WIDR FM's Constitution: Restatement, Revision, and Analysis of Genre

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I have been involved with WIDR FM for 18 months as its employed Music Director and a volunteer DJ. I am one of six part-time paid student directors who oversee the general management of the station. My tenure at WIDR has been especially exciting in that this is the first year of WIDR's affiliation with Student Media Group—a new organization funded by the University that collaborates WIDR FM with the *Western Herald* and the Young Broadcasters of Tomorrow. It is designed to guide these organizations toward greater interactivity, scholarship, and fiscal solvency. The Student Media Group brings many changes to WIDR FM that are all very new, and I feel fortunate to have become a part of it.

However, in my tenure at WIDR FM I have noticed that the station has no consistent governing documents to guide the student directors or volunteers. There is no current constitution, and all financial records or previous attempts at government are scattered, outdated, or incomplete. I view the station's failure to maintain consistent governing documents as an enormous problem. How can the student directors of WIDR FM maintain any organizational consistency or enforce any policies without objective governing guidelines? I continuously see how my co-workers experience difficulty correcting the behavior of DJs having no written policies to enforce upon them. Inadequate government can not only lead to inconsistent management, but to misguidance, negligence, and even treachery within the organization. WIDR's poor management throughout history has greatly hindered the station's performance. A new governing constitution at WIDR FM will improve the management efforts of the station and will ensure protection and professionalism over time.

I have taken it upon myself to use my Honors Thesis as an opportunity to fill the need for a new constitution; to not only respond to WIDR's handicaps throughout history, but to inform how these new changes brought by the Student Media Group should affect long term goals, future changes, and organizational governance.

My thesis includes three components: an analysis of genre, which will provide a rhetorical framework from which the new constitution will be built; a historical report, which will allow me to establish an understanding of organizational needs based upon the station's past; and the ultimate constitution, which is built to represent and to respond to each of the salient needs at WIDR FM.
Abstract: Constitutions are rhetorical devices that are founded in culture. Constitutions respond specifically and directly to particular sets of needs called for by an organization. In the following study, I explore the rhetorical and philosophical definition of a "constitution" as it pertains to the construction of the new constitution of WIDR FM. What are the defining characteristics of a constitution, and what distinguishes them from other kinds of documents? At first, I apply generic criticism in my study to identify and describe constituents, understand the salient similarities among them, and apply the most fitting characteristics to the new constitution of WIDR FM. For the purposes of my study, WIDR FM is relevant to two types of organizations: Student Registered Organizations (RSOs) at Western Michigan University, and student-run campus radio stations. The enclosed discussion observes 13 governing constitutions from RSOs and college radio stations to represent the genre (and to establish new ones). I compare and contrast the makeup of each constitution and suggest which of their characteristics would be most useful to the new constitution of WIDR FM.

Introduction

WIDR FM is Western Michigan University's student-run radio station. It was founded in 1952 as a carrier current inter-dormitory radio station available only to students living on campus, and was later made available over the airwaves at 750 AM until 1975. Since that time, WIDR has broadcasted on an FM frequency of 89.1 MHz from a transmitter equipped with 100 watts of power, projecting a signal accessible to listeners within approximately an eight-mile radius. A live web stream is also available to listeners on the WIDR FM website. WIDR's programming is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to Western Michigan University. Part-time employment at WIDR is reserved for students enrolled at Western Michigan University while weekly volunteer DJ positions are available to all students, faculty, and community members. As of Fall 2014, more than 70 DJs broadcast live from the studio each week. The station also frequently arranges non-profit, student-oriented events to promote interest and listenership. Historically these events have included the WIDR Block Party, WIDR Week, Barking Tuna Festival (1985-2011) and Kite Flite (1977-1984).

From 2009 to 2012, WIDR FM, Western Herald, and Young Broadcasters of Tomorrow (YBOT) faced potential termination as a consequence of university funding complications. In response, Western Michigan University students voted to pass the Student Media Fee (effective Fall 2013), a $5.00 increase in tuition per student designated to fund these organizations. The fee
joins WIDR FM, *Western Herald*, and YBOT as components of the Student Media Group, a new University body designed to guide these organizations toward greater interactivity, scholarship, and fiscal solvency. However, since the Student Media Group came into existence, students have not been informed about how this new funding should affect specific goals, future changes, or organizational governance. A new governing constitution will help resolve this discrepancy.

An understanding of constitutions as a genre should be constructed beforehand in order to formulate a proper framework from which this new constitution is built. In the following paragraphs, I compare governing documents from various student organizations to identify and describe a particular genre of student media constitutions using generic criticism. Sonja K. Foss writes that the aim of generic criticism is to provide an understanding of the rhetorical practices in different time periods and in different places by discerning the rhetorical similarities among them ("Generic Criticism" 137). Generic criticism will give insight into how constitutions interact with the organizations to which they belong, and will help define the specific characteristics that distinguish constitutions from other types of documents. Ultimately, generic criticism will provide a lens through which I can make informed assumptions about these organizations based upon their constitutions. This new understanding of constitutions as a genre will be used to position the new constitution of WIDR FM in a way that takes advantage of the most effective or substantial qualities of other constituents. My findings described below will inform the new constitution of WIDR FM.

**Genres Defined**

Generic criticism aims to describe a particular artifact as it pertains to other artifacts of the same genre. Karlyn K. Campbell and Kathleen H. Jamieson echo Foss's definition of genres as groups of discourses which share substantive, stylistic, and situational characteristics ("Form and Genre" 20). An understanding of genre can also be used to evaluate constituents and predict qualities of future participants. Clay Spinuzzi adds that genre is a way of talking about how people regularly interpret and use texts ("Describing Assemblages" 1). Generic criticism is thus a way to explore a situation based upon its rhetorical artifacts. For the purposes of my study, a constitution is a genre of document characterized as a foundational text that generally outlines the system of duties, guidelines, interests, and/or procedures to which an organization or other social body obliges. Allowing the U.S Constitution to serve as the precedent, a document participates in this genre if meets the following criteria:

1. exists to represent the establishment and government of an organization or body;
2. responds to some social exigence on behalf of that organization or body;
3. arranges its contents into a series of articles, sections, and subsections; and
4. exposes itself to prospective emendation.

Constitutions constantly interact with the needs and interests of their organizations. James Boyd White argues in his essay series *Heracles' Bow* that constitutions are therefore artifacts of constitutive rhetoric. For White, rhetoric is "the central art by which culture and community are established, maintained, and transformed," where legal or constitutive rhetoric pertains to justice (28). To contribute to a conversation started by Lloyd Bitzer in 1968, White claims that law (or legal rhetoric) is necessarily related to its audience, and therefore law is always culture-specific.
It always starts with an external, empirically discoverable set of cultural resources into which it is an intervention (33). These "cultural resources" are what Bitzer defines as the rhetorical situation: a series of people, events, objects or relationships presenting an exigence that prompts positive modification by means of discourse ("The Rhetorical Situation" 6). A constitution is therefore rhetorical by nature because it provides information about how an organization should perform—it provides and predicts solutions and arguments, and is thus a rhetorical response to an existing exigence. If an organization encounters a previously unfamiliar circumstance to which its constitution does not refer, its members produce a decision that sets a precedent and ultimately modifies the constitution. Supreme Court decisions function in this way: new cases call attention to previously unforeseen situations that set precedents for the future. A constitution is based upon knowledge discovered empirically. A constitution is subject to modification for long as it is in service. A constitution responds to its situation and its situation responds in turn indefinitely, for the situation is always changing.

