

Constitution Template Introduction: This template assists student organizations in creating, updating, and implementing essential governing documents. The document's format/style is flexible, but **specific articles are crucial for the organization's successful and equitable operation, and therefore mandatory.**

- **RED** = Insert organization name or information
 - **GREEN** = Mandatory to have within the organization's constitution
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(Replace with your organization logo)



ORGANIZATION NAME

CONSTITUTION

LAST REVISED [MONTH/YEAR]

Article I – Name of Organization (This entire section is MANDATORY as is)

Section 1. The official name of this organization is **[Insert Org Name]**. Campus Activities and University Relations have approved it and also reserve the right to alter the name if it does not meet outlined policies (policies can change over time). The name follows the Cornell University Policy 4.10 on Student Organization Branding.

Section 2. This organization is also called **ORGANIZATION ACRONYM** and will be the official acronym.

Article II –Mission, Purpose, Aims of Organization (This entire section is MANDATORY as is)

Section 1. The purpose of **ORGANIZATION NAME** shall be to... *(Insert purpose: Generally 60 words or less. A mission statement is a single sentence that describes the purpose of your organization's existence. It represents your organization's intentions and goes some way to demonstrate how you're working towards making your goals/purpose/philosophy statement a reality.)*

Section 2. The goals of this organization are to ...**[INSERT GOALS]**

Section 3. *(If applicable)* This organization is associated with the following local, state, national, or international organization: **ORGANIZATION NAME**.

Article III – Membership Requirements and Limitations (This section is MANDATORY but can be determined by the organization in areas not highlighted in green.)

Section 1. Membership eligibility.

- a. The organization shall consist of **UNDERGRADUATE or GRADUATE STUDENTS (if both state for both)** of Cornell University who are interested in the purpose of the **ORGANIZATION NAME** and who shall be approved by the Officers.
- b. Members of registered student organizations must be registered, matriculated full-time students at their respective Cornell University campuses (i.e., Ithaca, Geneva, NYC Tech). Part-time students, non-matriculated students, students on a leave of absence, or students who are abroad may not serve as officers, eboard, and/or voting members of student organizations. It is the responsibility of the Advisor to collaborate with the President to ensure that all officers are full-time students on their campus. If one of your officers has a change in status that will require them to step down from their position, please contact the Campus Activities Office. General members may be students, faculty, staff, or community members.

- c. Approval results through the completion of the membership form, which solely consists of stating the reason for interest.
- d. **ORGANIZATION NAME** complies with Cornell University Policy 6.4 of Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual and Related Misconduct.
- e. The organization shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or national origin, citizenship and immigration status, color, sex/gender, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, age, creed, religion, actual or perceived disability (including persons associated with such a person), arrest and/or conviction record, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, gender expression and/or identity, an individual's genetic information, domestic violence victim status, familial status, marital status, and any other legally protected class when determining its membership. Notwithstanding these requirements, a sports club may restrict membership based on gender where selection for such clubs is based upon competitive athletic skill or the activity involved is a contact sport. Organizations may also make requirements based on vocal range or quality which may result in a chorus or choruses of one or predominantly one gender. In determining cases of discrimination it is not sufficient to look merely to the constitution of the organization. Its actual practices and operations are also relevant.
- f. This policy is also outlined in the Big Red Guidebook.

Section 2. General membership expectations.

- a. Members must attend at least **(PROVIDE NUMBER OR PERCENTAGE)** of regularly scheduled body meetings.
- b. Members are expected to assist with planning, advertising, and implementing events hosted by the organization.
- c. Members hold voting power during elections and when items are brought to the organization for a vote. Their vote has the same power as an Officer's vote.
- d. Members are expected to attend the organization retreat/training held within the first two weeks of classes.
- e. Members are invited to all social events hosted by the organization.

Section 3. New member recruitment.

- a. Recruitment for **ORGANIZATION NAME** occurs at the beginning of each semester.
- b. The organization recruits through ClubFest, social media, quarter cards, and other means.
- c. Membership is granted based on **(STATE YOUR APPLICATION PROCESS)**.
- d. The first meeting post-recruitment is dedicated to training new members and getting to know existing members.

