



Clubs & Societies Constitution Guidelines

Your club is there for its members. A constitution is needed to ensure that the club continues to provide valuable service to its members. Without a constitution, clubs risk falling into neglect. A constitution is also critical in ensuring fairness and accountability to members, and to ensure that the club's finances are under sound management. Every group that wishes to be recognized by the Student Union or that wishes to get Student Union funding must have a constitution that meets certain minimum requirements.

This is an example constitution which can help your group develop its own. Feel free to change it to suit the needs of your club. However, refer to the Student Union Clubs & Society Policy to ensure that your group's constitution meets the minimum Student Union requirements.

NAME

The purpose of this section is to state the name of your organization as well as an abbreviated version of said name to be used throughout this document.

Ex:

1. This organization shall be known as the U.N.B. Constitution Club (hereafter referred to as the "Club")

OBJECT

Set out the mission of your organization. Constitutions are permanent in nature, therefore the purpose of your group must also be one that will remain constant throughout the life of your organization.

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2. The object of the Club is to:
 - a. provide a positive environment for University of New Brunswick ("UNB") undergraduate students to discuss constitutional issues;
 - b. promote the development of skills needed to prepare policy; and
 - c. provide members of the Club with an opportunity for social development.

MEMBERS

These are the questions that need to be addressed in this section. What is a member? Who is membership open to? Are there varying types of membership, such as ordinary and honorary? For what period of time can one be a member? You may consider limiting the club to only UNB students. If you choose not to limit the club to only UNB students, the Constitution should say.

Note: Clubs & Society Policy section 5.a requires that “The Group must be open to all Members of the Union.” i.e.: all students who pay the Student Union membership fee.

Note: Clubs & Society Policy section 5.b stipulates that “Members of the Group may only have their membership in the Group revoked by a 2/3 majority vote of the Group’s members.”

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3. Membership in the Club shall be open to all full-time undergraduate UNB students as defined by the UNB Academic Calendar, but shall not be exclusively limited to those students.
4. There shall be two (2) classes of membership in the Club, namely:
 - a. Ordinary Members;
 - b. Honorary Members;(together referred to as the “Members”).
5. Ordinary Members shall be those persons, who have paid the requisite membership fee established from time to time by the Executive Officers.
6. Honourary Members shall be those individuals who have been granted such Membership by a majority of the Executive Officers.
7. Membership for Ordinary Members shall commence once the membership is paid and terminate on the thirty first day of August in a given year, excluding those Executive Members. Membership for Honourary Members shall commence on the date of appointment and shall terminate upon resolution effecting termination of such membership by a majority vote of the Executive Officers.
8. Where at least 2/3 of the Members vote to revoke the membership of a Member, the membership of that Member whose Membership was the subject of that vote shall be revoked.

REGISTRY

It is recommended that clubs and societies choose to maintain a registry of members along with contact information for internal records.

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9. A membership registry shall be maintained by the Secretary in which shall be entered the names of all Members of the Club.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

The purpose of this section is to declare how the membership fee of your group will be determined and what general privileges it brings with it.

Note: The Student Union does not require that you charge a membership fee; however it is critical for groups to recognize that the funding provided by the Student Union is intended to support events and not general operations.

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10. The Executive Officers of the Club may prescribe from time to time an annual membership fee which shall be payable by all Ordinary Members of the Club.
11. Upon payment of the requisite membership fee, Ordinary Members shall receive a receipt for payment and shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of a qualified Member of the Club.

MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

This section is used to identify the frequency of meetings, which all group members are encourage to attend to discuss the state of the group. Examples may include: one annual meeting open to all members, monthly meetings to which all students are invited, or a meeting to be held on the first and third Wednesday of every month. This section, as with the rest of your constitution, should not be overly specific. Keep things general. For example, it would not be a good idea to constitutionally set the date for annual meetings on, say, “the second Friday of July”. As we all know, things can come up, and there may be circumstances preventing members from showing up on that day. A better way to set such a date would be, say, “during the month of July”. This ensures that the meeting happens around a certain time of year, but does not unnecessarily restrict the club and its Executive Officers.

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12. The Club shall hold an annual meeting of its Members not more than twelve (12) months after the holding of the most recent annual meeting. The annual meeting shall be held in such a place and time as resolved by the Executive Officers. At the annual meeting there shall be presented to the Members a report from the Executive Officers on the affairs of the Club since the previous annual meeting, a review of the Club’s budget, and reports relating to the affairs of the Club as the Executive Officers may determine.

OFFICERS

This section is designed to specify the persons who will act as officers (or the executive) of your group. Each of the positions needs to be clarified in later sections. Groups must also define the procedure of handling dismissals and resignations of officers.

Note: Section 5.c of the Clubs & Society Policy stipulates that “Executive Officers of the group must be elected by the Group’s members.”

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13. In each year, the Members shall elect, in accordance with this Constitution, the following Executive Officers: a) President; b) Vice President; c) Treasurer; and d) Secretary
14. Where any Executive Officer does not take office, resigns, or is dismissed, the remaining Executive Officers shall appoint by two-thirds majority vote a Member in good standing to fill such vacancy.
15. At least 50% of the Group’s Executive Officers shall be Members of the UNB Student Union (the “Student Union”).

