

Student Organization Constitution Template

A Constitution contains the fundamental principles that govern an organization's operations. 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
The name of the student organization shall be

Article II Affiliation (optional article)
This organization is affiliated with

Article III Purpose
It shall be the purpose of this organization to

This section should explain what the organization hopes to do for its members and the university.
Example – the purpose of this organization shall be to provide educational activities for its members.

Article IV Membership
Section 1. Membership in the organization is open to any currently enrolled Bowie State University student. Only BSU students may serve as officers in the organization and have voting rights. Former BSU students, faculty and staff, and local community members may not participate in the club, nor can they hold office or vote.

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 and meeting the minimum 2.5 GPA requirement.

Article V Authority and Responsibility

Section 1. Authority:

The organization operates under the authority of the Student Government Association (SGA).

Section 2. Power:

The officers of the organization have the power to administer and enforce the constitution and bylaws of the organization.

Section 3. Responsibility:

The organization will adhere to the policies and procedures of Bowie State University, including, but not limited to the SGA Constitution and Bylaws and the Student Code of Conduct. The organization will also adhere to the laws and regulations of Prince George's County and the State of Maryland.

Article VI Notice of Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

The constitution must state that the organization will not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight in any educational programs and activities.

Article VII Notice of Anti-Hazing

The organization shall not haze any prospective member for the purpose of admission into or affiliation with the organization. Members of the organization are free to leave or disassociate without fear of retribution or harassment.

Article VIII Officers

Section 1. Titles:

The organization shall have a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers comprise the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Qualifications:

All officers must be currently enrolled students, carrying a minimum of three credits and members of the organization.

Section 3. Term of Office:

The term of office shall be from June 1 until the end of the academic year on May 31st. A student may serve as an officer for no more than two terms.

This section should explain the titles and terms of each office.

Example - the President shall serve for one year from June 1 to May 31.

Section 4. Election:

Election of officers shall be held annually. No less than two weeks notice shall be given before the election meeting. Nominations shall be initiated from the floor. Candidates must accept the nomination and speak about their qualifications for serving as an officer. Elections will be done by secret ballot. The person receiving majority vote will be elected.

This section should detail how officers are nominated and elected.

Example - only members in good academic standing may nominate, be nominated and vote; elections shall be by secret ballot and require a simple majority of members present.

Section 5. Duties of Officers:

Section 5.1 - The President:

1. The president shall be the chief executive officer
2. The president shall appoint all committee chairpersons
3. The president, with approval of the Executive Committee, directs the budget
4. The president shall convene and preside at all meetings

Section 5.2 - The Vice President:

1. The vice president shall be the parliamentarian for the organization.
2. The vice president shall assume the duties of the president should the office become vacant, or in the absence of the president.
3. The vice president will keep and have available current copies of the constitution and bylaws.

Section 5.3 - The Secretary:

1. The secretary shall be responsible for keeping the minutes of all meetings and the meetings of the Executive Committee.
2. The secretary will provide a copy of the minutes for each officer and keep a master file.
3. The secretary shall maintain a complete and accurate account of attendance and membership status.

Section 5.4 – Treasurer:

1. The treasurer shall keep a current record of all financial transactions.
2. The treasurer shall develop quarterly reports containing a list of all receipts and disbursements and distribute them among the membership.
3. The treasurer will be responsible for checking the accuracy of all bills and invoices and paying them correctly and on time.

Section 6. Resignation:

An officer can resign by submitting a letter to the Advisor and the Dean of Student Life.

Section 7. Removal of Officers:

Any officer who fails to fulfill the responsibilities, duties, and/or minimum qualification of the position, engages in abuse of power of office, engages in behavior and conduct unbecoming of an officer/student leader may be removed as an officer by a unanimous vote of the other members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee along with the Advisor must meet with the Dean of Student Life prior to the removal of an officer. Any officer removed may appeal to the general membership. Said officer shall be considered reinstated with a majority approval of the membership.

Article IX Vacancies

A vacancy shall be declared when an officer leaves the institution, resigns or is removed from office. Any vacancy which may occur in an office shall be filled by appointment by the president of the organization pending ratification at the next group business meeting. Once the vacancy has been filled, an updated Organization Officer and Membership Form must be completed and submitted to the Dean of Student Life.

Article X Advisor

Section 1. Eligibility:

Advisors to student organizations shall be full time employees at Bowie State University. Part-time faculty and staff members may serve as an advisor to the organization upon approval of the employee's supervisor.

