



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

Bylaw Requirements Checklist and Sample Template for Recognized Student Organizations

Introduction

This checklist and template are intended to serve as a model you may use to develop bylaws for your organization. Feel free to modify the template below to suit your organization's needs; however, you must abide by all SDSU Student Organization and University Policy and include the sections indicated as required by The California State University System (marked in red).

Purpose

Bylaws are secondary laws, which rule or govern the internal affairs of an organization. They describe in detail the procedures and steps for an organization to follow in order to conduct business effectively and efficiently.

Adoption of Bylaws

Initial adoption of bylaws requires a majority vote of the membership present at an organization meeting. You can adopt the bylaws in their entirety in a single motion, or vote section by section. Once adopted, bylaw amendments normally require advance notice and a two-thirds vote for adoption. Unlike Standing Rules, bylaws cannot be suspended, even by unanimous vote.

In addition to turning in a copy of your bylaws to Student Life & Leadership via your online Recognized Student Organization Application, it is a good practice to distribute paper or electronic copies to all of your members on an annual basis and to keep a current copy on file with your minutes.

Bylaw Checklist

- Name of Organization
- Purpose
- SDSU Authority Statement
- Open Membership Agreement
- Non-Discrimination Clause
- Minimum Five Officer Positions & Duties, including President and Treasurer
- Officer Qualifications & Eligibility
- Selection of Officers Procedure
- Advisor Clause
- Finances Clause
- Adoption Date

Template

The statements highlighted in red must appear verbatim on all bylaws, constitutions, and printed publicity. Prior to submission, please be sure to remove all parenthetical directions and notations.

Bylaw Review

Student Life & Leadership (SLL) staff review organization bylaws annually to ensure their congruence with CSU and University policy. Bylaw approval is required in order to obtain recognition. SLL staff may contact organizations with edit requests. Organizations are required to resubmit the edited bylaws within a timely manner.

BYLAWS

[Name of Organization] at San Diego State University

ARTICLE I

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the [Name of Organization] at San Diego State University. [Note: Per the Student Organization Handbook, only Associated Students Sports Clubs are permitted to begin their organization's name with SDSU. Your Organization name as listed in your bylaws must match the organization name as indicated in your RSO application. Optional: Include chapter designation if part of a national organization and/or the organization's founding date]

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

Section 1 The purposes of this organization are [insert organization's mission or purpose statement].

ARTICLE III

SDSU AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Section 1 This organization is a recognized student organization at San Diego State University and adheres to all campus policies as set forth in the *SDSU Student Organization Handbook*.

Section 2 [If applicable: This organization is affiliated with [Name of National or Affiliated Organization] and adheres to the [National or Affiliated Organization Bylaws or Governing Document(s)].

Section 3 This organization may establish Standing Rules to govern administrative and procedural matters (such as time and location of meetings, etc.). Standing Rules shall not conflict with these bylaws. Standing Rules may be adopted, amended, or temporarily suspended by a majority vote present at an organization meeting where a quorum is present (advance notice is not required).

Section 4 The rules contained in the most recent version of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority for this organization and shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

ARTICLE IV

OPEN MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

Section 1 Membership in the organization shall be open to those regularly-enrolled at San Diego State University. [Note: Students, including regularly-enrolled undergraduate/graduate, Extended Studies, and Open University students,

are eligible to participate in any Recognized Student Organizations and corresponding activities during their time of enrollment at San Diego State University. There are to be no bylaws restricting the general organization participation of any individual]

Section 2 [Required if your organization permits non-SDSU student members: This organization shall have associated members who are non-SDSU students or who do not meet the above criteria. Associated members shall have all membership privileges except for the right to vote or hold office. By California State University policy, no more than 20 percent of the membership shall be individuals who are not CSU students (e.g., community members, students at other colleges, etc.).]

Section 3 [California State University requires this **Non-Discrimination Clause** must be included verbatim; except that social fraternities and sororities are permitted by Federal law to select members by gender.] **Eligibility for membership or appointed or elected student officer positions may not be limited on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or disability. The organization shall have no rules or policies that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or disability.**

Section 4 [Optional: Some organizations have additional categories of membership, such as honorary membership. If this applies, include the categories of membership along with associated requirements and privileges.]

Section 5 [Optional: This organization may facilitate auditions or tryouts to assess members' qualifications. Auditions/tryouts can be used to categorize membership, such as "competitive member" or "performing member," but cannot limit or restrict anyone's general membership.]

ARTICLE V **OFFICERS**

Section 1 The officers of the organization shall be the [Titles of officers].

Section 2 **Positions and Duties of Officers** [Note: All organizations must have a minimum of five executive officers and are required to include President and Treasurer. The remaining officer positions are at the discretion of the organization]:

- a. The **President** shall serve as the chief executive officer of the organization, shall preside at all meetings of the organization and shall prepare the agenda for meetings. The President shall be the official spokesperson of the organization, representing the policies, views, and opinions of the organization in its relations with the campus and community at large. The

President shall appoint all committees and committee chairs. [Optional: The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees.] The President shall have such further powers and duties as may be prescribed by the organization.

