

STUDENT ORGANIZATION CONSTITUTION CHECKLIST

The following is a checklist for creating your organization's constitution. This checklist will help open the dialogue with your group in deciding the framework and substance of your organization.

I. ORGANIZATION NAME

1. *Ex: Dearborn Theatre Club - DTC, Theatre Club*

II. MISSION AND GOALS

1. **The mission statement is clear, precise, and definitive** (generally 60 words or less). Anyone who reads the mission should understand what the organization is about and why it is in existence.
2. **Philosophy, goals, and/or purpose for which the organization has been created**
For example: The purpose(s) of this organization is:
 - What is the purpose for establishing the organization?
 - What is the intended impact of the organization on the University community?
 - What services will be provided and for whom?
3. Following sentence in its **own paragraph**: "All activities and functions of the organization must be legal under University, local, state, and federal laws."

III. MEMBERSHIP

1. **Student membership statement**
 - Who is eligible? (undergraduates, graduate students, staff, faculty, community members, alumni/alumnae, etc.)
 - Criteria or qualification for membership: (e.g., attendance, dues that need to be paid, etc.)?
 - Are there various categories of membership such as active, associate, inactive, alumni, honorary, auxiliary, etc.?
 - What are the privileges, duties, and/or responsibilities of each type of membership?
2. **When recruitment takes place and when membership is open**
3. **Withdrawal or Removal of Members**
 - What are the grounds for removal of a member (i.e., under what circumstance would/could this occur)
 - What is the process for removal of a member of the organization? (Votes required?)
 - Who has a right to request removal or withdrawal of a member?
 - Does an appeal process exist, what are the policies and procedures?
 - Process by which membership would be reinstated, if possible
4. **Non-discrimination statement.** All student organization constitutions must include this anti-discrimination clause in its entirety:
"The ____ club/organization is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status."
5. **Statement on Voting Rights** for members (students and affiliate members) – *For example:* "Only student members who are active and in good standing are eligible to vote. Affiliate members may not vote."
6. **Non-Hazing Statement:** All student organization constitutions must include this anti-hazing statement in its entirety:
"Hazing will not be used as a condition of membership in this organization."

IV. OFFICERS

1. **Description of Officers**
 - How many officers are there in the organization?
 - Who is eligible for office (necessary experience, class level requirements)?

- Statement on whether an officer can hold more than one position concurrently. If allowed, explain the circumstances.
- List the officers' titles
- Will there be any type of executive committee including officers?
- List the duties and responsibilities of each officer
- What is the criteria for removing an officer from the eboard?
- What is the process of removing an officer from the eboard?
- Detail how the organization plans to manage officer transitions
- Statement on voting rights of officers. *For example:* "All eboard members have the right to vote in all matters that require one"

2. **Terms of Office**

- Specify time frame (i.e., academic term, academic year, etc.)
- When do officers assume their positions?

V. SELECTION OF OFFICERS/ELECTIONS

1. **Officer selection** must take place at least once per academic year

2. **Nomination procedure** if utilizing elections, unless your organization has an application and/or interview process

- How are nominations made?
- Are there self-nominations?

3. **Election/ selection process**

- Describe the election process. *For example:* "Officers of this organization shall be elected by a majority vote (51%) of the regular student membership of the organization."
- When? Where?
- Order of elections, speeches?
- How the votes are to be cast and counted (secret ballots, hands, etc.)
 - What number or percentage of members or quorum is necessary for elections to be valid (e.g., 2/3, etc.)?
 - Who is eligible to vote?
- What is the process for notifying others or posting information regarding organization elections?
 - Are letters, flyers, or posters used on campus?
 - Are verbal announcements made at meetings?
 - How long is the notification and posting period?
- Statement on absentee ballots or proxy ballots for nominations AND elections
- Statement that addresses the issue of a tie
- When newly selected officers shall take office

VI. OFFICER VACANCIES

1. **Whether officers can be re-elected** (if so, explain)

2. **Procedure for Removal of Officers**

- Who can initiate the removal of an officer?
- What is the specific procedure to be followed for removal?
- What type of vote is required for removal?

3. **Procedure for Filling Vacated Offices**

- Are special elections held?
- Is ascending order used? (for example, will the vice president take over in the event of a president vacancy, the treasurer take over for the vice president, etc.)
- Are appointments made or interviews coordinated?

4. **Appeal Policy**

- Is there such a policy in your organization?

- Is there a set time period to carry out an appeal?
- What are the steps involved with an appeal?

VII. MEETINGS

- ___ 1. **Types of meetings** (e.g., Officers' meetings and Membership meetings), including:
 - When/ how often do they occur?
 - Who can attend?
 - Who can vote in each?
- ___ 2. **Quorum requirements (if any)** to officially conduct and approve business of the organization (for example, at least a majority of members/officers)
- ___ 3. How and by whom can meetings be called and what kind of notice is required
- ___ 4. What procedures will be used to conduct meetings (e.g., Robert's Rules of Order, If using Robert's Rules of Order, please sure you use the Rules of Order Newly Revised.)

VIII. COMMITTEES (if applicable)

- ___ 1. Discuss any **standing and special committees** (formation, selections, powers, membership, chairperson selection, and duties)
- ___ 2. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of committee chairpersons

IX. ADVISOR

- ___ 1. **Nomination and selection process for advisors**
- ___ 2. **Role, responsibilities, duties, and authority of advisor** (what are their voting rights?)
- ___ 3. **Length of term of advisor** (can be for an unspecified amount of time)
- ___ 4. **Process by which an advisor is removed**
- ___ 5. **Replacement statement:** *For example:* "In the event that an advisor is removed or resigns, a new advisor shall be elected within 'X' number of academic days."

X. FINANCES (include this section, even it not charging dues)

- ___ 1. **Any membership dues**, include the amount and frequency of payments
- ___ 2. **Exemption from paying dues**, if applicable
- ___ 3. Include a policy on refunds, if applicable
- ___ 4. **Budget approval process**
 - Authorized signatures required for every financial transaction? Which members have authority to spend the organization's money?
- ___ 5. **Limitation on how funds may be spent**
- ___ 6. Procedure from outgoing to incoming officers

XI. RATIFICATION AND EMPOWERMENT

- ___ 1. Necessary approval needed for implementation of the constitution
- ___ 2. State when the constitution will go into effect

XII. AMENDMENTS

- ___ 1. **Proposing Amendments**
 - What is the procedure for proposing amendments (e.g., in writing, verbally, etc.)?
 - Who can propose amendments?
 - What is the timeline for reading and voting?
- ___ 2. **Provisions**
 - When can an amendment be proposed?
 - Is there any notice required in advance for amending the constitution and/or bylaws?
 - How many members must be present for adoption of the amendment?
 - Who can vote on the amendment(s)?
 - How many votes are required for passage?
 - When do new amendments take effect?

Describe the process for amending the constitution. *For example:* "This constitution and bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the entire voting student membership."

XIII. REVISION AND UPDATES

_____ 1. This statement must be included in its entirety: "This constitution must be reviewed by the organization leadership and the Office of Student Life once every three years."

XIII. HISTORY

_____ 1. **Must include the date of creation of the constitution**

_____ 2. **Must include all dates of revision**