The Constitution of the Minority Coalition

I. Statement of Existence In response to a call from the minority community of Williams College for a stronger and more unified voice against prejudice and prejudicial discrimination since September 1989, the Minority Coalition was formed in April 1990.

II. Statement of Purpose and Function Section A. The Minority Coalition (MinCo) is a student-run network prioritizing education on cultural awareness and exchange, diversity, and sociopolitical advocacy equally. In order to execute this function, the Minority Coalition shall:

1. Understand and advocate for affinity groups’ goals and concerns to empower our constituency;
2. Collaborate among affinity groups and administration towards fostering a progressive, transparent, and inclusive community.

Section B. The Minority Coalition will allocate funding and provide resources for the purpose of furthering minority concerns at the College.

Section C. The Minority Coalition operates independently from the Davis Center in both agenda and procedure.

III. Membership Section A. The Minority Coalition is a student-run organization that represents student populations and experiences which have been historically marginalized or under-represented at the College, along axes including—but not limited to—gender, religion, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationally, and ability.

Section B. Any organization that desires to join the Minority Coalition must meet the following requirements:

1. Be in at least its second year of recognition by College Council;
2. Agree to ratify the Statement of Purpose and Function as outlined in Article II;
3. Prepare a petition stating the organization’s purpose and function;
4. Submit a constitution to the Minority Coalition;
5. Pass a vote by the present Minority Coalition General Committee by a three-quarters majority.

Section C. In order to maintain membership in the Minority Coalition, an organization must meet the following requirements:

1. Ratify the Statement of Purpose and Function as outlined in Article II at the beginning of each academic year;
2. Not have been dormant during the prior academic year;
and 3. Elect a representative to the Minority Coalition, who will attend weekly meetings of the Minority Coalition General Committee, and a treasurer, who will attend weekly meetings of the Minority Coalition Funding Committee. **Section D. Affinity group dormancy.**

1. An affinity group is defined as dormant, as opposed to active, if the affinity group:
   a. Does not ratify the Statement of Purpose and Function as outlined in Article II.
   b. Fails to elect a representative to the Minority Coalition General Committee during affinity group elections (or whenever a vacancy occurs).
   c. Fails to elect a treasurer during affinity group elections (or whenever a vacancy occurs).
   d. Misses three consecutive meetings of the Minority Coalition General Committee or three consecutive meetings of the Minority Coalition Funding Committee without proxy. This is the delegated responsibility of the affinity group’s Minority Coalition Representative and Treasurer respectively.

2. A dormant affinity group has no voting rights within the Minority Coalition and is not considered to be affiliated with the Minority Coalition when submitting funding requests.

3. An affinity group may appeal its dormant status at the discretion of the Minority Coalition Steering Board, which may call a vote before the Minority Coalition General Committee to reconsider the affinity group’s dormancy.

4. A dormant group may regain active status if the following requirements are met: a. The Co-Chair(s) of the dormant group attend the first Minority Coalition General Committee meeting of the semester and delivers a justification for re-activation; and b. The present Minority Coalition General Committee votes to approve the dormant group’s re-activation by a majority of two-thirds. **Section E. Affinity group expulsion.**

1. An affinity group will be expelled from the Minority Coalition if it has been dormant for the prior four consecutive semesters.

2. An expelled affinity group has no voting rights within the Minority Coalition and is not considered to be affiliated.
with the Minority Coalition when submitting funding requests. 3. An expelled affinity group may join the Minority Coalition through the process outlined in Article III, Section B.

Section F. Voluntary affinity group withdrawal.

1. A Minority Coalition affinity group who wishes to end its affiliation with the Minority Coalition may choose to do so by presenting a resolution through the affinity group Minority Coalition Representative indicating that the following requirements have been met:
   a. The entire board of the affinity group unanimously calls for its withdrawal.
   b. The board of the affinity group has presented the plan for withdrawal in an open meeting advertised to the entire affinity group.
   c. Any members of the affinity group who desire to appeal the affinity group’s withdrawal are given adequate notice to meet with the Minority Coalition Steering Board with a petition against the affinity group’s withdrawal. In the case of such a petition, the Minority Coalition Steering Board shall make the final decision about the affinity group.

