



# Local Chapter Constitution Guidelines

**Every chapter must forward an updated copy of its local constitution to the national office by November 1 each year.** With the revisions of the IRS tax code guidelines for non-for-profit organizations, changes in the national constitution, and requirements for articles of incorporation, **it is essential that all chapters submit an updated local constitution** to the national office by **November 1**. The constitution must be signed and dated by the chapter president and the chapter advisor. The signed/dated constitution can be mailed, faxed, or scanned and e-mailed to the national office. However, the document must have the actual signatures of the chapter president and advisor with the date they signed it.

The local constitution may be created from scratch following the provisions found in the national constitution and by-laws. However, to make life simpler, a sample "fill-in-the-blank" form is available on this website. A local chapter may use that form, or the chapter can amend it to fit local needs. **Please highlight or use red ink to identify any deviations from the "boiler-plate" version.** All constitutions will be reviewed by the national office.

If you are using a "scratch" version of a local constitution, it must include the following:

1. Your chapter (school) name
2. The correct name of the national organization – which should read the "National Electronic Media Association"
3. The purpose and objectives of your chapter
4. A non-discrimination clause
5. A listing of privileges of membership
6. A statement that members must pay national dues
7. A delineation of types of membership
8. Requirements to remain a member in good standing
9. A description of the process to suspend membership which includes just cause
10. A description of the governing body and decision-making process
11. The schedule for electing officers
12. A description of the duties of the officers
13. Explanation of the location of the chapter's financial assets and the persons authorized to disburse chapter funds
14. A statement of relationship with the university including a statement which reads, "No rules may be enacted that are in conflict with the rules of the University. Nothing in these by-laws shall in any way limit the final authority of the University."
15. A statement identifying corporate identity that reads, "For purposes of Internal Revenue Service definition, the local chapter is an entity of [the property of] {Insert the College/University name here}. The local chapter will not be included as part of the national organization's Form 990 tax return and the local chapter is not eligible to use the organization's tax ID number for local activities or operations."
16. A description of how the local constitution may be amended.
17. (The local constitution can no longer include a statement requiring the disbursement of residual assets to the national organization in the event of dissolution of the chapter.)

Please review any changes you need to incorporate in your constitution. When complete, the local constitution must be signed and dated by the chapter president and chapter advisor. Then the constitution should be sent to the national office. You may also need to have the constitution approved by an office on your campus.

Chapters that fail to annually update their local constitutions **may** be suspended from active membership by the Board of Governors no later than December 31 of each year.