HOW TO START AN ORGANIZATION OR TEAM

Two things are needed:
1. A unique purpose – it CANNOT duplicate the purpose of an existing club.
2. A group of interested people that is large enough to carry on the activities of the organization, not just fill the seats on an executive board.

First Steps:
1. The organization should have an interest meeting open to the public and advertised to gain interest as well as to organize.
2. The organization must have an advisor who is a recognized employee of SUNY Potsdam or PACES.
3. A temporary chairman should be elected and lead the group in discussing the specific goals of the organization and to develop a constitution. (See attached sample and guidelines)

IMPORTANT:
No organization may be recognized by SGA unless it has a constitution.

IMPORTANT:
Organizations that require dues can be recognized, but need to consult with SGA Treasury before receiving funding.

OK, you wrote the constitution. Now what?
1. Submit it to the SGA office in Room 213 of the Barrington Student Union.
2. It will then go to the SGA Constitution Committee for review.
3. After it has been reviewed, the chair of this committee will contact you to set up a time to meet so they can go over the changes that are recommended to be made, if any.
4. Once the recommended changes are made, you resubmit the constitution to the Constitution Committee where they will approve it.
5. Once it is approved, the chair of the committee will contact the chair of the organization and let them know to email the Administrative Vice President of SGA with the new constitution as an attachment.
6. The constitution is then submitted as a bill to the Assembly. It's very important to have a representative at this meeting to answer any questions the assembly may have.
7. At the first meeting, the bill is tabled back to Constitution Committee who will make any final recommendations.
8. At the next meeting, the bill is brought back to Assembly so that they can vote to either approve or reject it. Once the Assembly approves, the organization is officially recognized by SGA.

Recognition Includes:
- Eligibility to receive program funding.
- Eligibility to sign out meeting rooms in the Barrington Student Union.

Please Note:
- Finance Committee meets every Wednesday at 5pm in Room 204 in the Barrington Student Union.
- A club must exist for one (1) year and attend Finance Committee meeting before it is eligible to request a budget.
- Existing for one (1) year does no guarantee a budget.
- The first year of having a budget only entitles an organization to $1000.
- Budget Committee may suggest that an organization stay in Finance Committee.

There are additional stipulations for sports clubs. If there are any questions or problems you should contact the SGA Executive Vice President, or stop by the SGA Office.
CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be called ___________.

Full organization name

(Artternym, if applicable)

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be ________________

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all State University of New York (SUNY) Potsdam Student Government Association (SGA) fee paying students.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of this organization shall be ___________

ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall consist of ___________

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular meetings shall be held ___________

Section 2. Executive Board meeting shall be held ___________

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by ___________

ARTICLE VII – ELECTIONS, VACANCIES & REMOVALS

Section 1. Eligibility:

A. All Executive Board members must not be on academic probation or judicial probation;

Section 2. Nominations:

Section 3. Elections:

Section 4. Vacancies

Section 5. Removals
ARTICLE VIII – FACULTY ADVISOR

Section 1. This organization must have at least one Faculty Advisor per academic year.

Section 2. 

Section 3. 

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

Section 1. 

Section 2. 

Section 3. 

Section 4. All amendments are subject to SGA Assembly approval.

ARTICLE X – AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CLAUSE

There shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, politics, or religion within this organization.

ARTICLE XI – SUPREMACY CLAUSE

This Constitution shall be subsidiary to the Constitution of the SGA of the State University of New York at Potsdam, and shall operate in accordance with the SGA Constitution, the Student Code of Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, and in other ways determined by the committee itself.

ARTICLE XII – HAZING CLAUSE

Hazing in any form is strictly prohibited. Hazing is considered an interference with personal liberty, and includes any act of domination by any students over others which may lead to physical or emotional injury and discomfort. Hazing involving forced consumption of alcohol or drugs for the purpose of intoxication or affiliation with any organization is specifically prohibited by this organization, SGA, and SUNY Potsdam.
SGA Organizational Constitution Guidelines

Constitution Descriptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEADER</td>
<td>The header is very simple. Just name your organization, and add “constitution” after it. All of the header should be in capital letters. So if your organization’s full name is “Happy Fun”, then your header will be “HAPPY FUN CONSTITUTION”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE I – NAME</td>
<td>Just make sure you use the full name of your organization. If you have an acronym, then put it in brackets. Then you can use the acronym everywhere else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE II – PURPOSE</td>
<td>It is advisable to state the purpose of the organization in terms of general purposes, but not go into great detail or to limit it too definitely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP</td>
<td>For most organizations, this section is complete. If you have further types of membership (beyond officers) i.e. associate members, adjunct members, staff members, etc., please consult the SGA Constitution Committee. Also note that if you have or will have members who are not SUNY Potsdam, SGA fee paying students, they cannot benefit (money-wise) from SGA. Please contact the SGA Constitution Committee for more information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS</td>
<td>Here you need to state the officer positions in the organization in section 1. In the following section(s) you need to outline the duties and responsibilities of those officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD</td>
<td>Now you are giving certain officers power. In section 1, you just need to fill in the blank by stating which of the officers shall serve as executive board members. Please note that many organizations have all of their officers as executive board members,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS</td>
<td>Define your meetings as weekly, biweekly, monthly, etc. But do not list a specific day or time. Also define who sets meetings, and what officer(s) can call special meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE VII - ELECTIONS, VACANCIES &amp; REMOVALS</td>
<td>Section 1. Who is eligible to be an officer? Subsection A must be in your constitution word-for-word. Section 2. Who can make nominations? When can nominations be made? Section 3. How to elect officers. Section 4. What to do in case of vacancies of an office. Section 5. How to remove an officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE VIII - FACULTY ADVISOR</td>
<td>Section 1. This is what is used by most organizations. If you want to use something different, talk to SGA constitution committee. Section 2. How many meetings must the Faculty attend? Section 3. State the purpose of the Faculty Advisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS</td>
<td>Section 1. Method of submitting amendments. Section 2. Method of notifying members of proposed change. Section 3. Method of voting and percentage of votes needed to amend. Section 4. This section MUST be the final section in this article, word for word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE X - AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CLAUSE</td>
<td>This article MUST be in your constitution, word for word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE XI - SUPREMACY CLAUSE</td>
<td>This article MUST be in your constitution, word for word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE XII - HAZING CLAUSE</td>
<td>This article MUST be in your constitution, word for word.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acronyms:

Any time you wish to use an acronym (including SUNY or SGA), you must ensure they are spelled out the first time you use them. For example, SGA would be like this: “Student Government Association (SGA)”

Grammar:

Constitutional grammar is tricky. Most of the grammar is just like you would use in an essay. The difference is that when you finish a section or subsection, you end with different punctuation. So, when you end a subsection you always end it with a period (.). But when you are finishing a section or an article you need to use a period. An example of the punctuation is given in the format example below.

Formatting:

Formatting isn’t hard, you just need to know a couple of things: what letters and numbers to use when, and when to double space. The following example outlines structure and double space protocol.

Example:

ARTICLE IV – DOUBLE SPACING PROTOCOL

Section 1. In a section header you can use colons for titles, or semicolons when it is a main idea that is going to be broken up;

A. Note that the section heading used single spacing. Also I just used a period within a subsection;