

# Constitution Guide

**Please STRICTLY follow this format including bullets and numbering.**

**Failure to include any of the points listed below will result in the delay of your organization's approval for the following academic year.**

## Items to remember when drafting your constitution:

- All sections described below *must* be included in some form in the organization's constitution and by-laws.
- All **bolded/highlighted** sections and clauses *must* be included verbatim in the organization's constitution.

These include:

- Article Three: Membership/Non-discriminatory clause
  - The non-discriminatory clause can only be altered for organizations with a religious affiliation, national Fraternity or Sorority affiliation, or political affiliation.
- Article Four: Advisor clause
- Article Six: Impeachment clause
- Article Nine: Amendments clause
- Article Ten: Ratification clause
- If you would like to make any changes to this format, speak with the Assistant Director for Student Organizations before doing so.
- Be sure to also provide the date the constitution was drafted (at the top) and any dates on which the constitution was updated and ratified (at the end)—This is important for your organization to keep record of when changes to the constitution were made.

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**ORGANIZATION NAME**  
**Drafted on: (Insert Date)**

- Article One **NAME OF ORGANIZATION**
- State the full name of the organization as well as the acronym if applicable. For example, "The name of this organization shall be (insert name)"

- Article Two **PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION**
- State the purpose of the organization. You may also include the mission, goals, objectives, etc.

- Article Three **MEMBERSHIP**
- *The constitution MUST include this clause:*
  - **Membership in this organization will not be restricted on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, pregnancy status or genetic information.**

- State which people are qualified for membership
- State that all active members must be currently enrolled GMU students with a minimum academic achievement record defined as a cumulative grade point average of at least a 2.0.
- State the types of membership available. For example: **active** (currently enrolled GMU students who attend meetings/functions and pay dues if applicable); **associate** (may include members of faculty/staff, community members or students from other schools); **honorary** (alumni or community members).
- State what a member must do in order to be recognized as an active/associate/honorary/etc. member
- State what rights and privileges go along with each level of membership. For example: Only *active* members may vote on matters (official or not) including amendments, elections, and other motions brought forth in meetings.
- State why and how membership privileges may be revoked

#### Article Four **OFFICERS**

- State the titles and duties of the officers to be selected by the membership and *explicitly list out what is expected of each officer*
- State any minimum qualifications officer candidates must have such as class standing, minimum GPA, etc.
- State the length of the officer's term and term limits, if any
- State why and how an officer may be removed from their duties
- At minimum, a tier 1 RSO should have a President and Treasurer. A Tier 2 RSO must have 2 additional officers (V. P., Secretary, etc). However, if you would like to have more officers, you may do so but only the aforementioned are required.

#### **ADVISOR** (TIER 2 ONLY)

- *The constitution MUST include this clause:*  
**The primary advisor shall be a member of the faculty or staff at George Mason University.**
- State how the advisor will be selected
- State why and how the advisor may be removed from their duties
- State that the advisor may offer guidance and support for the organization, but MAY NOT have a vote

#### Article Five **ELECTIONS**

- State approximately when elections will take place (usually April, and **must take place before the next RSO re-registration period** to allow time for officer transitions and an accurate, up-to-date roster).
- Explicitly state details of the nominating procedure including the length of time allowed for nomination, who is allowed to submit nominations, and the method for submitting nominations.
- State how nominees will present their qualifications.
- Explicitly define the method that will be used for voting (usually secret ballot) and who will be responsible for tallying votes (usually a group of members).
- State procedure for runoffs in the event of a tie (if applicable)

- State the procedure for transitioning of current and new officers (usually involves a short shadow period in which new officers are familiarized with operating procedures and necessary paperwork)

Article Six

**IMPEACHMENT OR RESIGNATION**

- **Should an elected officer fail to perform the responsibilities or abuse the privileges of their elected position, the officer shall be subject to impeachment and removal from their office.**
- State the procedures for removing an individual from their official position should they fail to perform the responsibilities or abuse the privileges of their elected or appointed position in the organization.
- State the procedures for an individual wishing to resign from their position.
- State the procedures for appointing or electing a new officer to a position that has been vacated should a current officer resign from their elected or appointed position or should a current officer be impeached or removed from their position.

Article Seven

**MEETINGS**

- State how often the group will meet (weekly, monthly, etc.)
- State who presides at the meeting
- State whether the executive board has separate meetings and if so, how often
- State attendance policy, if any
- State what the quorum is (usually a simple majority of the active membership plus one officer; or two-thirds of the active membership plus one officer)
- State the procedure for calling special meetings
- State parliamentary rules of order that will be used (usually the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order)

Article Eight

**FINANCE**

- State procedure for determining amount of dues and when they should be collected if any. For example: *The amount of dues and the method of collection will be decided by a majority vote of the executive officers at the beginning of each semester for semi-annual dues or the beginning of each school year for annual dues.*

Article Nine

**AMENDMENTS**

- State procedure for proposing and approving amendments to the constitution
- *The constitution MUST include the following clause:*
- **Student Involvement must review all amendments in the same manner as a completely new constitution.**

Article Ten

**RATIFICATION**

- State how the constitution will be ratified
- *The constitution MUST include this clause:*
- **This constitution shall become effective upon approval by a ¾ vote of the membership, and a Student Involvement staff member.**

Constitution Ratified on: (dates constitution is amended and ratified)

**\*\*\*If there are any additional articles that apply to your organization, place them after Article Eight and before Article Nine. Consult the Assistant Director for Student Organizations before doing so.**