

Michigan State University Outdoors Club Constitution 2026-2027

Preamble:

This Constitution for the Michigan State University (MSU) Outdoors Club, hereafter referred to as "the Club," is established to govern its structure, operations, and membership, ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Article I: Name and Objectives

Section 1: Name

The organization shall be recognized as the Michigan State University Outdoors Club.

Section 2: Objectives

The Club's objectives are to promote a community for students dedicated to exploring the outdoors. This involves offering a platform for members to convene, deliberate, and coordinate a variety of outdoor activities, including but not limited to hiking, biking, camping, kayaking, rafting, backpacking, and climbing.

Article II: Membership

Section 1: Non-Discrimination and Eligibility

1.1: Non-Discrimination

The organization will not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight. A student is a person enrolled in a program leading to a bachelor's degree or in an undergraduate non-degree program, including Lifelong Education. A person remains a student until graduation or completion of the program, permanent dismissal, or non-attendance for three full, consecutive semesters (including summer semester). This definition includes a person who is on a leave of absence, withdraws, recesses, or graduates after an alleged violation of student conduct policies.

1.2: Definitions

The Michigan State University Outdoors Club defines all forms of hazing, bullying, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, hate speech, bigotry, and other forms in accordance with the official definitions, standards, and guidelines established by Michigan State University and its Title IX policies.

1.3: Grievance Handling

Grievances against members shall be expeditiously addressed. Complaints must reach the president, and it is the responsibility of board members to report concerns and grievances to the president. The process adheres to university standards and procedures, ensuring privacy and due process rights. Board members must recuse themselves from voting if there is a conflict of interest or a bias that would sway their vote.

1.4: Disbandment Procedures

The organization may be dissolved by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of the active membership, and all active members have been given at least 7 days' notice of the proposed vote. Upon a successful vote to dissolve, the Executive Board shall notify the University Office of Student Engagement/Student Activities Office in writing. Complete and submit any official disbandment forms required by the university.

Upon dissolution, any remaining assets and/or funds of the organization shall be: First used to settle any outstanding debts or liabilities. Then the remaining balance will be donated to The Fenner Nature Center. The gear owned by the Club will be donated to MSU's Climbing Club. Under no circumstances shall any member receive individual financial benefit from remaining funds.

All official documents, including financial records, membership rosters, meeting minutes, and the constitution, shall be submitted to the university's student organization office for permanent archiving.

Section 2: Membership Suspension and Removal

2.1: Grounds for Removal

A member may be suspended or removed from the Michigan State University Outdoors Club for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to pay required annual membership dues.
- Failure to complete or maintain a valid Club Liability Waiver. Liability Waivers remain valid for two (2) academic years, after which a new waiver must be signed before participation in Club activities.
- Willful violation of any provision of this Constitution, the Club Code of Conduct, or any policies adopted by the Executive Board.
- Conduct that is determined by the Executive Board to be detrimental to the safety, welfare, or operation of the Club.

- Graduation from Michigan State University

2.2: Removal Procedure

Prior to any suspension or removal, the member shall be informed of the reason for the proposed action and be provided an opportunity to present their perspective to the Executive Board, either in writing or in person.

Following discussion, the Executive Board may suspend or remove the member by a simple majority vote. Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot whenever practicable. Board members with a conflict of interest shall not participate in deliberation and voting.

2.3: Length of Suspension or Removal

The duration of any suspension or removal shall be determined at the discretion of the Executive Board based upon the nature and severity of the violation. The Executive Board may establish conditions for reinstatement, including payment of outstanding dues, completion of required documentation, or other corrective actions deemed appropriate.

2.4: Effect of Removal

A member who has been suspended or removed shall forfeit all membership privileges for the duration of the disciplinary action, including participation in Club meetings, trips, events, equipment rentals, and voting rights, unless otherwise specified by the Executive Board.

Article III: Officers

Section 1: Executive Board Structure

The Club shall be governed by an Executive Board, herein referred to as "the Executive Board," comprising a President, Vice President, Treasurer(s), Secretary(s), Public Relations Manager(s), and Gear Manager(s). In cases of low membership or officer availability, individuals may serve in multiple officer roles, pending a majority vote of the general members.

Section 2: Officer Qualifications and Election Process

2.1: Qualifications

Officers must be returning members in good standing with the club and enrolled as MSU undergraduate students. The President must have at least 1 year of prior Executive Board experience to be able to run for the position. Nominations can be self-initiated or submitted by club members. Club members wishing to run must have attended at least 1 club-designated trip. Elections involve candidate speeches at a general meeting, with only official members permitted

in the room, and a secret ballot vote. Election-related information will be provided to all members via email or at weekly meetings. Votes will only be visible to Executive Board members who are in their last semester as Undergraduate Students at MSU and will not be returning as members of the Outdoors Club in the following year to ensure fairness and consistency.