- b. The Vice President shall preside at organization meetings in the absence of the President. The Vice President shall perform all legal duties assigned by the President. The Vice President shall assume the office of President if the office becomes vacant.
- c. The **Treasurer** shall handle all financial affairs and budgeting of the organization, maintain all necessary accounting records, and prepare monthly financial reports for the membership. Said records shall be maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The Treasurer shall collect and deposit all dues and fees. The Treasurer shall maintain bank accounts in the organization's name, requiring signatures of both the Treasurer and President for authorized disbursements.
- d. The Secretary shall take minutes at all meetings of the organization, keep these on file, and submit required copies to all organization members. The Secretary shall be responsible for all organization correspondence and shall keep copies thereof on file. The Secretary shall maintain membership records for the organization.
- e. The Membership Officer is responsible for the recruitment, education, and retention of all organization members. The Membership Officer shall maintain an accurate membership roster and update the SDSU Presence Portal accordingly.
- f. [List duties of any additional elected or appointed officers]

Section 3

Officer qualifications and eligibility necessary to hold office in this organization are as follows:

California State University policies require that to be eligible for office, candidates must be in good standing and regularly enrolled students at San Diego State University. Additionally, [list any additional qualifications for office, such as academic requirements or length of time one has been a member, if any.]

California State University policies require that the President and Treasurer maintain a minimum overall 2.0 grade point average each term and not be on probation of any kind. The President and Treasurer must be enrolled in at least six units (three units for graduate and credential students) each semester while holding office. Undergraduate students with over 150 semester units or 125

percent of the units required for a specific baccalaureate degree objective, whichever is greater, or graduate and credential students with over 50 semester units or 167 percent of the units required for the graduate or credential objective, whichever is greater, are ineligible to hold the office of President or Treasurer.

No member may hold more than one office. No member may serve more than [number of semesters or years] in the same office.

ARTICLE VI

SELECTION OF OFFICERS

- Section 1** The [List of elected officers as they appear in Article V, Section 2] are elected [annually or each semester]. Elections are held [at the end of each fall/spring semester] and shall take place at a regularly scheduled meeting of the organization at which a quorum is present. At least one week's notice shall be provided for any meeting at which an election is to be held.
- Section 2** Nominations for officers shall be made at the regular meeting immediately preceding the election. Nominations may also be made from the floor immediately prior to the election for each office. Members may nominate themselves for an office.
- Section 3** The officers shall be elected in this order: [List order, usually starting with the President].
- Section 4** Officers shall be elected by majority vote. [Optional: If no candidate receives a majority vote, a runoff election shall be held between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes. In the event of a tie, there shall be a revote. If the result of the revote is still a tie, the election shall be decided by the flip of a coin.]
- Section 5** Votes shall be cast by secret ballot; however, when there is only one candidate for an office, a motion may be made to elect the candidate by acclamation.
- Section 6** [Optional] The following officers shall be appointed by the [President or Executive Committee]. [Indicate if ratification by a majority vote of the membership is required.]
- Section 7** Officers shall assume office on [date] and shall serve for [length of term of office].
- Section 8** [Optional] Officers may be recalled from office for cause. To initiate a recall election, a petition signed by [specify number, such as one-third of the total number of voting members] must be submitted at a regular meeting and a recall vote shall be taken at the next regular meeting. The officer subject to recall shall be given written notice of the recall at least 72 hours prior to the

meeting at which the recall vote will be held and shall be given an opportunity to provide a defense. A two-thirds vote is required to remove an officer.

Section 9 If the position of President becomes vacant as the result of resignation, ineligibility or recall, the Vice President shall assume the office of President. Vacancies in any other elected office shall be filled by an election held at the next regular meeting where the vacancy was announced. Nominations may be made at the meeting where the vacancy is announced, and nominations may also be made from the floor at the time of the election. The President may appoint an interim officer to fill the vacancy until the election is held.

ARTICLE VII **MEETINGS**

Section 1 Regular meetings shall be scheduled [weekly, bi-weekly, monthly] during the academic year.

Section 2 Special meetings may be called by the President or a majority of the Executive Committee. All members must be given a minimum of 24 hours notice prior to the meeting time.

Section 3 Business cannot be conducted unless a quorum of the membership is present. A quorum for this organization is defined as a majority of the voting membership. *[Note: Organizations may choose have a lower quorum, such as one-third, or a specific number of members.]*

Section 4 Members must be present to vote. Absentee or proxy voting is not permitted.

Section 5 In order to vote a member must be in good standing. *[State what constitutes "good standing." This may include payment of dues, meeting attendance requirement, academic requirement, etc. If there is an attendance requirement, specify the number of excused and/or unexcused absences that results in loss of voting privileges, and define what constitutes an excused absence, if applicable.]*

ARTICLE VIII **ADVISOR(S) CLAUSE**

Section 1 The organization shall appoint an individual employed as a faculty or staff member by San Diego State University to serve as the university advisor to this organization as required by the California State University. Auxiliary staff and student assistants are not eligible to serve as advisors. The advisor shall fulfill the responsibilities specified in the *SDSU Student Organizations Handbook*. Advisors shall serve on an academic year basis or until their successor has been selected.