2. After withdrawal, an affinity group has no voting rights within the Minority Coalition and is not considered to be affiliated with the Minority Coalition when submitting funding requests. 3. A withdrawn affinity group may join the Minority Coalition at the beginning of any subsequent academic semester if the following requirements have been met:
   a. The current board of the withdrawn affinity group unanimously calls for its reentry.
   b. The board of the affinity group has presented the plan for reentry in an open meeting advertised to the entire affinity group.
   c. The present Minority Coalition General Committee votes to approve the affinity group’s reentry by a simple majority.

IV. The Minority Coalition Steering Board Section A. The Minority Coalition Steering Board is composed of six officers: the two co-chairs, the treasurer, the secretary, the
communications director, and the historian. All members of the Minority Coalition Steering Board are expected to regularly attend Minority Coalition General Committee meetings and General Forums and to be active participants in minority affairs at Williams; they are also expected to be accessible and dedicated members of the Steering Board. Their specific responsibilities are enumerated in Sections B-E. Section B. The responsibilities of the Co-Chairs.

1. Organize, schedule, and preside over meetings of the Minority Coalition General Committee. 2. Organize and schedule meetings of the Minority Coalition General Forum. 3. Organize, schedule, and preside over weekly meetings of the Minority Coalition Steering Board. 4. Encourage and facilitate communication and collaboration between Minority Coalition Representatives, affinity groups, and Minority Coalition Steering Board members. 5. Communicate and collaborate with the leaders of College Council and other student organizations on relevant initiatives. 6. Act as a liaison to the College administration and the Davis Center, meeting regularly with Davis Center staff and the Dean of Students. 7. Submit an annual report at the end of the academic year to the Minority Coalition General Committee, outlining the year’s work. 8. When necessary, create and organize task forces to improve the organization and structure of the Minority Coalition, and to address any emergent issues on campus. 9. Ensure that the transfer of Steering Boards occurs as smoothly as possible and serve in an advisory support role for the incoming Steering Board and especially the incoming Co-Chairs. 10. As the final official role of the position, organize, schedule, and preside over a Steering Board retreat within the first month of Steering Board transfer, in conjunction with the incoming Co-Chairs. Section C. The responsibilities of the Secretary.

1. Call roll at Minority Coalition General Committee meetings and keep attendance records, apprising the Minority Coalition Representatives of deficient attendance status when necessary. 2. Record and distribute minutes from the Minority Coalition General Committee meetings. 3. Attend all Minority Coalition Funding Committee meetings, recording and distributing minutes to all members of the Funding Committee and the
Steering Board. 4. Maintain an updated listing of all members of the Minority Coalition affinity group
boards. 5. Maintain accessibility and availability any online records (financial, programming,
minutes, petitions, brochures, etc) of the Minority Coalition. **Section D.** The responsibilities of the Treasurer.
1. Evaluate the affinity group financial audits for the preceding academic year and draft
a budget proposal for the following academic year, to be disseminated to the affinity groups before the start of the upcoming academic year. Meet independently with each affinity group’s financial status and needs with each individual treasurer before finalizing the budget proposal. 2. Organize, schedule, and attend treasurer training at the start of the academic year. 3. Organize, schedule, and preside over all meetings of the Minority Coalition Funding Committee. 4. Oversee the financial accounts of the Minority Coalition and ensure that all financial records are maintained in a timely manner. 5. Manage all funding requests issued to the Minority Coalition.
   a. Email all supplementary funding requests for the week to the affinity group treasurers as soon as the meeting agenda is set. b. Inform the contact person for each funding request of the upcoming deliberation, and invite them to the meeting. c. Ensure that the approved allocation is transferred from the Minority Coalition account to the recipient. 6. Work with affinity group treasurers and Davis Center staff to maintain annotated audits from each affinity group, to be collected at the end of the academic year and used as the basis for his/her/their budget proposal at the beginning of the upcoming academic year. 7. Meet with all affinity group treasurers at least once to clarify all financial responsibilities and requirements. **Section E.** The responsibilities of the Communications Director.
1. Coordinate publicity efforts for the Minority Coalition by administering the Minority Coalition listserv and by utilizing other techniques, with a particular focus on online and social media initiatives. 2. Communicate with and serve as a resource to the social coordinators, publicity
relations representatives, secretaries, or such similarly positioned members of affinity group boards throughout the academic year. 3. Serve as primary liaison between the Minority Coalition Steering Board and the affinity group leadership and membership. 4. Draft official communiqués from the Minority Coalition, at the request of the co-chairs.  