2.2: Exclusions

A member who has voluntarily resigned from the Executive Board and has remained a member in good standing with the Club following their resignation may run for office again in future elections if permitted by the current Executive Board. The Executive Board must vote by simple majority and secret ballot to permit them to run in another election.

A member who was removed from their position in accordance with Article III, Section 4, is not permitted to run for election again during their time at MSU.

Section 3: Officer Duties

The specific duties of each officer are delineated for operational clarity.

3.1: President

The president shall be responsible for convening and presiding over meetings, and provide comprehensive oversight of all club activities. The president will inform officers if they are not performing to standard.

3.2: Vice President

The vice president shall oversee all club activities and preside over meetings in the President's absence.

3.3: Treasurer(s)

The treasurer(s) shall manage financial transactions, maintain accurate records, and oversee club funds.

3.4: Secretary(s)

The secretary(s) shall record and disseminate meeting minutes for both general and executive board meetings. Help members plan trips and present them to the Executive Board. Manage the club email and alert the president of any important messages.

3.5: Public Relations Manager(s)

The public relations manager(s) shall secure and manage sponsorships, create promotional material, maintain/update the Club website, and manage club social media.

3.6: Gear Manager(s)

The gear manager(s) shall maintain equipment records, oversee check-in/out, and organize the gear room.

Section 4: Officer Removal Procedure:

Officers may face removal due to failure to maintain good standing or neglect of duties. Officer removal requires a simple majority vote of the Executive Board, with at least one week's notice. The voting must be done by secret ballot, and the President shall be the only person able to view the results. In the event that corrective discipline is necessary, the Executive Board must complete another simple majority vote to enact a disciplinary action on the board member in accordance with the terms outlined in Article VI Section 3.

Section 5: Officer Term Lengths

Officers shall serve for one academic year, beginning after spring elections and ending upon transition to newly elected officers.

Article IV: Operating procedures

Section 1: Meeting Structure

Meetings shall occur weekly or as determined by elected officers. Quorum is not mandated, and members are encouraged to meet independently for planning and participation.

Section 2: Determination of Meeting Style

The Executive Board determines the meeting style, expected to align with the Club's values.

Section 3: Committee Structure

The Club shall not establish formal committees. Members may volunteer as trip leaders and collaborate with the Executive Board in planning and execution of club events and trips.

Section 4: Advisor

The Club shall maintain a primary adviser who meets Michigan State University's eligibility requirements for Registered Student Organization advisers. The adviser shall serve as a resource to the Executive Board and provide guidance on university policies and procedures. The Club shall

remain student-led, and final decision-making authority shall rest with the student officers and members.

Article V: Amendments

Section 1: Amendment Proposal

Any member in good standing may propose amendments to the constitution.

Section 2: Approval Process

Proposed amendments are addressed in Executive Board meetings and may be incorporated following a 3/4 majority vote.

Article VI: Membership termination, safety, and conflict resolution

Section 1: Safety Prioritization

The Michigan State University Outdoors Club places the highest priority on the health, safety, and well-being of its members. The Executive Board reserves the right to consult with appropriate local, state, and university authorities and implement any safety measures deemed necessary to protect participants during all club-related activities.

Section 2: Member in Good Standing

A member in good standing is defined as one who fulfills all membership obligations and refrains from conduct that creates discomfort, demonstrates malicious intent, or violates the values of the Club. Membership requires the payment of annual dues to the Treasurer, as determined by the Executive Board, and the signing of the Club's Liability Waiver. Membership dues are paid once per academic year and expire at the conclusion of the following spring semester. The Liability Waiver remains valid for a period of two academic years. Rejoining members who signed the waiver the previous year are not required to sign again until the waiver's expiration, unless said waiver has updated. Members participating in trips must show respect for all establishments, landowners, and the natural environment, following the principle of Leave No Trace. Failure to maintain good standing may result in suspension or removal from membership pursuant to Article II, Section 2.

Section 3: Progressive Discipline

The Executive Board may enforce one or more of the following disciplinary actions:

- Level 0 Warning: Verbal or written warning to address behavior not consistent with the Code of Conduct. Intended as corrective and educational.
- Level 1 Restrictions: The member is prohibited from attending Club trips but may participate in on-campus events and meetings, subject to supervision. This restriction may be imposed for a defined period or indefinitely.
- Level 2 Ban: The member is prohibited from all Club activities. Should the banned individual appear at any Club function, authorities shall be notified. This ban shall remain in effect for the duration of the individual's enrollment as a student at Michigan State University.

The Executive Board reserves the right to modify, escalate, or reduce disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate, based on the circumstances of each case.

Section 4: Gear Responsibility

Members who rent or use Club equipment are responsible for returning it in the same condition in which it was issued. If gear is lost, stolen, or damaged beyond normal wear and tear, the member will be held financially responsible for repair or replacement at the discretion of the Executive Board. Failure to resolve outstanding gear-related issues may result in suspension of gear rental privileges, further disciplinary action under Article VI, Section 3, and potential referral to the University.

