Recognized Student Organization

Constitutions

# Requirements

All RSOs are required to have specific components and statements within their constitution, however they may be listed in any order that best serves the organization. Requirements are indicated in the sample constitution as follows:

* Sections are listed in **bold red**, however RSOs have the discretion to determine their own statements, rules, and procedures within each of these sections.
* Statements are listed in ***bold red italics*** and may not be altered in any way.

Also included in the sample constitution are recommendations for thought in developing each section.

# Sample

**Article I – Organization Name**

This section should be used to state the organization name and may include any acronyms or nicknames that the organization will use.

RSOs are not permitted to use “FSU” or “Florida State University” in the front of the organization name due to University Regulations and the Florida Administrative Code, but may use it following the organization name. More information about this policy can be found at <http://www.fsu.edu/gencounsel/notices/full/6c2-3.0015.html>.

For example: Involvement Club at FSU Panama City (approved) versus FSU Panama City Involvement Club (not approved).

**Article II – Organization Purpose**

This section should be utilized to outline the mission, vision, and or values of the organization.

**Article III – Membership**

**Section 1: Requirements**

***Recognized student organizations shall be limited to currently enrolled students at Florida State University Panama City or Gulf Coast State College as set forth by the Florida Administrative Code 6C2-3.0015 and the Seminole-Commodore Alliance.***

***No hazing or discrimination will be used as a condition of membership in this organization. Information regarding hazing can be found at*** [***http://hazing.fsu.edu***](http://hazing.fsu.edu)***.***

***This organization agrees to adhere to the University Non-Discrimination Statement: No university student may be denied membership on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veterans’ or marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other protected group status.***

\*Note that organizations exempt under Title IX are not required to include “gender” in their Non-Discrimination Statement. Those organizations must be entitled to single-gender membership under the provision of Section 86.14 of the regulations promulgated under Title IX of the U.S. Education Act of 1972.

**Subsection a: Active Membership Status**

Some organizations have active membership or regulations for a member in “good standing.” This section is used to explain what having active membership or being in good standing means for the organization (for example: GPA, service hours, attendance, etc.)

Additional requirements of membership may be listed here. Some organizations have different levels of members or have privileges given to active members or members that remain in good standing with the organization.

**Section 2: Revocation of Membership**

This section describes the process the organization should take in order to revoke the membership of an individual that is not fulfilling membership requirements or upholding the organization’s mission, vision, and/or values.

For example: “Membership may be revoked without mutual agreement for non-participation, misconduct, or violation of any provision of the Constitution. The member will be notified in writing of the possible revocation at least 72 hours prior to the vote and will be allowed to address the organization in order to relate to voting members any relevant defense prior to the voting for removal. Membership may only be revoked upon a 2/3 majority vote of eligible membership. Revocation of membership will be valid for three (3) semesters.”

**Section 3: Appeals Process**

This section describes the process the organization will take if a member wishes to appeal the decision to revoke their membership. It is suggested that this process be completed by members of the organization that did not issue the original revocation.

For example: “Any student whose membership is revoked will have seven (7) calendar days to appeal the revocation. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the President and Secretary and must include any relevant information that has not already been presented to the voting members. The President will then submit the appeal to the Appeals Committee. This committee consists of three (3) officers and four (4) general members not involved in the original revocation. This committee will render a decision at the next general organization meeting or in seven (7) calendar days, whichever occurs first.”

**Article IV – Officers**

**Section 1: Eligibility**

This section should outline what requirements the organization has set for members to hold officer positions and may be uniform for all officers and/or specified for each officer position (for example: GPA, previous position, completion of requirements, etc.).

**Section 2: Titles and Duties**

This section should list separate sections for each officer. These sections should outline the title of each officer and their respective responsibilities.

Remember, all RSOs are required to have at least two (2) officers, including a President (or similarly titled executive position). If the RSO plans to apply for A&S funding, the organization must also have a financial officer (or similarly title officer with primary responsibilities in organization finances).

**Article V – Selection of Officers**

**Section 1: Eligibility to Vote**

This section should detail requirements of organization members in order to vote (for example: must be in good standing or must be an active member as outlined in Article III Section 1.a. of the Constitution).

