

Student Organization Advisor Handbook

Miami University

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Advisor Job Description

Miami University Student Organization Advisor Job Description

Each organization is required to have an advisor that is a full-time (and emeritus) faculty, staff or graduate student member at Miami University. The advisor should be an individual who has a high interest level in the purpose of the organization. The advisor is asked to provide support, guidance, mature judgment, and continuity by assisting new officers during the transition process. While encouraged to be actively involved in all affairs of the organization, advisors are minimally expected to:

- Meet with student officers at least once a month
- Attend periodic meetings and activities
- Review and approve registration, budgets, travel plans, constitutions and other forms
- Help ensure the activities of the organization reflects favorably on the university
- Provide historical background and serve as a point of reference
- Support participation for its contribution to educational and personal development
- Assist members in balancing their extra-curricular activities
- Intervene in high-risk situations and challenge student decision-making when necessary
- Participate in the mandatory reporting of crimes for statistical and timely warning requirements of the Jeanne Clery Campus Security Act.

Advisor involvement may encompass many other areas including...

- Advise with regards to fundraising, sponsorship and spending
- Assist in transitioning new officers and developing leadership skills of all members
- Provide input into the recruitment, selection, and evaluation of members and officers
- Be aware that you may be consulted about personal concerns and are under no obligation in these instances.

An advisor agrees to operate as a good faith ambassador for Miami University. Advisors agree to abide by all policies governing student organizations and are encouraged to attend educational opportunities offered by the university to promote further development. Advisors acting within the course and scope of the responsibilities of their position are protected against individual liability. For more information on employee liability, see the general counsel's website at <http://www.units.MiamiOH.edu/generalcounsel>. Promotion and Tenure Guidelines recognize, "contributions to student welfare through service...as an advisor to a student organization" as part of the service aspect of the role of a faculty member at Miami University.

If you are serving as a faculty/staff advisor to a fraternity or sorority there are additional expectations:

All fraternities and sororities are required to have an advisor who serves on faculty or staff at Miami University. A fraternity/sorority faculty/staff advisor serves the chapter in addition to their chapter advisor.

It is the main purpose of the faculty/staff advisor to promote and support academic success within the organization. The duties and responsibilities of the advisor include, but are not limited to, the following functions:

- Assist the chapter in developing an overall scholarship program.
- Be available to meet with the new members each semester to review their academic progress and plans at Miami University.
- Assist with developing any scholarship recognition program for the chapter.
- Assist the chapter in developing an academic incentives program.
- Attend any scholarship receptions the chapter hosts.
- Be available to meet with individual members who are in need of academic assistance.
- Attend two chapter meetings/dinners each semester to get to know the members and the members to get to know the faculty advisor.
- Attend chapter advisory board meetings at least once a semester.

Other important information:

- In addition to being covered by Miami's liability policy, faculty advisors are also covered by the national fraternity's and sorority's policies but it is always good to check with them.
- Faculty advisors serve for one-year terms with possible extensions based on a mutual agreement between the fraternity or sorority and the faculty advisor.
- Faculty advisors are not expected to serve as the chapter advisor nor to serve on the alumni board (if they wish to serve in these positions that would be great but it is not expected)
- Faculty advisors are not on call nor are they responsible for the social aspects of the chapter.
- A fraternity or sorority may have their chapter advisor serve in the role of faculty/staff advisor for no more than 4 weeks. The Cliff Alexander Office will help chapters who do not have a faculty/staff advisor find one if they are in need.

If you are serving as a Club Sports Advisor there are additional expectations:

Advisors agree to operate as good faith ambassadors for the Club Sport Program and, when applicable, agree to cooperate and share information with similar sport clubs. Advisors agree to abide by all policies of the Club Sport Program. Any failure to comply may be grounds for revocation of status with the club. If travel is part of the agreement, it should be noted in the constitution. Specifically, this should state whether there is any kind of payment and/or reimbursement of funds with regards to hotel, transportation and food expenses. These should be noted in the constitution. Club Sport advisors are expected to attend periodic practices, activities and competitions.

