

GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A CONSTITUTION  
PREAMBLE (OPTIONAL)

ARTICLE I  
NAME

- SECTION 1 -Official name (also state any acronym to be used in lieu of formal title or name)  
SECTION 2 -Statement subordinating organization to University policies and procedures,  
rules, regulations

ARTICLE II  
OBJECTIVE OR PURPOSE

- State your reason for existing, what is it you plan to do and how you plan to  
achieve this

ARTICLE III  
MEMBERSHIP

- SECTION 1 -Who is eligible  
SECTION 2 -Requirements for membership  
SECTION 3 -Fees and dues

ARTICLE IV  
OFFICERS ELECTIONS

- SECTION 1 -Qualifications: must be a Howard University student enrolled and in good  
academic standing  
SECTION 2 -List by title with duties for each  
SECTION 3 -Method of election (when held, filling of vacancies)  
SECTION 4 -Term of office (specify from month to month)

ARTICLE V  
MEETINGS

- SECTION 1 -Time of regular and annual meetings (at what intervals)  
SECTION 2 -Provisions of special meetings (who can call them; advance  
notice requirement)  
SECTION 3 -Number constituting quorum (use percentage or fraction where  
possible)

ARTICLE VI  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (OPTIONAL)

- SECTION 1 -Composition (who constitute membership; chairs-how chosen)  
SECTION 2 -Powers and duties (purpose/function)  
SECTION 3 -Time of regular meetings and provision for special meetings; advanced written notice  
should be given  
SECTION 4 -Quorum requirement (minimum number of members needed to conduct business at a  
meeting)

ARTICLE VI  
COMMITTEE (IF APPLICABLE)

- SECTION 1 -Kinds (standing, special)  
SECTION 2 -Duties (definition/purpose)  
SECTION 3 -Method of appointment of membership and chairperson

ARTICLE VII  
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY  
(PROCEDURAL RULES WHICH WILL BE USED)  
CONSULT ROBERTS RULE OF ORDER REVISED EDITION

ARTICLE IX  
(HOW DOCUMENTS MAY BE AMENDED)

- SECTION 1 -Suggestion: Two-thirds majority vote required  
SECTION 2 -All revisions will be forwarded to the Office of Student Activities for final approval

THE ABOVE CONSTITUTION IS ONLY A GUIDE AN ORGANIZATION SHOULD DEVELOP ITS CONSTITUTION TO MEET  
THE PARTICULAR NEEDS OF THAT ORGANIZATION. PERSONNEL IN THE OFFICE OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES IS  
AVAILABLE TO ADVISE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTITUTIONS, BLACKBURN CENTER, SUITE 117  
(202) 806-7000.

## **SPECIAL NOTES:**

1. Organizations that will be an affiliate, chapter, or branch of some regional, national, or international organization must satisfy the following:
  - (a) submit copies of a letter of endorsement of your proposed chapter, etc., from the appropriate regional national, or international office of the organization.
  - (b) submit copies of the constitution of the national etc. organization.
  - (c) submit copies of the national bylaws and/or the guidelines for developing a branch, etc., of that organization.
2. The constitution should be a compilation of COMPLETE sentence.
3. Petitioners: All signatures must be legible. In cases where the student petitioner's name is not clear, the signature will be considered void.
4. The petitioners must have ratified the constitution submitted for recognition. Any major changes that occur in the constitution while in the recognition process should be ratified by the petitioners.
5. Organizations seeking recognition may have open membership to persons other than Howard University students. *However, all officers must be currently enrolled students at the University. Stipulation of this provision must be written in the organization's constitution.*
6. If funds, dues, etc., are to be collected and/or deposited in some account. Banks require that organizations have a Tax ID#, or the members transacting the bank deposits will have to use their own social security number, that may place the party in a higher income tax category. You may secure a Tax ID# by calling (631) 447-4955 or come and pick up information from Student Activities on how to receive an organizational tax-exempt number.  
Provisions must be stated in the organization's constitution regarding who or what officer(s) will be responsible for the disbursement of the organization's funds.
7. If the organization is to have a board of directors or an executive board. The purpose or function of that board should be clearly stated in the constitution.
8. When listing duties and powers of various officers, it is not sufficient to state "duties and powers traditionally or customarily assigned to this position". specific responsibilities must be spelled out for each office.
9. Robert's Rule of Order, Revised edition, may be very useful to the organization in developing a constitution. Reference to this resource is encouraged. Copies are available in the University Library or for sale at local bookstores.

APPROVED OSA 2/03