Methodology

WIDR FM identifies itself as an registered student organization (RSO) and is therefore subject to a particular cultural environment specific to student life at Western Michigan University. Every RSO participates in this environment and each is bound by the same social and political constraints enforced by the university and by the community. WIDR FM and its contemporary RSOs are comparable in their respective rhetorical situations. Subsequently, WIDR FM also participates in a community of campus radio stations. These stations are student-run, publicly funded, and they contribute to weekly radio playlists at the College Music Journal New Music Report. The rhetorical situations present at other college stations are also comparable to those at WIDR FM in that their employed staff teams are generally similar in makeup, they operate under the supervision of the larger university, and on-air broadcasts are constrained by regulations under the Federal Communications Commission. These two categories of situations—RSOs at Western Michigan University and student-run college stations at other campuses—call for a division within the larger genre of constitutions. Below I work to define smaller, more specialized genres of constitutions, or subgenres.

The sample sets for my study include constitutions belonging to the two groups: those belonging to RSOs within Western Michigan University and those belonging to student-run radio stations at other college campuses. Constitutions from the first group were collected from an updated list of all registered RSOs on the Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SA&LP) website. I selected these constitutions based upon perceived size of the RSO (in terms of participants and endowment), and their abilities to represent extracurricular student activity unique to Western Michigan University. The second group of documents was collected through a private Facebook group that connects college radio Music Directors around the country. I regularly participate in this group as WIDR’s representative to network with other likeminded students. I requested that they send me their station's materials by email. I also gathered documents from the College Broadcasters, Inc. website (askcbi.org), a national organization that represents and advises college radio stations, and from individual college station websites using a Google search. The following paragraphs work to identify and describe a separate subgenre pertaining to each group. RSO Constitutions
The nature of student life at Western Michigan University can be described well by the popular extracurricular activities available on campus. The university is home to over 300 distinct RSOs, including the largest student government body in Michigan, a student-run designated driver service, and several intensive academic research groups, among others. Representatives of RSOs are permitted their own office space in the Student Organization Center (SOC), and RSOs are granted advertising privileges to distribute flyers, sidewalk chalk messages, and painted signs. I chose the Aviation Student Council (ASC), Campus Activities Board (CAB), Computer Club, Drive Safe Kalamazoo (DSK), Love is Louder, Western Student Association (WSA), and Writing Center Association (WCA) to represent Western Michigan University RSOs and student life in my study. These RSOs were chosen because they are each particularly active, popular, and unique to student life at Western Michigan University.

All RSOs conform to political constraints placed upon them by the University, and state and federal law. At first, the constitution of each RSO complies with the guidelines included in the *SA&LP RSO Handbook*, an outline of eligibility requirements of all RSOs published by SA&LP and made available on the university website. It states that all RSOs must provide a current constitution or charter that includes the following:

**SA&LP RSO Handbook**

Each RSO constitution includes a Non-Discrimination Policy and a Statement of Compliance clause as instructed by the *SA&LP RSO Handbook*.

**ARTICLE III**

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

1. As our mission is founded upon promotion of equality, community, and support, *Love is Louder WMU* will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status, and welcomes any and all individuals struggling with discrimination to find support through *Love is Louder*.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Statement of Compliance**

1. As an organization dedicated to serving the WMU community, *Love is Louder WMU* will comply with all SA&LP and University policies, procedures, and practices and all local, state, and federal laws.

*Love is Louder*

The first four requirements might ensure consistency among the governing documents of all RSOs. The *SA&LP RSO Handbook* requires each RSO to reserve sections that explain its name, purpose, and finances. These are important identifying characteristics of any organization. The
fifth requirement however, which pertains to the university's non-discrimination policy, does not necessarily pertain to an RSO's identity or functionality. The official University non-discrimination policy is provided on the Policies page at wmich.edu:

Western Michigan University prohibits discrimination or harassment which violates the law or which constitutes inappropriate or unprofessional limitation of employment opportunity, University facility access, or participation in University activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status.

Several practices are explicitly prohibited by the university, but here only one in particular is emphasized. This emphasis on non-discrimination is reflective of the university's interest in multiculturalism. The Diversity page on Western Michigan University's website explains the implementation of The Diversity and Multiculturalism Action Plan (DMAP), effective 2004, a series of initiatives to "resolve the current [ethnic] climate issues" at WMU. It goes on to state that, "WMU will be a leader in the area of diversity and multiculturalism by fostering an environment where diversity in all of its forms is investigated, explained, practiced, celebrated, affirmed, and vigorously pursued." Components of DMAP are likely embraced by SA&LP and enforced upon RSOs and their constitutions.

RSOs can be distinguished into two types: "Assembly" and "Service" type RSOs. "Assembly" RSOs function closely to a council or administration. These RSOs include ASC, CAB, WCA, and WSA. "Assembly" RSOs organize themselves into branches or sects consisting of elected officials, a judicial faction, graduate or faculty advisors, voting members, and non-voting members. Decisions are reached democratically where student members are invited to vote during meetings. Faculty advisors and graduate assistants oversee organizational activity and report to SA&LP, but receive no governing power. Each of these RSOs are funded in large part by the Student Assessment Fee (SAF), therefore all elected positions and membership privileges are strictly reserved for students (the definition of student varies with each RSO). Executive boards are divided into a political hierarchy of a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, followed by a series of coordinators or chairs who oversee smaller committees serving "based on need and permanence of their respective mandates" (WSA Const.). "Assembly" constitutions provide detailed descriptions of membership duties and privileges, operational procedures, and policies. Their documents are consequently extensive and styled with legal jargon and list format by a hierarchy of numbers, letters, and bullets. The ASC constitution, for example, includes an entire article reserved for definitions of terms including quorum, executive board, appointed officer, formal business, and roster.

10. Quorum: The minimum number of officers required to be in attendance in order for the Council to conduct formal business or any type of vote. Quorum shall be at least 2/3 of the filled officer positions. If no officer is on the current roster for a single position that position shall be omitted from the quorum calculation until said position is formally filled.

11. Formal Business: Any discussion or decision making action during open or closed door meetings of the Council.

12. Closed Door Meeting: Any meeting of the Council held behind closed doors where business may be conducted with the records and minutes only available to Council members.

13. Open Door Meeting: Any meeting of the Council where any student is allowed to attend and voice their concerns on Council matters, and all minutes from such a meeting shall be available to all students, faculty and staff of the College of Aviation.

14. Public Event: Any meeting which the Council has planned. These meetings shall be

Aviation Student Council
Terms that appear in other "Assembly" constitutions include *pro-tempore*, *ad-hoc*, *ex-officio*, and *speaker*, among others (these terms are not defined).

RSO constitutions tend to organize themselves into a series of articles, sections, and subsections. *Article I* states the purpose(s) of the organization and defends the need of that organization to the university. Article headings and sections that follow vary with the functional nature of each RSO. For example, the ASC constitution divides itself into a series of articles and sections, and organizes its information by a numbered list.