Section 2 [Optional] The organization shall also appoint a community advisor. *[Specify qualifications, such as being an alumni member, a representative of the affiliated organization, etc.]*

ARTICLE IX **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Section 1 The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected and appointed officers, with the advisor(s) serving as non-voting member(s).

Section 2 The Executive Committee shall meet weekly during the academic year. Special meetings may be called by the President or a majority of the Executive Committee. All members must be given 24 hours notice of the meeting. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Committee members.

Section 3 [Optional] When necessary, Executive Committee business can be conducted via email or via online meetings.

Section 4 The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the organization between meetings and is authorized to take action when action must be taken prior to the next meeting.

Section 5 The Executive Committee shall report to the membership all actions taken between meetings. Except when it is too late to do so (such as when a contract has been executed), any actions taken by the Executive Committee may be rescinded or modified by the membership by a majority vote.

ARTICLE X **STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES**

Section 1 The organization shall have the following standing committees: [List all standing committees, such as Membership, Fund Raising, Program, Social, Bylaws, Nominations, Finance, Public Relations, etc.]

Section 2 The duties of each of Standing Committees is as follows:

[List the duties for each of the committees listed above.]

Section 3 The President shall have the authority to establish ad hoc committees as may be necessary from time to time to carry out the work of the organization.

Section 4 The President shall appoint the chairpersons and members of all committees [Optional: subject to ratification of the membership].

ARTICLE XI **FINANCES CLAUSE**

Section 1 Membership dues shall be [\$XX per semester/year OR specify if there are no dues].

Section 2 Dues shall be paid by [Specify due date, such as "second week of each semester."] [Optional: There shall be a late fee of [\$XX, or \$XX per week]

Section 4 Members who have not paid their dues or special assessments by the due date shall be considered as not being in good standing and shall lose all membership privileges, including voting, until the dues are paid.

Section 5 The Executive Committee shall propose an annual budget to be voted upon no later than the second regular meeting of the academic year. Any unbudgeted expenditures shall be approved in advance by the membership. When financial decisions must be made between meetings, the Executive Committee is authorized to approve expenditures not exceeding [\$XX].

Section 6 Organization funds shall not be used to purchase or reimburse members for alcoholic beverages.

ARTICLE XII **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Section 1 Whenever it appears that a student organization has violated the Student Organization Code of Conduct, a report should be directed to the Office of Student Life & Leadership (Aztec Student Union, room 210, sll@sdsu.edu, 619-594-5221).

Section 2 In cases where individual students are alleged to have violated the Student Code of Conduct, an investigation will be conducted by the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities. If that investigation concludes that a student organization appears to have violated the Student Organization Code of Conduct, the findings will be referred to the Office of Student Life & Leadership for disciplinary action regarding the organization

Section 3 When a member believes that another member has engaged in conduct that is detrimental to the organization, a written charge may be filed with the [Executive Committee, Standards Board or Judicial Board]. The [Executive Committee, Standards Board or Judicial Board] shall review the charges and may conduct a preliminary investigation if deemed appropriate. If the preliminary investigation concludes that misconduct appears to have occurred, the [Executive Committee, Standards Board or Judicial Board] shall conduct a hearing on the matter. The member alleged to have engaged in the misconduct shall be given at least 72 hours notice of the hearing and be given an opportunity to present a defense. By a majority vote, the [Executive Committee, Standards Board or Judicial Board] shall determine whether misconduct occurred. If it determines that misconduct did occur, [Executive Committee, Standards Board or Judicial Board] shall prepare a report to the membership of its findings and recommended sanctions, which may include

expulsion, suspension, or lesser sanction(s) including, but not limited to, a reprimand, removal from office, a fine or corrective remedies.

Section 4 The membership shall review the hearing report in executive session, and the member accused of misconduct shall have an opportunity to rebut the information in the report. After providing a statement to the membership, the member accused of misconduct shall leave the room for the remainder of the deliberations.

Section 5 The membership shall vote first on whether the member has engaged in misconduct. If by a two-thirds vote, the membership determines that misconduct has occurred, the membership shall then by a two-thirds vote, determine appropriate sanction(s). The accused member shall be immediately notified of the outcome.

Section 6 By a two-thirds vote, the membership may reinstate a member who has been suspended or expelled.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS

Section 1 Proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be presented to the membership, in writing, one meeting prior to the meeting where the amendment will be voted upon. [Optional: The Executive Committee and/or Bylaws Committee shall review and make recommendations on all bylaw revisions prior to consideration by the membership.]

Section 2 Bylaw amendments require approval by two-thirds of the voting members present at a regular meeting. The amendment shall be effective immediately unless otherwise stipulated in the amendment.

Section 3 A copy of any amendments to these bylaws must be submitted to the Student Life & Leadership Office at San Diego State University within two weeks after adoption.

These bylaws were adopted on [date] and most recently revised on [date].

For more information or additional assistance, please contact:
Student Life & Leadership, Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union, Suite 210
(619) 594-5221 | sll@sdsu.edu | www.sll.sdsu.edu