



## STUDENT ORGANIZATION CONSTITUTION GUIDE 2025-2026

Per the Council on Student Affairs' [Student Organization Registration and Funding Guidelines](#), all registered student organizations must follow the format provided by Ohio Union and Student Activities as the constitution to be shared in the Student Organization Management System and Student Organization Directory. The following information provided in this guide explains the constitutional requirements and offers recommendations. Some items, such as the titles as well as the entire University Regulations article require verbatim text, though most information shared in the constitution is created and maintained by the organization. Information and procedures outside the scope of the required constitution template may be classified and shared as the organization's bylaws, which have an optional upload area within the Student Organization Management System. Constitutions are reviewed by staff for approval per the annual registration process, whereas bylaws are published independently by the organization and are not subject to approval by the University.

Verbatim language is indicated in red or underlined

Requirements which are maintained by the organization are explained in **bold**

Recommendations and additional notes are indicated in normal font

### ARTICLE I. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

Article I must contain the full name of the student organization and any acronym(s) it is or will be affiliated with. This name may not duplicate the name of any other currently registered student organization. Additionally, if the organization is affiliated with any university, local national, or international organization, that information must be stated in this article of the constitution.

#### Rules Regarding Naming:

- Student organizations are separate entities from the University and have parameters in how they may associate by name with the University.
  - The name in your constitution must exactly match the name in the [Student Organization Directory](#).
  - Student organizations may only use "The Ohio State University" or "Ohio State" at the end of their name to reference their location, as in "Brutus Buckeye Fan Club at The Ohio State University."

- “OSU” is NOT permitted anywhere in the organization’s name.
- The use of “Buckeye” or other affiliations to the University’s brand may require additional approval from University Marketing facilitated by Ohio Union and Student Activities.

## ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATION PURPOSE

The purpose of the organization must be clearly stated. Typically, a purpose statement includes both the goals and the functions of the student organization. The organization's purpose should be tied to the educational purpose of the University and support the mission of Ohio State. This section may also include organizational vision, values, and mission.

## ARTICLE III. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

### Section A. Harassment and Discrimination, including Sexual Misconduct

[Organization Name] *agrees that it will not engage in sexual misconduct nor any harassment or discrimination on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, protected veteran status or any other basis in accordance with these guidelines.*

Rules Regarding Non-Discrimination:

- The paragraph above cannot be changed or altered. You may not remove categories from the above section.
- If your organization wishes to add additional categories to the above language, please add a separate statement with this information.

### Section B. Hazing

[Organization Name] *agrees to maintain a zero-tolerance policy for hazing, in compliance with Ohio State University and Collin's Law. All members must conduct themselves in a manner that supports an environment free from hazing. Hazing includes any activity, regardless of consent, that causes or creates a substantial risk of physical, mental, or emotional harm or humiliation to any individual as part of membership or affiliation with the student organization. If found responsible for hazing, members and/or the organization may face disciplinary actions.*

### Section C. Bylaws

[Organization Name] *retains the right to maintain separate bylaws to outline the day-to-day operations of the organization and to clarify policies and procedures otherwise not included in these constitutional articles. Bylaws and/or other guiding documents may not take precedence over the requirements set forth by local, state, and federal laws, The Ohio State University’s regulations, policies, and procedures, and the Council on Student Affairs Student Organization Registration Guidelines. Organizations may make amendments and changes to the bylaws without consulting the Ohio Union & Student Activities Department, and changes to bylaws do not require approval. All elements of organizational bylaws shall be consistent with the organization’s currently approved constitution on file and CSA constitution requirements*

## ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

### Section A. Membership Eligibility

**Describe your membership criteria (i.e., who is eligible to become a member?).**

Per CSA Guidelines, so long as students are afforded an equal opportunity to attain membership, student organizations may impose neutral and generally applicable membership eligibility criteria such as the payment of dues, regular attendance, or achievement measures (e.g., interviews, applications, essays, or minimum grade requirements). Additional stipulations regarding maintaining membership (e.g. attendance requirements, etc.) may be addressed in a separate document (your bylaws).

