**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:
	+ 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.
	+ Do not list any specific names. This document should be good for years, so just list positions and what those positions are expected to do.
	+ 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.

**Delete this page before you submit.**

**(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, mission, values).

**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 organizations 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).

^ This is a requirement and cannot be edited. Remove this line before submitting.

**A. Eligibility**

All students at UCR shall be eligible for membership.

^ Organizations are required to be open to all UCR students. You can choose to also be open to staff, faculty, or community members, if you wanted. Remove these instructions before submitting.

**B. Categories of Membership**

The categories of membership are as follows:

* Active Members: Currently registered UCR students who are listed on the HighlanderLink 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.”

^ You can add other requirements to be an active member, such as attending a % of meetings and/or paying necessary dues (which will be outlined later). You can also add additional categories such as Alumni, Honorary, etc, as long as you outline what those categories are allowed to do / not do. Remove these instructions before submitting.

**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 majority 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)

^ Don’t list names, just positions. You can also rename positions and add additional positions based on what your group needs. You can always add or remove positions by amending this constitution. Remove these instructions before submitting.

**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)

^ If you have additional officers listed in A. then make sure to add them to B. as well. Remove this line before submitting.

**C. Qualifications for Becoming an Officer**

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

^ Remember that only full-time UCR students are eligible for officer positions. You may choose to make it an additional 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 for example. 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, though this is only ideal for larger organizations that have enough people to do this. Remove this paragraph before submitting.

**D. Terms of office**

Every officer position will last ONE academic year from the beginning of Summer to the end of Spring.

^ You can choose these start and end dates. Most groups do Summer to Spring, you can try a Winter to Winter timeline if you wanted to. It’s irregular to make the term less than a year or more than a year but you have freedom to if you wanted. Remove this line before submitting.

**E. Procedure for filling vacated offices**

When a position is vacated, the executive board will appoint someone—either an Active Member or another officer—to fill the position by a majority vote. The executive board may also decide to hold a special election if they have multiple people interested.

**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 majority 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.

^ You can decide whether your organization wants *only* executive board or the entire membership to vote on removing officers, including President. By choosing the whole membership instead, this often stops the executive board from becoming a ‘clique’ and voting out people they don’t like. The wording above is fine as-is for executive decisions, change the wording in 4) if you’d like the whole membership to vote. Remove these instructions before submitting.

**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).

^ The above statement is fine as-is if you’re okay with a 50%+1 quorum, but feel free to edit if you think it’s unreasonable to get that many people to a meeting or to make a vote. Remove this line before submitting.

**B. 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.

^ 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. Remove these instructions before submitting.

**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.

^ You can edit these times to reflect your terms of office (section IV.D). Remove this line.

**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.

**C. Notification and posting of elections**

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

**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.

^ The above D section outlines what a typical election looks like. You have the freedom to add in additional steps, including interviews or appointments, gathering questions/answers, or other steps to securing a position. Whatever process you outline here is the official way to choose officers and you’re bound to follow these instructions unless you amend the constitution later. You do not need to hold elections when you first charter an organization but rather when the next election cycle begins. You can choose how to select your next officers but regardless you need to outline that process here. Remove this paragraph before submitting.

**ARTICLE VII**

## **Financial records**

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

^ This is a required statement, FYI. Remove this line.

**A. Dues/Membership Fees**

The membership dues for this organization will be $\_ a quarter/year. The dues will be used to \_\_\_ and will be collected by the position.

^ You can decide whether to have dues or not, but whatever you decide, you must stick with until you amend this document. Charging dues without amending your document could result in needing to pay members back for not following your own guidelines. If you don’t have dues, replace the above with this statement: There will be no dues to join this organization. Remove these instructions when you’ve decided and before submitting.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**Advisers**

**A. Selection and role of optional advisers**

Student organizations are not required to have a staff, faculty, or community adviser. The executive board, at any time, may decide to invite someone to become their adviser and may come up with a mutual understanding of what that means to be an adviser. They may also have multiple advisers. Advisers cannot be students, cannot make decisions in the organization, and may not vote or appoint officers. Advisers also cannot have access to any funding. They are purely to advise and guide, not decide.

**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.

^ This is the end of the template. If you’ve filled in the yellow sections with your personalized details and removed all the red instructions, such as this one, you may upload to our database for review. Remove this line before submitting.