

How to Write an Organization Constitution

“Setting the Guidelines”

This framework is designed to help your student organization build a strong foundation. The Student Government Association (SGA) requires all active student organizations to have an updated constitution on file with the **Dean of Students**.

Once finalized, **date the document**, keep a copy for your records, and submit the final version to the Dean of Students.

Constitution Template Framework

Article I: Name

State the official name of the organization and any authorized abbreviations or acronyms.

- *Suggested Language:* “The name of this organization shall be [Insert Name], officially abbreviated as [Insert Acronym].”

Article II: Statement of Purpose

Clearly define the mission, goals, and core philosophy of your organization. What unique value do you bring to the student body?

- *Suggested Language:* “The purpose of this organization shall be to [insert primary mission/goals] by providing opportunities for [professional development, community service, technical skill-building, etc.]”

Article III: Institutional Affiliations & Compliance (LCTCS / NTCC Mandates)

To protect your members and ensure official recognition, your constitution must acknowledge alignment with college and system policies.

- **Non-Discrimination:** Membership and leadership must be open to all eligible students.
 - *Required Language:* "This organization complies with all federal, state, and LCTCS non-discrimination policies. Membership and participation shall not be denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status."
- **Hazing Prevention:** In accordance with Louisiana state law (Act 382) and LCTCS policy, hazing is strictly prohibited.

- *Required Language:* "This organization strictly prohibits any form of hazing, as defined by Louisiana law and NTCC policy. No student shall be subjected to activities that intentionally endanger mental or physical health for the purpose of initiation or admission."

Article IV: Membership

Define who can join and how membership status is maintained.

- **Eligibility:** Who can be a member? (e.g., "All currently enrolled NTCC students with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.")
- **Categories:** Are there different types of membership? (e.g., Active Voting Members, Associate Members, Alumni).
- **Removal Process:** How is a member removed if they violate college code or club rules? (Define the due process, notice required, and the vote percentage needed for removal).

Article V: Club Advisor

Every student organization must have an advisor who is a full-time, professional employee of Northshore Technical Community College.

- **Role & Expectations:** What is the advisor's role in guiding the organization?
- **Selection & Vacancy:** How is the advisor chosen, and how is a vacancy filled?

Article VI: Officers & Executive Board

Identify the leadership structure of your organization.

- **Positions:** Who are the officers? (Typical boards include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Public Relations Officer).
- **SGA Representative:** ⚠️ **Crucial Requirement:** You must explicitly designate an officer (or appoint a representative) to attend all mandatory Student Body SGA Meetings. *Missing consecutive meetings will result in club suspension and the loss of funding/campus privileges.*
- **Qualifications:** What are the minimum requirements to run for office? (e.g., specific GPA, credit hour completion, clean disciplinary record).

Article VII: Officer Duties

Detail the specific responsibilities for each leadership role that you decide to have.

- **President:** Presides over meetings, acts as the primary spokesperson, and coordinates with the Advisor.
- **Vice President:** Assists the President and assumes leadership in their absence.
- **Secretary:** Records meeting minutes, tracks attendance, and maintains documentation.
- **Treasurer:** Manages finances, tracks budgets, and ensures compliance with NTCC fiscal guidelines.
- **Vacancies & Removal:** What is the step-by-step procedure if an officer resigns or fails to perform their duties? How is an officer impeached? (e.g., written notice, hearing, and a 2/3 secret ballot vote).

Article VIII: Elections

Establish a fair, democratic process for choosing your leaders.

- **Timeline:** How often are elections held? (Usually annually in April/May for the following academic year).
- **Nominations:** How are candidates nominated, and how far in advance must nominations close?
- **Voting Procedure:** How are votes cast (e.g., secret ballot, electronic poll) and what constitutes a win (e.g., simple majority of voting members present)?
- **Notification:** How and when will members be notified of upcoming elections?

Article IX: Meetings & Operations

- **Frequency:** How often will regular meetings occur? Who has the authority to call an emergency meeting?
- **Notification:** How will members be notified of meetings (e.g., Canvas, college email, text apps) and how far in advance?
- **Quorum:** What is the minimum number of voting members required to legally conduct official club business or vote on motions? (Standard is usually 50% + 1 of active voting members).
- **Parliamentary Authority:** What rules will govern meeting structure?

- *Suggested Language:* "The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and consistent with this Constitution."

Article X: Finances & Fiscal Accountability

Student organization funds are public funds subject to strict institutional audit.

- **Dues:** Will the club collect dues? If so, state the amount, frequency, and deadline.
- **Financial Oversight:** Who handles the money?
 - *Required Practice:* All funds must be deposited into an official NTCC agency account. No external bank accounts are permitted. Expenditures must be jointly authorized by the Student Treasurer and the Faculty/Staff Advisor, following official NTCC financial approval processes.

Article XI: Amendments & Ratification

A constitution should be a living document that can adapt as your club grows.

- **Proposal Process:** How can a member propose a change to the constitution?
- **Voting on Amendments:** How much advance notice must be given to members before an amendment is voted on? What majority is required to pass it? (A 2/3 majority vote of active members is strongly recommended).
- **Final Approval:** State that amendments only become active once approved by the **Dean of Students.**

Date of Creation/Last Revision: _____

President Signature: _____

Advisor Signature: _____

Date Submitted to Dean of Students: _____

