

STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISORS' HINTS

In order to register and remain active as a campus organization, each group must have a member of the faculty or staff serving in an advisory capacity. This person serves as a source of continuity, program ideas and experience. Aside from being the person who signs financial statements, various forms and room reservations, the advisor can be the difference between a mediocre organization and an excellent one. Officers can often utilize their advisors in solving problems such as recruitment, internal strife, and lack of funds. A student organization may have more than one advisor. Often two or three advisors prove advantageous to a student organization.

This document contains:

General Guidelines and the Roles of an Advisor

Group Development

Tuckman's Model of Group Development

Reference to Chapter 4,

Policies and Procedures

Regular Activities

Pre-Planning and Liability

Special Issues: Alcohol, Travel, and Hazing

Functions of the Office of Student Governance and Organizations

Information Clearinghouse: The Student Organizations Website

Please know The Office of Student Governance and Organizations is committed to helping you and your organization(s). Please do not hesitate to contact us at 817-272-2293 or via e-mail, mavorgs@uta.edu. Ideas and suggestions are welcome.

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND THE ROLES OF AN ADVISOR

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Express sincere enthusiasm and interest in the group and its activities.
- Be open to feedback from the group. Talk with them regarding your role as advisor. Be willing to admit mistakes.
- Provide feedback to the group and the leaders regarding their performance.
- Be familiar with the Student Organizations Handbook so that you can be a knowledgeable resource for the group
- Participate with the organization and get to know the members. Be available and accessible to them. They will feel more comfortable with you and be more open to your input if they know you.
- Following organization meetings, discuss any problems encountered during the meeting with the officers.

- Be careful of becoming too involved with the organization. Remember that you are not a member. Your role is to advise, assist, and facilitate.

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sald/studentorgs_advisors_effective.php

ROLES OF AN ADVISOR

The skill levels of one organization and its leadership will differ from semester to semester as well as from other organizations. Following is a list of possible roles/duties that a Student Organization Advisor may be involved with:

Maintenance Functions

- Provide the organization with information about its past.
- Enforce University policies (alcohol, outside membership in student organizations, solicitation regulations, and event registration procedures.)
- Interpret the University's policies and regulations to organization members.
- Ensure that minutes are maintained.
- Ensure the accuracy of financial reports.
- Approve expenditures and/or countersign checks.
- Attend organization's business meetings.
- Attend organization's special functions and programs.
- Work with officers to maintain standards and behavior.
- Explain procedures and the appropriate channels to follow.
- Respond to emergency situations.

Development Functions

- Arbitrate disputes that arise within the organization.
- Train new officers.
- Review details when projects are being planned.
- Point out additional resources within the University and the outside community.
- Suggest ways in which the organization could better attain its established goals.
- Assist the leadership in learning more effective ways to manage the organization.

Stimulation Functions

- Point out new perspectives and/or directions to the group.
- Supply expert knowledge and the insights of experience.
- Assist in the identification and development of new leadership.
- Assist in the development of the members' interpersonal skills.
- Assist in the groups' development of long-range plans.
- Provide information regarding the techniques and responsibilities of good leadership and fellowship.

- Provide opportunities for the practice of classroom-acquired skills, concepts, and/or principles.
- Cultivate responsibility in group members.
- Contribute to the intellectual development of group members.
- Introduce new program ideas with an intellectual flavor.
- Consult with students who appear to have personal concerns.

GROUP DEVELOPMENT

TUCKMAN'S MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Tuckman and Jensen (1977) categorized groups into five stages. In the forming stage, members determine their place in the organization, go through a testing or orientation process, and are more independent. In the storming stage, the organization has members who react negatively to the demands of whatever tasks need to be accomplished, conflicts rise, and there is a high level of emotion. In the norming stage, in-group feelings and cohesiveness develop – members accept the rules of behavior and discover new ways to work together. In the performing stage, the group is very functional in dealing with tasks and responsibilities. They have worked through issues of membership and roles, and focus their efforts to achieve their goals. In the adjourning stage, groups bring finality to the process. Following are activities/ways to assist the executive board and members during each stage:

Forming:

- Develop icebreakers to help members get acquainted.
- Coordinate a retreat or workshop.
- Review the mission and purpose with the membership.
- Identify expectations of members and officers.
- Share organizational history and tradition with officers.
- Provide information about institutional policies and procedures.
- Have individual meetings with the president.
- Talk about meeting management, planning programs, and team building with officers.
- Provide an initial "to-do" list for officers.

