

This document has the following required items every student organization constitution should include. The layout is up to each organization.

A good constitution should contain the basic elements of how your organization functions. It should have only fundamental information, be sustainable and difficult to amend. The items that are subject to frequent revision should be placed in the by-laws. The bylaws contain all the standing rules of the organization. The following is the suggested structure for organizations' constitutions.

**1. Organization Name**

**2. Mission & Purpose**

- a) What is the mission of the organization?
- b) What services will the organization provide?
- c) How will members benefit from the organization? What will members learn, do, or create?
- d) How will the organization influence the Columbia College Chicago community?

**3. Membership Criteria**

- a) Define who is eligible for membership such as: GPA minimums, dues, attendance at meetings, etc.
- b) Define the membership categories including the rights and voting privileges of each.
- c) Include the College's Anti-Discriminatory Statement:
  - i. The members of, (the organization's name), agree to comply with Columbia College Chicago's Anti-Discrimination & Harrasment policies.

"Columbia is committed to maintaining an environment that respects the dignity of all individuals. Accordingly, Columbia will not tolerate harassment or discrimination based on religion, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, ethnicity, or any other category protected by law by or of its students, faculty, or staff. This conduct may also be illegal under state, local, and federal law. To the extent practicable, Columbia will attempt to protect the Columbia community from harassment and/or discrimination by vendors, consultants, and other third parties who interact with the Columbia community. Columbia is promulgating this policy to reaffirm its opposition to harassment and discrimination and to emphasize that learning opportunities and employment opportunities must not be interfered with by such behavior.

No member of the Columbia community shall engage in discrimination or harassment in any program, activity, or place over which Columbia exercises control. It is expected that every member of our community will take

responsibility for refraining from any form of discrimination or harassment, reporting any incident that is made known, cooperating in preventing such behavior, and assisting with corrective measures when, despite Columbia's serious commitment, these acts occur." The full description can be found here: [https://columbiacollege.sharepoint.com/sites/hr/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=/sites/hr/Shared%20Documents/Employee%20%26%20Labor%20Relations/Policies/CCC%20Anti-Discrimination%20%26%20Harassment%20Policy%20%2808-14-2020%29.pdf&parent=/sites/hr/Shared%20Documents/Employee%20%26%20Labor%20Relations/Policies&utm\\_source=All+Faculty+and+Staff&utm\\_campaign=f13ae55dc2-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2020\\_08\\_13\\_08\\_47&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_ba8ab9bd51-f13ae55dc2-104158005](https://columbiacollege.sharepoint.com/sites/hr/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=/sites/hr/Shared%20Documents/Employee%20%26%20Labor%20Relations/Policies/CCC%20Anti-Discrimination%20%26%20Harassment%20Policy%20%2808-14-2020%29.pdf&parent=/sites/hr/Shared%20Documents/Employee%20%26%20Labor%20Relations/Policies&utm_source=All+Faculty+and+Staff&utm_campaign=f13ae55dc2-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_08_13_08_47&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ba8ab9bd51-f13ae55dc2-104158005) (we can make a bitly).

- d) Include a Drugs and Alcohol Use Policy
  - i. For example: "The members of, (the organization's name), agree to comply with Columbia College policies governing organizational use of alcohol and other drugs."
- e) State the removal process from membership, such as: grounds for removal, procedure for removal, if a vote is required, and the appeal process.

#### 4. **Election and Voting Procedures**

- a) When will the elections be held and who will call for the election?
- b) Define the nomination procedure (Self nomination, nomination committee, or by application?).
- c) Define the election procedure (Secret ballot, a show of hands, verbal? What does a digital votes look like?).
- d) State when the new officers will begin their term and length of term(s).

#### 5. **Officers of the Organization**

- a) Specify the qualifications for becoming an officer (Do the individuals need to be members of the organization for a certain amount of time? Is there leadership criteria used?).
- b) State the various officer positions and the responsibilities of each office. Include the SOC Representative role and responsibility.

##### I. Example: Section 5 - Duties of the SOC Representatives

The SOC representatives will act as the liaison between the SOC and (Student Org Name). The SOC rep or the alternate will attend the monthly meeting the first Wednesday of each month. If the SOC rep does not attend a meeting, they will be given a written warning for the first missed meeting. With each following missed meeting, the SOC representative and (Student Org Name) must accept any repercussions, including probation, loss of funding, and suspension of recognition.

- c) Define the procedure for filing vacated offices (Will there be a special election? Will your organization use an ascending order, appointment, or interview process?).
- d) Define the procedure for removal from office (Who initiates it, what is the vote required, and what is the recall procedure?).
- e) Explain the appeal process after a removal (Does the appeal need to be in written form? Is there a time period? Who reviews the appeal?).

**6. Definition of a quorum**

- a) Define what the quorum for the organization will be (Will the organization need 2/3 of the members present or 1/2 plus one? Will a quorum be necessary to carry on business?).

**7. Constitution Amendment Process**

- a) State the procedures for proposing amendments (Written or verbalized?). Add a clause regarding the process for online voting for amendments (if different than other online voting processes). Establish the length of time between notification and voting on the amendment (Will the amendment be read at two consecutive meetings before a vote can be taken? Can it be amended).
- b) State how many votes are needed for ratification. This should be difficult. (i.e.- At least two-thirds vote, three-fourths vote of actual membership, half of those attended plus one, etc.).
- c) Must include a section that any amendment approved by the membership must be in compliance with College policy.
- d) State how and when the constitution goes into effect.
  - i. For example: "These bylaws may be altered or amended by a majority vote of the members of the organization either in person or at a scheduled meeting; provided that (i.e.- 14 days) notice of the proposed change, and the meeting at which it is to be considered, has been given to all executive board and general members. Ratified amendments are put into effect immediately after approval."

**8. Organization Advisor**

- a) Define the role of the advisor.
- b) Define the duration of term and criteria for selection of advisor.
- c) Define the criteria for removal or changing the advisor.
- d) Define the appeal process for advisor, if removed.