**Sample Constitution**

The purpose of a constitution is to establish the structure by which student organizations can function in a smooth and orderly fashion. Topics such as membership, discipline, purpose, officers, etc. must be included, but it is up to each organization to structure itself in these areas. The following document is only a sample constitution to be used as a guide. If your organization is part of a National Organization, please check to see what national requirements may be needed and include those in your constitution. Information or statements that are **bolded** are required in your constitution and are instructions on what should be included in that section. The information written in *italics* is an example of what should go in the required section. Everything else is a suggestion or idea of what to be included in your documents. Please contact the Coordinator of Student Engagement at 903-334-6750 or email if you have any questions or require assistance.

**Article I: Name**

The name of this student organization shall be known as [organization name].

**Article II: Purpose and Goals**

**Provides a rationale for why and for what purpose the organization is being established. The purpose of the organization must fulfill a need that is not being fulfilled by another student organization. The purpose and function shall not duplicate that of an existing recognized student organization.**

**Section I: Purpose**

The purpose of [organization name] shall be to…

**Section II: Goals**

Goals of this organization shall be:

**Article III: Membership**

**This portion answers who may or will belong to the organization. It includes how a member is eligible (if there is a GPA requirement or other requirements, please state here), how or if there is a selection process (there doesn’t have to be one), attendance guidelines, and removal of members. All recognized student organizations should be currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-Texarkana.**

**Section I: Eligibility**

*Any member of the student body may apply for membership. This organization shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, gender, disability or handicap, religion, sexual orientation, disabled veteran's status, or Vietnam era veteran's status in any of its policies, procedures, and practices. This policy will include but is not limited to recruiting, membership, organization activities, or opportunity to hold office.*

*Only currently enrolled full/part-time graduate, undergraduate, or doctorate students at Texas A&M University-Texarkana are eligible to be members with full voting and office holding abilities.*

*Faculty, staff, and alumni may serve as associate members, but may not hold office, vote, or pay dues.*

**Section II: Selection Process**

**This section outlines the details on how selections will be made. Is there an application for potential members? Are there try-outs, voting, or an interview? If making selections, will there be a cap on how many new members may join a year/semester? An example is provided below:**

*Application for membership will be open \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ each year with an interview process to follow. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ new members will be accepted each semester by the selection committee. The selection committee will consist of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*

**Section III: Attendance**

**This section includes the number/percentage of meetings and organizational events members must attend to be in good standings with the student organization. What type of excuses for missing a meeting will be accepted? An example is provided below:**

*Attendance at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ meetings and organizational events is required to be in good standing with the student organization. If a meeting is to be missed, members must notify the executive board \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ days/hours in advance to be considered an excused absence. Excused absences include medical and family emergencies, university recognized events, or religious events. Not more than \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ unexcused absences will be allowed per a semester.*

**Section IV: Member Removal Procedures**

**If a member is not meeting the set requirements, how will the organization remove this person? We suggest you use the guidelines below.**

*Any member having \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ unexcused absences or who is not acting in the best interest of the student organization shall be removed. Three (3) types of written documentation are required for the removal of a member or officer. A quorum of 50% + 1 (fifty percent plus one) of the voting members must be present at the meeting and a 2/3 (two-thirds) vote must be obtained in order to remove the individual. Before a vote is taken, the Executive Board shall first consult with the student organization’s faculty/staff advisor.*

**Article IV: Officers and Executive Board**

**In this part, you will answer who your officers are and what their duties will be. In addition, make sure to include any extra criteria for officers that may be different from a general member (GPA, classification, previous positions held, etc.). The GPA requirement must be a minimum of a 2.5 but may be increased for officers and executive board members.**

**Section I: Requirements of Officers**

*The officers of this organization must meet the following requirements:*

* *Have at least a \_\_\_\_ GPA at the time of election and post at least a \_\_\_\_\_\_GPA for the preceding regular semester at the time of election and must maintain a \_\_\_\_ GPA during the term of office.*
* *Must be in good standings with the university (financially and judicially) and enrolled in at least six (6) credit hours in a regular semester during the term of office.*
* *Serves a term of one (1) year (May – April) and must be re-elected if wanting to continue in their current officer position.*
* *Any officer who, during the term of their office, fails to maintain their status as a matriculating undergraduate/graduate student, fails to maintain a GPA of \_\_\_\_\_\_, or fails to maintain their good academic and disciplinary standings with TAMUT, shall be removed from their office and a replacement shall be elected. Before an officer is removed for these reasons, the faculty/staff advisor must be consulted.*

