



Student Organization Advisor Handbook

Mansfield University Mission Statement

Offering dynamic programs in the arts and humanities, natural and social sciences, and professional studies, Mansfield University of Pennsylvania prepares our students for successful lives and careers. As an inclusive public institution, Mansfield University provides our students with a welcoming environment, individualized attention, and meaningful opportunities to learn and grow within and beyond the classroom. Through the Mansfield experience, our students develop the knowledge, skills, and character necessary to achieve their educational and career goals.

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WELCOME

Congratulations on becoming a Campus Organization Advisor!

Thank you for your decision to become involved with a student organization at Mansfield University. Recognized student organizations are an important part of the MU experience. Involvement in student groups encourages students to develop leadership skills, to explore values, and to begin laying the foundation for their professional careers. In addition to adding to the richness of our campus culture, research demonstrates that students who are engaged in campus life are more likely to stay in college and to graduate. Your role as an advisor is crucial to the success of the student groups you mentor. The expectations of advisors are based upon several premises. Faculty and staff members are generally familiar with the policies and procedures of MU, and therefore can assist students in the accomplishment of goals and objectives by helping them to work effectively within the framework of our community. Advisors can aid in growth and leadership, help with both transition and continuity between the shifting of academic years, and contribute to the total education and leadership ability of our students. Many ask the question of what being an advisor entails, and the answer is simply that as an advisor you have an active role, but not a controlling one. You have the responsibility of promoting student growth and education, helping our students to enjoy their work, but also realizing the success and failure of the group should belong to the group and the advisor should provide an atmosphere for learning and educational conversations to occur.

Your efforts are vital to both the students and our institution. Advising an organization does require additional time demands; however, the rewards gained by advising are great, and more than compensate for those demands. Advisors for student organizations are important catalysts for the learning that happens outside of the classroom and have the potential to influence and develop that learning. Student organizations are effective avenues for students to implement theories they have learned in class, to dialogue about what they are learning in the classroom, to develop friendships, to network with professionals, and to improve their interpersonal, communication, and leadership skills. The Student Affairs Division wants to establish strong lines of communication with student clubs/organizations advisors and has designed this publication to address the role of advisors, advisor responsibilities and the expectations the University has for student groups. Please familiarize yourself with the Student Organization Advisors Handbook. We believe that it will serve as a valuable resource to you. We welcome any questions you may have regarding organization and / or leadership development and encourage you to take advantage of our resources and assistance.

Go Mounties!
The Student Affairs Team
Mansfield University

INTRODUCTION

Mansfield University is home to 70 plus student organizations. Every registered student organization at Mansfield University is required to have an advisor who is a current full-time or part-time faculty member, staff member, or registered University volunteer. Exceptions may be made for unaffiliated advisors who have a particular expertise that is not available on campus. Exceptions must be approved, in writing by the Director of Student Involvement & Leadership, or their designee, in consultation with the Dean of Students and the Vice President for Student Success & Campus Life. Advisors can serve as mentors, counselors, allies and liaisons. They play key roles in the development and continuation of student organizations both to the students as individuals and to the organization as a whole.

This handbook is intended to be a tool for all advisors of registered student organizations at Mansfield University. It includes helpful information for advisors about University policies, procedures, and operations to ensure a successful year for your student group. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with this handbook.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of a Student Organization Advisor

Advisors serve as mentors, counselors, allies, and liaisons. They play key roles in the development and continuation of student organizations both to the students as individuals and to the organization as a whole.

Why Become an Advisor?

Advising provides an opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of students and the University. Student organizations provide opportunities for students to learn outside of the classroom and to develop their leadership skills. As an advisor, you will have a central role in this process. Not only can you make difference in students' lives, you will also receive the satisfaction of watching an organization grow and become successful.

Why Does this Organization Need an Advisor?

There are many benefits to having an advisor. Advisors maintain continuity within the organization from year to year, providing a sense of history and stability for the organization. Advisors act as advocates for students, and they can also provide helpful resources and knowledge. It is not the advisor's role to take over the organization, but they are a necessary and integral part of its success. Without an advisor, the organization cannot exist. Student organizations have the opportunity to choose their own advisor, so it is important that they choose someone with whom they will enjoy working.

