**Constitution Guidelines**

The following is a guideline to follow for creating a constitution for your group. A constitution is the written document of how your organization is to be run. Think of it as the handbook to your organization. Remember to keep information such as names and dates non-specific. For example, do not write the officers names in the document, only the offices themselves (president, vice president, etc…). As far as dates, it is important to indicate the time frame elections or events should take place, such as by the third week of the fall semester officer nominations are to be held with elections the following week during the regularly scheduled meeting.

Keep this important document **in Org Sync** that can be passed down and updated annually.

**Name of Group Constitution**

**Date**

The following outline is provided to assist organizations in preparing a constitution. All registered campus organizations are *required* to have an approved constitution on file in the Student Involvement Office.

Article I **Name of Organization and affiliations**

Article II **Purpose of the Organization**

Organizations should take care to include a complete statement of purpose.

Programs sponsored by the organization will be expected to be within the real of the club’s stated objectives.

Article III **Membership**

What does it take to be a member of the organization? What qualifications, dues, or type of memberships are there? Voting membership should be defined as limited to current, full-time, Ohio Wesleyan University students only. Ohio Wesleyan University will not recognize any campus organization that categorically denies consideration for membership because of color, creed, national origin, race, sex, or sexual orientation or handicap. Social fraternities and sororities are exempted from the discrimination based on sex requirement.

Article IV **Officers**

Include titles of officers, terms of office, how officers are selected and specific duties of each officer. Organizations should have the necessary officers to conduct their activities, which must include a president, secretary, and treasurer. Be cautious to not over create officers. Names of current officers and advisor(s) must be listed in the Student Involvement Office master files. The names of officers are never a part of the constitution.

Article V **Impeachment, expulsion, or suspension of officers or members.**

This is not a “fun” part of a constitution, but a very necessary article. Hopefully, an organization would never have to use this article. It may seem hard to imagine that anything would go “wrong” with a leader/member because when a group is first forming there is high energy, however, this article is a necessary part of any thorough constitution. What if a member of the organization does not live up to the standards of the group? What happens if the president does not do his/her job? How does the group go about replacing “bad” leaders?

Article VI **Meetings**

When will regular meetings be held? Are meetings determined at the beginning of an academic year or semester? What constitutes a special meeting and what steps are required to call one? What is quorum? It is best to establish only the minimum number required and the approximate time of year in order to avoid creating requirements impossible to fulfill. Additional meetings can always be held. Generally, specific information is not part of a constitution. An example of how the information could appear is: Meetings are held regularly and will be determined by the second week of the fall semester.

Article VII **Advisor**

Each organization **MUST** have a faculty or staff advisor. The advisor should be someone interested in the organization and believe in its purpose. Communication is a key component in the advisor organization relationship. The advisor is not simply a name or signature on paper. However, the advisor is intended to advise; the students themselves are to manage the functions of the organization.

Article VIII **Standing committees** (if needed)

List names and general duties of standing committees. The name of the committee should be listed, but the name of the committee chairs should not be mentioned.

Article IX **Elections**

How and when are leaders selected? A good idea is to have the new officers take office in December or early in the second semester (January) so that there is an opportunity for leadership transition and a good possibility that the outgoing leadership is still on campus to clarify how the group’s business is done.

Article X **Dues, Fees or Means of Financing**

How much does it cost to be a member of this organization? When are dues due? What happens if members do not pay dues? All money collected by the group must be turned into the

Student Involvement Office for deposit in the on-campus account.  **NO** off campus accounts or credit cards are allowed.

Article XI **Parliamentary Authority**

The usual statement reads: The rules contained in Roberts’ Rules of Order Revised shall govern this organization in all cases to which they are applicable unless they are inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws and special rules of this organization.

Article XII **Method of Amending Constitution and Bylaws**

Generally amendments require a super majority of 2/3 or ¾ of those voting or of total membership. The procedure must include the approval of all constitutional changes by the Student Government before they become effective. Bylaw changes, which are in keeping with the constitution, need not be approved.

Bylaws A club need not have bylaws separate from the constitution. It is sometimes desirable since bylaws usually contain more details and are more easily amended than the constitution. Bylaws are more permanent than passing a motion at a meeting. They cannot run contrary to the constitution.

Bylaws typically include:

- Conduct of business rules

- Election rules

- Details of the roles of Standing Committees

- Procedural matters such as admitting members, dropping members, special rules, auditing procedures, etc.

- Specials projects and programs.

***The constitution and all bylaws must be formally adopted by the organization.***