Developing or Revising a Student Organization’s Constitution and Bylaws  
(Revised 09.2012)

As a student organization at University of Mount Union, the main requirement is to create and keep current a constitution and bylaws that are suitable for the organization. A constitution and bylaws should provide order, vision, purpose, rules and continuity to the student organization and assist in the day-to-day operations of the group.

A constitution basically states how the group will be organized. It must contain the following pieces:

- Name and purpose of the organization
- Membership information
- Officers, officer duties, procedures for officer election, and procedures for officer removal
- Meeting guidelines
- Advisor
- Amendments
- Ratification procedure
- University of Mount Union Rules & Regulations
- Student Involvement & Leadership Clause

The bylaws of an organization are the specific rules of the organization. Bylaws should include all the rules not already in the constitution that are of such importance that they cannot be changed in any way without previous notice.

When completed, submit your constitution and/or changes to the Director of Student Involvement and Leadership and the Director will bring your constitution to the next Committee on Student Organization meeting for approval.

A current copy of your constitution must be on file with the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership at all times. All members of your organization should receive an approved copy of the constitution.

Recognized student organizations have the right and privilege to:

- Use of the supplies and resources provided by the Office of Student Involvement & Leadership and Mount Union Student Senate
- Reserve bulletin board space in the HPCC
- Participate in the annual “Raiderfest” student involvement fair
- Listing on the University website
- Use of the Mount Union insignia and logo, in accordance with the University’s Identity Standards
- Schedule and utilize on campus facilities for meetings, events and activities
- Apply for membership in the Mount Union Student Senate, to gain access to Student Senate funding
- Host a student organization website on the University server

Constitution Guidelines

The following sample constitution is an outline of how a student organization constitution should be written and organized. At the University of Mount Union, there are five articles of the constitution must be included, written verbatim as given, in the student organization constitution*. These articles are as follows: Advisor, Amendments, Ratification, University of Mount Union rules and regulations, and the Student Involvement and Leadership Clause. All other articles may be written with details according to the student organization requirements or needs.

If you need help writing your constitution, please contact the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership. In the case of a new student organization, the constitution must be submitted for review by the Director of Student Involvement & Leadership upon its completion. In the case of an established student organization, a current copy of the constitution must be on file with the Office of Student Involvement & Leadership at all times. Please be sure to submit a copy once the document has been updated.

* If your organization is a chapter of a nationally-recognized organization, these amendments are expected to appear in your organization’s bylaws. Please submit a copy of both the national constitution and the local bylaws to the Office of the Student Involvement & Leadership.
Example constitution
Please follow the model below as an outline to setting up the organization’s constitution. By answering the questions in each article, the information provided will frame the constitution.

Constitution of Name of Organization
University of Mount Union
Date created/revised

Article I  Name of the Organization
Section 1. The name of this organization shall be NAME OF ORGANIZATION

Article II  Purpose of the Organization
The purpose of NAME OF ORGANIZATION shall be ...
[Organizations should be certain to include a complete statement of purpose. Activities and programs sponsored by the organization will be expected to fulfill the organization’s state objectives. The purpose of the organization should also be related to the promotion of personal development and intellectual growth and should not conflict with the mission, goals and policies of the University of Mount Union.]

Article III  Membership
Section 1. Who is eligible for membership? Are there special requirements or restrictions?
Section 2. Are there categories of membership? If so, what are they?
Section 3. How does one become a member of this organization?
Section 4. How does one maintain membership in good standing? What does this organization constitute as “good standing”? Can a member be removed from the organization, and for what cause and by what process?

Article IV  Officers and election
Section 1. How many officers are there? What are the names of each officer (don’t forget Student Senate Representative if this organization is seeking Student Senate recognition)?
Section 2. What are the requirements of holding office?
Section 3. What are the duties and general responsibilities of the officers?
Section 4. How are officers elected and/or appointed?
Section 5. When are officers selected to take office? How long are officer terms?
Section 6. Can an officer be removed? What is the process to do so?

Article V  Committees
Section 1. What standing committees exist in this organization? Which officer/member is responsible for what committee? Who serves on which committee?