Advisor Responsibilities

Advising

The advisor is to advise students on various matters, including group dynamics, institutional policies and procedures, referrals, etc. While advisors should not make decisions for the group, they are not mere signatories. The relationship between student organization and advisor should be one of mutual respect and collaboration.

To Caution When Necessary

The advisor should alert the group when they believe the group is about to make a decision that is outside the boundaries established by the organization's constitution, University policy, or legally.

To Function as a Liaison

Occasionally, the group will need the advisor to assist contacting school officials, faculty, potential guest speakers, performers, etc.

To Work Closely with the Leader

Advisors are able to provide advice and counsel to the leader(s) of the organization. Standing appointments are necessary to ensure open and consistent dialogue. A new student leader will gain needed assistance and advice from the advisor in these one-on-one meetings and then be able to function more effectively as the leader within the group. A failure to meet regularly with the group leader may result in a breakdown of communication and ultimately termination of the advisor/organization relationship.

Help Plan

Successful activities take planning. Encourage foresight. Help the group think through its event and logistics. Pay attention to other University activities and the University Calendar of Events to ensure that your organization's event does not conflict with another similar, competing event. The Office of Student Involvement & Leadership can help in planning.

Know University Policies

All student clubs and organizations are subject to regulation by the Office of Student Involvement & Leadership, the Dean of Students, the VP for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, Mansfield University and the Office of Community Conduct. The benefits of recognition granted by the Student Government Association (SGA) and the University include:

- Use of the University name
- Reservation and use of campus facilities
- The opportunity to create an organization email where applicable.
- Ability to establish membership criteria and raise funds.
- The opportunity to request funds from the Student Government Association (SGA), and College Community Services, Inc. (CCSI).

- Use of a University budget line managed through the SGA and CCSI.
- The ability to use club/organization and university resources to publicize programs, events and activities.
- Use of the Student Government Association website to make organization information available.
- Use of University Print Shop.
- Ability to use Payment Requests and CCSI credit cards for event purchases and fundraising.
- Ability to fundraise.
- Participation in various events for recognized clubs and organizations, such as the annual Student Club and Organization Fair.
- Use of computer printer for organization business.
- Assistance in developing programs.
- Sound reinforcement and technical support for programs (provided by University CT Services & Office of Student Involvement & Leadership).
- Ability for Office of Student Involvement & Leadership to review and approve and sign-off on offer letters and contracts for artists and event services.

Attributes of a Good Advisor

- **Aware**: Knows what is happening with the group at all times – problems, dates of functions, etc.
- **Dedicated**: Always willing to assist the organization when necessary. Enjoys being associated with the group and is very involved.
- **Visible**: Attends meetings, social functions and other special activities of the group when possible.
- **Informed**: Familiar with the rules, policies and regulations of the University and the bylaws and constitution of the organization. Is prepared to render assistance with their interpretation.
- **Supportive**: Provides encouragement and praise to group members.
- **Open-minded**: Willing to consider new ideas and approaches although they may not totally agree with them.
- **Respected**: Earned through being trustworthy and honest and demonstrating a genuine interest in the welfare of the group.

Advisor “Dos”

- **Allow the group to succeed and fail.**
 - Give students a chance to work through problems without interference. When they succeed, it will give them confidence to be involved in other activities; when they fail, they will learn valuable lessons in planning and responsibility.
 - Please use good judgement in exercising this “do.” Allowing students to continually go down a bad path reflects badly on you the advisor as well as the student group.
- **Know your limits as an advisor.**
 - You are an advisor, not a member of the organization. Not everything is your responsibility, not everything is your fault.
- **Be visible.**
 - Your presence at meetings and events lets the group know that the University cares about them as people and productive members of an organization.
- **Be consistent with your actions.**
 - Fairness in advising is critical.
- **Model Leadership**
 - Leadership is the most important skill that organization members learn through their involvement with an organization. Advisors have an opportunity to model good leadership as well as provide leadership learning opportunities for the group’s members.

