

THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISOR

All registered Student Organizations are required to have a full-time faculty (or staff) advisor. As a general rule, advisors are chosen by the group that is organizing the student organization because of their interest in the organization's mission.

There are many benefits which can result from a good advising relationship. Developing a relationship of open and honest communication, sincerity, professional effectiveness and personal approachability provides the advisor and the organization leaders with a chance to grow and succeed.

ADVISING DEFINED

The basic purpose of the advisor is to work with the designated leaders and members of a functioning student organization with the intent of:

- Providing a sense of "continuity" for the organization especially during officer transition
- Being a resource person with a knowledge base for institutional policies, etc;
- Assisting the leaders and members to fulfill their responsibilities;
- Aiding the organization to define and achieve its goals and objectives;
- Integrating the organizational activity with the overall purpose of the educational setting.

THE ROLE OF THE ADVISOR

Advisors may be responsible for filling a variety of roles - it is important to clarify and outline these with each new group of officers:

- liaison between the organization, administration and faculty;
- an interpreter of policy;
- an information resource regarding organizational procedures, group process and programming concerns;
- a resource providing history and continuity between changing organization leadership;
- a teacher of programming skills;
- presenter of philosophical ideas and concepts of leadership;
- a counselor, mediator, consultant, sounding board, and friend.

A "good" advisor usually will:

- be vocal, provide their own leadership. (NOTE: a strong advisor usually is not a

- "controlling" advisor);
- support student growth and student development;
- be active and involved in the student organization's activities. (Absentee advisors are a disservice to student officers);
- keep the student organization in compliance with college policies;
- provide vision and inspire the membership to aspire to new and greater challenges.

HOW TO WORK WITH YOUR ADVISOR

Facts about Advisors

1. Many times advisors are employees of the college, and their first responsibility to the college is to their job.
2. Advisors volunteer to work with student organizations because they want to do it, and because they feel they can make a contribution to the organizations success.
3. Faculty advisors are human.

Organizations can help their advisor by:

1. Making clear the role they would like the advisor to take in the organization.
2. Keeping the advisor informed of the organizations plans and problems.
3. Making use of the advisor's background of experiences with the organization and at the college.
4. Working out tentative solutions to problems before going to the advisor whenever possible.
5. Observing lines of responsibility. Don't go "over their head" or by-pass them entirely.
6. Taking the initiative in arranging for regular executive committee meetings with the advisor.
7. Inviting the advisor and their family to all activities. Don't take their attendance for granted.
8. Making them feel like a member of the organization. Present them with membership cards. Ask them to serve on certain committees in some appropriate way.
9. Extending appropriate courtesies to the advisor and their guests at special functions such as dances, banquets, and meetings which include important speakers.
10. Showing an appreciation for their services -- through a letter or appropriate comments at meetings and other events.

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