



# **Student Organization Handbook**

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## Welcome to Student Organizations

Organizations are an important part of campus life at Sul Ross State University. Becoming involved in a student organization can be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding things you do while attending college. Being involved helps you to form lasting bonds with your fellow students and helps to balance your rigorous academic schedule with experiences outside of the classroom. Your involvement in an organization is a means of developing and honing skills in leadership, team work, time management and other areas that will transfer to life outside of college. We hope you find this Handbook for Student Organizations a useful manual of what to do and how to do it.

Complete University policies can be found in the Rules and Regulations section of the Student Handbook, available in the Student Life Office, University Center Room 211, or on the web. Policies stated in this handbook may change without notice.

If you have any questions about the policies found in this manual or online, please come by the Campus Activities Office, University Center Room 108.

Samples of forms and other useful items can be found in the Appendixes. Keep a copy of the handbook as a part of your organization records and refer to it as necessary. You may pick up copies of forms as you need them in the Campus Activities Office, UC 108.

Feel free to come by the Campus Activities Office any time you have questions or need help. Our mission is to facilitate a well-rounded, enriched college experience for *every* student. You are always welcome in our office!

## New Student Organizations

If there is not an existing group on campus that fits your interest, you may start one. All you have to do is ask! Completing the New Student Organization Temporary Registration form gives you 60 days to use University facilities for publicizing your proposed group and meeting with prospective members.

The first step when starting a new student organization is: make an appointment to meet with the Campus Activities Director to discuss your idea. New organizations should not duplicate existing organizations. Organizations must align with the university's mission statement and support a learning environment. During your meeting with the Campus Activities Director forms will be provided to get things started. A student organization constitution will be required for each new organization. A sample constitution will be provided during your meeting with the director.

Your new organization will need an advisor. Advisors must be full-time university employees. Make sure you meet with your potential advisor and inform him/her of the goals your organization has for the coming year. Talk about the expectations that you may have for your potential advisor. Once you have found someone to advise your group, encourage that individual to either call or visit the Campus Activities Office. Be sure to encourage your new advisor to attend any Advisor Orientation activities sponsored by the Campus Activities Office.

### Constitution Guidelines

A sample constitution will be provided by the Director of Campus Activities during your initial meeting to use as a guideline. A student organization constitution must contain the following 5 sections:

1. Requirements for membership
  - a. All voting members must be currently registered students.
  - b. Student Organizations may not discriminate based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or gender identity.
2. Financial Activities such as fund-raising activities, the charging of organization dues, etc.)
3. Limits on the powers of the organization and its members
4. Risk Management Plan

The constitution should be typed and checked carefully for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. Spell check is not enough read the document before submitting to Campus Activities.

Once your constitution has been reviewed and approved by the group, bring a hard copy

(signed and dated) to the Campus Activities office for approval and placement in your organization's file.

If you have any questions about what will or will not be approved in a constitution, go by the Campus Activities office and discuss the portions you have questions about.

Pending approval by the Campus Activities Director, the paperwork will be forwarded to the officers of the Student Government Association. Check with a Student Government Association officer to see when the registration request will be on the agenda; it is wise to be present at the meeting when your organization is being discussed. You can either visit the SGA Office, University Center Room 201, or call 432-837-8198.

Once your organization has been approved by all three bodies (the Campus Activities Director, the Student Government Association and the Dean of Student Life), the Agency Account Agreement forms will be sent to the Controller's Office and an account will be opened on behalf of your organization.

#### New Organization Registration Checklist:

- Meet with Campus Activities Director to discuss your ideas
- Pick up necessary forms in the Campus Activities Office
- Arrange a meeting time for potential members
- Meet with potential advisor
- Meet with potential organization members
- Turn in completed forms and constitution
- Approval by Campus Activities Director
- Approval by Dean of Student Life
- Approval by Student Government Association
- Organization account information to Controller's Office (if necessary)

## Existing Student Organizations

At the beginning of each academic year student organizations must register their organization and make plans to attend Risk Management for Student Organization training.