Advisor Roles

Each advisor perceives his/her relation to a student organization differently. Some Advisors play very active roles, attending meetings, working with student officers, and assisting in program planning and development. Others maintain a more distant relationship to the organization. It is hoped that each Advisor will maintain some regular contact with his/her organization. An Advisor accepts responsibility for keeping informed about activities of the organization and for advising officers of the organization on the appropriateness and general merits of policies and activities. However, Advisors are not responsible for the actions or policies of student organizations; students are solely responsible. Advisors should be both accessible and interested and should provide whatever counsel a group or its members might seek.

Given the myriad of purposes, activities, and objectives of various student groups, the role of the Advisor will vary in some degree between groups. The purpose of this section is to outline basic roles of an Advisor. As groups vary in their expectations and needs, it is important that you, as an Advisor, develop an understanding with the organization you are to represent as to the nature of your involvement. The Advisor and group should agree on a set of expectations of one another from the onset and should write this list down as a contract between the group and the Advisor.

Following are some of the roles you may assume as an advisor:

Mentor

Many students will come to see their advisor as a mentor and the success of these relationships can last many years and be rewarding for both the student and the advisor. If the student is seeking an education and a career in your field, you may be asked to assist in his/her professional development. To be effective in this capacity, you will need knowledge of their academic program and profession, a genuine interest in the personal and professional development of new professionals, and a willingness to connect students to a network of professionals. You may be approached to review resumes, to connect students with community resources, or to be a sounding board for their ideas of what they want to accomplish in the field.

At times, students will seek out someone to assist with their personal development. In this capacity, a mentor will have a basic understanding of student needs and perspectives, a desire to challenge students intellectually and emotionally while providing support to meet the challenge, and the ability to listen to students' verbal and nonverbal communication. Students may want to talk to you about family or relationship issues, conflicts they are having with other students, or to have conversations about their ideas and thoughts on different subjects.

Team Builder

When new officers are elected or new members join the organization, you may need to take the initiative in turning the students from individuals with separate goals and expectations into a team. Team building is important because it enhances the relationships of the students between one another and the advisor. Positive relationships help the organization succeed and to work through conflicts and difficult times.

To accomplish the goal of creating an effective team, it is necessary to conduct a workshop (if you and the students have the time, a full-scale retreat encompassing team building and goal setting could be planned) to engage students in this process. As the advisor, you may consider working with the student officers to develop a plan and to have the students implement it. Training students in effective techniques for team building will keep students invested in the organization and give them the opportunity to learn what it takes to build a team.

Conflict Mediator

Inevitably, students are going to join the organization with different agendas, goals, and ideas about how things should function and the direction they should be taking. When working with students who have come in to conflict, it may be necessary to meet with them and have them discuss their issues with each other. In many cases, it may be necessary to remind them that they both want what is in the best interest of the organization. Ask them how they think they can work together, point out the organization's mission, and ask how their conduct is helping the group achieve its mission.

Sometimes, one student may be causing problems with other students. In many cases this student may not realize that his/her actions are causing a problem. In this case, speaking with the student individually could be helpful. Chances are that no one has met with the student previously and discussed how his/her attitudes are impacting other people and how those attitudes or actions can be changed to make everyone feel better. In many cases, the student will appreciate honest feedback.

Reflective Agent

One of the most essential components to learning in "out of classroom" activities is providing time for students to reflect on how and what they are doing. As an advisor, you will want your officers to talk to you about how they think they are performing, their strengths, and their weaknesses. Give them the opportunity to discuss their thoughts on their performance. Then be honest with them. Let them know when you agree with their self-perceptions and in a tactful manner let them know when you disagree. Remember, any criticism you provide students should be constructive and you will want to provide concrete examples of actions the student took that seem to contradict their self-perceptions. When students discuss their weaknesses, ask them how they can improve those areas and how you can help them. Remember to have students reflect on their successes and failures.

Educator

As an advisor, your role of educator will often come through the role modeling of behavior, guiding the student in reflection of their actions, and being there to answer questions. One of the most difficult actions to take as an advisor is to do nothing, but sometimes this can be the most important action of all. Allow the students to make their decisions even if they do not agree with your ideas. Sometimes, students will succeed; other times, they may fail. The key is to return to the role of the reflective agent and give the students a safe place to reflect on their experiences.