Rules Regarding Eligibility:

- The criteria must not violate any protected classes from Article III.<sup>1</sup>
- No student shall be excluded from full membership on the basis of sex, unless the student organization is exempt under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Only social fraternities and sororities recognized by the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life may limit membership based on sex. Sports Clubs registered with the Department of Recreational Sports may limit membership based on sex if the primary purpose of the organization is to engage in sports in which the major purpose or activity involves bodily contact. No other organizations may limit membership based on sex.
- 90% of the voting membership must be currently enrolled Columbus campus Ohio State students. Faculty, staff, alumni, and the partners of students, faculty, staff, and alumni of Ohio State may participate in the activities and programs of student organizations as associate members but may not comprise more than 10% of the total membership.<sup>2</sup>

### Section B. Member Selection

**Describe the process by which non-members become members. A process has specific, actionable steps that non-members can take to become members.**

Examples of Membership Selection Processes:

- Applications
  - Application processes must identify who the decision maker(s) are, and if there is a vote, a margin by which the vote passes (2/3, simple majority, unanimous, etc.).
- Interviews
  - Interview processes must identify who the decision maker(s) are, and if there is a vote, a margin by which the vote passes (2/3, simple majority, unanimous, etc.).
- Attending a certain number of meetings and submitting a membership form
- Contacting organization officers to express interest
- Joining a group chat

Rules Regarding Membership:

- Members must choose to join your organization. Organizations cannot grant automatic membership to any category of students; membership must be voluntary.
- All members are free to leave and disassociate without fear of retribution, retaliation, or harassment.

### Section C. Membership Timeline

Provide an overview of your general timeline of when non-members become members. You should not include specific dates, rather general times of the year (i.e., start of fall semester, two weeks into the spring semester, membership is open on a rolling basis, etc.).

### Section D. Member Removal

A description of for what conduct or cause a member can be removed *and* by what process member removal occurs.<sup>3</sup>

Member Removal Process must include:

- Establishing Cause for Removal: This could include behavior standards, specific infractions, or other examples that could result in removal.
- Decision Maker(s): Who is involved in the member removal process; who makes the decision to remove a member.
- Consensus/Margin of Approval: How the decision-maker(s) come to a conclusion for removal.

## ARTICLE V. ADVISOR

### Section A. Advisor Duties and Responsibilities

The student organization advisor shall serve as a resource person providing advisory support to officers and members and may not vote or hold office in the organization. If your organization has co-advisors, you may outline their responsibilities here as well.

Primary Advisors must be able to satisfy the following requirements:

- Complete advisor training every two years
- Complete the anti-hazing training module available on BuckeyeLearn or through [stophazing.osu.edu](http://stophazing.osu.edu)
- Submit online approval of the organization's registration every year
- Submit online approval of the organization's goals every year
- Submit online approval of any Council on Student Affairs (CSA) Operating or Programming funds requests initiated by the organization's treasurer
- Follow applicable laws, regulations, university rules, policies and guidelines
- Complete relevant reporting obligations

### Section B. Advisor Term

Describe the standard expectation for how long an advisor serves in their role. One year with the opportunity to be reappointed is recommended.

### Section C. Advisor Selection

State the eligibility and selection process for the advisor role.

An advisor may have formal connections to the organization through a direct appointment or partnership with a campus department. If your advisor is selected by the university, a statement of who within the university selects your advisor will suffice for this section.

Advisor Selection Process must include:

- Identify Decision Maker(s)
- Candidate Identification: action steps taken by decision-maker(s) within the organization to identify possible advisors.
- Consensus/Margin of Approval: outline how the decision-maker(s) come to a conclusion.

Rules Regarding Advisor Selection:

- The Primary Advisor must be a member of the faculty or administrative and professional staff selected by the student organization.
- Classified civil service employees, graduate associates, and emeritus and retired faculty/staff may serve as co-advisors, but the primary faculty/staff advisor must complete the certification process for the organization to be registered.

#### Section D. Advisor Replacement

Describe the process by which an advisor is removed from their position.

Advisor Removal Process must include:

- Establishing Cause: Possible cause for removal, which could include behavior standards, specific infractions, or other examples that could result in removal.
- Decision Maker(s): Who is involved in the removal process and/or who makes the decision to remove an advisor.
- Consensus/Margin of Approval: How the decision-maker(s) come to a conclusion for removal.

