Bakersfield College
Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (M.E.Ch.A.)

Constitution

Preamble

Inasmuch as there arises of necessity the privilege of individuals to unite for a common purpose, whether as nations, states, towns, or other groups, there arises also the need for such unions to be governed by agreed-upon regulations; that the common purpose of the group, as well as the common good of those comprising it, might be realized, and that the foundation upon which the group is built might be firmly established. We, therefore, the Students and Representatives of Bakersfield College and of the Organization known as M.E.Ch.A., do hereby establish this Constitution, that we might continue the focus of the organization, perfecting it and ourselves, for the advancement and progression of Chicano students as well as all who seek to become involved with it.

Objective

The objective of the Organization shall continually be to create an atmosphere of Academic Achievement, Advancement, Growth, Leadership, Involvement, and Outreach, extending our sphere to include all students and persons of Bakersfield College as well as members of the communities in which we find ourselves.

Article 1

Preliminaries

Section 1. Name: The name of the Organization shall be Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán, commonly abbreviated as M.E.Ch.A.

Section 2. Purpose: The purpose of this organization shall continually be:

I. To reach out to the Chicano student community for mentorship and progressive encouragement, academically and overall
II. To act as a liaison between the Chicano student community and the institutions of Higher Education
III. To reach out to all students on campus, encouraging and developing a sense of unity without regard to race, creed, ethnicity, religious preference, self-identity, or any other differences, whether personal or otherwise
IV. To encourage a volunteer-mentality among members and non-members alike
V. To promote awareness of cultural backgrounds and history, without bias or reservation
VI. To promote personal growth, maturity, determination, success, and positive self-image among members and non-members alike

VII. To gain more awareness of cultural and societal issues whether in our communities, in the County, State, Country, or abroad, as well as understand what we, as a people, can do to assist in the solution of, or otherwise solve, those issues

Section 3. Symbol: The identifying symbol of M.E.Ch.A. shall be that of a black eagle with an Aztec war club held in one talon and a stick of dynamite held in the other talon

Section 4. Structure: We recognize the national and international level of the M.E.Ch.A. organization. The Bakersfield College Chapter shall retain the privilege to determine its own course of action under its goals and objectives at Bakersfield College. Efforts shall be made in order to establish a communicative relationship with chapters of M.E.Ch.A. present at other educational institutions as well as within the communities.

**Article 2**

**Membership**

Section 1. Active Members: “Active Members” shall be defined as current Bakersfield College students meeting the following criteria:

I. Are enrolled in at least one (1) unit for the current term
II. Have attended at minimum three (3) consecutive meetings and/or other M.E.Ch.A. events¹
III. Express an interest in becoming involved in college and community affairs
IV. Demonstrate a teachable and respectful attitude
V. Support and abide by this constitution as established
VI. Attend all of M.E.Ch.A.’s regularly scheduled meetings to the best of their ability, or otherwise demonstrate their willingness to participate
VII. Participate in M.E.Ch.A.’s activities and promotions to the best of their ability
   a. Note: Senior Members (Members who have completed at least one full academic year at Bakersfield College) must show initiative with regard to KVC Discount/SGA Incentive card offered to all students at the time of registration for any given semester

Section 2. Associate Members: “Associate Members” shall be defined as current Bakersfield College students meeting the following criteria:

I. Are enrolled in at least one (1) unit for the current term
II. Express an interest in becoming involved in college and community affairs
III. Support and assist M.E.Ch.A. with activities and promotions to the best of their ability
   a. Note: Associate Members retain no voting privileges within M.E.Ch.A.’s board

¹ Effected by Amendment III
Section 3. Honorary Members: “Honorary Members” shall be defined as individuals, whether Bakersfield College student or otherwise, meeting the following criteria:

I. Are acknowledged by M.E.Ch.A.
II. Make significant contributions to the advancement of minority groups in the community or on Bakersfield College campus
III. Continue to support the goals and objectives of M.E.Ch.A.
   a. Note: Honorary Members retain no voting privileges within M.E.Ch.A.’s board

Section 4. Voting

I. Voting privileges shall be reserved for Active Members and officers only, excluding only the President and Secretary
II. Members may vote only once per issue, per cycle
III. Votes shall be cast verbally in the “Aye,” “Nay” style, dictating “Yes,” or, “No,” respectively
IV. All issues are decided by simple majority, defined as 50% plus one.
   a. Exclusions: Election or removal of officers shall require a two-thirds vote when membership exceeds 13 Members. Amendments shall require a two-thirds vote
V. In all cases of a tie, the decisive vote shall be made by the President
VI. At any time, the Members may call for a silent vote by a simple majority motion, in which the Secretary, or President when no secretary is appointed, receives written ballots from the Members and a count is determined

