GUIDELINES FOR CREATING A CHAPTER CONSTITUTION

As a requirement for recognition, Chapters must create a constitution that governs the business of the chapter. It is suggested that the chapter consider the following elements when drafting their constitution. Suggested text appears in plain text and required items appear in red text. Required items must appear for the constitution to be approved by the Alumni Association Board of Directors. Take care in customizing the optional areas, as this is where your chapter will truly define its unique purpose.

Additional standing rules governing day-to-day chapter business can be adopted at a later date and approved at any chapter business meeting and noted in chapter minutes. No standing rule can be adopted which conflicts with the chapter constitution.

Chapter constitutions that conflict with the Bylaws, policies or mission of California State University Northridge or the CSUN Alumni Association will not be adopted.

For your use in creating, modifying or updating your chapter constitution, a sample document is attached.

Chapter Constitutions should contain the following sections:

**Article 1**  Name
State the official name of the chapter, including the name of any affiliate organization. This will be the name used for official purposes and publications.

**Article 2**  Purpose
List reasons for forming the chapter, as well as overall goals. Keep in mind, the organizational goals must be inclusive of the mission and values of Cal State Northridge and the Alumni Association to be approved by the Board of Directors.

**Article 3**  Charter
“The Charter of the Alumni Chapter is held by The California State University, Northridge Alumni Association. The CSUN Alumni Association Board of Directors may grant or revoke chapter charters as prescribed in Article VII of the California State University Northridge Alumni Association Bylaws.”

**Article 4**  Membership
Section 1: Definition: Please define the requirements for membership. State and define any classification categories that apply to your group. If chapter membership definition differs from CSUN Alumni Association Membership, please include following definition of associated membership:

Section 2: Privileges: Specify by classification, privileges of membership. (i.e. to attend meetings, to speak, to vote, to hold an office, to nominate, etc.)

Section 4: Honorary Membership: List qualifications for chapter honorary membership eligibility.
Article 5  Officers and Advisors
Section 1: Officers: List which officers will serve the chapter (i.e. President, VP, Treasurer, Secretary) Define membership on the Executive Committee, if applicable. Define how representative to the Alumni Association Board of Directors is selected.
Section 2: Qualifications: State qualifications for holding office (i.e. must have been a member for x terms, etc)
Section 3: Term: State length of term for officers
Section 4: Duties of Officers: List general duties of officers listed in Section #1

Article 6  Elections
Section 1: Election Procedures: Consider including the time of year elections will be held, method of nomination, method of voting, how winners are declared, run-off process, recall election process.
Section 2: Special Elections and Appointments
List how vacancy’s are filled, who can call a special election, make appointments.

Article 7  Meetings
Section 1 List the date or time period of regular meetings.
Section 2 Special Meetings (Who can call them, notification to membership)
Section 3 Quorum for regular meetings. (A quorum is the minimum number of voting members who must be at a meeting before any official decisions can be made. This number should be slightly less than the number of people who usually attend- yet large enough so that a few people cannot control the whole organization.)
Section 4 Rules of Procedure: (Suggest Roberts Rules of Order or Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedures)

Article 8  Committees
Section 1 Define Standing Committees, if any. (i.e. Nominations committee, Executive Committee, Programs Committee, Finance Committee).
Section 2 Define Adhoc Committees: How are they formed, by whom?
Section 3 Selection procedures for standing/adhoc committees and minimum number of members.
Section 4 Powers and Duties of Standing Committees (i.e. frequency of meetings, quorum, purpose.

Article 9  Finances
Section 1 Define the Fiscal/Operating Year (Suggest the same fiscal year as the University and Foundation Accounting Office July 1 – June 30)
Section 2 Membership Dues, Language must mirror Alumni Association dues policy.
Section 3 Funding: List other avenues of funding.

Article 10  Amendments
Section 1 Define procedure for making amendments to constitution.
Section 2 Approval “Chapter charter amendments must also be approved by the Cal State Northridge Alumni Association.”
Sample Chapter Constitution

Article I
Name

The name of this chapter shall be the “Sample Alumni Chapter” also referred to as “SAC”. It is a unit of the California State University Northridge Alumni Association, established under the policies of California State University, Northridge.

Article II
Purpose

The goals and objectives of the Sample Chapter are:

a. to create opportunities for alumni to become more connected to and interactive with the university and sample constituency;
b. honor and showcase our alumni;
c. to strengthen and improve the Sample chapter, its alumni, faculty and students;
d. heighten the perception of our Sample chapter, our department, and Cal State Northridge.

This connection, in turn, will provide additional financial and personal resources to promote the welfare and intellectual progress of current and former students at Cal State Northridge.

Article III
Charter

The California State University, Northridge Alumni Association, holds the Charter of the “Sample Alumni Chapter”. The CSUN Alumni Association Board of Directors may grant or revoke chapter charters as prescribed in Article VII of the California State University, Northridge Alumni Association Bylaws.

Article IV
Membership

Section 1: Definition

A. Official Members are dues-paying members in the CSUN Alumni Association who have requested affiliation in the Sample Chapter and the appropriate financial allocation has been transferred to the chapter.

B. Honorary Membership in the Sample Chapter can be granted by two-thirds vote of quorum by the chapter Executive Council to any person who has done valuable service for the Sample Chapter. For Honorary Membership in sample chapter to be recognized and extended to the general alumni association, nominees must be forwarded to the CSUN Alumni Association Board of Directors for approval.

Section 2: Privileges:

A. Official members are entitled to vote, nominate officers, hold an office and participate in the business of the chapter. By Policies and Procedures, the chapter Executive Committee may determine additional requirements for active membership.