Advisor “Don’ts”

- Control or manipulate the group
- Close communication
- Be afraid to let the group fail
- Say “I told you so”

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY

Types of MU Organizations

Mansfield University encourages diversity of student organizations. There are many different types of student organizations on campus and all have to be recognized in some form by the University.

Student Government Associate (SGA) Recognized Student Organizations

SGA recognized student organizations are organizations that have gone through the official process of becoming a recognized organization. These student groups are eligible to request funding through SGA. These groups are required to have an advisor.

University Recognized Student Organizations

In addition to the SGA student groups, there are official student groups that are recognized by the Division of Student Affairs. These student groups have official University recognition, but do not ask for or receive SGA funding. These groups are required to have an advisor. Some may include:

- *Departmental Organizations* – Departmental groups provide an opportunity to develop a better understanding of their discipline in an informal setting. Members are given the chance to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real life experiences.
- *Honorary Organizations* – Honorary Organizations are typically affiliated with national organizations established to recognize and reward academic excellence.
- *Religious Organizations* – The examination and nurturing of religious beliefs, values, and morality in a spirit of fellowship are the common bonds among the campus religious organizations.
- *Special Interest Organizations* – The broad spectrum of unique interests represented in this category of groups enhances student involvement in campus life. Active members of many of these organizations develop social skills that they often continue to perfect as lifelong leisure pursuits.

Social Greek Organizations

Mansfield University is home to National Panhellenic and Fraternal organizations. These groups are recognized by Mansfield University. Social fraternities and sororities provide opportunities for leadership, community service, philanthropy, and brotherhood and sisterhood. These groups often have national and local leadership advisors that are not affiliated with the University. In addition, these groups must have faculty or staff campus advisors. It is helpful for Greek organizations to have a campus advisor for help with reserving rooms on campus, and navigating University policy. Greek Organizations liaison with the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

Club Sports

The classification of Club Sport applies to organizations that are composed of enrolled students that are voluntarily participating in competitions of a physical nature against other non-Mansfield University institutions or organizations on or off of the Mansfield University campus.

Club Sports organizations can be recognized by SGA or not. Club Sports are typically managed and run by the participants themselves, along with an advisor that is a University faculty or staff member (minimum of co-advisor with this type of current position held). More than one advisor is acceptable, but each Club Sport must have at least one advisor that is a current Mansfield University faculty or staff member.

Being an advisor for a Club Sport is not a job to be taken lightly. There is a major time commitment in advising a Club Sport, especially if this also involves coaching the squad. Before consenting to advise a club, one should find out how much time the group will need. Some sports are active only at certain times of the year, while others go year-round.

Getting Started

There are a few key points to help you get started advising a Recognized Student Organization (RSO). By following these steps, you will be properly registered as your RSO's Advisor and have a solid understanding of the task that is before you.

- Make sure you are listed on the RSO's Active Student Organization Recognition Form. This is a form filled out each year by the organization President, Treasurer and Advisor(s) of the RSO. Amendments to the Active Student Organization Recognition Form may be submitted throughout the year whenever changes are made to the leadership of the organization. The form and information for that process is available here: <http://www.mansfield.edu/student-organizations/>
- Familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures outlined by both Student Affairs and the Student Government Association (SGA). Both areas will provide information to effectively plan events and provides student organization leaders, Advisors, members and administrators with knowledge of University policies and procedures.
- Meet with the officers of the RSO you will be advising and share your expectations with them and allow them to share their expectations for you. Make sure they know the best ways to contact you throughout the year, whether by phone, e-mail or in person.

Starting a New Organization

- Each group needs to be first recognized by Mansfield University. The forms and information for that process is available here: <http://www.mansfield.edu/student-organizations/>
- This website contains the list of current active student organizations as well as the form to create your own organization. Along with completing the *Petition to Create Organization*, each group must send a copy of their Constitution and/or By-Laws to Student Affairs.
- If you want your organization to be eligible for funding through SGA, your organization will need to be officially recognized through the SGA which is a separate process. The form to petition SGA to start a new organization is available here: <http://www.mansfield.edu/sga/resources.cfm>.

