



Constitution Guidelines for Registered Student Organizations

The purpose of the constitution is to guide a registered student organization in its operations and activities and, accordingly, are intended primarily for the organization's benefit and use. The constitution contains the fundamental principles and structure of the organization, and the bylaws outline the basic rules of procedure by which a group's membership govern its organization. The constitution and bylaws should be carefully formulated, clearly worded, and kept up-to-date so that the needs of the organization can be met.

An approved constitution is necessary to become a registered student organization at Miami Dade College and must be submitted electronically via SharkNet anytime the constitution is amended. In order to be considered for approval, the student organization constitution must comply with the following format.

***Verbatim Language is indicated in RED ***

Examples are listed in BLUE

ARTICLE I. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

The name of the organization should be unique from any other registered student organizations and should reflect the nature and activities of the organization. Any organization abbreviations or acronyms should be referenced in this article.

Your organization name must indicate at which campus you are registering. Example: The name of this organization is 'Shark Lovers' you must list the organization name as 'Shark Lovers, Kendall'.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

Your organization's purpose should be defined in clear and concise terms.

Example: Shark Lovers is established for the purpose of bringing together people who share a common appreciation of our mascot the shark.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Additional stipulations regarding active membership (e.g. GPA requirements, attendance requirements, etc.) should be addressed in a separate article AFTER Article IX. The following language, and no additional information about membership, should appear verbatim for Article III.

Section A. Membership in [Name of Registered Student Organization] is open to all enrolled students at Miami Dade College, (Campus Name). All members are free to leave and disassociate without fear of retribution, retaliation, or harassment.

Section B. [Name of Registered Student Organization] shall be in full compliance with all Federal and State nondiscrimination and equal opportunity laws, orders and regulations. [Name of Registered Student Organization] shall not discriminate against a Student Officer, member or prospective member on any basis identified in MDC Procedure 1665 (Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Process), except if specifically exempted by law. [Name of Registered Student Organization] shall be open to all currently enrolled MDC Students, except if specifically exempted by law.

*All groups except those exempt by law must have opportunities for membership of all genders.

ARTICLE IV. COLLEGE REGULATIONS

Section A. [Name of Registered Student Organization] will abide by all Federal, State and Local Laws and MDC Procedures and Policies, including but not limited to the MDC Student Code of Conduct Procedure 4025, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Academic Dishonesty Procedure 4035, Alcohol and Drug Policy, and all requirements as outlined in the Registered Student Organization Manual.

Section B. [Name of Registered Student Organization] agrees to abide by the Florida AntiHazing Law in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure 4028 (Hazing).

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

The sections of this article must contain the following information: titles of elected organization officers; titles of appointed organization officers (including appointment process – e.g. appointed by whom?); term of office; the general duties of each officer; and the procedures for handling vacancies (e.g. resignations, officer ineligibility, impeachments, or similar occurrences).

Example:

Section A. The officers of this organization shall be President, Vice President, and Treasurer.

Part 1: The President shall preside at all meetings of the organization and shall coordinate the work of the officers and committees.

Part 2: The Vice-President shall serve as an aide to the President and shall perform the duties of the President in her/his absence or inability to serve.

Part 3: The Treasurer shall receive all monies of Shark Lovers; shall keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures; shall pay out local funds in accordance with the approved budget as authorized by the organization. The Treasurer shall present a financial statement at every meeting of Shark Lovers and at other times when requested by the President or Vice President.

Section B: Officers shall assume their official duties at the close of the last general meeting of the academic year and shall serve for a term of one academic year and/or until their successors are elected/appointed.

Section C: Any officer of Shark Lovers may be removed from office through the following process:

Part 1: A written request by at least three voting members of the organization shall be submitted to either the President, Vice President, or Treasurer. Written notification shall be sent to the officer in question asking that officer to be present at the next meeting and prepared to respond to the removal request.

Part 2: A two thirds majority vote of members present is necessary to remove the officer.

Part 3: In the event of the removal of an officer, a special provision may be granted to the remaining officers to appoint an interim replacement until an election may be held.

