

University of South Alabama Student Organization Constitution Guide

Constitution of _____
(NAME OF ORGANIZATION)

Date Created **OR** Date Last Revised: _____

DISCLAIMER: PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THIS IS A *GUIDE* TO HELP YOU WRITE A CONSTITUTION FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION. UNLESS STATED, **DO NOT COPY AND PASTE THE EXAMPLES.**

Article I. NAME

INSTRUCTIONS

Give the full name of the organization, as well as any abbreviated or shortened forms that may be commonly used.

EXAMPLE

The name of this organization is Students Advocating Lettuce and Dressing, also known as SALAD.

Article II. PURPOSE

INSTRUCTIONS

State the purpose, aim, and function of the organization, as well as its main mission-supporting activities. Remember that all student organizations at USA must have separate and distinct missions. New organizations cannot overlap or duplicate existing student groups.

EXAMPLE

SALAD's sole purpose is the promotion of salad consumption among University of South Alabama students. SALAD believes a daily salad is the key to physical and mental well-being. To increase salad awareness on campus, SALAD will conduct pop-up informational sessions, host nutritionists and other speakers, and hold an annual food festival called SALAD DAYS.

Article III. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

INSTRUCTIONS

The non-discrimination policy below must be included word-for-word. **Copy-and-paste it into your constitution. Make no additions or deletions!**

EXAMPLE

Membership in University of South Alabama student organizations is open to all regularly enrolled students. Accordingly, no person may be excluded from membership or leadership in a registered student organization due to race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender (unless exempt under Title IX), sexual orientation, disability or veteran status; provided, however, that registered student organizations may limit their membership to students who, upon individual

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inquiry, affirm that they support the organization's religious, political or other legally protected views, consistent with the First Amendment.

Article IV. MEMBERSHIP

INSTRUCTIONS

Section 1. USA Enrollment Requirement

Only currently enrolled students at the University of South Alabama are allowed to be members of USA student organizations. This means that 100% of your membership must be currently enrolled at USA. You must state this explicitly. (See example below.)

Section 2. Membership Qualifications and Requirements

This section should explain how a student can join the organization, as well as any additional qualifications or requirements.

Section 3. Quorum and Voting Requirements

This section should clearly define what constitutes a quorum (that is, the minimum number of members necessary to conduct official business) and how winners will be decided when voting. Remember that a *majority* means “more than half.” In some cases, you may want to institute *plurality* voting (the candidate or option that receives more votes than any other single option is declared the winner) or a *supermajority* threshold (some level of support greater than a majority, such as 60%). Feel free to **Copy-and-paste example into your constitution.**

EXAMPLE

Section 1. USA Enrollment Requirement

Membership is limited to students currently enrolled at the University of South Alabama.

Section 2. Membership Qualifications and Requirements

To join, a student must attend an official organizational event or meeting and ask to be placed on the roster. There are no additional qualifications or requirements for membership.

Section 3. Quorum and Voting Requirements

For the purpose of official business, a quorum is defined as a majority of the total membership. On any business requiring a vote, the winner must receive a majority of the ballots cast.

Article V. OFFICERS

INSTRUCTIONS

Section 1. Positions

This section must list the organization’s officer positions and define each of their roles. Each

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organization is required to have a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. You may add additional positions as desired.

Section 2. Elections

This section must explain your organization's election process. Remember that elections must be free, open, democratic, and periodic.

Section 3. Vacancies and Removals

This section should include provisions for filling interim vacancies and for removing individuals from office, should that become necessary.

EXAMPLE

Section 1. Positions

- a. **President.** The president is the chief executive officer, responsible for the general operations of the organization.
- b. **Vice-President.** The vice-president is second-in-command, assisting and filling in for the president as required.
- c. **Secretary.** The secretary is responsible for keeping minutes and maintaining the organization's historical record.
- d. **Treasurer.** The treasurer is the organization's chief financial officer, responsible for all financial matters within the organization.

Section 2. Elections

Elections will be held at the final spring meeting. Members may nominate themselves or others. For each position, the winner must receive a majority of the ballots cast. If there are three or more candidates for the same position and none receives a majority, a run-off election between the top two candidates will be conducted.

Section 3. Vacancies and Removals

If an officer resigns or a majority of members vote to replace an officer, an interim election will be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Article VI. ADVISOR

INSTRUCTIONS

Section 1. Advisor Employment Requirement

Student organization advisors at USA must either be on the faculty or a full-time staff member. You must state this explicitly. (See example below.) **Copy-and-paste example into your constitution. Make no additions or deletions!**

Section 2. Qualifications and Responsibilities

This section should explain the attributes that the organization is looking for in an advisor. Remember that it is not always possible to find the perfect advisor, so do not frame the items in this section as requirements!

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Section 3. Selection and Replacement

This section should explain the process by which the organization will select an advisor, as well as the length of term (if applicable) and the replacement process.

EXAMPLE

Section 1. Advisor Employment Requirement

The official advisor to the organization must either be a faculty member or a full-time staff member at the University of South Alabama.

Section 2. Qualifications and Responsibilities

Ideally, SALAD's advisor will enjoy eating salads and have an interest in promoting healthy lifestyles. The advisor will serve as a resource to the organization and, when available, attend official events and meeting.

Section 3. Selection and Replacement

The organization's officers are responsible for finding a faculty member or full-time staff member who is willing to serve as advisor. Once a potential advisor has been identified, the organization will vote on the nominee. The nominee must receive a majority of the ballots cast to be confirmed as advisor. With the support of the membership, an advisor may serve indefinitely. If an advisor resigns or a majority of members vote to replace the current advisor, the selection process will begin anew.

Article VII. MEETINGS

INSTRUCTIONS

Section 1. General Meetings and Notification

This section must set a minimum number of annual meetings for organization membership. Also, this section must provide suitable guarantees that the members will be given advance notice as to the time and place for conducting general meetings.

Section 2. Special Meetings

This section should explain how (and by whom) special meetings can be called, should the situation arise.

EXAMPLE

Section 1. General Meetings and Notification

The organization will have monthly general body meetings during the academic year. All meetings will be announced seven days in advance.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Any officer can call a special meeting.

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Article VIII. FINANCES

INSTRUCTIONS

Section 1. Financial Transparency Statement

The financial transparency statement in the example below must be included word-for-word. **Copy-and-paste it into your constitution. Make no additions or deletions!**

Section 2. Bank Account

This section should provide general information regarding the organization's bank account. Will it be an on-campus or off-campus account? Refer to student organization handbook for more information.

Section 3: Dues

If the organization has dues, this section explains how they are assessed and collected.

Section 4: Dissolution

This section explains what happens to the organization's funds should the organization become inactive. Feel free to **Copy-and-paste example into your constitution inserting your non-profit.**

EXAMPLE

Section 1. Financial Transparency Statement

All accounts, financial records, and transactions of the organization are subject to audit or review at the University's discretion.

Section 2. Bank Account

The organization will maintain an off-campus bank account at USA Federal Credit Union.

or

This organization will maintain an on-campus bank account.

Section 3. Dues

This organization has no dues.

or

This organization has dues of \$10 that will be collected in the Fall semester by the treasurer.

Section 3. Dissolution

Should the organization be dissolved, all remaining funds will be donated to the non-profit [INSERT NAME OF RECEIVING ORGANIZATION i.e Campus Recreation Department, Ronald McDonald House, etc].

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Article IX. AMENDMENTS AND BYLAWS

INSTRUCTIONS

Explain how the constitution can be amended and how bylaws can be adopted.

EXAMPLE

Amendments and bylaws can be proposed in writing by any member at any regular meeting. A majority vote is required for adoption.