

STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISOR'S RESOURCE MANUAL



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Mission of the Office of Campus Activities (OCA):

OCA provides opportunities for meaningful co-curricular engagement that develop self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and citizenship, complementing academic, co-op, and professional experiences.

Overview

Student organization advisors provide a vital link between the students and the University and/or national sponsoring organizations. Drexel University and the Office of Campus Activities (OCA) require that all student organizations have at least one full-time faculty or professional staff advisor. The advisor plays many roles in working with the organization. He/she can serve as a mentor, motivator, challenger, and supporter.

This manual has been developed to assist student organization advisors and is intended to explain the basic expectations that OCA has of the relationship between advisors and student organizations. It should be stressed that the advisor-student organization relationship is based on mutual understanding and expectation setting, and does not require an advisor be of a certain race, ethnicity, sex/gender, academic discipline, or have ever been a member of a similar organization.

GENERAL TIPS FOR ADVISORS

- Express a sincere interest in the group, its mission and in each individual
- Be mindful of the goals and objectives of the group
- Establish clear expectations by articulating what is expected by/from the student organization and the advisor – any misconceptions will be identified from the beginning of the relationship
- Assist members in their growth as individuals, personally and professionally, while helping the group achieve its goals
- Have regular open and honest dialogue and communication
- Challenge the group to grow and develop
- Maintain contact with OCA and direct students to use our resources

THE REWARDS

The rewards of being an advisor are sometimes intangible. Advisors cite deep satisfaction of working with college students outside of the classroom, developing meaningful co-curricular relationships, and knowing they have made a difference in students' lives as reasons why they are involved with student organizations. OCA is committed to working collaboratively with advisors and is committed to providing assistance and support, including training and resources, to help make the advisor role worthwhile, impactful, and enjoyable.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION

Student organizations are required to be recognized annually in order to receive various [benefits](#). With benefits, however, are numerous [responsibilities](#) and expectations of student organizations. The [process](#) runs annually from July to early-November and requires numerous [steps](#) to reach full recognition. The entire process is conducted via [CollegiateLink](#), our online student organization management system. An overall policy manual is being created for student organizations and can be accessed [here](#). For questions regarding recognition, policies, or procedures, please contact the Office of Campus Activities at askOCA@drexel.edu.

Advisor Expectations

EXPECTATIONS OF ADVISORS

- Support, not control, administer or lead the direction and event planning of the organization
- Establish an attendance expectation at organization meetings and events, which is mutually agreed upon by the advisor and student organization
- Work with student leadership to establish meetings with officers and members who need guidance
- Be cognizant of policies particular to student organizations pertaining to any membership requirements, standards, fiscal responsibilities, event planning or other information
- Provide advice and guidance to officers with their daily operational and special event/activity needs
- When his/her schedule permits, attend any programs for advisors and meet as needed with members of Student Life staff or when requested
- Serve the organization for a minimum of one academic year and if both parties choose, the relationship can be reaffirmed annually
- Advisors are expected to be knowledgeable about and comply with federal, state and local laws and ordinances and with Drexel University policies and procedures
- Shall serve without pay and shall not be provided release time, unless permitted by their supervisor
- Advisors who become aware of an allegation or violation of University Policy, Student Code of Conduct, civil law, or criminal law must report to the allegation to the Office of Campus Activities and/or Public Safety (215-895-2822)
- Be knowledgeable of all business and financial transactions and when required, approve expenditures

ADVISOR PROFESSIONALISM

You should feel comfortable and encouraged to develop professional relationships with group members, but be mindful in order to remain an effective advisor, you must retain credibility. Having dinner or coffee with students are normal activities that build relationships, but participating in inappropriate activities are not acceptable. You were selected as advisor for many reasons and are entrusted to serve the group as a professional resource and role model. Advisors should use their best judgment and not put themselves or their credibility in a potentially compromising situation.

EXPECTATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR ADVISORS

- Establish and share a “job description” for the advisor that clearly defines his/her responsibilities and anticipated lines of communication
- Establish an attendance expectation at organization meetings and events, which is mutually agreed upon by the advisor and student organization
- Show respect and value for the advisor whom you have chosen
- Consider all advice and guidance with an open mind as a sincere interest for improvement of daily operational and special event/activity needs
- Inform advisor of any planned events and activities
- The student organization advisor listed must be consistent with the student organization recognition paperwork on file with the Office of Campus Activities and/or with SAFAC

Advising Styles & Skills

Your advising style is the way you counsel and give advice when you work with someone. Situational advising allows you to change and flex your style to match the development needs of the individual or organization.

ADVISING STYLES

You will vary your style based on your assessment of the readiness level of the student and group. Many times advisors may struggle because they believe that students/groups need a higher level of interaction or direction when the student/group is actually able to accept more of a delegating style and vice versa.

Directing: The advisor provides specific instructions and closely supervises task accomplishments. Use this style with students/groups that are at a low level of readiness.

Coaching: The advisor “tells” and “sells” toward task accomplishment. Use this style with groups that have a few leaders at a higher readiness level who need your support with the rest of the group to get things accomplished.

Supporting: The advisor facilitates and supports group efforts toward task accomplishment. Use this style with students/groups that are starting to understand the concepts that will lead to success - the group is just starting to “get it”.

Delegating: The advisor supports the students/group to conduct their own decision making, problem solving, and delegating. Use this style with students/groups that are at a high level of readiness.

ADVISING SKILLS

Flexibility: Advisor should move from one style to another in order to meet the needs of the different types of students/groups and multiple circumstances they will encounter.

Diagnosis: Advisors can learn how to diagnose the needs of the students/groups they advise. Determining what is needed as opposed to what is wanted is sometimes a difficult task. It is also important to note that what is needed is not always what will get the most positive response - it may be what will lead the student/group through a problem, set the standard for the future, or help teach a valuable life lesson.

Contracting: Advisors learn how to negotiate agreements with students. Contracting and negotiating are valuable lessons for assisting students/groups with understanding how to effectively interact with others for their future and the future of the group.

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Below are the five stages of group development that have been commonly recognized to most groups that are forming and continuing to develop:

1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing
5. Adjourning

Advisors can [review these stages](#) and incorporate this knowledge when interacting and guiding a student organization.

Advising: Do and Don't

DO

- Allow students to fail
- Allow students to succeed
- Know your limits
- Know the group's limits
- Read the constitution of the group
- Get to know members
- Be visible
- Assist in transitioning student organization officers
- Realize you have the power of persuasion, so use this judiciously
- Help student leaders see alternatives and provide an outside perspective
- Be consistent with your actions
- Keep your sense of humor
- Trust the group
- Learn when to speak/when not to speak
- Teach the art of leadership
- Service as a resource
- Provide honest feedback to group members and positive reinforcement for accomplishments
- Challenge the organization and its members to set high goals and support them in their efforts
- Be available in emergency situations
- Assist officers with procedural matters
- Suggest program ideas
- Serve as a role model
- Advise officers in decision-making matters
- Provide historical continuity for the organization

DON'T

- Control the group
- Manipulate the group
- Miss too many group meetings and functions
- Take ownership for the group
- Close communication
- Become a strict naysayer nor overly laissez-faire
- Be afraid to try new ideas
- Know it all
- Take everything so seriously
- Be the leader
- Say "I told you so..."
- Impose your own bias
- Tell the group what to do

Advisor Expectations and Role Checklist

Listed below are potential advisor expectations and roles which should be negotiated between student leaders and the advisor. Individuals should complete this on their own and then collaborate to establish a shared “level of agreement” which will serve as the blueprint for establishing mutual expectations, roles, and responsibilities.

“The advisor should ...”

