

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Advisor's Guide to personal growth and leadership development

Lesson Number: **RNH.9.6**

Chapter Constitution

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to teach students the importance of the chapter constitution, how to develop a constitution, and how to revise the one that is in place.

Directions:

A constitution is a document that sets forth the reason for a country or organization's existence. A constitution contains specific information about how an organization will operate. Many constitutions have bylaws.

Benefits of a Constitution – A constitution, as the Official FFA Manual indicates, provides an organization and its members with structure and support. The decisions made by chapter members should be based upon its constitution and bylaws. A well-written constitution helps to avoid conflicts and miscommunications in the normal operation of the chapter.

1. Pose the following question and draw out the points that follow.
 - a. Ask students why our country has a constitution and why they think the founding fathers thought it was important.
 - i. Explain that a constitution is a document that sets forth the reason for a country or organization's existence, i.e., what it was formed to do.
 - ii. A constitution contains specific information about how an organization will operate including membership, officers, and degrees.

Quick Reference:

Time Required:

60 minutes

Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Describe the importance of the chapter constitution.
2. Describe how to develop a constitution and what it should include.
3. Work to revise a chapter constitution to make it more meaningful to the chapter.

Materials:

- ✓ Copies of your local chapter's constitution – enough for all students to see
- ✓ RNH.9.6.AS.A if a local chapter constitution is not available – enough for all students to see





- iii. Many constitutions have bylaws. This portion of the constitution generally contains information that needs to be changed or updated on a regular basis such as officer duties, meeting notification guidelines, etc.
2. Review an established constitution.
 - a. If yours is an established chapter, explain that the chapter has a constitution and distribute copies of it for review.
 - i. Walk the students through the chapter constitution and explain each section and how it relates.
 1. During this session, you may want to highlight areas that need to be discussed in detail and perhaps revised.
 2. Follow the procedure outlined in your chapter constitution to amend or change what the students feel needs changed in your constitution.
 - b. If you do not have an established constitution, utilize RNH.9.4.AS.A to have students do the following:
 - i. Walk the students through the sample chapter constitution RNH.9.4.AS.A and explain each section and how it relates.
 1. During this session you may want to highlight areas that need to be discussed in detail and perhaps revised to fit your local chapter.

Follow the procedure outlined in Article VIII of the sample constitution to amend or change what the students feel needs changed in the sample constitution in order to fit your chapter.

Connection Questions:

1. How can a constitution protect an organization?
2. If a country did not have a constitution, why might its leadership not want one?
3. How do we rely on the Constitution of the United States? How do we rely on our chapter's constitution in the same way?



LifeKnowledge Connections

Precept(s) Addressed:

Action

- A2. Focus on results.
- A3. Plan effectively.

Relationships

- B5. Participate effectively as a team member.

Continuous Improvement

- F3. Use innovative problem-solving strategies.

Mental Growth

- J1. Think critically.
- J3. Practice sound decision making.

Decision Making

- N1. Demonstrate the decision-making processes.
- N2. Demonstrate problem-solving skills.

LK Lesson Suggestion:



- HS.113 – How Organizations Are Structured
(National, State, Local)
- AHS.42 – Responsible citizenship



Sample Local Chapter Constitution

ARTICLE I – Name, Mission and Strategies

Section A. The name of this organization shall be the ***CHAPTER NAME*** Chapter of the National FFA Organization

Section B. The mission and strategies for this chapter are as follows:

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth and career success** through agricultural education.

1. Develops competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
2. Increases awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture and its contribution to our well being.
3. Strengthens the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work.
4. Promotes the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
5. Encourages achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs.
6. Encourages wise management of economic, environmental and human resources of the community.
7. Develops interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations and social interaction.
8. Builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism.
9. Promotes cooperation and cooperative attitudes among all people.
10. Promotes healthy lifestyles.
11. Encourages excellence in scholarship.

ARTICLE II – Organization

Section A. The ***CHAPTER NAME*** Chapter of FFA is a chartered local unit of the ***STATE*** Association of FFA which is chartered by the National FFA Organization.

