

Student Organization Relationship Statement

Approved by VPSA: June 1997; Updated November 2010

Section 1: Purpose Statement

- 1.1 The University of Texas at San Antonio is strongly committed to providing students opportunities for involvement in student organizations operating on campus. By maintaining a statement of relationship between the University and the student organization, the University establishes a clear set of privileges and responsibilities for student organizations to foster their success.
- 1.2 These policies and procedures shall conform to The University of Texas System Board of Regents' Rules as well as the student policies and regulations as published in The University of Texas at San Antonio Student Guide, Handbook of Operating Procedures, and Administrative Memoranda.

Section 2: Definitions

- 2.1 **Student Organization:** A separate, independent entity from the University whose membership is composed of UTSA students, or a combination of students, faculty, and staff; which has complied with the registration procedures to be officially registered (granted approval to operate on campus) by the University.
- 2.2 **Sponsored Student Organization:** A student organization created by a University department or division to support the ongoing interests of the University community. A sponsored student organization is considered to be critical to the mission and culture of the University and is inherently linked to the University due to their role as University representatives; thus a sponsored student organization is an integral part of the institution and routinely presents events for the University and surrounding community. A sponsored student organization has an advisor that is paid by the University to specifically advise the organization. Other privileges may be granted to a sponsored student organization by the sponsoring University department or division, which may or may not be extended to other student organizations. To be considered a sponsored student organization, the student organization must complete the process outlined in the Student Organization Relationship Statement, Section 3.3.
- 2.3 **Student Organization Leader:** A person meeting each and all of the following criteria shall be officially recognized as a student organization leader:
 - a. An undergraduate or graduate student enrolled in at least one credit hour at the University; the student need not be enrolled during the summer semester;
 - b. A member in good standing of a student organization currently registered with the University; and,
 - c. A student whose name appears in a student organization's registration materials as an officer or authorized representative.
- 2.4 **Student:** An undergraduate or graduate enrolled in at least one credit hour and has paid all applicable tuition and fees.
- 2.5 **A General Social Greek organization** is a men's or women's fraternity (or sorority), meeting the following criteria:
 - a. the organization is single-sex;
 - b. the organization exists to promote fraternal relationships and personal development;

- c. requirement for admission is not limited to a specific field of study, class year, or grade attainment beyond the typical grade requirement;
- d. the organization is affiliated with a(n) (inter)national organization as a colony or chapter. (Inter)National is defined as more than one chapter in more than one state; and
- e. the inter(national) organization has tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 3: Process for University Registration

- 3.1 Registered status will be granted to any student organization that meets the following criteria: a) membership is limited to UTSA students, or combination of students, faculty, and/or staff; b) the organization complies with the established registration procedures; and, c) the organization's actions or activities do not conflict with the educational mission of the University.
- 3.2 General Social Greek Organizations: The University reserves the right to extend an invitation to a(n) (inter)national fraternity/sorority to register a local chapter as a recognized general social Greek organization. The University, in consultation with the campus Greek governing body impacted, will make the final decision on the addition of any Greek organization to the UTSA Greek community. The expansion procedures will be followed when determining to invite a(n) (inter)national fraternity/sorority to register a local chapter. These procedures may be obtained through the Student Organization Handbook or the Program Advisor for Greek Life.
- 3.2.1 Any new general social Greek organization seeking recognition by the University must first obtain initial written approval from the University. Before a(n) (inter)national fraternity/ sorority may colonize and officially recognize a general social Greek organization at UTSA, it must receive written approval from the University. There is no allowance for interest meetings before written approval has been received.
- 3.3 Upon the recommendation of the Office of Student Activities, a student organization may be considered a sponsored student organization, if the organization meets the definition (Section 2.2) and criteria of a sponsored student organization and completes the sponsored student organization approval process. The Vice President for Student Affairs gives the final approval.
- 3.3.1 A sponsored student organization must meet the following criteria:
 - a. plan activities which have a campus-wide impact and/or serves as a coordinating or umbrella council for a large number of students or student organizations;
 - b. receive direct funding and/or advising from a University department or division;
 - c. have a staff/faculty member that is assigned, per a job description, to advise the organization; and
 - d. membership is on a voluntary, non-paid and non-academic credit, basis.
- 3.3.2 Sponsored student organization approval process:
 - a. Advisor(s) and student organizers schedule a meeting with the Assistant Director for Student Organizations to review the creation process, rights, responsibilities, and privileges extended by sponsoring office.