PRESIDENT

The definition of the positions is included in the following sections. It is important to remain general so that the officers are not tied into duties they may be incapable of completing from year to year, such as “organize the spring fling”, especially since this event is not clearly defined as a required annual event for the group to operate. However, it may be in your group’s best interests to make these regulations extensive so that the President, for example is mandated to perform certain tasks and ensure the group is well governed.

Note: Pursuant to Clubs & Society Policy section 5.d, “The duties and responsibilities of each Executive Officer must be stipulated in the Constitution.”

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16. The President shall:
 - a. provide direction and leadership for the advancement and promotion of the objectives of the Club;
 - b. be the official spokesperson for the Club;
 - c. supervise the Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary;
 - d. co-sign, along with the Secretary, the minutes of each meeting; and
 - e. fulfill and perform those duties as may be required to achieve the objectives of the Club.

VICE PRESIDENT

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17. The Vice President shall:
 - a. report to the President;
 - b. fulfill the duties of the President in his or her absence; and
 - c. organize the annual meeting.

TREASURER

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18. The Treasurer shall:
 - a. report to the President;
 - b. present the books and accounts of the Club to any Member within three days of a request to view the books and accounts of the Club;
 - c. be responsible for the enforcement of all financial policies of the Club; and
 - d. act as a liaison between the Club and the Student Union in all communications and agreements relating to funding.

SECRETARY

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19. The Secretary shall:
 - a. report to the President;
 - b. record the minutes of meetings of the Executive Councilors;
 - c. record minutes of the annual meeting; and
 - d. maintain this Constitution;

COMMITTEES

The committees section outlines the group's ability to create committees as well as the role of any permanent committees that may exist. Again, ensure that only committees that are permanent in nature are included in the constitution so that it does not need to be change whenever a committee is created or dissolved.

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20. The Executive Officers of the Club may appoint from time to time committees of the Club. Where a committee is appointed, the Executive Officers shall determine the composition of the committee.
21. The Club shall create and maintain the following standing committees:
 - a. Policy Committee

The Policy Committee shall consist of the Vice President who shall act as the chairperson and no fewer than four (4) Ordinary Members appointed by the Executive and shall:

 - i. hear and provide written recommendations to the Executive Officers regarding any general matter of policy of the Club and changes thereto.

ELECTIONS

Clarity needs to be provided in this section as to which positions require an election as well as when these elections will occur. Also, groups may stipulate limits on those members that are eligible for elections. (Such as no members under the age of 19 may be executives, etc.)

Note: Clubs & Society Policy section 5.c stipulates that “Executive Officers of the group must be elected by the Group’s members.”

Note: Clubs & Society Policy section 6.a stipulates that “Each year a minimum of 50% of the Group’s Executive Officers must be Members of the Union.”

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22. The annual election of the Executive Officers shall take place not fewer than two (2) weeks after the close of nominations and shall be held prior to mid Winter Term break as defined by the UNB Academic Calendar.
23. Each Executive Officer elected in accordance with this Constitution shall assume office on the first day of May in the year of his or her election and shall continue to hold office until the earliest of:
 - a. the thirtieth day of April; and
 - b. such time as he or she resigns, is dismissed, or ceases to be a Member of the Club.

BALLOTS & VOTING

This section can cover any and all voting issues and procedures, such as what information is required on the ballots, if there are ballots, what happens if only one person runs for a position, and who may vote.

Note: Clubs & Society Policy section 5.e stipulates that “All Group members, including Executive Officers, must have equal voting rights.”

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24. All Group members, including Executive Officers, shall have one vote.
25. Where only one candidate is nominated for a particular position, the ballot for that position shall be in the form of a “yes/no” vote.

FISCAL YEAR

This section simply states the fiscal year by which the group will operate. The year end day is used when preparing financial information. Due to the fact that most clubs operate during the school year, it would not be reasonable to designate the calendar year as a year of operation.

Note: Clubs & Society policy section 7 stipulates that “Groups shall establish a fiscal year of May 1st to April 30th to maintain synchronicity with the fiscal year of the Union as set out in Union By-Law 94.”

26. The fiscal year of the Club shall begin on the first day of May in each year and shall terminate on the last day of April in the following year.

AMENDMENT

Any amendments to the group's constitution must follow the regulations set out this section.

Note: Clubs & Society Policy section 5.g requires that "Amendments to a Group's Constitution must be passed by a 2/3rds majority of the Group's membership at a meeting where 50%+1 of the Group's members are present."

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27. Notice of Motion indicating the intention of any proposed change to this Constitution is required two weeks in advance of a meeting at which any proposed change is to be discussed. Such notice shall be posted in conspicuous places where it is expected that a majority of Members may take notice of the proposed changes.

28. Amendments shall be accepted only after at least 2/3 of the Members of the Club voting at a meeting where 50%+1 of the Members are present.

Last but not least, the constitution requires authentication from at least two signing authorities.

Ex:

ENACTED this 30th day of April, 2010

President

Vice President