CONSTITUTION OUTLINE

The following is a suggested format and outlines the essential items that should be included in the constitution of student groups seeking to become a registered student organization (RSO) at Michigan Technological University:

Article I  NAME, INSIGNIA and AFFILIATION

Include the name of the organization and insignia, if applicable. The name should reflect how the group would like to be recognized on campus. It is best to have a name that represents the function of your group. If Michigan Tech’s name is used, it must appear at the end of the name. For example, The Four Wheelers at Michigan Tech. The initials MTU should not be used.

State the name of any other organization or campus department with which the student group will be affiliated. Do similar organizations already exist? How is this organization distinguished from any existing registered student organization on campus?

Article II  AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the organization should reflect exactly what the organization wants to accomplish once registration is approved. What are your goals? Why do you exist? What is your purpose? What do you hope your members will gain from being a part of your organization?

Reflect how the organization will make a positive contribution to the welfare of its members and the University. The organization must be devoid of functions or activities that conflict with the primary purpose of the university. Registered student organizations are responsible for accepted standards of good taste and observing University policies in all activities of the group.

Article III  MEMBERSHIP

An organization must have a minimum of 10 members at any time, including officers, who are enrolled students of Michigan Tech.

Who is eligible to join? How can they join? Are there any specific qualifications such as dues? Who is eligible to vote? Your constitution is required to state that voting members must be enrolled Michigan Tech students. What is the length and obligation of membership?
Groups will generally have regular members (restricted to Michigan Tech students), and associate members (Michigan Tech faculty and staff). If applicable, groups may have categories of new members, charter members and honorary members.

Include other qualifications, if applicable, such as academic grade point requirements, class standing, if a majority vote is needed by current members, initiation requirements (must not be secret). If there are initiation requirements, you must include a statement that your organization prohibits any hazing activities.

What is the method of dropping members? Be certain to insure due process.

What are the rights and privileges of members?

New organizations must include the most current Board of Control Equal Opportunity Statement as follows:

“In compliance with Michigan Technological University’s Board of Control Equal Opportunity Policy effective February 24, 2011, (organization name) will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, height, weight, genetic information, or marital status. In addition, (organization name) is committed to the policy of not discriminating against disabled individuals and veterans.”

Article IV  OFFICERS

List all the officer positions needed in the organization and the composition of the executive board. What are their qualifications, such as scholastic requirements or previous office experience? What are the responsibilities of each office?

Define the term of office. What is the length of their term? When will it begin and end? How can officers be removed from office? Your constitution is required to state that officers must be enrolled Michigan Tech students. Officers MUST have a 2.25 cumulative and most recent semester grade point average at the time of election.

Define how officers are elected. Can nominations be made by a committee or from the floor? What type of voting will be done? What vote is needed for election? (Majority vs. plurality: a majority requires 50.1% of a vote; a plurality simply requires the most votes).

State the method of impeachment, being certain to insure due process. Possible language could include: “An officer may be removed from office on the grounds of malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of their duties by a 2/3 majority vote of regular members, at a meeting at which a quorum is present.”

Article V  ADVISOR
All organizations are required to have at least one advisor who is a full-time employee with the University (faculty to staff). A group may have additional advisors, including part-time and temporary employees, or community members. An advisor’s main purpose is to provide guidance for the activities and operations of the group in order to protect the interests of the members, other students, and the University. (pdf of Advisor statement)

Define your group’s expectations of its advisor. What is his/her term of office? How is the advisor elected? The following phrase must be included in the election proceedings, “...the name of the desired advisor is forwarded to Student Activities for approval.”

Article VI COMMITTEES

Will your club have any committees (standing, special, nomination, social, temporary, etc.)? Define their functions and responsibilities. How will they be appointed? What are their terms of existence?

Article VII FINANCES/DUES

What is your club’s financial plan? By what means are funds generated, such as dues or fundraising events? How are they allocated and expended? What accounting or bookkeeping procedures are used? Will you have a checking or savings account? What precautions are made to avoid embezzlement?

Discuss if and how dues are set, who must pay, and when they are paid; but do not state the amount in the constitution as dues are subject to frequent change. Instead, amounts should be discussed in the group’s procedures or by-laws only.

Article VIII MEETINGS

What are your quorum requirements and voting regulations? When are your regularly scheduled meetings?

What types of meetings will there be (regular, special)? Who may call the meetings? How can an officer and or members call a special meeting? What parliamentary authority is to be used (Robert’s Rules of Order-Revised is suggested). (pdf or link to RROR)

Article IX CONSTITUTION

Acceptance of the constitution must be ratified or adopted by the organization’s membership. The following statement must be incorporated into this section: “It will take effect when approved by Student Activities.”
By what methods can the constitution be amended? Is a written proposal required? All members must be notified before voting on amendments. The following statement must be incorporated into this section: “It will take effect when approved by Student Activities.”

By-laws of the organization, if called for in the constitution, should contain information subject to frequent change. The constitution should include a clause reflecting a need for by-laws, the vote needed for adoption and amendment, and when by-laws may be adopted or revised. The following statement must be incorporated into this section: “It will take effect when approved by Student Activities.”