

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
November 7, 2011

Club Constitution Guidelines

All clubs need to have a constitution that is complete and all encompassing. The following sections are required by the Rules Committee to be present in a club's constitution.

Your club is strongly encouraged to create as many articles as necessary to make your constitution more detailed and effective. Each organization has specific qualifiers that set it apart from other organizations. Please add the specific details of your organization to this template to make the constitution a document that will serve as a guide for the future leaders of your club.

The following template is to be used as a guide for creating a club constitution. Preceding each section is a **bolded explanation**.

Title: Please title the constitution appropriately. For example if the club were called the "Lawn Mowing Club," an appropriate title would be "The Constitution of the Lawn Mowing Club." It is not necessary to include Hofstra's name unless it is part of the official title of your club.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE LAWN MOWING CLUB

Preamble: This cannot be changed. It is absolutely necessary for this to be in a club's constitution.

PREAMBLE:

Under Article 1, Section 2, of the Student Government Association (SGA) Constitution, the following organization is hereby granted approval to function as a student organization for the best interest of the University community. It is the duty of this student organization to follow the Student Government Association's Constitution and Policy Series. Membership in this organization is open to all full-time undergraduate students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, marital or veteran status ("protected status") in the conduct and operation of its educational programs and activities, including admission and employment.

Name: Please use the organization's full name. It is okay for an organization to be known by an acronym or abbreviation, but if this is the case, the full name must be spelled out. So if the Lawn Mowing Club is known as L.M.C., it still needs to be spelled out as it is below.

ARTICLE I: NAME

A. The name of this organization shall be the Lawn Mowing Club.

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Purpose: Clubs must provide a detailed purpose describing every aspect of the organization. The more clear and detailed a purpose, the better chance a club will differentiate itself from other clubs. It will also prevent new clubs from being created that conflict with existing club's purposes. This is the appropriate section to include any existing affiliation with a national, regional, or state organization.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this organization shall be to educate the Hofstra Community on the art and methodology of mowing lawns. It will seek to incorporate aspects of landscaping and gardening in addition to lawn mowing; however, operation of walk-behind mowers, riding mowers, and commercial mowers will be emphasized. It will be the goal of the Lawn Mowing Club to offer mowing and landscaping services to communities surrounding Hofstra University as both service opportunities and fundraising efforts.

Club Adviser: All clubs and organizations are required to have a Club Adviser selected by the organization. The adviser must be a non-student employee of Hofstra University. This is a Student Government Association and Hofstra University policy. A second adviser, the Programming Adviser, will be assigned appropriately from the Office of Student Leadership and Activities, the Department of Recreation and Intramural Sports, or the Office of Multicultural and International Student Programs.

ARTICLE III: CLUB ADVISER

- A. The Club Adviser for this organization must be a Hofstra University employee.
- B. The adviser must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members of this organization.
- C. The duties of the Club Adviser will be the following:
 - a. Mentor and advise this organization on how best to fulfill its purpose.
 - b. Hold members and officers of this organization accountable.
 - c. Provide structure for the meetings of this organization and serve as a resource for all members and officers during meetings.

Membership: No club or organization that is recognized by the Student Government Association can limit its membership or be exclusive in nature. No club can discriminate for any reason whatsoever (as listed in the preamble). It is strongly advised that a club define a system to track the status of members. This way, members that are not active in the club are held accountable and lose their active status. Active members are those that regularly attend club meetings and events. Your organization has the right to determine

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how many attended meetings it takes to be recognized as an active member and how many missed meetings it takes to become an inactive member. To be club a recognized by SGA, all members must be undergraduate students.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

- A. Any full-time undergraduate student at Hofstra University may become a member.
- B. Status of Members
 - a. Members shall be recognized as active after attending three (3) meetings.
 - b. Members who miss more than two (2) meetings in a row will be considered an inactive member.
 - c. An inactive member may be reinstated as an active member by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active membership present and voting at the meeting.

Duties of Officers and Their Elections: SGA requires that all clubs have a President, Vice-President, and Treasurer, or equivalents of these positions. Clubs are encouraged to add additional officers to this section as needed. It is recommended that the duties of officers be adjusted to best fit the purpose of a club. The provided example uses a commonly recommended elections procedure; however, it can be changed to best fit the purpose and operations of a club.

ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTIONS

- A. The titles of the officers and their duties will be:
 - a. President
 - i. Preside at full meetings of the club.
 - ii. Act as a member ex-officio of all club committees.
 - iii. Represent the club where such representation is required, requested, or deemed appropriate and/or acceptable.
 - iv. Carry out or delegate all duties not specifically vested in any other officer of the club.
 - v. Update Collegiate Link by ensuring that the member roster is active and complete and by updating adviser information.
 - b. Vice President
 - i. Assume the duty of the President in the event of a resignation, removal of the President, or in the event that the President cannot for any reason fulfill his/her duties.
 - ii. In the event that a chairperson of any committee is unable to fulfill his/her duties, the Vice President will act as temporary chairperson until a new one is appointed.
 - c. Treasurer

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- i. Meet with the Student Government Association Internal Review and Control Board when deemed so necessary by the Internal Review and Control Board.
- ii. To keep track of all records concerning club funds.
- iii. To attend Appropriations Committee meetings when necessary.

B. Election Rules:

- a. Elections shall be held at last meeting before the culmination of the Spring Semester.
- b. The presiding officer shall take nominations from the floor. Any active member may nominate any other eligible active member for any office.
- c. There shall be a closed ballot; the election shall be constituted by a simple majority of active members present and voting.
 - i. If any one candidate does not obtain a majority, the two (2) individuals with the highest number of votes will participate in a run-off election.
 - ii. If there is a tie in the percentage of votes cast in the first election, all of the candidates will reintroduce themselves and proceed with another election until there is either a clear majority or two (2) individuals with the highest number of votes which refers back to sub-sub-section i.
- d. All ballots must be cast in person. No voting by proxy will be permitted at any election. However, if an active member cannot attend the elections, he/she may hand in a signed written ballot to the adviser before the election.
- e. The order of elections shall start with the President. After the President is elected, the Vice-President will be elected, followed by the Treasurer, and so forth.
- f. Elected officials shall take office immediately after the conclusion of the elections.
- g. Procedure in the event of resignation, removal, or vacancy:
 - i. Any vacancy in the Presidency shall result in the succession of the Vice-President to the Presidency.
 - ii. If for any reason the Vice-President cannot assume the presidency, an election shall take place as soon as possible to elect a new president.

Meetings: Clubs are encouraged to indicate how often meetings will occur. General guidelines for what is allowed at meetings are included, but this can be changed depending on the needs of the club.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

- A. Meetings shall be held at least once a week while classes are in session. The exact time and date shall be determined by a common agreement of the members.

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- B. Special Meetings
 - a. If one-third (1/3) of the club's active members present a petition in writing to the President, he/she is required to call a special meeting within 48 hours.
 - b. During a special meeting, no removal of officers shall take place.
- C. A quorum of a majority of the active members will be required for any business actions at a meeting.
- D. Only active members may be permitted to vote at meetings.

Removal of Officers: While membership in a club cannot be totally declined, an officer can be removed from their position if necessary. This section identifies the recommended procedure for removing officers, in accordance with the policies of the Student Government Association.

ARTICLE VII: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

- A. If it is determined that an officer is not fulfilling the duties of his/her position, or is violating the rules and procedures of the club, he/she shall be removed from office in the following manner.
 - a. An impeachment committee will be formed to collect and bring charges against the officer.
 - b. The impeachment committee will send a letter to the officer notifying him/her of the date of the impeachment vote.
 - c. The committee will present their findings to the club.
 - d. The officer will have a chance to rebut the charges.
 - e. After all procedures have been carried out, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all active members is required to remove the officer.

Method of Amendment: It is SGA policy that clubs must have any and all constitutional changes approved by the Rules Committee.

ARTICLE VIII: METHOD OF AMENDMENT

- A. Proposed amendments to this constitution shall be presented at any regular meeting and shall be ratified by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members present and voting at the following regular meeting.
- B. The Rules Committee of the Student Government Association must approve all amendments.

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Additional Articles: Since all clubs have different purposes, it is beneficial to provide additional sections specific to the policies and components of your club. In this example, the Lawn Mowing Club creates ARTICLE IX: FUNDRAISING to describe the fundraising policies. The additional articles your club adds to this template can be anything that helps to provide more structure for your constitution.

ARTICLE IX: FUNDRAISING

- A. It will be the duty of all members and officers to be involved with this organization's fundraising opportunities.
- B. Fundraising will be for charitable purposes only. All money raised will be donated to a charity to be voted upon by all active members once per semester.
- C. Members and officers will never be required to contribute money to fundraisers, however contributions made by members or officers for the execution of fundraising events will be allowed.
 - a. All money contributed to the execution of fundraisers will be refunded when deemed necessary by a majority vote of all active members.