What is a Constitution?
A constitution contains the fundamental principles that outline the purpose, structure, and limits of an organization. It provides a foundation upon which an organization operates.

Why should I have a Constitution?
Every official student club at JTCC is required to file a current copy of their constitution and bylaws with the Office of Student Activities. An updated copy should be filed promptly should the document change during the year. Your constitution serves to help:
- Clarify your purpose
- Outline your basic structure
- Provide the cornerstone for building an effective club
- Allow members and potential members to have a better understanding of what the club is all about and how it functions.

What should I include in my Constitution?
A constitution should provide the structure for a club, describe its purpose, and define the duties and responsibilities of the officers and members. The objective is to draft a document that covers these topics in a simple, clear, and concise manner.

What are By-laws?
By-laws are secondary principles that govern the internal affairs of an organization. By-laws are essentially an expansion of the articles or sections of the constitution. They describe in detail the procedures and steps the organization must follow in order to conduct business effectively and efficiently.
Sample Outline for a Combined Constitution/By-laws Document:

Article I - NAME
The name of this club shall be called _________________________________.

Article II - PURPOSE
The purpose(s) of this club shall include the following:

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

If your club is affiliated with other groups, mention that here too (i.e. a chapter of a national organization).

Article III - MEMBERSHIP
Membership shall be open to all registered students at John Tyler Community College regardless of age, race, sex, religion, or disability.

a. Official student clubs at John Tyler Community College are required to be non-discriminatory in membership. As such, you should review your constitution to ensure that it does not contain discriminatory language or provisions.

b. Any recognized religious or political student organization shall be authorized to limit certain activities only to members who are committed to furthering the mission of such organization. Such activities include ordering the organization’s internal affairs, selecting the organization’s leaders and members, defining the organization’s doctrines, and resolving the organization’s disputes.

If your club wants to include membership requirement information, here is an example: “As a member, one is required to attend club meetings regularly, pay dues if required, and actively support club projects.”

Article IV - OFFICERS
At a minimum, each student club is expected to designate one officer as the main student leader (usually titled “president”) and one officer authorized to deal with the club’s finances (usually titled “treasurer”).

Section I – Officers
Officers shall consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc.

Section II – Duties of the Officers
Duties of the ______________ shall be to ______________.
Example Officer Duties:

1. President
   a. Preside over all meetings
   b. Represent organization on campus
   c. Ensure that the organization is operating in conformity with the standards set forth by John Tyler Community College and the Office of Student Activities
   d. Maintain communication with club advisor

2. Vice-President
   a. Preside over meetings in the absence of the President
   b. Coordinate club promotion and publicity of events

3. Secretary
   a. Maintain an accurate record of all club meetings
   b. Maintain membership directory

4. Treasurer
   a. Maintain an accurate record of club transactions
   b. Collect dues if required

Article V – MEETINGS
How often held, when, by whom, where, how announced.

Article VI – ADVISOR
Each club must have a JTCC faculty or staff member as an advisor who is employed full-time. The advisor will provide leadership, guidance, advice, and supervision to the officers and members of the club.

Article VII – DUES
Explain financial procedures including the amount and collection procedures for dues, if any will be required for membership.

Article VIII – AMENDMENTS
An amendment may be initiated by any member of the club and passed by a two-thirds (2 / 3) majority of the general membership.