Student Organization Guidelines & Resources

2026-2027

Dean of Students office

WELCOME

SWOSU is happy to help students grow by facilitating campus organizations within the parameters of University policies and values. Being recognized as an official organization on campus is a wonderful opportunity for students to enhance their experience at SWOSU. The University supports many different student organizations so students can succeed and develop both academically and personally beyond the classroom.

Officially recognized student organizations are granted certain benefits by the University, including access to facilities. These organizations may also request funding to support engaging events that enhance campus culture and well-being through the established Allocations process. Additionally, they can host events covered by University insurance and utilize University platforms and promotional resources.

Please use this document as a resource for developing, supporting, and maintaining a student organization for SWOSU students. The Dean of Students office is available to assist your student organization and provide guidance for the policies that are held within this document.

SWOSU ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTS

ABIGAIL BALENTI | STUDENT ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

(580) 774-3767 | ABIGAIL.HARMON@SWOSU.EDU

DR. WENDY YODER | DEAN OF STUDENTS

(580) 774-3767 | DEANOFFICE@SWOSU.EDU

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Chapter 1 - University Policies for Student Organizations

1.1 All student organization activities must be in compliance with University rules and policies as well as federal, municipal, and state laws. For a full list of SWOSU student conduct policies, please see the SWOSU Student Handbook.

1.2 ANTI-HAZING POLICY

I. Purpose

Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) is committed to providing a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students. This policy is established to comply with the federal Stop Campus Hazing Act and relevant Oklahoma state laws, ensuring the prevention, reporting, and enforcement of anti-hazing measures.

Other Campus Policies

Non-Discrimination and Harassment Statement

SWOSU's policy complies with federal regulations. SWOSU does not discriminate against any individual based on race, color, creed, religion, alienage or national origin, citizenship status, age, sex, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This policy includes, but is not limited to, admissions, employment, financial services, residential life, educational programs, and other activities the University operates.

SWOSU demonstrates a zero-tolerance environment related to any type of discrimination or harassment.

Retaliation Policy

SWOSU prohibits retaliation against anyone who has submitted a complaint for discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct under this policy or local, state, or federal laws. SWOSU also prohibits retaliation against someone participating in an investigation or assisting another to submit a complaint of discrimination or harassment.

The following person serves as the Title IX Coordinator for the entire SWOSU community:

Cindi Albrightson
Title IX & Compliance Coordinator
Hays Administration Building, Room 204A
580-74-3108
cindi.albrightson@swosu.edu

If you are experiencing retaliation, are aware of retaliation, or have any concerns please report immediately using the forms provided on the Dean of Students website or by directly contacting the Title IX & Compliance Coordinator.

Policy Statement

Hazing is prohibited at Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU). Hazing is any conduct committed as part of a person's recruitment, initiation, pledging, admission into, or affiliation with a student organization, athletic team, or living group (collectively "student groups") or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to such a student group that causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger or physical harm, or serious psychological or emotional harm, to any student or other person attending SWOSU, including causing, directing, coercing, or forcing a person to consume any food, liquid, alcohol, drug, or other substance which subjects the person to risk of such harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. "Hazing" does not include customary athletic events or other similar contests or competitions. This prohibition applies to conduct that may occur both on and off campus. In compliance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act and relevant Oklahoma state laws SWOSU will implement procedures and programs, including offering students and employees hazing prevention training and programming, implementation of a mandatory reporting procedure, incorporating hazing reports into the annual Clery Report, and publication of a Campus Hazing Transparency Report.

II. Stop Campus Hazing Act Definitions

Hazing – Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate, that

(I) is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and

(II) causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury including

a. whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity;

b. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;

c. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;

d. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;

e. any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;

f. any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law; and

g. any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law.

Student Organization - The term 'student organization' means an organization at an institution of higher education (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

III. Prohibited Conduct

All forms of hazing as defined herein, including physical, psychological, and cyber hazing, are strictly prohibited in any University-affiliated activity, group, or organization, including athletics. Consent is not a defense to hazing.

IV. Reporting and Investigation

1. Mandatory Reporting – Faculty, staff, and students must report any hazing incidents. Reports can be made using the forms provided on the Dean of Students website or by directly contacting the Title IX & Compliance Coordinator.
2. Investigation Procedures – All reports will be reviewed and investigated in compliance with University policies and applicable laws.
3. Protection from Retaliation – Retaliation is any adverse action taken against a person because of that person's participation in protected activity. In accordance with the member universities non-retaliation policies, RUSO and the member universities strictly prohibit retaliation against any person for making any good faith report.