![Article 1 - Purpose](image)

"Service" RSOs include Computer Club, DSK, and Love is Louder. These organizations offer volunteer services for students and operate under a small governing board of student executives who oversee and assume responsibility for regular business processes. Volunteer tasks are specific, routine, and all students are invited to participate. "Service" types are responsible for marketing themselves by organizing events and distributing merchandise to yield funds and attention from students. Organizational decisions are made by the student executives and largely pertain to daily labor supply and annual funding. Unlike their political counterparts, "Service" type constitutions seem less concerned with procedures and more so with values and goals. Mission statements, job descriptions, membership qualifications, and operational constraints are the apparent topics of greater weight. For example, the DSK constitution begins with its values outlined in a series of italicized quotes:

> "As representatives of Drive Safe Kalamazoo, we are committed to taking ownership of the ideals of DSK, fulfilling our responsibilities, and upholding the reputation that we work to achieve."

> "We unconditionally respect ourselves, patrons, and others through our thoughts, words, and actions."

> "While we understand the safety of the community is our driving concern, the safety of our volunteers is also of utmost importance."

> "We promote equality and embrace diversity as a foundation of our organization and an asset to the community."

> "We believe teamwork and communication should guide us to accomplish our goals. To preserve unity, we work to eliminate any divisions in our organization, as we strive to establish a fun environment."

Drive Safe Kalamazoo
These quotes, displayed in no particular order, hold no governing power and set an informal tone for the rest of the document. Even though the document is divided into articles and sections, the information contained is displayed in paragraph form as opposed to a bulleted list. Computer Club arranges its constitution in a similar fashion, except that each heading receives a separate page. Articles across "Service" type RSOs include little to no information outlining regular operational procedures or activities. Altogether, these constitutions do not conform to a consistent document format in terms of structure or content.

An RSO's governing constitution varies with its type because its situation changes. Lloyd Bitzer explains that a particular discourse comes into existence because of some specific condition or situation which invites utterance ("The Rhetorical Situation" 4). Where the "Assembly" RSOs exist within a somewhat formal and political context, their constitutions respond accordingly, even necessarily because the situation invites specific utterances. A situation not only involves context, but it includes all of the events, people, circumstances, or relationships that influenced it. Bitzer adds that the situation dictates the sorts of observations to be made and the physical and verbal responses, as it also constrains them (5). In this way, a critic can observe and make inferences about that situation through its artifacts. Bitzer would argue here that the constitutions belonging to these RSOs are obliged to respond in the way that they do. For example, each "Assembly" constitution employs professional user-friendly formatting and legal jargon. The terms mentioned above were chosen to fit the rhetorical situation at hand exactly. Further, by functional nature of the "Assembly" RSOs, their constitutions exist as an authority that governs practice: an "Assembly" RSO relies on its constitution in order to maintain procedural consistency, to avoid conflict, and to record precedents. This forces "Assembly" type RSOs to regularly maintain and update their governing constitutions.

Although "Service" type organizations rely on professionalism in practice, their constitutions respond differently—these constitutions seem less critical to the organization's daily operations. Because "Service" type constitutions appear freeform and general to some extent, they must have been composed sometime after their organization's conception for they do not have significant influence over that organization's daily practices. "Service" type RSOs do not rely on a governing document for organizational support, although other forms of written communication may be used elsewhere. "Service" RSOs primarily maintain consistency by way of oral communication, social interaction, and routine or tradition. For this reason, their constitutions need not be regularly updated or maintained. At last, generic criticism allows us to conclude that the rhetorical situations behind each constitution are influenced by an RSO's functional nature, and the constraints placed upon those RSOs by the university.

**College Radio Constitutions**

WIDR FM participates in a national community of non-commercial, student-run radio stations at college campuses. These radio stations share common situational characteristics. As WIDR FM's employed Music Director, I am responsible for curating the station's new music supply and selecting its weekly playlists. Several licensing and distribution agencies, record labels, and independent artists regularly send CDs in exchange for the prospect of exposure on air and on WIDR's playlist submissions to the College Music Journal's New Music Report, a weekly compiled playlist collected from over 300 college stations in North America. In 2013, I
had the opportunity to meet representatives from those agencies and representatives from other college radio stations at the CMJ Music Marathon, an annual college radio conference and music festival hosted by the College Music Journal in New York City. Based upon my experiences there and the extents to which each station participates in CMJ, I chose University of Pittsburgh (WPTS), University of South Dakota (KAOR), North Carolina State University (WKNC), Rutgers University at Livingston (WVPH), Hamilton College (WHCL), Illinois Wesleyan University (WESN), and University of Texas at Dallas (Radio UTD) to represent college radio stations in my study. The situations at these college radio stations are similar to WIDR FM in that they are traditionally made up of a station manager, general manager, music director, program director, news director, among others, depending on the needs of the stations. College radio stations are also similar in their music programming, relationships to their universities, and interests in counter-culture activity.

Governing documents that belong to these college radio stations generally conform to the generic characteristics of constitutions described above. However, because these organizations are not necessarily unified by a single governing body, there is significant situational variance among them, and so their constitutions differ in substance and style. Each document includes articles and sections that generally outline their organization's mission statements, membership qualifications, voting processes, and document emendation procedures. However, the content of a college radio station's constitution varies with the organizational design of each station and the constraints placed upon them by their respective universities.

The WPTS constitution, for example, is concise and straightforward in general. Under Article I it states its name, its purpose, and it admits governing authority to the University of Pittsburgh and the Federal Communications Commission in detail. Each point is accompanied by a numbered section heading.

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ARTICLE I
ORGANIZATION

Section 1.01. Name. The name of the organization shall be WPTS-FM, University of Pittsburgh.

Section 1.02. Purpose. The purpose of the organization shall be to provide high-quality radio programming to the University and local Pittsburgh community and to provide experience for its members in broadcasting and related fields.

Section 1.03. Authorization for Management. The WPTS-FM license by the Federal Communication Commission is issued to the University of Pittsburgh. The University has assigned operational authority to the Vice Provost and Dean of Students, who has delegated primary supervisory authority to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. The Associate Dean may delegate a member of his/her staff to serve as General Manager of the Station. The General Manager shall be considered ultimately responsible for the management of the organization.

Section 1.04. Chief Engineer. In accordance with federal law, WPTS-FM shall employ a Chief Engineer licensed by the Federal Communication Commission. A copy of the Chief Engineer's license shall be kept on file at WPTS-FM. The Chief Engineer shall be considered ultimately responsible for the technical operations of the organization.
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An advisory board selects a Chief Station Engineer, a Station Manager, and a General Manager who oversee station operations and employee activities. The constitution continues in listing the staff member qualifications, staff meeting procedures, removal procedures, financing guidelines, and members' rights. This station seems to prioritize its compliance with university policy and
federal law. The WPTS constitution does not describe the duties of its staff nor outline procedures. It predominantly lists only the components of the station. All assignments of duties or powers by the document are assigned using the word *shall*.

The style, tone, and content of this constitution speak to the rhetorical situations at WPTS. Because this constitution does not outline many specific internal procedures, but instead focuses upon compliance clauses, it may be directed at an outside source.

WESN organizes its constitution differently. This constitution is made available only as text on a webpage. Information switches between list and paragraph form throughout. It provides general job descriptions for its staff and outlines membership qualifications, opening with the university's non-discrimination policy.