Motivator

As an advisor, you may have to motivate students to excel and to carry out their plans and achieve their goals. Some students are easily discouraged and at the first sign of difficulty they may want to quit. You will need to be their "cheerleader" to keep them excited about all of the potential successes they will experience. You can motivate students through the recognition of their efforts, appealing to their desire to create change, and to connecting their experiences here at the University to the experiences they will have in the community.

Policy Interpreter

Student organizations operate under policies, procedures, and rules. At times, students may not be aware of these policies and they will do things in an inappropriate manner. The more you know about these policies the better advising you can give to the students on their plans.

As an advisor you will assume numerous roles and all possible roles are not mentioned here. A key idea to remember is that you are an advisor not the leader. You provide guidance, insight, and perspective to students as they work on projects, but you should not be doing the work. Students will learn if they are engaged. Be careful of being challenged into doing the work for a student project. The students make the decisions, and they are accountable for those decisions, and for the successes and failures of their groups.

Advising “Do’s”

Advising Do’s

Each advisor and organization leadership should openly discuss what kind of role the advisor should play with the organization. Some organizations have a pool of advisors to assist them with different aspects of the organization (financial, scholarship, programming, etc.) Some advisors have a high level of involvement with every aspect of the organization; others have a very limited role. It is up to the organization and the advisor to set the parameters of involvement.

With those thoughts in mind, the following list is a guideline to the “dos” of student organization advising:

- Assist officers with procedural matters. Be knowledgeable of the organization’s purpose and constitution and help the general membership adhere to them.
- Be knowledgeable about, and comply with federal, state and local laws and ordinances, as well as campus policies. Inform the group of pertinent policies.
- Empower students to take action and to take satisfaction in seeing the student organization succeed.
- Allow the group to succeed, and allow the group to fail. Learn when to speak when not to speak. Remember to let the students make the decisions while you provide guidance and advice.
- Represent the group and its interests in staff and faculty meetings. Reach out to other advisors or departments (i.e. Student Organizations) for assistance.
- At the beginning, develop clear expectations about the role of the advisor and your relationship to the organization.
- Read the group’s constitution.
- Get to know all of the members on an individual level. Learn what they want to get out of the organization. Maintain a complete officer and membership list with addresses and phone numbers (or know where to easily find one).
- Develop a strong working relationship with all the officers. Establish as needed meetings with individual members of the organization who need additional guidance in their officer or committee positions.
- Discuss concerns with officers in private and praise them in public.
- Meet with the officers and to help them set goals. Encourage the Leadership Team to disseminate reports (such as financial reports) to the general membership on a regular basis.
- Orient new officers and members to the history and purpose of the group and help them to build upon it. Help members look toward the future by developing long-term goals and communicating those plans to future members.

- Help to resolve intragroup conflict.
- Enjoy the impact you can have on the students' development.
- Help to develop the leadership potential within the group.
- Be visible and choose to attend group meetings and events. At the same time, know your limits. Establish an attendance schedule at organization meetings, which is mutually agreed upon by the advisor and the student organization.
- Know your group's limits. Help students find a balance between activities and their academic responsibilities.
- Keep your sense of humor and enthusiasm. Share creative suggestions and provide feedback for activities planned by students.
- Serve as a resource person. The advisor does not set the policy of the group, but should take an active part in its formulation through interaction with the members of the group. Since members and officers in any organization are ordinarily active only as long as they are students, the advisor can serve as a continuity factor for the group.
- Be consistent with your actions. Model good communication skills and listening skills. Develop good rapport.
- Be available in emergency situations.
- Head off situations that might give rise to poor public relations for the student group or University.
- Introduce new program ideas with educational flavor; point out new perspectives and directions to the group; and supply the knowledge and the insight of experience.
- Carefully review monthly financial reports from the organization treasurer or business manager. Familiarize yourself with the group's financial structure, from where the treasury is derived (dues, fundraising), for what the money is used, how money is allocated, and how the money is budgeted; assist in budget development and execution.
- Learn the strengths and weaknesses of the group. Offer support when necessary; but also allow people to make their own mistakes and learn from them.
- Encourage feedback and the evaluation process.
- Plan and encourage attendance at leadership training.
- Do things right and to do the right things. Guide and assist students in becoming responsible leaders.
- Provide support. Give the group autonomy but offer feedback, even when it is not solicited. Let the group work out its problems, but be prepared to step in when called upon to assist.