V. Enforcement and Sanctions

1. Student Organizations and Athletics – Organizations and athletic teams found responsible for hazing will face disciplinary action, including suspension, expulsion, or other sanctions. See Student Organization Guidelines and Resources 2024-2025 and 21 OK Stat § 21-1190 part D**fines
2. Individuals – Students or employees found responsible for hazing may face disciplinary actions such as suspension, expulsion, termination, or legal consequences. Students, see the Student Code of Conduct; Employees, see the Staff Handbook or Faculty Handbook, Conduct and Discipline section, 2025 and 21 OK Stat § 21-1190 part E**fines.
3. Legal Compliance – SWOSU will report hazing incidents to local law enforcement as required by law in compliance with 21 OK Stat § 21-1190 (2020)

VI. Education and Prevention

1. SWOSU will implement annual training for students, faculty, staff, and athletic teams on hazing prevention. Training will be available in-person and online.
2. Educational materials and resources will be made available online and in University offices.
3. SWOSU Connect for new students will include anti-hazing awareness and reporting procedures.

VII. Public Disclosure SWOSU will maintain and publicly disclose hazing violations, in compliance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act, on the University website, ensuring transparency and awareness.

VIII. Policy Review and Amendments This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to remain in compliance with federal and state laws. The Hazing Compliance Committee is responsible for ensuring adherence to this policy.

IX. Contact Information

For --more information or to report hazing, please contact:

Student Activities Coordinator; Abigail Harmon-Balenti; 580-774-3767; abigail.harmon@swosu.edu

Athletic Director Todd Helton; 580-774-3227; todd.helton@swosu.edu

Dean of Students Dr. Wendy Yoder; 580-774-3767; deanoffice@swosu.edu

Title IX & Compliance Coordinator Cindi Albrightson; 580-774-3108; cindi.albrightson@swosu.edu or compliance@swosu.edu

Or use the reporting form found on the Dean of Students webpage: Hazing Incident Report

Please reference Appendix A for more information

1.3 ACTIVITIES REQUEST

All student organizations will make a request for any and all planned activities through the Dean of Students office at least three business days prior to the event by completing an Event Submission in HilltopCentral and receiving approval. Failure to submit the Event Submission for your activity will prohibit the student organization from hosting their activity. All events, meetings, fundraisers, and group community service activities are required to be submitted in HilltopCentral for approval. All activities must be submitted through the SWOSU Calendar/Room Reservation system, as well.

1.4 ADVERTISING

Posting of flyers, signs and displays in campus buildings is limited to approved campus organizations. All flyers must have their events submitted and approved on HilltopCentral. These must be approved by the Dean of Students before posting and must be stamped and dated prior to duplication.

1. Flyers must be approved by the Dean of Students in room 214 STF prior to making multiple copies.
2. Must submit and have approval of their event being promoted in HilltopCentral.
3. Must have "Authorized by Dean of Students" stamped on each flyer.
4. Must have name of sponsoring organization on flyer.
5. Flyers may be approved for a maximum of 2 weeks.
6. Flyers must be posted only on bulletin boards.
7. Maximum size 8-1/2 X 11 inches.
8. Copy of each flyer will be filed in the Dean of Student's office.
9. Flyers must fall within the guidelines outlined in the Student Handbook.

10. Flyers are to be removed after the event by the sponsoring organizations no later than 1 week after the event.
11. CAB may be available to assist with hanging/removing of flyers upon request.

**All social media posts apply to the advertising approval process, as well.

1. Must submit and have approval of their event being promoted in HilltopCentral.
2. Must have name of sponsoring organization located in the post (graphic or caption).
3. Social media posts must fall within the guidelines outlined in the Student Handbook.

1.5 DANCES & SECURITY

Activities requiring the assistance of Campus Police should be scheduled in advance, by calling (580) 774-3111. Activities with alcohol or firearms are required to have an officer present, per RUSO policies. Dependent on the activity, an Etrieve form may be required to be completed. Events held on weeknights within the Student Center must conclude by no later than midnight. No events are permitted to be held on Sundays in the Student Center.

1.6 ALCOHOL ON CAMPUS

The use of alcohol is forbidden on campus as well as at campus events sponsored by recognized student organizations. Publicity encouraging the use or abuse of alcohol at events is also prohibited.