Expectations	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Attend all general meetings					
Attend all executive board meetings					
Attend all organization events					
Meet with the president regularly					
Call meetings of the executive board when believed necessary					
Meet with the executive board before each meeting					
Exert influence with organization leaders between meetings					
Assist in the creation of meeting agendas					
Assist in the creation of goals for the organization					

“In performing the role of advisor, the advisor should ...”

Potential Roles of the Advisor	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Be a counselor					
Be a sounding board					
Be a change agent in the organization					
Be knowledgeable of university and event policies/procedures					
Speak-up during discussions/meetings when appropriate					
Remain quiet during discussions/meetings unless called upon					
Provide continuity between years					
Be a doer/developer/planner of new programs					
Be an educator/trainer of leadership and organizational skills					
Maintain organizational records					
Mediate inter-personal conflicts of the group					
Be a financial supervisor					
Be responsible for election of organization officers					
Orient new officers to their roles/responsibilities					
Recruit new members to organization					
Evaluate leaders					
Evaluate programs					
Take initiative in developing teamwork among the officers					
Have a vote and/or veto organization decisions					
Receive copies of meeting minutes, e-mails, etc.					

modified from the resources of Eastern Oregon University, University of Florida, and Butler University

Why Students Engage in Student Organizations

It is important for advisors to understand and recognize reasons why students participate in student organizations:

- Develops friendships
- Improves relationships and fosters closer contact between faculty/professional staff and students
- Complements what is learned within the classroom
- Teaches self-discipline, initiative, leadership and responsibility
- Allows students to apply learned concepts to real-life, co-op, and professional settings/situations
- Acts as an arena for testing beliefs, values, attitudes and morals
- Contributes to the identity and development of students
- Exposes students to differing, diverse, and conflicting viewpoints
- Helps students identify and connect to the campus, making them more likely to stay and graduate
- Channels anxiety and stress into positive, enjoyable and productive pursuits
- Exposes students to influential and/or controversial speakers or topics
- Teaches and promotes hobbies, sports and other leisure activities at no/nominal costs
- Provides support for students with common needs or interests
- Motivates students to strive for and maintain academic excellence
- Plans major events which benefit and unite the entire campus community
- Broadens perspectives of students in areas of diversity and multiculturalism
- Improves opportunities for students to develop networks with peers and others
- Improves leadership and interpersonal skills
- Teaches students to work effectively with and within a group
- Establishes mentoring opportunities between students and between faculty/staff
- Exploration of social issues
- Enhances their resume

Since most students spend a significant amount of time focusing on their education, the co-curricular provides an opportunity for learning and growth, as well as a release for fun and enjoyment. Students who find college fulfilling and rewarding are more likely to persist and reach their educational goal.

Participation in campus activities is an important aspect of the educational experience. Not unlike the curriculum, activities are designed to educate and facilitate student development. Although the approach and emphasis may differ from traditional in-class educational process, activities make a significant contribution to student learning.

Today's students are tomorrow's citizens and the impact that engagement in campus activities has on the individual student, benefits society as a whole. Campus activities are truly central to the mission of higher education.

Stress Cycles or Triggers for Students

The following potential cycles or triggers of student stress are identified and can be used to design a more helpful and suitable advising and programming environment for the Drexel University, quarter system campus.

Late-September/Early-October

- Homesickness, especially for new, transfer, and international students.
- Students are confronted with questions of conscience over value conflict areas, such as drug and alcohol experimentation, morality, race, religion, and social expectations.
- Feelings of inadequacy and inferiority develop because of the discrepancy between high school status and grades and initial college performance.
- Students feel depressed because of real or perceived restrictive policies and regulations of the university
- International students sense confusion, vulnerability, and a lack of an advocate in power positions.
- Students starting co-op may feel unstable and inadequate while learning the new job. Student may try to over compensate in organization leadership positions to prove they are knowledgeable and in control.
- Students who participated in co-op over the summer may feel they “missed out” and therefore need to plunge into fun and exciting extra-curricular and sometimes risky behavior.