Article VI  Meetings
Section 1. How many regular meetings are going to be held? How are they called and by whom? Be sure to indicate that the student organization will only meet while school is in session.
Section 2. How many members are needed for a quorum?
Section 3. How are decisions made? (e.g., simple majority; 2/3 majority; etc.)
Section 4. How are special meetings called? For what purposes? Who may call them?

Article VII  Advisor
[this article is REQUIRED in a student organization, specifically section 1, and must be included verbatim]
Section 1. The advisor of NAME OF ORGANIZATION must be a full-time member of the faculty, administration, or support staff of University of Mount Union and shall be recommended annually by the members of this organization in a manner agreeable to a majority of the total membership.
Section 2. (if needed) The advisor shall be (list additional advisor requirements, i.e. member of a particular national organization, academic department, specific role on campus)
Article VIII  Amendments
[This article is REQUIRED in a student organization and must be included verbatim]
Section 1. In order to amend this constitution, a written copy of the proposed amendment will be provided to the membership a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting a vote will be taken on the proposed amendment.
Section 2. The amendment to this constitution shall be adopted by a minimum two-thirds vote of the members present at this meeting.
Section 3. Amendments will become effective upon approval by the Committee on Student Organizations. The organization will receive written notification from the Director of Student Involvement and Leadership of the approval.

Article IX  Ratification
[This article is REQUIRED in a student organization and must be included verbatim]
Section 1. This constitution shall be in effect upon ratification by two-thirds of the Committee on Student Organizations.

Article X  University of Mount Union Rules and Regulations
[This article is REQUIRED in a student organization, and must be included verbatim]
Section 1. This organization shall adhere to the University of Mount Union Student Handbook and all laws, rules and regulations governing University of Mount Union, its organizations and its students.

Article XI.  Student Involvement and Leadership Clause
[This article is REQUIRED in a student organization, specifically sections 1 and 2, and must be included verbatim]
Section 1. NAME OF ORGANIZATION shall maintain a current registration form on file with the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership. This registration form includes a list of officers, name of the advisor, and a current roster of members.
Section 2. NAME OF ORGANIZATION will also submit the most recently amended constitution within one month of any change made.
Section 3. Failure to submit proper documentation will result in the withdrawal of formal recognition by the University.
Example Bylaws

The bylaws of a student organization should be detailed rules that explain the responsibilities, limitations and expectations of membership as they pertain to the group. Bylaws may include the meeting time and locations, dues to be paid, attendance requirements, election procedures, and other procedures as appropriate to the student organization.

Bylaws should be divided into headings (for example, "dues", "meetings", and "attendance") followed by the guidelines pertaining to that bylaw listed below the heading. This makes your bylaw system more organized and easier to use when needed.

Example bylaws

Please follow this outline as your model. Anything “bolded” should be changed to fit your organization’s needs. If your organization is a chapter of a nationally-recognized organization, the 5 required constitutional amendments are expected to appear in your organization’s bylaws. Please submit a copy of both the national constitution and the local bylaws to the Office of the Student Involvement & Leadership.

Bylaws of Name of Organization
University of Mount Union
Date created/ revised

1. Dues
   a. i.e. Dues will be $# per month/semester/year.
   b. i.e. Dues will be paid at the # meeting of each month/semester/year.
   c. i.e. Failure to pay dues will result in (list consequences, i.e. no benefits of membership, activities, conferences, etc.) until dues are paid in full.

2. Meetings
   a. i.e. General meetings
   b. i.e. Executive board (and/or committee meetings) will be at # pm in the X room.

3. Attendance
   a. i.e. Attendance is required at all general and special meetings of (name of organization) unless excused prior to the meeting.
   b. i.e. Members may be excused by submitting a written excuse to the president prior to the meeting they will be missing. Submission of excuse does not constitute acceptance.
   c. i.e. # unexcused absences will result in expulsion from the group.

4. Elections
   a. i.e. Elections shall take place in the # week of (month).
   b. i.e. Any regular member having served one semester in the group may be nominated for an executive office.
   c. i.e. Elections will be by written secret ballot.
   d. i.e. All ties will be decided by (indicate tie breaking process).
   e. i.e. The outgoing president will inform the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership of the new officers.