This is in stark contrast to the WPTS constitution, which spent more time outlining its relationship to the Federal Communications Commission. Here, WESN is telling that it is likely more student-centered: this placement of the non-discrimination policy advertises the station's inclusiveness toward students. The WESN constitution also spends more time detailing membership qualifications and job descriptions. It outlines eligibility of staff selection and removal processes. Staff members are appointed by means of an election process. Similar to the "Assembly" type RSOs described above, large decisions are reached by group elections and activities are supervised by a faculty advisor. WVPH also functions by group elections. The WVPH constitution is perhaps the most comprehensive—it outlines all membership guidelines, job duties, and election procedures in full. This constitution is most similar to the previous "Assembly" type RSO in terms of its form, use of jargon, and content.
This station is also apparently the largest. WVPH is equipped with 19 paid student staff members, where other stations traditionally have six or seven. Its constitution outlines tenure policies for both student and non-student volunteers, describes the nature and frequency of staff meetings, and provides comprehensive descriptions of each job duty. The content of these constitutions is thus managed by the organization of the station, and constrained by university requirements, state and federal law, and the interests of the students.

By contrast, the KAOR constitution contains almost no common characteristics with those described above. This document briefly describes its goals and staff makeup, but includes no details about how the station is run or how funds are managed.

Even though KAOR seems inconsistent with the other station constitutions, it is representative of the organization's design. The style of writing and the lack of detail throughout suggests that the station may be more freeform, and thus does not rely on a governing document for organizational support. This document is also telling of the organization's relationship to the university: the university is not enforcing any identifiable requirements upon the contents of the document, which may imply that KAOR is small in size or deficient. Each document indicates the nature of its own constraints by way of content emphasis or lack thereof.

These constitutions at first respond to an immediate situation specific to their respective universities. Just as the SA&LP RSO Handbook places constraints upon RSOs, these constitutions also conform to requirements. Non-discrimination policies, document formatting, and statement of purpose are likely examples of required content. Even though no two student radio constitutions are bound by the same social or political constraints (other than state and federal regulation), there are still salient common characteristics among these documents. By nature, these stations function similarly: they each have similar staff makeups, volunteer membership policies are almost identical, and they share similar financing practices. This is reflective of the similar situations to which these constitutions respond. Based upon the makeup of each constitution, one can make inferences about each college station. For example, comprehensiveness of a student media constitution is perhaps indicative of that station's size or resources. KAOR's constitution is vague and written with few words compared to the WPTS constitution, which is comparatively concise yet thorough and specific. In general, these constitutions mostly work to describe the organizational makeups of each station. Although these constitutions are useful, they may not be necessary for carrying out daily practices. Similar to "Service" RSOs, stations maintain organizational consistency by routine or tradition. Here, a need for an organization to interact with its constitution is somewhat removed.
Constitutions as Persuasive Texts

In order for a rhetorical text to exercise agency in terms of modifying attitudes or provoking action, it must take advantage of some mutually shared identity with its audience. Kenneth Burke theorizes the process of "identification" in his *Rhetoric of Motives*, "A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is identified with B" (21). When two individuals find a mutual identification, they become "consubstantial." Consubstantiality is the foundation for how people agree, argue, or persuade one another. Consubstantiality can be located upon a common interest, a cultural reference, or some other relatable subject. In order for a constitution, or any other rhetorical text, to be effective it must achieve this identification with its audience.

One way many of these constitutions identify with their audiences is by incorporating some varying version of the following mantra into their introductory clauses:

We, the [participants of organization], in order to: [...], do hereby establish [this organization] and this constitution.

The WSA and ASC constitutions are interesting examples of documents that employ this mantra.

![Aviation Student Council](image)

- **Aviation Student Council**

  We, the Students of the College of Aviation at Western Michigan University, in order to incorporate a democratic representation and active voice at the University, do hereby establish the Aviation Student Council (ASC), which shall be recognized as the legitimate aviation student advocacy organization of Western Michigan University. The Aviation Student Council shall be governed in good faith and guided by the conventions herein to act in the collective interest of the Aviation Student Body and serve the needs of the College of Aviation community.

This opening mantra is at first an homage to the Preamble of the U.S Constitution:

- **Western Student Association**

  We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

The purpose of the preamble in this instance is to not only to inform the reader the purpose of the document, but to allow it to establish itself as a member of a genre of constitutions, where the reader may perceive that phrase as a defining characteristic. Sonja K. Foss argues that audience
members' recognition of a particular artifact as belonging to a specific genre influences their strategies of comprehension and response ("Generic Criticism" 137). The authors of these constitutions reference the Preamble in effort to authenticate their documents in this way, by finding some identification with their audiences. More specifically, the others mimic the style of 18th century formal prose to signify sophistication, officialdom, or patriotism. In the excerpts from the WSA and ASC constitutions pictured above, the first line and the last lines of the Preamble are referenced in particular, perhaps because these are the most memorable. Key phrases include: We, in order to, hereby establish, and this constitution. Here the authors locate a consubstantiality with their audience by way of cultural reference. Burke writes, "you persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his." (55). Readers are more likely to be persuaded when they encounter something familiar. In this way references to the genre conventions of constitutions are so powerful. However, this style of prose used to distinguish the preamble section is especially interesting in that it is not consistent with makeup of the rest of the document. Those constitutions referencing the Preamble only do so at the beginning—their style returns to standard English once Article I begins. The reader consequently only identifies with the text until this point. Looking at WCA's constitution, the introduction heading is titled "Preamble" but its text is styled in contemporary English. The word "Preamble" here becomes a euphemism and conveys a similar message.

These constitutions make other subtle references to the United States Constitution. The use of articles and sections as headings function as powerful signifiers. These types of headings seem exclusive to constitutions in general. They are a stylistic characteristic arguably inspired by the U.S. Constitution that signifies legal or constitutive rhetoric in particular. Headings as chapters or parts would not carry the same effect. Here these constitutions attempt to locate a more subtle identification with the reader.
Conclusion

The rhetorical situation is entirely responsible for influencing a document's content. A document becomes rhetorical when it responds to some rising exigence called for by the situation. Different documents that respond to similar kinds of situations tend to appear similarly. Generic analysis demonstrates why constitutive documents bind to their common rhetorical characteristics. James Boyd White writes,

[of law] Ultimately the identity, the meaning, and the authority of the materials are always arguable, always uncertain. There is a sense in which the materials can be regarded in the first instance as object, external to the self; but they are always remade in argument. Their discovery is an empirical process; their reformulation and use an inventive or creative one (34).

Here, White returns to his understanding of law as a discussion. Constitutions respond to the situation at hand and its situation responds in turn. In this case, that situation is defined by an organization's political and social constraints, the cultural environment within that organization participates, the organization's functional nature, the attitudes of that organization's participants. Generic criticism makes this visible. However, this exchange between an organization and its constitution only occurs when a constitution details protocols. Those constitutions limited in detail have a weaker effect upon its organization's practices, and provide less incentive for emendation and revision over time.

By observing the common substantive, stylistic, and situational characteristics across a genre of documents, the reasonings or motivations behind these similarities become apparent. Using Bitzer's framework of the rhetorical situation, we see that aspects of similar situations necessitate particular responses that are identifiable upon close analysis. This explains how genres are created: any series of artifacts–textual, visual, oral, or otherwise–that respond to similar exigencies can be classified as a genre (and vice-versa) because they will necessarily share common characteristics as they pertain to that response.

