



**University of the District of Columbia
Division of Student Affairs
Student Life and Services**

Advisor Standard Operating Guidelines for Student Clubs and Organizations

The University of the District of Columbia, Division of Student Affairs, and Office of Student Life and Services realizes and understands that learning doesn't only take place in the classroom, but also outside of the classroom. Clubs and organizations are a vital part of the University Community. UDC's more than seventy five clubs and organizations reflect the local and national social climate, as well as represent the multi-ethnic composition of the student body. Clubs and organizations also provide invaluable training in developing project plans and budgets, working as a team, critical thinking and crisis management-all of which translates into important, marketable skills in the workplace. Leading scholars' research illustrates that participation in clubs and organizations improves the likelihood students will graduate.

Each club and organization is required to have an advisor on campus. The advisor can be an administrator, faculty member or staff member employed at UDC. Organizations such as the Graduate Student Government Association may require a specific advisor (i.e. faculty member). The Division of Student Affairs and Office of Student Life and Services value the effort and time of faculty, staff and administrators who play the critical role of "club and organization advisor". The role of the advisor is to help students develop effective leadership skills, organizational effectiveness, fiscal management, interpersonal skills, communication and personal growth. Advisors are a great resource to students. A club and organization advisor affirms the desire of the University to create meaningful extra and co-curricular activities and programs with faculty/staff support and participation. The advisor also fulfills the requirements of responsible supervision incumbent upon the institution.

Responsibility of Advisor

The faculty, administrator or staff member who accepts the position of advisor must be aware of the responsibilities inherent in the function. The advisor or Associate Vice President/Vice President for Student Affairs is the final word of authority in any decision which must be made related to all club/organization matters (i.e. programs, events, activities, travel, funding requests, etc.).

Advisor Expectations

The expectations of an advisor depend on the student organization's needs and the advisor's leadership style and level of commitment. The following is a list of possible expectations that can act as a starting point for the discussion between the advisor and the student organization. It is important to establish expectations at the beginning of the semester.

Administrative:

- Attend club/organization meetings, including executive board meetings.
- **Advisor attendance is required at all activities.**
- Explain University policy to the entire membership at a general meeting once a year and let officers know you depend upon them to uphold the policies through leadership role.
- Take the initiative in creating teamwork, cooperation and ideas in discussion.
- Play an active role in formulating the goals for the academic year.
- Be responsible for reinforcing student participation in leadership skills, workshops, authorized trips, student retreats and other activities or events sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs.
- Call meetings of the executive board and/or membership when you believe it is necessary.
- Recommend programs, speakers, etc.
- Be familiar with University facilities, services, and procedures, which affect group activities. Feel free to contact Student Activities Advisor for assistance.
- Keep the group aware of its stated objectives when planning events.
- **Conduct an evaluation of each activity** by those students responsible for planning it.
- Review and proof posters for an event **prior to** forwarding to Student Life and Services for approval of posting and distribution. Reinforce the removal of posters, flyers, etc., immediately after an event.
- Cancel any activities/events when you believe they have been inadequately planned after consulting with the organization. **Note: Allow 4 to 6 weeks lead time when requesting use of monies awarded to your organization; sixty days (60) required for travel.**

Fiscal Management & Organizational Effectiveness:

- Require the treasurer to clear all expenditures with you before making financial commitment and forward to Student Life and Services.
- Request to see the treasurer's book monthly. You can always reconcile financial records with the Student Activities Advisor.

- Check the secretary's minutes before they are written in a final form. Copies of minutes from meetings should be sent to advisor and membership for review and corrections, if necessary and forward to Student Life and Services.
- Make sure all signatures are placed on financial forms (i.e. purchase requisition forms) prior to submission to Student Activities Advisor.
- Reimbursements must be pre-approved by the Office of Student Life and Services. Non-preapproved reimbursements will not be honored. Reimbursements should be kept to a minimum as club/organization's budget award and fundraising efforts should be utilized as primary funding source. A Reimbursement Pre-Authorization Form and documentation will need to be submitted to Student Activities Advisor.
- Proof all official correspondence before it is sent.
- Please retain a copy of all official correspondence, including financial forms, proposals, funding requests, etc.
- Be custodian of all group paraphernalia, records, etc. This helps to document activities and portfolio development.
- Keep the official files in your office.
- Take an **active part** in the orderly transition of responsibilities between old and new officers at the end of the semester or year.
- Be familiar with club/organizations' charter, bylaws, codes, standing rules and constitution.
- Inform the group of infractions of their bylaws, codes, standing rules, and constitution.
- Veto a decision when it violates a stated objective, bylaws, codes, standing rules, the organization's constitution or University policy.
- Represent the group in any conflicts with members of the University staff.

Advisor Expectations of Clubs and Organizations:

As an advisor, you will have certain expectations of the student club/organization. Make sure you discuss these with the club/organization at the beginning of the year. Some expectations may include:

- Awareness and adherence to all university policies, student code of conduct and club/organizations' charter, bylaws and constitution
- Support and understanding of the University's mission
- Written goals and objectives
- Advance notification of all meetings and events - semester calendar (**strongly recommend**)
- Organization's attendance at meetings and events; written minutes of meetings and event summaries (a copy forwarded to Student Life and Services)
- Financial maturity, responsibility and accountability
- Open communication
- Honesty
- Commitment to the organization

It is important to evaluate and revise expectations as needed throughout the year.