

Constitution and Bylaws for Ratio Christi at University of Iowa

I. Name

The name of this organization is Ratio Christi at University of Iowa (hereafter referred to as “Chapter”), a group consisting of at least 80% undergraduate and/or graduate students at the University of Iowa (hereafter referred to as “School”).

II. Purposes

2.1. The Chapter will be guided by the following purposes:

The mission is to equip university students and faculty to give historical, philosophical, and scientific reasons for following Jesus Christ. The purpose for which the Ratio Christi, Inc. (Ratio Christi) is organized is to encourage and strengthen the faith of Christian students at public and private institutions around the world, while sharing Christ's message and love with those who have not yet accepted Him. By situating apologetic clubs at universities nationally and internationally, Ratio Christi will take part in the battle for the mind by encouraging dialogue and stimulating discussion directed towards secularism and answering life’s pressing questions.

2.2. To this end, this chapter of Ratio Christi shall have as its objectives:

- (a) Expressing the Good News of Jesus Christ through all activities of the Chapter.
- (b) Empowering students to grow deeper in the knowledge of and love for Jesus Christ, and enabling them to effectively share that knowledge and love with others by building relationships and promoting Christian discipleship.
- (c) Encouraging dialogue and stimulating discussion directed towards answering life’s pressing questions
- (d) Engaging the entire campus by serving as catalyst for apologetics-related discussion at the university. Students will meet to discuss culturally relevant issues related to history, science, philosophy, and theology and ask how they pertain to a biblical worldview and the truth of Christianity. Further, through campus-wide events, we will encourage all students and faculty to interact with Christian thinkers on an objective, intellectual basis. This chapter will attempt, at least once per year, to create a platform for Christian thinkers to interact with the academy at large in the form of a public discussion, lecture or debate.
- (e) Extending offers to provide apologetics training to other campus ministries, local churches, youth groups and Christian junior and senior high schools.

III. Membership

In no aspect of its programs shall there be any difference in the treatment of persons on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification which would deprive the person of consideration as an individual. The organization will guarantee that equal opportunity and equal access to membership, programming, facilities, and benefits shall be open to all persons. Eighty percent (80%) of this organization's membership must be composed of UI students.

3.1. *Membership Requirements.* Chapter membership is open to those who agree with and promote the purposes enumerated in Article II. Attendance at Chapter meetings alone does not confer Chapter membership. Only students of the School can vote or hold office. There will be no maximum number of members. Each member must attend at least one meeting per semester or submit in writing to the Chapter Officers an explanation of why they are not able to attend at least one meeting. Attendance will be kept for meetings. Chapter officers will confer Chapter membership on those who request it if the officers are satisfied that the prospective member satisfies the membership requirements. The officers will respond in writing to the membership request and keep a written record of all current members.

3.2. *Eligibility to vote.* Only Chapter members are eligible to vote on any Chapter business. All officers are considered voting members.

3.3. *Termination.* Any Chapter member who for any reason ceases to be a student at the School shall immediately cease to be a member of the Chapter. If any member ceases to meet the membership requirements as specified in paragraph 3.1 their membership may be terminated by a vote of 2/3 of the chapter's membership or a unanimous vote of the chapter officers.

3.4. *Appeals.* A Chapter member terminated as a result of action taken pursuant to paragraph 3.3 above may appeal such termination by requesting a hearing before the Chapter officers and Chapter Director, whose decision shall be final. The decision of the Chapter officers and Chapter Director must be unanimous to reverse the prior termination decision.

IV. Officers

4.1. *Eligibility Requirements.* The Chapter must consist of at least three (3) officers who are enrolled as students at the School and have served as active voting members of this Chapter for one year prior to serving as an officer (except for the first year of the Chapter's existence). Chapter officers must be in good academic standing, meet any requirements imposed by the School for number of credit hours and grade point average (if required), and profess a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and abstain from any conduct that would impair their ability to

bear witness of their faith and serve the purposes of the organization. The Ratio Christi Chapter Director shall review any candidates for office and determine their eligibility in cooperation with the outgoing officers. His or her determinations as to the candidates' eligibility under this constitution shall be final. A Chapter officer who for any reason ceases to be a student at the School shall immediately cease to be an officer of the Chapter.

