

Constitution of the Open Source Club  
Hunter College

Executive Board of the OSC

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# Constitution

## Article Z Definitions

For the purposes of this document<sup>1</sup> and unless the distinction is specified explicitly, let the term Open Source include both permissive (copy-center) and reciprocal (copy-left) licenses.

Let Open Source refer to Creative Commons family of licenses and other permissive and copy-left licenses when referring to educational documents such as instructional textbooks.

Standard Legislative Process and Popular Referendum are terms defined in Article VII Quorum.

## Article I Name

The name of this organization will be Hunter's **Open Source Club** or **OSC**.

Hunter's **Free Software Club** was suggested, but discarded because it is not inclusive of permissive licenses, and suffers from the ambiguity: free might be misinterpreted to be free of charge instead of software *freedom*.

The Hunter **Association for Free, Libre, and Open Source Software** was one suggestion which is more inclusive of the intended philosophy.

**Humanitarian, Free, and Open Source Association** was another suggestion that captures the motivation behind our Open Source philosophy.

Ultimately, the name of the Club was decided on the basis of brevity, and should be understood as a contraction of these terms, not a compromise on our ideology.

To not stray far from the topic, this distinction is clarified in Article IX Ideology.

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<sup>1</sup>This document was written as a collaboration effort the original executive board members. The digital version of this document has an index and links for the names of Articles to make navigation easier. It was written in **markdown** and typeset using **L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X** via **pandoc**. May it set a precedent that these are all Open Source tools.

## Article II Purpose

### Inspiration

This Club was founded with encouragement from Professor Stewart Weiss, who teaches *Open Source Development Workshop* and encouraged the chartering process. We are listing him as our Faculty Adviser.

### Ends

The Club's primary goals are to...

1. combat elitism, increase equitability and promote accessibility in computer coding and programming,
2. bolster student portfolios and prepare students for a future in computer science, and
3. improve adoption of Open Source Software among technical students, professors and creatives.

### Means

To acheive these goals, the Club will...

1. provide technical assistance for computer science and math classes for members and,
2. host technical and behavioral workshops to advance career readiness for members, and
3. build, deploy, and promote Open Source Software and solutions for all target groups.

### Allied Goals

Some examples of intermediate goals core to the club's purpose follow:

1. Maintain a strong presence on social media and in physical advertising to allow all Hunter students to benefit from Club opportunities.
2. Create instructional videos directly pertinent to Hunter CS and Math Courses and approved by the professors of those classes.
3. Build, deploy, and maintain an Open Source club website serving as a central hub for resources on and off the campus.
4. Host socials and events such as Hackathons to promote networking among members and spread the open source spirit.

5. Lobby for and consolidate tools for the creation of a makerspace where students can learn about physical computing and computer hardware in a welcoming environment.
6. Reach out to Hunter Professors, offer, and undertake the creation, deployment, and maintenance of Open Source
  - a. class instructional materials,
  - b. class websites, and
  - c. solutions to classroom problems or inefficiencies *sui generis*.

## Article III Membership

1. Membership is granted to any person in the Hunter College Community, regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, or disability.
2. Voting membership is granted to all registered members. The Club will maintain a registry of the names of members and their positions as well as the amount of time contributed back to the Club, useful for logging extracurricular or volunteer hours.
3. All members should make an effort to participate in the community and commit to sharing knowledge for the betterment of the community.
4. Voting membership will be suspended in the case of..
  - a. a proceeding of *Popular Referendum* with due process considered,
  - b. any disciplinary action by Hunter College against a member after due process.
5. Voting during elections and popular democratic action is a necessary condition for membership.

## Article IV Officers

Let the words *Executive Board* and *Officers* refer to the members of the executive board as defined by Hunter's Club requirements.

Filling any vacancies is subject to *Standard Legislative Process*. Vacancies of officers other than the president are filled by presidential appointment under *Standard Legislative Process*.

All officers need to be elected by the process outlined in *Elections*.

## Impeachment

Any Officer may be impeached by vote for not fulfilling duties, or for extended unannounced absence, or may be impeached automatically following disciplinary action by Hunter College.

## President

The President may be understood as a trusted mentor or advisor, taking the popular action to accelerate progress when consensus is clear. The president must honor referendum and call a vote. The president is culpable for all of those responsibilities as outlined in Hunter College's Club Regulations.

The president is responsible for any additional actions needed to ensure the club's healthy function. A president automatically resigns after a week of unannounced absence during the normal semester. It follows that absences must be announced, and the Vice President may be appointed as a provisional president until the President's return, subject to *Standard Legislative Process*.

The same president must not serve for more than 2 academic years.

## Vice President

The Vice President assumes the role of the President and appoints a new Vice President in the case of vacancies. The Vice President may be called upon by the president to share in presidential tasks. The Vice President is also responsible for the club's healthy function.

The Vice President is responsible for all those responsibilities as outlined in Hunter College's Club Regulations.

## Treasurer

The Treasurer manages all finances of the Club. The Treasurer keeps strict tabulations on the costs of all the Club's endeavors and tracks all incoming and outgoing financial transactions, including reimbursement and bill payments. The Treasurer receives all monies of the Club and immediately deposits them in the name of the Club into its respective coffer and shall remain in the self-generated in Hunter College.

The Treasurer is responsible for working closely with the other Executive Board Officers in determining the allocation of the Club's funds. The Treasurer shall also work closely with members of the College Association to prepare and maintain the budget. The Treasurer will submit budget request(s) in accordance with the Hunter College Association's guidelines and policies.