Late-October/Early-November

- New students begin to realize life at college is not as perfect as they were led to believe by parents, teachers, and counselors. Old problems seem to continue and new ones are added. An external reality in which they had put their hopes may fail them.
- Grief develops because of inadequate skills for finding a peer group of friends or not being selected by one.
- Midterm workload pressures are followed by feelings of failure and loss of self-esteem.
- Some students often sense a loss of self-esteem because so much value is placed on dating.
- Job search stress begins for December graduates and spring/summer co-ops.

November/December

- Academic pressure mounts because of procrastination, difficulty of work, and lack of ability. The pace is beginning to catch-up to students and there is a sense that the workload required cannot be done by the end of the term.
- Incidences of depression/anxiety increase from feelings that one should have adjusted to college by now.
- Going home for the holidays/break creates stress as students experience a loss of freedom or miss the friends made while at college.
- Some students have failed to expand their network of friends.
- Stresses of the season include holiday parties, concerts, social service projects, and religious activities drain student energies.
- Anxiety, fear, and guilt increase as final examinations and term paper deadlines approach.
- Pre-holiday depression, especially for those who have concerns for family, those who have no home to visit, and those who prefer not to go home because of family conflicts.

January

- Post-holiday depression due to being away from the security of home or from feeling that the term break was insufficient as high school peers have additional time off.
- Significant time spent socializing because of perception that academics do not really begin until the second or third week of classes.
- Economic anxiety may hit as funds from family and co-op earnings begin to run out, loans become due, holiday expenses are seen as a reality.

February

- Many students experience optimism because the winter term is perceived as going downhill.
- Vocational/career/major choices cause anxiety and depression.
- Relationships begin to establish stronger ties or experience weakening.
- Depression increases for students who have failed to establish social relationships or achieve a moderate amount of recognition.
- New students have feelings of excitement and nervousness as their co-op cycle is determined.
- Students may choose to participate in few structured social events and focus more on their academics.

March

- Drug and alcohol use increases significantly before, during, and after spring break.
- Academic pressures continue as finals are taken and the results are received.
- Extracurricular/job crisis for sophomores/pre-juniors/juniors (Will I get a co-op this late in the term?) and seniors (Will I get a job? Have I really learned anything?).
- New students experience the sting of the pace and workload and begin to question their decisions – major of study, extracurricular activities, university setting, etc.
- Students who participated in co-op over the summer may feel they “missed out” and therefore need to plunge into fun and exciting extra-curricular and sometimes risky behavior.

April

- Frustration and confusion develop for students who earned too much during co-op to qualify for the financial aid they were counting on.
- Job search stress continues for graduates and fall/winter co-ops.
- Major often has to be declared and pressure mounts.
- Midterm exams get closer, but motivation to study decreases due to changes in the weather.
- Job recruitment panic for seniors.

May

- New students become frustrated as their high school peers finish classes and begin to enjoy summer.
- The need for a social outlet and release heightens because of the weather while balancing the continued need to focus on class work and co-op.
- Students feel over-programmed because they have compensated for the lack of activity over winter term.
- Seniors (if they haven't already) withdrawal and stop participating in extracurricular activities in preparation for finals and graduation.

June

- Seniors graduate and freshmen return home for a much needed break.
- Students left to run the business operations of their student organization feel pressure to function at only a slightly slower pace than other terms.

July/August

- Less involved members become almost inactive while filling time with social and summertime activities.
- Extremely dedicated organization officers become frustrated with members who do not participate.
- Students may plan for their future and make “resolutions” to fix any disappointments from the prior year.
- Job stress for students not placed in fall/winter co-ops increases.
- Students have settled into a slower pace, but may feel they missed out on summer and it has gone too fast.
- As finals approach, many have a nonchalant attitude that proves to give poor results.
- Students look forward to a break from class and work, but are disappointed to find their high school peers have already left home to attend fall classes at their semester institutions.

