

Missouri Western State University
Registered Student Organization Advisor Agreement

(Adapted from the Student Organization Advisor Agreement at Harvard College)

Type clearly and legibly.

Organization Name: _____

Organization President/Contact: _____

Advisor Name: _____ E-Mail: _____

Title: _____ Phone: _____

NOTICE

Advisors for recognized student organizations (RSOs) play important roles. Not only do they strive to make a positive contribution to the healthy development of an organization, but they offer constructive advice and aid of various kinds.

RSO advisors can also help prevent, and even cure, undesirable situations that may arise throughout the course of the year. An RSO advisor should apprise the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) of situations that may need further attention from the University.

RSO advisors have many roles and expectations. Though the importance and level of responsibility for an advisor may vary from organization to organization, all advisors make an integral part of an organization.

All advisors should act in accordance with the policies of Missouri Western State University, especially those found in the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Organization Handbook, and MWSU Policy Guide.

RSOs may have more than one advisor, but at least ONE advisor MUST be a member of the MWSU Faculty, Staff, or Administration. Advisors should have a basic interest in the activities of the RSO in which they are sponsoring, and should be able to contribute in meaningful ways.

When securing an advisor for an RSO, a copy of this form, signed by the advisor, stating that he or she has read the roles and expectations outlined in the *Student Organization Handbook* and should be submitted to the CSI. This form must be resubmitted on an annual basis.

I have read and understand the roles and expectations for RSO advisors, and I agree to serve in an official capacity, as the group's faculty/staff advisor. I have received a copy of the *Student Organization Handbook* and am aware of the policies therein.

Advisor Signature: _____

G#: _____

Date: _____

Student Organization Advisor's Guide

Missouri Western State University

July 2017

Preface on Principle and Policy

Guiding Principles for Student Organization Advisors at MWSU

All registered student organizations must have an advisor who is a full time employee at Missouri Western State University. Student employees, adjunct faculty, and teaching, research, or graduate assistants do not qualify). Advisors are educators outside the classroom setting and a resource person for the organization. Ideally, the recommendations and advice from advisor to the organization's membership and leadership is welcome and seen as valuable. It is understood at times the advisor may disagree with an organizational decision and/or activities, but decision making and goal setting for the organization must remain in the hands of student membership. A situation may occur when the advisor feels organizational activities or decisions as incompatible with his or her own beliefs, the objectives of the University, or inappropriate for a university setting. In this case, if the students do not heed the insights of the advisor, he or she must decide whether to continue on as the group's advisor. If the actions or decisions of the organization are contrary to University policy or regulation, the advisor must report the group to the Center for Student Involvement or the Director of Student Development.

Advisors have a variety of roles with an organization including a mentor, teacher, leader, and follower. The advisor and students must have regular communication in order for them to advise the organization on its day-to-day operations and activities. Ideally, the advisor assists the organization members and officers in staying in compliance with their charter, constitution, bylaws, and applicable Student Government Association of MWSU policies, as well as local, state, and federal laws and ordinances. Advisors should also assist student leaders in developing critical thinking skills in the areas of event planning, risk management, organization management, group processes, and ethical decision making.

Financial Responsibility of Organizations

Every student organization is governed by the standards and regulations defined by the Student Government Association. Officers of organizations are responsible for making sure their groups are financially sound. Student organizations are responsible for contacting the Federal Internal Revenue Service for specific information on income tax requirements and other filing requirements. Student organizations may be liable to pay sales tax on some of their fundraising efforts.

The University is not responsible for debts or other liabilities of student groups. All new and continuing members of groups, as well as businesses where products and services are ordered, should be informed of this. Officers of groups may be held liable for financial obligations incurred by the group.

Responsibility of Organizations

Students are subject to local, state, and federal laws and ordinances. The University expects that all student organizations will prevent unlawful actions in connection with their activities. Failure to do so could subject student organizations, the officers, and members to disciplinary action (please refer to Student Code of Conduct). The organization acknowledges that its activities, including some which may occur on the campus of MWSU, are not eligible for liability protection to obtain a special-event(s) liability policy you must secure it at your organizations expense.

What does it mean to advise a student organization?

