

Constitution and Bylaws Template

This TEMPLATE is designed for the purpose of helping current and prospective groups, organizations, and clubs develop a constitution and by-laws for their recognition by the College. The constitution and bylaws are important regulations, which govern the organization of a group and provide guidelines for meetings. These basic documents are also important because they state the rights and responsibilities of the members, officers and committees, which comprise an organization.

This Template was designed by Student Activities Office to address those basic elements of organizational structure which the College feels are essential. The following topics must be included in all PBSC club/ organization constitution and/or bylaws: Highlighted on the template.

- Statement of purpose
- Criteria for membership (must state that membership is open to all currently enrolled students)
- Disclosure of all off-campus affiliations and associations of the student organization
- Statement prohibiting hazing per Florida Statute 1006.63.
- A Statement of adherence to PBSC Cash Collection and Deposit Guidelines
- State whether or not membership dues are required and the amount
- Statement of Impeachment process including oversight by the advisor
- Procedure for amending the constitution & bylaws and annual ratification

It is recognized, however, that different groups may have variations in their need for certain positions, titles, and/or procedures. This guide is a "working

draft" which should be discussed by organization members and approved by the group.

Questions or concerns about the development of a constitution and bylaws should be directed to Student Activities Office.

There is often confusion regarding the definitions of the terms "constitution" and "bylaws". However, there are important differences between the two that should be recognized. The constitution contains the fundamental principles of an organization and determines the responsibilities and rights of its officers and members. The bylaws explain the detailed procedures and working guidelines of the organization and determine the routine operations of the organization. Both the constitution and bylaws are divided into parts, called articles. As necessary, the articles can then be further divided into sections and subsections.

NOTE: If the new group or club is going to be a local chapter of a larger organization, special rules may apply. The larger organization will most likely have its own constitution and may require special provisions of its local chapters.

CONSTITUTION TEMPLATE

Note: All highlighted fields must be included in the constitution.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The first article of any group's constitution states what the name of that group shall be. The name should not be identical with that of an organization that already exists, and should reflect the essence of the organization.

EXAMPLE: The name of this organization shall be _____.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The second article of the constitution must state, as clearly as possible, the purpose of the organization.

EXAMPLE: The purpose of the (name of organization or group) shall be to _____.

ARTICLE III– External Affiliations (if applicable)

The rules and regulations of the external affiliate shall be followed when not inconsistent with the rules and regulations of this Constitution and Palm Beach State College.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. State the name of any affiliation with a national, regional, or local governing body/parent/corporate organization. Discuss how the organization relates to the external affiliates, including any requirements (fees, membership, governance, etc.) of that relationship.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

This article should clearly state the eligibility for membership (which should also contain an equal opportunity statement which provides access to membership regardless of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or

*disability), types of membership offered and qualifications for voting in the organization. **Membership must be open to all currently enrolled Palm Beach State students in good academic and judicial standing, but requirements, such as paying dues or meeting certain grade point average standards may be included for voting members.***

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. All currently enrolled Palm Beach State students in good academic and judicial standing shall be eligible for membership in the (name of group). Membership shall be open to any student regardless of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status or disability.

SECTION 2. Voting members shall be designated as those persons who have attended _____ meetings in an academic semester.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

This article should include the titles and special qualifications for all the officers of the organization. The method for electing officers, filling vacancies, and the length of term for each officer should also be specified. (The duties of the officers will be part of the bylaws.)

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. The officers of the organization shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and a Treasurer.

SECTION 2. All currently enrolled students, whether or not they have previously been voting members of the organization, shall be eligible to hold office provided they are in good academic standing at the time of election.

SECTION 3. The term of office for the officers shall be from _____ of the regular academic year to the _____ of the following year.

SECTION 4. The officers shall be elected by a majority at the annual elections held on _____.

SECTION 5. Vacancies of offices shall be (appointed, elected) by _____.

SECTION 6. All officers shall retain voting rights; however, the President shall only vote in the case of a tie, with the exception of officer elections.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

This article should explain when and under what circumstances meetings of the organization are held. This article will vary widely depending on the size of the group, its purpose, and interest level.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. The regular meetings of the voting membership shall be held every at least _____ (week, month, etc.)

SECTION 2. Special meetings of the organization may be called by the President, or upon the requests of _____ members of the organization.

SECTION 3. A quorum for the conduct of official business shall be defined as _____ of the voting membership.

ARTICLE VII – RULES OF PROCEDURE

The type of procedure for conducting the business of the organization. Robert's Rules of Order is recommended, but organizations may choose an alternative method of conducting their meetings if it better suits their needs.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. Robert's Rules of Order (revised) shall be the parliamentary authority of this organization. Should Robert's Rules of Order conflict with this Constitution, this Constitution takes priority.