Check with your advisor to be sure he/she is willing to serve for another year. Your advisor should be informed if there are any changes planned which would affect his/her role. Then, decide on a time to meet with your group's membership.

In order to secure a meeting room, you will need to complete and return a Facility Use Request Form to the Campus Activities Office. At the meeting, be sure to obtain *all* of the information needed to fill out the four registration forms *completely*. Your paperwork will not be accepted unless complete and legible.

## Reactivating Student Organizations

If an organization does not return the Annual Student Organization Registration each year, it loses its recognition and is termed inactive. As long as registration was not revoked for disciplinary reasons, an organization can be reactivate at any time using the following procedure:

- Fill out the following forms. They are available online or in the Campus Activities office:
  - Annual Student Organization Registration
  - Annual Student Organization Membership List
  - Agency Account Agreement and
  - Agency Account Guidelines
- Return forms to Campus Activities when completed.
- Submit a new constitution or use the one currently on file in the Campus Activities office.
- Submit a Facility Use Request Form for the group's meeting location.
- Attend the next schedule Risk Management training for student organization



## Money Matters

### Agency Account

Organizations are not allowed to maintain a bank account off-campus. When your organization is registered, you may set up an account with the Controller's office where you can deposit, withdraw, or charge campus services. There is no charge for this account. The title signifies the University is acting as a bank, and has no control over the way the funds are used (except in a few cases). These are funds which the organization has raised and can spend with the approval of the group.

### Agency Account Agreement

Each fall, your organization must notify the Controller's Office exactly who is authorized to make transactions for the organization. The Agency Account Agreement that is part of the registration packet requires your primary advisor and designated student officer to sign so signatures can be matched on all paperwork for money matters.

### Cash

If your group needs a check for items such as a cash advance for trips, paying a vendor directly, etc., a Check Request Form must be submitted, specifying the amount of the check and when it should be ready for pick-up. The Check Request Form should be submitted to the Controller's Office at least five (5) working days before it's needed. When the check is ready, it can be picked up in the Cashier's Office.

### Debts

The Texas State University System and SRSU will not assume responsibility for your organization's debts. They will not act as a collection agency, except for money owed to the University or System, and they will not get involved in disputes between your group and a business.

### Interdepartmental Transfers

Postage, printing, supplies, and food services items can all be charged to an agency account.

### University Funds for Organizations

University Funds for Organizations (UFO) is an account set up for registered student organizations that do not receive Student Service Fees. The Student Government Association is in charge of the account. To request money from this account you must fill out the application and submit it to SGA four weeks before your scheduled event or 6 weeks before traveling. Organizations may be eligible for funds up to \$750 per semester. If you have questions, contact SGA at their office, UC 201, or call 432-837-8198 and leave a message. Rules for UFO funds are subject to change.

## Financial Advisor

Organizations that are financially active should seek advice from a tax professional and or accountant to verify that they are in compliance with all local, state, and federal tax laws.

## Fund Raising

- Student Organizations must be fully registered and in compliance with risk management guidelines to fund raise on university property.
- Fund Raising must be for a particular reason (listed on all fund raising documents)
- Funds raised may not be used to pay members or advisors

For more information regarding fund raising see the Administrative Policy Manual 2.26.

## Raffles

Your student organization must be registered with the IRS as a 501c3 to hold a raffle. Raffles are allowed, but with very strict guidelines. Your organization name must be on all tickets and promotional materials.

Each organization is limited to one (1) raffle per semester.

A Raffle Approval form and proof of 501c3 status must be on file in the Campus Activities office before the sale of any tickets is approved. This form provides important information about how a raffle can be conducted and should be carefully reviewed before and during a raffle to help ensure it is conducted within the guidelines set forth in the Texas Charitable Raffle Enabling Act.

