

Hofstra University

Club Constitution Guidelines

Your club is strongly encouraged to create as many articles as necessary to make your constitution more detailed and effective. Each organization has specific qualities 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. Please remain within the formatting guidelines of this template, particularly as it relates to margins, indents, and outlining format (i.e. no bullet points or dashes). Preceding each section is a **bolded explanation**.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Use the word “shall” when stating an action is definitive (instead of using “must” or “will”).

Use the word “may” when stating an action is not definitive or optional (instead of using “can”).

Each number shall be written both numerically and in words (i.e. two-thirds (2/3)).

Complete all sentences and clauses with a period.

Do not list any specific names for any position (i.e. do not list your club advisor’s name).

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: Please include SGA’s Preamble as follows.

PREAMBLE:

Under Article I, section two, 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. A club or organization will be defined as non-exclusive in its membership and actions by “extending equal opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, marital or veteran status (characteristics collectively referred to as ‘Protective Characteristic’) in employment and in the conduct and operation of Hofstra University’s Educational programs and activities.

Name: Please use the organization’s full name. It is acceptable 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.
- B. The name of this organization shall be colloquially known as L.M.C.

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 have in differentiating itself from other clubs. It will also prevent new clubs from being created that conflict with an 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 shall seek to incorporate aspects of landscaping and gardening in addition to lawn mowing; however, operation of walk-behind mowers, riding mowers, and commercial mowers shall be emphasized.

- B. It shall 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 Advisor: All clubs and organizations are required to have a Club Advisor selected by the organization. The advisor MUST be a non-student employee of Hofstra University. A second advisor, the Programming Advisor, will be assigned appropriately from the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement, or the Department of Recreation and Intramural Sports.

ARTICLE III: CLUB ADVISOR

- A. The Club Advisor for this organization shall be a non-student Hofstra University employee.
- B. The advisor shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members of this organization.
- C. The duties of the Club Advisor shall be the following:
 - a. Mentor and advise this organization on how to best 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 during meetings.

Membership: It is strongly advised that clubs define a system to track the status of members. This way, inactive members are held accountable. Active members are those that regularly attend club meetings and events. Your organization has the right to determine 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.

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) consecutive meetings.
 - b. Members who miss more than two (2) consecutive meetings will be considered inactive.

Duties of Officers and Their Elections: It's required that all clubs have an Executive Board composed of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary or equivalents of these positions. Clubs are encouraged to add additional officers (i.e. Public Relations Chair) 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 shall be to:

- 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. Ensure that the member roster is active and complete by updating GetInvolvedHU.
- b. Vice President
 - i. Assume the duty of the President in the event of a resignation, removal or in the event that the President cannot for any reason fulfill his/her duties.
 - ii. Act as temporary chairperson in the event that a chairperson of any committee is unable to fulfill his/her duties until a new one is appointed.
 - iii. Perform all other tasks as delegated by the President.
- c. Treasurer
 - i. Keep track of all records concerning club funds.
 - ii. Attend Appropriations Committee meetings when necessary.
 - iii. Perform all other tasks as delegated by the President.
- d. Secretary
 - i. Record all minutes during each general meeting and E-Board meeting.
 - ii. Maintain a permanent file of all agendas, minutes, and meeting handouts.
 - iii. Keep attendance at all club meetings and events.
 - iv. Perform all other tasks as delegated by the President.

B. Elections

- a. Elections shall be held before the culmination of the spring semester.
- b. A representative of the Student Government Association shall be present in order for the election proceedings to occur.
- c. The presiding officer shall take nominations from the floor. Any active member may nominate any other active member for any office.
- d. There shall be a closed ballot; election of a candidate to a position shall be constituted by a simple majority of the active members present and voting.
 - i. If any one (1) 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.

- e. All ballots shall be cast in person. No voting by proxy shall be permitted at any election. However, if any active member cannot attend the elections, he/she may hand in a signed, written ballot to the advisor before the election.
- f. The order of elections shall start with the President. After the President is elected, the Vice Present shall be elected, followed by the Treasurer, and so forth.
- g. Elected officials shall take office immediately after the conclusion of the elections.
- h. 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 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.
- 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 forty-eight (48) hours.
 - b. During a special meeting, no removal of officers shall take place.
- C. A quorum of a majority of the active members shall be required for any business actions at a meeting.
- D. Only active members shall be permitted to vote at meetings.

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 and could be removed from the club in the following manner:
 - a. A concerned member shall collect and bring charges against the officer.
 - b. Said member shall send a letter to the officer notifying him/her of the date of the impeachment vote.
 - c. He/she/they shall present his/her/their findings to the club.
 - d. The officer shall 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.

- B. A member of Student Government Association's Rules Committee shall be present for impeachment proceedings to occur.

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. Any amendments made to this constitution shall be presented to and approved by the Student Government Association's Rules Committee before going into effect.

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 shall be the duty of all members and officers to be involved with this organization's fundraising opportunities.
- B. Members and officers shall never be required to contribute money to fundraisers; however, contributions made by members or officers for the execution of fundraising events shall be allowed.
 - a. The Executive Board shall set a contribution limit for individuals before each fundraiser.
 - b. Any amount contributed above such limit by an individual shall be refunded when deemed necessary by a majority vote of all active members.
 - c. All money contributions, even those under the contribution limit, are subject to review and refund by the Executive Board.

Logistics: In this example, the Lawn Mowing Club creates ARTICLE X: LOGISTICS to describe relevant club necessities. This section is not necessarily for all clubs but may help to create a conducive constitution that will provide explicit intricacies for the future of your members. This section should by no means be limited to the examples provided here.

ARTICLE X: LOGISTICS

- A. Equipment
 - a. The Lawn Mowing Club shall require two (2) pull-start gas powered push mowers. This shall be provided by the Hofstra University Maintenance Department. They shall also require each member to purchase a pair of Pruning Clippers to be brought to every meeting.

- i. Members shall be responsible for the care of said equipment and assume the consequences for its misuse.

B. Events

- a. Each year the Lawn Mowing Club shall host a “Lawn Race,” wherein participants shall vie for the title of Hofstra’s fastest, most efficient lawn mower.
 - i. The President shall be the presiding figure in this event.
 - ii. This event shall be hosted annually in the spring semester at a time to be determined by the present voting members of the Lawn Mowing Club when the weather permits Landscaping activities.