**Section 2: Nomination Process**

This section should outline the nomination process for potential officers.

For example: “The nomination of officers shall occur at the first meeting held in November. Any eligible member (as defined in Article III Section 1) present may nominate someone or themselves for office by verbally nominating the individual during this procedure. However, the nominee must be considered an eligible member (as defined in Article III Section 1). Absentee ballots and proxy ballots are not permitted in the nomination or election process.”

**Section 4: Election Process**

This section should outline the election process. It is highly encouraged that RSOs function very democratically. The nomination and election processes need to be fair to all members of the organization and allow an opportunity for the membership of the organization to have a voice in the election of the officers.

For example: “The election of officers shall occur at the second meeting held in November. The nominated candidates will be given a chance to address the organization to discuss their qualifications and reasons why they should be selected. Once each candidate has had the opportunity to speak, all eligible members (as defined in Article III Section 1) present will have the opportunity to vote by secret ballot. The Advisor and current highest-ranking officer not running for office will tabulate all votes. The highest-ranking officer not running for office shall announce the officer with a simple majority of votes cast by eligible members. After announcing the officer, the highest-ranking officer not running for office shall ask if any eligible members contest the count. If no eligible member contests the count, the new officer shall take office immediately. If an eligible member contests the count, the Advisor and the highest-ranking officer not running for office will recount all votes. In the event of a tie, the President shall cast the deciding vote for office unless they are running for the said office. In that case, the next-highest ranking officer not running for office shall make the deciding vote.”

**Section 5: Term of Office**

This section should describe how long officers will serve in their positions. For example, one calendar year or one academic year. Additionally, include if there are limits to how many terms an officer may hold their position.

**Article VI – Officer Vacancies**

**Section 1: Removal of Officers**

This section should explain how the organization will remove an officer from their position, the notification process, voting process and majority for removal, and if the officer has the opportunity to speak before the organization prior to votes being cast. Additionally, if there is an appeals process.

**Section 2: Resignation**

This section should describe the process for an officer to resign from their position and what an officer should do before they resign. This should include a process for transition to a new officer.

**Section 3: Filling Vacant Officer Positions**

This section should describe what the organization will do in the event of a vacant office position. This could include a nomination/election process or appointment process.

**Article VII – Advisor**

**Section 1: Advisor Responsibilities**

***The Advisor will be employed by Florida State University Panama City on a full-time basis.***

***The Advisor does not have any voting rights within the organization.***

This section should outline the organization’s expectations and responsibilities of the Advisor.

**Section 2: Nomination and Role**

This section should explain how the Advisor will be selected for the organization and the term of service. Additionally, any documentation the organization would like to have regarding an agreement between the organization and the Advisor.

**Section 3: Removal and Replacement**

This section should describe how the Advisor would be removed from the organization including notification process, voting process, etc. Additionally, include the selection of a new Advisor if different from that stated in Article VII Section 2.

**Article VIII – Finances**

**Section 1: Description**

This section should outline whether the organization will have dues. If so, this section should describe how much dues will cost, how often they will be collected, who maintains records of which members have paid, etc. If dues are collected, the following statement must be included:

***Inability to pay dues statement: No university student may be denied membership due to inability to pay dues. If a member is not able to pay dues, other arrangements will be made.***

This section may outline arrangements for members unable to pay dues.

**Section 2: Spending Organization Money**

This section should outline how organization money will maintain finances, including if the organization will have a bank account, authorized signers, and how officers/members will request and spend money.

**Section 3: Dissolution of the Organization**

This section should outline what will happen with the organization’s funds should the organization cease to exist. For example, will the funds be donated to a local school or charity?

**Article IX – Publications**

**Section 1: Compliance**

***University Posting Policy Compliance: All advertisements of the organization must comply with the University Posting Policy.***

**Section 2: Approval**

This section should discuss who will approve all flyers, publications, shirts, etc. before they are publicly distributed or printed.

**Article X – Amendments**

This section should discuss how amendments to the constitution can be made. This includes proposal, voting process and requirements, etc. Just like elections, all eligible members should have the opportunity to vote on changes to the constitution since it pertains to all members.

**Section 1: Eligibility to Propose**

**Section 2: Proposal Process**

**Section 3: Voting Process**