**Constitution Guidelines**

The following is a guideline to create a constitution for a registered student organization. A constitution is the written document about how your organization functions. Remember to keep information such as names and dates nonspecific. For example, do not write officer names in the document, only the titles themselves (president, vice president, etc.). As far as dates, it is important to indicate the time frame elections or events should take place, for example, by the third week of the fall semester. This document should be saved on Engage (formerly Orgsync) so it can be accessible and updated annually.

**Name of Group Constitution**

**Date**

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

Article I **Name of Organization**

Article II **Purpose of the Organization**

Organizations should create a complete statement of purpose.

Programs sponsored by the organization will be expected to be within the scope of the 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 ability.

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**

It may seem hard to imagine anything would go “wrong” with a leader/member because when a group is first forming there is high energy. This article is necessary to explain the process related to membership challenges. Consider, what if a member does not meet the group expectations or president does not fulfill their responsibilities?

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? 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. Generally, specific information is not part of a constitution. For example, this article can simply state: 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. The advisor is not simply a name or signature on paper. Advisors are intended to support while the students manage the functions of the organization. An advisor agreement should be on file with the Student Involvement Office.

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 included.

Article IX **Elections**

How and when are leaders selected? It is important to consider and ensure there is an opportunity for leadership transition to sustain the organization.

Article X **Dues, Fees, or Funding**

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 majority of 2/3 of those voting or of total membership. The procedure must include the approval of all constitutional changes WCSA before they become effective. Bylaw changes, which are in keeping with the constitution, need not be approved.

Bylaws Bylaws can be separate or included in the constitution because typically bylaws usually contain more details and are more easily amended than the constitution. Bylaws are more permanent than passing a motion at a meeting and cannot be contrary to the constitution.

Bylaws typically include:

* Conduct of business rules
* Election rules (specify what makes a passing vote)
* Standing committee(s) position descriptions
* Procedures related to admitting members, dropping members, special rules, auditing procedures, etc.
* Specials projects and programs