**BEFORE YOU START!**

Before you start to follow this template and create your constitution, there are a couple of things that we need to outline and define so that creating your constitution can be made as easy a process as possible. The following are a couple of tips and definitions you need to know before starting!

* Definitions:
  + **Quorum:** The minimum number of members that must be present in order to vote and make decisions for the group. Note that the purpose of quorum is to ensure that enough members are present and expressing their opinions for the decisions made to be considered valid and meaningful to the organization.
    - Example: If there are 100 members in a group, and quorum is defined by that group as 50% + 1 (half of the membership plus one more member), then 51 of those 100 members must be present in order for a vote to even be taken. If that quorum is met, then a vote can be taken. The percentage for a vote to pass can vary—for example, a group might define a passing vote as 2/3. That means, of the 51 members present, 34 out of the 51 must vote in favor.
* Tips:
  + Elections must be open and fair. All members must be eligible for nomination and all members must be eligible to vote. All members’ votes must have the same value.
  + You must state a Quorum for all elections, meetings, and voting on amendments. Be very clear how many members must be present in order for a vote to occur. 50% +1 is a good rule to follow.
  + Do not give all the power to the certain/all officers. Remember that decisions must include the input of the members.
  + Advisors, outside of Student Life, are not required. That being said, having a section for advisors (Article VIII) is a good way to leave the door open to having an advisor in the future without having to amend the constitution later to add a section on advisors.

**DIRECTIONS!**

* As you follow this template, notice that some areas are bolded. **ALL BOLDED AREAS ARE REQUIRED!** Constitution’s missing bolded areas will not be approved! Areas that are not bolded are optional, but that doesn’t make them obsolete. (You should remove the bold for these areas in your final constitution document)
* All areas that are HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW require that you fill them in.

**(INSERT ORGANIZATION’S FULL NAME)**

**(INSERT DATE)**

**ARTICLE I**

### **Name of organization**

**The name of this organization shall be INSERT FULL NAME HERE, hereinafter referred to as (OPTIONAL: short name/acronym).**

**ARTICLE II**

## **Purpose of organization**

**The purpose(s) of this organization shall be (state your purpose, answering the questions below).**

* **This section must include: What is the purpose for establishing the organization? What is the intended impact of the organization on the University community? Why is it important to have this organization on campus?**

*NOTES: Your purpose statement will impact decisions related to what are appropriate (and inappropriate) spheres of activity for the organization to be engaged in. The purpose statement should be broad enough in scope to allow the organization freedom of action but specific enough to show the uniqueness of the organization.*

**ARTICLE III**

## **Membership practice**

**Active membership of this student organization shall be chosen without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, color, disability, national origin, age, or marital status, except in cases of fraternity and sorority organization which are exempt by federal law from Title IX regulations concerning discrimination on the basis of sex. Active membership should also be composed of at least 50% UCR Students (undergraduate or graduate).**

**A. Eligibility for Membership**

**All students currently enrolled at UCR shall be eligible for membership.**

*NOTES: Your organization MUST be open to all currently enrolled UCR students. You can also choose to open it up to staff, faculty, and community members. Remember that at least 50% of the organization’s membership must be made up of undergraduate and/or graduate students. Students enrolled at the University Extension Center do not count towards the minimum number requirement.*

**B. Categories of Membership**

**The categories of membership are as follows:**

* **Active Members: Currently registered UCR students who are listed on the Highlander Link roster. Active members can vote in elections and other group matters, can run for officer positions, and can propose amendments.**
* **Inactive Members: Members who do not fit or fulfill the above definition of “Active Members.”**

NOTES: When it comes to “Active Members,” you can choose to add other requirements like having to attend a certain amount/percentage of group meetings/events. If you have membership dues, you can also list that members must pay their membership dues to be considered “Active Members.” You can also have other categories like Alumni, Staff/Faculty, or Honorary. Only Active and Inactive Member Categories are required.