4.2. *Officer duties.* The primary responsibility of all Chapter officers is to live in a manner that is consistent with Christian beliefs and conduct standards, so as not to undermine the effectiveness of the Chapter's Christian witness on campus. Officers are also responsible to ensure that the viewpoints the Chapter advocates on campus through its events and activities are consistent with Christian teaching and a Biblical worldview. Chapter officers are responsible for approving membership requests as stated in Article 3.1. The following offices and specific duties are stated for the use of those holding office. Since a Chapter may consist of as few as three (3) people, it is understood that the offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined.

President. The President shall preside over Chapter business meetings and meetings of the Officers. The President shall operate as the Chapter's representative to the School community and the public-at-large in all matters for which a formal representative is required or appropriate. Initiates projects, sets events and opportunities into course, and informs members of these. Presides over Chapter business meetings and meetings of the Officers.

Vice President. The Vice President shall assist the President in the discharge of his or her duties, as the President may direct, and shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the President. In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the President. The Vice President oversees recruitment for the club.

Secretary. The Secretary shall maintain all non-financial records of the Chapter and shall be responsible for preparing minutes of all meetings. Deals with all matters concerning times, dates, and scheduling for events. Takes roll via the member sign-in sheet at all meetings.

Treasurer. The Treasurer shall maintain all financial records of the Chapter, including, but not limited to, all records of the payment of funds, deposits, and disbursements from the Chapter's financial accounts pursuant to the procedures described in Article VII. Presents all financial activity to the Chapter officers, Chapter Director, and faculty/school advisor.

Other Officers. Any other Chapter officers appointed pursuant to this Article shall have such duties as are assigned to them by the President.

4.3. *Transition of authority.* To insure the continual well-being of the Chapter, outgoing officers shall facilitate the orderly transition of authority by taking adequate time in the winter and spring to train new officers. The Chapter shall implement a procedure to ensure the selection of at least three new officers by no later than April 30th of each year. The election timeline and nomination process must be announced to members at least two weeks prior to the elections meeting. The outgoing officers shall solicit nominations for new officers from the membership and, after consultation with the Director and evaluation of the candidates' eligibility, present to the membership a list of those members eligible for election for each office. The determination by the officers, in consultation with the Director, of an individual's eligibility to hold office shall be final.

4.4. *Election of Officers.* The Officers, in consultation with the Director as described in 4.3 shall present to the members a candidate or candidates for officer positions for the following year. A majority vote of the membership shall be required for the election of any officer. Should a vote fail to result in a majority for any position for which more than 2 candidates are presented, the Officers may, in their discretion, remove the candidate receiving the fewest votes from consideration. This process may be repeated until a candidate receives a majority. Should the membership fail to break a tie between any two candidates for an office after two separate votes, the outgoing chapter President shall break the tie. New Officers take office at the last meeting of the Spring semester and remain in office until the next election. The Officers remain in office over the summer.

4.5. *Forcible removal of an officer.* If an officer fails to maintain School requirements for holding office, he or she shall resign immediately. If it is believed that an officer is not fulfilling his or her constitutional duties, then a petition requesting his or her removal must be signed by at least half of the voting membership and half of the Officers and presented at a general meeting or special meeting called by the Officers. Then, upon verification of the validity of the petition, by the Chapter Director, and, at least two weeks but no more than four weeks from the date of submission, another meeting shall be held at which the petition will be presented, with both sides having the opportunity to present a case. The President will preside over the removal hearing unless the President is the subject of the hearing in which case the Chapter Director will preside. After all arguments have been heard a vote will be taken. The removal of a current officer requires a 75% majority vote of Chapter members.

4.6. *Vacancies.* If a vacancy of an Officer position exists, due to resignation or removal or other, the remaining Officers can decide whether to leave the position unfilled until the next regular election or to call for a special election. If it is determined to leave the President's office unfilled, then the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. If a special election is called the election timeline, nomination process, and voting procedures shall be the

same as enumerated in Article 4.3 and 4.4 above, except that it will not be limited to the Spring semester.

4.7. *Committees.* The Officers can call for a committee to be put together to discuss any necessary issues, determine a course of action, and implement that action regarding the issue. A committee will be composed of an officer and any number of other members. The committee members must present their recommendations to the Officers and Chapter Director who will determine the appropriate course of action.

