

GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS HANDBOOK



ARTICLE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The Senate Groups and Organizations (GANDO) Committee's role is to oversee and assist with the creation and management of student organizations recognized by the Student Bar Association (SBA) at American University Washington College of Law (WCL). GANDO's purpose is to facilitate organizational communication, provide event oversight, and address organizational concerns for all potential SBA recognized groups. The GANDO committee shall publish a list of all recognized organizations at the beginning of each academic calendar year.

Section A. Contacting GANDO

Communications shall be directed to the GANDO Committee's Chairperson to begin the process for recognition by the SBA or any Group-related concerns. You can contact the Chairperson by emailing sbagando@wcl.american.edu. The Chairperson shall respond to such communications within 3 business days. All recognized organizations should contact the GANDO committee through sbagando@wcl.american.edu.

Section B. GANDO Meetings

The GANDO Committee shall meet bi-weekly during the normal course of the academic calendar year. The Committee shall discuss pertinent issues under their purview and see any proposals for group recognition. Meeting times are set at the beginning of each semester based on the availability of the Chairperson and Committee members for that semester. All meetings are open to the student body but are closed during the voting portion of any meeting.

ARTICLE II. GROUP RECOGNITION

Section A. Procedure

The GANDO Committee shall strive to create organizations that are unique and contribute to the greater American University Washington College of Law. To become a recognized organization, a group shall satisfy the requirements under Section B of this Article. Student organizations seeking recognition must be represented by any member of the organization at a GANDO Committee meeting.

Subsection 1. Recognition Process

- a. Upon an organization gathering the required materials under Art. II(B), an organization representative must:
 - i. Send an email to the GANDO Committee Chairperson to set up a proposal meeting (see *infra*) in which at least the GANDO Chairperson and 2 other members of the GANDO Committee shall attend.
- b. Send all required documents under Art. II Sec. B to the GANDO Chairperson. The proposal meeting shall consist of:

- i. A hearing where the organization will present their case for recognition.
 - a. This hearing will be limited to ten (10) minutes.
 - b. Following the organization's presentation, the GANDO committee may ask questions.
- c. A vote where the committee shall decide on whether the group shall be recognized. This vote occurs in a closed setting.
 - i. Here, closed is defined as the only people in attendance are members of the GANDO Committee.
 - ii. The vote shall be that of a simple majority to approve the group's recognition proposal.
 - iii. In the event of a tie, it is considered a vote in the negative.
- d. If the committee votes in the affirmative for recognition, the Chairperson shall alert the group within 1 business day.
 - i. In the event of an affirmative vote, the Chairperson shall draft a resolution to put before the Senate at the next upcoming meeting.
 - ii. In the event of a vote in the negative, the Chairperson shall alert the organization of the results and include reasoning why that group was denied recognition.
- e. After the proposal meeting, the organization shall then present their proposal before the full Senate at the meeting following their successful committee meeting.
 - i. Full Senate is defined as the Senate consisting of enough members to reach quorum.
 - ii. The GANDO Committee's vote shall be reported to the Senate.

Subsection 2. Non-Recognition Appeal

Upon being denied recognition by either the GANDO Committee or the Senate, the organization may appeal the decision to the Director of External Affairs. The organization appeals the decision by sending the Director of External Affairs a formal request for appeal. For a formal appeal, the organization must submit all documents required under Art. II(B) and any other document displaying the requested changes proposed by the GANDO Committee or the Senate.

Section B. Requirements

To become recognized by the SBA, the following materials must be gathered and accurately prepared in one zip file **upon initial submission** sbagando@wcl.american.edu.

1. Constitution

- a. An organizational constitution must include a mission statement, non-discrimination clause, and provisions for current and future leadership of at least three separate students including a Chief Executive, Treasurer, and one additional named officer.

2. Petition

- a. Student leaders must provide a petition that contains 100 signatures from the current student body. Petitions must contain current American University Washington College of Law student names, student ID numbers, and signatures.
- 3. Contact Information**
 - a. The contact information for the entire executive board and a general group contact email must be provided.
- 4. Faculty Sponsor**
 - a. Organizations must have a Faculty Sponsor to become recognized.
- 5. Planned Events and Activities**
 - a. Organizations must submit to the GANDO Committee Chairperson an outline of proposed events for the academic school year.
- 6. Funding**
 - a. Funding is obtained through the Finance Committee after recognition by the SBA Senate.

ARTICLE III. GROUP OPERATIONS

Section A. Events

The GANDO Committee strives to help groups organize and hold successful events at WCL. To achieve this, the GANDO Committee will require a Pre-Event Form and a Post-Event Form.

1. Pre-Event Form
 - a. The Pre-Event Form must be submitted at least five (5) days prior to the date of an organization's event. This form is located on the Engage SBA GANDO page under the "Forms" section.
2. Post-Event Form
 - a. The Post-Event Form must be submitted within two (2) days following the date of the organization's event. This form is located on the Engage SBA GANDO page under the "Forms" section.
 - b. In addition to the Post-Event Form, an organization must upload a list of signatures from the attendees of the event. This can be in the form of a picture or an electronic document. It is critical to document attendees for an accurate reflection of the event's success, which can help determine next year's budget.