**C. Removal of members**

**Members can be removed from the organization for the following reasons: (state the reasons - EXAMPLE: Making racist/discriminatory comments, breaking Federal, State, Local, or University Law/Policy)**

**All Active Members have the ability to request the removal of another member. Any Active Member who wishes to have another member removed must present their reasoning in writing to the executive board through an email/electronic or hard copy documentation. Once the complaint/request is brought to the executive board, the following process must take place:**

1. **Charges or complaint brought against an individual**
2. **Evidence to support complaint is presented**
3. **Individual given an opportunity to argue a defense and offer counter evidence**
4. **Vote is taken by the executive board**
5. **A (pick your vote—either Majority or Plurality) vote will result in the removal of the member in question**
6. **Appeal process for the decision made by vote. Only one level of appeal is required.**

**ARTICLE IV**

## **Officers**

**A. List of officers**

**The Officers of this organization shall be:**

1. **President 2. Vice President 3. Treasurer 4. (If you have others, numerically list them here)**

NOTES: At minimum, there must be a primary officer (president), a secondary officer (vice president), and a treasurer. Your organization should not be comprised mostly of officers. Officers should not comprise more than 30% of your membership (exception: newly registered student organizations that only have 5 members).

**B. General Duties and Responsibilities of Officers**

**The President’s duties include:**

* **(state the duties of the president)**

**The Vice President’s duties include:**

* **(state the duties of the vice-president)**

**The Treasurer’s duties include:**

* **(state the duties of the treasurer)**

**Etc.**

NOTES: Give as much detail as possible when outlining each officer’s duties/responsibilities. You must have one officer who will take meeting minutes and make them available to the Active members.

**C. Qualifications for Becoming an Officer**

**To be eligible to become an officer in this organization, potential candidates must be currently registered undergraduate students at UCR and must be Active Members as outlined in Article III Section B.**

NOTES: Remember that only UCR students are eligible for officer positions. You may choose to make it a requirement that Active members be “active” for a certain amount of time before they can run for a position—like 2 quarters of active membership. You may also choose to restrict your top 3 positions (President, Vice President, and Treasurer), to only those members who have served as an officer before.

**D. Terms of office**

**Every officer position will last ONE academic year.**

NOTES: You may choose to limit how many times someone can hold a position.

E. Procedure for filling vacated offices (OPTIONAL)

When a position is vacated, the executive board will appoint someone—either an Active Member or another officer—to fill the position.

**F. Procedure for removal of officers**

**Officers can be removed from the organization for the following reasons: : (state the reasons - EXAMPLE: Making racist/discriminatory comments, breaking Federal, State, Local, or University Law/Policy)**

**All Active Members have the ability to request the removal of an officer. Any Active Member who wishes to have an officer removed must present their reasoning in writing to the executive board (this could be done through hard copy or an email/electronic). Once the complaint/request is brought to the executive board, the following process must take place:**

1. **Charges or complaint brought against an individual**
2. **Evidence to support complaint is presented**
3. **Individual given an opportunity to argue a defense and offer counter evidence**
4. **Vote is taken by the executive board**
5. **A (pick your vote—either Majority or Plurality) vote will result in the removal of the member in question**
6. **Appeal process for the decision made by vote. Only one level of appeal is required.**

**ARTICLES V**

## **Meetings**

**A. Quorum**

**A quorum defines the minimum number of members that must be present in order to vote and make decisions for the group. A quorum defines the minimum number of members that must be present in order to vote and make decisions for the group. The quorum for this organization is 50% of the Active members plus ONE more Active Member (50%+1 of the Active Members).**

NOTES: The quorum should be determined according to the organization’s need.

B. Types of meetings (OPTIONAL)

Things to consider:

* Are there different types of meetings (general meetings, board meetings, etc.)?
* How often are meetings held (e.g., weekly, monthly, etc.)?
* Who is required to attend each type of meeting? What happens if a meeting is missed?
* Are there special meetings? What are the circumstances under which special meetings may be called? Who can call the meetings?

C. Method of conducting meetings (OPTIONAL)

Things to consider:

* What rules shall govern the conduct of business for the organization (General Consensus, Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, etc.)?

**D. Meeting minutes and records**

**It shall be the responsibility of the secretary (or another officer if you don’t have a secretary) to take meeting minutes and keep related records of all meetings (including special and emergency meetings). Meeting Minutes and other records are vital for an organization’s success. Election results, impeachment of an officer, approval of a budget or expense, and passing of an amendment are just a few of the important items that meeting minutes are used to validate/verify. Previous minutes will be read or distributed at the beginning of next meeting. Additions and corrections are to be made at this time and a final approval of the minutes must be made.**

NOTES: Someone in your group needs to take notes and it should be listed as the responsibility of one of the officers. If you don’t have a secretary position, the Vice President can take meeting minutes. Make sure you address who will be responsible for taking notes, how the records will be stored and who will be responsible for them, and how the organization will share meeting minutes with the membership.

