Writing Your Own Constitution

Using your own constitution instead of the standard constitution is a great way to give your organization its own unique identity from the start. In some cases, as with organizations which have parent or national organizations, organizations are required create a constitution that aligns with the national standards. Either way, this process can be very beneficial and rewarding for an organization's members, but will lengthen the approval process to approximately two months.

The Office of Student Development and Campus Vibrancy is happy to help you to write your constitution. We ask that you please follow the guidelines below, triple checking your work for errors and typos. Once completed, make an appointment with us begin the review process.

Things Your Constitution Must Contain

- The name of the organization
- A mission or purpose statement
- A description of rights for Stetson University student members and non-Stetson University student members
- The following information about officer elections:
  - When elections occur
  - What the voting procedures entail
  - How much notice will be given before voting with regard to time, location, candidates, etc.
  - What percentage of votes will be needed to name a winner (specify votes of those present at voting OR votes of entire organization)
- Officer removal procedures
- Officer duties
- Advisor specifications as follows:
  - How an advisor is to be chosen
  - What the advisor’s duties are
- Procedures for amending the constitution
- The following statements:
  - "The organization will maintain contact with the Office of Student Development and Campus Vibrancy on a regular basis regarding organizational matters."
  - "The organization shall comply with all federal, state, local and university laws, policies and procedures."
  - "Stetson University values the equality of all people, recognizing its responsibility to protect human dignity and promote positive personal growth, and therefore hazing is strictly prohibited by any member of the university community. Stetson defines hazing as an act that threatens the mental, physical, academic health or safety of a student through actions or situations that endanger, embarrass, harass, demean or ridicule any person regardless of locations, intent or consent of participants."
  - "The organization recognizes its role and responsibilities as a member of an engaged and inclusive university community."
"As a student organization of Stetson we agree to uphold Stetson University's nondiscrimination policy. It is the policy of Stetson University not to discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, age, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, physical characteristics or any other category protected by federal, state or local law in its educational programs, admissions policies, financial aid, employment or other school-administered programs. The policy is enforced by Stetson and, where applicable, federal laws such as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. The University is an equal opportunity educational institution."

Things Your Constitution Should Contain

- Reference to which officer will be responsible for S.A.F.A.C.
- The role and duties of the SGA senator representative for the organization
- How an advisor would be removed from their role
- If the organization will reference Robert's Rules of Order (or a like system) for conducting meetings
- How many members constitute a quorum (what is required to conduct official business)
- Information about dues

Things Your Constitution May Not Contain

- Any faculty, staff or off-campus persons as voting members or officers
- Any discriminatory language