Once again, this list is not meant to be totally inclusive or applicable to every organization, but it may serve as a guideline when determining the role that you will play.

It is also important to bear in mind that the job of Advisor is not always an easy one. At times you may have to make a difficult decision or take an action which is not popular with the organization. It is important to realize that your first responsibility is to the health and well-being of the students and to uphold campus and community policies and regulations. It may be necessary on occasion to use your authority to ensure that you meet these responsibilities.

Questions You May Want to Ask the Organization:

- How much involvement is expected or needed?
- How often does the group meet?
- How many major activities does the group plan per semester?
- How experienced are the student leaders?
- How do your skills match the needs of the organization?
- What are some of the problem areas that your organization specifically needs advisory assistance in dealing with? Ask for past examples.
- What are some of the ways the Advisor can be more helpful to the group?
- Will the Advisor be a silent observer at meetings or an active participant?
- Should you interrupt during meetings if you think the group is getting off track? How? When?
- If things get unruly, should you interrupt or remain silent?
- Is the Advisor expected to give feedback? How? When?
- Are there areas of the organization that are “hands off” to the advisor?

Advising “Don’ts”

Advising Don’ts

- Know it all.
- Be the leader or “run” the meeting.
- Say I told you so.
- Impose your own bias.
- Manipulate the group, impose, or force your opinions.
- Close communications.
- Tell the group what to do, or do the work of the president or other members of the executive board.
- Take everything so seriously.
- Take ownership for the group, be the “parent,” or the smothering administrator.
- Miss group meetings or functions.
- Be afraid to let the group try new ideas.
- Become such an advocate that you lose an objective viewpoint.
- Allow the organization to become a one-person organization.
- Be laissez-faire or autocratic.
- Assume the group handles everything okay and doesn’t need you.
- Assume the organization’s attitudes, needs and personalities will remain the same year to year.

Responsibilities of the Student Organization to the Advisor:

The responsibilities of Student Organizations to their advisor include, but are not limited to...

- Establishing and sharing a job description for the advisor that clearly defines his/her responsibilities and anticipated lines of communication anticipated.
- Notifying the advisor of all meetings, activities, and programs. Establishing an attendance schedule at organization meetings, which is mutually agreed upon by the advisor and the student organization.
- Providing copies of meeting minutes in a timely manner.

- Meeting regularly with your advisor to discuss organization matters.
- Consulting the advisor prior to making significant changes to the structure of the Organization.
- Consulting the advisor when any significant organization policy changes are made.
- Allowing the advisor to share their thoughts and ideas.
- Showing respect and value for the advisor whom the organization chosen to serve as guide and mentor.
- Considering all advice and guidance provided with an open mind and a sincere interest for improvement of daily operational and special event/activity needs.

Troubleshooting

The following lists are provided so that an advisor may have a better idea of the types of problems he/she may face with their organization (Lorenz and Shipton, 1984). This list is not all inclusive, but may serve as a guide for the advisor. Please note that a list of additional resources is provided at the close of this handbook so that advisors know who to contact for specific concerns.

Leadership Problems

- The leader does not consult with the organization before making significant decisions.
- The leader appears to lack self-confidence, is non-assertive, and lacks interest in organization.
- A rivalry exists between leaders in the organization.
- The leader has work overload, and too many time-conflicts.

Membership Problems

- Low attendance at meetings.
- Members have low satisfaction and morale, are bored, do not communicate well, feel left out or are apathetic.
- Members compete for attention.
- An individual member's goals differ from those of the organization.
- There exists a lack of trust among members.
- Programs fail.
- There is a lack of ideas.

Organizational Problems

- Meetings are disorganized.
- Meetings are too long.
- The organization suffers from financial problems.
- There is no continuity from one year to the next.
- The organization has no "plan of action".

Inner-organization Problems

- Disagreement between an organization and other student organizations.
- Disagreement with institutional policies and procedures.

