

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA
NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION
CONSTITUTION APPROVAL COVER SHEET**

This cover sheet is to be attached to one of the three copies of the constitution submitted to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development/Dean of Students, 305 University Center, when seeking official registration by the University. It will remain with the constitution throughout the approval process and will be kept in the organization's permanent file.

To be completed by representatives of the new organization -

Name of Organization _____

Charter President or Chair _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Faculty Advisor _____

Department/Dept Mail # _____ Phone _____

To be completed by the Student Government Association Procedures Chair -

Procedures Committee Recommendation:

___ favorable ___ unfavorable ___ no recommendation _____ Date

Senate Action: ___ passed ___ failed _____ Item# _____ Date

**Procedures Chair should return this form along with the attached Constitution to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development/Dean of Students immediately following the SGA meeting in which the Constitution is considered.

To be completed by the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development/Dean of Students -

Approval from the Vice Chancellor for Student Development obtained _____ Date

Approval letter sent _____ Date

Other _____

Comments _____

FORMING A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Forming a new student organization at UTC is not a difficult or particularly lengthy process. This packet is to aid students who wish to form a new student organization. Additional assistance is available from the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development, 305 University Center, 425-4761. Supplemental information can be found in the current UTC Student Handbook under "The Registration of Student Organizations."

GETTING STARTED

In most cases you have already taken the first steps to forming a new student organization before picking up this handout. That is, you have identified an interest, topic, or issue around which you would like to form an organization and you probably have an idea of a few other UTC students who would like to participate in such a group. And, most importantly, you have sought out information and assistance in getting the group going. Congratulations, you are off on the right foot!

For the approval process your group is going to need the following:

1. A constitution stating the basic purpose and organizational structure of the group.
2. Officers
3. A faculty advisor
4. Members

But before you can go about writing a constitution and electing officers, you need at least a small group of interested students.

GETTING ORGANIZED AND ATTRACTING MEMBERS

While your group is in the organizational phase, the University allows you to have a few special privileges reserved only for registered student organizations:

1. You may hold up to three organizational meetings in the University Center
*meeting space should be reserved through the University Center Office.
2. You may advertise these meetings with flyers on campus and in the University Center.
*flyers to be posted in the University Center should be submitted to the University Center Office.
3. You may advertise these meetings in the ECHO newspaper bulletin board
*copy should be submitted directly to the ECHO Office by the appropriate deadline.

You may also want to consider other methods of publicizing your group such as: working with professors to have classroom announcements, posters in departmental offices, table tents, setting up a recruitment table in the University Center lobby (must reserve space through the University Center Office 423-425-4455), or any other creative ideas you can come up with.

WRITING THE CONSTITUTION

You might consider appointing a small committee of really dedicated students to undertake the project of writing the first draft of the group's constitution – most groups have found it difficult to do with a large group. This draft can then be presented to the interest group for approval. Your constitution does not have to be terribly elaborate but should conform to the general outline listed below. You can also look over some sample constitutions on file at the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development's office.

- A. The name of the organization
- B. A statement of purpose for the organization
 - it should be reasonably clear and specific as to aims and activities of the organization
 - these stated aims and activities should be compatible with the academic function of the University, with the maintenance of order and propriety on the campus, and with the requirements of the University as a corporate entity with legal obligations
- C. Membership eligibility requirements
 - the group must be open to any UTC student who meets the stated membership eligibility requirements regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or sexual preference
 - no minimum or maximum number of members is required, however, the anticipated membership as represented by the eligibility requirements should be sufficient to give reasonable prospects of continuity for the organization and ability to carry out the purposes stated in the constitution
 - membership is limited to students of the University, except where membership of faculty or other University staff is consistent with the structure and purposes stated in the constitution
- D. A listing of officers by title, term of office, and any special functions of the office
 - officers must be full-time students or they must be members of the faculty or University staff
 - to be eligible to serve as an officer, a student must have a 2.00 average cumulatively, must carry a minimum of 12 hours for credit, and must not be on disciplinary probation
- E. Frequency of meetings
- F. A statement of any membership dues, including amount and frequency of payment and provision for disposition of any funds in the event of dissolution of the organization
- G. Provision for faculty advisor(s)
 - all student organizations except national social fraternities and sororities (which shall have alumni advisors) and religious centers operating under church auspices, must have at least one qualified faculty advisor
 - when the membership exceeds fifty, organizations are urged to obtain an additional faculty advisor
 - any faculty member at UTC may serve as faculty advisor and, with the sanction of the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Development, non-teaching members of the University staff whose positions are comparable to full-time faculty members may also serve

- H. Any other provisions relating to the purpose and function of the particular organization
- I. A provision for amending the constitution

Once the constitution is written and approved by your interest group, the officers have been elected according to the method set out in the constitution, and the faculty advisor has been enlisted, you are ready for the approval process.

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

The new organization will need two types of approval in order to be considered a registered student organization: 1) Student Government Association approval, and 2) approval from the Vice Chancellor for Student Development.

The approval process, which must occur in that order, is begun by submitting three copies of your constitution with the "New Student Organization Constitution Cover Sheet" attached to one to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development/Dean of Student Life, at 305 University Center. The constitution will be reviewed and sent to the chair of the SGA Procedures Committee. A representative of the group will need to be present when the Procedures Committee meets to consider your constitution in order to answer any questions. The committee meets weekly throughout the school year and the time and date of the committee meeting can be obtained through Student Development at 425-4761 or by a visit to the SGA Office on the lower floor of the University Center.

The Procedures Committee will make a recommendation on the constitution and put it on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled SGA meeting. SGA meets weekly; this process should not take longer than two weeks at the most. SGA as a whole will review your constitution and again a representative will need to be present to answer any questions. The outcome of this approval will be known as soon as the vote is taken.

After approval, someone from your organization will need to speak with the Director of Organizations and get signed up for the ICS program; which will link you to the University website and make you a recognized organization. The ICS Program will allow you rent rooms, use UTC Catering, and have a blackboard account.

The Procedures Committee chair then turns the matter over to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development/Dean of Student Life who relays the SGA's recommendation and obtains the Vice Chancellor's approval. A letter from the Vice Chancellor certifying your group as a registered student organization should follow within two weeks (or less).

Your group is then free to meet, have activities, conduct projects, and take advantage of the privileges allowed registered student organizations: advertising meetings and events on campus, using meeting facilities, applying for funds from the Student Government Association, participating in University functions such as Homecoming and Orientation Organization Fairs, and applying for office space in the Student Organization Complex.

AFTER YOU ARE “OFFICIAL”...

Don't forget to stay in touch with the Student Development Office! All registered student organizations are required to submit an accurate listing of officers including current addresses to the Student Development Office within three class days of an election. If election of officers as specified in the constitution has passed twice without any action having been reported to the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Development, registration may be suspended and privileges withdrawn. Plus, without updated information on file, your organization will miss out on important information and mailings.

In addition, any constitutional changes or amendments affecting the nature or purposes of the organization as originally approved must be brought to the attention of the Office of Student Development and receive formal approval through the same procedures as utilized in the original registration process.