## Secretary

The Secretary's primary role is to confer with the executive board, organize meetings, and maintain strong communication between officers and the membership. These roles lend well to leadership of the Outreach committee.

## Article V Committees

As an Open Source community, it is important for us to collaborate with our members and the general Hunter College student/faculty base, especially in an organized and productive fashion. Therefore, we have defined three committees, each division responsible for certain tasks. These types of committees and their responsibilities are listed below.

### 1. Public Outreach Committee

- Maintain the Open Source Club website, with duties including (but not limited to) developing new sections/pages, and updating the site with new information.
- Manage the mailing list and related technologies; formulate and send out emails.
- Manage the Club's social media presence and accounts.
- Design visual and/or auditory content representative of the Club (e.g. logos, slayer's, posters, promotional/informational videos).
- Document relevant workshops/presentations in the form of videos or blogs (or other) and publish them online.
- Reach out to established industry leaders for Club collaboration.

### 2. Career Preparation Committee

- Host events for non-technical students introducing them to programming
- Host events on practical topics which may not be represented in the Computer Science curriculum, such as web development
- Lead workshops on small projects

### 3. Academic and Ideological Committee

- Establish position of Grade Level Leaders (GLL), students who do their assignments ahead of schedule and
  1. reach out to professors to fix any problems with the assignments or auto-graders
  2. use their expertise to help fellow students

3. gather and post online resources to help with assignments to post on the Open Source Club website
- Host presentations, “talks”, or other events sharing educational material (which need not necessarily be technical, but can instead be conceptual or simply interesting to draw in beginners)
  - Propagate the ideals of the Open Source movements

New committees may be created, existing committees may be dissolved, and responsibilities may be added, removed, or adjusted for any committee by following the Standard Legislative Process (SLP) defined in Article VII Quorum. These changes should be appended to the constitution by following the procedure specified in Article VIII.

## Elections

Elections are a Strict-Majority *Vote* (as defined in Article VII Quorum) held once yearly and according to Hunter College club regulations. Committee members are appointed by Standard Legislative Process.

All officers are responsible for ensuring a fair vote. Nominees running for office automatically resign after one week without communication with the Club.

## Article VI Meetings

Meetings are scheduled by Standard Legislative Process. Special meetings are called in the case of Popular Referendum.

## Article VII Quorum

### Vote

Each member gets one vote, including members of the Executive Board.

Each voting period will last one week or until the standard is met. Quorum should be 80 percent of all members. Officers will maximize accessibility by providing a secure, online option for voting.

Table 1: Table of Standards

Standard	Portion
Mere-Minority	$\leq 25\%$
Strict-Majority	$> 50\%$
Super-Majority	$\geq 75\%$

The Open Source world thrives in part because of its lack of hierarchy. The following is an attempt to redirect power into the hands of the constituency to adhere more closely to our ideological roots.

## Standard Legislative Process

The *Standard Legislative Process (SLP)* is the usual method for creating and enacting new rules. Let SLP consist of one or more of the following actions:

1. Top-down Proceeding
  - a. A member of the executive board takes a tentative action,
  - b. that action is immediately called upon for approval through vote, and
  - c. no more than a Mere-Minority of the Club's quorum object to the law.
2. Bottom-up Proceeding
  - a. A Club member begins a petition,
  - b. that petition gets 10 signatures, or 10 percent of the quorum, whichever amount is larger, and
  - c. at least a Strict-Majority of the Club's quorum approve it.

*SLP* always requires an extra step of approval. In the Top-down proceeding, 75 percent of quorum tacitly approve the Top-down action by inaction. In the Bottom-up proceeding, approval is explicit.

## Popular Referendum

Unlike *SLP*, *Popular Referendum* is final. First, any more than a Strict-Minority petition may call for for a vote or propose an amendment. A Super-Majority is then needed to approve the vote.

## Article VIII Amendment

This section only is not amendable. Amendments to the constitution proceed by *Popular Referendum* only. The executive board is responsible for putting any proposed amendments (from the first step of Popular Referendum) on the election ballot.

Amendments are appended to the end of the constitution and supersede previous Articles.

## Article IX Ideology

### Preamble

It is quite possible that much of our intended audience is not familiar with the concept of “Open Source.” That won’t be an issue, however, as the very nature of the culture propagated by the Open Source movement is defined by inclusivity, freedom, and respect. All are welcome, and all will learn in due time.

### Definition

Literally interpreted, the term ‘Open Source’ is relatively self explanatory – it is an adjective used to describe code which is available for view and use by anybody. Proponents of Open Source are drawn to it for a multitude of reasons, whether due to its inherent practicality (*“given enough eyeballs, all bugs are shallow”*), or its imperative of fostering epistemic justice.

### History

Though originally free, once software left the realm of academia and hackers it didn’t take long for it to become a proprietary commodity. The resurgence of freedom and openness in software can be likened to the Enlightenment – a period of time which followed the Dark Ages, which, in turn, were preceded by the intellectualism of the ancient Greek and Roman Empires.

These movements share more than similarly structured histories – many of the ideals put forward by the Free and Open Source movements (such as the belief that knowledge should be free) originated in the Enlightenment. Many great people have been involved in promoting these ideals – we stand on the shoulders of giants, ordinary heroes. The history of Computer Science and Open Source is the people’s history, and there is much to be learned from those who preceded us.

It is left to the reader as an exercise to discover that history in greater detail along with the many colorful characters – and those that leave a stain on the Open Source movement. And although Open Source has its fair share of negative figures, we must take that as an opportunity to learn from their mistakes and grow together as a community.