

This sample constitution is provided by Student Engagement to assist your student organization in creating a constitution. Bolded items **MUST BE INCLUDED VERBATIM** as well as the date of adoption/revision. Green items are additional suggestions organizations should consider when drafting their constitution.

Constitution for the [Organization Name] at the University of West Florida

Article I: Name and Purpose

1. The name of this organization will be known as [Organization Name] at the University of West Florida, hereafter referred to as “organization”. (What is the exact title to be used in addressing this organization?)
2. The purpose of [Organization Name] is [Insert the primary purpose and goals]. (What is the purpose? Is it fostering a broad educational goal? Is it a social, cultural, recreational or political organization? Why was the group founded?)
3. The purpose and activities of [Organization Name] are lawful and consistent with University objectives, and:
 - a. May not advocate or participate in illegal activities
 - b. Contributes to the educational, cultural, social, spiritual, and/or recreational mission of the University
 - c. May not advocate intolerance or participate in acts of intolerance toward people of difference
 - d. Must recognize the primacy of the University’s academic mission.
4. The [Organization Name] shall comply with all local, state and federal laws, as well as all University of West Florida regulations, policies and procedures.

Article II: Membership

1. Membership in [Organization Name] is open to all University of West Florida students. (Who is eligible for membership? How does one become a member? How are members identified?)
2. Non-students may participate in [Organization Name] as associate members, but may not vote or hold officer positions.
3. Membership is open to all regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, race, religion, and veteran status as stated in UWF Policy P-13.09-02/20.
4. Specifically, pursuant to the American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA), the [Organization Name] is obligated to ensure that meetings, programs, or other activities are accessible to individuals with disabilities and that reasonable accommodations are made as necessary.

5. All members are free to leave and disassociate without fear of retribution, retaliation, or harassment.

Article III: Officers and Duties

1. The officers of the [Organization Name] shall be [insert which offices the organization will include (An organization must have a president or an equivalent officer)]. (How many officers are there? What are their titles and duties? Will the officers constitute an executive board?)
2. Officers terms will [insert timeframe, duration, term limits, etc.].
3. The President will [insert president's role]. Examples include:
 - a. The president shall be the chief executive officer
 - b. The president shall appoint all committee chairpersons
 - c. The president, with approval of the executive board, directs the budget
4. The Vice President will [insert vice president's role]. Examples include:
 - a. The vice president act of behalf in the absence of the president
 - b. The vice president will chair certain committees
5. The Treasurer will [insert treasurer's role]. Examples include:
 - a. The treasurer shall keep a current record of all financial transactions.
 - b. The treasurer shall develop quarterly reports containing a list of all receipts and disbursements and distribute them among the membership.
 - c. The treasurer will be responsible for checking the accuracy of all bills and invoices and paying them correctly and on time.
 - d. The treasurer will perform other duties as directed by the president.
6. The Secretary will [insert secretary's role]. Examples include:
 - a. The secretary shall record the proceedings of each meeting
 - b. The secretary shall distribute minutes to members
 - c. The secretary shall be responsible for all correspondence of the organization

[Insert any other offices held within the organization and their respective powers and duties.]

Article IV: Officer Elections

1. In order to comply with the University of West Florida Student Leader Eligibility Policy, (SA-10.05-10/18) officers of [Organization Name] must meet the following minimum requirements to be eligible to seek and retain an officer position:
 - a. Be enrolled in at least six (6) credit hours per semester
 - b. Have and maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) for UWF course work of at least 2.50 or have a UWF Semester GPA of at least 2.50 in the most recent fall or spring semester

- c. **Not be on academic or disciplinary probation. Student organizations may establish additional requirements so long as they do not conflict with other institutional policies.**
2. Elections of new officers will take place [insert the estimated times of elections and how often they will occur].
3. [List who is eligible to run for the various officer positions and that all regular members may vote.]
4. Members who are running for office must [insert election requirements- examples are acceptance of nomination, speech, campaign, etc.].
5. Officers must be elected by [insert simple majority, 2/3rds majority, etc. Also include secret ballot or hand vote.]

Article V: Removal of Officers and Vacancies

1. **If an officer fails to maintain eligibility requirements for holding office they shall be removed from the position immediately upon notification of requirement violation by another officer. Officers may be reinstated if the violation is resolved within one week upon approval by a majority vote of the Executive Board.**
2. **An officer may be removed from their position if their behavior is considered misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance to the organization or the University.**
3. **An officer may be called to face removal proceedings upon a written complaint by any member or officer in good standing submitted to the Executive Board.**
4. **The officer in question shall be notified in writing of the possible removal and the meeting time and location at least 72 hours prior to the vote. The officer in question will be allowed to address the organization in order to relate to members any relevant defense or appeal prior to the voting for removal. The Executive Board shall notify all members of the issue at least 48 hours prior to the vote.**
5. **Voting must take place at a meeting attended by at least half of the active members. If two-thirds of members in attendance vote in favor of the removal, the officer shall be released of his or her position immediately.**
6. **Removal from office does not affect the good standing of the officer as a member of the organization. For information about removing members from the organization, see Article VI.**
7. **In the case of removal, the position will be filled by special election following the procedures described in Article V section 9. The newly elected or appointed officer will assume the role immediately without an “elect” period.**

8. An officer who feels wronged by the removal process can consult the University's Student Grievance Process.

9. (Detail how an open position is filled i.e. election at next meeting, appointment, etc.)