Article 3
Administration

Section 1. Executive Powers: The executive powers shall be vested in an administrative board consisting of elected officers as well as a committee of chairpersons

Section 2. Election of officers:

I. The election of officers shall be held at the first meeting of the last month of the Spring semester for the upcoming academic year beginning with the Fall semester of that year, with each position being verified before the current Spring semester closes
II. Inauguration of elected officers shall be held at the first meeting of the Fall semester for which they are elected
III. Potential candidates for any position within M.E.Ch.A. must maintain a minimum 2.00 GPA (on a 4.00 scale) and be continuously enrolled in at least six (6) units, or part-time status
IV. All officers must have completed at least one (1) semester with Bakersfield College and must maintain good academic standing

2 Effected by Amendment II
V. All officers must participate in the KVC Discount/SGA Incentive card program offered to all students at the time of registration for any given semester

Section 3. Official duties and responsibilities of elected officers:

I. President: The president of M.E.Ch.A. shall have limited powers including
   a. Preside over M.E.Ch.A. meetings
   b. Review and consider all issues brought forth by any Member present at meetings
   c. Represent M.E.Ch.A. in an official, professional capacity
   d. Coordinate the affairs of M.E.Ch.A., including the posting of official agendas
   e. Have the decisive voice in cases of unresolved issues
   f. Delegate duties in accordance with this constitution as well as each Members’ ability and talent, always accounting for the benefit of the group

II. Vice-President: The vice-president of M.E.Ch.A. shall have limited powers including:
   a. Assisting the President in the execution of his/her duties
   b. Temporarily assume the office of the President when he/she is absent
   c. Fully assume the office of President in cases of abandonment or removal
   d. Act as a standing ICC representative when this office is vacant
      i. Note: In this case, there shall be no Vice-President until an ICC representative is appointed
   e. Act as primary contact and chairperson during M.E.Ch.A. events and festivities
   f. Shall oversee and be responsible for the election process and ballot-counting

III. Secretary: The office of the Secretary shall consist of specific duties including:
   a. Conduct all agenda items involving roll calls, including all voting instances such as Action Items, Elections, etc.
   b. Recording of minutes for each scheduled meeting
   c. Provide minutes to the President within 72 hours of the meeting for which they are recorded
   d. Recording of Member lists, including election data and contact information
   e. Recording of event and festival dates and committees
   f. Correspond with M.E.Ch.A. Treasurer and keep a backup of any vital data
      i. Note: These responsibilities shall be assumed by the President when vacancy occurs

IV. Treasurer: The office of the Treasurer shall consist of specific duties including:
   a. Recording and keeping of all financial data and reports
   b. Submitting necessary requests for events involving fundraising, purchase requisitions, or other instances where finances are involved with the Office of Student Life
   c. Deposit funds accumulated to the M.E.Ch.A. account as needed
   d. Submit budget estimates for events and festivities to the board for approval no later than one (1) month prior to the proposed event date

3 Effected by Amendment IV
e. Maintaining an active knowledge of current account status at all times

V. ICC Representative: The office of the Inter-Council Council Representative shall be responsible for specific duties including:
   a. Attending all ICC meetings with Bakersfield College Student Government Association to the best of their ability
   b. Maintain a positive representation of M.E.Ch.A. during regular ICC meetings as well as voice the concerns and ideas of M.E.Ch.A. at these meetings
   c. Record and discuss outcomes of ICC meetings with M.E.Ch.A.
   d. Maintain working relationship with M.E.Ch.A. advisor and the Office of Student Life
      i. Note: In accordance with BCSGA regulations concerning Student Organizations, the office of ICC representative shall take priority over Vice-President and/or Secretary

Section 4. Other Offices: In the event of a large membership (above seven (7) Active Members, the following offices are also available for appointment or occupation:

I. External Representative
II. Sergeant at Arms
III. Historian
   i. Note: Descriptions of these offices and their duties shall be made available upon occupation

Section 5. M.E.Ch.A. Advisor: The Organization Advisor(s) is/are chosen and approved by the Members of M.E.Ch.A. and confirmed by the Office of Student Life at Bakersfield College.