**Section II: Officers and Duties**

**Fully describe the duties of officers for the organization. Specify what positions are a part of the executive board and others that may be chair positions (if the organization chooses to have chair positions). Each organization must have a President, but we highly recommend having other offices such as Vice President, and Treasurer or the equivalent, and other officers as needed. Please see the example below:**

***President -****shall preside over regular and executive meetings, coordinate group activities and communicate with the officers and advisor on all matters.*

***Vice President****- shall assist the President and preside over meetings in the absence of the President and act as a liaison between committees and the president.*

***Secretary****- shall record minutes at all business meetings, check attendance at functions, and receive and review excuses for absences.*

***Treasurer -****shall collect dues, pay bills, oversee other monetary transactions including fund-raising and social activities, and prepare and maintain an annual budget.*

***Membership Coordinator****- shall coordinate recruitment and selection of new members during each fall semester.*

***Historian****- shall document the history of the organization through pictures and membership records. This position is not a part of the Executive Board.*

***Marketing and Public Relations Chair****- shall develop and gain approval for all posted materials for the organization, shall maintain the student organization’s social media pages, shall promote all events, and provide ways for the student organization to advertise events. This position is not a part of the Executive Board.*

**Section III: Executive Board**

**Here you can define more of the roles of the executive board as a whole.**

* *The Executive Board shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Coordinator, and the faculty/ staff advisor (this individual must work for A&M-Texarkana).*
* *The Executive Board shall determine the policies and the activities of the student organization, discipline members, approve the budget, and have general management of [student organization].*
* *The Executive Board shall regularly meet each month at the call of the President.*

**Section IV: Election Process**

**In this section, please detail how the election process will occur for the student organization. How far in advance will nominations open? Who can nominate members for the positions? When in the year/semester will the process take place? What is required for the election process? Will nominees have to give a speech, write a letter, etc.? When will officer assume their position? Is there a term limit for positions on being on the Executive Board? Elections should be held in the spring semester so student organizations can prepare in advance for the new school year. Please see the example below:**

*Elections shall be held at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of \_\_\_\_\_\_. Nominations will be taken by the President \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ week(s) before the election is to be held. The President will oversee and run elections and therefore shall not vote in the election of any positions. Any eligible member may nominate another eligible member. Members must have held a previous Executive Board position or Chair position in order to run for the President position. Nominees will be required to give a \_\_\_\_\_ minute speech on why they are interested in the position. Voting will be held by secret ballot and the President and a Senior-classified member will count the votes. A quorum of 50% + 1 (fifty percent plus one) of voting members must be present for elections to occur and a simple majority (a majority in which the highest number of votes cast for any one candidate exceeds the second-highest number, although doesn’t have to be over 50%) vote will win. If there is a tie in votes, the President shall then cast their vote to determine the winner of the election. Newly elected officers shall assume their responsibilities on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*

**Section V: Removal of an Officer**

**An officer may be removed for not fulfilling the requirements set out in Article IV: Section I and Section II. Removal procedures for officers shall be the same as general members, found in Article III: Section IV.**

**Section VI: Vacancies**

*A special election shall be called by the President within \_\_\_\_\_ days to fill the vacancy using normal voting procedures. If the President position is the one vacant, the Vice President will preside over the election process. The newly elected officer shall immediately assume the position’s responsibilities following the election. In special circumstances when an election is not feasible, the faculty/staff advisor in consultation with the President (or Vice-President if the President’s position is vacant) may appoint an officer until the next regular election.*

**Article V: Advisor**

**In this part, please detail the role of the faculty/staff advisor and how they are appointed or elected. In addition, include how long their term will be, if you choose to set a term limit for your advisor.**

*The advisor or co-advisors shall be appointed by the student organization. This person must be a faculty or staff member at the Texas A&M University-Texarkana. The faculty or staff advisor shall advise the organization as needed. The advisor shall not, however, speak for or represent in any way the voice of the student organization without prior notice. The student organization shall invite a faculty or staff member to serve on a yearly basis, subject to the organization’s renewed invitation.  There shall be no limit on the number of times that a faculty or staff advisor may be re-appointed to serve the organization.  The faculty or staff advisor may at any time ask to be replaced by another faculty or staff member.  In this case, the new faculty or staff advisor is still subject to an invitation by the incoming student organization’s members. The organization may change its advisor at any time with a simple majority vote of current membership.*

