



Writing A Constitution or Bylaws For Student Organizations

Your constitution should be as detailed or as simple as your organization requires for smooth operation. Remember that the constitution will give continuity to your organization.

The following information is offered as a guide to help organizations in the preparation of a constitution and bylaws. (The basic format is reprinted from the University of Texas at Austin's Handbook for Registered Student Organizations.)

CONSTITUTION

Date: _____
Constitution of: _____
(Name of Organization)

Article I. Name of Organization: In selecting a name do not use TAMU-T in the name. This indicates an agency status that is not permissible.

Article II. Statement of Purpose: A short statement about the purpose(s) of your organization or definition of what the organization is about should be included.

Article III. Membership: (Should include statement about membership)

Section 1. Membership will be open to students, faculty and staff regardless of race, national origin, creed, political affiliation, sex, religion, age, handicap, or veteran's status.

Section 2. Membership categories and criteria must be established. Three categories are recommended. Full membership is restricted to enrolled TAMU-T students and includes voting rights and eligibility to hold office. Associate members may not hold office, vote, preside, officiate, act as the advisor, or solicit funds on campus on behalf of the Club. Students attending Texarkana College may apply. Faculty or staff membership is open to any TAMU-T employees who have an interest in the club's purpose. They may hold office, vote, preside, officiate, or solicit funds on campus on behalf of the club.

Section 3. Terms of membership should be specified typically for one calendar year beginning and ending on the first day of the Fall semester.

Article IV. Administration:

Section 1. Should include officers or governing structure for the organization, duties and responsibilities of officers.



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Section 2. Specify how officers are elected chosen or appointed and when elections are to be held. (Fall, spring, etc.)

Article V. Executive Board:

Section 1. Voting members (i.e., elected and appointed officers)

Section 2. Ex-officio members (i.e., faculty advisor); indicate if voting or non-voting.

Article VI. Faculty/Staff Advisor: Every official student organization must have a faculty or staff adviser from TAMU-T (full-time only).

Article VII. Meetings:

Section 1. Regular meetings (Frequency and time)

Section 2. Special meetings (indicate who has authority to call).

Article VIII. Method to Amend: means for changing or adding to the constitution should be outlined.

Article IX: Dissolution of Clause:

Section 1. Provide for the succession of elected officers in the event of permanent incapacitation, resignation or removal.

Section 2. Provide for disbursement of funds should organization dissolve.

Additional articles and/or sections may be added, if needed.



BYLAWS

Bylaws are the general procedures of your organization – “the working rules”. They are more easily changed, sometimes by a quorum at a regular meeting. They might include such items as meeting times and days, amount of dues, etc.

Date: _____

Constitution of: _____

(Name of Organization)

Bylaw I. Membership:

Section 1. Membership eligibility and categories. (see Article III under Constitutions)

Section 2. Provision for expulsion of members.

Bylaw II. Dues: Statement of whether or not dues are collected and amount.

Bylaw III. Officers:

Section 1. Powers and duties of elected officers.

Section 2. Filling vacancies.

Section 3. Recall of officers (when applicable).

Bylaw IV. Committees:

Section 1. Standing committees and duties.

Section 2. Special committees (appointments and approvals).

Bylaw V. Elections: Should include sections that cover the following: time of elections, votes necessary to be elected, qualifications of voters, method of balloting (secret or open)

Bylaw VI. Quorum: Specify what number of members constitutes a quorum. A quorum is the minimum number of members who must be present at an assembly before it



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can validly transact business. Usually a percentage of the membership is stipulated - such as two thirds of the total voting membership.

Bylaw VII. Parliamentary

Authority: Source of authority (i.e., Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure 2nd edition, or Roberts Rules of Order).

NOTE: Only students who have contributed to the funds through payment of student activity fees (full members) during the current academic year are eligible to receive monetary compensation for club travel expenses (meaning they were enrolled at A&M-Texarkana during the current academic year). All membership categories should be eligible to benefit from regular club activities such as refreshments, speakers, parties, etc.