Advisor Problems

- Organization members avoid the advisor.
- Organization members do not pay attention to advisor's advice.
- The advisor is overwhelmed by their responsibility.
- The advisor assumes a leadership function.

Officer Transition

One of the most important functions of an advisor is to assist in the transition from one set of organization officers to the next. As the stability of the organization, the advisor has seen changes, knows what works and can help maintain continuity. Investing time in a good officer transition early on will mean less time spent throughout the year nursing new officers through the quarter.

The key to a successful transition is making sure new officers know their jobs **BEFORE** they take office. Expectations should be clearly defined. There are a number of ways to conduct the officer transition. The following examples demonstrate two commonly used methods.

The Team Effort

The team effort involves the outgoing-officer board, the advisor, and the incoming officer board. This method involves a retreat or series of meetings where outgoing officers work with incoming officers on:

1. Past records/notebooks for their office and updating those together
2. Discussion topics should include:
 - Completed projects for the past year.
 - Upcoming/incomplete projects.
 - Challenges and setbacks.
 - Anything the new officers need to know to do their job effectively.

The advisor's role may be to:

- Facilitate discussion and be a sounding board for ideas.
- Organize and provide the structure of a retreat.
- Offer suggestions on various questions.
- Refrain from telling new officers what they should do.
- Fill in the blanks.
 - If an outgoing officer doesn't know how something was done, or doesn't have records to pass on to the new officer, you can help that officer by providing the information he or she doesn't have. The structure of a team effort retreat can take many forms. The advisor's role in this process is to provide historical background when needed, help keep goals specific, attainable and measurable and provide advice on policies and procedures.

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One-on-One Training, Advisor with Officers

While it is ideal to have the outgoing officer team assist in training the incoming officers, often it is left up to the advisor to educate the incoming officers. In that situation, there should be a joint meeting of the new officers, as described in section 4 of the above outline. After that meeting, the advisor should meet individually with each officer; examine the notebook of the previous officer (or create a new one).

Things to include in a new notebook:

1. Any forms the officers may need to use

2. Copies of previous meeting agendas.

3. A copy of the organization's constitution and bylaws

Talk about what the officers hope to accomplish in the forthcoming year. Assess the officer's role in the organization. What are the expectations of each position? What are the student's expectations of the position and his/her goals?

Parliamentary Procedure

What is Parliamentary Procedure?

Parliamentary procedure is a set of rules for conducting meetings. It allows for everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

Today, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* is the basic handbook of operation for most clubs, organizations, and other groups. *Robert's Rules* can be found in most libraries.

A Very Abridged Version of *Robert's Rules*

The degree of order needed at a meeting is dependent upon the size and purpose of the group. The following are some basics of *Robert's Rules of Order*, which may be helpful for groups that need a degree of normality in conducting business.

The Motion

You may make a motion when you want the group to take some action: to send a letter, to accept a report, to hold a special meeting, to spend money for some special purpose, etc.

Introduce the motion by saying, "I move that," followed by a statement of the proposal. You cannot discuss the motion until someone has seconded it. This is done to reduce the number of discussions on a subject in which no one else in the group is interested.

The Amendment

Amendments are offered in the same way as a motion. You may offer an amendment when you agree substantially with the motion which has been made but want to make some changes before it is adopted.

Amending the Amendment

Just as a motion may be amended, an amendment may also be changed in the same way. As with the first amendment, the second amendment must relate to the motion and the amendment. It is in order only when it relates to both. No more than two amendments may be made to one motion.

Substitute Motion

The substitute motion is sometimes used when there is a motion and two amendments on the floor in order to save the time of the meeting. If there does not seem to be substantial disagreement with the motion and the two amendments, a substitute motion incorporating all three into one motion may be made and accepted by the chair.

Note: If you disagree with a motion or an amendment, you do not defeat it by trying to change the sense of the motion through amendment. You speak against the motion or amendments and urge the membership to vote against them. Then new motions calling for different action may be made and considered.

Speaking on Motions and Amendments

When you want to speak at a meeting, you raise your hand and ask the chair for the floor. As soon as you are recognized by the chair, you may proceed to speak either for or against the motion or amendments being considered.

