

CONSTITUTION GUIDELINES FOR UTEP STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Constitution Overview

Student organizations at UTEP are required to create and maintain a constitution. The Student Engagement and Leadership Center has created these guidelines in the creation of a constitution for your student organization.

Purpose of a Constitution

A constitution contains the fundamental principles that outline the procedures and processes to aid the organization in functioning in an effective and efficient manner. Each time new officers are elected, the constitution should be reviewed. This helps to ensure it is up to date and serving the needs of the organization

Creation of a Constitution

The constitution should be tailored to your organization's specific needs and ensure all members and activities are in accordance with University policy.

Below is a checklist of required areas to include in the constitution. The second page of this document lists required information that must be included in your student organization's constitution. The third page provides a constitution template.

Constitution Checklist

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title – Title of Constitution | <input type="checkbox"/> Article 6 – Meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preamble | <input type="checkbox"/> Article 7 – University Advisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Article 1 – Name & Purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> Article 8 – Finances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Article 2 – University Compliance | <input type="checkbox"/> Article 9 – Elections |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Article 3 – University Policies | <input type="checkbox"/> Article 10 – Amendments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Article 4 – Membership and Eligibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Article 11 - Ratifications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Article 5 – Officers | |

Submission of Constitution

Newly registered student organizations are required to submit a constitution with their new student organization application. If a constitution is not submitted, your student organization application with UTEP will be delayed. Current registered student organizations are required to submit a constitution when completing their annual registration prior to the fall semester. If guidelines are not met, registration submissions will be denied and feedback will be given to address any issues. After corrections have been made, student organizations may resubmit.

Requirements for Student Organization Constitutions

It is required that the following clauses be included in student organization constitutions.

1. *Statement of University Compliance (In Article 2: University Compliance):* This organization is a recognized student organization at The University of Texas at El Paso and adheres to all campus policies as set forth in the Handbook of Operating Procedures as outlined by the Office of the Vice President for Business Affairs and the Registered Student Organization Handbook as outlined by the Student Engagement & Leadership Center at The University of Texas at El Paso.

2. *Prohibition of Hazing Policy (In Article 3: University Policies):* Hazing in state educational institutions is prohibited by both state law (Sections 51.936, 37.151 (5) and (6), and 37.155, Texas Education Code) and by the Rules and Regulations of The Board of Regents of The University of Texas System, Series: 50101, Section 2.8). Individuals or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with criminal offenses. Additionally, the law does not affect or in any way restrict the right of the University to enforce its own rules against hazing. For more information on UTEP's hazing policy, please visit UTEP's Handbook of Operating Procedures, Chapter 1, Section 1.2.3(g).

3. *Non-Discrimination Policy (In Article 3: University Policies):* In accordance with the UTEP Student Organization Handbook, this organization may not deny membership on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, except that a registered student organization created primarily for religious purposes may restrict the right to vote or hold office to persons who subscribe to the registered student organization's statement of faith; and a registered student organization may restrict membership based on the provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

4. *Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 (In Article 3: University Policies):* Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities at the university unless such programs and activities are specifically exempt from the law. The university is required to be in compliance with the provisions of Title IX. Therefore, compliance with Title IX is a condition to be a registered student organization at the university. Since passage of this law and the publication of the implementing regulations, the U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights has evolved a rather clear set of criteria for determining when single sex organizations are exempt from the provisions of Title IX. The criteria are as follows: the organization must have tax-exempt status under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code; members must be limited to students, staff or faculty at The University of Texas at El Paso; the organization must be a "social fraternity" as defined by the Department of Education.

5. *Texas Board of Regent's Membership Statement (In Article 4: Membership & Eligibility):* At the beginning of each academic year, each registered student or group must file with the appropriate institutional officer an affidavit stating that the organization or group does not, and will not during the year, have as a member any person who is not a student or a member of the faculty or staff of the institution. *Student organizations abide by this policy by fulfilling their Annual Requirements of submitting their registration with only UTEP-affiliated individuals.*

6. *Finances Statement (In Article 8: Finances):* If the organization becomes inactive, or loses its registration status at UTEP, funds will be dispersed to [insert organization, department, etc. that you wish to have your organization's funds dispersed to]. If said option is not feasible, all funds will be dispersed to the Student Organization Advancement Fund, managed by the Student Engagement & Leadership Center.

