

## Preamble

The Preamble introduces the rest of the document in no more than two or three sentences, slating the reasons for the group and the constitution. The inclusion of some general ground rules that govern the group is helpful as well. Preambles may include the group's history and original reasons for organizing.

## Definitions

Define the names and terms you are about to use in your constitution this is to make sure you have a clear understanding of what your constitution says. Also, if anything will be abbreviated in your document, it should be defined here.

### Article I - Name of Organization

- The official name of the organization (i.e. The official name of the student organization shall be Terra State Community College's \_\_\_\_\_ or The name of this organization shall be known as \_\_\_ of Terra State Community College)

### Article II - Affiliations with other groups (local, state, national, etc.)

- Explain if the organization is connected with other groups if so list all contact and relevant information

### Article III – Purpose, aims, functions of the organization

- Section I. Define Organization's Purpose
- Section II. Define the purpose of the Executive Board

### Article IV- Membership Requirements (how determined, who is eligible, any membership fees, etc.)

- Section I. Define who makes up the organization and the requirements for membership
- Section II. Define the privileges and responsibilities of membership. (i.e., a privilege of belonging to the Agriculture Club would be the ability to partake in trips run by the Agriculture Club).

### Article V – Officers and Committee Chairs (titles, term of office, etc.)

- Section I. Define what officers the organization acquires
- Section II. Define what the officers' duties shall be
- Section III. Define the term of office for each position
- Section IV. Define committees that make up the organization
- Section V. Define the duties of each committee
- Section VI. Define how officers and committee chairs are selected

### Article VI – Electing, Appointing, Impeachment, and Removing Officers

- Section I. Elections should take place once per year. Define general election procedures your organization may have. Detailed election procedures should be defined in the organization's bylaws.
- Section II. Define appointment procedures for appointing officers. Specific appointment procedures should be defined in the bylaws.
- Section III. Define the process by which members of the executive board of removing members of committees.
- Section IV. Define the procedure in the event of a mid-term vacancy of an elected official, temporary and/or permanent replacement.

## *Constitution Template Example*

### Constitution Template Cont'

#### Article VII – Advisor

- Section I. Selection process
- Section II. Term of office

#### Article VIII - Meetings

- Section I. Explain the frequency of when they will occur
- Section II. How will special or emergency meetings be called
- Section III. Who has the authority to call meetings

#### Article IX - Quorum and Voting Requirements

- Section I. Number of members needed to be present to conduct business

#### Article X – Amendments

- Section I. Define how amendments to the constitution are made. Include who proposes amendments and how they were adopted.
- Section II. Is there a notice required? Section III. Voting requirements to amend

## Writing Bylaws

### Why have Bylaws?

The Constitution covers the fundamental principles but does not prescribe specific procedures for operating your organization. Bylaws set forth detail the procedure your group must follow to conduct business in an orderly manner. They provide further definitions to the Articles of the Constitution and can be changed more easily as the needs of the organization change.

### What should be included in the Bylaws? (Look at Articles IV, V, VI)

By-Laws must not contradict provisions in the Constitution. They generally contain specific information on the following topics:

- A. Membership (requirements, resignations, expulsion, rights, and duties)
- B. Dues (amount and collection procedures, any special fees, when payable)
- C. Duties of Officers (powers, responsibilities, specific job descriptions, procedures for filling unexpired terms of office, removal of office)
- D. Executive Board (structure, composition, powers)
- E. Committees (standing, special, how formed, chairpersons, meetings, powers, duties)
- F. Order of Business (standard agenda for conducting business)
- G. Parliamentary Authority (provisions for rules of order, generally Robert Rules of Order– newly revised)
- H. Amendment procedures (means of proposals, notice required, voting requirements)
- I. Other specific policies and procedures unique to your organization necessary for its operation