Section B. Organizational Structure

The GANDO Committee ensures the proper operation of recognized organizations. Each organization is required to have at least a chief executive, chief financial, and one additional named officer.

Subsection 1. Elections

- a. Organizations shall hold elections for their board for the following academic year, in the Spring semester by the Friday of the third full week of March.
- b. Organizations shall alert the GANDO Committee Chair of the newly elected board before the last Friday of April.
- c. The policies and procedures shall be left to the discretion of each organization's leadership.
- d. The GANDO Committee shall act as an authoritative arbitrator for internal organizational disputes regarding organizational structure if requested by the organization.
 - i. "Organization" refers to any member of the organization.

Subsection 2. Penalties

- a. Upon failure to abide by the Art. III(B)(1)(a) requirement, the organization shall lose ten percent (10%) of their budget for the following academic year.
- b. Upon failure to abide by the Art. III(B)(1)(b), the organization shall lose ten percent (10%) of their budget for the following academic year.
- c. Upon failure to abide by both Art. III(B)(1)(a)-(b) by the last academic calendar day of the Spring semester, the organization shall lose one hundred percent (100%) of their budget for the following academic year.

Section C. Compliance

1. All organizations are required to comply with all other SBA policies and procedures, including but not limited to:
 - a. SBA Finance Committee Policies & Procedures
 - b. SBA Executive Branch Orders
 - c. SBA Judicial Opinions
2. All groups are required to be in good standing to be recognized by and receive funding from the SBA. Good standing requires abiding by Art. III Sec. 1-3 (*supra*).

Appendix A. Organizational Documents

Pre-Event Report

Pre-Event Organization Name:

Event: _____

When will this event be held?

Where will this event be held?

How will you advertise this event?

Will this event be for students only, or will professors and practitioners be invited?

<https://american.campuslabs.com/engage/submitter/form/start/694587>

Post-Event Report

Post-Event Organization Name:

Event: _____

What is the total number of attendees?

Did your group maximize its resources by looking for sponsorships, collaborating with other student organizations, etc.?

How much did your group request in contingency grants?

- a. What was the actual dollar amount spent?
- b. Please provide a breakdown of how the contingency grant money was spent?

<https://american.campuslabs.com/engage/submitter/form/start/694604>

STUDENT ORGANIZATION CONSTITUTION SAMPLE

[Name of Student Organization] Constitution

[Date of Adoption and/or Revision]

ARTICLE I – *Name*

The name of this organization shall be the Washington College of Law Underwater Basket Weaving Law Society (UBWLS). The UBWLS is a student organization at the American University Washington College of Law.

ARTICLE II- *Mission Statement*

The mission of this organization is to spread the knowledge of underwater basket weaving law to the greater legal community and influence positive change in the field.

ARTICLE III - *Statement of Non-Discrimination*

This organization shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, or veteran status. This policy will include, but not limited to recruiting, membership, organization activities, or opportunities to hold office.

ARTICLE IV – *Objectives*

The objectives of the organization shall be:

1. To educate and promote interest in underwater basket weaving law;
2. To provide fellowship among students and faculty;
3. To represent student needs and wants in regard to the legal intricacies of underwater basket weaving; and
4. To present a forum for the presentation of innovative ideas to benefit the community.

ARTICLE V – *Officers*

A. Election of Officers

1. The Officers of this organization will consist of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.
2. Officers shall be elected by written ballot, with each active member casting a vote. A simple majority of votes will constitute a victory.
3. Election of Officers will take place during the third full week of March.
4. Officers will assume office for the period of one year starting on [X], and ending on [X].

B. Recall of Officers

1. Officers can be recalled for malfeasance in office. Malfeasance shall be defined as:
 - a. An inability to perform the requirements of office.
 - b. Willfully disobeying Washington College of Law Rules and Regulations governing student organizations.
 - c. Breaching the Student Code of Conduct.
 - d. Mismanaging club funds.
2. Recall procedures will be initiated at the request of five (5) active members.
3. Recall hearings will be conducted at a regular meeting for the presentation of evidence from all concerned parties.
 - a. Those requesting a recall of officer(s) shall be given 20 minutes to present their case.
 - b. Officers being recalled will have five (5) minutes to question their accusers.
 - c. Officers being recalled will have 20 minutes to rebut the charges presented against them.
 - d. The club will then have five (5) minutes to question those being recalled.
 - e. A two-thirds majority of those active members voting in a recall at the end of the hearing is necessary to remove any office.

ARTICLE VI – *Voting*

- A. This constitution and by-laws may be amended by a 2/3-majority vote of those voting, a quorum being present.
- B. Voting on amendments must be conducted after a minimum notice of 1 week.

This is merely a sample constitution. Organizations may have a Constitution in any form they please so long as it fulfills the requirements of SBA and its subsidiaries.