

Registered Student Organization Constitution Guidelines

Any group seeking recognition as an RSO must present a constitution. You will be asked to attach a copy of your organization's constitution and bylaws (if applicable) to your New Student Organization Application. Social fraternities and sororities may be required to submit the equivalent from national affiliates or other pertinent information.

The constitution must contain the following information:

- I. The name of the organization
- II. A statement of purpose for the organization
- III. Membership eligibility requirements
- IV. A listing of officers by title and any special functions of the officers/positions, and a statement of the terms of the officers and the time and methods for election
- V. A statement detailing any membership dues, including amount and frequency of payment and provision for the disposition of any funds (in the event of dissolution of the organization)
- VI. Provision for faculty/staff advisor(s)
- VII. A dissolution clause

Student Organization Constitution Guidance

Use the format below to help build your own RSO constitution! Blue text indicates an example from another RSO that you can use for inspiration.

I. Name

The name of your RSO. Sometimes additional funding can be available from outside organizations based on the full RSO name, so you may want to do some research! For example, Tennessee provides funds and resources to groups actively engaging in wildlife conservation, so the Bad Bass Anglers including the following as part of their full RSO name:

- [Bad Bass Anglers Fishing and Conservation Club](#)

II. Purpose

This statement should explain the goals of the RSO.

A few examples are below:

- [The purpose of the Student Government Association \(SGA\) shall be to support the rights and responsibilities of the student body of the University of Tennessee Southern and promote awareness of these rights and responsibilities in all areas of student life. The Student Government Association shall be devoted to helping enhance the quality of experiences for faculty, administration, and students. SGA shall act as communicator for the student body to the University.](#)
- [The main objective of the Health Sciences Association is to foster awareness and appreciation of health sciences among both the campus and the wider community. Additionally, it seeks to cultivate a sense of camaraderie amongst current students who aspire to pursue a career in the field of health sciences. This organization will help students develop skills, promote health initiatives for the university as well as the community, and create an atmosphere where students with similar interests are able to come together.](#)

III. Membership Eligibility

This statement must include non-discrimination and anti-hazing language, copy and pasted from the following (if edits are needed for your specific RSO, reach out to the Dean of Students to discuss):

- In alignment with the University of Tennessee Southern's Student Handbook, Code of Conduct, and other policies governing discrimination, this Registered Student Organization shall be open to all students with no discrimination with regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, age, or disability; and will not restrict membership based on the provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Additionally, this Registered Student Organization prohibits hazing or any such behavior that injures, frightens, degrades, or disgraces a person.

Additionally, this statement should include how members join and remain in good standing with the RSO. An example is below:

- Membership in Commuters Assemble is open to all commuters currently enrolled at UT Southern. All members are expected to (a) align with the organization's purpose and represent the organization well; (b) adhere to the University's policies, including the Student Code; (c) attend and participate in club meetings or activities at least once each semester. Members who do not meet these expectations can either ask to be removed from the organization's membership roll, or may be removed by the president or advisor of the club.

IV. Officers & Elections

This statement should explain (1) what officers the RSO will have, (2) what the duties of each office are, (3) how long the terms of office are, (4) how elections will be held, and (5) procedures for removal of officers. Do not put specific names here yet! Please keep the following requirements for all RSO's in mind: Officers must be full-time students, except for organizations where membership is composed of both faculty and student members, in which case a faculty member may serve as an officer. Officers should be in good academic standing and may be judged ineligible for the office if found responsible for violating a University Standard of Conduct.

An example is below:

- Students of Title IX (STIX) officers and corresponding duties and terms will be as follows:
 1. President – Oversees all STIX functions (including collaboration with the Office of Title IX, organization of STIX meetings and events, etc.) and is responsible for ensuring the organization's good standing as an RSO with the University.
Term of Office: Academic Year (August-May)
 2. Vice President – Oversees STIX communications with members and the UT Southern community, and other duties delegated by the President as appropriate.
Term of Office: Calendar Year (January-December)
 3. Secretary – Responsible for STIX note and record keeping, including accurate membership list, updating the UT Southern App with members and events, and other duties delegated by the President or Vice President as appropriate.
Term of Office: Calendar Year (January-December)
 4. Treasurer – Oversees all STIX finances, including fundraisers, cost of events, budget management, and other expenses.
Term of Office: Academic Year (August-May)
- Officer elections for STIX will operate as follows:
 - Only eligible members on the current membership list may vote
 - Voting must be held at a meeting held in a time and location usual for STIX, and the meeting must be advertised in advance as the election voting meeting