Section B. This chapter accepts in full the provisions in the constitution and bylaws of the ***STATE*** Association of FFA as well as those of the National FFA Organization.



Sample Local Chapter Constitution

ARTICLE III – Membership

Section A. Membership in this chapter shall be of three kinds: (1) Active; (2) Alumni and (3) Honorary, as defined by the National FFA Constitution.

Section B. The regular activities of this chapter shall be carried on by the active membership.

Section C. Honorary membership in this chapter shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree.

Section D. Active members in good standing may vote on all business brought before the chapter. An active member shall be considered in good standing when:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study. Either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current state and national dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

Section E. Names of applicants for membership shall be filed with the membership committee.

ARTICLE IV – Emblems

Section A. The emblem of the FFA shall be the emblem for the chapter.

Section B. Emblems used by the members shall be designated by the National FFA Organization.

ARTICLE V – Degrees and Privileges of Active Membership

Section A. There shall be four degrees of active membership based on individual achievement. These degrees are (1) Greenhand FFA Degree, (2) Chapter FFA Degree, (3) State FFA Degree, and (4) American FFA Degree.



Sample Local Chapter Constitution

All “Greenhands” are entitled to wear the regulation bronze emblem pin. All members holding the Chapter FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation silver emblem pin. All members holding the State FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation gold emblem charm. All members holding the American FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation gold emblem key.

Section B. Greenhand FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election: (Refer to National Constitution)

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education and have satisfactory plans for a supervised agricultural experience program.
2. Learn and explain the meaning of the FFA Creed, Motto, and Salute.
3. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws, and the chapter Program of Activities.
6. Personally own or have access to the Official FFA Manual and the FFA Student Handbook.
7. Submit a written application for the Greenhand FFA Degree.

Section C. Chapter FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election: (Refer to National Constitution)

1. Must have received the Greenhand FFA Degree.
2. Must have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least 180 hours of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level, have in operation an approved supervised agricultural experience program, and be enrolled in an agricultural education course.
3. Must have participated in the planning and conducting of at least three official functions in the chapter Program of Activities.
4. Must have earned and productively invested at least \$150 by the member’s own efforts or worked at least forty-five hours in excess of scheduled class time, or a combination thereof, and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Must have effectively led a group discussion for 15 minutes.
6. Must have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
7. Must show progress toward individual achievement in the FFA award programs.
8. Must have a satisfactory scholastic record.
9. Must submit a written application for the Chapter FFA Degree.



Sample Local Chapter Constitution

Section D. State FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for selection:

1. Qualifications for the State FFA Degree are those set forth in the constitution of the State FFA Association and National FFA Organization.

Section E. American FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for selection:

1. Qualifications for the American FFA Degree are those set forth in the constitution of the National FFA Organization.

ARTICLE VI – State and Chapter Officers

Section A. The offices of an FFA chapter shall be: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter and sentinel. Other officers may be elected as deemed appropriate by the local advisor and/or governing body. The teacher(s) of agricultural education shall be the FFA advisor(s). The members present at any regular meeting of the chapter shall elect chapter officers annually or semi-annually.

ARTICLE VII – Dues

Section A. Local dues in this chapter shall be fixed annually by a majority vote of the active members.

Section B. Full local, state and national dues shall be paid by all active members.

Section C. No member shall be considered as active and in good standing unless he/she pays full local, state and national FFA dues.

ARTICLE VIII – Amendments

Section A. This constitution may be amended or changed at any regular chapter meeting by a two-thirds vote of the active members present providing it is not in conflict with the state association constitution or that of the National FFA Organization.

Section B. Bylaws may be adopted to fit the needs of the chapter at any regular chapter meeting by a two-thirds vote of the active members present providing such bylaws conflict in no way with the constitution and bylaws of either the state association or the national organization.

NOTE: This sample came directly from https://www.ffa.org/documents/sample_local_chapter_constitution.pdf