

TASC Guidelines for School Constitutions

This is a guide only. TASC does not require specifics in your constitution. It should be a living document and be relevant to your particular situation. Regardless, your constitution is your safety net, especially regarding questions of election, probation, lettering, etc.

Preamble

Begin your constitution with a preamble. The preamble should introduce the constitution in a few sentences. It should also state the reasons and purpose for which the organization is formed. It should connect the school to the state organization.

Somewhere in your document, you will need to state that the school principal is the final authority in all matters.

Article 1: Name

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be _____.

Section 2: The officers of <name of organization> shall make up the Executive Board of <name>, hereafter referred to as the Board.

Article 2: Purpose

Section 1: The purpose of this organization shall be_____.

Section 2: The Board shall <what is the purpose of the Board>.

Article 3: Membership

Section 1: Charter members of this organization...(if you know them)

Section 2: Membership shall consist of students who _____.

Section 3: The privileges of membership include access to events such as _____.

Section 4: All council events shall follow _____ High School policies regarding illegal substances, weapons and safety, and dress code.

Section 5: No person, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, or disability shall be excluded from or denied the benefits of membership.

(You may want to include required number of service hours, any fees, general expectations for members, etc.)

Article 4: Meetings and Procedures

Section 1: Meetings will be held as stated in <bylaws/policies/procedures>. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Board. A 25% presence of current members shall constitute a quorum to transact any business that requires voting. A simple majority of those voting shall constitute an affirmative vote.

Section 2: A two-thirds presence of the Board shall constitute a quorum to transact any business. A simple majority of those voting shall constitute an affirmative vote of the Board. Each officer shall be entitled to one vote, and the vote of the majority of the Board at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be sufficient to transact business requiring a vote.

Article 5: Officers

Section 1: States who your officers are by title. Also, indicate methods of nomination and election of these offices and eligibility to hold offices.

(You can add specific criteria for officers as well as duties, or that can be in by-laws, which are more easily changed than is a constitution.)

Section 2: States the duties of the officers and other members of the Board including who is a voting member/advisor member, etc. (*The TASC State Board allows each student and each advisor of an officer school to have an individual vote.*)

Section 3: States the length of term as well as term limits.

Section 4: States whether or not UIL, TAPPS, or other eligibility policy is used.

Article 6: Elections

Section 1: States when elections are held and how. "Board/officer elections will be held annually during the spring meeting." Include specifics in your bylaws or procedures and policies with statement: "Elections shall follow procedures as stated in the bylaws/guidelines". Include: "Each student filing for office with the council will be provided a copy of the campaign procedures of ___ High School".

(You may want to explain how officers are elected-solely by popular vote or will it also be based on interviews, teacher evaluation and/or short answer responses. This could also be in your election polices which follow your constitution. That is more easily amended than your constitution is.)

Section 2: Removal from office. You may want to model this after Article III. Section B, #7 from TASC constitution

“Failure to fulfill duties or absence from board meetings can be grounds to remove any officer school or elected board member. Formal charges and a two-thirds vote by the Board are required for removal. Should an officer school or elected board member resign, the resignation goes into effect when the board approves it. In the event of a resignation or removal of an officer school, the position shall either be filled for the remainder of the term or the position shall remain vacant until the next spring conference (depending on time of year). In the event of removal or resignation of an elected board member, the Board shall fill the position for the remainder of the term. In either of the mentioned occurrences, the vacancy would be filled by the person or school that ran and was not elected. Should the position have not been contested, the Board shall determine the advisor appointed to the position.”

Here you can explain specifics such as: -is there a demerit system in place?
-is both principal and/or advisor approval required

Section 3: In the event of a mid-term vacancy....

If student, the school is responsible for replacing

If a school/adult, position offered to “runner-up” of the contested election. If there is none, the board may appoint the replacement.

Article 7: Committees

Section1: Ad hoc committees may be created by the board on an as needed basis. The duties and duration of these committees shall be stated by the Board upon establishment of the committee.

Article 8: Bylaws

Section 1: Bylaws of the organization shall be established and amended by....

Section 2: Bylaws of the Board shall be established and amended by...(recommend majority vote)

Bylaws should not contradict anything in the constitution. The typically include detailed provisions on such topics as membership, dues, duties of officers, the Board, committees, order of business, amendment procedures, and other specific policies and procedures necessary for the organization or its operation.

Article 9: Amendments and Revisions

State how and by whom can amendments be proposed; two-thirds (2/3) or majority of the votes submitted shall be required for amendment. You are free to choose between 2/3 of the votes and majority of votes. Potentially it could be very difficult to get 2/3 to agree, however majority vote could be too easily passable in some cases.

Ex: An amendment may be proposed by any advisor or student of a member school of TASC District ____ and approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes or majority submitted. You are free

to choose between 2/3 of the votes and majority of votes. Potentially it could be very difficult to get 2/3 to agree, however majority vote could be too easily passable in some cases.

Article 10: Ratification

This constitution shall be presented by _____ to (advisor, principal, student council members, etc.) Two-thirds (2/3) of the votes or majority of votes submitted shall be required for ratification. You are free to choose between 2/3 of the votes and majority of votes.

Article 11: Constitutional Clarifications

Roberts Rules of Order shall be the standard parliamentary text of the Association and shall govern all cases not otherwise covered in the Constitution and By-Laws *Order*.

Each constitution should state when it was adopted and when it was amended.

- *Be sure that this constitution is provided to all candidates for office and all members.
- *Be certain that your principal and assistant principals have a copy of this constitution and that your principal has approved it.
- *Also, please upload your constitution to your profile on the TASC website. That way it will remain with the school profile should you leave.

On request, TASC can provide examples of constitutions from other schools.