

Constitution Writing Guide

When writing your organization's constitution, keep in mind that this is only a general format. All areas covered in articles 1-5 should be covered in some way in your document, but may be formatted differently. Specific wording that must be included in your constitution is bolded in this document. If you would like to reference existing constitutions go to the senate webpage. If you need any help or have any questions, contact the Chair of Organizations.

In order to become a Senate recognized organization you will need to have a petition signed by 10% of the student body as well as have your constitution approved. The approval process includes attending an Organizations committee meeting as well as the Senate meetings during which your constitution is voted upon by the General Assembly.

Article I: Name

The Name of this Organization shall be _____. (If your organization has an abbreviated name, this can also be mentioned here, especially if this is what will be used to describe the group for the remainder of this document).

Article II: Purpose

In this section you should describe the purpose(s) of your organization as it relates to Cornell College, your own members, and the community in general. This description may be as detailed as you choose.

Article III: Membership

Membership shall be open to any person of the Cornell College Community. This section should explain voting privileges among the group (specifically who can vote). This can be done simply by defining different types of members: i.e. members in good standing are members who attend at least 3 of the 4 meetings per block and general members are any members on the email list. Quorum should be defined in the constitution as well. Quorum is the number of members necessary to be in attendance to hold a vote.

Article IV: Duties of Officers

1. President Below the specific duties of each officer should be explained. Duties can be general like those examples below however the more specific the duties the easier it will be to keep track of each officer's responsibilities.
 - a. The President will call and preside over meetings.
 - b. The President will act as a representative of the group whenever necessary.

- c. The President will act as the main contact for Student Senate and will notify the Student Senate Organizations Chair and the Cornell Staff Director of Student Activities of any changes in contact information.
 - d. The President will help the other officers to fulfill their duties.
- 2. Vice President
 - a. The Vice President will assume the duties of the President in their absence.
 - b. Add any other duties your group sees fit to assign to the Vice President.
- 3. Secretary
 - a. The Secretary will keep the records for the group.
 - b. The Secretary will take minutes at the meetings.
 - c. Add any other duties or specifications to what the Secretary will be in charge of recording.
- 4. Treasurer
 - a. The Treasurer will administer the financial affairs of the organization.
 - b. All funds shall be deposited in the Student Activities Fund at the Cornell College Business Office, and all Disbursements shall be made by checks drawn upon this fund by the Treasurer.
 - c. The Treasurer, or designee, must attend all meetings to which he/she is called by the Appropriations and Organizations Chair of the Student Senate.
 - d. Add any other duties you would like the Treasurer to be responsible for completing.

Other officer positions can be added if your organization sees it necessary. Another suggestion if you would like they're to be fewer officers would be to combine the duties of several officer positions. It is highly suggested that you have a treasurer or someone specifically responsible for handling budget requests made throughout the year and the annual budget request.

Article V: Faculty/Staff Advisor

The advisor will be a member of the Cornell College Faculty or Staff.

Article VI: Elections

In this section a procedure for elections should be decided. A timeline for elections should be established: i.e. nominations may be made by any member in good standing; nominations must be made at the last meeting before elections; elections will take place the second week of Block 8. A specific officer may be designated to preside over elections, if the group chooses.

Article VII: By-Laws

By-Laws are specific rules or procedures that the organization can choose to create to help better run its meetings and affairs. By-Laws do not need to be approved by Senate however the specifics on voting to approve them must be specified in this section (i.e. 2/3 quorum vote). By- Laws are not a part of the constitution but rather for your organization- they may be included as part of your constitution for reference for future group members. Article VIII: Amendments Your organization's constitution may be amended by procedures outlined in this section. Changes must be approved by Student Senate. Amendments may be made to your constitution in the future if necessary. Your constitution must be re-approved by Student Senate every two years.