Section 5: Dispute Resolution within the Club

All disputes among members shall be addressed through civil and respectful dialogue with the Executive Board as moderators if requested by the complainant. In cases where a dispute involves a member of the Executive Board, an impartial mediator from the Executive Board shall be appointed to ensure fairness and objectivity in the resolution process.

Section 6: Member Conduct

Members are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the mission, values, and Code of Conduct (Article VII) of the Michigan State University Outdoors Club. Conduct that violates these principles shall be subject to corrective or disciplinary action as determined by the Executive Board.

Section 7: Confidentiality

All grievance matters shall be handled with the highest degree of confidentiality. Members of the Executive Board are prohibited from disclosing sensitive information related to disputes, grievances, or disciplinary proceedings, except as required by law or University policy.

Section 8: Record-Keeping

The Executive Board shall maintain appropriate records of grievances, testimonies, and proceedings to ensure transparency, accountability, and consistency in decision-making.

Section 9: Refunds on Trip Payments

Members who are permitted to attend a trip and confirm their intention to participate must pay the required trip fee by the designated payment deadline. Failure to make payment by the deadline will result in forfeiture of the member's spot, which may then be offered to another participant. If a member withdraws prior to the payment deadline, a refund may be issued, provided that another member is available to assume their spot and pay the required fee. If a member withdraws after the payment deadline has passed, no refund shall be issued. Members are expected to have the financial means to cover the cost of trips at the time of sign-up.

Article VII: Code of Conduct

Section 1: Validity and Requirement for Participation

All members in good standing must adhere to the Code of Conduct to remain members in good standing. Continued membership is contingent upon compliance with the principles and expectations outlined in this Constitution and the Code of Conduct.

Section 2: Respect and Inclusivity

Treat all participants, Executive Board Members, and community partners with courtesy and respect. Embrace and celebrate diversity by fostering an inclusive atmosphere that welcomes individuals of all backgrounds, identities, and experiences.

Section 3: Cooperation and Teamwork

Collaborate with fellow members and officers in a spirit of teamwork and cooperation. Contribute positively to the shared goals of the Club, cultivating community and camaraderie.

Section 4: Responsible Outdoor Ethics

Adhere to the principle of *"take only pictures, leave only footprints"* and Leave No Trace standards, minimizing environmental impact during outdoor activities. Follow ethical and sustainable practices that promote conservation and environmental stewardship. These standards also apply to all on-campus and off-campus events organized by the Club.

Section 5: Safety First

Prioritize the safety and well-being of yourself and others during all Club activities. Comply with all safety guidelines, protocols, and instructions issued by officers or trip leaders. Any member who endangers others or violates established safety principles may be subject to disciplinary action under the Progressive Discipline framework in Article VI, Section 3 of the constitution.

Section 6: Harassment and Misconduct

The Michigan State University Outdoors Club defines all forms of sexual harassment and misconduct in accordance with the official definitions, standards, and guidelines established by Michigan State University and its Title IX policies. Any form of sexual harassment or misconduct is strictly prohibited. Incidents shall be reported immediately to Michigan State University and addressed in accordance with University policies and Title IX procedures.

Section 7: University Investigations

If a member is under an active University investigation for alleged misconduct, the Executive Board may impose a Level 2 Ban until the investigation is resolved.

Section 8: Hate Speech and Bigotry

Hate speech, homophobia, racism, discrimination, or any form of bigotry is strictly prohibited. The Michigan State University Outdoors Club defines all forms of hate speech and bigotry in accordance with the official definitions, standards, and guidelines established by Michigan State University and its Title IX policies.

Section 9: Open Communication

Members shall communicate honestly and respectfully with fellow members and officers. Concerns or grievances must be reported promptly, following procedures outlined in this Constitution.

Section 10. Responsible Alcohol and Substance Use

Members must comply with all University policies, local, and state laws regarding alcohol and substance use. Behavior that compromises safety or well-being due to alcohol or substance use is strictly prohibited.

Section 11: Confidentiality

Grievances, disciplinary matters, and sensitive information shall be handled with the highest degree of confidentiality. The Executive Board members shall not disclose private information without explicit consent, unless required by law or University policy.

Section 12: Positive Representation

Members shall represent the Outdoors Club positively within the University and external communities. Conduct that undermines the reputation of the Club may result in corrective action.

Section 13: Compliance with University Policies

Members must comply with all Michigan State University policies and regulations governing student organizations. Members must also adhere to any additional rules or requirements established by the University that pertain to Club activities.

Violation of this Code of Conduct may result in corrective actions as outlined in Article VI Section 3. Members are strongly urged to uphold these principles and actively contribute to creating a welcoming and enriching environment within the Michigan State University Outdoors Club.

Constitution Adopted: August 25, 2025

Last Amended: June 20, 2026

Approved by Executive Board: July 12, 2026