1.7 USE OF CAMPUS GROUNDS

Any events on campus grounds are required to be submitted in HilltopCentral for approval. If your organization is planning an activity outside on campus grounds, you are required to check with the office of the Dean of Students and the Physical Plant for information, permission, and assistance. No glitter or confetti is permitted to be used on campus grounds. Event clean-up will be done by the sponsoring organization.

1.8 FUND RAISING

Any fund-raising activities require prior University approval, particularly for sales of items or event attendance. **State law prohibits some activities, such as lotteries and raffles**. All fundraisers must be submitted and approved in HilltopCentral by the SWOSU Foundation Office and the Dean of Students Office. Fundraisers conducted in the Student Center must also have approval from Auxiliary Services. No bake sales are permitted by student organizations. All sales and transactions must be conducted by currently enrolled students of the organizations or the advisor. If students from the organizations are not involved in the sale, or properly partnered with an approved vendor, the sale must cease. Fundraising includes any activity involving soliciting funds (i.e. selling merchandise, entry fees, taking donations, etc.) for the organization's use. Door-to-door solicitation to local businesses is strictly prohibited.

1.9 MAINTAINING OFFICIAL ORGANIZATION STATUS

Each organization president is required to Re-Register their Student Organization on HilltopCentral by the third Monday in September of each academic year and at any other time during the year when information becomes outdated (such as when officers are elected/replaced) to maintain **active**, official student organization status. The Office of the Dean of Students will approve Re-

Registrations for a student organization. You will need the following for your Re-Registration on HilltopCentral:

- A list of officers of the organization with current contact information.
- Roster of active members with SWOSU student email addresses.
- Full-time SWOSU faculty or staff sponsor for the organization.
- Each organization must maintain a **current** copy of its Constitution and Bylaws within the Hilltop platform (any updates must be approved through the Dean of Students Office)

All materials for maintaining official organization status must be submitted via HilltopCentral to be considered for **official** renewal.

1.10 SPONSOR

Student organizations must have a current full-time SWOSU faculty or staff member designated as a Sponsor. The sponsor is selected by the student organization each academic year. The organization can have up to 2 co-sponsors. Sponsors must submit written approval of accepting the position to the Dean of Student Office if:

1. It is a new organization.
2. The sponsorship has changed since the previous academic year.

1.11 FUNDING AND PURCHASING

Funds deposited to or expended from student organization accounts are funds owned by the State of Oklahoma and therefore, subject to the rules, regulations, and best practices of the State of Oklahoma.

- Funds deposited to or expended from student organization accounts are subject to all audits by internal and external audit firms and are subject to open records requests.
- All funds expended to outside vendors for the purchase of products require an invoice which clearly states the name of the vendor, the product was sold to SWOSU, the product purchased and the amount.
- Funds expended to individuals or companies for services, awards or prizes must be reported to the IRS on an income reportable form, such as a W2, 1099, or 1098T.

Process for purchases from Business Services:

1. **Submit PO**: You must submit a PO BEFORE making the purchase. Only staff/faculty have access in Etrieve, so the sponsor will have to be the ones to submit it to the Student Activities Coordinator.
2. **Make the purchase**: Orgs do not have to use the DOS purchase card, but we are happy to help them by loaning it out or making a purchase on our Amazon business account. Business Services will place order in case of travel for hotel rooms and conference registration. All purchases for organization must be **tax-exempt**. Here is a list of prohibited items:
    a. Personal items
    b. Alcohol
    c. Cash Advances

d. Gasoline

e. Gift Certificates

f. Professional Services

g. Personal Services

h. Travel & Entertainment

i. Postage or Shipping

3. **Submit Invoice/Receipt:** Return the DOS card **with itemized receipts**. Invoice payments will not be made until after submitted and approved by Business Services through Etrieve.
4. **Reimbursements:** Vendors must be the same for PO's and Invoices. Make the PO out to the person being reimbursed, NOT the company where the purchase was made. Only SWOSU faculty/staff can be reimbursed.