- b. Develop a formal proposal using the guidelines in Section 3.33 to start a new sponsored student organization and present it to the Assistant Director for Student Organizations.
 - c. Student Activities reviews proposal, gathers outside information if needed and makes a recommendation to the Vice President for Student Affairs. Additional meetings between Student Activities, organizers and the advisor(s) may be necessary before a recommendation is forwarded to the Vice President for Student Affairs.
 - d. Vice President for Student Affairs approves or denies sponsored status.
- 3.33 Formal proposal to become a sponsored student organization: A completed proposal should address the following thoroughly and should include appropriate supporting documentation:
- a. Name of student organization, sponsoring office, student organizers' contact information, and advisor(s)' contact information.
 - b. Purpose statement of student organization. This statement should define the services/programs the student organization will offer to UTSA students, which are not currently available, and/or not being delivered effectively through existing organizations.
 - c. Explanation of how this student organization meets the definition of a sponsored student organization (Section 2.4).
 - d. Demonstrated need from students that the new student organization will provide programs/services, which are not currently provided through existing methods. Examples of supporting documentation include petitions from interested students, evaluations, Advisory Committee meeting minutes, etc.
 - e. Draft of constitution and bylaws.
 - f. Proposed operating budget and funding sources.
 - g. Roles, job descriptions, and/or duties of officers & members.
 - h. Action plans for student organizers and advisor to recruit members and begin providing programs.
 - i. Description of support the sponsoring office will provide for the student organization (i.e. office supplies, budget, workspace, staff advising time, training, etc.)
 - j. UTSA job description of the full-time staff member that will serve as an advisor. It is critical that the advisor job responsibility not be tied to a person, but to a position within the department or division; as should the position become vacant it is necessary for the next person in the position to assume the advising of the sponsored student organization.

Section 4: Academic Requirements

- 4.1 The University reserves the right to hold student organizations accountable to reasonable standards of academic performance of the group, its student organization leaders and its members.
- 4.2 A student, officially recognized as a student organization leader, must meet the following academic requirements to receive and maintain such status:
 - a. have at least a 2.25 UTSA cumulative GPA (3.0 for graduate student) prior to the first day of each long-term semester during the term of position; and
 - b. be in good scholastic and disciplinary status with the University at time of selection and during the term of position.
- 4.2.1 The student must relinquish the position should he/she fail to maintain the above requirements.

- 4.2.2 Academic requirements to be eligible for a student organization leader position that meet or exceed those stated above must be included in the student organization's constitution and/or bylaws.
- 4.3 A student selected for membership in a sponsored student organization must maintain at least a 2.00 UTSA cumulative GPA (or 3.0 for graduate student) to maintain membership. Academic requirements to be eligible for membership in a sponsored student organization that meet or exceed a 2.00 UTSA cumulative GPA must be stated in the sponsored student organization's constitution and/or bylaws.
- 4.4 A general social Greek organization whose initiated or new member semester GPA falls below a 2.25 in any long-term semester will be placed on academic probation for the following long-term semester. The organization must meet the following requirements to be cleared of academic probation:
 - a. the initiated and new member's semester GPA must meet or exceed a 2.25 at the end of the probationary semester;
 - b. the organization must develop and implement a chapter academic enhancement program in conjunction with, and approved by, the Assistant Director for Student Organizations prior to the end of the second week of the probationary semester;
 - c. the organization must sponsor or attend an academic workshop during the probationary period requiring mandatory attendance of not less than 95% of the chapter members; and,
 - d. any additional requirements as determined by the Assistant Director for Student Organizations.
- 4.4.1 Failure to meet the above requirements during the probationary semester will result in suspension, for a minimum of one long-term semester, of University recognition and all privileges associated with such recognition.