**Section F.** The Responsibilities of the Historian

1. Attend all-campus inter-coalition events hosted by the Minority Coalition, its affinity groups, and/or outside groups and initiatives, recording and distributing photographs via online media. 2. Coordinate media coverage on student-driven empowerment events hosted by Minority Coalition and its affinity groups. 3. Collaborate with Communication Director(s) to assist in Minority Coalition-related public relations. 4. Communicate with and serve as a resource to the historians, secretaries, publicity relations representations, or such similarly positioned members of affinity group boards throughout the academic year. 5. Maintain and augment archives to document inter-coalition and relevant student activism and advocacy events. Head initiatives to make this institutional history available, accessible, and relevant to the Minority Coalition and wider Campus community. 6. Draft a report twice during the academic year (once during the fall and the spring), reviewing the events and progress of Minority Coalition initiatives to share with Minority Coalition affinity groups and the Williams community.  

**Section G.** Voting rights of Minority Coalition Steering Board officers. 1. Within the Minority Coalition General Committee:

a. The secretary, treasurer, historian, and communications director shall have full voting privileges. b. The co-chairs will serve as non-voting members of the committee, except in the event of a tie. A tie will be broken by mutual agreement of the co-chairs, who will cast a single, deciding vote. 2. Within the Minority Coalition Funding Committee:

a. The treasurer will serve as a non-voting member of the committee, except in the event of a tie. The treasurer will cast the single, deciding vote. b. The secretary will
serve as a non-voting member of the committee at all times. **Section H.** Election of the Minority Coalition Steering Board officers.

1. Elections will be organized by a committee formed for that specific purpose, which will consist only of seniors graduating in the current academic year. 2. Any Williams College first-year, sophomore, or junior is eligible to run for office. If elected, all members of the Minority Coalition Steering Board must relinquish any position(s) as an affinity group Minority Coalition Representative. The Co-Chair(s) and Treasurer of the Minority Coalition Steering Board must relinquish any position(s) as an affinity group co-chair/president and treasurer. 3. The responsibilities of the Minority Coalition Steering Board and the Ad Hoc Election Committee are enumerated below:
   a. Work with the Office of Student Life to coordinate the campus-wide election. b. Organize the dissemination of information about the candidates to the student body as seen fit. Some possible efforts include: publically sharing the candidates' self-nominations, organizing a campus forum, etc. c. Meet with all candidates seeking their position on the Minority Coalition Steering Board. 4. The responsibilities of candidates for office are enumerated below:
   a. Submit a self-nomination to the current co-chairs of the Minority Coalition Steering Board. b. Participate in any campus forums/debates organized by the current Minority Coalition Steering Board. c. Meet with the outgoing officer who currently holds the candidate’s desired position. 5. Upon election, the incoming Minority Coalition Steering Board officers immediately take office; the outgoing Minority Coalition Steering Board officers retain an advisory role for the remainder of the year.
   a. Within their advisory role, the outgoing Minority Coalition Steering Board or the outgoing Minority Coalition co-chairs will organize and preside over a board retreat within the first month of transfer to familiarize the incoming Steering Board with their new roles, help solidify the incoming Steering Board as a cohesive unit, and update the incoming
Steering Board about ongoing and relevant campus initiatives.