Article VI: Member Removal

1. Members may be removed from the [organization name] if the member's behavior has and likely will continue to disrupt the activities of the organization, the members' sense of safety, or other University or Student Involvement policies. Members may also be removed for failure to meet minimum requirements described in the organization's constitution.
2. Members must be asked to end their membership by the President upon a unanimous vote by the Executive Board.
3. If the member wishes not to end their membership, they may request an appeal to the organization by submitting a written request to the Executive Board. The member in question and all members must be notified in writing of the possible removal and meeting time and location at least 48 hours prior to the vote. The member in question will be allowed to address the organization in order to relate to members any relevant defense or appeal prior to the voting for removal.
4. Voting shall take place at a meeting attended by at least half of the active members. If two-thirds of members in attendance vote in favor of the removal, the member shall be asked again to end his or her membership immediately.
5. If the member refuses for the second time to end his or her membership, the President will consult the University's Student Grievance Process.

Article VII: Finances

1. Dues shall be \$[XX] per semester/year and shall be charged [Define how much dues are, when they are charged, when they are due, and any penalties for failure to pay]
2. [Define any type of process of drafting and passing an annual/semesterly budget.]
3. [Define how expenditures are approved and who has the authority to spend money on behalf of the organization].
4. The financial affairs of the [Organization Name] will be conducted in accordance with sound business procedures and UWF requirements including:
 - a. Bill and other financial obligations will be paid in a timely fashion.

b. All fundraising activities must be legal and registered with the University.

- c. **No organization may contract in the name of the University without express approval of the Director of Student Involvement.**
5. **The [Organization Name] is fully responsible for complying with any and all applicable state and federal laws regarding tax identification, income reporting, tax exemption, and charitable organizations.**
6. **It is understood and agreed that in the event an organization is declared officially inactive, after six (6) months any funds remaining in the organization's bank account(s) may be retrieved and placed in the Student Government Loan and Grant Account. In registering as a student organization, the organization authorizes the Director of Student Involvement to close out the organization's bank account(s). Records of all such actions will be retained in the organization's permanent file in the Student Involvement office.**

Article VIII: Hazing

The University of West Florida (UWF) prohibits any form of hazing of its students, including hazing by students or other persons associated with any student, organization, or group, at any time, and at any location, and as such, this organization prohibits its members, both individually and collectively, from committing any acts of hazing as defined herein:

“Hazing” means any action or situation, which occurs on or off university property, that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for purposes including, but not limited to:

1. **Initiation into any organization operating under the sanction of a postsecondary institution;**
2. **Admission into any organization operating under the sanction of a postsecondary institution;**
3. **Affiliation with any organization operating under the sanction of a postsecondary institution; or**
4. **The perpetuation of furtherance of a tradition or ritual of any organization operating under the sanction of a postsecondary institution.**

Hazing includes, but is not limited to, pressuring or coercing the student into violating state or federal law; any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance; or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of

the student; and also includes any activity that would subject the student to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment,

or other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the student. Hazing does not include customary athletic events or other similar contests or competitions or any activity or conduct that furthers a legal or legitimate objective.

Hazing also includes observation of hazing activities by Bystanders, defined as individuals in a position to intervene, but who fail to intervene.

Hazing is a violation of the UWF Student Code of Conduct, as well as a crime in Florida, pursuant to Florida Statutes, section 1006.63.

Violation may result in the following:

1. Corrective action under the UWF Student Code of Conduct, Human Resources Policies and Procedures, or other applicable Regulations, Policies, or Operating Procedures.
2. Responsibility for any violations may be attributed to the accused, the Organization or Group, its members, or its officers/captains.
3. Any of the above in (2) may be found responsible if they engaged in, did not discourage, or did not take reasonable steps to prevent hazing from occurring.

Penalties imposed by the University may be in addition to any penalty imposed for violation of any criminal laws of the State of Florida.

Article IX: Faculty/Staff Advisor

1. The advisor of [Organization Name] will be a full-time faculty or staff member of the University of West Florida.
2. (Detail how the faculty/staff advisor is selected, the length of their term, their duties, responsibilities, and process of removal/replacement of the advisor.)
3. It is understood and agreed that the University, the State of Florida, and the employees and agents of either will not be liable for any of the organization's contracts, torts, or other acts or omissions by the organizations' officers, members, staff, or activity participants. It is further understood and agreed that the organization or its officers, members, staff or activity participants are protected by the University's or the state's insurance policies or self-insurance plans and that the University and the State will not provide any legal defense for the organization or any such person in the vent of any

claims against them. This disclaimer does not lessen protection provided to faculty advisors as stipulated by Florida law [F.S. 768.28(9)(a)].

Article X: Amendments

1. Any member of this organization may suggest amendments to this Constitution. [Insert other requirements for amendments including how they are to be submitted and to whom. Also include how they are presented, voted upon and approved (voting must include all members). Make sure to include what majority is necessary for approval.]
2. Any changes to the organization's name, purpose, and other details referenced in the constitution or by-laws must be submitted to Student Involvement via ArgoPulse prior to taking effect.

Article XI: Other Terms and Warranties

1. The affairs of [Organization Name] will be conducted in accordance with this constitution and University regulations, including:
 - a. Officer selection criteria and process must be non-discriminatory except as regards to academic and performance-based criteria.
 - b. The University reserves the right to enforce academic standards established by this constitution.
 - c. The organization must adhere to appropriate University event registrations.

BYLAWS **(Optional)**

An organization may have need to create a set of bylaws which serve to establish specific rules or guidance needed in the operation of the organization. If an organization chooses to use bylaws language should be added to their constitution that references and authorizes the bylaws. Bylaws can include items such as:

- Standing committees of the organization.
- Structures/purposes of said committees.
- Parliamentary procedures and meeting guidelines
- Specific codes of conduct
- Rules or guidelines regarding certain organization events or activities