Section 5: Privileges of Recognition

- 5.1 Privileges extended to student organizations in good standing with the University and currently registered with the Office of Student Activities include the following:
 - 5.1.1 Recruitment: Student organizations may conduct activities on campus to recruit UTSA students in accordance with University policies and procedures regarding the use of campus facilities and solicitation.
 - 5.1.2 Fundraising: Student organizations may raise funds on and off campus. If raising funds on campus, the activity must comply with all posting and solicitation policies.
 - 5.1.3 Use of Campus Facilities: Student organizations may use University facilities for meetings, functions, programs, and other activities provided that the organization completes the appropriate facility reservation process and the activities do not intrude upon or interfere with the academic programs and administrative processes of the University. Failure to comply with facility use guidelines may restrict an organization from the use of such facilities.
 - 5.1.4 Use of the On-Campus Account System: Student organizations may establish an on- campus account to procure University services, to purchase items and services from off- campus businesses and individuals, and to reimburse individuals for organization-related expenses. Improper use of the on-campus account may result in the loss of the account and the use of services requiring payment via the account.

- 5.1.5 Participation in University-sponsored Events: Student organizations are eligible to participate in all University-sponsored programs and activities involving student organizations (e.g., Involvement Fair, Best Fest, Fiesta UTSA, Homecoming). Student organizations must comply with the sign-up procedures and rules established for the event or face exclusion from such events.
- 5.1.6 Use of Campus Services: Student organizations have access to campus services. Use of these services requires payment via an on-campus account unless other payment arrangements are approved by the service provider. Improper use of campus services may result in the loss of the use of those privileges.
- 5.1.7 Use of Student Activities Services: Student organizations are eligible for all services provided by the Office of Student Activities.
- 5.2 No student organization may use University services, facilities, and equipment while it owes a monetary debt to the University and the debt is considered delinquent.
- 5.3 A student organization may state that its membership is composed of UTSA students or a combination of students, faculty, and/or staff but it shall not suggest or imply that it is acting with the authority or as an agency of the University. Student organizations are not official entities of the University and may not represent themselves as such.
- 5.3.1 Student organizations cannot use the words "The University of Texas at San Antonio" or "UTSA" as a part of the name of the organization, and it cannot display the seal or logo as part of any letterhead, sign, banner, pamphlet or other printed material that bears the name of the organization.
- 5.3.2 Student organizations may indicate existence at the University by adding the phrase "at The University of Texas at San Antonio (or UTSA)".
- 5.3.3 Sponsored student organizations may incorporate the University's name into the name of the organization.
- 5.3.4 Sponsored student organizations may use the name, seal and logo of the University in accordance with University communication, policies and guidelines established by the sponsoring University department or division.
- 5.4 Other privileges may be granted to sponsored student organizations by the sponsoring University department or division that may or may not be extended to other student organizations.

Section 6: Responsibilities of Recognition

- 6.1 Student organizations must complete the registration process with the Office of Student Activities each semester. If the established procedures for registration or the deadlines are not adhered to, the student organization will lose all privileges of recognition until they comply.
- 6.2 Student organizations must keep on file with the Office of Student Activities a list of five officers and/or representatives who are authorized to act on behalf of the organization. Information to be included: Name, Title, Banner identification number, phone number and email address.
- 6.2.1 It shall be conclusively presumed that the authorized officers/representative whose names are most currently on-file with Student Activities are authorized to represent the organization in its relations with the University.
- 6.2.2 In addition, general social Greek organizations must also provide the name, address and phone numbers of the alumni/graduate advisor(s) and house board corporation president (if applicable).