Storming:

- Provide mediation resources when needed.
- Teach confrontation/communication skills.
- Hold a roundtable discussion on issues.
- Review the mission statement, purpose, and expectations to redefine the group's action plans.
- Conduct a group decision-making activity.
- Discuss/review officer roles.
- Develop a "rebuilding" team activity.

- Remind everyone that this stage is a natural part of the formation of the group.

Norming:

- Schedule a more in-depth team-building activity.
- Have members design t-shirts, pins, etc. to id group.
- Assist in starting a new program to create tradition.
- Review/establish new goals for the organization.
- Maintain relationships to avoid reverting back to the storming stage.

Performing:

- Ensure the organization and members have a task.
- Give feedback about what is going well/what can be improved upon for next year.
- Step back and allow the organization to perform.

Adjourning:

- Develop a closure activity to help members determine what they have learned/how they have benefited.
- Conduct an assessment/evaluation of the past year.
- Develop transition reports for new executives.
- Ensure that a plan of recognition is in place; coordinate awards, statements or expressions, or gifts, of appreciation.
- Encourage out-going officers to assist the in-coming officers with transition.
- Identify how the organization contributed to the history or tradition of the organization.
- Ensure minutes, reports, etc. are stored/maintained.
- Record contact information for departing/graduating members.

(Dunkel & Schuh, Advising Student Groups and Organizations, pp. 87-89.)

For more information and to review more in-depth, see the attached copy of Chapter 4.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

You will likely have a hand in these regular activities:

- Developing the constitution. (Student Governance and Organizations keeps a copy of your organization's constitution on file. Your organization may need/choose to update this document from time to time.)
- Registering the Organization. (Organizations are required to update their information every fall and spring semester. Student Governance and Organizations sends a copy of this form in a packet to you every August and January. You will want to meet with the President/officers to give them the form and go through the information in the packet with them.)
- Reserving Space, Registering Events. (The policy is listed in the Handbook for Student Organizations. The student will pick up a Campus Events Information Sheet in Student Governance and Organizations and complete it. The advisor must sign, and the form is brought back to Student Governance and

Organizations. We will help with the next step(s). Email mavorgs@uta.edu to find out about an online process that can cut down on some of the steps.)

- Advertising/Posting. (The policy is listed in the Handbook for Student Organizations. Essentially, organizations may post 50 flyers, 50 table tents, 6 banners for up to two weeks at a time.)
- Funds/Accounts. (See the Handbook of Student Organizations. Email sc-parl@uta.edu to find out about Program Assistance Funds.)
- Web Pages/List-servs. (The advisor or Student Governance must request these services. List-servs may be requested in Student Governance, Web pages are requested on OIT's web site.)

PRE-PLANNING AND LIABILITY

You cannot eliminate your liability, but you can decrease it with careful and well thought-out planning. As an officer of your organization, you should address the following questions for each activity or event your group sponsors or participates in:

- Is the entire organization aware of this activity? Is the advisor?
- How will this activity affect the neighborhood? Have you consulted with your neighbors that this activity is going to be taking place?
- What state laws and city ordinances have the potential of being violated?
- What safeguards do we have to keep these laws from being violated?
- How will officers maintain control over the activity? If alcohol is being served, will officers identify those less than 21 years of age?
- What liability does the organization run the risk of incurring?
- What will the officers do if this activity gets out of hand?
- List the possible situations that could present themselves at your activity. Make the list long and let "Murphy's Laws" be your guide.
- List how you will solve each of the situations from the list you just created.
- Do you have an established procedure to follow in case of emergencies?
- Could you convince a prudent person that your event is not potentially dangerous?
- Is the potential liability for the organization worth the benefit of the organization?

