

# ESTABLISHING A COLLEGIATE SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM

COLLEGIATE SHOOTING  
SPORTS INITIATIVE



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## **Establishing a Collegiate Shooting Sports Program**

*The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), in consultation with Duane Shepherd, Ph.D., of Fort Hays State University's Department of Health and Human Performance, has prepared the following guidelines for establishing a collegiate shooting sports program. NSSF is the trade association of the shooting sports and hunting, firearms and ammunition industry, with the mission to promote, protect and preserve the shooting sports. It is dedicated to increasing safe participation, and NSSF has produced many programs and resources to help achieve that goal. Among them has been the establishment and former administration of the Scholastic Clay Target Program, which, in its first seven years, provided an opportunity for more than 30,000 young people to discover the many benefits of an organized, competitive shooting program. By establishing the Collegiate Shooting Sports Initiative (CSSI), NSSF has provided an incentive for those SCTP graduates, as well as any college student interested in the shooting sports, to have the opportunity to enjoy shooting in a safe, stimulating environment in their college environs.*

*Dr. Shepherd has brought not only admirable academic credentials to the project but also impressive personal experience with the shooting program at his university. He is a recognized expert in organizing collegiate shooting programs.*

A number of different youth organizations provide shooting sports opportunities for students in grades 12 and under at the local, state, regional and national levels. Often when the high-school-age student graduates and looks to engage in higher-level learning they find that the opportunity to continue in the shooting sports is limited or nonexistent in most colleges and universities. Many students entering college would continue to engage in shooting sports if they were available, and when they are not available, they struggle to find the means to establish a shooting program.

The following is designed to provide you, the reader, with a schematic approach, a “roadmap” if you will, to provide information that will assist with the establishment of a college- or university-sanctioned shooting club. The “roadmap” presented below represents a generalized approach, as each college/university will have its own unique requirements.

Always remember that the ultimate goal in choosing and attending a college or university is to achieve a quality education in the field of your choice. Thus, keep in mind that establishing a shooting club will require your time, the gathering of information, dedication and a long-term commitment from yourself and others. On the other hand, establishing a shooting sports club for your college has its rewards. Not only will it enhance your educational and shooting experience, but many other students will long enjoy the fruits of your labor of getting a shooting sports club started.

### **Planning & Organization**

How well you plan and detail your organizational structure will determine the initial success in establishing a college / university shooting club. It will require you to think out and put on paper the purpose, goals and objectives of the collegiate club. If you already know students who share your interest in shooting sports, engage them in the planning process. One of the key benchmarks that is considered by college administration is the number of students who will be involved and the benefits to the students that participate. Most colleges and universities encourage incoming and current students to be involved in extracurricular activities, and they make a considerable effort to provide information about existing opportunities on campus.

- Prepare and plan to succeed. The more initial effort you put into planning and organizing the club, the more likely you will avoid obstacles, implement a successful club program and have a meaningful experience. Often prospective students visit the college campuses they are interested in attending. During these visits ask campus officials about shooting opportunities and seek out

campus personnel who may be involved with or have an interest in shooting activities.

- Ask questions around campus and the community with regard to shooting sports opportunities and find out what the overall interest level is.
- Check with local ranges and sporting goods outlets to see if they know of someone on faculty or staff that engages in shooting sports. If the college or university has an ROTC program, make its leaders people with whom to start. Of course, its members may be future club members. Another area to explore is alumni. They can provide beneficial support in both start-up and funding efforts.
- Find individuals with experience. Your interest will be better served if you can locate campus or community individuals who are involved in shooting sports and know the ins and outs of organizing and establishing college clubs.
- Research your college/university requirements for organizing student programs. The goal is for your club to be university-sanctioned, which is recognized by the university as a campus-wide student organization. Virtually every college or university has individuals and departments involved with helping students arrange and sanction student clubs and organizations.
- Go into this venture with the intent that the club will be established and available to students long after you graduate.

### **Considerations**

The following are considerations when planning to establish a collegiate shooting club or program. These are vital in the planning process as they ultimately have implications for the successful implementation and longevity of any shooting program.