Sul Ross State University, the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System, and its employees assume no responsibility regarding raffles or the awarding of prizes for raffles conducted by registered campus organizations.

## Solicitation

The sale or offer for sale of goods or services, for immediate or future delivery, or asking for or getting a gift or contribution. Political solicitation for votes or activities by legitimate candidates must be in accordance with the rules and regulations of Sul Ross State University and the Texas State University System. Solicitation may only be conducted by student members.

There are some activities which are not considered solicitations that will interest student organizations:

- Collection of membership dues at scheduled meetings is not considered solicitation.

- Collection of admission fees at scheduled programs sponsored by registered organizations is not considered solicitation. If admission is being charge, the organization may be charged for use of the facility.
- Activities sponsored by a registered organization for a charity and conducted in accordance with the University's nondiscrimination policies are not considered solicitation.
- Scheduled activities with all publicity clearly identifying the student organization as sponsor on all signs, tickets, or literature is not considered solicitation.
- Advertising an activity, item, service, or product in a University publication is not considered solicitation.
- Advertising an activity, item, service, or product sent to University students, faculty, or staff through the United States Mail is not considered solicitation.

For a complete list, refer to Appendix Seven, the Board of Regents, Texas State University System, Rules and Regulations.

When activities and fund raisers are conducted, they must:

- Be approved in advance by the Campus Activities Office.
- Be submitted on a Facilities Use Request Form.
- Not disturb classes or other scheduled activities.
- Not interfere with the regular traffic pattern of the campus, whether pedestrian or vehicular.

#### Solicitation on grounds, streets and sidewalks

Your organization may solicit on the grounds, streets, and sidewalks as long as it does not:

- Disturb or interfere with classes or other scheduled activity, interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- Harass or intimidate anyone.

***IMPORTANT: Organizations violating these rules may not be allowed to solicit on campus for a period of time determined by the University President. In case of repeated violations, the University President may cancel the registration of the organization.***

At any time, the University President may require any registered organization to file a sworn statement disclosing the sources and amounts of money which it obtained from sales and contributions on campus and listing where and how much was spent during the preceding semester or summer session. Organizations will be given 30 days following the end of the fall, spring, or summer session to comply. An organization failing to submit this statement will be prohibited from solicitation on the campus until it complies.

## Student Travel

Student Organizations that travel as a group to an event or activity more than 25 miles away from campus must comply with the following policies:

- Submit a completed Team/Group Travel Authorization form to the Student Life Office (UC Room 211). If the trip is approved, students attending will be listed on the Explained Absence List. Students listed on the request must sign a Liability Waiver which will be on file with the Team/Group Travel Authorization form in the Student Life Office.
- Your advisor or faculty/staff substitute must go on all trips.
- You may request a University vehicle for use on the trip. You must be 21 and a University employee to drive the vehicle.

## Risk Management Training for Student Organizations

All registered student organizations must attend risk management training. Every year organizations must send at least one student officer to represent the organization at a Risk Management for student organizations training workshop. Advisors must attend a workshop once every year. Several workshops will be scheduled during the Spring and Fall semester. It is the organizations responsibility to attend one of these workshops. Notices will be emailed to the campus community with dates and times of training workshops.

### Security

The **University Department of Public Safety (UDPS)** will help your group maintain security, control, and order at scheduled on-campus activities. Officers are also available to help with any emergency which occurs at an on-campus event sponsored by a registered campus organization.

### Alcoholic Beverages

The only on-campus location where alcohol is permitted is Kokernot Lodge, as long as the function is approved beforehand through the Campus Activities Office. Before alcohol will be approved for the requested activity, at least one of the group's officers planning to attend the function must complete a brief education course regarding alcohol and the risks of its use.