Conflict

In your role, advising students who interact and work closely with one another, you may have to mediate conflict. Conflict is not inherently bad and since no two people view the world exactly the same, conflict is normal.

Often students are not comfortable addressing conflict and do not always handle in mature, professional ways. Unmanaged conflict will lead to continued complications, avoidance, and drama. The key to advising students to manage conflict is to help them learn the skills necessary to resolve conflict efficiently and effectively. The goal should be to reach a solution through consensus that will hopefully be a win-win situation.

Things to be mindful about conflict and conflict management:

- Conflict is inevitable, however it can be minimized, diverted, and/or resolved.
- Conflict develops due to lack of communication and is often related to interpersonal dynamics of dealing with people's lives, jobs, pride, ego and sense of mission or purpose.
- There are effective strategies for resolution.

Some causes that can start a potential conflict:

- Poor communication and lack of openness.
- Individuals and/or factions within the group.
- Dissatisfaction with current leadership and/or decisions.

While conflict is not inherently negative, it can be destructive when it:

- Takes attention away from other important activities.
- Undermines morale or self-concept.
- Increases or sharpens difference, reducing cooperation.
- Leads to irresponsible and harmful behavior.

Conflict can be constructive when it:

- Results in solutions to or clarification of important problems and issues.
- Involves people in developing consensus to resolve issues important to them and the group.
- Causes honest and open communication.
- Helps release emotion, anxiety, and stress.
- Builds cooperation through learning more about one another, helping individuals develop understanding and skills.

Techniques for avoiding and/or resolving conflict:

- Establish group norms and expectations for communication and conflict.
- Meet conflict head-on – address it right away as avoidance can lead to bigger problems.
- Plan for and communicate frequently as honestly as possible – encourage students to be truthful and transparent about what is happening with the organization.
- Be honest about concerns – talk about the problem openly and candidly.
- Build cooperation through learning more about each other.
- Separate the problem from the person and work to resolve the situation.
- Agree to disagree – healthy disagreement can build better, developed decisions.
- Encourage large-scale team participation in goal setting – people support what they help create.
- Discuss differences openly – ensure everyone knows where each member of the group stands and that they are accepted for who they are and their opinions.
- Provide as much data and information as is possible – share successes and failures with the group and collect feedback to make your group better.

Crisis Management

The following guidelines are for advisors and students in the event of any tragedy or crisis that affects the organization. Examples of such situations include, but are not limited to:

- The death or serious injury of a member
- Any injury or incident at or during an organization event
- Any injury or incident that occurs while the group is traveling

1. When a situation occurs, it can bring harm to the organization and its members if not handled properly. This protocol system will help the organization deal with the crisis in the most effective and efficient way and move toward normal operation. The advisors' role is to assist students through the crisis event and to lend a source of support for the organization.
2. Emergency Phone Calls
 - 911 EMERGENCY NUMBER: Your first phone call for any serious emergency is to 911.
 - ON-CAMPUS EMERGENCIES: To report a fire, medical emergency or request an officer, call 215-895-2222. Calls will be answered by the University Department of Public Safety. University officers, as well as additional personnel will be dispatched as appropriate.
 - ON-CAMPUS NON-EMERGENCY: Call the Department of Public Safety at 215-895-2822.
 - OFF-CAMPUS EMERGENCIES: Dial 911 to report a fire, medical emergency or request an officer. Calls will be answered by the police dispatcher and emergency personnel will be dispatched as appropriate.
 - Whenever an emergency call is placed, call the Student Life Dean on Duty at 215-783-1606.
3. Once Public Safety has been notified of a crisis, they will also contact the Dean on Duty. The Dean on Duty will then notify the Office of Campus Activities about the incident.
4. A member of the Office of Campus Activities and/or the Dean of Students will meet the group to inform all members of the incident and offer counseling services through the Office of Counseling, Health and Wellness.
5. Organization members should make NO statements to anyone other than University officials, their national sponsoring organizations, or law enforcement officers. A staff person from the Office of University Relations is responsible to communicate with the media.
6. In the event that it is necessary, the Dean of Students will make a decision to contact family members of anyone involved in an emergency crisis.

