

## **ADVISOR GUIDE**

### **The Attributes of a Good Advisor**

**Aware** : Knows what is happening with the group at all times –problems, dates of functions, etc.

**Dedicated** : Always willing to assist the organization when necessary. Enjoys being associated with the group and is very involved.

**Visible** : Attends meetings, social functions and other special engagements for the group when possible.

**Informed** : Familiar with the rules, policies and regulations of the College and the bylaws and constitution of the organization. Is prepared to render assistance with their interpretation.

**Supportive**: Provides encouragement and praise to group members.

**Open-minded**: Willing to consider new ideas and approaches although He/she may not totally agree with them.

**Respected** : Earned through being trustworthy and honest and demonstrating a genuine interest in the welfare of the group.

*Adapted from The Kent State Advisor Manual at : <http://dept.kent.edu/csi/StudentOrganizations/AdvisorManual.html>*

### **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISOR?**

Each campus organization is required to have a full or part time advisor and to register that name at the Department of Student Life in order to be recognized. The advisor must sign the Student Organization Registration form each semester. In addition, the advisor's duty is to counsel and advise the officers and members of the organization. No advisor shall have the power to prohibit the expression of editorial opinion by a unit of campus media.

A Student Organization Advisor is a resource for the organization and can offer support and guidance in several broad areas:

- Helping with the growth and development of students within the organization;
- Serving as a source of information and continuity to the organization as members transition;
- Serving as a liaison between the College and the organization;
- Advising the organization regarding program/event content and purpose;
- Traveling with students to college approved conferences and competitions;
- Filing appropriate paperwork for travel and budgetary transactions.

### **HOW ADVISORS SUPPORT STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

It may be helpful to think of the role as an Advisor in terms of three major areas:

#### **1. Organizational Maintenance**

These sometimes "routine" engagements are essential to the ultimate success of an organization and may include:

- Ensuring organizational continuity by periodically reviewing the constitution, minutes, files, and/or traditions with students;
- Serving as a resource for students, especially regarding College policies, regulations, and procedures;
- Coaching the officers in the principles of good organizational and administrative practice;

- Helping and encouraging officers to fully register their group each academic year;
- Assisting with the room reservations and event request forms.

## 2. Organizational Growth

One of the most rewarding aspects of working with student organizations is assisting an organization in setting its vision for the future. Your experience and guidance can prove invaluable by:

- Keeping the group focused on its development and goals;
- Remembering and assisting groups as they develop and mature;
- Pointing out new opportunities, perspectives and directions to the group;
- Developing self-discipline and responsibility among group members.

## 3. Motivation

Many students need nothing more than encouragement from someone who has an active interest in what they are doing. Advisors can motivate students in ways that ensure that they are learning and having fun. Advisors can encourage and support an organization by:

- Attending organizational meetings, retreats, and events whenever possible;
- Remaining as available as possible to assist the organization;
- Supplying expert knowledge and insight through experience;
- Providing problem-solving suggestions;
- Serving as a role model for creative decision-making and flexibility, because problems can create stressful circumstances for students.

The Department of Student Life encourages advisors to support all areas of student organization activity especially through direct interaction. This practice may vary from organization to organization, based on the group's needs, goals, and size. Each year, the student leadership of the organization and the advisor should meet to determine the role and expectations of the advisor and the advisor's expectations of the students.

## **THINGS TO BE AWARE OF AS AN ADVISOR**

### Meeting Attendance/Level of Involvement

The level of involvement of an Advisor depends upon the nature of the organization, its leaders, and its activities. It is not necessary to attend every meeting and event. However, advisors should stay informed of the organization's activities and might want to attend some meetings from time to time in order to offer helpful points of view and encouragement to the organization. It may also be useful to establish weekly or bi-weekly meetings with student leaders to discuss issues and assist by reviewing agenda items for executive and general meetings.

### Decision Making

Consistent with the development of responsible student leaders, Advisors of an organization do not have the authority to represent the views of the organization. This remains the responsibility of the students. Additionally, Advisors may not serve as a voting member of the organization's board of directors, executive council, or similar governing body.

### Expense Authorization

It is strongly encouraged that Advisors be aware of the financial status of the organization. However, Advisors are not allowed to sign checks or authorize spending without approval from members of the student organization.

#### Event Attendance

Advisors' attendance at events sponsored by student organizations is not required, however, where Advisors are able and feel comfortable, event attendance is not prohibited. This can be another way to demonstrate support for the organization.

#### **SHARKNET**

SharkNet is MDC's newest tool that expands campus engagement to the web for all students. An online student organization management and student involvement portal, SharkNet allows students to create and tailor their college experience. From the site, students can:

- Join or start a student organization
- See all events and programs at all MDC campuses and centers
- RSVP for special events
- Track their involvement at MDC
- Submit forms and documents online

SharkNet is also great for Advisors! Get all event information, review organization requests and documents, and interact with the group all through the site. Activate your account today!

#### **APPLICABLE COLLEGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

##### *Student Organization General Information*

Policy IV-3

Student Organizations

Procedure 4072

Formation of Student Organizations

Procedure 4028

Hazing

Procedure 4073

Suspension of Student Organizations

Procedure 4097

Student Life Guest Speakers

Procedure 4009

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Procedure 4025

Student Code of Conduct

Procedure 4067

Religious Observances by Students

Money

Policy VI-30

Contractual Agreements with Individuals or Organizations for Professional and Technical Services

Procedure 6001, Part B, Section 4.

Allowable Expenditures of the College

This is applicable to Club Advisors, as club accounts are housed in Fund 6 Agency Accounts.

Procedure 3280

Reimbursement to College Employees for College-Related Purchases Not Exceeding \$500

Procedure 3270

Petty Cash

Procedure 3110

Cash Collection Other Than at the Bursar's Office

Student Travel

Procedure 4096

Student Travel

Procedure 3450

Travel Advances for Estimated Expenses Pertaining to Student Activity and Athletic Funds

Procedure 3400

Travel Reimbursement for the District Board of Trustees, the President, College Employees, and Other Authorized Persons

Procedure 2129

Driver Record Search