

# Constitution/Bylaws Template

## Introduction

The Center for Student Life & Leadership at Grand Rapids Community College requires all recognized student organizations to submit an updated constitution or bylaws document each academic year. These records serve as the guiding documents for all registered student organizations to abide by to maintain active status.

## Purpose of Constitution/Bylaws

This document is for the establishment of the proposed organization which includes a purpose and basic operating structure and should contain detailed information of the following:

***Sections in italics and bold are mandatory language and may not be altered.*** Each section of this template will provide information about what should be included in each article. If mandatory language is omitted or altered, your organization may not become a registered student organization. Separate from the mandatory language, an organization's executive board may decide to adapt or omit language to fit the needs of the respective organization. In the instance additional information is included, it must be included following Article XIII.

The text in red is for clarification purposes only. Please exclude from the final document before submitting.

## How to Submit

Writing an organization's constitution shall include the input from all executive board members in order to reflect the needs of the whole organization. Once the constitution has been filled out entirely it can be uploaded to the Raider Connect registration or re-registration page. The "register an organization" button for new and returning student organizations is located on the "organization" tab.

Student Life will review the registration request and determine next steps within 14 days of submission. Communication will be made via email to the original submitter and the respective organization advisor.

## Student Life Support

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- Registration
- Onboarding
- Collaborations
- College Sponsored Travel
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- Budget Training
- Funding, Purchasing, Check Requests, Reimbursements
- Event planning
- Space reservations

# **The Constitution of [Enter Organization Name Here] of Grand Rapids Community College**

## **Article I Name**

The name of the organization shall be [Enter Organization Name Here]

In this article, outline the exact title, and acronym if applicable, of your organization. If your organization has an acronym, you may use it from here on out in the rest of the articles. If you would like to use "GRCC" or "Grand Rapids Community College" in your name, it must be put at the end. This way, when students are looking for your organization, it will not be grouped in with campus departments or programs.

## **Article II Mission**

We, the...[Enter organization's mission statement]

This section should clearly communicate what your organization does and what you wish to accomplish.

## **Article III Purpose**

The purpose of this organization shall be to provide [Enter organization's purpose statement] (The purpose should be different from the mission statement).

This section should clearly communicate why your organization does what it does. In some cases, this will be the guiding principles upon which your organization was founded. For others, it may be as simple as providing entertainment. If you have a multitude of reasons, consider outlining your purpose using bullet points.

## **Article IV Affiliation with Other Organizations**

The [Enter Organization Name Here] is affiliated with the [Name of Organization, Department, Local, State or National Affiliation, if applicable]

This section is for student organizations that choose to be affiliated with any internal organizations or campus departments in addition to external organizations (non-GRCC).

## **Article V Membership**

- 1. Membership in [Name of Organization] shall be open to any currently enrolled students at Grand Rapids Community College. It is the policy of GRCC and [Name of Organization] that no person on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam Era veteran and/or any other legally protected class not heretofore mentioned shall be discriminated against.***
- 2. Notice of Anti-Hazing: [Name of Organization] shall not haze any prospective or current member for the purpose of admission into or affiliation with the organization. Hazing is defined as any action or situation created, intentionally, whether on or off private premises, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. Members of the organization are free to leave or disassociate without fear of retribution or harassment. Organizations responsible for incidents of hazing may lose College recognition and be excluded from the***

***campus. There will be no hazing involved in the recruitment or maintenance process of membership in this organization.***

3. Membership Expectations: [Enter membership expectations of participating, ex. Attendance, GPA, conduct, etc.]
4. Selective Membership Criteria (if applicable): [Enter your membership criteria, ex. GPA, class standing, alumni, etc.]
5. Termination of Membership: [State the conditions under which membership is terminated and how reinstatement is accomplished].

