

## Sample Constitution

This document serves as a model for you to follow when writing the constitution for your organization. Student organization can modify and add amendments as long as the group abides by all state and federal laws, rules and regulations of American University, The Office of Campus Life, and the Student Code of Conduct. Keep in mind that an organization's constitution outlines the basic rules governing an organization, allows for continuity, and addresses situations that may arise within an organization.

### PREAMBLE

**We the members of (name of organization), and subscribing to the regulations and policies of American University, establish this Constitution to govern the matters within our organization.**

### Article I - Name

**Section 1 The name of this organization shall be...**

(Provide complete, official name, specific and variations on the name which the organization might use in the business it conducts. If using American University in the club name must come after club. For example, Happy Club @ AU, not the AU Happy Club).

**Section 2** Identify, if any, affiliations with national, regional, etc. groups and specify what the relationship is between the local group and the other groups.

### Article II - Purpose

**Section 1 The purpose of this organization shall be to...**

- Consider questions such as:
  - What is your overarching mission?
  - Why are you establishing this organization?
  - What are the goals of the club?

(Be as detailed as possible since your group will be limited to the purpose listed here. Use action words such as: Promote, Recognize, Serve, Advocate, Educate, etc.)

### Article III - Membership

**Section 1 Membership** (*Note: Membership in a registered student organization must be open only to AU students and any student is welcome to join.*)

**All constitutions must include and abide by the following clauses:**

**Clause 1:** American University student organizations shall not discriminate in membership based on true or perceived race, color, culture, religion, faith, national origin, age or student status, class, caste, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, citizenship, personal appearance, marital status, veteran status, student status, family responsibility, political affiliation or source of income, or any other basis under international, federal, or local law.

**Clause 2:** Student organization membership is open to any University students in good academic standing who express interest American University Student Life.

## **Section 2 Members**

States the requirements, if any, while working within the non-discrimination clause mentioned above. The majority of active members must be the persons officially connected with the University (students, faculty, and staff).

List:

- Qualifications, requirements, and all other conditions for active membership in the organization
  - Example:
    - Clause 1. The conditions for active membership shall be:
      - Being an enrolled student at American University
      - Attendance at 1 general body meeting
- Include rights and privileges of membership
  - Ex. Voting in executive board elections
- How and why membership may be resigned or terminated
  - Is there an appeal process?
- Whether there are dues associated with being a part of the organization. If no dues, then you must state that. If you do charge dues, organizations must clearly state the amount and purpose, this includes national dues as well.

### **Article IV - Officers**

#### **Section 1 The officers of this organization shall consist of...**

State the:

- Number of officers
- Their titles (President and Treasurer are Required)
- Their general duties and responsibilities for each position

#### **Section 2 Term of office shall be...**

State the:

- Period of time that the office will be held
  - Ex. 1 academic year (August- May)

## Article V - Elections

### Section 1 Election of officers shall be...

State the:

- Requirements or other conditions that members must meet before becoming candidates for office
  - *\*All officers must have at least a 2.5 GPA and be in good disciplinary standing with the University*
- Process of elections
  - Questions to consider:
    - How will members become candidates?
    - How are candidates elected?
      - *\*The general body of the organization must elect the president.*
    - How will the general body be notified of the newly elected officers?
- Frequency of elections

### Section 2 The procedures for voting shall be...

(List any other provisions, if there is a secret ballot or hand/verbal vote, the quorum necessary to vote, aka the number of members that must be present for a legal election 2/3, or 1/2 etc.).

### Section 3 Provisions for filling vacancies.

Specify:

- When elections are held
- If there are special elections
- How positions are posted
- Who is eligible to vote

### Section 4 Provisions for removal of an officer shall be...

State the:

- Reasons why an officer would be removed
  - Ex. Not in good disciplinary standing with the University
- How an officer is removed
  - When?
  - Who initiates?
  - What type of vote is required and by who?
  - What is the appeal process?

## Article VI - Meetings

### Section 1 Regular meetings of this organization shall be held...

(Monthly, bimonthly, etc.)

Specify:

- Executive Board Meetings vs. General Body Meetings
- The person responsible for notifying members of upcoming meetings
- Method of notification
- Rules of order or procedure to utilize during meetings. Cite the specific source or authority to for deciding questions of parliamentary procedure
  - Ex. Robert's Rules

**Section 2**     **A quorum shall consist of (X) voting members or a percentage of voting members present at any meeting.**

(A quorum is the number or percentage of total membership to be present at a meeting in order to conduct the business of the organization.)

**Article VII - Advisors**

**Section 1**     **There shall be at least one full time faculty/staff advisor at all times in the organizations.**

*Note: AU requires each registered student organization to have a full time faculty or staff person as an advisor for a registered student organization.*

Include:

- Selection process of advisor
- Removal process of advisor

**Section 2**     Duties or responsibilities of advisor.  
Include the groups' expectations for club involvement

**Ex. Advisor Expectations/Duties**

- Assist in the development of the organization and its members
- Interpret University policies and regulations
- Attend as many organizational meetings and functions as possible
- Meet with organization officers or membership to discuss the progress and direction of the group
- Be available to the officers and membership
- Aid in leadership transitions
- Ensure accountability to governing documents by organization leadership
- Act as a liaison to The Center for Student Involvement
- Support student programs and activities

**Article VIII - Amendments**

**Section 1**     **The constitution may be amended by a vote of...**

(Be specific - majority, 2/3, etc.)

Include:

- Any requirements for the form or manner in which the amendment is written
  - Ex. Who can propose an amendment and how?
- Any limitations for the presentation or ratification of an amendment
- What margin of votes an amendment shall be required to receive for passage

