



# SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

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## OVERVIEW

A club's constitution sets the ground for a club to operate smoothly and coherently. It gives guidance to club executives for the daily and long-term management of the club, and informs club members of their rights and obligations. A constitution that is cumbersome, obscure, scanty, or ambiguous can hamper a club from the beginning of its operation and can provide various difficulties in the future. Please give careful thought to how the rules and directives of the constitution are formulated.

Attached is a sample constitution.

You may follow the sample constitution or compose your own, using this package as an example of how to proceed. **If you choose to follow the sample constitution, please download the electronic version from [www.sfss.ca](http://www.sfss.ca) and type in the blanks with your information. A handwritten copy is not acceptable.**

### The following are necessary components of an SFSS Club Constitution:

- the aims, purposes and objectives of the clubs.
- a clause stating that membership must be open to every SFU Student who is in good standing with the SFSS.
- how the club executives are elected, how long each officer serves, their duties and powers, provisions for recall, guidelines for impeachment, and how vacant terms are filled.
- how the constitution can be amended, including what kind of notice is required for a meeting, procedures for voting, and procedures for passing an amendment.
- how the club can be dissolved, including a clause stating that all club assets revert to the SFSS upon dissolution.

### The following points should also be kept in mind when writing your constitution:

- a completed club package must be submitted every semester by the club if they wish to remain registered with the SFSS. If the club wishes to be dormant for one semester, the SFSS needs to be notified.
- each club should hold at least one meeting per term and meeting minutes must be kept to record decisions of the group.
- officers must be **elected, not appointed**, and can take office for up to a year;
- where needed, provisions should be made for a discipline committee to investigate willful breaches of club policy and decisions, and to recommend a mediation procedure.
- The Club Constitution must not be hand-written.
- clubs should rely on "Robert's Rules of Order" for the conduct of business or other recognized meeting procedure, such as consensus decision-making.

**The Constitution of \_\_\_\_\_**

**I Club Name**

1. The official name of the club shall be “\_\_\_\_\_.” No other name shall be used in the advertising or representation of the club.

**II Purposes and Aims**

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**III Membership**

1. Membership shall be open to all SFU students in good standing with the Simon Fraser Student Society.
2. Membership can also be open to non-student individuals such as staff, faculty, alumni or community members. If any restrictions are to be placed on these associate members they must be noted, and are subject to approval. “Associate Members” may not run for club executive positions.
3. A member may be expelled from the club by a vote of at least 2/3 of quorum. The duration of the penalty must be determined before the expulsion vote is conducted. An expelled member has the right to appeal, and may rejoin the club if 2/3 of quorum vote to permit this.

**IV Executive**

1. The Executive shall include at least \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g. President and Secretary/Treasurer. Other positions can be included as required).
2. All members of the Executive must be student members of the club.
3. All members of the Executive shall be voted into their positions via an election or by-election. For single nomination positions, a yes/no vote shall be held. No member can be appointed to an executive position unless the appointment is less than a month in duration.
4. Responsibilities of the Executive members are as follows:

(Please outline position responsibilities using the descriptions below as a guide:

- 4.1 President: shall conduct all executive or general meetings; is ex-officio member of all committees within the club; is responsible for promoting the club to the campus community.
- 4.2 Secretary: shall record minutes of all meetings; is responsible for club correspondence.
- 4.3 Treasurer: keeps a record of allocation of club funds; periodically checks and updates the club asset list; shall give an account of the club’s financial standing and make the record books open to the club or to the SFSS if requested to do so.)
5. Any Executive member may be impeached by a vote of at least 2/3 of quorum. Reinstating a member can be done by a similar vote.

## **V Meetings**

1. Clubs must decide on a quorum, i.e. the minimum number of executives and members necessary to conduct official club business.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ club quorum is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(e.g. The *Bird Society* club quorum is 2 *Executive members* + 30% of signed members)
3. At least one official meeting must be called per semester. If assembling members is difficult, club business can be conducted over electronic mail.
4. Club meetings should be well posted in advance using electronic mail, website, posters, etc.
5. Minutes shall be recorded for all meetings.

## **VI Elections and by-elections**

1. Club Executives of the Club must be elected from and by the membership with a majority vote. An election must be held at least once per year.
2. The club's elections will take place \_\_\_\_\_. (e.g. week 2 of each semester)
3. The results of any election are recorded in the SFSS Club Registration sheet.
4. Executive positions can be held by any student member of the club.
5. Votes may be cast by secret ballot or a simple show of hands. Majority vote wins. In case of a tie, the chair casts the deciding vote, or the member with the least votes drops out and votes are recast.
6. If for any reason an executive position becomes vacant, a by-election for that position will be held. This is not required if less than one month is left before the next scheduled election; instead, a member may be appointed to the position by the Executive. The SFSS General Office must be notified of Executive changes.

## **VII Amendments**

1. Notice of the proposed amendments to the constitution shall be presented via email to the active club membership in advance, prior to the meeting in which the amendments will be discussed and voted upon.
2. Amendments to this constitution require a 2/3-majority vote of quorum.
3. Upon receiving 2/3 affirmative votes in favor of amendment/revision, an executive member shall submit the new constitution to the SFSS General Office for approval.

## **VIII Dissolution**

1. This club will be dissolved if a 2/3 majority of quorum votes to do so, or if club attendance falls below SFSS standards.
2. In the event of the club's dissolution, all club assets become property of the SFSS.

## **IX Agency**

1. The Club is not an agent of the SFSS and the club's views and actions do not necessarily represent the voice of the SFSS.

**X Special Club Policies (if you have any additional policies, please write them here)**

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This constitution has been adopted by: “ \_\_\_\_\_ Club Name \_\_\_\_\_ :”

On: \_\_\_\_\_ of: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Month Year

President: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

Club Executive Member: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date