This section should outline the requirements to become a member and stay in good standing with the organization. ***Remember the sections in italics and bold are mandatory language and may not be altered.***

## **Article VI Executive Board**

1. ***The Executive Board shall consist of [a minimum of 2 e-board members required] core members: [Enter the title of each e-board member (recommended titles: President and Treasurer)]*** The recommended titles reflect the language used on Raider Connect at the time of registration. Once an organization has been approved, names of titles may be changed and additional roles may be added.
2. ***Qualifications: [Enter qualifications for e-board positions (ex. All officers must be currently enrolled students, carrying a minimum of three credits and be in good standing at the college)]***
3. ***Elections: [Election of officers shall be held annually or on a needs basis].*** This section should detail how officers are nominated and elected in addition to a timeline in which they serve in respective positions.
4. ***Vacancies: A vacancy shall be declared when an officer leaves the institution, resigns or is removed from office. Any vacancy which may occur in an office shall be filled by appointment by the President of the organization pending ratification at the next group business meeting. Once the vacancy has been filled, an updated organization roster is required and must be communicated to Student Life. In the event that there is a vacancy, an organization is deemed insufficient and may be limited to resources until vacancies are filled. Organizations with vacancies that extend into the next semester will become inactive.***
5. ***Representation at Student Leaders Town Halls: Each recognized student organization is required to appoint and send a minimum of one executive board representative to each Town Hall meeting during the Fall and Winter semesters. When the appointed person is unavailable, a substitute should be identified. This person could be another executive member, a general member or the advisor.***

This section describes the leadership roles of the organization. There should be a specific description of each officer title. The names of current executive members are not necessary, just a description of their role. There is a minimum of 3 executive members. There is no maximum number on how many officers your organization may have. ***Remember the sections in italics and bold are mandatory language and may not be altered.***

## **Article VII Executive Board Responsibilities**

### **1. President (Chief Operating Officer)**

- a. Preside at all meetings of [Name of Organization].
- b. Create an agenda and plan for organization.
- c. Shall appoint all committee chairpersons and delegate ad-hoc responsibilities.
- d. Directs the budget with approval of the Executive Committee.
- e. May act as the organization's representative at Student Leader Town Hall meetings.
- f. [Other duties as assigned...]

### **2. Vice President (Proxy for Chief Operating Officer)**

- a. Address any duties deemed necessary by the Executive Committee and/or the President.
- b. May act as the organization's representative at Student Leader Town Hall meetings.
- c. Perform the duties of the President in their absence may it be short term or in the instance the role becomes vacant.
- d. May represent the organization for the purposes of communicating the organization's initiatives and events.
- e. [Other duties as assigned...]

### **3. Treasurer (Chief Financial Officer)**

- a. Shall act as organization's Allocation Request representative for things like campus programming, travel, etc. and attend assigned funding meetings as required.
- b. Shall be the main point of contact with the Student Life Office Manager when organizing a purchase and or in the interest of fundraising with the approval of the Executive Board and in compliance with college policy.
- c. Continually update all financial records of the organization according to budgets and financial transactions made.
- d. May act as the organization's representative at Student Leader Town Hall meetings.
- e. [Other duties as assigned...]

### **4. Secretary (Membership Officer)**

- a. Manage and update Raider Connect page including but not limited to current information, news, images, documents and rosters with active members, retiring old members, etc.
- b. Responsible for recording the minutes and attendance for each meeting.

- c. Shall act as support to the Vice President with correspondence of the organization within the organization and among Student Life staff and other organizations.
- d. May act as the organization's representative at Student Leader Town Hall meetings.
- e. [Other duties as assigned...]

This section should outline the core responsibilities of the organization executive board members. While your organization may decide to use other executive member titles, the registration process will use the titles listed above. When an organization becomes active titles can be edited in Raider Connect. Additionally, the responsibilities of board members can remain as listed or be delegated or re-written to reflect responsibilities as it pertains to the basic functions to maintain active status of your organization.