ARTICLE VIII – HAZING

This article MUST be included in every club/organization constitution. It shall state that the organization complies with [Florida Statute 1006.63](#), which prohibits the practice of "hazing".

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. The (name of group or organization) does not engage in any Initiation procedures which would be considered illegal Under Florida Statute 1006.63 and/or applicable federal law.

SECTION 2. Each year, every member, will be provided with a copy of Palm Beach State College's Board policy 6Hx-18-3.41, Hazing: Suspension of a student; Suspension of a Student Organization.

ARTICLE IX – RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENTS

A procedure for ratifying and amending the constitution must be placed in every constitution. The procedure should be clearly outlined and as specific as possible.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. This constitution must be ratified by its officers and/or members annually according to the deadline set by SA.

SECTION 2. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by either the officers or voting members of this organization.

SECTION 3. Consent by two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members shall be necessary to approve amendments to this Constitution.

BYLAWS TEMPLATE

Note: All highlighted field must be included in Bylaws.

ARTICLE I – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

This section should specifically outline the duties of each officer of the organization. These are general duties for basic positions; depending on the nature of a particular organization the duties and officers may be different.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. The duties of the President shall be to:

- a. Preside over all regular membership meetings.
- b. Call for special meetings when necessary
- c. Sign all financial documents of the organization
- d. Serve as the organizational representative.

SECTION 2. The duties of the Vice-President shall be to:

- a. Succeed the President should he or she for any reason be unable to carry out the Presidential duties.
- b. Assist the President in administering the business of the organization.

SECTION 3. The duties of the Secretary shall be to:

- a. Take brief minutes of each meeting and take care of any major correspondence concerning the organization as a whole.
- b. Maintain organization's OrgSync portal

SECTION 4. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to:

- a. Keep a record of all financial and historical documents and submit all financial records to the advisor.
- b. Review club expenditures
- c. Ensure adherence to College's Cash Collection and Deposit Guidelines

ARTICLE II – SELECTION OF OFFICERS

This article should clearly explain how officers are selected, nominated and voted on for positions. It should be in line with Article IV on officer qualifications in the constitution.

SECTION 1. The nomination of officers shall occur each academic year at the Membership meeting held in _____ the highest-ranking officer not running for office shall facilitate the nomination and election process at this meeting. If this is not possible, the facilitator will be selected by a majority vote of active student members.

SECTION 2. Any active student member present may nominate someone or him/herself for office by verbally nominating the individual during this procedure. However, the nominee must be considered eligible for an officer position (as defined in Article IV, Sections 1 and 2 in the constitution). Absentee/proxy ballots are not permitted in the nomination process

Section 3. Founding/Initial or appointed officers shall serve as volunteers until special elections are held on _____

ARTICLE III – DUTIES OF ADVISOR

This article should clearly describe the role/expectation of the advisor in the organization.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. An advisor shall be selected by the members and subject to approval by the College.

SECTION 2. The duties of the advisor shall be to:

- Attend mandatory Advisor Training(s) as required by SA.
- Attend the meetings and ensure that they are properly scheduled.
- Serve as a resource person at executive and committee meetings.
- Act as a consultant on any project or special committees.
- Inform club members of the anti-hazing regulations stated in the constitution.
- Act as a liaison between the College and the club/organization, representing the best interest of each.
- Sign documents deemed appropriate, such as room reservation forms, recognition forms, travel forms, requisitions, etc.

- Submit all publicity and advertisements to SA for approval.
- Ensure fiscal responsibility by managing budgets, complying with College policy, Cash and Collections Guidelines, Purchasing Card usage guidelines, and SA requirements.
- Serve as an OrgSync administrator to ensure OrgSync is up-to-date and accurate according to SA policy.
- Assist with the formulation, amendment, and clarification of the constitution and bylaws.
- Advise the planning of activities and events and oversee elections.
- Confirm that activities and events are approved in advance.
- Chaperone all travel, activities, and events or appoint a designee.
- Work with the officers to promote efficient and effective administration.
- Assist with the development, training, and orientation for new members.
- Consult with Student Activities Office when questions and conflicts arise.
- Advise students in the area of fiscal responsibilities, integrity and leadership.
- Enforce the College Student Code of Conduct at all activities/events whether on or off campus.
- Use or possession of alcohol and/or drugs by an advisor during any College sponsored activity is strictly prohibited.

ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEES

Although no organization is required to have a standing committee structure, this section would provide the opportunity to state the duties, powers, and a membership of any existing committees. At the very least it should provide for an ad-hoc committee that can be formed to consider questions of impeachment, sanctioning, and removal.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. Ad-hoc (temporary) committees

- a. Shall be formed by the President, as deemed necessary, to address matters of immediate concern.
- b. The Chairperson and members of the ad-hoc committee will be appointed by the President, to be approved by a majority of the voting members of the organization.