In order for WIDR FM's constitution to be effective, it will consider its place among other RSOs and student-run radio stations, identify its own needs, and ultimately contribute to a larger discussion of self-governance. WIDR FM participates in a community of RSOs and student-run radio stations, and so it will conform to the rhetorical restraints associated with each. With time, WIDR FM will identify the specific situations at hand, and as the stations grows and changes, WIDR's constitution will respond accordingly.
Works Cited


Appendix


"KAOR Constitution." *KAOR FM*, University of South Dakota. 1-2. PDF File.


"WSA Constitution." *Western Student Association*, Western Michigan University. 1-12. PDF File.

WIDR FM: A Historical Report

Joseph Silver
Western Michigan University
21 December, 2014

Introduction

Over the course of the 2014 Summer and Fall semesters, I conducted a series of interviews and historical document analyses to uncover previously hidden exigencies at WIDR FM. Among those interviewed are WIDR alumni, including employees, volunteer DJs, faculty, and friends. Many of these alumni have remained active at WIDR for years; some have held DJ positions for 20 years or more. The information gathered from their testimony and the analysis performed upon it will ultimately inform the new constitution of WIDR FM. A deep reading of WIDR's history will not only authenticate this new constitution as a thoroughly researched project, but it will allow me to design it in a way that approaches specific situations which call for change. Although WIDR does have some collection of governing documentation, it is largely scattered, outdated, and incomplete. The new constitution will be largely based upon WIDR's history to ensure long-term organizational stability, consistency, and guidance. Although WIDR was founded in 1952, the earliest period of involvement among those interviewed in my study dates to 1975. Other interviewees have maintained their involvement at WIDR throughout the 1980s, 90s, and early 2000s, and they tended to express profound loyalty to, and affection for, the station. Their ages ranged between 25 and 65 years old, although the majority of those interviewed were somewhat older. Many of these individuals stayed at WIDR long enough to witness an extended series of changes. It is important to place these interviews into the appropriate context: while these interviews were both interesting and helpful, I discovered an inherent biased attitude against significant change at WIDR. My study is therefore limited in that it does not represent alternative political opinions of the station. For further research, I suggest an expansion upon the interviewee subject group, and a revision of interview questions designed to avoid value-judgements in responses.

I am affiliated with WIDR as its employed Music Director of 18 months. In that time, I have become personally acquainted with many alumni. I have also connected with many WIDR alumni by way of the WIDR Alumni group on Facebook. Others were introduced to me over the phone or via email. During the Personal interviews, I asked the interviewees to state their names and to describe the nature of their respective involvements with the station. We would then engage in discourse about the station's history, the concurrent cultural and technological shifts, and politics, among other things. My findings and conclusions are described among the paragraphs that follow.

Organizational Culture and Management

WIDR is consistently described in hindsight by alumni as "run exceedingly casually" and "lots of fun." Since 1975, student directors have performed poorly at finding replacements for themselves as they prepare to graduate. Any student director's tenure only lasts as long as he or
she remains a full-time student. Four consecutive years remains the maximum term for any director. Since 1975 (approximately), a new generation of student directors would succeed the previous and start new every four years. According to longtime WIDR veteran and donor Jason Hall, there have only been two general managers in WIDR's history who have maintained directorships for four consecutive years: Valerie Elliott (circa 1975) and Andrew Grabowski (circa 2004). Hall describes these periods as "two pivotal points" in WIDR's leadership history. For WIDR, a four-year general manager term signifies four years of consistent management. Holding a four-year directorship is significant because WIDR tends to "start again from scratch" once that general manager graduates and a new student takes his place. These brief periods of consistency are rare and have been critical to WIDR's history. Glen Dillon, WIDR alumnus and current Assistant Director of Student Media, agrees,

Part of the reason that WIDR has remained unchanged for so long is because there hasn't been any continuity. Two or three of the most experienced directors would leave without leaving behind much of a legacy, and the new directors would have to pick up the pieces again.

WIDR directorships have maintained this pattern for a remarkably long period of time. I argue that event planning, accounting, and brand identity all rely on long-term consistent management for any organization. Without proper communication from one director to the next, WIDR's recent history has become lost and subject to misinterpretation.

The consistent volatility of WIDR's historic leadership has made long-term goals extraordinarily difficult for the station to reach. One example of WIDR's rugged leadership in history is cited by a project conducted by Michael Finn in 1991, *WIDR-FM: A Program Analysis of an Alternative Music Format*. The project probes WIDR's effectiveness at appealing to "student needs." Finn conducted a series of surveys and interviews to ultimately argue by way of qualitative analysis that WIDR should alter its programming to better fit the interests of students of the time. The project called for shifts in WIDR's programming from "authentic, alternative variety" to "popular college rock." It also called for a student-only DJ roster during a time when most DJ positions belonged to non-student community residents. This project has been referred to by several interviewees as a "regime." Finn reportedly had vague political ties to the student directors of the time. Non-student DJs were "shut out" and were eventually replaced by students. Richard Bowser, a WIDR DJ of 24 non-consecutive years, is one of those non-student DJs who was replaced by a student DJ at that time. In 1994, three years after Finn’s report, the student directors with whom Finn purportedly had ties had graduated to be replaced by six new students. By 1997, Bowser was offered an opportunity to return to his DJ slot by a new general manager. Even though Finn's project is viewed by most as authoritarian and misguided, it failed at the mercy of directors who neglected to properly continue their legacy.

Several volunteer DJs have maintained their commitments to WIDR for decades. Mark Wedel, Richard Bowser, Brad Miller, Jason Hall, Johanna Kelley, and Sean Hartman are among those who have committed to their DJ slots for 10 years or more. DJs hold no governing power, but historically they have been very influential over WIDR's music programming and event planning. Veteran DJs credit themselves for conserving WIDR's cultural identity as it pertains to their individual attitudes towards the kinds of music that ought to played on air. "We're the weirdos," says Bowser. He continues that, “There's always something holding [the structure of
WIDR] all together." Brad Miller views that, through all of the changes (or lack thereof), he and the other DJ veterans have always been around to "maintain some structure." Even though these DJs are not specifically entitled to any sort of governing power, they have positioned themselves within a larger social hierarchy in a way that awards them influence. John Barrett, a non-student DJ, recalls that most programming regulations were "enforced" upon him by other DJs as opposed to the student directors. The social power of these non-student veteran DJs has created much dissension with the student directors. Historically, the DJ veterans have used their social positions to their advantage to oppose any rules or changes instated by the directors. This hierarchy among the veteran DJs and the student directors remains problematic today. WIDR faces limitations here in that the student directors are generally reluctant to take advantage of any enforcement mechanism in fear of altering the culture of WIDR.

Inconsistent management at WIDR has also affected the station's ability to host musical events. WIDR is well known for its annual music festivals in Kalamazoo, namely Kite Flite (1977-1984), Barking Tuna Festival (1985-2011), and the WIDR Block Party (2013-present). Other events in WIDR's history include Friday Freebies, New Music Mondays, WIDR Wednesdays, and WIDRama. These events change as management shifts and as WIDR's culture changes. For example, Friday Freebies took place in the parking lot of the Faunce Student Services Building, where WIDR hosted music performances from local acts on Friday evenings free to students. Friday Freebies built enthusiasm about WIDR on campus, but eventually discontinued after the University associated the event with alcohol use. DJ veteran Mark Wedel recalls the gradual shift in WIDR events over time,

A photo appeared in the papers of someone at a Friday Freebie with a beer sometime around the late '80s. Western Michigan University officials started to demand that the WIDR had to have security to patrol alcohol use, and that WIDR had to pay this security. Eventually WIDR events were moved to various venues: Club Soda, Kalamazoo State Theatre, and eventually The Strutt.