Checklist of Items to Complete to Become Recognized:

All Organizations MUST:

- Petition to Create an Organization
- Constitution and/or By-Laws
- Annual Student Organization Recognition Form (must be completed annually or more often depending on when organization holds elections)

For Organizations wanting to be funded through SGA:

- Contact SGA's Parliamentarian to get information about becoming recognized
- SGA Organization Recognition Form (found on SGA webpage)
- Bring copy of SGA Organization Recognition Form to a weekly SGA meeting
- Make a short presentation about your organization

Once the organization is an SGA Recognized Student Organization, the following forms will be required:

- Constitution
- Ledger
- Inventory Records
- Updated Roster and Attendance Records
- Budget Items (please refer to the section on SGA Funding)

- Up-to-date officers' lists and contact information
- Upcoming events that would require a contract

- Funding concerns

- National or international conference opportunities

- Awards or honors received by individuals or the group

Other Considerations:

1. At the beginning of each year/semester, develop clear expectations with the organization officers to define your role as advisor and shared expectations.
2. Read the group's constitution. You should be familiar with their purpose, mission, executive board positions, and founding tenets.
3. Get to know executive board members, but also get to know general club members.
4. Attend the organization's events and be present at club functions.
5. Develop a working relationship with the president and other officers.

6. Discuss concerns with club members in private, and praise them in public.
7. Remember to let the students make decisions. Your role as advisor is directed to guidance and advice.
8. Be familiar with University policies. It is important that you help the student club or organization navigate campus policies, especially in regard to club and organization events and purchases.
9. Meet with the officers regularly, help them set goals and assist when there is conflict and tension between club members.
10. At all times, keep your sense of humor!

CODE OF CONDUCT AND ORGANIZATIONS

(Taken from the Mansfield University Student Code of Conduct rev. July, 2021)

Student organizations are held responsible for the information in the Student Code of Conduct.

University Organizations

“If a University organization is charged with a violation of University policy, such charges shall be brought against the appropriate officer of that organization who shall respond as the representative of the organization. Additional members of the organization may be charged to respond as additional representatives of the organization following the procedures outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Sanctions on University Organizations

“If an organization is found to be in violation of University policy, sanctions may be levied against the organization itself or upon individual members of the organization. Sanctions against an organization may include loss of University recognition, the loss of the privilege to use University facilities, and prohibitions regarding the use of the Mansfield University name, likeness or visual identity in anyway. Such restrictions or prohibitions may be permanent or for a specified probationary period.

Protection of Minors

The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) has established a Protection of Minors Policy to protect the safety and security of the thousands of pre-school, elementary middle, high school, and minor-aged university students who participate in programs held on

PASSHE university campuses and other properties each year and to provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff who are involved with such programs and activities. All organization advisors and offices should be familiar with this policy which is found at <http://mansfield.edu/hr/protection-of-minors.cfm>.

Prohibition on Hazing

Mansfield University prohibits hazing. Hazing is defined as any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of another person for the purpose of membership, advancement, or continued good standing in any organization or group recognized by the University. In addition, any requirement by a member or pledge which compels a member or pledge to participate in any activity that is against University policy, Pennsylvania State Law, or Federal law, is defined as hazing. **Please note: As the student club and organization advisor** your role is to make sure that all student members of the club and organization understand what hazing looks like to best insure that both advisors and students are each prepared to help prevent hazing from ever happening, and to report it if it does happen. A good national resource with information on hazing is www.hazingprevention.org To report a hazing incident on campus go to https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MansfieldUniv&layout_id=0 to fill out a report form. **If the hazing incident requires an immediate response due to the risk of emotional and or physical harm contact campus police at (570) 662-4900 or call 911.**

Hazing behavior include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Forcing or requiring an individual to drink alcohol or use other substances or consume unreasonable amounts of food;
- Engaging in activities that compel an individual or group to remain at a certain place, or transporting anyone anywhere without their knowledge and/or consent (road trips, kidnaps, etc.).
- Creating excessive fatigue or distress through the deprivation of privacy, sufficient sleep, or decent and edible meals.
- Participating in morally degrading or humiliating games and activities.
- Participating in or creation of situations that cause physical harm or emotional strain, such as causing a member or non-member to be the object of malicious amusement or ridicule.
- Using brutality or force.

