

CONSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES

To aid your organization in getting off to a good start, this constitutional structure outline and an explanation of each section has been prepared for your use. The Constitution of an organization provides for efficiency, fair and equal consideration, clarification, and continuity in the regular operations of an organization. Every organization has basic principles and procedural rules, which the Constitution merely states in writing.

These guidelines are designed to assist groups in their formation and to anticipate any future problems. Prospective student organizations should use these guidelines to assist them in drafting a Constitution. Any Constitution not in accordance with these guidelines will not be accepted, and recommendations for recognition will be delayed until the Constitution meets University standards. **Please note the sections in BOLD TYPE. They must appear in all Constitutions EXACTLY as they are written in this guideline.**

If you require further assistance in the preparation of your Constitution, please contact either the Student Organization Liaison (SOL) located in Room #260, Iowa Memorial Union (335-3860) or the Office of Student Life (OSL) located in Room #145, Iowa Memorial Union (335-3059).

ARTICLE CONSIDERATIONS

Component parts of a Constitution, which must be included, are listed below. (Article numbers are provided only as a guide - the exact structure of a Constitution may vary from group to group.)

- Title:** The Constitution should be entitled . . ."CONSTITUTION OF (official name of the organization)"
- Preamble:** State the full, official name of the organization. The name as it appears in your Constitution must be used in any advertising or business done by the organization, and should reflect the nature of the organization.
- Date:** Date of submission to Office of Student Life (OSL) as well as date of ratification and date on which any amendments were made.

Article I

- Purpose:** State the purpose, aims, and functions of the organization.

Article II

Membership

- a) This article must be written **EXACTLY** as follows:

In no aspect of its programs shall there be any difference in the treatment of persons on the basis of race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preference, 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.

- b) State the limitations of membership, if any (minimum or maximum limits).
- c) State the different classes of membership and the requirements for and rights of each class, if any.
- d) State the procedure for selection and revocation of membership (i.e., How the organization admits persons to or removes persons from membership).

Article III

Officers and Duties

List the positions available and the duties and responsibilities associated with each. Include also the qualifications an individual must possess in order to be considered for that position.

How may someone be considered for a position? Describe the election or selection process. What is the process for when a position is vacated?

Explain the procedure for removing a person from office.

Article IV

Advisor

(Optional: If the organization has an advisor, this article must be included.)

What are the responsibilities and duties of the advisor? How are they selected?

Article V

Meetings

- a) How often will meetings be held?
- b) By what means and how far in advance will the membership be notified of special meetings?
- c) What constitutes a quorum? (Quorum is the minimum number of members present in order to conduct official business.)
- d) Who has the authority to call meetings?

Article VI

Elections

- a) When and how frequently will elections be held?
- b) By what means and how far in advance will members be notified of any upcoming election?

Article VII

Finances

- a) Are there dues? If so, how will the amounts be determined?
- b) Who is in charge of financial affairs? Consider both administrative (e.g., collection of dues, disbursement of funds) and authoritative (e.g., authorization, expenditures) responsibilities.
- c) What happens to the remaining money if the group should dissolve? The financial clause must be written **EXACTLY** as follows:

Upon dissolution, state money and mandatory student fees revert back to the granting organization.

Group fees should be divided as stated in the Constitution and carried out by the dissolving group's members and officers.

If the group has dissolved and group fees have not been divided as stated in Constitution by five years from last account activity, monies in the group's 00 account will revert to an account specified for this purpose within UISG/PSGI. These funds will then be available for distribution through SABAC guidelines in compliance with University of Iowa policy.

Include a statement of where group fees should be divided upon dissolution of your organization. The University of Iowa and UISG are not responsible for the division of student fees as you have outlined above. It is the responsibility of your group to submit a copy of minutes in which the division of the group's 00 account was agreed upon. You must also fill out the appropriate approval forms, vouchers, and tax information in the Student Organization Business Office.

Article VIII

Amendments

An amendment is a formal alteration of any kind. This alteration may take many forms, not only the addition of material but also the removal of excess, invalid, or outdated text.

- a) How will all eligible voting members be informed of the proposed amendment (e.g., reading at two consecutive meetings, posting, notification by mail)?
- b) What vote is required to ratify an amendment? (Usually 2/3 or 3/4 of those present and voting.)
- c) Note that all amendments or changes to your Constitution must be submitted to the Student Organization Liaison for approval.

Article IX

Ratification

Ratification is the process of adopting a Constitution and confirming it governs the organization. Different organizations can have different rules for ratification.

Updated 04/08