"New Music Mondays" took place in downtown Kalamazoo at a venue called Club Soda which featured touring acts on Mondays. WIDR had close ties with the venue and would frequently sponsor the events. These events discontinued with the closing of Club Soda. Barking Tuna Festival, a 26-year annual music celebration and fundraiser, discontinued as a direct result of poor management. The event typically featured two days of musical performances from nationally touring acts such as Guided by Voices, the Violent Femmes, and Henry Rollins. In the festival's final years, poor management and careless oversight led to fraud, theft, and turmoil from within the organization. This situation at WIDR and the downfall of Barking Tuna Festival could have been prevented had there been some written governance and someone to enforce that governance to guide the management of the station.

Technology

Technology has been pertinent to WIDR's history in that WIDR's programming, management, and identity have largely revolved around the quality and currency of the equipment available at the station. The interests of listeners have also changed along with technological advancements. Changes in technology have lead to faulty shifts in WIDR's
management throughout the station's history. A proper governing constitution would ensure organizational consistency at WIDR among these changes.

In the middle 1980s, live broadcasting involved the operation of an analog mixing board, vinyl record turntables, and 8-track tape players. Even though this studio setup would be outdated today, it contributed to increased professionalism among the DJs at the time. Jason Hall describes his experiences operating the archaic equipment in the WIDR studio,

Training involved pre-recording your show to 8-track tapes on the reel-to-reel tape machine three times. Recordings were evaluated by the directors. This made DJ training somewhat competitive. [...] There were six DJ slots available a day, seven days a week. Each DJ had a four-hour slot. Shows were organized by a hotclock and a program log, which together outlined a minute-by-minute agenda for a DJ show. The hot clock designated cues for announcing the weather, citing the station's call letters, or performing a vocal readback of the playlist. The program log mapped specifics for recorded airplay. It designated which 8-track tapes (carts) were assigned to a DJ show and at what times they should be played.

At that time, DJ attendance and performance was taken somewhat more seriously, and slots were more competitive. Volunteers were not only encouraged to compete for their own slots, but the more desirable shifts were awarded based upon merit and experience. WIDR's reputation at the time presumably motivated these DJs to perform. Further, FM radio was a dominant media source until the turn of the century. When FM radio was most popular, WIDR was viewed as a strong competitor against other commercial stations that broadcasted in the area. Eric McConnell, Assistant Ombudsman and WIDR DJ, recalls that he grew up listening to WIDR, "I've been a listener since 1996. I was actually introduced to the station by my friends in high school. McConnell argues that, at the time, WIDR was considered "on-par" with the other popular commercial stations.

Lastly, the consequences associated with an unoccupied DJ slot were greater before computers were installed into the studio. If any DJ slot went unattended, the broadcast would be silent during that time until the next DJ occupied the studio. Although many DJs volunteered to occupy overnight shifts, the station would regularly shut the transmitter down from 2:00am to 6:00am. Each of these changes are directly associated with the station's responses to technological advancements. Changes in technology influences the performance of the WIDR staff and the professionalism of the station, which has ebbed in recent years and testifies to the need for a new governing constitution.

According to former Production Director and DJ Kelly Argyle, the first studio computer was installed during the 1997 school year, allowing DJs to use CDs and digital media files to broadcast on air. The more efficient equipment improved the quality of on-air performance. This computer also allowed DJs to produce high-quality digital recordings as opposed to using analog tape decks. The student directors converted the old tape recordings to digital and disposed of many of the original copies. A separate computer (dubbed "the Overnighter") was installed two years later to replace the silence overnight. This computer has a running extended playlist that loops indefinitely, designed to substitute for "dead air." The advent of the Overnighter allowed
WIDR to earn its title as a 24-hour station and effectively eliminated the need for overnight DJ shifts. The installation of the Overnighter is generally viewed as a technological milestone for the station.

However, many WIDR alumni argue that the Overnighter also inhibited the incentive for DJs to perform professionally. To an extent, the Overnighter cushioned the consequences of missed DJ slots because it removed extended periods of silence on air, and DJ retention and enthusiasm eventually decreased. At some points, the Overnighter occupied more airtime than live DJs. Former General Manager Andrew Grabowski recalls his time at WIDR in 2004, "When I started at WIDR... [the Overnighter] was the main on-air personality, clocking in at 56% of the programming week... We made great efforts to reduce this number." Grabowski speaks to the weak quality of the station's programming of the time. Less than half of the weekly program schedule was occupied by live DJs, and among those DJs almost none of them were students. The Overnighter is known to be repetitive and limited in its programming. Extended Overnighter play is especially problematic because the difference in performance between an automated playlist and a live DJ on air can be obvious to listeners. A live DJ is capable of making spontaneous decisions, responding to live listener requests, and playing music distinct from other WIDR DJs—a live performance brings warmth to the WIDR broadcast that a computer cannot replicate. Overuse of the Overnighter and subsequent lack of live DJ performance has hindered the station's reputation in recent years.

WIDR's hindered reputation quickly grew noticeable. The culture at WIDR and the quality of its programming remained relatively stale for several years until the University threatened to cut the station's funding in 2011. This period is described by several as "WIDR's Dark Days", where the general apathy among DJs and student directors was "profound." Former General Manager Johanna Kelly describes her experiences, "At the time (2009-2011), WIDR's closing was a very real possibility, especially between changes in leadership and reputation." At this time, the Overnighter continued to monopolize WIDR's programming, the student directors failed to meet their obligations, and the station suffered financially. Kelley continues that, "holding DJs to a high standard is something that got lost during 'those dark years'."

Without guidance from previous management or any written governing documents, WIDR FM was ultimately unsuccessful as a radio station. It was not producing quality broadcasted material nor was it making efforts to involve students in a productive way. WIDR suffered from an identity crisis: the station eventually lost sight of its interest in students, future goals, and ultimately, the station lost sight of its bare functionality. The student directors and DJs require some resource to inform how they ought to perform and for what purposes. A new governing constitution will offer guidance for the students, instruction on proper equipment handling and usage, security for the station, and motivation for policy enforcement.

Conclusion

Today, WIDR FM has improved greatly as a radio station and as a resource for students. The DJ roster is now close to 100% filled and the Overnighter can now literally only be heard overnight. WIDR receives generous funding under the Student Media Group and has been especially successful in producing quality on-air content, generating its own funds by fundraising
and seeking private donations, and selling merchandise. WIDR's fundraising efforts have allowed the station to provide itself with new industry-standard equipment, enabling students to place a greater emphasis upon audio production and professionalism. WIDR has also continued to remain highly active among the local community and student life. WIDR frequently hosts events at venues close to campus. The station's newest annual fundraiser, the WIDR Block Party, has been more successful and student-centered than any other student-run event in recent history after only its second year.