V. The Minority Coalition General Committee  

Section A. The Minority Coalition General Committee (GenCom) constitutes the programmatic, collaborative, and reactive body of the Minority Coalition. Its members shall be devoted to the development of relevant programming and educational initiatives at the College; to the fostering of collaborative relationships between the Minority Coalition, affinity groups, and the campus community; and to the promotion of marginalized concerns at Williams. The Minority Coalition General Committee shall address minority concerns at Williams and may address issues external to the Williams community but deemed significant by members of the Minority Coalition constituency. Any member of the Williams community may bring a concern, resolution, or proposal to the General Committee. The purpose and function of the Minority Coalition General Committee is further outlined in Article II, Section A.  

Section B. Representation to the Minority Coalition General Committee shall include the six officers of the Minority Coalition Steering Board, three committee representatives, three at-large representatives, and representatives from all Minority Coalition affinity groups. The responsibilities of all members of the Minority Coalition General Committee are enumerated below.  

1. The six officers of the Minority Coalition Steering Board will attend General Committee meetings, fulfilling the roles outlined in Article IV, Sections A-E. Their voting rights are outlined in Article IV, Section F.  

2. Three Committee Representatives will attend General Committee meetings. They will represent the concerns of their respective committees in General Committee meetings and act as a liaison between the Minority Coalition and their respective committees. As non-voting members of the General Committee, they serve in an advisory capacity and may assume additional leadership roles within the Minority Coalition as determined by the General Committee and the Steering Board.  

   a. College Council Representative: The Vice President of Community and Diversity will represent College Council at General Committee meetings.  

   b. Committee on Undergraduate Life Representative: Any student member of the CUL may represent the CUL at General Committee meetings, to be determined at the beginning of each academic year.  

   c. Committee on Diversity and Community Representative: Any student members of the CDC may represent the CDC at General Committee meetings,
to be determined at the beginning of each academic year. 3. Three At-Large Representatives, to be selected from the student body on the basis of self-nominations addressed to the Minority Coalition Steering Board, will attend General Committee meetings to represent the campus community. They shall have full voting rights.

   a. The Minority Coalition Steering Board will publically solicit self-nominations for the three at-large representatives (a year-long position) at the beginning of each academic year. These representatives must take office by the third week of regular General Committee meetings, and will be selected at the discretion of the Minority Coalition Steering Board. The three at-large representatives must be approved by a simple majority vote of the General Committee. i. If any of the at-large representatives are rejected by the General Committee, the Steering Board will return to the self-nominations and present an alternative selection at the next Minority Coalition General Committee meeting. At their discretion, they may reopen the self-nomination process. b. Affiliation with a Minority Coalition affinity group shall be neither a prerequisite nor a detriment to the selection of the at-large representatives. c. The Minority Coalition Steering Board will make a concerted effort to advertise the at-large representatives selection process to the entire campus community.

4. Representatives from each of the Minority Coalition affinity groups will attend General Committee meetings, representing their respective affinity groups and the broader concerns of their constituency. They shall have full voting rights. The responsibilities of the Minority Coalition Representatives are enumerated below:

   a. Each Minority Coalition affinity group shall elect a representative, who will only represent that one affinity group during his/her/their term. b. The Minority Coalition Representative must attend all affinity group meetings and all meetings of the General Committee; when unable to attend, a proxy must be designated and the Minority Coalition Steering Board Secretary must be notified twenty-four hours before the meeting. Refer to Article III, Section D for the penalties for inadequate attendance. c. The Minority Coalition Representative must report on Minority Coalition
business to their respective affinity groups, be active participants in minority affairs at Williams, and actively publicize Minority Coalition programming to their respective affinity groups. **Section C. Quorum.**

1. To reach quorum, two-thirds of the voting body of the Minority Coalition General Committee must be present. If quorum is not attainable, further action is left to the discretion of the co-chairs of the Minority Coalition Steering Board. No votes may be taken unless quorum is reached. 2. Full voting privileges shall be accorded to the Minority Coalition representatives, the secretary, treasurers, and communications director, and historian of the Minority Coalition Steering Board, and the at-large representatives. Each voting member will be accorded one vote. In the event of a tie, the Minority Coalition co-chairs shall cast a single, deciding vote. 3. Proposals must be passed by a simple majority of all present voting members of the Minority Coalition General Committee, providing that quorum has been reached.