ARTICLE V – IMPEACHMENT

Every organization must have some mechanism for the impeachment, sanctioning and removal of officers, members and advisors. These rules should never be used, however, without extremely good cause. Sanctions such as censure or reprimand may be imposed for minor violations, in accordance with this article.

EXAMPLE:

SECTION 1. Officers and/or members may be impeached on the basis of not fulfilling the purposes and policies of the organization as outlined in The Constitution and Bylaws or for violation of College and/or Financial procedures. Any concerns with the Advisor must be conveyed to SA.

SECTION 2. Any member of the organization may initiate impeachment proceedings by giving written notice to the President and Advisor. If it is the President who is being impeached, notice must be given to the Vice-President.

SECTION 3. Upon formal notification, it is the responsibility of the President (or Vice-President) to convene an ad-hoc committee of inquiry to consider the filed allegations.

SECTION 4. Any individual who is impeached shall be given full notice of the allegations against him/her and shall have an opportunity to respond to them.

SECTION 5. The ad-hoc committee of inquiry will investigate the allegations. Determine the validity of the charges, and make recommendations regarding sanctioning to the full body for its consideration.

SECTION 6. Recommendations for sanctioning made by the ad-hoc committee of inquiry must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting, in order to be implemented.

SECTION 7. Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, reprimand, censure, and/or removal.

SECTION 8. An individual may appeal his/her sanction by submitting an Appeal Request to the Dean of Student Services/Educational Services or designee office within ten (10) Calendar days of his/her notification of the sanction.

- SECTION 9. An appeal may be requested only on the basis of one of the following two claims:
- a. That there was procedural error in the conduct of the impeachment proceedings.
 - b. That there is significant new evidence which was previously not available.
- SECTION 10. The Dean of Student Services/Educational Services or designee shall determine whether there are grounds for appeal and may choose to affirm the sanction or remand the case for a rehearing by a new ad-hoc committee of inquiry.
- SECTION 11. If an appeal hearing is granted based upon one of the conditions in Section 9, it will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Sections 5-7, and with new evidence submitted or procedural error removed.

ARTICLE VI – ELECTIONS

Specific election procedures for the organization should include information on dates, eligibility, and rules for handling election procedure violations.

EXAMPLE:

- SECTION 1. Elections shall be held during the first/last _____ weeks of the _____ semester of each academic year.
- SECTION 2. Candidates for offices shall be eligible provided they have met the requirements for that office as stated in Article V of the Constitution.
- SECTION 3. Violations of election procedures shall be heard by _____.
- SECTION 4. Special elections may be held to replace interim, temporary, or vacant officer positions with a written request to the Advisor.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCES

This article should state the guidelines for use of dues (if there are any), income, and other funds.

EXAMPLE:

- SECTION 1. All finances shall be handled in accordance with the established Cash Collection & Deposit Guidelines for Student Activities fiscal procedures.
- SECTION 2. Membership dues shall be number (#) dollars per year or number (#) dollars per semester. Membership dues will be collected at the discretion of the Treasurer (or appointed officer). All members, including officers, are required to pay membership dues. Once payment has been processed, no refunds will be granted.
- SECTION 3. The Treasurer (in conjunction with the President and Advisor) shall propose a budget for the entire year.
- SECTION 4. Organizational funds may be spent on items such as office supplies, events and activities, publicity, travel expenses, and conference fees, but will not be used for anything illegal under College, local, state, and federal laws. All funds must be deposited within 24 business hours after collection.
- SECTION 5. It is the outgoing Treasurer's responsibility to compile and present all documents and information about the previous and current budget to the advisor.
- SECTION 6. In the event that the organization ceases to exist, any funds remaining in the organization's account shall be deposited back Student Activities.

ARTICLE VIII—PUBLICATIONS AND ADVERTISEMENT

The standards and regulations for advertisements and marketing should be defined in this section. It should mention the College's required standards when using the College logo on printed or electronic materials.

EXAMPLE:

- SECTION 1. All publications of the organization must comply with the Palm Beach State College Relations and Marketing department's branding guidelines and graphic standards.
- SECTION 2. The Advisor must approve all publications, shirts, flyers, and other forms of advertising/marketing prior to

duplication and distribution. All flyers to be posted must be submitted and approved by Student Activities Office.

ARTICLE IX –RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENTS

Because the Constitution and Bylaws are two separate documents, each must have an article, which provided procedures for amendment. This article can follow the same basic pattern as Article VII of the Constitution.

SECTION 1. These bylaws must be ratifying by its officers and/or members annually according to the deadline set by SA.

History of Constitution

Created: Original date of creation

Revised: Date of revision, AFTER initial recognition is given