### ARTICLE VI. ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

#### Section A. Officer Positions

Provide a list of all available officer positions and the general duties of each officer position. Detailed descriptions of daily responsibilities, transition requirements, and other specific duties can be outlined in your bylaws.

Rules Regarding Officers:

- Registered student organizations are required to have a minimum of a Primary Leader, Secondary Leader, and Treasurer officers.
- Primary Leader and Treasurer must be enrolled as full-time students; Secondary Leader(s) must be student(s) in good standing.

### Section B. Officer Eligibility

Describe the criteria by which a member is eligible to assume an officer position.

Rules Regarding Officer Eligibility:

- The criteria must not violate any clauses in Article III or IV.<sup>1</sup>

### Section C. Officer Selection Process

Describe the process by which officers are selected and how selection is determined.

Officer Selection Process must include:

- Candidate Identification: How are potential candidates identified?
  - e.g., nominations, applications, etc.
- Decision Maker(s): Who determines the winners/final candidates
- Procedures
  - e.g., elections, applications, nominations, etc.
- Consensus/Margin of Approval: How do the decision makers come to a conclusion on the final candidate(s)?
  - If a vote is taken, what margin of approval is needed to determine a winner?
    - e.g. simple majority, 2/3, unanimous approval, etc.

### Section D. Officer Removal

Provide a description of on what basis an officer can be removed from their position and the process for removing officers. Include procedures for handling officer vacancies (e.g. resignations, officer ineligibility, or similar occurrences).

Officer Removal Process must include:

- Establishing Cause: Possible cause for removal, which could include behavior standards, specific infractions, or other examples that could result in removal.
- Decision Maker(s): Who is involved in the member removal process and/or who makes the decision to remove a member.
- Consensus/Margin of Approval: How the decision-maker(s) come to a conclusion for removal.

## ARTICLE VII. ORGANIZATION DISSOLUTION

### Section A. Dissolution Requirements

Describe the process for determining if the organization should be dissolved. This should include how the decision-maker(s) conclude the organization should dissolve or a threshold that must be met in order for the organization to dissolve.

## Section B. Dissolution Procedures, including Assets and Debts

Describe what happens if, at the time of proposed dissolution, any organization assets and debts exist, the appropriate means for disposing of those assets and debts.

Dissolution Procedures should include:

- **Responsible Party(s):** Who is responsible for executing the dissolution procedures.
- **Assets:** How will assets be disposed of and what will happen to excess assets after debts are paid.
- **Debts:** How debts will be paid and who will be responsible for managing excess debts not covered by assets.

We recommend organizations first utilize remaining assets to cover debts. Even if you do not anticipate your organization having debt upon dissolution, you still must outline a procedure to manage possible debts.

Rules Regarding Dissolution:

- Under no circumstances may an organization leave debts to The Ohio State University or its entities.

## ARTICLE VIII: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

This section describes how your constitution can be amended.

Constitutional Amendments should include:

- **Decision Maker(s):** who can propose amendments or changes to the constitution,
- **Consensus/Margin of Approval:** any necessary vote to approve the change(s) (Ex: 50% majority, 2/3 majority, etc.) or how the decision maker(s) will come to a consensus on approving or rejecting said changes.

Rules Regarding Constitutional Amendments:

- Should the organization transition leadership or wish to amend the constitution in between registration cycles, the articles set forth in this document will remain in place until a new constitution is provided to the Ohio Union and Student Activities Department and is approved.
- Submission for approval of an amended constitution should occur within 30 days of the amendments.

<sup>1</sup> A student organization formed to foster or affirm the sincerely held religious beliefs of its members may adopt eligibility criteria for its members and/or officers that are consistent with those beliefs.

<sup>2</sup> Registered student organizations whose constitution expressly promotes faculty-student interaction may have a membership that is composed of 60% students providing that the other 40% is composed of faculty or administrative and professional staff at Ohio State.

<sup>3</sup> FOR GROUPS REGISTERED WITH SORORITY AND FRATERNITY LIFE: Where processes for officer and/or member removal are provided for in national governing documents, whether secret or public, reference to such documents in local constitution shall suffice to meet the constitutional requirement outlined above.