**VI. The Minority Coalition General Forum Section A.** The Minority Coalition General Forum (GenForm) is intended to provide a discussion space to process and respond to current events, concerns about student life at the College, and any other topic deemed relevant by the Minority Coalition General Committee and Minority Coalition Steering Board; and to help build connections and community between individuals and groups within Minority Coalition and the wider campus. The Forum space is intended to prioritize student voices, especially those typically given less space in traditional settings (i.e. students of color, female-identifying, queer, disabled, and undocumented students), but is open to the entire campus. Generally, it is expected that General Forums will be focused on community building through discussion of experiences and perspectives; while General Forums will not be expected to serve as an organizing space, it can do so, or serve as a meeting point for interested individuals to work on individual projects. **Section B.** General Forums will be led by three rotating positions to allow for different perspectives and experiences to be foregrounded: facilitator, note-taker, and stack-keeper. These roles can be filled at the discretion of the Minority Coalition Steering Board, whether through sign-ups of the Steering Board, Minority Coalition General Committee members, affinity group members, and/or campus community members. At the start of each General Forum, the topic(s), goal(s), and boundaries of that General Forum will be introduced and amended with audience input. The responsibilities of each position are delineated below:
1. Facilitator:
   a. Direct the General Forum based on the selected topic for the week.
   b. Introduce the topic(s), goal(s), agenda, and any facilitating techniques to
      be used
      in the space, such as stack-taking and bike-racking at the beginning
      of each General Forum.
   c. Solicit audience responses to their introduction before beginning the General
      Forum.
   d. Keep track of time and direct the General Forum’s pace between
      talking points
      accordingly, and in response to the flow of discussion.
   e. Extend the time of the General Forum if deemed necessary, and adjourn the
      General Forum.

2. Note-taker:
   a. Distribute an email sign-up sheet at the beginning and end of the
      General Forum
      for those interested in receiving minutes and follow-ups.
   b. Record and distribute
      minutes from that week’s General Forum. These minutes
      will be archived by the Steering Board Historian or Secretary.
   c. Notes should
      include a “bike-rack” section that lists topics that could not be fully
      discussed or resolved during the current General Forum, with the expectation
      that these topics will be addressed at a future time.

3. Stack-keeper:
   a. Keeping track of speaking order for new talking items; direct
      responses to the
      current talking item do not need to enter the stack. In order to get into the stack,
      the intended speaker would make eye contact with the stack-keeper, who
      would then record their name in the stack.

Section C. The topics for each General Forum can be
decided upon in one of two ways: as a response to immediate events or relevant
happenings on campus or in the world; or in advanced, based on a schedule created
with the General Committee. Thus, generally, the topic for each General Forum would
be the topic decided upon on the schedule, but if a relevant concern emerges in time for
General Forum to become a relevant space for discussion, the topic can be changed
with the consent of the Facilitator of that General Forum, who will have the option of
opting out of serving as the facilitator of that topic in making their decision on the topic.
If the Facilitator opts out of that General Forum, it is up to the discretion of the Minority
Coalition Steering Board to find a replacement and advertise the new topic of discussion.