**ARTICLE VI**

## **Elections**

**A. Times and period when elections occur**

**Yearly elections will be held every Spring quarter no later than the last week of May. New officers will shadow current officers and will be transitioned through Spring quarter. Newly elected officers will take their positions on the first day of summer.**

NOTES: Elect officers in early Spring quarter, use the rest of Spring to transition officers, have the new board take office right before summer or on day 1 of summer. This creates overlap in duties and a designated training period that ultimately makes the organization stronger.

**B. Nominations**

**Only active members are eligible for nomination. Any active member can nominate another active member. Any active member can also self-nominate themselves, but must be seconded by another active member.**

NOTES: If your group wants to have applications for officer positions, remember that those applications must be labeled as “Nomination Applications” and can only be used to collect information or as “Statements of Interest” for an officer position. They can’t be used to screen out potential candidates

**C. Notification and posting of elections**

**Active members will be notified about elections through email, social media, and through announcements at meetings.**

NOTES: Make sure you make a mention of how long the notification and posting period will be. In other words, how much in advance will members be told about the nomination process, and how long will that process itself be.

**D. Election procedures**

**The quorum necessary for elections to take place is 50% of the active members plus one more active member. Electronic voting will be allowed and will count toward the quorum requirement. Only active members are able to run for elections and only active members are allowed to vote. A majority of votes will secure an officer position. The newly elected officers will be transitioned throughout the remainder of the Spring quarter, and will officially take their positions on the first day of summer.**

NOTES: You need to state the specific procedure for elections. Will the voting be done through secret ballot or raised hands? Will electronic voting be allowed and will it count toward fulfilling the quorum requirement? In regards to the number of votes needed to win, a simple majority or plurality of votes works perfectly.

**ARTICLE VII**

## **Financial records**

**The University shall have the right to audit the financial records of this organization. If the organization will receive funding from Associated Student at UCR (ASUCR) or the Graduate Student Association (GSA), the organization must comply with all funding policies and procedures issued by the funding authority.**

**A. Dues/membership fees**

**IF YOU WILL HAVE DUES: The membership dues for this organization will be $\_\_/(quarter/year?). The dues will be used to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**IF YOU WILL NOT HAVE DUES: There will be no dues for membership in this organization.**

NOTES: If there are dues, who is the officer that a member can connect with to pay their dues? Who can they ask what the dues are for that year/quarter? If there are ways to members to fundraise to pay their dues—maybe because they are unable to afford it—make sure you talk about that here. Can payment plans be arranged to allow students to pay over time?

B. Budget expenditures (OPTIONAL)

State what the process for budget expenditures will be

* Things to consider:
* Is a vote of the members required for all expenditures?
* Who are the officers/members that are responsible for authorizing all expenditures and reimbursements?
* Officers should never have complete control of financial matters and the general membership.
* What is the procedure for disbursement of all remaining funds upon dissolution of the organization?

ARTICLE VIII

Advisors

A. Selection of advisors (OPTIONAL)

Things to consider:

* How is an advisor selected (e.g., by appointment, election)?
* What are the responsibilities of the advisor? What are the groups’ expectations for the involvement of the advisor?

**ARTICLE IX**

## **Amendments**

**A. Proposing amendments**

**All Active members can propose amendments at general meetings. Amendments must be proposed to the board and presented to the active members, and will be voted on at the following general meeting.**

**B. Provisions**

**The Quorum necessary for amendments to the constitution to be voted on shall be no less than 50% +1 of the active members. Amendments to the constitution shall be approved by a 2/3 vote in favor of the amendment. All amendments shall be in agreement with University regulations and policies and are not approved until reviewed by a Student Life official. An updated Constitution must be filed with the Student Life office through the online organization system within one week of adoption. Groups will notify their Organization Advisor in Student Life once the document has been uploaded in the system so that it might be reviewed.**