This report brings light to several exigencies at WIDR FM that previously have not been addressed. Management at WIDR has historically been lackadaisical and inconsistent, which has led to internal dissension, unsuccessful event planning, and faulty programming. A new and comprehensive constitution will address these issues directly. The new constitution will also allow the governing documentation at WIDR to be accessible and available as a single resource as opposed to the previous series of scattered documents, digital files, and notes. The new constitution of WIDR FM will:

1) restate the purpose of the organization;
2) ensure proper equipment usage and on-air performance;
3) outline hiring procedures that ensure consistent leadership in advance; and
4) provide an approach to the new University funding and WIDR's relationship to the Student Media Group.

WIDR cannot continue in the path of its history. WIDR's involvement with the Student Media Group and the oversight of the Assistant Direct of Student Media have both been critical to WIDR's recent success, but the station still cannot function properly in the long term without a proper governing constitution and management willing to adhere to it. The constitution is a valuable tool that still requires implementation and human leadership. It is my goal that the greater culture at WIDR FM provides significance for this new constitution as a tool that will only promote the station's success and protection.
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References

WIDR FM

Introduction

WIDR FM is the student-run, non-commercial radio station of Western Michigan University. WIDR FM programming is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to Western Michigan University. WIDR FM is recognized by the Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SA&LP) as a Registered Student Organization (RSO). As of June 2013, WIDR FM is one of three participating student organizations operating under the guidance of the Student Media Group (SMG). This document is established to provide for the administration of WIDR FM.

Article I – Purpose

Section 1.1 – General. The purpose of WIDR FM (hereafter referred to as WIDR) is to serve the Western Michigan University student body and greater Kalamazoo community by:

1. Providing original, current, and educational programming with a focus upon new music clearly distinct from competing stations
2. Creating a professional, all-inclusive platform upon which students can explore radio broadcasting as it pertains to on-air performance, programming, audio production, event planning, and news broadcasting
3. Advocating University-sponsored, student-run, and/or other local events or causes which speak to the interests of WIDR and the Student Media Group
4. Actively contributing to the growth of student media in collaboration with the Western Herald and Young Broadcasters of Tomorrow (YBOT)

Article II – Management

Section 2.1 – Administration. The WIDR Board of Directors is hereby established as chief administration over the organization. The Board of Directors includes the General Manager, Program Director, Business Director, Promotions Director, Music Director, and Production Director.

Section 2.2 – Hired Directors. By the end of each Spring Semester, WIDR will offer six (6) part-time paid positions to graduate and undergraduate students who enroll in at least 10 credit hours per semester. WIDR will also offer part-time positions to students on federal work-study. Positions may be offered to interested students upon the submission of an application at least three (3) weeks prior to hire and after one in-person interview with the current team of Directors. Student positions are one-year terms, with a term limit of four consecutive terms. New directorships should be filled in a way that maintains contiguous management.

1. General Manager
   a. Holds ultimate responsibility for management of WIDR
   b. Shall be appointed by the SMG Board
   c. Attends SMG meetings as called by the Assistant Director of Student Media (ADSM)
   d. Schedules weekly meetings with team of Directors
   e. Schedules mandatory staff meetings at least twice per semester
   f. Maintains Public File in conjunction with the ADSM
   g. Assures compliance with the SMG Charter
   h. Corresponds with ADSM, WSA, and media managers of Western Herald and YBOT
   i. Oversees hiring process of new Directors and work study employees
   j. Ensures consistent leadership over time
   k. Arbitrates disputes and grievances among Directors
   l. Holds authority to discipline or dismiss Directors and volunteers
m. Oversees the distribution of scholarship opportunities and internships to Directors and volunteers
n. Supervises contractual agreements with business partners alongside Business Director
o. Coordinates yearly budgets with Business Director and ADMS
p. Monitors inventory and schedules events alongside Business Director and Promotions Director
q. Ensures station compliance with state and federal law, and University policy
r. Acquires or composes University grants
s. Oversees WIDR online presence and social media accounts
t. Promotes an active and interesting environment for student-run, commercial-free radio
u. Maintains a minimum 2.5 GPA
v. Attends and supervises all WIDR events

2. Program Director
   a. Holds general responsibility for on-air conduct and programming
   b. Oversees all DJs
c. Monitors and assesses DJ performance and attendance
d. Enforces and regulates program schedule and program clock
e. Checks and maintains daily station transmitter readings
f. Holds authority to discipline or dismiss volunteers
g. Arbitrates disputes and grievances among volunteers
h. Conducts background checks for new hires
i. Ensures that WIDR is in compliance with FCC regulations and University policy alongside General Manager
j. Maintains all WIDR governing documents, including the DJ Manifesto, the official DJ roster, and the non-student DJ key-card list.
k. Appoints and oversees volunteers
l. Maintains a minimum 2.0 GPA
m. Attends and supervises all WIDR events

3. Business Director
   a. Holds general responsibility for organizational finances and business transactions
   b. Solicits local businesses and private sponsors for underwriting options and private donations
c. Earns 10% commission on all final sponsorship and underwriting sales
d. Coordinates yearly budgets alongside General Manager and ADMS
e. Coordinates contractual agreements with business partners
f. Provides timely invoices for new business
g. Maintains all financial documents
h. Monitors inventory and schedules events alongside General Manager and Promotions Director
i. Creates underwriting packages for local business and private donors
j. Oversees cash flow
k. Approves of all final purchases
l. Appoints and oversees volunteers
m. Maintains a minimum 2.0 GPA
n. Attends and supervises all WIDR events

4. Promotions Director
   a. Holds general responsibility for WIDR event planning, merchandising, advertising, and promoting
   b. Plans and schedules fundraising events
c. Manages new posts on WIDR website
d. Oversees WIDR social media presence
e. Updates online Concert Calendar
f. Solicits local venues and performers for event cooperation alongside Business Director
g. Monitors inventory and schedules events alongside General Manager and Promotions Director
h. Schedules in-studio performances alongside Production Director and Program Director
i. Oversees production of promotional audio imaging
j. Oversees promotion of WIDR events and notable accomplishments
k. Contacts major local events for WIDR press opportunities
l. Manages on-air promotional giveaways
m. Appoints and oversees volunteers
n. Maintains a minimum 2.0 GPA
o. Attends and supervises all WIDR events

5. Music Director
a. Holds general responsibility for music programming
b. Updates New Music Rotation
c. Manages inflow of new music
d. Maintains WIDR music library database
e. Maintains regular contact with industry representatives and radio promoters
f. Submits weekly playlists to College Music Journal (CMJ) at Radio 200, RPM, and Hip Hop
g. Tracks airtime of all media in new music rotation
h. Maintains familiarity with pertinent FCC regulations and EAS safety standards
i. Schedules in-studio performances alongside Production Director and Program Director
j. Maintains overnight computer playlist alongside the Production Director
k. Appoints and oversees volunteers
l. Maintains a minimum 2.0 GPA
m. Attends and supervises all WIDR events

6. Production Director
a. Holds general responsibility over studio equipment and technical operations alongside Studio Engineer
b. Oversees the production of audio imaging, including promotional liners, grants, PSAs, underwritings, and event teasers for scheduled airplay
c. Trains Directors and volunteers on proper equipment usage and production science
d. Provides audio engineering services for in-studio performances alongside Studio Engineer and trained volunteers
e. Oversees equipment rentals
f. Maintains the overnight computer playlist alongside Music Director
g. Appoints and oversees volunteers
h. Maintains a minimum 2.0 GPA
i. Attends and supervises all WIDR events

Section 2.3 – Work Study Positions. Work study positions may be offered to interested students upon the submission of an application at least three (3) weeks prior to hire and after one in-person interview with the current team of Directors. Work study positions are one-year terms, with a term limit of two consecutive terms. Work study employees shall conform to the following guidelines:

a. Perform under the supervision of the General Manager
b. Maintain a regular in-office presence
c. Maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA
d. Attend all WIDR events
Section 2.4 – Removal of a Director. Any Director or work study employee found in violation of University policy, or state or federal law, may be removed from office upon the submission of a complaint to the General Manager by another Director. The General Manager will call a Directors' meeting to discuss an action plan. WIDR reserves the right to remove any Director at any time. All complaints are filed by the General Manager. The remaining Directors will perform the roles of the excused Director until the hire of a replacement.

