

## STUDENT ORGANIZATION CONSTITUTION GUIDELINES

To register and maintain active status as a student organization at the University of Florida, the organization must submit the constitution and update as required its constitution in printed form for review and approval to the Center for Student Activities and Involvement. In order to be considered for approval, the student organization constitution must comply with the following guidelines, including the sequence of the articles.

The purpose of the student organization constitution is to demonstrate that requirements for registered student organizations are met and to define identifying characteristics of the organization, governance structure, and general operating parameters, processes, and guidelines. The following outline and samples are designed to summarize requirements, as well as to assist with the construction of a constitution for a registered student organization. Please note that samples are offered as a guide only and are not designed to be comprehensive of every point of each article.

### **ARTICLE I. NAME OF ORGANIZATION**

The name of the organization must be uniquely different from any other currently registered student organization and may reflect the nature and activities of the organization. In addition, any organization abbreviations or acronyms must be formally referenced in this article. Use of “University of Florida” or “UF” as part of the organization name is prohibited. At no time should the organization refer to itself as a part of UF. If the organization is affiliated with a parent organization, that information must be stated in this article of the constitution.

*Sample: The name of this organization is Blue Leaders. This organization will utilize the acronym BLDS in all publicity materials and correspondence. Blue Leaders is affiliated with [affiliate organization (if applicable)] operating in [city, state]. The website of [affiliate organization] is [www.affiliate organization].*

### **ARTICLE II. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of the organization must be clearly stated.

*Sample 1: Blue Leaders is established for the purpose of developing leadership skills and to encourage UF students to participate in community service projects such as voter registration.*

*Sample 2: The purpose of Blue Leaders is to explore and promote academic and career issues related to leadership and to help those interested in leadership to get to know one another outside the classroom.*

*Sample 3: The purpose of the West Indian Student Society is to explore and foster West Indian culture and history. Any interested enrolled UF student may be a member.*

### **ARTICLE III. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT [NOTE: Article III (Compliance Statement) must appear in the constitution verbatim as indicated below.]**

Upon approval by the Center for Student Activities and Involvement, [name of organization] shall be a registered student organization at the University of Florida. [Name of organization] shall comply with all local, state and federal laws, as well as all University of Florida regulations, policies, and procedures. Such compliance includes but is not limited to the University’s regulations related to Non-Discrimination, Hazing, Commercial Activity, and Student Leader Eligibility.

**ARTICLE IV. NON-DISCRIMINATION [NOTE: Article IV (Non-Discrimination) must appear in the constitution verbatim as option A or B.]**

A. Student organizations that wish to register with the Center for Student Activities and Involvement (CSAI) must agree that they will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, or veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act.

A student organization whose primary purpose is religious will not be denied registration as a Registered Student Organization on the ground that it limits membership or leadership positions to students who share the religious beliefs of the organization. The University has determined that this accommodation of religious belief does not violate its nondiscrimination policy.

OR

B. NAME OF STUDENT ORGANIZATION agrees to comply with the University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy (Regulation 6C1-1.006).

**ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP [NOTE: Article V (Membership) must appear in the constitution verbatim as indicated below.]**

Membership in this organization is open to enrolled students at the University of Florida. Non-students, spouses, faculty, and staff may be associate members; however, they may not vote or hold office. All members and associate members are free to leave and disassociate without fear of retribution, retaliation, or harassment.

**ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS**

Registered student organizations are required to have a minimum of a President and Treasurer as elected officers. The titles of organization officers, term of office, specification as to which officers are elected or appointed and by whom, the general duties of each position must be clearly specified, and the procedures to cover special circumstances (e.g., resignations, officer ineligibility, impeachments, or similar occurrences).

*Sample 1: Officers*

*Section A: The elected officers of Blue Leaders 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 Blue Leaders; 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 Gator Leaders and at other times when requested by the President or Vice President.*

*Section B: The appointed officer of Blue Leaders shall be Secretary.*

*Part 1: The Secretary shall be appointed by the Vice President.*

*Part 2: The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings of Blue Leaders and shall perform other duties as may be delegated.*

*Section C: 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 D: Any officer of Blue Leaders 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 VII. ELECTIONS**

Election rules and procedures, appointment and ratification procedures, and other procedures and guidelines including eligibility for officers, the nomination process, balloting procedures, and similar guidelines must be specified. The month of elections must be specified.

*Sample 1: Nominations for all officers will take place annually from the members at the last general meeting in January. 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.*

*Sample 2: 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.*

*Sample 3: Only an individual whose interests, views, and knowledge align with our organization's religious purpose is eligible to run for office, as specified in our By-laws.*

## **ARTICLE VIII. FACULTY ADVISOR**

Each registered student organization must have a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor shall serve as a resource person and provide advisory support for the officers and members of the organization. The faculty advisor should attend executive and general meetings of the organization. The faculty advisor must be a faculty or staff member employed at UF. The selection method, term, duties, responsibilities, and process of replacement of the advisor must be clearly stated.

*Sample: The faculty advisor shall serve as a resource person and provide advisory support for the officers and members of the organization. The faculty advisor should attend executive and general meetings; however, the faculty advisor may not vote in any Blue Leaders matters. The faculty advisor shall be nominated by the officers and confirmed by a majority vote of the members.*

## **ARTICLE IX. FINANCE**

If an organization requires a membership fee, the maximum fee and/or other financial obligations of members must be clearly stated. If an organization does not require membership fees or other financial obligations, a statement to that effect should be included in this article. NOTE: In accordance with Student Government guidelines, any organization seeking or receiving funding from Student Government is precluded from collecting membership dues. Registered student organizations seeking funding from Student Government must apply each year, and funding is not guaranteed.

*Sample 1: Blue Leaders requires each member to pay \$100 during the month of September for annual dues. This fee covers the cost of t-shirts, travel to leadership conferences, and the purchase of books on leadership.*

*Sample 2: Blue Leaders will not require membership dues; however, it will raise funds through carwashes and similar activities, for t-shirts, travel to leadership conferences, and the purchase of books on leadership. Members are expected to participate in these fundraising activities. Blue Leaders will also apply for Student Government funding.*

**ARTICLE X. DISSOLUTION OF ORGANIZATION**

Requirements and procedures for the dissolution of the student organization must be stated. Should any organization assets and/or debt exist, appropriate means for disposing of these assets and debts must be specified clearly and unequivocally.

*Sample: 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 (FINAL ARTICLE) AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION**

The process for amending the organization's constitution must be outlined as well as the necessary vote to approve the change(s). All amendments to the constitution must immediately be submitted directly to the Center for Student Activities and Involvement in writing for review and approval.

*Sample: This constitution may be amended at any regular meeting of Blue Leaders by a two thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment was given at the previous meeting and that the proposed amendment shall be subject to approval of the Center for Student Activities and Involvement.*