Section 4. The Officers reserve the right to remove any member (based on the unanimous decision of the Officers and Advisor) for the following grounds:

- a. Violation of rules and regulations outlined in the Cornell Student Policies and/or Student Code of Conduct.
- b. Failure to uphold the provisions of the constitution and bylaws.
- c. Does not act in the best interests of the organization and/or is engaged in activity jeopardizing the organization's existence.
- d. Unexcused absences for a minimum of **(OR ANOTHER NUMBER)** required events.

Section 5. Membership Accountability.

Members are expected to uphold the organization's constitution, bylaws, and behavioral expectations. Concerns regarding member conduct shall be addressed through the Organization Accountability Process outlined in Article 11.

Article IV – Student Code of Conduct (This entire section is MANDATORY as is)

Section 1. All members must follow local, state, and federal laws, Cornell University rules, and the organization's constitution at all functions.

Section 2. All members will abide by Cornell University Policies, specifically policy 6.4: Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual and Related Misconduct.

Section 3. In the event of a violation and/or an active University investigation, it is essential to recognize that many University investigations are confidential, depending on their nature, and the University has no obligation to disclose information about a case (again, depending on the nature of the case).

Section 4. If there is an alleged violation of a University policy, the organization must submit an incident report and refer the matter to the appropriate University process. Organizations are not permitted to conduct internal investigations into alleged violations of University policies.

Article V – Executive Board of Officers (This section is MANDATORY but can be determined by the organization in areas not highlighted in green.)

Section 1. Elected Officers.

- a. The elected officers in **ORGANIZATION NAME** shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and any other officers listed in **ORGANIZATION NAME's** Standing Rules,

Policies, and Procedures.

Section 2. President. The President shall:

- a. Coordinate all functions and activities of **ORGANIZATION NAME**.
- b. Chair all General Membership and Executive Board meetings.
- c. Ensure that **ORGANIZATION NAME**'s activities and members follow all Cornell University policies.
- d. Secure **ORGANIZATION NAME**'s registration with Cornell University each year.
- e. Maintain open communication with each officer and faculty/staff advisor.
- f. Install and remove all appointed officers with the approval of the Executive Board.
- g. Serve as a non-official member of each committee.
- h. Act as a spokesperson for the organization.
- i. Organize and run an officer transition and education program for new officers.
- j. Maintain contact with and solicit participation from organization advisors.
- k. Seek out new advisors, if needed, and acquaint them with the organization's history, traditions, and procedures.

Section 3. Vice President. The Vice President shall:

- a. Serve as Executive Vice President of **ORGANIZATION NAME**.
- b. Ensure that all the organization's activities and members follow all Cornell University policies.
- c. Maintain accurate records of **ORGANIZATION NAME**'s Membership.
- d. Maintain records of participation in events for each Member.
- e. Oversee the review of each Member's requirements.
- f. Endeavor to improve **ORGANIZATION NAME**'s retention of its Members.
- g. The Vice President will assume the role if the President is unable to perform their duties for a meeting, event, or other purpose.

Section 4. Secretary. The Secretary shall:

- a. Coordinate the communicative functions of **ORGANIZATION NAME**.
- b. Record minutes of and attendance at each General Membership and Executive Board meeting.
- c. Appoint scribes to record minutes in committee meetings as needed.
- d. Manage and maintain all organizational email listservs and social media.
- e. The Secretary will assume the role if the Vice President is unable to perform their duties for a meeting, event, or other purpose.

Section 5. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Collect and distribute all monies of **ORGANIZATION NAME**.
- b. Keep clear records of all of **ORGANIZATION NAME**'s financial activity.
- c. Provide regular reports to the General Membership on the organization's finances.
- d. Oversee the organization's budget, including allocating funds and keeping records of previous budgets.
- e. Prepare and submit applications for funding to the SAFC or any other necessary organization.
- f. The Treasurer will assume the role if the Secretary is unable to perform their duties for a meeting, event, or other purpose.