- What is the purpose of your club program? You may have many different thoughts as to what you intend to accomplish or provide within the club organization. Do you wish to have a club that is designed to provide a means for leisure/recreational shooting to students and members? Do you want to establish a means to continue to engage in competitive shooting sports at the collegiate level? What you want your club/organization to represent and provide will be of considerable interest and importance to you and the college administration, and this will have considerable importance to potential members.
- Membership is another key component. The purpose of the club will influence who will choose to be members. Again, you will have to determine what individuals with what interests you are “targeting” for membership. If you are seeking to shoot competitions and establish a competitive team, you will limit the number of prospective members. On the other hand if you establish this club with the intention of offering it as an opportunity to engage in shooting sports for leisure/recreation, you will have the opportunity to target a larger “pool” of individuals who may consider joining. Advisable would be to initially establish with the intent of offering shooting opportunities to the campus community as a whole and build the competitive aspect as an entity within the shooting club. This builds the membership numbers that are important to administration and personnel involved with student organizations.
- Access to a range/facility will be important. Depending on the location of the college/university, is a range/facility within a reasonable distance? To locate a range near you go to [www.wheretoshoot.org](http://www.wheretoshoot.org). Does it offer the type of shooting sports needed for the purpose of the club? Is it willing to work with the club to offer times, dates and shooting opportunities that will work within

the club framework and membership? Typically, ranges/facilities will welcome a college/university club for it will both promote the range/facility and bring in new members and opportunities. In other words, form a partnership with the range/facility that will benefit both groups. Talk to the range manager and make him/her aware of your intentions. Knowing you will have access to range and shooting facilities will play a huge role in the formation of the shooting club.

- Having a university advisor/sponsor who is willing to assume a leadership role will pay dividends. Work to find this person as he or she, especially if they participate in shooting sports, will have an interest in the benefits to students and will both represent and help you through the process. He or she will also probably be able to provide information about shooting opportunities and function as a “figurehead” both on campus and in the community. College/universities generally will have an “intramural” department. Intramural departments schedule and provide various leisure/recreation events to promote student involvement and may have staff on hand that can be contacted for information. They may also have information and events (including shooting events) for the student population.
- Becoming a sanctioned student organization is the ultimate goal of the process. Being recognized on campus brings with it credibility, opportunities for visibility and the chance to participate in events that will raise awareness on campus of the opportunities to students that the club can provide. In addition, funding is often available to student organizations and clubs. To become sanctioned as a student organization you will probably need a “charter.” This is a group of students (three to six) and a faculty sponsor/advisor who will sign a document expressing an interest and desire to establish a shooting club. Most universities will require a club “constitution” and “bylaws” outlining the purpose, membership requirements and any other information necessary for sanction. The student organization or student affairs office should be able to provide information and samples needed for the above.

Listed below are examples of some of the information you will probably need with regard to becoming a sanctioned campus club/organization

- What is the purpose of your organization/club?
- Have you established goals and objectives for the organization/club?
- Will it offer competition, recreation/leisure or both?
- Who/How will your club impact: the university, students and community?
- Membership (Students? Faculty? Staff?) Who has the option of joining and/or participating?
- Cost: Below are some financial and other issues that need to be addressed in the constitution and bylaws document.
  - o Dues: This is a fee to be a member and can be by semester and/or school year.
  - o Shooting fees: What is the fee to shoot targets at the range?
  - o Range fees: Will there be an access fee to use the range?
  - o Insurance/liability: This can be looked at in many different ways. It may be something that will be covered by range fees. It is important that you investigate this and be aware of liability issues and ultimate responsibility.
- Eligibility: Can both undergraduate and graduate students be members? Will the member have to be enrolled in a certain amount of credit hours for membership? Will your constitution have an established grade point average for membership?
- Officers: As a student organization you will need officers. Within the constitution and bylaws their duties to the club will be outlined. Most campus organizations are required to list the officers, their duties, keep meeting minutes and report required information to the student organization office.

## **Promoting Your Organization**

Perception is everything. Those who are involved in shooting sports recognize the safety and responsibility participants observe on a daily basis when using firearms. However, those who do not have a personal understanding of and experience with firearms and the shooting sports may not have a similar appreciation. That is not to say they will have negative perceptions, but they will need to be presented with a very positive image of what your shooting sports club will represent and the manner in which you will conduct the activities of the shooting club. The highest priority of the club and members is to be perceived as safe, responsible and a positive asset for members, the college/university and the community at large.

- Project a positive image: Establishing and maintaining a shooting club that promotes a positive image of shooting sports is imperative.
- Be visible on campus: Make it a point that all aspects of campus life are aware of the shooting club and its activities and how they are a positive influence.
- Become involved (student government/university events). Be a presence at events sponsored by the university and student government. Work to have members become active in student government as senators or representatives.
- Require high standards of conduct among members
- Engage in community activities such as assisting your “home: shooting facility with their events: Helping to maintain the flow of an event will go a long way toward garnering support.
- Build on your community relations especially through youth groups and gun rights and sportsmen’s organizations. Find them and volunteer to help with their events. Many of these groups have funds that are available to responsible clubs and organizations.

## **BE AMBASSADORS AND MENTORS FOR SHOOTING SPORTS!**

Establishing a shooting club on a college/university campus is achievable if approached with a well thought-out plan and organizational scheme. These are some of the areas that were found helpful when the Fort Hays State University Shooting/Club team was founded in the summer of 2005. Since that time the FHSU club/team has grown from six charter members to a consistent membership of 50-plus each semester. The Fort Hays State University Shooting Club has both a leisure/recreation program and a Competitive Shooting Team, which participates at the state, regional and national levels. All student members are provided an environment that promotes safe and responsible firearm use and are offered the opportunity for instruction.