Any of these activities, if a condition either directly or indirectly, of membership, advancement, or good standing in a University-recognized organization, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding. The University may treat the action of even one member of a group as constituting hazing by the entire group.

Executive leaders of an organization found responsible for hazing are also subject to disciplinary action.

FINANCES AND FUNDING

Types of Accounts

- Every organization has a non-allocated account through CCSI (College Community Services, Inc.). This is comprised of money that the organization generates either through dues collection, donations, fund raising, etc., which can be spent however they deem fit (within University guidelines).
- Organizations can petition the Student Government Association (SGA) for Student Activity Fee funds. Each time an organization is allocated funds, an allocation letter that states exactly for what the funds are to be used will be provided. Student Activity Fees **MUST** be used for the purposes dictated in the allocation letter. All Student Activity Fee funds that are remaining in an organization's account at the end of the fiscal year (June 30) will be returned. More information about SGA funding is included below.

Student Government Association Funding

The Student Government Association (SGA) administers the allocation of Student Activity Fees. Student Activity Fees are allocated by the Committee on Finance (COF) through the budget process, where annual budgets are allocated to meet the needs of student groups. Allocation may also occur through the COF Financial Request Form process, which furnishes emergency funds for needs not anticipated during the budget process. Those organizations interested in receiving funding from Mansfield University Student Activity Fees, must comply with the following additional criteria.

- Organization must be recognized by the SGA.
- Organization must have a College Community Services Inc. (CCSI) Account.
- Organization must submit an Active Student Organization Recognition Form, copies of the organization's Constitution, Roster and Attendance records, inventory records, and current ledgers to SGA by the date and time set forth by SGA (date/time changes each semester, at the discretion of SGA).
- Organization must submit a CCSI Account Signature Form to the CCSI office at the beginning of each semester.

- Organization must have a constitution, which has been approved by SGA, that indicates the organization's mission and purpose or be hosting an official activity of the University that is generally considered to be a student activity.
 - Such activities include programs and events planned for entertainment, education, or the betterment of the campus body.
- Organization must have an active faculty/staff advisor at all times while considered an active organization. The advisor must have completed the necessary background checks, finger-printing and protection of minors training required by the University.
- Organization must have an accurate and updated running ledger of their overall allocated and non-allocated CCSI accounts.
- Organization must have an accurate and updated inventory list of all equipment and reusable items purchased with Student Activity Fees.
- Organization must be in compliance with all appropriate rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE).
- Must comply with all SGA and COF Policies.
- Organization meetings and membership must be open to all students who pay the student activity fee.
- Organizations that require members to pay mandatory dues or membership fees are not eligible for funding from COF/SGA.
- As a note of caution, providing false information to SGA/COF will result in a loss of your organization's current budget and ineligibility for a budget for the next year.

For a complete list of COF policies, please review the COF Policy Manual at <http://www.mansfield.edu/sqa/resources.cfm>.

Fundraising

Many student organizations conduct fundraising activities as a means for financing their other projects and events. Funds raised by MU recognized student clubs/organizations are to be used to expand their educational and leadership opportunities within the club/organization and not to financially subsidize their individual person interests, appetites, needs, or living expenses.

All money collected from fundraising sales should be deposited in their student club/organization account in the CCSI office located in the MU Spirit Store, immediately following the conclusion of the fundraiser.

As advisor to the student club and organization your role in helping your club / organization research, plan, advertise, promote, execute, and assess a fundraising effort is to be there for

them in guiding their actions as per the suggested planning mechanisms outlined below. Help them to follow through with the important details by going through a checklist of best practices with them to best insure that they are being put in the best position as students to be successful with their fundraising endeavor. Fundraising for a student club / organization is a great activity to foster team building with our students and leadership development. **As advisor** you have the opportunity to have the students engaged and placed in leadership roles and as a **guide** you just need to help them secure the tools necessary for them to be successful fundraisers by making sure that all members of the student club / organization have an important job to do within the fundraising team effort.