I. The responsibilities of the Advisor(s) include but are not limited to:
   a. Attend monthly Student Organization Advisor Round Discussions when possible
   b. Recognize and support participation by M.E.Ch.A. for its contribution to the educational and personal development of students within the higher education setting
   c. Provides continuity within the student organization and should be familiar with the history of the Organization
   d. Be familiar with M.E.Ch.A.’s constitution and bylaws and be prepared to assist the Student Organization Executive Board and other Members with interpretation when necessary
   e. Be available during the development and coordination of programs for M.E.Ch.A. The Advisor shall ensure that the activities and undertakings performed by M.E.Ch.A. are sound and reflect favorably on Bakersfield College by offering suggestions or ideas for the group's discussion
   f. Be aware of the goals and direction of the Organization by attending regularly scheduled meetings and consulting with the Executive Board. The Advisor should monitor M.E.Ch.A.’s progress toward predetermined organizational goals and objectives
g. Be aware of the general financial condition of the Organization and encourage the keeping of good financial records
h. Assist the Organization in complying with College policies and procedures. The Advisor must be aware of the Organization’s conditions and procedures, the Student Code of Conduct, and the BC/KCCD Policies and procedures
i. Monitor group functions and encourage Members to participate and maintain a balance between academic endeavors and co-curricular commitments
j. Assist in orienting new officers and developing the leadership skills of all Members
k. Consult the Office of Student Life about organizational opportunities, plans or changes in the Organization’s status or a Member’s status when appropriate
l. Attend most, if not all, regularly scheduled meetings and events. While the Advisor is not required to attend all meetings, they should meet with the club at least once a month and the Executive Board bi-weekly. Notes from these meetings should be placed in the club’s records
m. Continue the voluntary association of being the Advisor as long as both parties believe the relationship is productive and mutually satisfying
n. Refrain from managing the Organization or completing tasks assigned to it. The management of M.E.Ch.A. Organization is the responsibility of each Member
o. Maintains contact with the Office of Student Life

II. The responsibilities of the Community Advisor(s) include but are not limited to:

a. Attend meetings of the Organization as often as possible, or otherwise maintain an avenue of communication with Members and Officers
b. Advise the Organization on matters pertaining to the greater Bakersfield and Kern County community, including opportunities for involvement and outreach
c. Connect frequently with the on-campus Advisors for informational purposes
d. Engage the Organization in community affairs and provide real-world expertise and experience regarding current issues
e. Provide information on off-campus events that coincide with the vision and mission of the Organization
f. Act as the liaison between M.E.Ch.A. and outside organizations whenever possible, providing possible network opportunities
g. Guide the progress of the Organization toward its goals in connection with the on-campus advisors

Article 5
Meetings

Section 1. Meeting time and location
   I. All meeting times and locations shall be agreed upon at the end of the Spring semester for the upcoming academic year
   II. Meeting dates and locations shall be submitted to the Office of Student Life with proper paperwork filed and space reservation requests submitted for the full academic year by the President
Section 2. Attendance
I. All Members are encouraged to attend regularly scheduled meetings
II. All officers are required to attend regularly scheduled meetings
III. Failure of any elected officer to attend three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings shall be considered failure to comply and will be subject to possible disciplinary action
   a. Three attempts shall be made to communicate with any officer regarding absences

Section 3. Meeting Procedure
I. The number of individuals required to hold a bona fide meeting shall be two-thirds of the registered officers of the Organization (a “quorum”)
II. Parliamentary procedures and authority shall be applied as laid forth in the most recent version of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, and as is necessary in any situation which may arise
III. The meeting procedure at each regularly scheduled meeting shall be as follows:
   1) Roll call
   2) Review of current agenda and most recent minutes
   3) Public Comment
   4) President’s Report
   5) Individual reports
   6) Discussion of business
   7) Vote on any motions set forth
   8) Additional public comment
   9) Educational/Instructional Option
   10) Adjournment and dismissal

Section 3. Non-Discrimination Clause
Forthwith, the students and Members of M.E.Ch.A. do hereby comply with all federal laws, executive orders and state regulations pertaining thereto and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or physical disability. The organization shall have no rules or policies that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or physical disability, neither shall any instances of bullying, hazing, or harassment be tolerated at any time. Failure to comply with this clause shall be grounds for immediate dismissal and possible Student Conduct referral.

