

## **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 also a means of developing and honing skills in leadership, teamwork, 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. Policies stated in this handbook may change without notice.

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 piques your interest, you may start one. All you have to do is ask! Completing the New Student Organization Temporary Registration form gives you six months to use University facilities for publicizing your proposed group and meeting with prospective members.

1. Make an appointment to meet with the Director of Campus Activities to discuss your idea and get the necessary forms.
2. Find an advisor. Your advisor must be a full-time university employee. Make sure you meet with your potential advisor and inform them of your goals for your organization. This is also a good time to go over expectations. The advisor should contact the Director of Campus if they have any questions.
3. Create a constitution. You will find an example of how this should look in this handbook.
4. Review and approve your constitution.
5. Submit your constitution to the Campus Activities office.

Pending approval by the Director of Campus Activities, the paperwork will be forwarded to the officers of the Student Government Association (SGA). Check with an SGA officer to see when the registration request will be on the agenda; it is wise to be present at the meeting when

your organization will be discussed. You can either visit the SGA office, UC room 201, or call 432-837-8198.

Once your organization has been approved by all three bodies (Director of Campus Activities, the Student Government Association, and the Dean of Students), 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 the Director of Campus Activities to discuss your ideas.
- ☐ Pick up necessary forms in the Campus Activities office.
- ☐ Meet with potential advisor.
- ☐ Meet with potential organization members.
- ☐ Turn in completed forms and constitution.
- ☐ Approval by Director of Campus Activities.
- ☐ Approval by Dean of Students.
- ☐ Approval by Student Government Association.
- ☐ Organization account information given to Controller's office.

#### **Existing Student Organizations**

At the beginning of each academic year, current information about your organization needs to be filed in the Campus Activities office. These four forms are:

- Annual Student organization registration
- Annual Student organization membership list
- Agency account agreement
- Agency account guidelines

These forms are available in the Campus Activities office and will also be sent via email to your advisor. Complete all the forms for the coming academic year. Make sure you check with your advisor to be sure they are willing to serve for another year. Your advisor should be informed of any changes that might affect their role. You will need to decide on a time and place to meet with your group membership. The first meeting should be a time for your group to gather all the information needed for the paperwork you submit to Campus Activities.

\*To secure a meeting room, you will need to complete and return a Facility Use Request form to the Campus Activities office. \*

#### **Reactivating Student Organizations**

If an organization does not return the annual Student organization registration paperwork each year, it loses its recognition and is termed “inactive”. As long as registration was not revoked for disciplinary reasons, an organization can reactivate at any time. An organization officer will need to come by the Campus Activities office and pick up the required forms:

- Annual Student organization registration
- Annual Student organization membership list
- Agency account agreement
- Agency account guidelines

They will also need to check to make sure we still have a constitution on file. If not, one will need to be submitted.

### **Constitution Guidelines**

The sample constitution is included at the end of this document but should in no way limit your constitution. There are four required sections for all constitutions or bylaws. Your constitution must include:

Article I – name of organization and who you will be referred as

Article II – your purpose and goal(s) of the organization

Article III – addressing requirements for membership

Article VII – outlining officer eligibility

Article IX – describing the financial dealings of your organization (such as fund- raising activities, charging of dues, etc.)

Article X – placing limits on the powers of the organization

The constitution should be typed and checked carefully for spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. 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 questions about what will or what won’t be approved, make an appointment to meet with the Director of Campus Activities.

### **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 otherwise).
- Use University facilities in accordance with the Facilities Use Policy.
- Raise funds in accordance with all University policies and city, state and federal laws.
- Select members, provided there is no discrimination based on race, creed, color, religion, ethnic origin, or sex.
- Use University publicity sources. This includes being listed in university catalogs, annuals, and other publications.
- Invite off-campus guests to appear for approved activities.
- Distribute organizational information in accordance with the policy.