ARTICLE VI. ELECTIONS (Optional)

This article may contain the following information: the month of elections; officer eligibility; the nomination process; balloting procedures; election rules and procedures (including required margin of victory); and run-off procedures in the event of a tie.

Example: Nominations for all officers will take place annually from the members starting in February. Any member may nominate any other voting member, including himself or herself. Nominations may also be made during the election meeting prior to closing of nominations. Voting will occur by secret ballot and a simple majority vote is required to elect an officer. If there are more than two candidates running and no candidate receives a majority vote, there shall be a run-off vote between the top two vote recipients at the next general meeting. No person shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office. Elections should take place in late March to early April to allow for turnover between old and new board.

ARTICLE VII. STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISOR

Each registered student organization must have a student organization advisor. The student organization advisor shall serve as a resource person and provide advisory support for the officers and members of the organization. The student organization advisor must be a full-time, salaried faculty or staff member not on leave during his or her advisor term. Section A below is required verbatim. The remaining sections of this article must include: the selection method; term; duties and responsibilities; and process of replacement for student organization advisors.

Section A. All Registered Student Organizations must have least one advisor who is a full-time faculty or staff member at MDC.

Example:

Section B. The student organization advisor shall serve as a resource person and provide advisory support for the officers and members of the organization. The student organization advisor should

attend executive and general meetings; however, the student organization advisor may not vote in any organization matters.

Section C. The student organization advisor may be nominated by the officers and confirmed by a majority vote of the members.

Section D. The student organization advisor will serve a term of one (1) academic year.

Section E. In the event that the student organization advisor is unable to continue in their position, officers may nominate a replacement at any time, to be confirmed by a majority vote of the members.

ARTICLE VIII. FINANCE

This article must include information about how the organization will be funded. If an organization requires membership dues, the maximum dollar amount and/or other financial obligations of members, as well as when payment is due, must be clearly stated in this article. If an organization does not require membership fees or other financial obligations, a statement to that effect should be included in this article.

Example 1: Shark Lovers may raise funds through carwashes, bake sales, and similar activities to help cover the costs of other operational expenses of the organization. Members are expected to participate in these fundraising activities. Shark Lovers will not require membership dues.

Example 2: Shark Lovers will be funded through the collection of annual membership dues in the amount of \$100 to be paid during the month of September. This fee covers the cost of t-shirts, travel to leadership conferences, and other operational expenses of the organization.

ARTICLE IX. DISSOLUTION/SUSPENSION OF ORGANIZATION

Requirements and procedures for the dissolution of the student organization must be stated in this article. Should any organization assets and/or debts exist, appropriate means for disposing of these assets and/or debts must be specified clearly and unequivocally. A specific charity or organization must be designated as the recipient of any remaining assets at the dissolution of the organization.

Per MDC Procedure 4073 (Suspension of Student Organization) a recognized organization may lose its official recognition and be suspended if, as a result of the actions of its officers or members, or as a result of an activity of the organization as a whole, the organization violates College policy and procedures or applicable laws.

Example: In the event this organization dissolves, all monies left in the treasury, after outstanding debts and claims have been paid, shall be donated to "Name of charitable organization."

ARTICLE X... (Any articles the organization wishes to include to further clarify policies and procedures not included in previous articles may be added here. There is no limit on the number of additional articles that may be included.)

ARTICLE (insert number for FINAL Article). AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

All constitutions must conclude with this article. The article must include: the process for amending the organization's constitution; and the necessary vote to approve the change(s). All amended constitutions must immediately be submitted directly to the office of Student Life for review and approval.

Example: Amendments to this constitution may be made at any regular meeting of Shark Lovers provided notice of the proposed amendment was given one week prior to a vote. Amendments require a two-thirds vote of the voting members in attendance at the meeting, and are subject to final approval by the office of Student Life.

BYLAWS (Optional)

Bylaws often accompany a constitution, and include details relating to meetings, committees, dues, voting and other governance, etc. By-laws are NOT required; however, they are recommended if your RSO wants to put common practices in writing.