Article 6
Removal of Officers

Section 1. Grounds: Grounds for removal of officers from their position shall be as follows:
I. Failure to comply with this constitution and/or the purpose of M.E.Ch.A.
II. Continued failure to meet expectations of his/her office
III. Refusal to communicate with the group regarding absences and/or grievances
IV. Failure to attend three (3) or more consecutive regularly scheduled meetings
V. Special Note for ICC REP: Failure to attend three (3) consecutive ICC meetings as scheduled by the BCSGA shall be grounds for immediate removal from office
   a. After the first absence, there shall be a 48-hour time constraint placed on the individual to establish communication with either the vice-president or secretary

Section 2. Process: The process for removing any officer shall be as follows:
   I. Written request by at least three (3) Active Members of M.E.Ch.A.
   II. Written outline of reasons for the request, with evidence if possible
   III. Written notification to the officer in question, requesting his/her presence at the next meeting and preparation to voice his/her testimony
   IV. Opportunity given to the officer in question for defense
   V. Motion for impeachment followed by a second
   VI. Simple majority vote, defined as 50% plus one, or three-fourths if membership exceeds 13 persons

Article 7
Finances

Section 1: Profits and allocation of funds generated
   I. At no time shall M.E.Ch.A. collect any funds for profit or for the furtherance of individual Members themselves
   II. All funds generated shall be documented and deposited into the account designated specifically for M.E.Ch.A. via the Bakersfield College Business Services office for the purposes of being used as funding for events and other activities sponsored and promoted by the organization

Section 2: Membership dues
   I. Membership for M.E.Ch.A. shall continually be free; therefore, no dues shall be collected at any time, neither will financial coercion be tolerated at any time

Section 3: Organizational Accounting
   I. Knowledge of account balances shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer, who shall also correspond with the Advisor when changes occur
   II. Account balances shall be provided in a public manner including savings, expenditures, and funds raised, donated, or otherwise generated
   III. There shall be a formal method of documenting all funds either generated or donated, with deposits made as needed
   IV. Written documentation and records shall be kept of all funds either generated, deposited, or withdrawn
   V. A separate account for Cash On-Hand is hereby established, which may be kept in the event of emergency situations and shall be defined as follows
      a. All monies designated as “Cash On-Hand” shall be entrusted to the Advisor, who shall maintain the funds as a separate account kept in a safe location accessible as needed

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4 Effected by Amendment I
b. All monies designated as “Cash On-Hand” shall be documented and recorded by
the Treasurer, who shall also maintain a working knowledge of account balances
c. For any “Cash On-Hand” to be withdrawn, a formal request must be written and
submitted to the Advisor, bearing the signature of the Treasurer or other Officer,
stating the amount and reason for the funds being withdrawn, as well as the event
for which the withdrawal pertains to
d. The request must then be recorded, and a copy given to the President as well as
any receipts declaring the amount of money used
e. Any monies not used after withdrawal must be deposited back into the “Cash On-
Hand” account following the same guidelines stipulated above
f. Any funds which are not directly deposited into either account shall be considered
“at-large”
g. Any funds “at-large” shall be the responsibility of the last-known individual
handling the withdrawal or deposit, which may or may not constitute formal
conduct analysis, depending on the situation

Section 4: Annual Budget
I. The proposal of an annual budget shall be discussed and approved no later than the
second meeting of the summer of the current academic year. The approved budget
shall be maintained and recorded, to be used in order that the Organization may
register for the next coming academic year

Article 8
Amendments

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution
I. This Constitution shall be binding upon all Members of the Bakersfield College
M.E.Ch.A. Student Organization; however, it shall not be binding unto itself
II. Amendments to this Constitution may be presented in writing by any Active
Member at any regularly scheduled meeting at which quorum has been established
III. Proposed amendments may be discussed at the time of presentation or be
scheduled on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting as time permits
IV. Proposed amendments require a two-thirds vote to be established and adopted
Amendments

I. Let there be created and inserted, a new article, numbered “7,” “Finances,” which shall give clear details concerning the Organization’s financial procedures, including, but not limited to, deposit of funds generated, membership dues, account maintenance, and annual budgets (adopted 08/2016)i

II. Let there be created and inserted an addendum to Article 2, which will be section 4, “Voting,” to establish details concerning voting privileges and voting procedure within the Organization (adopted 08/29/2018)ii

III. To further define “Active Members,” let there be added a clause within Article 2, section 1, detailing the level of involvement necessary for Active membership (adopted 08/29/2018)iii

IV. To ensure proper decorum and functionality of the Organization, the Secretary shall have the responsibility of conducting business involving roll call, which includes voting matters (adopted 08/29/2018)iv

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i See Article 7, “Finances”  
ii See Article 2, Section 4, “Voting”  
iii See Article 2, Section 1, Clause 2  
iv See Article 3, Section 3, § 3(a)