**Organization Responsibilities** – Your group has the responsibility to:

- Be aware of the special role it enjoys as a part of the university.
- Act in the best interests of the 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.
- Exercise good judgment, good faith, and reasonable precautions in conducting activities.
- Conduct organization business and financial affairs in accordance with good business practices, including, but not limited to prompt deposit all funds with the Controller's office.
- Act in a fiscally responsible manner. For example, see that all financial obligations are paid, damage to facilities or equipment is repaired or paid for.
- Realize it is responsible for members' behavior at all functions, including formal or unofficial meetings or parties.

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

Organizations can use many locations on campus for meetings, parties, fundraisers, etc. Availability of a room is verified by checking with the Campus Activities office. Once a location is found, the reservation is confirmed by completing the Facilities Use request form, with your advisor's signature authorizing the event.

## **Risk Management**

In accordance with Texas Education Code, Section 51.9361, all recognized student organizations are required to review and complete annual Risk Management training with the university.

A. Timeline: For student organizations seeking re-recognition, training must be completed between July 15-September

1. For new student organizations seeking recognition, training will be completed during the application process.

B. Responsible Parties: A responsible member of each organization must complete the Risk Management Training. The training is self-paced and must be completed and passed for the organization to gain credit. The member is then responsible for relaying the information covered to their organization's entire membership. Advisors must complete training within their first year of advisement and are encouraged to complete training annually.

C. Training topics will include but are not limited to

1. Possession and use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs including penalties for possession or use.

2. Overdose awareness and appropriate response training.

3. Hazing.

4. Sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct and harassment.

5. Fire and other safety issues, including the possession and use of firearms or other weapons or explosive devices.

6. Student travel.

7. Behavior at parties and other events held by a student organization.

8. Adoption of a student organization risk management policy

9. Issues regarding persons with disabilities, including a review of applicable requirements of federal and state law, and any related policies of the institution, for providing reasonable accommodations and modifications to address the needs of students with disabilities, including access to the activities of the student organization.

D. Records of completion will be retained by Student Involvement for 3 academic years unless the university records retention schedule changes.

## **Travel Policy**

In ordinance with Risk Management, student travel and transportation must be effectively managed by Sul Ross State University. Although no set of guidelines can guarantee the health and safety needs of each individual involved in an off-campus activity, these guidelines address issues that may merit attention and thoughtful consideration. It is of utmost importance that thoughtful judgement be made, as well as responsible decisions whenever students are traveling on official university sponsored activities. These policies are in effect whenever 1) official travel undertaken by one or more students 2) these individuals must reach said event or activity that is located more than 25 miles from University Campus 3) a university vehicle is used 4) university funds are used to lease a vehicle. For the purpose of this document, the staff advisor, coordinator, director, or other persons overseeing the off-campus activity shall be identified as the Responsible University Official (RUO). The RUO is responsible for insuring compliance with this policy.

1. **RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY OFFICIAL (RUO)**- At least one faculty or university employee acting in an official capacity must accompany students on any off-campus activity. RUOs are responsible for knowing the university policies and regulations, along with the ones accompanying this document. Noncompliance must be made clear to participants and the RUO must take appropriate action when in violation. Exceptions can be granted by the vice-president about a university employee traveling, as well as graduate teaching or research assistants, provided they are at least 21 years of age and have permission of the Department Chair to drive a university vehicle unaccompanied by a full-time faculty or staff member. Students who are not employed by the university are not insured under the liability policy and are not authorized to drive university owned/leased vehicles.
2. **DRIVER REQUIREMENTS**- All drivers of university owned/leased vehicles must be at least 21 years of age and a university employee. Drivers must have a valid Texas Class C operator's license, an approved driver's record for the last three years, and successfully complete a university travel safety-training course for the university vehicle being used.
3. **ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND RELEASE AGREEMENT/ TEAM GROUP TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FORM /PARTICIPANT/ RESPONSIBILITY FORM**- Each participant or their parent/guardian in case of a minor, must complete and sign the Assumption of Risk and Release Agreement and Indemnity Agreement. A copy of these records must also be

provided to the student affairs administrator (Alpine – Dean of Student Life Office; Rio Grande College – Director of Student Affairs).