- Elections will take place by secret ballot. Each member may only vote once. Current officers may vote.
- Elections will take for President and Treasurer place at the end of the academic year for the upcoming academic year.
- Elections will take place for Vice President and Secretary in December for the upcoming calendar year.
- For President/Treasurer elections, ballots will be counted and recorded by the current Vice President and Secretary, under the supervision of the Advisor.
- For Vice President/Secretary elections, ballots will be counted and recorded by the current President and Treasurer, under the supervision of the Advisor.
- Ballots will be kept by the Advisor for one month post-election, and are available for review by any eligible member during that time.
- Should an officer make themselves ineligible per UT Southern Registered Student Organization Procedures & Guidelines, the Advisor will be notified and will work with remaining officers in transitioning the current officer out of the position. In the event that an officer requires removal based on other violations or behavior that does not represent the values of STIX, the Advisor should be contacted first. The Advisor must hold a vote for officer removal, requiring a quorum at the vote and 3/5 votes for removal. In either case, emergency elections may be held at the discretion of the Advisor.

V. Dues

This statement should explain if any dues or membership fees are required for membership. Most RSO's at UT Southern do not require dues, but if a RSO chooses to require dues, this statement should then include payment timelines and procedures, and details on how the funds will be used.

Examples from both due-requiring and non-due-requiring RSO's are below:

- The Equality Alliance does not require dues for membership.
- Alpha Chi requires a \$75 membership fee for all first-time members. It is a one time fee, paid within the first month of membership to the Treasurer. The membership fee covers the required national membership fee of \$55 (paid to the National office by the Treasurer), and an additional \$20 fee to cover our chapter's events. All funds are deposited through the University of Tennessee Southern's Office of Student Life to the Alpha Chi restricted account. As per the national Society's Handbook, upon termination of the dissolution of this Society, after discharge and satisfaction of outstanding liabilities, the remaining funds and assets of the Society, if any, shall be distributed and transferred only to such organizations or entities described by the terms of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States as shall be designated by the National Council at the time of dissolution.

VI. Advisor

This statement should explain the RSO's requirements for an advisor and the advisor's duties. All RSO's are required to have a full-time UT Southern faculty or staff member as an advisor. Verified Campus Ministries are allowed to have the lead religious official of their affiliate place of worship serve as their advisor, though additional requirements apply.

Examples from both a campus ministry and non-campus ministry RSO are below:

- The primary responsibility of the Baptist Campus Ministry Director is the maintain proper function and continuity of the BCM by coordinating with student leadership, advisors, and the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board leadership. The Director is a voting member on the Executive Leadership Team and all other BCM teams. The Director is responsible for BCM's financial accountability.
- The Criminal Justice Club's advisor will be a UT Southern faculty or staff member, selected based on the frequency of their presence on campus and the interest they have for the organization. If the advisor needs to be replaced, CJC officers will discuss and request a new advisor. The CJC advisor's duties include attending meetings and CJC sponsored events, and collaborating with CJC officers to discuss future sponsored events, fundraisers, and needs the club has not addressed.

VII. Dissolution

This statement should explain the procedures that will occur if the RSO ceases to exist, either because membership is too low or for other reasons. All RSO's should be aware that the University will deem any RSO inactive if it meets any of the following:

- *RSO Officers do not complete the RSO Renewal Verification Process on time*
- *RSO Officers cease to communicate or cooperate with Student Affairs or other University officials*
- *Membership drops below 5 members for 2 consecutive academic years*

An example is below:

In the event that HPA is deemed inactive by UT Southern, or if HPA Officers choose to dissolve the club, procedures below will occur:

1. In the event that HPA Officers choose to dissolve the club, officers must (a) consult with the current Advisor; (b) communicate plans to dissolve and reasons for dissolution to all current members; and (c) communicate an effective dissolution date to Student Affairs. In absence of officers, the Advisor may dissolve HPA.
2. After dissolution or designation of inactive status, all privileges associated with RSO status or HPA membership will be revoked.
3. After dissolution or designation of inactive status, any remaining funds in the HPA restricted account will be designated by the Advisor to be reallocated to another University RSO that serves similar functions or works towards a similar mission as HPA. This will be at the sole discretion of the Advisor, and in the absence of an Advisor, reallocation will be at the joint discretion of the Vice President of Finance (or their designee) and the Dean of Students (or their designee).