Advisor/Student Evaluation and Feedback Tool

This tool is for student leaders to use with their advisors to evaluate the advising relationship. Students should respond openly and honestly, and should also be prepared to support the rating.

Use a scale of 1-5 to rate your answers (1 – completely disagree and 5 – completely agree).

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) I am satisfied with the amount of time our advisor spends with our group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2) I am satisfied with the quality of time our advisor spends with our group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3) I am satisfied with the amount of information our advisor shares with our group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4) I am satisfied with the quality of information our advisor shares with our group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5) Our advisor is familiar with the goals of our group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6) Our advisor advises our group in a way consistent with our goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7) Our advisor adjusts his/her advising style to meet our needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8) Our advisor keeps our group informed on larger campus/national issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9) Our advisor is a good listener. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10) Our advisor understands the dynamics of our group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11) Our advisor role models balance and healthy living. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12) Our advisor challenges me to think. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13) Our advisor allows me room to make and execute decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Additional Comments:

Directory

Office of Campus Activities (OCA)

Student Organization Resource Center (SORC), 215-895-1328
Lower Level, Creese Student Center askoca@drexel.edu

- Director of Campus Activities [Ed Kovacs](#)
- Associate Director of Campus Activities, University City [Richard Kopp](#)
- Associate Director of University Student Life, Center City [Phi Nguyen](#)

- Associate Dean for Campus Engagement [John Cooke](#)
- Assistant Director of Campus Engagement/SAFAC Advisor [Joe Gonzalez](#)
- Coordinator of Campus Engagement/Good Idea Fund Advisor [Casey Sharkey](#)
- Administrative Coordinator, Campus Engagement [Kia Perkins](#)

Drexel Public Safety	3201 Arch St., Suite 350	(General) 215-895-2822 (Emergencies) 215-895-2222
Dean of Student's Office	215 Creese Student Center	215-895-2501
Commuter, Graduate and Transfer Student Programs and Services (CGTSPS)	SORC, Creese Student Center	215-895-1328
Office of Multicultural Programs	James E. Marks Intercultural Center	215-895-2662
University Student Life, Center City	245 N. 15th Street, Suite 1106	215-762-1400
Fraternity and Sorority Life	215 Creese Student Center	215-571-3575
Interfaith Council	James E. Marks Intercultural Center	215-571-3809
International Students & Scholars Services	210 Creese Student Center	215-895-2502
Residential Living Office/ University Housing	Towers Hall	215-571-3028
Counseling Center/Health Services Office	201 Creese Student Center	215-895-1660
Student Health Services	3201 Arch St., Suite 240	215-662-5800
Drexel Learning Center (DLC)	050 Creese Student Center	215-895-2568
Disability Services	3201 Arch St., Suite 210	215-895-1401
Student Conduct & Community Standards	215 Creese Student Center	215-895-6074
Student Union Operations (SUO)	Information Desk, Creese Student Center	215-895-2515
Event Services Office (Reservations)	001 Creese Student Center	215-895-2520
Ross Commons	229 N. 34 th Street	215-895-3580
Drexel University Student Technicians (DUST)	001 Creese Student Center	215-895-1330
Sodexo Campus Catering Services	Handschumacher Dining Hall	215-895-6934
Drexel Copy Shop	First Floor MacAlister	215-895-2898
Printing and Mailing	Main Building	215-895-2797
University Bookstore	First Floor MacAlister	215-895-2860
Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee (SAFAC) Advisor	SORC, Creese Student Center	215-895-1811
Drexel Athletics	Daskalakis Athletic Center (DAC)	215-895-1999

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