Section 2.5 – Removal of General Manager. The General Manager can be removed by the SMG Board upon the recommendation of the ADSM and at least one other media manager. The SMG Board may remove the WIDR General Manager at any time. Any person filing charges must be available to appear before the Board at the Board’s request and in the presence of the media manager in question, who will have the opportunity to address the concerns.

Article III – Volunteer Membership

Section 3.1 – General. Volunteers are encouraged to donate their time to WIDR business upon the submission of an application to the Program Director. Applicants who have a criminal history or who have previously been dismissed from WIDR may not be eligible for volunteer membership. Sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 are subject to change at the discretion of the General Manager and Program Director without the emendation of this constitution. The Program Director shall maintain updated volunteer membership information in a separate document.

Section 3.2 – DJ Membership. DJ positions may be offered to interested students and community residents upon the submission of an application and after one in-person interview with the Program Director. New DJs will complete a training requirement as per Section 3.5. The WIDR DJ roster must be composed of a student majority (51%). Conditions of DJ membership is outlined by the following:

a. DJ slots are assigned and evaluated by the Program Director
b. All music and equipment for new DJs is provided by WIDR during showtimes. DJs are discouraged from providing their own music unless given specific permission from the Program Director
c. DJs are expected to assign substitutes for their shows at the prospect of an absence. Substitutes must be assigned at least five (5) days prior to the missed show. A DJ may not assign a substitute for more than one consecutive show per semester. DJs must offer themselves as substitutes for other DJs at least twice per semester
d. DJs are allotted three (3) absences per semester
e. Non-student DJs are responsible for acquiring access to the studio during their showtimes
f. DJs are encouraged to attend all WIDR events and staff meetings. Missed staff meetings will be treated as a regular absence
g. All DJs are encouraged to produce audio imaging alongside the Production Director. DJs are entitled to the intellectual property that they produce
h. DJs may not take advantage of WIDR’s resources to promote themselves or any third party without written permission from the Promotions Director or Business Director

Section 3.3 – DJ Requirements. All DJs are required to do the following:

a. Commit to his or her assigned slots
b. Conform to the program schedule and program clock
c. Abide by all WIDR policies and FCC regulations
d. Entertain New Music Rotation
e. Respect WIDR property and equipment
f. Check their mailboxes and email accounts for notifications
g. Gain a new understanding of production and broadcasting science
h. Train new applicants
i. Attend WIDR events

Section 3.4 – DJ Training Sessions. New DJ applicants shall complete a minimum of two (2) training sessions and must achieve a passing score on the New DJ Training Exam before receiving airtime. Each new DJ will train under the mentorship of a seasoned DJ who has earned a minimum of 6 months on-air experience. DJ training sessions shall be assigned by the Program Director at least one (1) week in advance. New DJs may seek further training upon request. New DJs must schedule to take the New DJ Training Exam within at least two (2) weeks of his or her second training session.

Section 3.5 – Staff Meetings. General staff meetings shall be called twice per semester by the General Manager for the transaction of general business at WIDR. All Directors, and current and prospective volunteers are required to attend. Volunteers shall notify the Program Director upon the prospect of an absence. Staff meetings require a 51% quorum.

Section 3.6 – Facebook Group. All volunteers are encouraged to participate in the WIDR Staff Facebook Group. This group is designed to serve as an open platform for volunteers to exchange ideas, to acquire DJ substitutes, and to ask questions. All posts must be relevant to the collective needs and interests of the WIDR volunteers. Complaints, criticisms, and unsolicited advertisements are prohibited. This group shall be moderated by the Program Director and the General Manager.

Section 3.7 – Grievances. Grievances or complaints shall be formally and privately submitted to the Program Director by email or by personal appointment.

Section 3.8 – Volunteer Removal. Volunteers will be removed if found to be in violation of WIDR policy, University policy, or state or federal law. Violations include but are not limited to: poor attendance, neglect of duty, and on-air misconduct. The removal of volunteers will be heard on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director. WIDR reserves the right to remove volunteers at any time and for any reason.

Article IV – Financing

Section 4.1 – Student Media Group. WIDR receives funding as part of the Student Media Group (SMG) by an SAF student media allocation through WMU, and other additional revenues generated by the SMG.

Section 4.2 – Non-University Funds. WIDR shall actively seek to generate revenue for itself by way of fundraising, merchandising, and underwriting. The Business Director shall keep a petty cash box and shall hold responsibility for all petty cash transactions.

Section 4.3 – Compliance. WIDR shall follow and be subject to all University policies, procedures, and practices regarding student organization accounts and finances.

Article V – Assistant Director of Student Media

Section 5.1 – General. The ADSM is a full-time university staff position selected by the Division of Student Affairs in consultation with the Board and the student media managers of WIDR, Western Herald, and YBOT. The ADSM is required to do the following:
   a. Serve as a liaison between the Board, students, academic advisors and Division of Student Affairs
   b. Call SMG meetings
c. Meet and advise students on regular basis

d. Maintain Public File in conjunction with the WIDR General Manager

e. Monitor FCC and other required licenses

f. Coordinate yearly budgets with General Manager and Business Director

g. Work with SMG to develop strategic plans

h. Evaluate programs and services

i. Shall not exert prior restraint of any kind upon the content of any student organization within the SMG

Article VI – Statement of Compliance

Section 6.1 – General. WIDR shall comply in full with all SA&LP and University policies, procedures, and practices, and all local, state, and federal laws.

Article VII – Non-discrimination Policy

Section 7.1 – General. WIDR shall not engage in discrimination constituting inappropriate or unprofessional limitation of employment or participation opportunity on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status.

Article VIII – Emendation

Section 8.1 – General. Any Director or current volunteer may submit a motion to amend this constitution. The General Manager shall collect and hold motions until the next scheduled staff meeting, where each motion shall be presented and voted upon by all Directors and volunteers present. Amendments to this constitution require a two-thirds majority vote from all volunteers present at the staff meeting, and a signature from both the General Manager and the ADSM. The General Manager holds responsibility for updating the constitution and distributing the new draft.
Ratification

This constitution was written on 10 December, 2014 by Joseph Silver. This constitution is effective and enforceable by the signatures below.

_______________________________________________________________
Joseph Silver, Music Director                               Date

_______________________________________________________________
Jacqueline Kappeler, General Manager                         Date

_______________________________________________________________
Sean Murray, Business Director                               Date

_______________________________________________________________
Taylor Larson, Program Director                               Date

_______________________________________________________________
Sophie Smith, Promotion Director                             Date

_______________________________________________________________
Paul Schaedig, Production Director                           Date

_______________________________________________________________
Glen Dillon, Assistant Director of Student Media              Date