V. Chapter Director and School/Faculty Advisor

5.1. *Chapter Director:* Ratio Christi will appoint a Chapter Director to each chapter. This person must have a strong background in classical apologetics and must meet all requirements of Ratio Christi for the position of Chapter Director. If necessary, a faculty member or another person may be appointed by Ratio Christi as Interim Chapter Director. The Chapter Director must profess a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and abstain from any conduct that would impair their ability to bear witness of their faith and serve the purposes of the organization. The officers shall meet with the Chapter Director on a regular basis and shall keep him or her informed of chapter meetings, special events, financial matters, problems within the Chapter or the School, and other relevant matters. It is possible that the school/faculty advisor and the Chapter Director may be the same person as long as that person meets all the provisions of this paragraph. The Ratio Christi Chapter Director shall review candidates for student office and determine their eligibility in cooperation with the outgoing officers. The Chapter Director's determinations as to the candidate's eligibility under this constitution in order to affiliate with Ratio Christi shall be final. The Chapter Director shall be considered a Ratio Christi staff member.

5.2. *Chapter School/Faculty Advisor.* The Chapter must have a faculty/staff/school Advisor. The Chapter officers, with the assistance of the Chapter Director, will identify an Advisor meeting the requirements of the School for this position. Optimally, the school/faculty advisor will meet the provisions in 5.1 concerning profession of faith and personal conduct. If the Chapter is unable to find a school/faculty Advisor who meets both the provisions of Paragraph 5.1 and the School requirements, the Chapter should select an advisor who supports the Christian apologetic aims and goals of the Chapter. If such an advisor cannot be identified, the Chapter may identify a "chapter school/faculty Advisor" only for administrative purposes, in addition to the appointed Chapter Director for the Chapter. The Advisor and the Chapter Director may be the same person as long as that person meets all the provisions in Paragraph 5.1.

5.3. *Chapter Advisor Selection.* An Advisor will be chosen within three weeks of a vacancy. Nominations for Advisor will take place by the existing Officers and the Chapter Director. The Advisor will then be chosen by a majority vote of the Officers and invite him/her to serve as Advisor for the next academic year. During officer elections each Spring semester, the Officers will by a majority vote on whether to continue the Advisor appointment or not. The

Advisor can be removed for not carrying out the duties and expectations as defined in this document. Any member can bring concerns to the Officers. The Officers will discuss the concerns and if necessary vote on whether to remove the Advisor by majority vote of the Officers. If an Advisor steps down, is removed, or is not re-appointed, the Officers will use the process herein to select another Advisor.

VI. Meetings

6.1. *In general.* Chapter meetings shall be held with enough frequency to accomplish the mission and purposes enumerated in Article II; at a minimum, at least four (4) general meetings shall be held during each school year. The officers, in consultation with the Chapter members and advisor, shall determine the frequency, time, place, and agenda of each meeting and shall insure that adequate notice is given of each meeting.

6.2. *Attendance.* All students and faculty are welcome to attend public Chapter meetings and events. The privilege of attendance does not depend on one's race, age, ability/disability, color, national origin, religion, race, sex, veteran status, or sexual orientation or behavior. Disruptive behavior, as determined by the Chapter Officers or the Chapter Director, may be cause for expulsion of student(s) and faculty and guests from Chapter meetings and events.

6.3. *Parliamentary Procedure.* *Roberts' Rules of Order, Newly Revised* will be used for meetings in instances not covered in this constitution.

6.4. *Voting Mechanism.* All votes will be taken by verbal, handraising, or secret ballot at the discretion of the Officers. During a secret ballot, the voting members will write their vote on a piece of paper and turn it in to the advisor/director and secretary, who will collect the ballots and announce the results per the guidelines listed below.

6.5. *Absentee Voting.* In the event that a voting member will be absent during a vote, this voting member should e-mail a vote to the advisor/director by the end of the period in which the vote is scheduled to take place.

6.6. *Voting Criteria.* The requirement for a vote for a proposal to pass will be a 50% quorum by the voting members unless otherwise stipulated in this constitution.