If you plan ahead, and can prove you've been responsible and taken reasonable precautions, you can reduce your liability.

Copyright 1997 St. Norbert College

SPECIAL ISSUES: ALCOHOL, TRAVEL, AND HAZING

The UTA Handbook of Operating Procedures has a student travel policy as well as a policy on the use of alcohol. (See below. Excerpted from the UTA Handbook of Operating Procedures)

SUBCHAPTER 6-600 STUDENT TRAVEL POLICY

This policy is applicable to student travel undertaken by one or more currently-enrolled students to reach an activity or event that meets all of the following:

Section 6-601 Criteria

- A. An activity or event organized and sponsored by the University. The activity or event meets this requirement if it is planned and funded by the University and approved by an authorized University administrator;
- B. The activity or event is more than twenty-five miles from the University;
- C. (i) Travel to the activity or event is funded and undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by the University; or (ii) Attendance at the activity or event is required by a registered student organization in good standing and approved in accordance with this Policy.

Note: All students will travel together unless an exception is authorized, in writing, by the director/department head or designated representative.

Section 6-602 Registered Student Organization Travel

A registered student organization that requires its members to travel more than 25 miles from the University to an activity or event covered by this Policy must obtain prior written approval for the proposed travel by an authorized University administrator.

Section 6-603 Safety Rules

- A. All motor vehicle travel
 - 1. Seat Belts - Occupants of motor vehicles shall use seat belts or other approved safety restraint devices required by law or regulation at all times when the vehicle is in operation.
 - 2. Alcohol and Illegal Substance Prohibited - Occupants of motor vehicles shall not consume, possess or transport any alcoholic beverages or illegal substances.
 - 3. Passenger Capacity - The total number of passengers in any vehicle at any time it is in operation shall not exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity or the number specified in applicable University policies, federal or state law or regulation, whichever is lower.
 - 4. License and Training - Each operator of a motor vehicle shall have a valid operator's license and be trained as required by law to drive the vehicle that will be used.
 - 5. Proof of Insurance, Inspection and Safety Devices - Each motor vehicle must have a current proof of liability insurance card and state inspection certification, be equipped with all safety devices or equipment required by federal or state law or regulation, and comply with all other applicable requirements of federal or state law or regulation.
 - 6. Legal Operation of Vehicles and Driving Schedule - Operators of motor vehicles shall comply with all laws, regulations and posted signs regarding speed and traffic control and shall not operate the vehicle for a continuous period that is longer than three hours without at least a fifteen-minute rest stop. There shall be no driving between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. without prior approval of the appropriate administrative official.
- B. Travel Using a Vehicle Owned by or Leased by the University
 - 1. Service and Maintenance - Each vehicle owned or leased by the University must be subject to scheduled periodic service and maintenance by qualified persons and comply with all applicable requirements of The University of Texas System Business Procedures Memoranda.
 - 2. Operators of Vehicles - All operators of vehicles owned or leased by the University shall be employees of the University and shall have a valid operator's license for the operation of the particular vehicle. In addition, the operator shall have a current Motor Vehicle Record on file with the designated University office and must be authorized to drive a University vehicle in accordance with the policies of the University.
- C. Travel Using Rented Vehicles - Travel using rented vehicles shall comply with Section 6-603.A. and, when applicable, with the state contracts of rental cars and all applicable requirements of The University of Texas System Business Procedures Memoranda.
- D. Travel by Common Carrier - The University will make a reasonable effort to assure that when a common carrier is used for travel covered by this Policy, such travel complies with this Policy and all applicable U. T. System and University regulations.