# Shooting Club Rules and Guidelines (SAMPLE)

The purpose of the Shooting Sports Club is to offer (your university) the opportunity to participate in recreational and competitive shooting activities. The following are club rules and guidelines designed to ensure each member will have the opportunity to participate in a safe and successful shooting venue. Each prospective and current member is expected to abide by the rules/guidelines set forth or will be subject to dismissal from the shooting club and relinquish all shooting privileges.

## Membership Dues

Dues are \$\_\_\_\_\_ per member for each semester. Dues are to be paid to the club sponsor (**Your Advisor**) or to the club Treasurer (**Your Treasurer**) within the first month of each semester of membership. Dues will be used to cover club costs and those associated with the usage of the (**Your Range/facility**).

## Shooting Dates and Activities

Members have the privilege of participating in shooting events offered through the club on Thursday evenings (6 p.m. - 9 p.m.) beginning with the start of school term each semester.

Members will be offered the following shooting venues:

- Trap — (singles and doubles) (American and International)
- Skeet — (American and International)
- 5-Stand — (when available)

Note: The above are examples and are not inclusive of all of the possibilities and disciplines

*\*\*\*Note: Due to liability issues members will not be allowed to shoot unless/until club sponsor or designated individuals (club advisor/sponsor, coach/instructor and/or a representative from the range/shooting facility) are present.*

## Member Responsibilities

- Maintain good standing by paying dues to the Shooting Sports Club
- Abide by the Range/Facility and Shooting Club rules
- Provide one's own firearm and ammunition
- Pay range fees and or target fees and ammunition (if purchased from club) before shooting
- Prepare, store and clean equipment and facility
- Conduct oneself in a safe/appropriate manner at all times

## Member Acknowledgement

I have read the above and the Shooting Guidelines and Etiquette page and understand that I assume responsibility to conduct myself in accordance with the Shooting Club rules and guidelines for membership. I acknowledge by my signature that failure to adhere to the rules and guidelines will result in my dismissal from the club and loss of shooting privileges. I understand there are inherent risks in using firearms, and I assume those risks and will not hold the (Your University) liable for any bodily injury I may suffer in taking part in this activity.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail (print) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Shooting Guidelines and Etiquette**

The following guidelines are in place to ensure that each participant will have a safe and successful experience.

Alcohol and drug use will not be tolerated by any individual participating in a shooting venue. Individuals who fail to abide will be subject to club action, loss of shooting privileges and dismissal from the club/organization.

Members at all times will abide by and adhere to the Firearms & Other Deadly Weapons section of the Student Code of Conduct, published in the Student Handbook.

- 1.) Absolutely no inappropriate behavior while on the firing line. Failure to understand and apply the following guidelines could result in injury or worse to yourself and/or others.
- 2.) All guns must have the action open and contain no live or empty rounds at any time, except while the shooter is on the firing line. A break-open gun's action may be closed when it is in a gun rack, but still shall not contain a live or empty shell.
- 3.) Shooters must wear eye and ear protection at all times.
- 4.) Shooters shall place a round of ammunition in their gun only when ready and it is their turn to shoot.
- 5.) Wait until it's your turn to shoot to load and mount your gun.
- 6.) ALWAYS walk behind anyone who is on the firing line and be COURTEOUS to others by avoiding any actions that may cause a distraction to those still shooting.

# SAMPLE Constitution and By-Laws YOUR University and Club Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

## Article I (Name)

The name of this club/organization will be known as:  
**Your Club Name**

## Article II (Purpose, Goals, and Objectives)

**Purpose:** The purpose of this club/organization is to provide a venue for participation in shooting sports to any/all students/faculty at **Your University**. Members are provided opportunities to acquire skills that can be employed in recreational/leisure and/or competitive activities.

**Goals and Objectives:** The broad goal of the club organization is defined in the purpose. The following are objectives for club/organization.

1. Provide opportunities for participation in shooting sports
2. Sponsor member social activities that promote firearm responsibility and foster club/organization and professional relationships
3. Foster a spirit that promotes and supports shooting sports
4. Provide a means through instruction and coaching for skill acquisition in various shooting sports and venues
5. Promote a spirit of service to others (both university and community) through volunteer projects and activities
6. Encourage and provide opportunities for participation in local, state and national shooting sports competitive events

## Article III (Membership)

**(Section I)** Membership is open to “all” students (enrolled in classes at **Your University**), **faculty, and staff** who wish to participate in club/organization shooting sports and functions. Members are required to obtain, read and sign the Shooting Club Rules and Guidelines.

