

Instructions for using the Constitution Template

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Introduction

In this document, we will be giving you instructions on how to utilize the template for your constitution. The reason we have this in a separate document is to allow easier editing of the template file.

Basic Context:

Before we start, we will be providing basic context so that you can understand the key terms.

What is a Constitution?

A constitution sets out the basic rules that your student club will follow and provide direction for your club in a clearly written manner.

What is an Article?

Simplistically, just see articles as sections to properly and effectively categorize your constitution content.

- If you're talking about an election's procedure, then it would be best to categorize that content into an article.
- If you're talking about an executive's duties, it would also be best to categorize that content into an article.

Legal Definition:

"An article is a subdivision of a larger legal document or law. Articles outline specific areas of regulation. An article can be further divided into sections, which specifically address each legal point." Source: <https://termly.io/legal-dictionary/article/>

More Information:

The complexity of a constitution is reflective of the depth and intricacy each club has. Clubs can have a range of ways to organize their club members, executive, operations and governance

We at UMSU provide recognition and benefits to clubs, in exchange, we ask for your club to send us your executive team information, contact information, club information, membership list, and an up-to-date constitution. Updating your constitution ensures that clubs are constantly operating and governing in a proper, fair manner.

Using the Template

There are 3 elements in this template document that you must understand:

- **Red text** = **Required Items** for your constitution
- **Blue text** = **Optional items** for your constitution
- Black text with no highlights = **you are NOT allowed to edit this** otherwise your club cannot be recognized by UMSU.

Can we add more articles and other items to the template?

Yes!

Just ensure that these extra articles do not conflict with the pre-existing articles in this template as that is what is required to be recognized as an UMSU Club.

If you want to adjust sections or the like, that is fine but you cannot adjust Section 4: Club Governance.

Can we keep our own constitution structure but amend / change the document to include the required items and articles from the template?

Yes!

Please refer to the Constitution checklist with respect to what items you need for your club to be recognized.

Considering you are revising your constitution this way, it is recommended to have your constitution draft reviewed with Student Group Services for feedback before applying for recognition. This makes it easier for your club to apply for recognition, as getting a pre-approval speeds up the recognition process.

Can we change the role titles as stated in this constitution template?

Yes!

Your club is not required to keep the role titles as stated in the template. It is mainly an example for clubs who would like to opt-in for those titles. Note - please ensure the President role name is not changed. It can be renamed to Co-President but that is it.

If your club has different role titles and duties, it is completely acceptable to adjust your constitution with those role titles in mind.

Can you help us with revising our constitution?

Yes!

Please send us an email at studentclubs@umsu.ca and we will be happy to help!

Overall, we know the constitution writing process can feel like a big task, so we have offered a variety of support resources for student club executives such as documents like this and offer consultation to students from Student Group Services at studentclubs@umsu.ca .