

Mission Statement

A mission statement is a declaration of organizational purpose. Mission statements vary in length, but they are typically short – no more than a page and often not more than a punchy slogan. They should be inspiring. The actual statement should grow out of discussions aimed at answering six questions:

1. Who are we?
2. In general, what are the basic social or political needs we exist to meet, or what are the basic social and political problems we exist to address?
3. In general, what do we do to recognize, anticipate, and respond to these needs or problems?
4. How should we respond to our key stakeholders?
5. What are our philosophy, values, and culture?
6. What makes us distinctive or unique?

If you have any further questions regarding a mission statement please feel free to contact the Office of Student Development & Activities for assistance.



Model Constitution

When you write your club's constitution, please keep the following things in mind:

1. All recognized groups must comply with the general college regulations concerning student clubs and organizations.
2. The constitution should include only those procedures and details deemed so important as to merit protection from the usual 2/3 vote required to suspend rules and by-laws.
3. Establishment of committees is generally a by-laws consideration. For reasons of convenience or expediency, such provisions could be included in the constitution.
4. Enough copies of this constitution should be printed for distribution to all members, with at least three (3) additional copies for the Office of Student Development & Activities files and the Student Government Association.
5. It is the responsibility of the organization to keep both the Office of Student Development & Activities informed of all changes in the constitution, as well as the registration of the club and its officers each semester.
6. Any major changes to the constitution that change the purpose, mission or focus of the organization must be reviewed by the Student Government Association as it may constitute the creation of a new organization.

This model constitution is to be used as a guideline for your own organization. Please remember to select the appropriate choice where necessary.



Constitution of the (Name of Organization) at Marymount Manhattan College

Article 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be (state the name). (If affiliated with an outside group, a charter of the affiliated outside group or fraternal ties must accompany the constitution).

Article 2: Purpose

The purpose of this organization shall be... (It is advisable to state the purpose in general terms; do not go into great detail or limit too definitely.)

Article 3: Membership

Section 1 – Qualifications

- A. All members must be matriculated students at Marymount Manhattan College and must subscribe to or be interested in the purpose of this organization.
- B. No person shall be denied membership or office because of national origin, race, sex, sexual orientation and/or political or religious beliefs.
- C. Any member (including officers) who does not fulfill their responsibility as per the constitution may be removed from office or the organization by a two-thirds majority vote.

Article 4: Officers/Elections

Section 1- Officers

All officers of this organization must have a minimum overall average of a 2.5 GPA and must be registered for at least 12 credits for the term during which they are to serve. All officers shall serve (one term, one year) and may be elected for one additional term.

- A. There shall be a President who shall... (Preside at all meetings; coordinate all activities of the organization, etc.)
- B. There shall be a Vice-President who shall... (Assume the duties of the President, etc.)
- C. There shall be a Treasurer who shall...(collect all dues, if any, and monies and deposit all monies in an account through the Business Office, be responsible for all disbursements and record-keeping of all club funds.)
- D. There shall be a Secretary who shall... (Take minutes and attendance at all meetings, maintain an up-to-date membership roster, handle all correspondence, etc.)

Article V: Executive Board

Section 1 – The Executive Board shall consist of the officers of the organization.

Section 2 – The Executive Board shall formulate the agenda; take emergency action, etc, in the absence of the full membership.

Section 3 – The Vice-President shall assume the duties of any vacant office until a special election is held. If more than one office is vacant, they shall be filled by presidential appointment until a special election is held.

Article VI: Meetings

Section 1 – This organization shall hold regular meetings (state minimum frequency per month, semester, etc.)

Section 2 – A quorum consisting of one officer plus a majority of duly registered members is necessary for the transaction of any business.

Section 3 – The rules contained in *Roberts Rule of Order – Newly Revised* shall govern this organization in all cases in which they are consistent with the constitution and the by-laws of this organization.

Article VII: Amendments

Section 1 – Amendments to this constitution shall be introduced from the floor and submitted to the Secretary in writing at a regular business meeting.

Section 2 – The entire membership shall be notified in writing at least seven (7) days prior to a vote on the proposed amendment.

Section 3 – A 2/3 vote of those present and voting shall be necessary for the passage of an amendment.

Article VIII: Dissolution

Requirements and procedures for the dissolution of the student organization must be stated. In the event of the dissolution of this group, all accrued funds and assets shall revert to the College.

By-Laws

By-laws contain the standing (permanent) rules of procedure of an organization. Articles in the by-laws may be covered in appropriate detail in the constitution of very small organizations. However, most groups keep separate by-laws because they usually contain more detail and are subject to change more than that of the constitution and, therefore, may require different procedures for amending.

Provision for amendment of the by-laws should be somewhat easier than that of the constitution as rules of procedure should adapt to changing conditions of the student organization. When amending the by-laws, as with the constitution, previous notice of any changes is usually required to be given to the membership and should not be changed in the same meeting in which proposed.

By-laws are more permanent, however, than passing a general motion, which may require only a simple majority vote of voters present at a general meeting of the membership (a quorum being present). By-laws cannot run contrary to the constitution.

Article I – Parliamentary Authority

Most organizations use Robert's Rule of Order to govern their organization's decision making except when these rules are inconsistent with their constitution or by-laws of the organization. These rules are of Western cultural origin, and based on the premise that "though the minority shall be heard and absentees protected, the majority will decide."

A recommended wording is "The rules contained in [specify the source for parliamentary practice] shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the by-laws of this organization."

Article II- Membership

Procedures for becoming a member, which may vary by membership category, amount of dues, if any, and how often they should be paid, termination of membership, and so on should be described in detail.

Article III- Election / Appointment of Government Leadership

Elections rules and procedures, including eligibility for office, the nominating process, design of ballots and balloting procedures, and so on should be specified as well as appointment and ratification procedures. The timing of elections and/or appointments should be specified along with procedures to cover special circumstances (resignations, impeachments, etc.).

Article IV- Executive Committee (if needed)

Specific duties of the Committee and its responsibilities to the membership.

Article V- Standing Committees (if needed)

Specific duties of each committee and their responsibilities to the organization leadership, Executive Committee, and general membership.

Article VI - Advisor/Advisory Board Responsibilities

Expectations of the advisor in the organization (e.g., availability, meeting attendance, second signer on checks, etc.)

Article VII - Meeting Requirements

Regular, special, size and determination of quorum (number of voting members required to vote on decisions placed before the general membership, executive, and standing committees).

Article VIII - Method of Amending By-Laws

This should be similar to amending the constitution. However, by-laws are apt to change more often than the constitution, thus amending should be somewhat easier. By-laws may be amended by proposing in writing and reading the change at a general meeting of the membership and then bring the proposed change up for a vote at the next general meeting with a 2/3 majority vote of the membership present (a quorum being present).

Note - Some organizations desire a structure that is fundamentally different from the guidelines presented here. Under these circumstances, the organization should contact the Office of Student Development & Activities to assist in the design of an alternate structure. The goal would be to incorporate basic principles important to the College while promoting those of the organization.