**(Section II)** Student members will comprise the voting membership for the club/organization. Voting membership must maintain a 2.0 grade point average or be dropped from voting privileges. They may be reinstated upon attainment of a 2.0 grade point average.

**(Section III)** Proposed club/organization officers must have a 2.0 grade point average for office consideration.



**(Section IV)** Members that choose to shoot competitive events that represent the club/organization and Your University must have a 2.0 grade point average to participate.

**(Section V)** Members are responsible for adhering to all rules and protocols set forth by the club/organization and Your Range/Facility. Failure to abide will result in immediate dismissal from the club/organization and loss of shooting privileges.

## **Article IV (Officers)**

**Section I:** The officers of this club/organization will be Your University students and consist of President, President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer.

**Section II:** Officers shall be elected annually (Month Meeting Date) by simple majority vote of voting members present at the annual meeting.

**Section III:** Any active member may volunteer or be selected for nomination to one of the above stated offices, at which time ballots shall be cast. The nominees must consent to serve.

**Section IV:** Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of election with the consent of the nominees. Non-elected candidates automatically become eligible for remaining offices

**Section V:** If and when a vacancy occurs other than that of the President, the Executive Board, (President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Faculty Advisor) shall submit names of interested nominees and post these nominees two weeks prior to the next meeting.

**Section VI:** The President-Elect shall fill the vacancy of the President, and a new President-Elect shall be elected according to the procedure set forth in Article IV, Section V.

**Section VII:** When resigning from an elected office, a written resignation is necessary stating the reason(s) for resignation.

**Section VIII:** New officers shall sit in on Executive Board meetings following their election and shall act as assistants.

## **Article V (Executive Board)**

**Section I:** The Executive Board shall consist of the President (who shall act as the chairman of the board), President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Faculty Advisor.

**Section II:** Meeting of the Executive Board shall be called at the discretion of the President and/or Faculty Advisor.

**Section III:** The Faculty Advisor shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Board (no voting rights).

**Section IV:** Duties of the members of the Executive Board are stated in the By-Laws.

## **Article VI (Meetings)**

**Section I:** The official club/organization meeting will be held the **(Date and Time)** of each month. All specify day( for example, Thursdays) of each month are scheduled shooting nights for all members.

**Section II:** To provide flexibility, the scheduled monthly meeting times may vary to assure maximum attendance by members. Meeting times will be determined by vote at the meeting prior.

## **Article VII (Membership Dues)**

**Section I:** The membership dues for the club/organization will be (COST) per semester.

**Section II:** Members will be required to pay dues by the second meeting of each semester.

**Section III:** Prospective members will be allowed to participate in shooting events one time for the purpose of choosing to join the club/organization. Subsequent participation requires membership.

## **Article VIII (Shooting Fees)**

Members are required to pay a fee of (\$ XX) for each targets, range time or whatever shooting fees apply. Members can purchase ammunition at club price or furnish their own.

## **Article IX (Amendments)**

An amendment to the constitution may be passed by two-thirds membership of the organization, but such amendments must be presented in writing at the meeting preceding the one at which the voting takes place.

## **Article X (Adoption)**

This constitution or amendments to this constitution shall be in effect from the time of its adoption by the club/organization.

# **SAMPLE By-Laws**

## **Article I**

On all matters requiring a vote, a two-thirds majority vote of the members present is necessary for adoption.

## **Article II**

### **Section I: (The board) as described in Article IV, Section V of the constitution.**

- a. Shall be the governing body of the club/organization.
- b. The members of the Board shall attend all regular and special meetings of the Board unless excused by the President before the meeting. The Board shall drop a member if he/she does not present a reason for not attending scheduled meetings, and the vacancy shall be filled according to the constitution.

### **Section II: (President)**

- a. Shall call and preside at all meetings of the organization and Board.
- b. Shall audit all requisitions and bills.
- c. Shall perform all other duties incidental to the office.
- d. Shall call on all officers for reports of their duties at each regular meeting of the club/organization.
- e. Shall plan, with the aid of the Board, meetings necessary in addition to monthly meetings.

### **Section III: (President-Elect)**

- a. Shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
- b. Shall be program chairman with responsibility for planning all recreational meetings
- c. Shall appoint all special committees with aid of the President and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

### **Section IV: (Secretary)**

- a. Shall keep accurate minutes and records of all meetings of the organization and the Board.
- b. Shall keep accurate record of membership and of attendance.
- c. Shall conduct all regular correspondence pertaining to the organization.

**Section V: (Treasurer)**

- a. Shall be responsible for all funds of the organization and conduct all monetary business and report at all monthly meetings.

**Article III (Rules of Order)**

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all meetings of the Executive Board and of the club/organization.

**Article IV (Amendments)**

The By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of club/organization by a two-thirds vote of the membership present.



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