

Registered Student Organization Constitution (Writing a Constitution) Student Media

Constitutions lend stability to organizations by providing a common framework within which members agree to work. Constitutions also state an organization's purpose and processes.

Constitutions are required by all UCSC Registered Student Organizations and must be in agreement with University policies. The section below includes the elements required by the University as well as suggestions. (See the [Student Policies & Regulations Handbook](#) for additional information.)

Student Media organizations are also required to have a Code of Ethics and Diversity Guidelines in their constitution. This language can be very helpful in guiding both personnel and content decisions.

Organizations are encouraged to discuss and design their own processes and make additions as necessary.

As part of your registration process:

- File a copy of your constitution with Student Media
- You will be notified of its approval or any revision required to meet University policy
- File all amendments with Student Media within one week of their adoption.

If you have any questions, please contact the SOMeCA office at (831) 459-2934 or at soar@ucsc.edu.

Writing A Constitution

In the sample below, the sections and statements in ***bold and italics*** or state *Required Language* are required to be stated in your organization's constitution per university policy. Words not in bold are suggestions. For assistance writing your constitution, ask your Student Media advisor for help or a fill-in-the-blank constitution.

Section 1: *The Name of this organization shall be...*

- The name of the University can only be used as a geographical designation:
 - e.g. the Alphabet Club at UCSC; but may not be UCSC Alphabet Club.

Section 2: *The purpose of this organization shall be to...*

- State the primary purpose of the organization.

Section 3: *Statements of Responsibility*

- *[Required Language] Accept responsibility for compliance with University policies and campus regulations under the UCSC Student Policies and Regulation Handbook and UC policies.*
- *[Required Language] Understand and agree to abide by the provisions of the anti-hazing states in the California Education Code or Penal Code (as amended by SB 1454) and UCSC Anti-Hazing Policy (Appendix AA)*
- *[Required Language] Affirm that the rules, regulations and policies of the University of California and UCSC shall supersede the rules, regulations, policies and/or bylaws of any affiliated international, national, regional or local organization.*

Section 4: Membership (state any criteria for membership)

- ***[Required Language] All UCSC students interested in the purpose of this organization are eligible for membership.***
- ***[Required Language] Membership is open to any students regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, etc. with the exception of incorporated sororities and fraternities, which may be limited by gender.***
- ***[Required Language] Membership is limited to currently registered UCSC students. Non-students are welcome to participate in activities, but may not be members, hold office, or vote. Non-students must complete non-student participation forms.***
- **Membership may be rescinded by...**
 - ***[Required Language] Membership may be rescinded by a member failing to fulfill their membership requirements as set forth in constitution and/or by laws. Membership cannot be rescinded based on violations of the University Code of Conduct including Title IX Law and the UC Systemwide Sexual Violence and Sexual Harrasment Policy. If the student organization believes that a member has violated University Code of Conduct including Title IX Law and the UC Systemwide Sexual Violence and Sexual Harrasment Policy, please schedule a meeting with your SOMeCA Advisor to discuss next steps.***
- **Please list in detail what those requirements are.**
 - Examples: Not attending a minimum number of general meetings, not attending a minimum number of sponsoring events, not fulfilling requirements of an active member etc.
- **Please state the process of how membership may be rescinded**
 - Example: If a member has failed to meet one of the above requirements, a X majority vote of members present at a regular meeting is required. Reasons for removal of membership shall be introduced at the previous meeting. The member in question shall be notified at least 24 hours in advance at their UCSC email address and shall be allowed to reply at the meeting at which the vote is taken. The member will be notified in person or via email and provided next steps for their appeal or to become a member again.

Section 5: Officers/Authorized Representatives (take responsibility for the organization):

- **Qualifications for Officers/Authorized Representatives:**
 - **Must be a currently registered student at UCSC.**
 - Add any additional qualifications (if any):
 - e.g. must have been an active member for at least one quarter.
- **Duties and Responsibilities of Officers/Authorized Representatives:**
 - **Please list the following four Officer/Authorized Representatives titles and duties and any additional Officers/Authorized Representatives title and duties**
 - **Editor-in-Chief:** facilitates all meetings, represents the organization, and convenes the executive committee weekly when school is in season, etc.
 - **Managing Editor:** assumes the duties of Editor-in-Chief when they are absent, and serves as special projects chair, etc.
 - **Facilities Use Committee Representative:** represents the organization on the Facilities Use Committee (when needed) to address matters relating to shared use of the Student Media Center, etc.
 - **Business Manager/Financial Officer:** keeps a record of all income and expenses, makes a report of the account balance at each meeting, expends funds at the direction of the membership, etc.

