Organization Manual
Section 1:
Recognition & Training
Recognition & Training

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!

The Department of Student Activities (StuAct) works to provide students, faculty, and staff with the information and resources necessary to support the efforts and success of all recognized student organizations.

This Organization Manual was created to supplement information found on our website and to help you with the day to day management of your recognized student organization. It includes policies, procedures and lots of information to help you be successful! Please note that policies, rules, procedures, and even the law can change from year to year, so be sure to visit the manual often.

If you still need assistance, please contact Student Organization Development and Administration at (979) 458-4371 or email soda@stuact.tamu.edu. We are located in Koldus 142!

Our Philosophy - The Facilitator University Model

› The Division of Student Affairs at Texas A&M University values you and your student organizations as “facilitators” of the involvement experience.

› As facilitators, student organization members, leaders, and advisors work with administrators, faculty and staff to make intelligent, fair and reasonable choices within the boundaries established by state, federal, and local laws, university rules, and the educational mission of the institution.

WHAT IS RECOGNITION?

Recognition is the process where student organizations earn the ability to have access to privileges and resources at Texas A&M University, and it is defined in Student Rule 41.

GOALS OF RECOGNITION PROCESS INCLUDE:

› Establish an on-going relationship with student leaders and advisors

› Make student leaders and advisors aware of expectations, rules, responsibilities, and enhanced expectations of student organizations and their roles

› Gather updated information from student organizations
There are three types of recognized student organizations at Texas A&M:

1. Registered organizations:
   - Primarily present events that are limited to their membership
   - Involve a lower level of complexity due to their limited scope
   - Capable of functioning with minimal support from or interaction with the university

2. Affiliated organizations:
   - Present events for their members and invited guests
   - Are often housed within or connected to larger sponsored organizations
   - Involve a moderate level of complexity and/or higher risk due to their nature and/or scope

3. Sponsored organizations:
   - Are critical to the mission and culture of the university because of their role in representing TAMU
   - Routinely present events for the campus and broader community
   - Typically have a close relationship with a university department or office
   - Involve a higher level of complexity and/or risk because of their scope and perceived association with the university

Requirements:

- Complete the annual recognition requirements found [here](#).
- Prior to hosting events beyond the membership of the organization, develop an event plan and review it with the organization’s advisor and the Department of Student Activities or other designated University department.
- Prepare to be assessed during the recognition process to determine whether the organization must meet additional requirements, such as developing an operations manual and/or carrying additional liability insurance.
- Comply with any conditions, stipulations, or restrictions placed on its recognition. Affiliated organizations connected to sponsored organizations are responsible for complying with any rules, procedures, and expectations established by the sponsored organization.

Expectations of recognized organizations:

- Apply for and achieve university recognition annually through the Department of Student Activities.
- Adhere to all municipal, state, and federal laws, the Texas A&M University Student Rules, and all university rules and procedures.
- Remain in good standing with the university, including full compliance with any conditions, stipulations, or restrictions placed upon organizational recognition.
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Expectations of recognized organizations

- Keep the Department of Student Activities informed of changes to governing documents and organizational leadership and advisor(s) in a timely fashion
- Demonstrate respect for the university community and other student organizations
- Operate in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the university and the governing documents of the organization
- Consult with the appropriate university departments, offices, or representatives when planning large, unusual, or potentially complex events
- Ensure continuity in leadership from year to year by training newly selected leaders and maintaining good records and transition materials
- Establish and communicate appropriate advisor expectations
- Be open in membership unless otherwise permitted under applicable state or federal law

- Carry liability insurance to cover membership and events as deemed appropriate by university review (if applicable)
- Provide appropriate levels of support, training, and oversight for organizations that operate under the umbrella of the sponsored organization

Sponsored organizations must also meet the following expectations

PRIVILEGES OF RECOGNITION

- Association with Texas A&M University, including the ability to use university logos and trademarks
- Access to a MaroonLink organization page which features social media feeds, texting functions, photoboard, forms creation, and more
- Access to concessions permits that allow for the sale or exchange of items
- Participation in the MSC Open House
- Free banking services at the Student Organization Finance Center (SOFC)
- Eligibility to apply for storage space for the organization
- Use of university facilities and priority use of campus space
- Eligibility to apply for special funding for student organization events and risk initiatives
- Resources and support from staff members in the Department of Student Activities
What is an Advisor?
An advisor is a full time faculty member, staff member and/or graduate assistant who provides support and guidance to officers and members of a student organization. The advisor not only serves as a representative of the group in an official capacity, but also as a student advocate.

An advisor agrees to be an educational resource and consultant for an organization and its members. The advisor should have a genuine interest in the organization and their programs and activities.

More information on recruiting an advisor, and the advisor role, can be found here.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

A constitution contains the fundamental principles that outline the purpose, structure, and limits of an organization and provides a foundation upon which your organization operates.

Student Organization Constitutions:
- Are required during the annual recognition process
- May contain bylaws - secondary principles that govern the internal affairs of your organization
- Should be reviewed often - these documents can give members a better understanding of the organization's functions, but as your organization's needs change over time, so should your governing document.

More information on the required components of a constitution can be found here.

OPERATIONS MANUALS

Operations manuals are different than constitutions and are strongly suggested for student organizations, especially those who have more complex operations. Keep in mind that an ops manual may be required as an enhanced expectation for high-risk student organizations during the recognition process.

An operations manual serves as a resource in planning organizational events or activities, and can also outline how to make specific decisions that might impact the organization. It can include guidelines, procedures, and expectations set by your organization, making it a very effective tool for training and transitioning new leaders.
Although operations manuals will vary in content based on the unique needs of each student organization, ops manuals generally included:

- How to procedures - including risk management and event planning resources, safety precautions, necessary forms and instructions regarding specific responsibilities
- Important contact information – including officer and advisor information, and contacts for key stakeholders of organization (vendors, national organizations, etc.)
- Standard Operating Policies and Procedures - such as membership standards, discipline procedures, publicity guidelines, and financial plans
- Organizational History such as past calendars, event evaluations, and financial records

ADDITIONAL OFFICES ON CAMPUS OFFER SUPPORT AND RESOURCE TO STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, SO FEEL FREE TO CHECK THOSE OUT:

Departments of the Division of Student Affairs
The Association of Former Students
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Resource Center
International Student Services
University Writing Center
Veteran Resource and Support Center
Women's Resource Center
Consensual Language, Awareness, and Relationships (CLEAR) Office