The sponsoring organization must adhere to the following procedures:

- The group must observe all local and state liquor laws.
- The organization's advisor *must* be present during the entire activity.
- The organization's advisor and officers are responsible for seeing that underage students do not have access to alcohol and for controlling the amount of alcohol consumed to ensure a safe activity.
- Any activity at Kokernot Lodge for which alcohol has been approved is open only to members of the sponsoring organization and their specifically invited guests. The function cannot be publicized as open to the campus community.
- All alcoholic beverages must be served from the bar, by an agent of the sponsoring organization; liquor bottles are not allowed on the tables.
- Beer is the only alcoholic beverage that may be consumed outside the Lodge.
- Kegs are not allowed inside the Lodge. Kegs may be on the porch for picnics or other activities outside the Lodge.
- No fee may be charged for the alcoholic beverage or admission to the event.
- The clean-up of the Lodge and grounds is the responsibility of the organization

## Use of University Facilities

### Facilities Use

Your organization can conduct activities on campus, provided the location has been reserved through the Campus Activities Office by completing and submitting a Facilities Use Request Form. The organization advisor is required to sign the Facilities Use Request form. ***Do not advertise your event before you have reserved the use of University facilities!*** Reservations for facilities are made in the order they are received, so advance planning can eliminate last minute problems. If a facility is being used to host a student organization fund raising activity organizations will be charged for the use of the facility at the non-profit rate listed on the Facilities Use request Form.

### Classrooms

Classrooms in various academic buildings can be reserved for organization meetings. Do not assume a room is available just because there is no one in there at any given time. Availability must be confirmed with Campus Activities.

### Kokernot Lodge

The Lodge has 60 chairs and 10 tables available to groups using the Lodge. The kitchen has a refrigerator, electric stove, sink and cabinets which can be used. No dishes or utensils are provided. Fire laws set the maximum capacity for the Lodge at 85 for a stand-up reception and 60 for a seated meal or meeting. The student organization is responsible for seeing that the stated capacity is not exceeded. The Lodge must be left in the condition it is found; tables and chairs properly arranged and extras put away, kitchen and bar cleaned, floor swept, and all trash taken to the dumpster in the parking lot. Heating or cooling must be turned off and all windows and doors locked before leaving.

#### Important!

Clean-up of the Lodge and grounds is the responsibility of the organization.

### The Mall

Located in the center of the main campus can be used for a variety of outdoor activities. These activities should be scheduled for a time when they will not conflict with classes. Electricity is available on the mall in various locations and if needed, should be requested on the Facilities Use Request Form.

### Zuzu Verk Outdoor Amphitheater

Located between the Residential Living offices and the Science building. This location has power and phone chargers.

### Marshall Auditorium

In the Horace W. Morelock Academic Building. It seats 700 and contains light and sound equipment, control booth in the balcony, stage with curtains, large movie screen, public address system, and a ticket booth. The Campus Activities Office will assist organizations using the Auditorium. A meeting should be scheduled with the staff so the group's requirements can be assessed. Only authorized personnel may operate the equipment in the Auditorium and the organization using it will be required to pay an hourly rate for the services of all technicians required to operate the equipment. Only the house lights are available for use without technicians. No tobacco, food, or beverages are allowed in the Auditorium.

### Studio Theatre

Located in the Fine Arts Building, seats 121 and contains a light and sound control booth, stage with curtains, movie screen, public address system, and ticket booth. Only authorized personnel may operate the equipment in Studio Theatre and the group using it will be required to pay an hourly rate for the services of all technicians required to operate the equipment. Only the house lights are available for use without technicians. No tobacco, food, or beverages are allowed in the Studio Theatre.

### The Swimming Pool

The pool is part of the Graves Pierce Recreational Center and may be reserved for parties during the hours it is normally closed. A lifeguard must be hired for such an activity. Contact the Campus Activities Office, extension 8191.

### Speech and Assembly

Groups can gather and engage in free speech on campus as long as the activity does not actively encourage anyone to break any laws. These gatherings can be regulated by the University President. Any speaker paid from State funds must have the speech open to the public. Off-campus speakers must be sponsored by a registered campus organization or University department.