**The Student Organization Advancement Fund is general fund that all student organizations can request monies from for their initiatives and activities.*

Constitution of [Name of org]
at The University of Texas at El Paso

PREAMBLE (Required)

[Name of org] is intended to (insert mission, purpose, aims or relative information as to why your organization has been established)

ARTICLE I – NAME (Required)

The name of the student organization must follow the guidelines in the Registered Student Organization Handbook. **Student organizations names cannot begin with “UTEP” or include “The University of Texas at El Paso.”**

ARTICLE II – UNIVERSITY COMPLIANCE (Required)

[Insert “Statement of University Compliance” text **EXACTLY** as listed on page 2 of this document.]

Statement of University Compliance: This organization is a recognized student organization at The University of Texas at El Paso and adheres to all campus policies as set forth in the Handbook of Operating Procedures as outlined by the Office of the Vice President for Business Affairs and the Registered Student Organization Handbook as outlined by the Student Engagement & Leadership Center at The University of Texas at El Paso.

ARTICLE III – UNIVERSITY POLICIES (Required)

[Insert “Non-Discrimination Policy,” “Prohibition of Hazing Policy,” and “Title IX Policy text **EXACTLY** as listed on page 2 of this document.]

Non-Discrimination Policy: accordance with the UTEP Student Organization Handbook, this organization may not deny membership on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, except that a registered student organization created primarily for religious purposes may restrict the right to vote or hold office to persons who subscribe to the registered student organization’s statement of faith; and a registered student organization may restrict membership based on the provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

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Article IV – MEMBERSHIP & ELIGIBILITY (Required)

[Insert "Texas Board of Regent's Membership Statement" text **EXACTLY** as listed on page 2 of this document.] This section defines the composition of the student organization including membership requirements and selection procedures. All members must be currently enrolled students at the University and maintain at least a minimum 2.0 grade point average per University Policy. Some examples of requirements to include are: insert limitations, classes of, requirements, dues, procedure for member selection, and procedure for member removal.

Texas Board of Regent's Membership Statement: At the beginning of each academic year, each registered student or group must file with the appropriate institutional officer an affidavit stating that the organization or group does not, and will not during the year, have as a member any person who is not a student or a member of the faculty or staff of the institution.

Article V – OFFICERS (Required)

List each major officer position with duties, responsibilities, requirements, selection process, and procedure for officer removal. Eligibility requirements must be included in this section that meet or exceed the guidelines in the Registered Student Organization Handbook (at least a 2.25 cumulative GPA).

Article VI – MEETINGS (Required)

This section should include the frequency of general meetings, officer meetings, expectations of attendance and voting procedures. It can be customized to best suit your organization.

ARTICLE VII - UNIVERSITY ADVISOR(S) (Required)

Procedures for advisor duties, responsibilities, selection process, and number of advisors can be included here. An advisor must be either a faculty member (not on sabbatical) or a staff member at the University. The faculty or staff member must be employed at the University at least part-time and in a benefits eligible position. Unless it states otherwise in their position description on file with human resources. Each advisor must complete a RSO State Mandated Risk Management Training (once a year). In addition, the advisor serves as the link between the Student Organization and the University; providing guidance to the organization in regards to University policies and procedures.

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCES (Required)

Defines how funds will be collected, maintained and disbursed. Please note that if your organization does not have a specific organization or entity to disburse finances to, you may list the Student Organization Advancement Fund as your first option.

The following statements are *required*:

If the organization becomes inactive, or loses its registration status at UTEP, funds will be dispersed to [insert organization, department, etc. that you wish to have your organization's funds dispersed to]. If said option is not feasible, all funds will be dispersed to the Student Organization Advancement Fund, managed by the Student Engagement & Leadership Center.

ARTICLE IX – ELECTIONS (Required)

Insert when and how elections are held, how members are notified of upcoming elections, nomination process, voting process, number of members required to be present, and number of votes required to win.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS (Required)

Include your organization's procedure for how constitution amendments will be handled. This includes, but is not limited to, sections on notifying officers and members of proposed amendments, voting process and the vote required to ratify.

ARTICLE XI – RATIFICATIONS (Required)

This article should make known that your final version of the constitution was effective upon approval by your RSO with a definition of how it was voted and approved (ex. Majority vote of members present at a general meeting.) and include the date the constitution was voted on.