Section 6. Terms of Service.

- a. No individual shall hold a specific position as Officer for more than **five** semesters. (Can insert a lower number, but not higher than five.)
- b. Grounds for removal of an officer include:
 - i. Violation of the rules and regulations outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
 - ii. Failure to uphold the provisions of the constitution and bylaws

Section 7. Elections. (This section is **MANDATORY** but can be determined by the organization in areas not highlighted in green.)

At the end of each academic year, **ORGANIZATION NAME** may or may not hold elections, depending on the percentage of members who wish to.

- a. If more than forty-nine percent of members wish to do the latter, members will vote by paper ballot, which will be collected and counted by three randomly chosen members who are not running for officer positions.
- b. Members running for an officer position, who receive eighty percent of the votes, reserve the right to replace the officer position they ran for.
- c. Otherwise, the current officer must reach the end-of-term limit of their specific position, indicating a necessary replacement.
- d. In the event of the latter occurring, members running for positions may give a speech before voting takes place.
- e. A majority vote determines elections.
- f. In the event of a tie, a revote will be held by paper ballot, with the votes of the current members of the executive board receiving double weighting.

Section 8. Responsibilities.

- a. Both elected and appointed officers shall be responsible for their duties as listed in this constitution.
- b. Each officer shall also establish and maintain a working relationship with the General

Membership, Executive Board, and all other officers, advisors, chairs, committees, and staff necessary to perform their duties.

Section 9. (This section is mandatory) Officer Transitions.

- a. Each officer shall maintain a record of their position, including the office's budgets and activities, to provide to incoming officers following the elections.
- b. Outgoing officers shall also make every effort to assist in the transition process, including helping to ensure that incoming officers are aware of their responsibilities.

Section 10. Vacancies.

- a. Any officer may resign by submitting a letter to the Executive Board.
- b. In the event of a position vacancy, the President shall, with the majority approval of the Executive Board, appoint a replacement to serve until the next General Membership meeting, at which point a special election will be held to fill the position.
- c. A vacancy in the office of President shall be treated as a temporary absence as defined in this Article.
- d. Any person selected to fill a vacancy shall meet the eligibility requirements prescribed for that position.
- e. Current officers shall be eligible to run for the vacant position but must vacate their original position immediately upon election.
- f. If the special election creates a new vacancy, another will be held to fill that vacancy, and so on until all positions are filled.

Article VI. Organization Accountability Process (This language is MANDATORY as is and will be required by Spring of 2027)

The Organization Accountability Process applies to **all members of the organization**. The purpose of this process is to address concerns related to participation or fulfillment of responsibilities in a fair, consistent, and educational manner.

ORGANIZATION'S NAME is committed to resolving concerns through open communication and education, and opportunities for improvement. Removal from the organization should be considered a last resort after efforts have been made to resolve concerns through the procedures outlined in the sections below. No individual shall be removed from the organization without being provided an opportunity to understand the concern, respond to the matter, and demonstrate improvement when necessary.

If the organization is affiliated with a national organization, the process below should be conducted in consultation with that organization when appropriate.

Section 1. Member Support and Accountability Process

- a. **Informal Conversation:** When concerns arise regarding a member's or officer's

conduct, participation, or fulfillment of responsibilities, the organization President, Vice President, and Advisor shall meet with the individual to discuss the concern. The individual shall have an opportunity to share their perspective, understand organizational expectations, and identify possible steps for improvement. The general outcome of the conversation shall be documented for organizational records. The date and general outcome of the conversation should be documented for the organization's records. If the member/officer in question is the President or Vice President, the other voting officers should be involved.