**Article VI: Regular Meetings**

**Detail how often meetings will occur, who will decide when the meetings will be held, and the quorum needed to hold a meeting.**

**Section I: Frequency of Meetings**

*Meetings shall be held [each week, twice a month, once a month, etc.] at a time most convenient for the general membership. The Executive Board will propose times and provide members with a schedule of meetings at the beginning of each semester.*

**Section II: Quorum**

*A quorum is the number of members required to be in attendance for official business to occur. Official business means discussion of any issues/events, voting, or any decision is being made.*

*At all meetings, a quorum of 50% + 1 (fifty percent plus one) of the voting members must be present for official business to occur.*

**Section III: Special Meetings**

*A special meeting may be called by the President with the support of the Executive Board if deemed necessary. The faculty/staff advisor must be present at these special meetings. At least \_\_\_\_\_ days/hours notice must be given to the membership when a special meeting is to occur.*

**Article VII: Finance**

**In this part, please detail all aspects of how finances will be determined, collected, and voted on. This part should define any collection of monies such as dues and fundraisers and should define how the monies are to be distributed and who shall be responsible for the accountability of the student organization’s money. How often will dues be collected (each year/each semester)?**

**Section I: Dues**

*Dues shall be determined per academic year and will be collected for all members, including officers, during the first \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ weeks of the school year/semester. Dues shall be determined by the Executive Board and voted on by the general body membership at the first meeting. Members will pay their dues to the Treasurer and the Treasurer shall keep a record of all members that have paid. Upon the discretion of the Treasurer, with consultation from the Executive Board, a payment plan may be implemented if need.*

**Section II: Use and Responsibility of Funds**

***In this section, detail how funds will be used and if, at a certain level, the general body must vote on the use of funds.***

*The use of funds collected through dues, donations, fundraisers, etc. shall be determined by the Executive Board based on the needs of the organization and the events being held. If purchases for an event are to exceed $\_\_\_\_\_, a 50% + 1 (fifty percent plus one) vote by the general body membership must be obtained for the expenditures. The Treasurer is responsible for the accountability of [student organization]’s monies, and shall report the bank balance monthly to the Executive Board and the general body membership.*

**Section III: Student Organization Bank Account**

*All monies belonging to [student organization] shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for this organization at a public banking facility. All funds must be deposited within 48 hours after collection. The Treasurer, one additional office, and the faculty/staff advisor shall be named on the bank account. The advisor and a student organizational officer must approve and sign each expenditure before payment or any withdrawal of funds from the account in addition to a passing vote by the general body membership.*

**Section IV: Dissolution of [Student Organization]**

If [student organization] dissolves, remaining monies shall be donated to the Student Organization fund at Texas A&M University-Texarkana.

**Article VIII: Non-Hazing Clause**

**Hazing is any intentional or reckless act by one person alone or acting with others that endangers the mental or physical health of a student. Hazing may occur on or off campus and usually takes place in connection with obtaining membership in or holding office in a student organization. “Student” includes all persons presently enrolled, accepted for admission, and those intending to enroll after a period of vacation.**

**A person commits the offense of hazing if the person engages in hazing, solicits, encourages, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing, knowingly permits hazing to occur, or has firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred or may occur and fails to report the act to the proper authority.**

**A student organization which knowingly engages in or encourages hazing may also be charged with the offense of hazing.**

**This offense is punishable by a fine and/or confinement in jail. It is not a defense to a charge of hazing that the person at whom the act was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.**

**If you have knowledge that a person or organization is planning or has committed an act of hazing, you must report the information to the Coordinator of Student Engagement or the Director of Student Life. The full text of the act is published in the Texas School Law Bulletin 4.51 (Texas Education Agency, 1990).**

**Article IX: Amendments and Review**

**In this part, include when and how revisions can be made to this document. In addition, include how often it will be reviewed by the Executive Board and the membership.**

**Section I: Amendments**

*This constitution may be amended at the beginning of the semester by a 2/3 (two-thirds) vote of the voting members. Before approval of an amendment can occur, it must be approved by the faculty/staff advisor and the Department of Student Life.*

**Section II: Review**

**This document must be reviewed every year and submitted to the Office of Student Life every spring semester during the student organization transitional period.**