Section 2. Selection:

The organization is free to select any eligible employee to serve as the advisor to the organization. Upon selection, the advisor must be approved by the Dean of Student Life.

Section 3. Term of Service:

The advisor shall be approved yearly by the general membership of the organization. Should the organization chose not to approve the advisor, the organization must select another employee to serve as the advisor and have the advisor approved by the Dean of Student Life. The advisor may resign by submitting a letter to the Dean of Student Life.

Section 4. Duties of Advisor:

1. The advisor shall assist the group in their execution of roles and responsibilities.
2. The advisor shall provide feedback to the organization regarding its operation and functioning.
3. The advisor shall serve as a resource.
4. The advisor should provide advice upon request, and also should share knowledge, expertise, and experience with the group.
5. The advisor will be a nonvoting member of the organization.
6. The advisor must attend all organization activities, events and meetings.

Article XI Voting

Section 1. Eligibility:

Each member in good standing may vote.

Section 2. Quorum:

Quorum in a general meeting of the organization shall constitute a minimum of three officers and five members.

Section 3. Proxy voting:

Members are allowed to vote on the business of the organization by submitting a vote in writing to the President. The proxy must state the name of the voter, the business for which the member is voting and if the member is voting in support of, against or abstaining.

Article XII Committees

Section 1. Establishment:

The Executive Committee may establish both standing and special committees. Members shall be appointed by the President subject to ratification by the organization during a regular business meeting.

Section 2. Responsibilities:

The purpose and duties of the committees shall be defined by the Executive Committee.

Article XIII Finances

Section 1. On-Campus Account:

The organization shall be assigned a budget amount established by the SGA Executive Treasurer. The organization shall not maintain an off-campus account.

Section 2. Fiscal Year:

The fiscal year of the organization shall be from July 1 to May 15.

Section 3. Dues: (optional)

The organization has the option of charging dues, which shall be collected and held in an on-campus account, which will be managed by the Office of Student Life. The amount of dues shall be determined each year by the organization's officers. The amount set for dues shall not unduly prohibit students from joining the organization and waivers or scholarships shall be offered by the organization for members who are unable to afford the dues.

This section describes the amount of dues, when they will be collected, and what the due will be used for.

Section 4. Revenues: (Optional)

The organization may generate revenues through fund-raising activities approved by the Dean of Student Life. Money collected via fundraising shall be collected and held in an on-campus account, which will be managed by the Office of Student Life. Appropriate accounting procedures shall conform to university and state policy.

Section 5. Expenditures:

The organization may make purchases with the approval of the organization Treasurer and Advisor. Purchases shall conform to university and state policy.

Article XIV Meetings

Section 1. Open Public Meetings:

All meetings of the organization and its committees shall be open and public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meetings.

Section 2. Notice of Regular Meetings:

At least 3 days' notice shall be given for each regular business meeting.

Section 3. Special Meetings:

Special or emergency meetings may be called with at least twenty-four hours notice by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Structure:

The meetings shall include a quorum, order of business, and disposition of the minutes.

Article XV Parliamentary Procedure

Section 1. Roberts Rules of Order:

The rules of Parliamentary Procedure as contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be a guideline for the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with the Constitution or any special rules of order as determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Suspension of Rules:

The rules may be suspended by two-thirds vote of the present membership.

Article XVI Bylaws

The Bylaws shall be the lawful means by which the provisions of the Constitution shall be implemented.

Article XVII Interpretation

The interpretation of the Constitution shall be the responsibility of the organization's President, with advice from the Advisor. Initial appeals to interpretation will be made to the Advisor and subsequently, the Dean of Student Life.

Any interpretation of the Constitution shall be made with the view of its basic principles, which are to increase and foster student responsibility, interest, and participation in the activities and programs of the organization.

Article XVIII Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution must be presented two weeks prior to the ratification vote and may be initiated by any officers or members of the organization. Amendments must be approved by three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Executive Committee and ratified by a simple majority vote of the member students. Amendments to any article or section of the Constitution shall render each and every previously recognized corresponding article or section null and void.

Article XIX Adoption and Implementation

The Constitution shall be implemented upon its adoption by a majority vote of the membership.

This constitution is hereby authorized by:

Advisor Signature

Date

President Signature

Date

Vice President Signature

Date

If your organization needs assistance in writing a constitution, contact the Office of Student Life staff, Student Center 3rd floor. 301-860-3835.

May 2017