

## UMKC Constitution Check-list for All New and Existing Student Organizations

University of Missouri – Kansas City Office of Student Involvement

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A constitution is a semi-permanent governing document that must explain the structure and operation of a student organization. It should contain enough detail to provide for the perpetuity of an organization whose membership will be in flux from year to year yet maintain the ability to change if the need arises. Student organizations recognized by the University are fully subject to all policies imposed by the University of Missouri System and the University of Missouri – Kansas City. This document has been created as a ready guide to bring all new and existing student organizations into compliance.

All portions in ***underlined bold italics*** must be included in the constitution ***in verbatim***; however, including these phrases alone will not be sufficient. This is why it is important to read and understand each of the explanations within the list.

All other items should be addressed in the best interest of the organization. The more specific the rules are, the better they will guide the organization.

**The Student Government Association and the Office of Student Involvement must approve the constitution before it goes into effect.**

### ***Constitution Requirements:***

- A statement introducing the organization's official name
  - The organization's name in the constitution must match word-for-word with the organization's name on RooGroups.
- A clearly defined statement of purpose. Please be specific
  - This is what students will see when they search for your organization on RooGroups
  - Think of it as an advertisement for students who may be interested in joining the organization. Answer the question: "*What will the organization do?*"
- A statement of compliance
  - 1) ***We agree to abide by all regulations described in the Guidelines for Recognized Student Organizations, all University policies, in addition to all federal, state and local laws.***
- A notice of non-discrimination
  - 2) ***This organization shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, protected veteran status, and any other status protected by applicable state or federal law.***
- A definition of membership eligibility and requirements
  - 3) ***Membership shall be open to any currently enrolled student or employee of the University.***
- A clearly defined outline of the process for selecting officers
  - 4) ***Officers of this organization must be chosen in an election format open to all current members. Every effort will be made to notify all members of said election and, further, to accommodate the needs of all members desiring to participate.***
  - This must include a **GPA requirement for all officers.**
    - While organizations may make the requirement as strict as they would like, *the minimum GPA required of all officers is 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.*
- 5) ***Officers must meet minimum eligibility requirements, including a cumulative GPA of 2.5 and six credit hours of current enrollment, and must not be on student conduct disciplinary or honor code probation.***

- *The requirement to be enrolled in six credit hours will be waived for Doctoral students who have completed their formal degree course work, have passed their comprehensive or matriculation examination, and are continuously enrolled in at least one hour of research in the Fall and Spring semesters.*
- In constitutions defining SGA Executive Officers, SGA Senators, Academic Council or Governing Council Executive Officers, the following statement must be included: **6) “Potential candidates must have accumulated 12 hours of credit at UMKC before filing for office.”**

\* The Coordinator of Student Organizations has the ability to let you know whether a student is academically eligible.

Recognized Student Organizations should be student-centered, student-driven and student-led. Please keep this in mind when creating election processes.

- A thorough definition of the responsibilities of each officer position
  - All organizations must have at least a president, vice-president & treasurer
- A clearly defined outline of the process for removing officers, including this statement explaining the reasons why an officer may be removed
  - **7) Grounds for removal include the inadequate fulfillment of aforementioned duties or the violation of regulations described in the Guidelines for Recognized Student Organizations, University policies or any federal, state or local laws.**
- A statement on membership dues
  - **8) Paying dues is not a mandatory requirement to be considered a member of this organization.**
    - *An organization that is required by a national, state, or other regional chapter (above the campus level) to collect dues does not need to include the above statement in its constitution. However, mandatory dues may not be assessed for the campus level. Organizations that do assess non-mandatory campus-level dues may have different levels of membership for students that do and do not pay dues.*
- A clearly defined hazing statement
  - **9) Hazing is strictly prohibited in the State of Missouri and by the University. Hazing is defined as any willful act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, directed against a student or a prospective member of an organization operating under the sanction of an educational institution, that recklessly endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student or prospective member for the purpose of initiation or admission into or continued membership in any such organization. Acts of hazing include, but are not limited to:**
    - **Any activity that recklessly endangers the physical health or safety of the student or prospective member, including but not limited to physical brutality, whipping, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance**
    - **Any activity that endangers the mental health of the student or prospective member, including but not limited to sleep deprivation, physical confinement, or other extreme stress inducing activity.**
    - **Any activity that requires the student or prospective member to perform a duty or task which involves a violation of the criminal laws of this state or any political subdivision in this state. Hazing is a class C Felony.**
- A provision for an advisor, who may be either faculty or staff and a thorough explanation of what is expected of the advisor
  - Constitutions must have the following statements: **10) A qualified UMKC faculty or staff member (at least 75% FTE) must be selected by the membership as an advisor.**

- A clearly defined outline of the process for removing an *advisor*, including this statement explaining the reasons why an *advisor* may be removed:
  - **11) Grounds for removal include the inadequate fulfillment of aforementioned duties or the violation of regulations described in the Guidelines for Recognized Student Organizations, University policies or any federal, state or local laws.**
- A clearly defined outline of the process for making amendments to the constitution. The process should conclude with this statement:
  - **12) It is further understood that if this organization desires at any time in the future to change in any way the provisions of this constitution, the organization must submit the amended constitution for approval to the Student Government Association and the Office of Student involvement before they can become effective**
- Any other articles that are deemed necessary by the organization's membership to make the document as thorough as possible
  - This may include a section about the risk the organization undertakes and how the risk will be mitigated.
  - Other topics to cover include detailing committees (and their responsibilities), social media guidelines and expectations, explaining membership dues, etc.

***Please do not hesitate to email [stoumbaughj@umkc.edu](mailto:stoumbaughj@umkc.edu) with any questions you may have regarding your organization's constitution.***