B. Honorary members are entitled to all the rights and privileges of official members, except those of voting.
Section 3: Membership Terms and Dues
   A. Membership terms and dues for official members are defined in the CSUN Alumni Association Bylaws.
   B. Membership terms for honorary members are at the pleasure of the chapter board.

Article V
Officers and Advisors

Section 1: Definition and Structure:
   A. The Officers of the Sample Chapter shall include President, Vice-President, Past-President, Treasurer, and Secretary.
   B. The Executive Committee of the chapter shall include the following voting members;
      a. Officers
      b. Committee Chairs
      c. The Immediate Past President of the chapter
   C. The Executive Committee of the chapter shall include the following ex-officio, non-voting members;
      a. Appointees serving at the pleasure of the Chapter
      b. The chapter advisor

Section 2: Qualifications:
   A. Only official members may hold an office. The Chapter President or official designee to the CSUN Alumni Association Board of Directors must be a dues-paying member of the Chapter.

Section 3: Terms:
   A. The Officers of the chapter shall serve terms of one year, beginning on July 1 annually. No member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, unless approved by a two-thirds vote of the official chapter membership.

Section 4: Vacancy
   A. Vacancy in an office occurring during a term shall be filled by appointment by the Chapter’s Executive Committee. The selected officer shall hold office for the remainder of the term to which appointed. The incomplete term shall not apply towards any applicable term limits for the position.

Section 5: Powers and Duties:
   A. All chapters Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by chapter bylaws and by the parliamentary authority of Robert’s Rules of Order. These duties include;
      a. President: Shall have general and active management of the business of the organization, preside over meetings of the chapter and govern the general business of the chapter.
      b. Vice President: Shall in the absence of the president, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the president.
      c. Treasurer: Shall be responsible for the fiscal administration of the chapter and under the direction of the board sign checks, make financial commitments on behalf of the chapter, serve as a signator on chapter bank accounts, and present periodic financial reports.
      d. Secretary: Shall take minutes at chapter meetings, maintain official chapter rosters and other correspondence on behalf of the chapter.
      e. Past President: Shall chair the nominations committee, etc
      f. Committee Chairs: Shall fulfill the stated purpose of their committee and govern committee activities.

Section 6: Removal
A. Officers can be removed for failure to fulfill the duties of their office by a 2/3 majority of quorum of the Executive Committee.

**Article VI**

**Elections**

Section 1: Procedures:
A. Elections shall be held at least one month prior to the end of the fiscal year, June 30th. Any official member may nominate a candidate for office and winners are declared with a margin of 50% of the votes cast, plus one. Recall elections can be called by a two-thirds vote of the active membership.

B. The Past President and Nominations committee shall prepare a slate of officers to be approved upon vote of the membership.

Section 2: Special Elections and Appointments
A. Vacancy in an office occurring during a term shall be filled by appointment by the Chapter’s Executive Committee.

**Article VII**

**Meetings**

Section 1: Meetings:
A. The chapter will hold a minimum of one annual meeting. The Executive Committee will determine the time, date and place, and notify all active members, honorary members, and associate members at least 10 working days in advance.

B. All chapter meetings must be open to the public.

Section 2: Special Meetings
A. Special Meetings may be called by the Executive Committee or on written petition of at least 10% of the active members. If a special meeting is called by petition, the members so petitioning must bear all costs. The purpose of the special meeting must be stated as part of the petition or resolution of the Committee, and must be included in the notice of the meeting. All active members, honorary members and associate members and the Executive Committee must be notified of the special meeting at least 10 working days in advance. The chapter cannot transact any business at the special meeting other than the business for which it was called.

Section 3: Quorum:
A. Quorum for meetings and elections shall be a minimum of 3 Officers and 5 voting members. Active members may vote on matters presented at the annual or special meetings in person or by written proxy. The Executive Committee may issue Rules and Regulations concerning proxies.

Section 4: Rules of Procedure:
A. The standard rules of parliamentary procedure shall follow Roberts Rules of Order.

**Article VIII**

**Committees**

Section 1: Standing Committees
A. The Executive Committee is a standing committee of the chapter and comprised of the members outlined in Article V, Section 1. The Executive Committee will meet at least twice a year to carry out the purpose of the chapter and quorum shall be set at three voting members.
B. The Nominations Committee is a standing committee of the chapter and chaired by the Past President of the Chapter and will prepare a slate of officers for vote at the annual elections.

C. Other Committees to consider adding as you write your Constitution:
   i. Membership Committee
   ii. Social Programs Committee
   iii. Professional Programs Committee
   iv. Communications Committee (Webmaster, newsletter chair)
   v. Scholarship Committee
   vi. Student Liaisons

Section 2: Adhoc Committees
   A. The President, upon approval of the council may create other committees as necessary to carry out the purpose of the chapter membership.

Article IV
Finances

Section 1: Fiscal Year:
   A. The fiscal year for the chapter runs from July 1 of each year until June 30th of the following year. The Executive Committee must submit a proposed annual budget to the chapter by June 1st of each year. The chapter must approve an annual budget by July 1 of each year.

Section 2: Membership Dues
   A. Per Rules and Regulations outlined by the CSUN Alumni Association, Sample chapter will receive a portion of the annual membership dues paid to the general Alumni Association for any member who indicates Sample chapter membership at the time of acquisition.

Section 3: Funding
   A. The chapter’s programs may be funded through a variety of sources including but not limited to CSUN Alumni Association grants, fees from events, donations to the chapter, departmental grants, and approved development activities.

   B. The Sample chapter is eligible for funding from the Cal State University, Northridge Alumni Association as outlined in the Rules and Regulations governing alumni chapters.

Article X
Amendments

Amendments may be made to these bylaws by a three-fourths vote of the active chapter membership. The Cal State Northridge Alumni Association Board of Directors must also approve all charter amendments.

Adopted MM/DD/YR