



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Center for Campus Life

Student Involvement

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

An organization's constitution and/or bylaws should address a minimum of these areas: purpose, membership selection and removal, officer titles, duties, election and removal, departmental and/or external relationships, financial procedures, procedures for decision making, advisor selection and expectations, and parliamentary authority.

Why have a Constitution?

The constitution of an organization contains the fundamental principles which govern its operation. A constitution will serve to:

- Clarify the organization's **purpose**
- Outline its basic **structure**
- Provide a **cornerstone** for building an **effective organization**
- Allow members and potential members to have a better understanding of the organization's **purpose** and **mission** and how the organization **functions**

If you keep in mind the value of having a written document that clearly describes the basic framework of your organization, the drafting of the constitution will be a much easier and more rewarding experience.

Why have Bylaws?

The bylaws establish specific rules of guidance by which the organization is to function. Bylaws:

- Set forth in **detail** the **procedures** the organization must follow to conduct business in an orderly manner.
- Provides further **definition** to the **constitution**
- Can be **changed** more **easily** as the needs for the organization change.
- **Must not contradict** provisions in the **constitution**.

Putting your Constitution to Use

Remember the reasons for having a constitution and bylaws. They articulate the purpose of your organization and spell out the procedures to be followed by your organization. It is recommended that the constitution and bylaws of your student organization be reviewed regularly. The needs of your organization will change over time, and it is important to review the constitution and bylaws on a regular basis and when your organization has officer transition.

The Center for Campus Life recommends that your organization upload a copy of the latest constitution and bylaws to the student organization file portion on your OrgSync Profile so all members can review it and have access to it.

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Center for Campus Life, SUB 201

A Guide to Writing a Constitution & Bylaws for Your Student Organization

This document is intended to serve as an example when you are drafting your Constitution. The Student Involvement staff will review all new and revised Constitutions and Bylaws. The Constitution of your organization can be more detailed than this example. For additional questions regarding your Constitution or Bylaws, please contact the Student Involvement at 806-742-5433 or studentorgs@ttu.edu.

Constitution

The Texas Tech University Student Handbook requires specific elements in each constitution of an organization. Each required element is listed below with a (R).

Article I – Name

- Section 1 (R)** The name of the organization shall be _____.
Special Note: The name of the organization cannot include Red Raiders, Texas Tech, TTU, or Texas Tech University. The name can include "Tech" or "Raiders."
- Section 2** Identify any affiliations with national, regional, etc. groups and specify what the relationship is between the Texas Tech student organization and the other group(s).

Article II – Purpose

- Section 1 (R)** The purpose of the organization shall be to _____.
Special Note: Be as detailed as possible because your group will be limited to those actions that are listed here.

Article III – Membership

- Section 1 (R)** Members (provide a description of the members and list the requirements for membership)
Special Note: Student organizations need to have at least five members in order to be registered at Texas Tech University.
- Section 2 (R)** Student organizations are required to included the Anti-discriminatory Statement.
"A student organization is eligible for registration if it does not deny membership on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, except that: a registered student organization created primarily for religious purposes may restrict the right to vote or hold officer to persons who subscribe to the registered student organization's religious beliefs."
- Section 3** If applicable, guests or associate members. This could be any alumni, staff, faculty, or community members. The guest/associate members do not have the same privileges as regular members, or Texas Tech students.

Article IV – Officers

- Section 1 (R)** The officers of the organization will be made up of _____:
Special Note: The following officers must be listed in the Constitution: President, Treasurer, SORC/Org Rep. All officers must be Texas Tech students.
- Section 2** List the eligibility or qualifications to serve as an officer.

Article V – Meetings

- Section 1** Regular meetings of this student organization shall be held (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, etc.)
- Section 2 (R)** Quorum will consist of a _____% of members who are present at the meeting.
Special Note: Often listed as either two-thirds or three-fourth of active membership.
- Section 3** A special meeting may be called by the _____ when necessary, and shall be called by him/her upon the written request of any regular or associated member. Notice of the special meeting shall be given to the organization electronically _____ hours in advance.

Article VI – Voting

- Section 1 (R)** During regular meeting how will votes be taken (ballot, rising, roll call). What is required to pass a vote once quorum is confirmed.

Article VII – Departmental and/or External Relationships

- Section 1 (R)** State any present or intended relationship the organization may have to other local, state, or national organizations.
Special Note: Some organizations do not have a relationship with other local, state, or national organizations. This article is required only if there is a relationship with other organizations.