- b. **Written Warning:** If the concern continues following the informal conversation, the President, Vice President, and Advisor may issue a written warning outlining the concern, expectations for improvement, and potential consequences of continued failure to meet expectations.
- c. **Accountability Review:** If concerns remain unresolved, the organization's designated decision-making body, as outlined in the constitution or bylaws, shall conduct an accountability review. The individual shall receive notice of the meeting and an opportunity to respond before any decision is made. The President, Vice President, and Advisor shall participate in the review process.
- d. **Removal Decision:** Following the accountability review, the designated decision-making body may determine whether removal from membership or leadership is appropriate. Any removal decision shall follow the voting requirements established in the organization's constitution or bylaws with involvement of the organization's advisor. The individual under review shall not participate in deliberations or vote on their own removal.

Article VII – Advisor (This section is MANDATORY, but can be determined by the organization in some areas)

Section 1. Advisor selection.

- a. Any faculty or staff member at Cornell University capable of corresponding with the university in the official and legal matters of the **ORGANIZATION NAME**.
- b. A majority vote of active members selects Independent organization advisors.
- c. University/Department advisors are assigned by the university/department to oversee an organization.

Section 2. Responsibilities of the advisor.

- a. Attend general body and/or executive board meetings when needed
- b. Meet regularly with the organization's President to stay updated and serve as a resource
- c. Assist with the annual registration process
- d. Assist with the funding process

Please note additional responsibilities are permitted to be ratified

Section 3. Term of service.

- a. There is no limit to how long the advisor may hold the position, subject to the advisor acting in the organization's best interests, does not violate any Cornell University Policies or rules, and/or the Student Code of Conduct, and is not engaged in activity jeopardizing the organization's existence.

Article VIII – Meetings (A section regarding meetings is MANDATORY, but the organization determines meeting requirements & expectations)

Section 1. Officers/Executive board.

- a. Hold officer meetings outside the regular meeting schedule as often as necessary, called by the President and/or the Vice President.

Section 2. All members.

- a. Hold general meetings **(REGULARLY - ONCE A WEEK OR ONCE A MONTH)** as decided by the organization members each semester, based on academic obligations.

Section 3. Quorum and Referendum.

- a. Four members are the minimum number of voting members who must be present at a properly called meeting to conduct business in the group's name.
- b. All Officers must be present to transact business.

Article IX – Dues (This section is only MANDATORY if the organization collects dues. Dues can only be collected from Independent classified organizations. Departments sponsoring University Organizations are expected to cover additional costs associated as needed.)

Section 1. Dues and dues collection are under the direction of the Treasurer. The Treasurer must confer with the other Officers to approve any changes to the dues plan and provide all members of the organization with a breakdown of what their dues include, at any time new members join the organization or when due rates are subject to change.

Section 2. Additional social fees may be collected if organization members elect to hold more social events. The costs for each event may vary, but will be kept at a minimal value. Only members attending each of these extra social events will be charged.

Section 3. Statement of Non-Discrimination.

- a. **ORGANIZATION NAME** complies with Cornell University's anti-discrimination policies, as outlined in Section 6.4 of the Student Code of Conduct.
- b. Suppose a member is unable to pay their dues or other costs associated with participating in the organization or social events. In that case, they may consult with the Officers to make alternative arrangements, allowing them to remain a part of the organization.
- c. If members of the organization cannot afford the required dues but are interested in

participating, the club's Eboard can vote to waive dues with no additional questions asked.

Article X – Amendments and Ratification (This section is MANDATORY, but can be determined by the organization in some areas)

Section 1. This constitution shall take effect once it is uploaded to CampusGroups during the annual re-registration process.

Section 2. Ratification process

- a. The constitution on file in CampusGroups is uploaded annually during the re-registration process and is valid until amendments are made.
- b. This constitution must be ratified annually and re-uploaded to the CampusGroups group file.
- c. The officers will propose any changes to the document before ratification to allow time for organization members to review it.
- d. These changes will be voted upon by all **members of ORGANIZATION NAME** who attend the meeting and must receive a majority vote.
- e. Any member may submit a written proposal to the President or Vice-President to amend at any time during the academic year.
- f. Submitted amendments will be voted upon at the next general body meeting.
- g. Any change to this constitution approved by a majority of the organization's members voting goes into effect.
- h. **Any changes to the constitution must be shared with Campus Activities for review and approval of a revised constitution.**