- 6.3 Student organizations must have a faculty or staff advisor who is employed by the University at least one-half time (20 hours) and not on sabbatical.
- 6.4 Student organizations must keep an updated organizational constitution on file with the Office of Student Activities at all times. Constitutions should follow the following guidelines and must include those components indicated as being required:
- a) the date of creation and revision [required];
 - b) the official name of the organization [required];
 - c) a detailed declaration of purpose of the organization [required];
 - d) criteria for selecting membership [required];
 - e) legal agreement clause [required];
 - f) establishment of authority structure, including:
 - g) officer/representative positions, duties, and authority [required];
 - h) description of officer/representative eligibility including academic requirements meeting or exceeding those stated in Section 4 [required];
 - i) procedure for selection and removal of officer/representatives [required];
 - j) procedures for decision-making (i.e., voting) in the control of organizational activities and finances, including a definition of quorum [required];
 - k) provision for disbursement of organization assets should the organization become defunct [required];
 - l) description of standing (permanent) and ad hoc (temporary) committees, including list of responsibilities [recommended];
 - m) description of the amendment process [recommended]; and,
 - n) provision for the selection and removal of faculty/staff advisor [recommended].
- 6.5 As a requirement of the registration process the authorized officer/representative and faculty/staff advisor of the student organization must sign the Legal Responsibilities Affidavit for Student Organizations. This affidavit includes: Statement as to Make-up of Members, Prohibition of Hazing and Disclosure of Solicitation.
- 6.6 Student organizations are accountable for the conduct of their members wherever individual actions are abetted by the organization. "Abetting" may be defined as, but not limited to, organizational sponsorship, sanctioning or condoning of the event or activity.
- 6.7 Any student organization is subject to disciplinary action or revocation of recognition as a student organization for violation of a rule or regulation of the University.
- 6.8 Sponsored student organizations are subject to all laws, rules, regulations, and policies that govern the sponsoring University department or division.
- 6.9 Additional requirements may be imposed upon general social Greek organizations.
- 6.9.1 Twice each semester, general social Greek organizations must provide updated rosters of their most current membership. Information required for every member includes: full name; banner identification number and membership status.
- 6.9.2 At the end of every fall semester, general social Greek organizations must submit their most current constitution and by-laws, new member program, and risk management policy to the Program Advisor for Greek Life.

- 6.9.3 All general social Greek organizations are required to apply for, obtain, and retain membership in one of the Greek governing councils. Membership in a Greek governing body requires that the organization be in compliance with all rules and regulations of that body and fully involved in all official activities of that body.
- 6.9.4 General social Greek organizations are subject to regulations from the University, their (inter) national offices and their governance councils. All general social organizations must abide by all regulations to which they are subject.
- 6.9.5 General social Greek organizations are required to be in compliance with the Greek Expectations and Accreditation Review (GEAR). The development and implementation of the review process, review criteria, and recommendations and/or expectations will be coordinated by the Assistant Director for Student Organizations in consultation with the general social Greek organizations. The GEAR program policies and procedures may be obtained through the Program Advisor for Greek Life or the Assistant Director for Student Organizations.