Planning Your Fundraiser

- Set a goal
- Ask for suggestions from your club/organization members
- Find out what has been done before. What worked? What didn't? Why? How can it be improved?
- All fundraisers must comply with all university, local, state, and federal regulations.
- Check University solicitation policy, including residence halls. (Door-to-door selling/solicitation in the residence halls is not permitted.)
- Determine the market: college students, community, parents, etc.
- Know the overhead.
- Advertise wisely. If advertising a fund-raising event in the residence halls, flyers/posters must be brought to the Student Living Office. Staff will review and, if approved, will distribute them to Resident Assistants for posting.
- Let everyone know their expectations in advance and update on progress. Using a goal poster is a great idea; make sure that poster is displayed prominently.
- Recognize everyone involved
- Thank your supporters
- Complete a written evaluation or report. Make sure to include:
 - Contact names, addresses, emails and phone numbers
 - Time lines and important dates
 - Suggestions of things to do differently

Student clubs and organizations should not solicit financial support from local businesses without permission from University administration. Requests for fundraising should be made at least 60 days in advance. To request permission, contact Casey Wood, Director of Alumni Relations, cmwood@mansfield.edu.

EVENT PLANNING

An **advisor** plays a critical role in helping organizations develop programs, events, and activities that will enhance campus life and support the educational mission of the University. In order to accomplish this task, an advisor must encourage the students to think about the role of their programs, as well as how the programs align with the organization's mission.

When beginning to plan events or activities for student organizations, there are a lot of aspects to be considered. Resources are available to aid an organization in this process from start to finish. **A key resource for advisors and students to contact for student club / organization event planning assistance is the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership.** This office can assist student club and organization **advisors** and **student members** with all aspects of event planning to include but not limited to event research, booking talent / programs / activities / arts & entertainers, and more, event fee / price negotiations, event contract and rider procurement, advertising, marketing, and promotion, technical support services, event production, and assessment.

Items to Consider when Planning an Event:

- Establish budgets
- Determine audience: campus-only, open to general public, all-ages, family, etc.
- Choose events that answer these questions: Does it meet your mission? Does it move your organization forward? Does it serve/help your target audience?
- Check the official campus events calendar and these calendars and offices listed below for conflicts
 - Your own organization
 - Other student organizations (Greek-letter organizations, governing organizations, etc.)
 - Athletics Scheduling Office
 - Buildings and Grounds
 - Academic calendar (Avoid finals, Spring Break, etc.)
 - Holidays (school, religious – more than just Christian)
- Reserve locations/venues (include as many details as possible – and remember that the earlier submitted = the more likely you'll get your first choice!) Reserve rain location for outdoor events
 - This will be completed through the Event Management System (EMS) Room Reservation System. **Please note: Advisors must put in the EMS Room / Space Reservation** for their student club and student organization. Student members of clubs and organizations are not permitted to reserve university space through the EMS system.
- **The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership** is here to assist student club and organization **advisors** and **members** with securing speakers, performers, presenters, events, etc. at the best possible negotiated fees / prices available. The **Office of Student Involvement and Leadership** already has strong working relationships with speakers, performers, presenters, artist managers, agents, agencies, companies, etc. and is a member of **APCA, NACA, APAP, and POLLSTAR** which are great resource

organizations for all your student club and organization event programming needs. This office is also able to negotiate artist fees / prices on your behalf in order to get your student club and organization contracts and riders that are budget friendly and user friendly.

