

Alfred State

SUNY College of Technology

Student Organization Recognition
Office of Student Life

CREATING A CONSTITUTION

Outline

- Starting the Process
- The Basic Components
- The Required Components
- Submitting your Draft Constitution



Starting the Process

When some students are told that they must develop a constitution, their interest in starting a club dies on the spot.

Building a constitution doesn't have to be intimidating.



The Basic Components

- ◎ Here are the required elements to be included when drafting your document:
 - Article I — Name of the organization
 - Article II — Purpose of the organization
 - Article III — Membership
 - Article IV — Leadership Structure & Duties
 - Article V — By-Laws (Terms-of-Office, Elections)
 - Article VI — Amendment Procedures
 - Article VII — Advisor Duties

The Basic Components, cont.

- ◎ Article I — Name of the organization
 - What will you call your organization?
 - If approved, this will be your official name until such time as you apply for a name change through the submission of amendments to your constitution

The Basic Components, cont.

- ◎ Article II — Purpose of the organization
 - This could be your mission statement...
 - What service do you propose you will provide?
 - What's your niche?
 - What will be your legacy?

The Basic Components, cont.

◎ Article III — Membership

- What criteria do you apply when calling someone a member?
- What are your expectations in terms of meeting and activity attendance and participation?
- What differentiates students involved in your group from the members of the general student population?
- Are there any limits on who can be a member?

The Basic Components, cont.

- ◎ Article IV — Leadership Structure & Duties
 - What is your hierarchy?
 - What specific duties and responsibilities are each officer expected to accomplish?
 - What is your succession plan?

The Basic Components, cont.

◎ Article V — By-Laws

- How long will your leaders serve?
- When are your elections to be held?
- What happens to officers who fail to perform?
- How do you fill vacancies?
- How will any funds be managed?
- What are your procedure for censure?
- What other measures are of concern to you?

The Basic Components, cont.

- ◎ Article V — Amendment Procedures
 - How do you change your constitution?
 - How do you change your by-laws?

The Basic Components, cont.

◎ Article V — Advisor Duties

- What do you expect of your advisor(s)?
- What are the limits of his/her power?
- What is your procedure for selection, approval, and/or replacement of an advisor?

The Required Components

- ◎ Your constitution must include:

- Membership Statement

- We prohibit any action or situation, which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any individual or engage in any action or situation that involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs for the purpose of initiation into or affiliation with our organization.

The Required Components, Cont.

- ◎ Your constitution must include:
 - Statement of non-discrimination
 - All programs and services and services of the College are administered without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam conflict.
 - Safety attestation
 - To prohibit any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any individual or engage in any action or situation that involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs for the purpose of initiation into or affiliation with the organization.

Submitting Your DRAFT Constitution

- ◎ You must submit your typed document (preferably submitted electronically) for review by the Director of Student Activities.
 - Once reviewed, any suggested amendments, additions, and questions must be responded to.
- ◎ Once final approval is given, you must notify Student Activities of the name(s) of the organization advisor(s).
 - That person or those persons must be a member of the Alfred State faculty or staff.

What if I'm lost...?

- Questions should be referred to the Office of Student Activities.

Good Luck!!!