## Article VIII Advisor

### 1. *Responsibilities of Advisor:*

- a. *The advisor shall adhere to Clery Training with Campus Police (dates and times will be disseminated throughout the semester from a Campus Police representative).*
- b. *The advisor shall assist the group in their execution of roles and responsibilities and is responsible for ensuring that GRCC policies and procedures are followed by the student organization.*
- c. *The advisor shall provide feedback to the organization regarding its operation and functioning.*
- d. *The advisor shall serve as a resource.*
- e. *The advisor should provide advice upon request, and also should share knowledge, expertise, and experience with the group.*
- f. *The advisor will be a nonvoting member of the organization.*
- g. *The advisor will not have financial authority.*
- h. *The advisor shall attend a minimum of one organization activity each semester the organization is active. The advisor is required to attend these functions during after hours 5-10pm, Monday-Friday.*
- i. *The executive board must keep their advisors informed of any and all activities and goals for the organization through regular meetings or updates.*

2. *Term of Service: The advisor shall be approved annually by the executive board membership of the organization. Should the organization choose not to approve the advisor, the organization must select another employee to serve as the advisor and have the advisor approved by the Assistant Director of Student Life. The advisor may resign by contacting Student Life Staff.*

3. *Selection: The organization is free to select any eligible employee to serve as the advisor to the organization or with assistance from Student Life Staff. Upon selection, the advisor must be approved by the Director or Assistant Director of Student Life.*

4. [Enter Expectations of Advisor]

This section outlines the duties and selection process for the advisor set by the executive board members, beyond those mandatory responsibilities listed in italics and bold. Be specific about what duties your organization expects from the advisor.

## **Article IX Meetings**

1. The first general assembly meeting shall be held within the first three weeks of the semester.
2. General assembly meetings shall be held [Enter frequency of meetings per the executive board]
3. Special meetings of the organization may be called by the organization.
4. Quorum shall be composed of [Enter number or percentage] of membership that is required to conduct business]

This section should outline the frequency of meetings and, if there are different types of meetings, describe those types. Some organizations have both general member meetings and executive board meetings.

## **Article X Parliamentary Authority**

1. Robert's Rules of Order: To resolve any disputes, conflicts, or rulings.
  - a. The rules of Parliamentary Procedure as contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be a guideline for the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with the Constitution or any special rules of order as determined by the Executive Board. Robert's Rules is a framework that is a set of codes and rules of ethics that helps groups hold orderly meetings that allow the majority to rule while allowing minority voices to be heard.

## **Article XI Committees**

If applicable, outline the committees of the organization, the functions of each committee, how chairpersons for each committee are selected, and how members are designated to serve on a committee. All committee action must be approved by the Executive Board.

## **Article XII Dues**

1. A membership fee of [Enter Membership Fee Amount] will be due of all members [each semester or each year].
2. Membership dues will be used for {Enter intended use of fees}.

The organization has the option of charging dues, which shall be collected and held in an on campus account, which will be managed by the Office of Student Life. This section should outline if/how the organization collects dues. Describe the amount, collection schedule and indication of what the monies will be used for. The amount set for dues shall not unduly prohibit students from joining the organization and waivers or scholarships shall be offered by the organization for members who are unable to afford the dues.

## **Article XIII Amendments**

1. Amendments must be presented [Enter Period of Time (one week, etc.)] before an amendment may be voted and may be initiated by any of the organization's executive board.

2. [Enter number or percentage] vote is required to pass an amendment.

This section outlines the process for changing the student organization's constitution. By having a clear procedure to make amendments, future organizations will have the ability to adapt the constitution to meet the needs of the members. An amendment may be initiated by any member of the organization's executive board. Amendments to any article or section of the Constitution shall render each and every previously recognized corresponding article or section null and void. In the instance of an amendment, the constitution document should be updated to reflect changes made. This could look like an asterisk next to the article/s amended with a footnote at the end of the document with a timestamp for recordkeeping.