

SAMPLE #1

CONSTITUTION OF THE (NAME OF RISO)

ARTICLE I - NAME

What is the exact name/title by which the organization will be known? RISOs may not use the "University of Hawai`i" or the "University of Hawai`i–West O`ahu" in its name.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

What is the purpose of the organization? What are its broad goals? Are the aims political, social, cultural, religious, service, etc? What is this group's reason for being founded?

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Who is eligible for membership? What qualifications are there for membership? Are there any restrictions? Will you have various membership categories, i.e. regular, associate, honorary? How is each type of membership defined? A nondiscrimination clause should be provided and include the following: race, creed, color, age, national origin, ethnic background, gender, disability or handicapped status, sexual orientation, or religion.

Section 2. Officers: What titles will officers have? How will they be selected? What will be their term of office? Only regular members should be allowed to serve as officers.

Section 3. Quorum: How many members of the organization must be present to officially transact business during organization meetings and during executive board meetings? Will it be 2/3 of the membership/executive board or a simple majority of the membership/executive board or whoever shows up? It is important that serious thought be given to this as there are advantages and disadvantages to any requirement selected.

Section 4. Voting: What is the basic requirement for approving actions of the organization and of the executive board? Usually this requirement is majority rule (50% plus one of the regular voting members). Some decisions require a 2/3 vote of the regular voting members.

Section 5. Parliamentary Authority: What resource will be relied upon for questions of parliamentary procedure? Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised is the most common resource used. In smaller organizations, the following statement might be sufficient: "Parliamentary authority shall be derived from Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised for decisions related to budget, officer elections and constitution or by-laws revisions. All other decisions shall be by consensus."

ARTICLE IX - FINANCES

Section 1. Dues: If membership dues are collected, state that in this section. How often will dues be paid and to whom will they be paid.

Section 2. Budget: What plans for spending finances of the organization must be presented to the membership? Who is responsible for preparing the annual budget? When must the budget be approved by the members?

Section 3. Disbursements: Whose signatures are required to expend funds? Will it be the Treasurer only, or the Treasurer and one other officer, or the Treasurer, one other officer and the advisor, or some other combination? It is important to have a check and balance between individuals who have authority to expend the organization's funds.

Section 4. Audits: Who will audit and double-check the expenditures of the organization? This should be done at least once a year particularly when the officers change.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Initiation: Who can initiate proposals for amending the Constitution? Are amendments proposed in writing prior to meetings or verbally at meetings? Are a minimum number of members required to propose an amendment?

Section 2. Voting: Must the membership vote on the proposed amendments by the next regular meeting, or within two weeks of the proposal, or at the meeting at which the amendment is proposed? Will voting be by written ballot, or verbal, vote, or show of hands or whatever other process? Will it take 2/3 vote, 3/4 vote, or simple majority for an amendment to be approved? Constitutional amendments usually require 2/3 vote for approval.

BY-LAWS OF THE (NAME OF RISO)

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Types of membership: If there are different types of membership (regular, associate, honorary), state the qualifications for each. If honorary membership is available, state how such members are selected.

Section 2. Termination of membership: Can members be terminated? Under what conditions and by what process? Can a member be reinstated? Under what conditions and by what process?

ARTICLE II - FEES (OR DUES)

Section 1. Membership fees (dues): How often will fees (dues) be collected? How is the amount determined? What is the process for changing the amount? What is the amount?

Section 2. Disbursement of fees (dues): What will fees be used for? Who decides use? Are there specific restrictions on what the RISO's money can be used for, i.e. purchase of alcohol?

ARTICLE III - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. President: The President shall .

Section 2. Vice-President: The Vice-President shall .

Section (x). Continue to add sections for each of the officers of the organization.

Section (x). Recall of officers: If any officers are not meeting their responsibilities, how will they be removed from office (recall)?

Section (x). Replacement of officers: How will officers who are recalled or resign be replaced?

Section (x). Is there anything else that should be included related to officers?

ARTICLE IV - COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees: What are the standing committees and what are the functions and responsibilities of each?

A. X Committee: functions

B. Y Committee: functions

(Add as needed)

Section 2. Special (Ad hoc) Committees: How is a special committee formed? Who appoints the special committees? When and how is a special committee disbanded?

ARTICLE V - ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nominating procedure: How will candidates be nominated? Will nominations occur at a meeting prior to the meeting when elections are held or will the election be held at the same meeting when nominations are accepted? Will there be a special nominations committee who presents the slate to the membership?

Section 2. Voting procedure: Will the vote be by a secret ballot or some other process? Who will conduct the election? Is a simple majority vote sufficient to be elected?

Section 3. Time of election: When will the election take place? Be sure this time is consistent with the term of office in your Constitution.

ARTICLE VI - ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business is usually included in the By-Laws as it may change from time to time. It is acceptable to include this section in the Constitution or the By-Laws.

Order of Business: In what order will items be taken up at each meeting? A customary agenda follows:

Section 1. The order of Business at regular meetings shall be:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Roll Call or head count to establish quorum is present
- 3) Reading of Minutes of Previous Meeting
- 4) Officers' Reports
- 5) Committee Reports
- 6) Unfinished Business
- 7) New Business
- 8) Announcements
- 9) Adjournment

Section 2. The order of business at Executive Board (Committee) meetings shall be:

- 1) Call to order
- 2) Roll Call or head count to establish quorum
- 3) Unfinished Business
- 4) New Business
- 5) Adjournment

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

Will these By-Laws be amended in the same manner as the Constitution? For most RISOs, it will be. For the chartered organizations, amendments to the Constitutions must be approved by the student body, while amendments to the By-Laws may be made by 2/3 vote of the organization.