Section 7: Student Organization Discipline

- 7.1 Organizational Responsibility for Violations: An organization violates a Regents' Rule, University regulation, or administrative rule when
 - a) one or more of its officers or authorized representatives acting in the scope of their organizational capacities commit the violation;
 - b) one or more of its members commit the violation after the action that constitutes the violation was approved by majority vote of those members of the organization present and voting;
 - c) one or more members of a committee of the organization commit the violation while acting in the scope of the committee's assignment;
 - d) a member of an organization acting with apparent authority of the organization commits the violation;
 - e) one or more members of an organization or its officers permit, encourage, aid, or assist any of its members in committing a violation;
 - f) one or more members of an organization or its officers, under circumstances where such persons knew or should have known that an action constituting a violation was occurring or about to occur, fails to prevent that action; or
 - g) one or more members of an organization fail to report to appropriate University or civil authorities promptly their knowledge or any reasonable information about a violation.
- 7.2. Procedure:
 - a) When the dean of students receives information that an organization has allegedly violated a Regents' Rule, University regulation, or administrative rule, he or she shall investigate the alleged violation. Upon completing the investigation, the dean may
 - a. dismiss the allegation as unfounded; or
 - b. summon the authorized representative(s) of the organization for a conference at which the organization can respond to the charges and, after conferring with the representative(s),
 - 1. dismiss the allegation; or
 - 2. find the organization in violation and impose a penalty.

- b) The dean of students may impose one or more of the penalties under Section 7.3 when an organization fails, without good cause, to comply with a summons under subsection (b).
- c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the dean of students or the president of the University may take immediate disciplinary action, pending a conference, against an organization that violates a rule or regulation of the University or The University of Texas System when, in the opinion of the official, the interest of the University or the University of Texas System would be served by interim action.
- d) A student may be disciplined for a violation under the Student Code of Conduct even though the organization of which the student is a member is penalized under this subchapter for the same violation or for a violation growing out of the same factual transaction.
- e) Violations of the University's rules and regulations regarding the posting of signs, flyers or banners will generally be addressed in accordance with the procedures outlined under the section of the Student Organization Handbook entitled "Posting Policy Violations". More egregious violations may be addressed under Section 7 of the Student Organization Relationship Statement at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

7.3. Disciplinary Penalties:

- a. The dean of students may impose one or more of the following penalties for violation of a Regents' Rule, University regulation, or administrative rule, and failure to meet the conditions will be considered an additional violation:
 - 1. Letter of Reprimand;
 - 2. Probation;
 - 3. Require restitution, educational seminars, and/or community service;
 - 4. Suspend the organization's right to do one or more of the following:
 - i. publicly post signs;
 - ii. set up a table or exhibit;
 - iii. publicly raise funds or make a solicitation;
 - iv. reserve the use of University rooms or spaces;
 - v. participate in intramural sports tournaments and events;
 - 5. Suspend or cancel the organization's registration for a defined period of time;
 - 6. Bar future registration of the organization;
 - 7. Deferred suspension/cancellation of the organization's registration

7.4 Notice:

- a. The dean of students shall notify the accused organization by letter of his or her decision. The dean may send the letter to any authorized representative of the organization.
- b. The letter shall
 - 1. concisely describe the dean's findings, identifying any violations and any charges on which no violation was found;
 - 2. state the penalty imposed, if any; and
 - 3. if any violation is found or any penalty imposed, advise the organization of its rights to appeal in accordance with Section

7.5. General Procedures for Appeal

- a. An organization may appeal to the vice president for student affairs or the vice president's designee.

1. To appeal any decision, an authorized representative of the organization must give written notice of appeal to the dean of students within ten days after the day on which the decision or action being appealed is mailed to the organization. But if the decision is mailed
 2. between semesters, the notice of appeal is due on the tenth calendar day of the following semester.
 3. The notice of appeal may be informal, but it shall contain the organization's name, the date of the decision or action and the name of the organization's representative.
- b. Notice of appeal timely given suspends the imposition of penalty until the appeal is finally decided, but interim action may be taken as authorized under Section 7.2 c.
 - c. Arguments either against or in support of the decision will be considered and, at the discretion of the vice president, will be presented in writing rather than orally.
 - d. The organization must file all relevant documentation from the previous decision, including written arguments when appropriate, with the Vice President for Student Affairs within ten days after notice of appeal is given.
 - e. The decision shall be communicated in writing to the organization and the dean. The decision of the vice president shall be the final appellate review.
 - f. The vice president may approve, reject, or modify the decision in question, or may require that the original decision be reopened for the presentation of additional evidence and reconsideration of the decision.