Chairpersons.

Section 14. Each NMCC member shall be allowed to cast one (1) vote for NMCC officers. Voting for NMCC officers shall be done by closed ballot.

Section 15. Two NMCC members, from different recognized MEChA Regions and who are not running for an officer position, will be selected at large by the full membership of the NMCC to count and report back the results of the election of officers. The results of the election will be reported back to the full NMCC that same day and will be recorded in the minutes.

Section 16. Only officially recognized NMCC members will be allowed to vote during the election of NMCC officers.

Section 17. A simple majority (50%+1) of the NMCC membership is needed to win each officer position. In the case where more than two people are running for a position, and no one receives a simple majority, the candidates having the two highest counts will have a run-election immediately thereafter.

Section 18. The newly elected officers will officially assume their roles immediately following the National MEChA Conference.

Section 19. When a vacancy in any of the NMCC officer positions takes place, the NMCC shall immediately conduct a special election.

Section 20. MEChA Regions:

- A) The Regional Committee involves both logistic planning and information distribution within its region receiving direction from the voting campuses.
- B) National MEChA recognizes the regions defined by states.

Section 21. A regional communication center shall be established where all MEChA regional information (i.e. minutes, phone lists, etc.) will be kept and distributed upon request.

Section 22. The region shall convene regularly with a quorum of 50% + 1% of all voting campuses.

Section 23. Voting Privileges: Any campus wanting to become part of the Regional Process must gain its affiliation and voting rights through their recognized Regional.

Section 24. In order to be a MEChA chapter recognized by the Regional, it shall adopt and abide by the following responsibilities:

- A) Orient all members by discussing and reading historical documents of our Movimiento including: El Plan de Santa Barbara, El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán, and the MEChA Position Papers of Philosophy, Constitutions, Relationship to Outside Organizations, and Goals & Objectives.
- B) Make important aspects of the Chicano Movement relevant to MEChistas.
- C) Send at least one (1) representative to the Regional meetings to be recognized as a voting chapter.

Section 25. Responsibilities of the MEChA Regionals include:

- A) To implement plans of action for their particular region.
- B) To meet on a regular basis.
- C) To review, recruit, and educate campuses wishing to form a MEChA chapter.

Section 26. Recognized MEChA Regions will annually elect two (2) Regional Representatives (male and female) to represent their respective MEChA Region on the NMCC.

Section 27. Each recognized MEChA Region will establish an election process for their two (2) NMCC Regional Representatives that involves the full participation of all officially recognized MEChA chapters in their respective MEChA Region.

Section 28. All NMCC Regional Representatives selected by each recognized MEChA Region must be fully recognized members of their campus MEChA chapter and they must also be from a campus that is officially recognized by their MEChA Region.

Section 29. The two (2) NMCC Regional Representatives elected per respective recognized MEChA Region must be from separate campus MEChA chapters within each recognized MEChA Region.

Article IV: National MEChA Guidelines

Section 1. A MEChA National Conference shall be held once a year and shall rotate from state to state.

Section 2. The purpose of this conference shall be to bring all MEChA chapters together in an effort to bring a MEChA National Conference that maintains and reaffirms the principles and philosophies of MEChA.

Section 3. At the MEChA National Conference, steps will be taken to establish ties among the MEChA chapters in the spirit of Aztlán. The purpose of the National is to create a vibrant and responsive network of Chicano and Chicana activists who will respond as a unit against oppression and racism and will work in harmony when initiating and carrying out campaigns and liberation for our people.

Section 4. MEChA National Conference Rules:

- A) Only MEChA chapters recognized by their respective regions can vote.
- B) Individuals and/or groups with a history of party-building and cadre raiding inside of MEChA will not be able to participate or attend the MEChA National Conference (see MEChA's Philosophy Papers: Relationship to Outside Organizations).