An advisor is an educator in a non-traditional classroom. The advisor should utilize personal expertise and perspective to stimulate individual development of members and the overall development of the registered student organization. The basic purpose of the advisor is to work with the designated leaders and members of a functioning student organization with the intent of the following goals:

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

(Adapted from: McKaig, R & Policello, S. (1984). Group Advising-Defined, Described, and Examined. In Schuh, J.H. (Ed), A Handbook for Student Group Advisers, 47.)

Who Can Be An Advisor?

All registered student organizations must have an advisor who is a full time employee of Missouri Western State University. (graduate assistants, student employees, and adjunct faculty do not qualify)

Advisor Responsibilities

- Must attend the organization's meetings and programs that do not conflict with daily work schedule.
- Lend experience and knowledge and act as a resource to the organization.
- Encourage students to participate in community outreach.
- Ensure organization academic requirements are being met.
- Oversee that someone from the organization is attending the monthly SGA President Leadership Council meetings held on every 1st Wednesday of the month.
- Encourage organization to evaluate objectives and programs periodically to determine their validity.
- Foster teamwork within the organization and serve as a liaison between the university and the organization.
- Assist in cutting through the administrative "red tape," if possible.
- Make themselves knowledgeable of all university policies and procedures and encourage adherence of them within the organization.
- Supervise transactions through the RSO financial account.
- Sign documents on behalf of the organization. This includes, but is not limited to, activity approval, room reservation/room set-up, work orders, and vehicle reservations.
- Intervene, when appropriate, in conflicts between group members.
- Assist with organizational crises.
- Give honest feedback to members assisting them in their personal growth and development as a leader.

If you, as the advisor to the organization, are unable to carry out the responsibilities and follow the guidelines for the student organization, the individual organization has the right to remove you from your duties and appoint a new one. The individual organization will need to submit a notification in writing for immediate changes to occur. The Center for Student Involvement also reserves the right to remove the advisor from their role and appoint a new advisor for any organization. If at any time you feel you are unable to carry out your position as an advisor, a notification to the organization and the Center for Student Involvement will need to be submitted.

Frequently Asked Questions

“Our club wants to hire a performer/entertainer for an event, what should I do?” Advisors should make sure that the organization has enough funding to cover event-related expenses prior to making any commitments with performers, agents, or vendors. Most performers/entertainers will require a fee for their appearance. In order for any entertainer to be paid, a contract must be completed and signed by the organization representative along with advisor. The Center for Student Involvement is well versed in dealing with performance agreements/contracts and is always willing to assist an organization with such matters. It is recommended that you give yourself at least a 30-day cushion prior to the intended event. Contracts need to be reviewed, and signed, and check(s) need to be cut. This process will take at least four weeks.

“I have been asked to be an advisor to a new and/or existing club and I want to know what my responsibilities will be.” Advisors are a campus resource that help clubs define projects and set goals. Advisors ensure that an accurate roster is submitted every semester to the Center for Student Involvement. Furthermore, advisors should be familiar with the club’s constitution, which is available in Blum 207. Advisors are also responsible for helping oversee any budget that may be available.

“As an advisor, do I need to attend all of the club’s meetings and events?” We encourage that advisors be active participants in the organization's regular activities and events. The advisor helps guide the organization and, in many cases, plays a large role in the organization’s success.

“Who should I speak to about ordering food for an event?” Aramark has the exclusive right to provide food on campus and should always be your first contact for catering needs. They are a great resource in planning a food-related event on campus. If your organization wishes to bring in another caterer, Aramark must first be consulted and approve your request. No organization may bring in any food from outside vendors without advance permission from Aramark. Aramark can be contacted at ext. 4426.

“What are some of the ways our organization can advertise events on campus?” Organizations will typically develop their own publicity, which may be distributed across campus. When advertising on campus you always need to have flyers, posters, banners, etc. approved by The Center for Student Involvement. The Center for Student Involvement will post a maximum of thirteen (13) related publicity documents on bulletin boards located around campus. Flyers should be brought to the Center for Student Involvement in order to get approval. Advertisements to be posted need to be dropped off on Mondays before 12:00pm. The Office of Marketing and Communications can also be of assistance for other publicity options such as, press release, marquee, public service announcement, etc.