## University Resources

### Banners and Posters

Craft (butcher) paper is available from Campus Activities.

### Copies

The copier in the Campus Activities Office is available for use by campus organizations. As with the banners and posters, there is a charge for copies which can be paid in cash or through an IT.

### Workroom

A workroom is maintained by the Campus Activities Office for the use of registered campus organizations in UC 203. Among the items available are butcher paper.

### Portable Sound System

A portable sound system may be checked out from the Campus Activities office. Use of the sound equipment will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Campus Activities Director. Arrangements should be made at least five (5) working days in advance.

### Vehicle Request

A University employee acting as advisor for a student organization can request a vehicle from the Motor Pool for organization trips. Call extension 8085 to check the availability of a vehicle for the time you need it, complete a Vehicle Request Form, and send it to Box C-107. The **Physical Plant** Administrative Professional can give you details about vehicle use.

The Administrative Policy Manual section 4.11 Student Travel and Off-Campus Activities Guidelines contains the following Driver Requirements:

- Must be at least 21 years of age
- A university employee
- Possess a valid Texas Class C operator's license
- Have approved driver's record for the past three years (determined by Motor Vehicle Record check)

Remember; alcohol/Tobacco products are not allowed in University vehicles at any time, for any purpose.



## Clothing, Supplies, Fund-raising Items

The **Bookstore** can order clothing and other items specifically imprinted for a registered student organization. The Bookstore also maintains a supply of catalogs from a wide variety of companies and will assist organizations in identifying vendors for specific products.

## Mail

A post office box in the name of your organization is available through the **Post Office** by paying the current annual fee at the Cashier's Office. The receipt should be taken to the Post Office so that a box assignment can be made and combination issued. If your organization has an agency account, you can also use the Post Office in the following manner:

- Mail leaving the campus must have the account number in the upper left corner. The Post Office will charge the account for the postage.
- Mail staying on campus must have the account number in the upper left corner. It does not require postage and no charge will be made.
- Handbills to be distributed through campus mail should be folded to the approximate size of a legal envelope. Each piece must have the account number visible before the Post Office will accept them for distribution
- Organizations without an agency account must pay postage for all mail - whether it is staying on campus or not.

## Recreational Equipment

Recreational Sports may have items such as basketballs, volleyballs, nets, and horseshoe sets, are sometimes available for use by campus organizations. Contact the Director of Recreational Programs at extension 8299.

## Refreshments and Catering

ARAMARK, the contracted food service provider for the University, may be available to cater refreshments, luncheons, banquets, sack lunches, picnics, and bar-b-ques for organization meetings, dances, programs, etc. **ARAMARK has the right of first refusal on all food service in every University facility with the exception of Kokernot Lodge, Kokernot Field and Jackson Field.** ARAMARK can be helpful to organizations ordering large quantities of food for banquets or fund-raising projects. Contact the Manager or go by the University Center Food Court for details.

## Publicity and Posting

### Posting

All posters, flyers, announcements, etc., must be approved and dated by the Campus Activities Office prior to posting.

All posters, flyers, announcements, etc., must include the name of the student organization sponsoring the event and information contact. Items may be posted for a maximum of two weeks and must be removed the day after the event. All postings are to be put on bulletin boards only. Posting on any departmental bulletin boards is permitted only with the approval of the office to which it is assigned. Such bulletin boards will display a statement indicating the proper office to contact for permission to post items. Bulletin boards that do not bear a statement of assignment are available for general posting.

Do not post on glass, brick, sheet rock, handrails, or other areas that may cause damage to property or cause a safety hazard. Distribution of flyers, leaflets or other printed material on automobiles in parking lots is strictly prohibited. Any organization or individual failing to comply with this policy may lose the privilege of using University facilities, in addition to other disciplinary action. Items associated with off-campus entities may be posted at the discretion of the Campus Activities Coordinator. Off-campus entities must follow the above posting policies.