- C) Non-voting individuals and/or groups can not attend or participate in any workshops or meetings wherein constitutional issues or resolutions will be discussed or voted upon, unless these individuals and/or groups meet both of the following criteria:
 - 1) Have sponsorship from a MEChA chapter which is recognized by its respective MEChA Region;
 - 2) Be approved by unanimous consent by all recognized MEChA Chapters in attendance when these constitutional issues or resolutions are discussed or voted upon.
- D) All entertainment shall be culturally oriented.
- E) A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is needed at the national level to decline any regional boundaries.

Section 5. All MEChA National meetings shall be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order until an alternate method can be found.

Section 6. MEChA National Conference Liaison Process:

- A) Prior to each MEChA National Conference there shall be a minimum of three (3) MEChA National Conference liaison meetings held with the intent of having equal input from all officially recognized MEChA chapters into the conference.
- B) Each of the MEChA National Conference liaison meetings shall be held in different states chosen by the NMCC.
- C) All MEChA National Conference liaison meetings must be hosted by a MEChA chapter which is officially recognized by its respective recognized MEChA Region.
- D) All non-MEChA individuals or organizations who wish to attend a MEChA National Conference liaison meeting must meet all of the following criteria:
 - 1. Have sponsorship from a MEChA chapter which is recognized by its respective recognized MEChA Region;
 - 2. Be approved to attend the MEChA National Conference liaison meeting by the recognized MEChA Region in which the liaison is being held;
 - 3. Be approved by unanimous consent the day of the MEChA National Conference liaison meeting by all the regionally recognized MEChA chapters in attendance.
- E) Final decisions regarding the MEChA National Conference shall be made at the last MEChA National Conference liaison meeting.

Section 7. The MEChA National Conference hosting campus shall be required to submit a written report to the NMCC at each of the NMCC meetings that outlines their progress with respects to organizing the MEChA National Conference (i.e. funding, logistics, etc.) and the MEChA National Conference liaison meetings.

Section 8. The MEChA National Conference hosting campus must be prepared to attend any NMCC meetings in which a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the recognized MEChA Regions represented on the NMCC may have questions or concerns regarding the MEChA National Conference.

Section 9. National MEChA Communications Center:

- A) The MEChA National Conference hosting campus is responsible for distributing the resolutions to all the regional communication centers one month (30 days) prior to the MEChA National Conference.
- B) The MEChA National Conference hosting campus must forward all information regarding MEChA National Conference planning to next year's hosting campus within two (2) months after the MEChA National Conference.

Section 10. MEChA chapters may establish "terms of agreement" with any outside entities, organizations, and/or individuals who they choose to have a working relationship with. If these "terms of agreement " are violated, documentation explaining the violation must be distributed to

all regional communication centers through the National MEChA Communications Center and the NMCC.

Article V: Amendments

Section 1. Amendments to the MEChA National Constitution shall be as follows:

A) Amendments and/or changes to the MEChA National Constitution shall be first submitted in writing to the MEChA National Conference hosting campus two (2) months prior to the MEChA National Conference and shall be mailed out to the regional communication centers by the hosting campus.

B) A national structure workshop at the MEChA National Conference is required for the proposed amendments so to that regionally recognized MEChA chapters have an opportunity to discuss proposed changes.

C) The general body shall vote on the proposed amendment at the resolution session.

D) A two-thirds (2/3) vote of officially recognized MEChA chapters present at the MEChA National Conference shall pass the amendment.

Adopted on April 9, 1995 at the 1995 MEChA National Conference Hosted by MEChA at the University of California - Berkeley

Amendments:

Amendments and/or changes to the Constitution shall be first submitted in writing to the hosting campus two (2) months prior to the MEChA National Conference and shall be mailed out to the communication centers by the hosting campus.

Amended on April 14, 1996 MEChA National Conference Hosted by El Sexto Sol de MEChA at the University of Texas-Pan American, Edinburg

Amended on April 14, 1997 MEChA National Conference Hosted by MEXA at Michigan State University, Lansing