

Sample Constitution and Bylaws

Organizations applying for charter status must submit a constitution and bylaws that provides the organization with guidelines for operations and activities. These two separate documents should be well written and kept up-to-date to meet the needs of the student organization.

The constitution:

- Establishes the broad structure and fundamental principles that govern the organization
- It should be straightforward
- It should be difficult to amend

The bylaws:

- Outline the rules of procedure for an organization
- Should be consistent with the constitution
- Are often easier to amend than the constitution

Below are sample constitution and bylaws that serve as a guideline for organizations. There are several sections that are required by the University to be included in your constitution. These required sections are clearly marked below.

Constitution of (Insert Name of Organization) (Insert Date)

Article I Name and Affiliations

Section 1: "The name of this organization is..." No organization can include Auburn University or AU in the name of the organization for record keeping purposes. All organizations recognized by the Center for Student Organizations are official Auburn University student organizations. Remember, this name will be the official one required on all materials.

Section 2: Please include the organization's relationship to any Auburn University department and/or any campus, local, state, national, or international organization.

Article II Purpose

Section 1: "The purpose of this organization is..." Please include the primary purpose of the organization.

Article III

Membership

Section I: General Members

This section should include general membership requirements.

This section must also contain the following statement: “Membership is restricted to regularly enrolled Auburn University students, faculty, and staff. No university student may be denied membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, color, age, disability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or veteran status.”

However Religious student organizations will not be denied registration solely because they limit membership or leadership positions to students who share the same religious beliefs.

Section II: Voting Members

This section should address the qualifications needed in order to be a voting member of the organization (i.e. paid dues, are on current roster, etc.).

Article IV

Officers

Section I: The officers shall be... (Please insert the titles of the officers. You can include here a general statement about the role of each office. However, specific duties and responsibilities should be included in the bylaws.)

Section II: The qualifications for each office (Please state any qualifications for each office.)

Section III: Officers will hold office from... (Please insert officers' term limits. Also include whether or not there is a limit to the number of terms for which any single person may be re-elected)

Section V: If an officer's position is to become vacant during his or her term, the following will take place... (Please include the provisions to be made for filling vacancies. This should include the process of impeachment of an officer who is not fulfilling his or her duties.)

Article V

Advisors

- Section 1: The XXX organization shall have an Auburn University faculty, administrator, or staff member serving as Advisor at all times.
- Section 2: This section should include the general role of the advisor. See the Advisor guidelines in this packet. Specific duties should be included in the bylaws.
- Section 2: This section should include the provisions for the removal of an advisor.

Article VI

Meetings

- Section 1: This section should address the frequency of regular meetings (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.) and who has the authority to call the meetings. Quorum, or the percentage of membership that must be present in order to conduct business at the organization's meetings, should be stated here.
- Section 2: In addition, this section should also address who can call special meetings, as well as the number of hours in advance that members should be notified of special meetings.

Article VI

Amendments

- Section 1: This constitution shall be amended by a vote of (2/3, 3/4, etc.) majority of the membership at any regular or special meeting. The section should also include how, when, and to whom amendments should be submitted prior to a vote.

Bylaws of

(Insert Name of Organization)

(Insert Date)

Article I

Membership

- Section 1: This section should include procedures for becoming or selecting members. When are members selected, by what process, what qualifications. Be specific here.
- Section 2: This section should include membership rights, duties, responsibilities, etc.

Section 3: Expulsion and resignation procedures should be provided.

Section 4: Amount of membership dues, if any, how dues are decided upon, as well as how often they must be paid should be addressed in this section.

Article III

Officer Duties

Section I: The specific roles and responsibilities of each officer position should be included here. Each officer can be listed as a separate section.

Article II

Election of Officers

Section I: Elections of new officers will take place...(insert the estimated times of elections and how often they will occur.)

Section II: Insert information on the nomination process.

Section III: Members who are running for office must...(insert election requirements such as acceptance of nomination, speech, campaign, etc.)

Section IV: Officers must be elected by...(insert simple majority, 2/3 majority, etc. Also include secret ballot, hand vote, etc.)

Section V: If an officer decides to step down from an office or is no longer enrolled...(insert procedures for filling the office including how nominations are made, how the election is held, how and when notice is given regarding the election)

Article IV

Advisor

Section 1: This section should include how the advisor is chosen and/or elected, and the duration of their term.

Article V

Committees (if needed)

Section 1: This section should address any specific and Chartered committees of the organization. It should include the function and specific duties of each committee.

Section 2: This section should include how members are selected to committees.

Article V **Finances (if needed)**

Section 1: This section should address any specific issues or guidelines regarding financial records, reporting, responsibilities, etc. of the organization. For those organizations collecting dues or any other type of income (fundraisers, etc.), you must have a checking account established for your organization. Organizations with a checking account must have the following statement in this section: "All checks and withdrawals from the organization's checking account must be approved by the president and/or treasurer as well as the advisor of the organization."

Article VI **Parliamentary Authority**

Section 1: This organization shall be governed by... (Specify source of parliamentary procedure. Most organizations use *Robert's Rules of Order* to govern their organization's decision making except when these rules are inconsistent with their constitution or bylaws of the organization.)

Article VII **Amendment of Bylaws**

Section 1: This should be somewhat similar to amending the constitution. However, bylaws are apt to change more often than the constitution, thus amending should be somewhat easier. Bylaws may be amended by proposing in writing and reading the change at a general meeting of the membership and then bringing the proposed change up for a vote at the next general meeting with 2/3 majority vote of the membership present (a quorum being present).