6.7. *Results.* The results will be announced by the President or Chapter Director via e-mail within 24 hours of the vote. Any appeals must be directed to a member of the Officers within 48 hours of this announcement, and the Advisor and/or Director shall decide whether the appeal is worthy to be entertained by the voting members at large. If this is the case, the voting members will take a new vote by the procedures listed above.

6.8. *Applicability.* These procedures are to be followed whenever any vote is taken; this shall include, but is not limited to, elections of officers, removals of officers, and decisions

concerning the affairs of the club.

VII. Finances

7.1. *Ratio Christi is required to deposit all receipts in and make disbursements through the Student Organization Business Office, Fraternity Business Services, or Recreational Services. Upon dissolution, state money and mandatory student fees revert back to the granting organization. Inactive organizations will be considered dissolved after five years of no account activity. Revenue generated dollars or "00 funds" must be divided as stated in this Constitution and carried out by our leadership. Our organization's remaining revenue generated dollars or "00 funds" will be divided or disbursed to Ratio Christi. If this organization has dissolved and revenue generated dollars or "00 funds" have not been divided as stated in this Constitution by five years from last account activity, funds in our "00 account" will revert to an account specified for this purpose within student government(s). These funds will then be available for distribution through student government(s) guidelines in accordance with University of Iowa policy.*

VIII. Restrictions on Activities

8.1 The Chapter shall not carry on any activities prohibited by Ratio Christi, the University of Iowa under its bylaws, or by Sections 501(c)(3) and 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code. Without the prior written consent of Ratio Christi, the Chapter shall not: 1) be a voluntary party in any litigation; 2) lobby (including the publishing or distribution of statements) or otherwise attempt to influence legislation; or 3) participate or intervene in any political or judicial campaign on behalf of any candidate for office. No part of the net income of the Chapter shall inure to the benefit of its officers or other private persons, except that the Chapter shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services actually rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its purposes.

IX. Affiliation

9.1. This Chapter is officially affiliated with Ratio Christi, Inc. To become a student chapter of Ratio Christi, at least three (3) officers who are students in good standing must sign this Constitution and submit the original to the Ratio Christi office. Either party may terminate this status at any time by written notice to the other party with or without cause. A letter from Ratio Christi recognizing the chapter and signed by an officer of Ratio Christi will officially complete the affiliation process. Once affiliated with Ratio Christi, a chapter will have the right to use Ratio Christi name and logos in accordance with the most current policy set by Ratio Christi.

9.2. *Force and Effect of Constitution* This Constitution shall take effect when Ratio Christi accepts the Chapter's affiliation request and shall remain in effect until terminated in writing by either party or until the Chapter ceases to meet the qualifications of a Ratio Christi

student chapter as enumerated in this Constitution. If the Chapter Constitution is terminated, the Ratio Christi affiliated student Chapter ceases to exist.

9.3. *Severability.* If the requirements of Article IX are not met, this constitution may remain in effect except that Article IX will be severed from the constitution and it may continue to exist as a separate non-Ratio Christi group. In such case the student club may not use the Ratio Christi name or represent itself as affiliated in any way and all references to Ratio Christi must be removed from this Constitution. All other Articles of the Constitution shall remain in full force and effect. Any conflict or disagreement among Chapter officers or members as to the meaning or interpretation of this Constitution shall be submitted in writing to Ratio Christi. Ratio Christi's decision resolving the conflict or disagreement shall be final as to its ability to affiliate with Ratio Christi.

X. Amendments and Interpretation

10.1. *Amendments.* Amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted by members of this organization to the Officers in writing for consideration. Written notification of the proposed amendment to all voting members must be made by mail or email, at least two weeks in advance of any vote on changes in the constitution. The Chapter may amend this Constitution by a 75% member vote, provided, however, that no amendment shall have any force or effect unless it has been approved in writing by Ratio Christi.

10.2. *Interpretation.* Any conflict or disagreement among Chapter officers or members as to the meaning or interpretation of this Constitution shall be submitted in writing to Ratio Christi. Ratio Christi's decision resolving the conflict or disagreement shall be final.

Adopted on: _____, 20____

Signed by three student officers:

Name and office held

Name and office held

Name and office held

Constitution History

- Created: __ day of __ in the year _
- Revised: __ day of __ in the year _ (edited Articles ____)