When several members wish to speak at the same time, these guiding principles should determine the decision of the chairman:

1. The chairman should show preference to the one who made the motion.
2. A member who has not spoken has first choice over one who has already spoken.

If the chairman knows the opinions of members discussing the measure, he/she should alternate between those favoring and those opposing it.

Motion to the Table

If you wish to postpone or end debate on an issue, you may also make a motion to table. Such a motion is not debatable, and if it is seconded by one other member, the motion must be put to an immediate vote by the chair. The chair may discuss the reason for tabling with the member.

Calling a Question

In order to speed up the meeting and eliminate unnecessary discussion, a member can “call the question.” The chair will call for dissent. If you want the motion to be discussed further, raise your hand. If there is no dissent, voting on the motion takes place.

Voting

Voting on a motion can be as formal as using written ballots or as casual as having the chair ask if anyone objects to the motion.

The most common practice is to call for a show of hands or a voice vote of ayes and nays. Only members present at the time may vote unless the rules of the organization allow for proxies or absentee ballots.

A simple majority of votes cast will pass most motions. During elections when more than two candidates are running for an office, your organization rules should specify whether a majority or plurality is necessary. These rules can also call for other requirements depending on the issue on which the vote is held.

When the Chairperson Can Vote

Assuming that the chairperson is a member of the organization, he/she has the right to vote whenever a written or secret ballot is used. With any other method of voting, to protect the impartiality of the chair, he/she should vote only when it will change the outcome.

Point of Information, Of Order

If at any time during the meeting you are confused about the business being discussed or if you want the motion that is being considered more clearly explained, you may rise to ask the chairman for a point of information. After you are recognized, ask for the explanation which you desire.

If you disagree with any of the chair's rulings, or if you believe that the person who is speaking is not talking about the business being considered, you may raise a point of order and state your objection to the chair. The chair then is required to rule one way or another on your point of order.

Note: This section of the *Advisors Handbook* does not pretend to cover all situations or answer all questions. It is meant to introduce you to some basic information which will suit many groups' needs.

Motivating Your Organization

What do others want?

It is NOT money or personal gain that most people want. They want intrinsic satisfaction. People will work harder for intrinsic satisfaction than they will for monetary income. The following are some ways that you as a leader can help people satisfy those intrinsic needs:

People Need to Feel Important

See people as worthwhile human beings loaded with untapped potential; go out of your way to express this attitude.

Give Praise

Reinforce for continual achievement. All people need praise and appreciation. Get into the habit of being "praise-minded." Give public recognition when it is due.

Give People Status

The more status and prestige you can build into a committee or an organization, the more motivated the members become. There are many status symbols you can use to make others feel important. For example, develop a "Member of the Week/Month" Award or "Committee Chairperson of the Month" Award. In addition, simply treating people with courtesy is a way of giving them status.

Communicate

People like to know what is going on in the organization. They want to be told about problems, objectives, and "inside information."

They feel recognized and important when they are kept informed. Two-way communication within the organization is necessary in order to achieve a mutual understanding. Mutual understanding leads to motivation!

Give Security

People need more than financial security. People will look to you for intrinsic security. For example, they must know that you like them, respect them understand them and accept them not only for their strong points, but also for their weaknesses.

People Need You – People Need People

They need you to give them what they want and need: intrinsic satisfaction. When you give them what they want, they will give you what you want. This is what motivation is all about. It is not something you do to other people, but something they do for themselves.

You give them the reasons and that makes you the motivator – a person who gets things done through others.

Develop Purpose

Always explain why. Instill in the members that their assistance is vital for success. Share ways that participation can encourage personal growth.

Encourage Participation in Group Goal Development

Include all members when planning goals. Consider and follow through on members' suggestions. Remember that we support that which we help to create.

Develop a Sense of Belonging

People like to belong. Those who feel like they belong will more likely invest themselves.

Specific Ways to Increase Motivation

- Give others credit when it is due them.
- Use "We" statements, and not "I."
- Play up the positive and not the negative.
- Make meetings and projects appear attractive and interesting.
- When you are wrong, admit it.
- Use members' names often.
- Let members in on the early stages of plans.
- Be fair, honest, and consistent – show no favoritism.
- Be careful what you say – do not gossip.
- Listen to others.
- Expect only the best and be proud when members achieve it!

