

This sample constitution is provided as a guide for use in developing constitutions for student organizations at University of Portland. Student organizations are encouraged to adapt this sample constitution to the unique needs and purposes of the organization.

All student organization constitutions, adapted or original, must include all articles covered in the sample constitution below as well as the following:

- Date of creation and revision of the constitution (note at end of constitution)
- Non-discrimination clause (Article III)
- Disbandment Clause (Article VII)

Club Constitution Template

Below is a template for what your constitution should include, keep in mind that the articles with an asterisk (*) are required and must include the specific information denoted; however, when it comes to formatting, you and your club leadership can use the template and examples at the end of the document if you choose, but they are ultimately suggestions.

* ARTICLE I: NAME *

This article should announce the official name, as well as the acronym if one is commonly used for this group. *Try to refrain from using "on campus" "UP" or "Pilots" in your club name, due to the limitations from university marketing.*

* ARTICLE II: PURPOSE *

This article should be a summary stating the one or two overall purposes for the club and potential goals that future leadership should strive to attain in the future (but not list all the activities). If someone who had no idea what your club was read your purpose, they should get a basic understanding of who your club is.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Specify who is eligible for membership.

- State a policy of non-discrimination (it might be best if you copy and paste this statement into your constitution, in order to not leave anything out)
 - As a Registered Student Group at the University of Portland we adhere to the University's Non-Discrimination Policy. This group provides equal treatment and opportunity to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status except where such distinction is required by law. Additionally, the Office of Student Activities prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
- Specify that only currently enrolled undergraduate students can vote or hold an executive board position within the club. Furthermore, faculty and staff can be *affiliated members* that are not allowed to vote or hold office in the club nor outnumber the voting members of the club (This justification must be explicitly stated).
- If a club so desires to have tiered membership of "high standing" and general membership dependent on unique club specifications (attendance, service hours, level of participation, etc.)
 - Ex: Of the voting members of the club, a "high standing" member is characterized by attending one meeting per month and having at least 10 community service hours with the club. A general member is characterized by attending two meetings per semester and having at least 2 community service hours with the club.
- If a potential club would like to ask dues of its general membership then, the criteria of payment and membership status upon payment should be specified further in this section

*ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS *

Include all officers indicating major job responsibilities under each.

- To be approved you must have at least two officer positions filled: President and Treasurer (you can add officer positions over time or you can start with more positions like: Vice President, Secretary, and/or Advertisement Officer; it is up to you & you can name the positions whatever you would like as long as the roles are consistent and specified).
 - We strongly suggest having 3 officer positions (President, Treasurer, and Secretary) for efficient club functioning
 - Furthermore, the club advisor should not be mentioned in the constitution because they are not an officer or a voting member
- how positions will be filled if vacated before the end of the term
 - *Suggestion:* special election using a supermajority, etc.
- define the procedures for recall of an officer
 - *Suggestion:* unanimous officer vote and supermajority vote of members at a special meeting

*ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS *

Specify information related to elections.

- Include when and how elections should be conducted
 - *Suggestion:* it is best to have elections at the same time every year, usually March is the best transition time for the current and new leadership; we suggest that a special voting meeting should be called on the last week of March.
- We suggest you also make a brief statement of how the election will be publicized to the voting members
 - *Suggestion:* "A week before the set date of the special meeting for the official election, we will send out an e-mail reminder to our member roster, reminding them of the place and time of the meeting."
- Indicate who can vote, and what the eligibility requirements, if any, are in place for any of the offices. (It is best to re-state the specifications of membership in terms of voting)
 - It is important to discuss what quorum is for validation of the election (Quorum: the minimum number of members of an assembly or society that must be present at any of its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting, valid)
 - *Suggestion:* make quorum a percentage of active members in the roster (in order to remain effective over the years of operation)
- Include what type of majority is needed for an officer to win their election.
 - *Suggestion:* simple majority (50% + 1 present members) or supermajority (2/3 or 3/5 present members)

*ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS *

- Define the frequency of regular meetings and any other major information about them.
 - Try to avoid specifics with regards to meeting frequency (because specifics are difficult to uphold over different semesters), we believe that just laying out a general statement of frequency is best
 - *Suggestion:* weekly, monthly, or three times a semester
- There should be a statement on how many members are needed to establish a quorum at general meetings.
 - Define quorum for regular meeting business to proceed (like elections, stipulate a percentage of voting members that should be present at the meeting to proceed)
- Give a brief statement about how *special meetings*, will be called (similar to the section about publicizing elections)

*ARTICLE VII: DISBANDMENT *

- Specify what should happen to any funds or equipment owned by the group if the group should disband. This includes stating that any funds or equipment purchased by or given from ASUP will be returned to ASUP and any Waldschmidt funds will be returned to the university after a set period of time (We suggest that you copy and paste this statement below, so that important information is not omitted).
 - "If this club or organization were to disband for any reason, any club materials or supplies purchased with ASUP funds will be returned to ASUP, and those funds obtained from fundraising or club dues will be returned to the university after three years of group inactivity."

***ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS ***

Specify policies and procedures for amending the constitution. You must include what type of majority is needed for an amendment to be made.

- *Suggestion:* potentially call a special election once the officers unanimously approve the amendment

or

- *Suggestion:* simple majority (50% + 1 present members) or supermajority (2/3 or 3/5 present members)

****At the bottom of the last page of the constitution, there should be a note to indicate when the current version was adopted, or when it was last amended ****

OTHER ARTICLES (OPTIONAL):

Address any information specific to their club, such as safety procedures, special definitions, etc.

Other articles could include ones to:

- *list the standing or special committees, with the major function of each and to whom the committee reports*
- *outline an executive committee, specifying who is on it, what authority it has, how often it meets, how many are required for a quorum to exist*
- *An article can be added in order to form an Ad Hoc committee, which can be created at will by the executive board/president and appointed to perform a finite job or purpose and they should report to the club as a whole with their progress*
- *specify that the organization will adhere to Robert's Rules of Order or some other procedure for conducting business (if this applies then you need someone to specialize and hold the club accountable to the guidelines)*
- **Since these articles are optional, if you believe that any of these are necessary it might be best to create a by-laws section for procedural information**
 - It is important to point out that the constitution should be a broad framework that underlies the general rules of the club and the by-laws should be specific procedural information that is too specific to a constitution
- *Similarly, if you want to have committee information in your constitution, then we suggest that you leave the article out of the original and amend it in later, once you are ready to put committees into effect (it may be difficult to have committees right after approval, because it might be difficult to get enough members involved at first, therefore it is better to add it in as needed)*
- *We would suggest that if you are a club affiliated with a national organization or service organization, you should include an article at the end that catalogs the relationship between your club and the national charter*

Sample Constitution:

A fake constitution has been created as a point of reference, displaying the different sections of emphasis showcased in this template. Constitution included shows the diversity structure that could exist within this document. This constitution is included to demonstrate but not limit the structure of any potential club constitutions.

How to Start a Club (Addendum)

To become a recognized student club or organization, follow these steps:

Before you submit a new club recognition request to the Office of Student Activities it's important to know what will be needed for the process

- Club Leaderships — Know who you want your President and Treasurer to be
- Constitution — this is your club's founding document that outlines how you'd like your club to be run.
 - Constitution Template
 - [Sample Constitution](#)
- Roster — each potential club must have at least ten students who are planning to be involved.

Once you have this information it's easy to submit a new club request on the Engage Platform:

1. Navigate to <https://up.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>
2. On the left side click "register an organization"
3. Scroll down and click the blue button that says "Register a new organization"

A Club Recognition & Advisory Committee exists in partnership between the Program Coordinator for Student Clubs and Organizations and ASUP. All proposals for new clubs are reviewed by this committee, and any suggestions made by the committee must be resolved before the club can be recognized. The committee then makes a recommendation to the Director of Student Activities about the approval of a new club.