

# Model Bylaws for Student Organizations

## University of Maine Student Government Inc.

*You may use this template to develop bylaws for your organization. Feel free to modify the template below to suit your organization's needs and policies; however, you must include the sections indicated as required by policy of UMSG, Inc. and the University of Maine.*

*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 the Vice President of Student Government, 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.*

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### BYLAWS

[Name of Organization] at  
the University of Maine

#### ARTICLE I

#### NAME

##### **Section 1.**

The name of this organization shall be the [Name of Organization] at The University of Maine.

[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

#### AUTHORITY

##### **Section 1**

This organization is a recognized student organization at The University of Maine and adheres to all rules and obligations of the University of Maine Student Government. This includes, but is not limited to, the completion and submission of an update form to Student Government each year or within two weeks of an officer change.

##### **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      MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1** Membership in the organization shall be open to those regularly-enrolled at the University of Maine students who [State eligibility criteria or qualifications for membership]. The membership of the organization will always consist of at least 50% undergraduate students.

**Section 2** [Optional: This organization shall have associated members who are non-UM 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.

**Section 3** [The University of Maine requires this statement 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, 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, 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: Membership in some organizations is by invitation. If this applies, indicate who is authorized to extend an invitation to join and, the selection process and vote required.]

**Section 6** [Optional: Some organizations have a probationary period for new members before they become full members. If this applies, state the length of the probationary period, privileges and voting rights of probationary members, requirements and process to obtain full membership, the process and vote required to dismiss a probationary member, and the vote required to obtain full membership.]

#### ARTICLE V      OFFICERS

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

## **Section 2**

### **Powers and Duties of Officers:**

- 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 must be an undergraduate student. 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. The treasurer must be an undergraduate student. 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. [List duties of any additional elected or appointed officers]

## **Section 3**

Qualifications necessary to hold office in this organization are as follows:

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

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **SELECTION OF OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1**

The [List of elected officers] 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)**

**Section 1** The organization shall appoint at least one individual employed as a faculty or staff member by The University of Maine to serve as an advisor to this organization as required by UMSG. Auxiliary staff and student assistants are not eligible to serve as primary advisors. Advisors shall serve on an academic year basis or until their successor has been selected.

**Section 2** The faculty/staff advisor will never have control of the organization or its finances.

**Section 3** *[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

**Section 1** Membership dues shall be [\$XX per semester or year].

**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 3** This organization has the ability to assess the membership for special purposes. Assessments shall be determined by a quorum of the membership at a regularly scheduled meeting

**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].

## ARTICLE XII DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

**Section 1** 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 2** 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 3** 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 4** 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 Vice President for Student Organizations of Student Government Inc. at the University of Maine within two weeks after adoption.

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