- **Manage risk. As an advisor, you are responsible for advising** your student club / organization to minimize and manage risk. **Advisors** should encourage students to plan safe events and manage their risks. **Advisors** need to insist that all plans consider federal, state and local laws; and University policies, rules and procedures.
- **Advisors** should help students identify possible co-sponsors.
 - It's a good idea to consult other groups/organizations to share resources and ideas.
- Decide upon need for tickets, costs
- Create event checklist / calendar with specific dates and people responsible for each item on list (create committees). **Advisors** and students in following the check list of items listed below should also consult with the **Office of Student Involvement and Leadership for additional Event Planning Support and Resources**.
 - Advertising
 - Food/Catering (on-campus events must be catered by the campus Dining Services contractor)
 - Decorations/Props
 - Accommodations and Travel
 - Budget/Compensation
 - Schedule
 - Facilities Usage (Room Reservation, Set-Ups, A/V Equipment, etc.)
- Complete program evaluation/summary with feedback from students and volunteers

OFFICER TRANSITION

One of the most important functions of an advisor is to assist with the transition from one set of organization officers to the next. Advisors are sometimes the only consistent, stable member of the organization, so the advisor has seen the organization develop over time, know what has worked in the past, and can help maintain continuity. Investing time in a good officer transition early on will mean less time spent throughout the year helping new officers through the semester. The **Office of Student Involvement & Leadership** is here to help.

The key to a successful transition is making sure new officers know their jobs before they take office. Expectations should be clearly defined. There are a number of ways to conduct officer transition. The following two methods are examples of commonly used methods for transitioning advisors.

The Team Effort

The team effort involves the outgoing officer board, the advisor, and the incoming officer board. This method involves a retreat or series of meetings where outgoing officers work with incoming officers on:

1. Past records/notebooks for their office and updating those together

2. Discussion topics should include:
 - Completed projects for the past year
 - Upcoming/incomplete projects
 - Challenges and setbacks
 - Anything the new officers need to know to do their job effectively

The Advisor's Role

- Facilitate discussion and be a sounding board for ideas.
- Organize and provide the structure of a retreat.
- Offer suggestions on various questions.
- Refrain from telling new officers what they should do.
- Fill in the blanks. If an outgoing officer doesn't know how something was done, or doesn't have records to pass on to the new officer, you can help that officer by providing the information he or she doesn't have.

Tip: In April, take the time to meet as a group to review events and programs for the following academic year, do an inventory of supplies and equipment and decide what direction you will take in the fall.

One-On-One Training Advisor with Officers

While it is ideal to have the outgoing student club and organization officer team assist in training the incoming officers, sometimes this is not possible. The outgoing officers may leave abruptly (even mid-year), or the outgoing officers are unwilling to commit to onboarding the new officers. In these cases, it is left up to the Advisor to educate the incoming officers. In that situation, there should be a joint meeting of the new officers with the Advisor to learn about their positions. You can be very helpful in this situation. After that meeting, the Advisor should meet individually with each officer; examine the notebook or electronic files of the previous officer and/or help create a new one.

Things to include:

1. A copy of the organization's constitution and by-laws
2. Copies of previous meeting agendas
3. Past years financial ledgers and relevant documents and receipts
4. Organizational financial account numbers (i.e. CCSI, SGA, etc.)
5. Past years' rosters and membership information
6. Organizational e-mail addresses and passwords

Talk about what the officers hope to accomplish in the forthcoming year. Assess the officer's role in the organization. What are the expectations of each position? What are the student's expectations of the position and his/her goals?

RESOURCES

Alumni Affairs & Advancement (alumni@mansfield.edu)

Athletics (Robin Colby, rcolby@mansfield.edu)

Campus Technologies (helpdesk@mansfield.edu)

CCSI Office (Elysee McPherson, emcpherson@mansfield.edu)

COF (Committee on Finance, cof@mansfield.edu)

Dean of Students Office (Scott Kane, skane@mansfield.edu)

Dining Services (Angela Dawson, adawson@mansfield.edu)

Director of Student Involvement & Leadership (Steve Plesac, splesac@mansfield.edu)

EMS Reservations (All reservations must be made by the Advisor; ems.mansfield.edu)

Facilities (Ryan Wood, rrwood@mansfield.edu)

Health & Safety Office (Jim Welch, jwelch@mansfield.edu)

Office of Student Living (Dusty Zeyn, dzeyn@mansfield.edu)

President's Office (president@mansfield.edu)

Registrar (Academic Calendar; registrar@mansfield.edu)

SGA Office (sga@mansfield.edu)