Article VIII – Committees

Section 1 List of the Committee(s)

Article IX – Advisor

- Section 1** Organizations are required to have one full-time faculty/staff advisor. The faculty/staff advisor often does not have any voting privilege and serves as an ex-officio member.
Special Note: All changes to faculty/staff advisors must be made within ten business days on OrgSync and a new university policy agreement must be submitted.
- Section 2 (R)** What is the process of selecting a new advisor.
Special Note: The Center for Campus Life has a list of faculty/staff members who have indicated they would like to serve as an advisor of student organizations.
- Section 3 (R)** What are the expectations and/or responsibilities of the advisor.
Special Note: Organizations should talk to their advisors about the role and responsibilities they want to have in the organization. The Center for Campus Life has resources to help organizations talk to their advisors about this role.
- Section 4** It is suggested that the decision to remove a advisor shall require a written letter submitted to the officers and a _____ vote from the organization.

Article XI – Legal Agreement

Section 1 The organization agrees to abide by all federal, state, and local laws; and by Texas Tech University policies and procedures.

Article XII – Amendments

- Section 1** Amendment to the Constitution can be passed by a vote of _____ (majority, two thirds).
- Section 2** Process for purposing the amendments to the Constitution.

Include the date of the creation and/or last revision.

Bylaws

The Bylaws establish specific rules of guidance by which the organization is to function. The Constitution covers fundamental principles, but not procedures for operating the constitution. Bylaws set forth in detail the procedures the organization must follow to conduct business in an orderly manner. They provide further definition to the Constitution and can be changed more easily as the needs of the organization change. Bylaws must not contradict provisions in the constitution. It is recommended that Bylaws contain the following information:

Article I – Membership

- Section 1 (R)** Selection Procedures – How will the organization select members and in what manner?
- Section 2** Resignations. The process that members can resign their membership in the organization.
- Section 3 (R)** Removals. What constitutes cause of removal and what the process is for removing a member.
- Section 4** A member should reserve the right to appeal a ruling of removal.

Article II – Duties of Officers

Special Note: Each officer position should have an individual section. At a minimum there should be at least three officers listed which include: President, Treasurer, and SORC Rep. For each officer the following points should be addressed: powers, responsibilities, specific job descriptions.

- Section 1 (R)** President
The Powers/Responsibilities shall be _____.
The President shall attend _____ meetings.
- Section 2 (R)** Treasurer
- Section 3 (R)** SORC Rep

Article III – Officer Election, Removal, and Replacement Process

- Section 1 (R)** The process of how the officers from the student organization will be elected.
- Section 2 (R)** How an officer can be removed from his/her official duties, and what are some actions that could cause removal.
- Section 3** Procedures for filling unexpired terms of officer, and resignation of officers during the year.

Article IV - Committees

- Section 1** Structure of the Committee(s)
- Section 2** Standing Committees and responsibilities for each committee. This would also describe the make-up of each standing committee, and how members of the committee are selected.
- Section 3** How often the committees meet, and their powers and duties.

Article V – Financial Procedures

- Section 1 (R)** Define how funds from the organization will be collected (dues, fundraising, SGA, etc.).
- Section 2 (R)** Determine who and how the funds are managed (try to allow for a system of checks and balances).
- Section 3 (R)** If the organization ceases to exist, determine who will obtain the organization's assets.

Article V – Order of Business

- Section 1** This article would contain the order in which general meetings are done. This could include roll call, announcement, old business, new business, and ending roll call. This would be considered the standard agenda for conducting student organization meetings.

Article VI – Other Policies and Procedures

- Section 1** These would include any policies and procedures that are unique to the organization and that are necessary for the organization's operation.

Article VII – Parliamentary Authority

- Section 1 (R)** Parliamentary authority would include the provision for rules of order, which is generally known as the Robert Rules of Order – Newly Revised Version. *Example: The Bubble Blowing Society shall use Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, as its authority on parliamentary procedures.*

Article VIII – Amendments

- Section 1** The section would contain the steps to make amendments to the bylaws.
Example: Amendments shall be submitted in written form to the officers. A ___ vote shall be required to present the proposed amendment to the organization. At that time, the proposed amendment will be discussed and then shall be tabled until the following meeting.

Include the date of the creation and/or last revision.

Please remember that the language listed throughout this resource is provided as a guide and student organization's constitution and bylaws should be written in the organization's own language and context.