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This sample constitution may be used as a template to develop a constitution for your organization. Please note that the preamble and articles I through V are required in order for your organization to be registered with The Office of Student Engagement. The remaining articles are suggested means for enhancing governance of your organization.

### **PREAMBLE**

This is statement of the general aims and purposes of the organization. It should be brief and direct.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Name**

Use clear and specific words that represent your organization. Per University policy, do not begin the organization's name with "The" or "Western Michigan University". You may use "at Western Michigan University" after your organization's name, but not "of Western Michigan University", i.e., Soccer Club *at* WMU.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Membership**

##### Section A. Types of Membership

Include an explanation of the types of membership and the privileges of each type. For example, you may have active, honorary, inactive, or associate members.

##### Section B. Membership Qualifications

- State any stipulations for membership, such as objectives, interests, class standing, number of credit hours completed, member of particular department, etc.
- We encourage including a nondiscrimination statement as follows:

#### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

No individual will be denied membership because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status.

##### Section C. Selection of Members

- State when and how members will be selected.
- Indicate the percentage of votes of active members that are needed for approval of new members.
- Specify how new members will be notified of membership acceptance.

Section D. Voting Privileges

- Specify which types of members are entitled to vote on which issues.
- State whether or not absentee ballots may be used.

Section E. Termination of Membership

- State the procedures to terminate membership.
- Specify the causes for which an individual's membership may be terminated.
- Indicate the procedures for terminating membership, including the percentage of votes needed, how the terminated member will be notified, and the procedure for submitting a written resignation.

**ARTICLE III**  
**Officers**

Section A. Elected Officers

- List the duties, and responsibilities of all elected positions.

Section B. Qualifications for Holding Office

- Officers must be currently enrolled WMU students.
- State any other criteria for holding office

Section C. Selection of Officers

- State when elections occur.
- Specify the voting procedures including the nomination and balloting procedures, person responsible for supervising the election, quorum needed, etc.
- Indicate the general time after elections when officers will assume their duties and the length of term in the office.

Section D. Filling Vacancies

- For each position, identify who will assume the duties of that position in case of vacancy.
- Define the procedure for appointing new officers and designating special committees.

Section E. Recall of Officers

- State the conditions for removal, such as failure to perform duties or excessive absenteeism.

## Sample Constitution

- Specify the voting procedure for impeachment. This should be a large majority (2/3 or more). Final action should be delayed until next regular meeting.

**ARTICLE IV****Finances****Section A. On-campus Accounts**

- Include a statement that the organization will follow and be subject to all University policies, procedures, and practices regarding student organization accounts and finances. (Note: If your organization disbands, by policy all SAF funds in your University account will revert to the University)

**Section B. Off-campus accounts**

- If applicable, state where banking will be done for non-university funds.

**Section C. Dues, Assessments, or Initiation Fees**

- Indicate any dues, fees, or assessments.

**Section D. Financial Policy**

- State that the financial books and records will be audited at least once a year.
- State that officers designated as responsible for financial matters will attend University financial workshops as required.

**Section E. Disposition of Non-University Funds in the Case of Inactivation**

1. For *non-University funds* kept in an off-campus account, include a provision for the handling of monies if the organization dissolves or is inactive. If the organization ceases to exist, they cannot be kept in off-campus accounts. Some examples are as follows: "*Name of RSO will donate any off-campus funds to name of WMU department, local non-profit, or related national headquarters if the organization dissolves or becomes inactive.*"

**ARTICLE V****Statement of Compliance**

Per university policy, the following statement must be included in your constitution.

*The organization will comply with all Office of Student Engagement and University policies, procedures, and practices and all local, state, and federal laws.*

Section A. Registration/Reactivation

[www.rso.wmich.edu/PDFs/RSO\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.rso.wmich.edu/PDFs/RSO_Handbook.pdf)

For new organizations, state which officer(s) will be designated to complete and follow-through on the requirements for the registration process as set forth by The Office of Student Engagement.

For existing organizations, state which officer(s) will be designated to complete and follow-through on the annual reactivation process as set forth by The Office of Student Engagement.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**Meetings**

Section A. Frequency of Meetings

- Indicate how often meeting will be held.

Section B. Special Meetings

- Include a statement of possible reasons to hold special meetings.
- Describe the process for calling a special meeting (e.g., by the president or petition by the members, etc.)
- State how members will be notified of the time, place, location, and reason for the special meeting.

Section C. Quorum

- Specify the percentage of active members needed for a quorum order to conduct business. Large organizations should require approximately 2/3 members present, while smaller organizations should have more than ½ members present.

Section D. Parliamentary Authority

- If applicable, indicate the parliamentary authority under which the organization will operate ( E.g., Sturgis Rules of Order, Roberta’s Rules of Order, or Roberts Rules of Order).

**ARTICLE VII**  
**Advisors**

- Indicate the advisor’s responsibilities and term of office.
- State the method of selecting and notifying an advisor.

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- All advisors should be faculty or staff members of Western Michigan University or a spouse/partner of a faculty or staff member. Sororities and Fraternities may substitute an alumna/e and religious organizations may substitute a clergy person.

**ARTICLE VIII  
Amendments**

Section A. Constitution

- State who may propose an amendment.
- Describe the procedure for proposing, considering, and adopting an amendment.
- Indicate a quorum for voting on the amendment (e.g., 75% of active members).

**ARTICLE IX  
Bylaws**

The bylaws indicate the technical details necessary for carrying out stipulations in the constitution. The following are examples of subjects you may want to include as covered under bylaws in your constitution:

- Initiation Procedures
- Detailed notation of powers and duties of officers
- House rules, duties, and discipline procedures
- Order of business to be followed at meetings