- **Note: Every Student Media organization must designate one Authorized Representative and one alternate to represent the organization on the Student Media Council.**
- **Election and Removal of Officers/Authorized Representatives:**
 - **Officers/Authorized Representatives shall be elected by...**
 - e.g. simple majority vote, consensus, or secret ballot vote of the members present at a regularly scheduled meeting
 - **And shall serve for...**
 - e.g. one calendar year or following academic year, etc.
 - **Officers/Authorized Representatives may be removed by:**
 - [Required Language] **Officers/Authorized Representatives may be rescinded by a member failing to fulfill their membership requirements as set forth in constitution and/or by laws. Officers/Authorized Representatives cannot be rescinded based on violations of the University Code of Conduct including Title IX Law and the UC Systemwide Sexual Violence and Sexual Harrasment Policy. If the student organization believes that a Officers/Authorized Representatives has violated University Code of Conduct including Title IX Law and the UC Systemwide Sexual Violence and Sexual Harrasment Policy, please schedule a meeting with your SOMECA Advisor to discuss next steps.**
 - **Please list in detail what those requirements are.**
 - Examples: not attending a minimum number of general meetings, not attending a minimum number of sponsoring events, failing to meet authorized representatives requirements and expectations, and failing to complete duties in their position
 - **Please state the process of how membership may be rescinded**
 - Example: 2/3s majority vote of members present at a regular meeting of the organization. Reasons for removal shall be introduced at the previous regular meeting. The officer/authorized representative in question will be notified at least 24 hours in advance at their UCSC email address and shall be allowed to reply to accusations at the meeting at which the vote is taken

Section 6: Organization Decision-Making:

- **Quorum shall be...**
 - (Minimum number of members needed to be present at a meeting for a vote)
- **Voting privileges shall be granted to...**
 - e.g. Members who have attended two consecutive meetings, etc.
- **The organization shall make decisions by...**
 - e.g. consensus, simple majority vote, 2/3s majority vote, etc. Additionally, you may also delegate certain decisions to specific subcommittees.

Section 7: Financial records procedure shall be...

- Describe any regular fundraising activities such as dues, T-shirt sales, events, and the purpose for which funds are raised. Describe the budget, record keeping, and reporting processes for your organization.
- Deposit all funds raised on campus with the Student Media Office. In addition, all checks must be made payable to the "UC Regents", with the student organization's name in the memo line.

Section 8: Code of Ethics and Diversity Guidelines

The Student Media Council requires that registered media organizations include a Code of Ethics and Diversity Guidelines in their constitution. These allow you to express your philosophy, responsibility to others, and commitment. They also provide an opportunity to articulate the standards of professionalism to which the organization adheres, and are helpful documents to turn to when the group is dealing with an ethical question and/or situation. Writing these elements of your constitution gives each group member a greater sense of membership and direction.

At a minimum, the Code of Ethics should address the following issues: accuracy, fairness, appropriateness of language and/or illustrations, identification of opinion, openness to persons wishing to take issue with an article, presentation, commentary or editorial, and input and participation by interested members of the campus community.

For examples of professional ethical codes and diversity guidelines, review the [Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics](#), or [The Seattle Times](#).

Section 9: *Bylaws*

- Generally, a constitution establishes the broad spectrum and format of an organization. Bylaws spell out the process and procedures used to attain the goals of the organization. If your organization has more detailed or complex procedures, you can simplify portions of your constitution and create bylaws to specify the details.

Section 10: *Amendments to the Constitution shall be approved by...*

- e.g. Simple or 2/3s majority vote or consensus of members present at a regularly scheduled meeting or of the total of membership.

Section 11: *This constitution has been formally approved by the membership of the organization.*

- At the end of your constitution, please include the name, signature, and date of one current Authorized Representative