

Form No. S-24

Rev. 8/05

DARTON COLLEGE

Guidelines for Writing a Constitution

- Preamble: Optional preface to the constitution which usually contains reasons for formation of the club/organization.
- Constitution: Consists of a few fundamental provisions clearly and briefly written. There are at least seven provisions usually stated in separate articles. Each article may be divided into sections. The articles are as follows:
- Article I: **Name** – State the official name of the organization.
- Article II: **Purpose** – State the purpose or goals of the organizations. It may be definitions, academics, cultural, service-oriented, political, religious, etc. The group should not duplicate the ideals of an already existing student organization. If there are similarities, state the unique aspects that characterize the organization. State any local, regional or national affiliations with any other groups. State how the club's/organization's purpose is consistent with the college mission.
- Article III: **Membership** – Define who is eligible for membership. Membership may only be open to Darton College students, faculty/staff. State the organization will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, age, sexual orientation, disability, veteran's status, marital status or national origin. State guidelines for membership renewal, removal or voluntary discontinuance. Members must have the freedom to discontinue membership at any time. State that the organization will ensure that its membership will not practice physical or psychological abusive hazing behaviors - either intentionally or unintentionally. State any requirements for membership such as paying dues, GPA, etc.
- Article IV: **Officers, Duties, and Requirements** – Describe the governance structure. Is there an executive board? State the duties of officers (*call meetings, determine agendas, approve expenditures, etc.*). State any requirements for officers (*GPA, extended membership, etc.*). State the officers of the organization must have at least a 2.0 GPA.
- Article V: **Meetings** – State approximately how often meetings can be held. State who has the authority to call meetings. State what quorum is required at meetings (if appropriate). State how meetings will be run (*Parliamentary Procedures, etc.*).
- Article VI: **Elections and Officers Replacement/Renewal** – State how officers will be elected, appointed, removed or replaced and what justifies removal. It is strongly suggested that elections be conducted by democratic procedures. State the time line for elections.
- Article VII: **Judicial Action (Optional)** – State the process for disciplining members of the organization.
- Article VIII: **Finances** – State how the organization will be funded (*dues, outside sources, Student Activities*).
- Article IX: **Advisor** – State the process for selecting/removing the advisor. Advisors must be Darton College faculty or professional staff members. State whether the advisor is a voting or non-voting member.
- Article X: **Amendments/Revisions** – State the procedures for amending/revising the constitution (*posted notices of amendments for two weeks prior to vote, placing an amendment for the floor for two weeks, etc.*). State who may propose an amendment.
- Article XI: **Enable Clause** – This must appear at the end of the Constitution:
 "The (*name of the organization*) agrees to abide by the policies of Darton College as well as all federal, state and local laws. This Constitution and any revisions or amendments must be approved by the Office of Student Activities prior to implementation."
- By-laws: Contain details necessary to amplify and carry out the provisions of the constitution. All by-laws dealing with the same general subject are grouped together under one article. For instance, there are usually several sections relating to committees. These sections are arranged in consecutive order and together form a by-law or article. By-laws may include the following:
- 1) Kinds of Membership
 - 2) Detailed requirements for membership
 - 3) Method of admitting new members
 - 4) Dues
 - 5) Powers/duties of committees
 - 6) Powers/duties of officers
 - 7) Election of officer/committees
 - 8) Provisions for calling and conducting meetings
 - 9) Parliamentary authority
 - 10) Number constituting a quorum
 - 11) Vote required for decisions
 - 12) Procedure for amending by-laws