### Publicity

Your group can distribute information (handouts, posters, or mailings) as long as it is not vulgar, libelous, obscene, or does not encourage breaking any laws, rules, or regulations. Classes and/or regular traffic on the campus cannot be disrupted by information distribution. All posters must be approved in the Campus Activities Office. Banners on or between buildings or trees are not permitted. Flyers are not allowed to be placed under car windshield wipers. Bulletin boards can be used when permission has been given by the office in charge of the board being used. Be sure to check for the sign indicating which office is in charge of a particular board.

### Mail

Handbills to be distributed through campus mail should be folded to the approximate size of a legal envelope. Each piece must have the account number visible before the Post Office will accept them for distribution.

### General Distribution

Your group can distribute information, (handouts, posters, or mailings) as long as it is not vulgar, libelous, obscene, or does not encourage breaking any laws or rules. Classes and/or regular traffic on the campus cannot be disrupted by information distribution.

### Bulletin Boards

Bring your posters to the Campus Activities Office for approval. After CA approval, bulletin boards can be used when permission has been given by the office in charge of the board being used. If they are not approved, they will be taken down.

### Skyline

Activities can be publicized in *The Skyline* when the information has been submitted to Student Publications by the published deadline. Articles will be printed at no cost to your group. Pictures may be run with the story, if there is room in the issue. For more details, call the News and Publications Office at extension 8061 or go by BAB 108.

### Publicity, News Release

You can get help with advertising needs from the News and Publications Office. Use of a variety of media is available through their contacts. Student Publications can help with news coverage and photos of special events. Organization photos for the University yearbook, *The Brand*, are coordinated through News and Publications.

## Organization Rights and Responsibilities

Your campus student organization is considered a legal entity subject to city, state, and federal laws; the regulations of the Board of Regents; and rules, regulations, and policies of Sul Ross State University. As such, your group has certain rights and responsibilities which must be met.

### Organization Rights

Your organization has the right to:

- Make public that it is an officially registered student organization of Sul Ross State University.
- Select an advisor (unless the constitution specifies the advisor).
- Use University facilities in accordance with the Facilities Use Policy which requires a Facilities Use Request Form.
- Raise funds in accordance with all University policies and city, state, and federal laws.
- Select members, provided there is no discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, ethnic origin, or sex (except in groups that can legally restrict membership).
- Use University publicity sources and be listed in University catalogs, annuals, and other publications.
- Invite off-campus guests to appear for approved activities in accordance with the Speakers Policy (don't forget the Facilities Use Request Form).
- Distribute organization information in accordance with the policies on Publicity and Solicitation (don't forget the Facilities Use Request Form).

### Organization Responsibilities

Your group has the responsibility to:

- Be aware of the special role it enjoys as part of the University.
- Act in the best interests of its members and the University.
- Act in compliance with its constitution; local, state, and federal laws; and University rules, regulations, and policies.
- Read, understand, and follow policies in The Code of Student Conduct, and the Rules and Regulations sections of the Student Handbook, available on the Student Life website at.
- Exercise good judgment, good faith, and reasonable precautions in conducting its activities

- Conduct organization business and financial affairs in accordance with good business practices, including, but not limited to, prompt discharge of all obligations, and deposit all funds with the Controller's Office at Sul Ross State University, at no charge to the group.
- Act in a fiscally responsible manner, *i.e.*, see that all financial obligations are paid, damage to facilities or equipment is repaired or paid for, etc.
- Realize it is responsible for members behavior at all functions, including informal or unofficial meetings or parties.

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action against your organization, or its members - including possible suspension of organization registration.

## Student Organization Association

All registered student organizations are members of the Student Organization Association. Meetings provide an opportunity for organization representatives to talk with one another about issues and activities. Meetings will be scheduled as needed.

## Student Organization Forms

(contact campus activities for copies of the following forms)

Deposit Slip

Check request

Officer Update Form

