

# Constitution Sample for Student Organizations

A constitution contains the fundamental principles that govern an organization's operation. The development of a constitution will serve to clarify your purpose and delineate your basic operating structure. It will allow members and potential members to have a better understanding of what the organization is about.

## ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE

- Section 1. The name of this organization shall be: \_\_\_\_\_
- Section 2. This section should explain what the organization hopes to do for its members and the university community. (Example – the purpose of this organization shall be to provide educational activities for its members.) An organization may not duplicate the purpose or mission of an existing student group.

## ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. This section should state that any student may be a member unless an exception has been given by the Executive Director of Student Programs & Student Diversity. In addition, because MUSC is an equal opportunity, affirmative action, and public institution that values diversity, student groups wanting to be recognized by the University, must be non-discriminatory. **The constitution must state that the organization will not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ability, religious affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or gender.**
- Section 2. This section should explain how a person becomes a member, and how a person remains a member in good standing. (Example – a person remains in good standing by obeying the rules of the group written in the constitution.) Per university guidelines, participation in recognized student organizations is contingent on the following three criteria: 1) being currently enrolled & a degree seeking student; 2) being in academic good standing at the university; and 3) being in professional good standing with one's college. The university minimum GPA requirement for student participation is 2.5, groups should defer to college -specific academic requirements if they differ.
- Section 3. This section should state that the organization does not condone hazing of any sort. **The constitution must have an anti hazing clause. An example includes the organization will not participate in any act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or that destroys or removes public or private property; and/or assisting, directing, or in any way causing others to participate in degrading behavior and/or behavior that causes ridicule, humiliation, or embarrassment; and/or engaging in conduct which tends to bring the reputation of the organization, group, or University into disrepute for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization; or as part of any activity of a recognized student organization, student group, and university program.**

## ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

- Section 1. This section should explain the titles and terms of each office. (Example - the President shall serve for one year from April 1 to March 31.)
- Section 2. This section should detail how officers are nominated and elected. (Example - only members in good standing may nominate, be nominated and vote; elections shall be by secret ballot and require a simple majority of members present.)
- Section 3. This section should describe the duties of each officer. (Example - the President shall have the following duties; to convene and preside at all meetings, etc.)
- Section 4. This section should contain a brief statement on how and why an officer may be removed. (Example - an officer failing to maintain membership in good standing, may be removed at any meeting by vote of the general membership.)

#### **ARTICLE IV: OPERATING PROCEDURES**

- Section 1. This section should cover time, place, and frequency of meetings and what constitutes quorum.
- Section 2. This section should cover rules of order or whatever meeting style is used. (Example - parliamentary procedure, Robert's Rules, etc.)
- Section 3. This section should contain the names and functions of any and all existing committees. Typical committees are membership, promotion and financial. (Example – the Executive Committee shall consist of all executive officers and chairpersons, and shall perform the following duties: review and approve the expenditure of all funds, etc.)
- Section 4. This section should cover organization banking details (DO NOT INCLUDE BANK ACCOUNT NUMBERS), specifically including what positions are required signers on the account (typically president, treasurer, & advisor), if your account is a MUSC agency fund or an external account (if external, list the bank name), etc.

#### **ARTICLE V: ADVISORS**

- Section 1. This section should state the expectations of the advisor. The advisor and group should agree on a set of expectations of one another from the onset. This understanding should be reviewed annually. Additional examples of roles are listed in the Student Organization Handbook.
- Section 2. The recognized student organization advisor is responsible for organizational oversight to include compliance with the Student Organization Bank Account and Agency Fund Policy. Persons with questions regarding organization funds and bank accounts should contact their Dean's Office and/or the Executive Director of Student Programs and Student Diversity at 843-792-2693 for more information.

#### **ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS**

- Section 1. This section should state who proposes amendments.
- Section 2. This section should explain how amendments are made/approved.

If your organization needs assistance in writing a constitution, contact the Office of Student Programs and Student Diversity located in the Harper Student Center , Ste. 213, or call 843-792-2693.