Section 6-604 Process Prior to Travel, the Following Steps must be Completed:

- A. Submit the University authorization Student/Group Travel Form and the University Request for Travel Authorization Form, if applicable, to the appropriate administrator at least ten days prior to date of travel.
- B. Secure travel approval. Ensure that all regulations of the Student Travel Policy are followed.
- C. Have each trip participant complete a waiver of liability form and file those forms with the appropriate administrative office.
- D. File a copy of the Student/Group Travel Form and Student/Group Travel List with the University Police Dispatch Office in B12 Davis Hall.
- E. Forms may be accessed from the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs or the University website.

SUBCHAPTER 6-200 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Section 6-201 Policy

- A. The use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in or on University Facilities. The President of the University may waive this prohibition with respect to any event sponsored by The University of Texas System or the University. An event is sponsored if a budgeted office, department, or division of the University is responsible for organizing the event, inviting attendees and paying expenses related to the event, including the purchase of food and beverages. Meetings or events organized and presented by a registered student, faculty or staff organization are not events that qualify as events sponsored by the University.
- B. Subsection A does not apply to (1) areas that are licensed under state law for the sale and service of alcoholic beverages, (2) a Special Use Facility during use by a non-University individual, group, association or corporation for purposes permitted by Regents' [Rules and Regulations](#), or (3) property, buildings or facilities that are occupied by a third party pursuant to a written lease or occupancy agreement that does not specifically exclude alcoholic beverages.
- C. All University rules and regulations and state laws relating to alcoholic beverages will be strictly enforced.
- D. Alcohol for University-sponsored events is to be purchased from and serviced by University Dining Services.
- E. An *Alcoholic Beverage Request Form* must be completed by a budgeted office, department or division of the University at least 5 working days prior to the event at which alcoholic beverages will be served. The request will be forwarded through University channels to the President for approval.
- F. Additional information is available in the Housing and University Center Office and from the Student Activities Office.

The Handbook of Student Organizations contains information about Hazing. (See below.) A workshop is held annually in conjunction with the Attorney for the Students on the issue.

HAZING INFORMATION

Summary of Subchapter A, Chapter 4

Texas Education Code: Hazing

Summary of Section 51.936 Texas Education Code

The 74th Texas Legislature modified the law concerning hazing which became effective May 30, 1995. Under the law, individuals or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with criminal offenses.

According to the law, a person can commit a hazing offense not only by engaging in a hazing activity, but also by soliciting, directing, encouraging, aiding, or attempting to aid another in hazing; by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly allowing hazing to occur; or by failing to report first hand information that a hazing incident is planned or has occurred in writing to the Vice President for Undergraduate Academic and Student Affairs (or a designated representative). **The fact that a person consented to or acquiesced in a hazing activity is not a defense to prosecution for hazing under this law.**

In an effort to encourage reporting of hazing incidents, the law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to any person who reports a specific hazing event to the Senior Associate Vice President for Student Affairs (or a designated representative); and immunizes that person from participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from that report. A person is not protected from prosecution if they report a hazing incident in bad faith or with malice. The penalty for failure to report a hazing offense is considered a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by a fine up to \$1,000, up to 180 days in jail, or both. Penalties for other hazing offenses vary according to the severity of the offense, and ranges from \$500 to \$10,000 in fines and possible confinement.

An organization and/or an officer, or any of its' members, new/associate members, or alumni who commit or assist in incidents of hazing may also be charged with violation of the hazing laws, and may also incur significant financial consequences.

The law defines hazing as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include students at an educational institution.

Hazing includes but is not limited to:

- A. Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity;
- B. Any type of physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in small space, calisthenics, or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk or harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- C. Any activity involving consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance which subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which adversely affects the mental or physical health of the student;
- D. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, or that adversely affects, the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the institution rather than submit to described in the subsection;
- E. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the students to perform a duty or tasks, which involved a violation of the Texas Penal Code.

The University of Texas at Arlington regards hazing as a serious issue and is committed to the removal of any such practice. The Dean of Students is prepared to assist any organization with a review of its activities to ensure they do not violate the hazing law.

FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE OF STUDENT GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Room and Reservations (forms, approval)
- Mall, Parking Lot, and other "Outdoor" Booth/Table Reservations (forms, approval, reservation)
- Food Waivers (forms, approval)
- Table Reservations (forms, approval, on-line process)
- Account Cards (forms, process to next office, copy available)
- Assistance with Bursar Services and Accounts
- Record-keeping of Student Organizations for the University (Registrations, Constitutions, Updates, Profit/Loss financial statements, accounts)
- Posting (date-stamping, removal of expired and improperly stamped banners, flyers)
- Policy questions
- Advising/General support (students, advisors, pursuing opportunities for organizations as possible)
- Robert's Rules (copy of Robert's Rules in Plain English, by Doris P. Zimmerman, available)
- Program Assistance Funds
- Web Sites and List-Serves (assistance with the Office of Information Technology, list-serve application and management assistance)
- Speakers' List
- Information (e-mails to Presidents and Advisors re. campus information, organization information, policy updates, web site)
- Letters of Appreciation/Recognition for Advisors and student leaders

- Mailboxes
- Banner – Making facility (paper, paint)
- Print Cards (information provided to Mav Express for obtaining organization print card)
- Awards Program Awards Program:
 - The Outstanding Student Organization Awards are given every spring semester to recognize student organizations which have shown excellence in serving their members, the University, and/or the community. A plaque and \$350 is given to the category winners (Professional/Honorary Service, International/Cultural, Special Interest/Recreational/ Political/Religious) and a plaque and \$500 is given to the Overall Outstanding Student Organization. The awards are given at the annual Outstanding Student Leader Awards ceremonies in April. Organizations nominate themselves through an application process. The applications are available on-line (<http://www.uta.edu/studentgovernance/>, click on student organizations, then on awards) and in the Office of Student Governance and Organizations. A committee of students and staff determine the recipients.
 - Student Organization Advisor Award is given each spring at the Outstanding Student Leader Awards ceremonies. It consists of a plaque and \$750. Organizations nominate advisors through an application process. A committee of students, staff, and faculty determine the recipient. The applications are available on-line (<http://www.uta.edu/studentgovernance/>, click on student organizations, then on awards) and in the Office of Student Governance and Organizations. A committee of students and staff determine the recipients.

INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE: THE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS WEBSITE

<http://www.uta.edu/studentgovernance/> and click on Organizations....

From this site, you can access various resources available to student organizations and advisors:

- Organizations Link: This is the on-line list of student organizations. Typically, a brief description of the organization, advisor contact information, and a web link is provided.
- Handbook: The Student Organizations Handbook is updated on an annual basis. Many of the questions relating to policy can be answered here:
 - How to organize a campus organization
 - The Committee on Student Organizations

- Choosing a Faculty/Staff Advisor, Alumni and other special Advisors, and Membership by non-University individuals
- Title IV and Title IX
- How to remain active as a student organization
- Descriptions of forms
- Program planning tips
- Policies
 - Banking and Fundraising
 - Co-sponsorships
 - Demonstrations or rallies
 - Display Cases
 - Exhibits
 - Food Events on Campus
 - Guest Speakers
 - Listserv Policy
 - Literature and Advertising
 - Movie Policy
 - Outdoor Event Policies
 - Reserving a Room on Campus (Special link available)
 - Reserving Tables/Booths
 - Sound Amplification
 - Travel Policy
 - University Center Policies
 - Event Security Policies
 - Wedding Policy
 - Alcoholic Beverage Regulations
 - Hazing Information
 - Services Available to Student Organizations (Special link available)
- An additional link for resources provides information on:
 - Hazing
 - Leaders' Hints (a brochure series of leadership information)
 - Leadership Responsibilities (a list with descriptions)
 - Marketing (two Creative Marketing presentations available)
 - Program Planning
 - Speakers List
 - Volunteering
- And for more information about procedures, policies and processes, a link to UTA's Handbook of Operating Procedures, Part Two (Student Services, Activities, and Policies).