4. **UNIVERSITY POLICIES-** All university policies including use or possession of tobacco, weapons, alcohol, or illegal drugs must be enforced while traveling on a university-sponsored trip.
5. **UNIVERSITY OWNED/RENTED VEHICLES AND CHARTERED BUSES-** All drivers must be approved and trained for transportation on said trip.
6. **USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE-** Because personal automobile insurance will be looked to first in the event of an accident, all persons who use their vehicles while conducting university business should be aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use. No individual shall be required to use his/her vehicle to drive to university-sponsored events and activities. Use of personal vehicles in this case is discouraged.
7. **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS-** No more than ten (10) people, including the driver, plus gear, should be loaded on any one maxi-van. The number of passengers should not exceed the number of seatbelts. Seatbelts must be worn by all occupants when vehicles are in motion.
8. **CELL PHONES-** All vehicles are recommended to have access to cellular devices. The driver may not use cellular phones or devices while the vehicle is in motion.
9. **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/FIRST AID-** A first aid kit and road hazard kit must be in all vehicles. The RUO must implement the following procedures:
  - ❖ Stop immediately, notify the proper law enforcement agency and/or emergency medical services (911)
  - ❖ Notify local authorities (911)
  - ❖ Notify SRSU Police (432.837.8100) who will notify physical plant
  - ❖ Leave a phone number where the dispatcher can contact you
  - ❖ Wait until help arrives
  - ❖ The following information will need to be obtained from the driver of the other vehicle in the event of an accident involving additional vehicles: Year of vehicle, make and model of vehicle, color of vehicle, license plate number, driver's license number of the other driver, and insurance provider
  - ❖ DO NOT make any statements, oral or written, as to who was at fault. Any admission of fault may impair the ability of insurance to defend a case of questionable legal liability.
  - ❖ Record the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all witnesses
  - ❖ Provide all required documentation and information to law enforcement officials
  - ❖ If the vehicle is inoperable, notify the Physical Plant (432.837.8085) for towing instructions. When towing a vehicle, remove the logbook, keys, fuel cards, and all property, which might be lost or stolen

- ❖ When returning to campus, the driver must immediately contact the Physical Plant to follow up on the completion of the accident report forms
- 10. **MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN-** Notify the dispatcher in the UDPS (432.837.8100) who will notify transportation services and the safety officer.
  - ❖ Leave a phone number for someone to call you back
  - ❖ Wait for transportation services to call the vehicle and dispatch assistance to the breakdown location

## **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 for campus services. There is no charge for this account. The title signifies that 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 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 at least five (5) working days before it is 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 businesses.

**University Funds for Organizations** – University Funds for Organizations (UFOO 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 prior to your scheduled event. Organizations may be eligible for funds up to \$750 per semester.



### **Advisor Contract**

To the Office of Campus Activities:

As an employee of Sul Ross State University, I \_\_\_\_\_,  
agree to serve as advisor to the \_\_\_\_\_, a  
student organization officially registered by the Campus Activities Office. I understand and  
agree to meet the following requirements and responsibilities:

1. To be reasonably informed about the organization's purposes and programs.
2. To be reasonably informed concerning University policies and procedures governing student activities and student organizations.
3. To attend and supervise, if necessary, all events at which my presence is required, or find an appropriate substitute.
4. To frequently attend organization meetings.
5. To encourage the organization members to assume responsibility for the organization and the program's effectiveness.
6. To provide advice on the planning and implementation of events and activities.
7. To provide continuity for the organization from year to year.
8. To be willing, as an advisor, to accept telephone messages or correspondence via the university mail system, regarding activities or announcements that should be conveyed to the organization.
9. To approve of and sign off on ALL activities sponsored by the organization.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department

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Telephone Number

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Email Address

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Signature

Date