GRAPE Theory of Motivation

Growth Being able to increase one's skills and competencies, performing new or more complex tasks, participating in training programs.

Recognition Promotion within the organization, praise for achievements, positive and constructively critical feedback, receiving an award, printed references to an individual's activities, being "listened to."

Achievement The opportunity to solve a problem, to see the results of one's efforts, to reach goals that one has established to create a 'whole' tangible product.

Participation Involvement in the organizational decision making, planning and scheduling one's own work and controlling one's own work activities.

Enjoyment! Having fun in a warm, friendly, and supportive atmosphere.

20 Tips to Increase Organizational Productivity

1. Know what the students expect of you as an Advisor.
2. Let the group and individual members know what you expect of them.
3. Express a sincere interest in the group and its mission. Stress the importance of each individual's contribution to the whole.
4. Assist the group in setting realistic, attainable goals. Ensure beginning success as much as possible, but allow the responsibility and implementation of events to lie primarily with the organization.
5. Have the goals or objectives of the group firmly in mind. Know the purposes of the group and know what things will need to be accomplished to meet the goals.
6. Assist the group in achieving its goals. Understand why people become involved. Learn strengths and emphasize them. Help the group learn through involvement by providing opportunities.
7. Know and understand the students with whom you are working. Different groups require different approaches.
8. Assist the group in determining the needs of the people the group is serving.
9. Express a sincere interest in each member. Encourage everyone to be responsible.
10. Assist the members in understanding the group's dynamics and human interaction. Recognize that at times the process is more important than the content.
11. Realize the importance of the peer group and its effect on each member's participation or lack thereof. Communicate that each individual's efforts are needed and appreciated.
12. Assist the group in developing a system by which they can evaluate their progress. Balance task orientation with social needs of members.
13. Use a reward system and recognition system for work well done.
14. Develop a style that balances active and passive group membership.
15. Be aware of the various roles that you will have: clarifier, consultant, counselor, educator, facilitator, friend, information source, mentor, and role model.
16. Do not allow yourself to be placed in the position of chairperson.
17. Be aware of institutional power structure—both formal and informal. Discuss institutional developments and policies with members.
18. Provide continuity for the group from semester to semester (not mandatory but encouraged).

19. Challenge the group to grow and develop. Encourage independent thinking and decision-making.
20. Be creative and innovative. Keep a sense of humor!

Resources Used

Some information provided by and/or adapted from the following resources:

ACPA Student Personnel Series No. 8;
Ball State University Downloads for Student Organizations and Advisors;
Jim Mohr, Advisor for Student Organizations and Greek Life, Eastern Washington University;
Jon Kapell, Associate Director of Campus Activities, Drexel University;
Leader Bits, University of Kansas;
M.J. Michael, Office of Student Leadership Development Programs at East Carolina University
Office of Student Leadership Development Programs at East Carolina University;
Paul A., Student group advising in higher education;
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Campus Contacts

Career Services	(513) 529-3831
Cliff Alexander Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life & Leadership	(513) 529-1462
Office of Community Engagement & Service	(513) 529-2961
Student Counseling Service	(513) 529-4634
Dean of Students Office	(513) 529-1877
Office of Diversity Affairs	(513) 529-6504
Office of Ethics and Student Conflict Resolution	(513) 529-1417
GLBTQ Services	(513) 529-0831
Harry T. Wilks Leadership Institute	(513) 529-0830
Office of Health Education	(513) 529-3438
Miami University Police	(513) 529-2222
Office of New Student Programs	(513) 529-9971
Office of Off-Campus Affairs	(513) 529-2268
Parents Office	(513) 529-3436
Office of Residence Life	(513) 529-4000
Rinella Learning Center	(513) 529-8741
Second Year Programs	(513) 529-4038
Sexual Assault Prevention & Response	(513) 529-1870
Office of Student Activities & Leadership	(513) 529-2266
Office of Student Housing and Meal Plan Services	(513) 529-4000
Shriver Center	(513) 529-4034
Office of the Vice President	(513) 529-5526
Women's Center	(513) 529-1510