VII. The Minority Coalition Funding Committee Section A. The Minority Coalition Funding Committee (FunCom) is responsible for deliberating and voting on all funding requests submitted to the Minority Coalition; maintaining financial records of the Minority Coalition and affinity groups; and should always be aware of the current financial status and definite future financial commitments of the Minority Coalition and each affinity group. In deliberating all funding requests, the Funding Committee must specifically:

1. Assess the merit of each proposal in promoting the purpose and function of the Minority Coalition, as outlined in Article II, Sections A and B. 2. Assess the practicality and cost-efficiency of each proposal. Section B. Representation to the Minority Coalition Funding Committee shall include the Minority Coalition Steering Board Treasurer and Secretary, and all of the treasurers from each affinity group of the Minority Coalition. The responsibilities and rights of all members of the Minority Coalition Funding Committee are enumerated below:

1. The Treasurer of the Minority Coalition Steering Board will attend all meetings, fulfilling the roles as outlined in Article IV, Section D. The treasurer’s voting rights are outlined in Article IV, Section F. 2. The Secretary of the Minority Coalition Steering Board will attend all meetings, fulfilling the roles as outlined in Article IV, Section C. The secretary’s voting rights are outlined in Article IV, Section F. 3. The treasurers from all the Minority Coalition affinity groups shall attend meetings of the Minority Coalition Funding Committee, representing their respective affinity groups and the broader concerns of their constituency. They shall have full voting rights. The specific responsibilities of the affinity group treasurers are enumerated below:

a. Each Minority Coalition affinity group shall elect a treasurer. b. The treasurer must attend all affinity group meetings and all meetings of the Funding Committee; when unable to attend, a proxy must be designated and the Minority Coalition Steering Board Secretary must be notified twenty-four hours before the meeting. Refer to Article III, Section D for the penalties for inadequate attendance. c. Affinity group treasurers must maintain basic familiarity with the current finances of their affinity group and of the Minority Coalition as a whole. d.
Affinity group treasurers must maintain financial records of their affinity group’s programming, expenditures, fundraising, and sponsorship through annotated audits. Audits should be annotated with evaluations on the efficiency of each expenditure, along with recommendations for future repetition of the expenditure when relevant. These audits will serve as a record of affinity group activity; a reference for future programming and budgeting; the basis for the Minority Coalition Treasurer’s budget proposal at the beginning of each year; and, when relevant, as data for future requests to expand the overall Minority Coalition budget. **Section C. Quorum.**

1. To reach quorum, two-thirds of the voting body of the Minority Coalition Funding Committee must be present. If quorum is not attainable, no voting on funding may take place and the Minority Coalition Steering Board Treasurer has the authority to adjourn the meeting. 2. Proposals must be passed by a simple majority of all present voting members of the Minority Coalition Funding Committee.

**VIII. Amendments to the Constitution of the Minority Coalition**

Amendments to the Constitution of the Minority Coalition may be proposed by any member(s) of the student body or jointly by any Minority Coalition affinity group. To propose an amendment to the Constitution, the interested party must submit a written amendment to the Minority Coalition General Committee and present it at a subsequent meeting of the General Committee. To entertain an amendment to the constitution, the voting body of the Minority Coalition General Committee must vote by a simple majority to deliberate the amendment. If that passes, in subsequent vote, amendments must be passed by a three-quarters majority of the voting body of the Minority Coalition General Committee.

**IX. Dissolution of the Minority Coalition**
The dissolution of the Minority Coalition must be initiated by one of the current Minority Coalition Representatives from one of the Minority Coalition affinity groups. To propose the dissolution of the Minority Coalition, the Representative must submit a written resolution to the Minority Coalition General Committee and present it at a subsequent meeting of the General Committee. The dissolution of the Minority Coalition must be approved by a three-quarters majority of the voting body of the Minority Coalition General Committee. The dissolution of the Minority Coalition results in immediate termination of all actions of the Minority Coalition.
Funding and General Committee meetings as well as General Forums, without any effect on the individual Minority Coalition affinity groups.

**X. Adoption of the Constitution of the Minority Coalition** This constitution may be implemented only with the approval of the voting body of the Minority Coalition General Committee. If approved, it will take effect on the first day of class in the Fall semester of 2012. Until that point, the 2012-2013 Minority Coalition Steering Board shall exercise its authority to determine the procedural protocol of the Minority Coalition.