1.12 CASH, PRIZES, OR AWARDS

Guidance for cash or other prizes to students:

- Purchase order and check requisition can be made out to the Faculty Sponsor, who can cash the check at the Bursar's window.
- A Student Award or Prize documentation sheet must be signed by the student accepting the award.
    - The original, signed award sheet must be returned to the Business Services office as soon as possible after the event and attached as documentation for the expenditure.
    - The Student Org. Award or Prize Documentation sheet can be found on the Dean of Students webpage under "Student Organizations," or you may contact the Dean of Students at 580.774.3767 to receive one.
- Business Services should evaluate the documents to determine which IRS reporting form should be used.
- Any giveaway over $50 in value must have a Giveaway Form filled out and returned to the Dean of Students Office.
- The Giveaway Form sheet can be found on the Dean of Students webpage under "Student Organizations," or you may contact the Dean of Students at 580.774.3767 to receive one.
- For any cash or scholarship prizes to students, organizations must reach out to Business Services Grant Accountant for further assistance.

1.13 HAZING

Hazing is prohibited at Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU). Hazing is any conduct committed as part of a person's recruitment, initiation, pledging, admission into, or affiliation with a student organization, athletic team, or living group (collectively "student groups") or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to such a student group that causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger or physical harm, or serious psychological or emotional harm, to any student or other person attending SWOSU, including causing, directing, coercing, or forcing a person to consume any food,

liquid, alcohol, drug, or other substance which subjects the person to risk of such harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. "Hazing" does not include customary athletic events or other similar contests or competitions. This prohibition applies to conduct that may occur both on and off campus. In compliance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act and relevant Oklahoma state laws SWOSU will implement procedures and programs, including offering students and employees hazing prevention training and programming, implementation of a mandatory reporting procedure, incorporating hazing reports into the annual Clery Report, and publication of a Campus Hazing Transparency Report.

1.14 SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

SWOSU student organizations do not condone any form of sexually abusive behavior on the part of its members, recruits, or pledges, whether physical, mental, or emotional. This includes any actions that are demeaning to any person including but not limited to date rape, gang rape or verbal or written harassment. Any reports will be investigated under the Code of Conduct or Title IX as appropriate.

1.15 FIRE AND SAFETY

No SWOSU student organization may be housed in or use the services of a structure that does not meet minimum fire and safety requirements of local civil authorities.

1.16 DRONES

Drones are not permitted to be used by a student organization unless the following requirements are met. Please contact the Compliance Coordinator (580.774.3108) for more information.

- The drones would need to be registered, and the operator would need to be licensed through the FAA.
- SWOSU Campus Police Chief and the Compliance Coordinator must grant approval for all flights on campus.
- Additional requirements may apply.

1.17 CAMPUS FOOD GUIDELINES

Campus Organizations: All Campus Organization events should be submitted through Hilltop Central for approval. If the event includes food items supplied by the organization, that should be indicated on the event request.

Utilizing SWOSU Food Services: Entities can order food and beverages through SWOSU Food Services by contacting (580) 774-3783. Please note that events held in the Memorial Student Union are not allowed to bring in outside food without obtaining prior written approval from the Director of Food Services. More information can be found at https://www.swosu.edu/about/conference-centers-facilities/banquet-catering.php

Food and Beverages from Off-Campus: **The sale of homemade baked goods or any food items not prepared by SWOSU Food Services is prohibited.** Fundraising activities involving food items that are prepared and packaged in a commercial kitchen are allowed, provided that prior

approval is obtained from SWOSU Food Services via Hilltop Central. Potluck events are permitted but must be approved ahead of time through Hilltop Central. Food purchases should be made only after the organization gains approval of a purchase order through Business Affairs. Club sponsors can access the Purchase Order in Etrieve and should submit them to the Student Activities Coordinator first. Organizations wishing to use the Dean of Students purchase card should complete the appropriate request form available on Hilltop Central. Any questions about Student Organization purchase orders should be directed to the Student Activities Coordinator in the Office of the Dean of Students at (580) 774-3767.

Chapter 2 - Student Activities

The following information has been compiled to assist organizations in becoming familiar with University policies as they apply to organization activities and to inform groups of services available to them. The forms referred to may be obtained from the office of the Dean of Students.

2.1 APPROVAL FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATION ACTIVITY

It is required for student organizations to request approval at least three business days prior to hosting any event, fundraiser, group community service hours, or meeting:

- **All events, meetings, fundraisers, and group community service** must be submitted for approval using the HilltopCentral Event Submission process.
    - Recurring meetings (e.g. monthly chapter meetings) can be submitted all at once by adding multiple event dates to your submission.
- You must contact any office or department offering assistance for your event and receive their explicit approval of the event. HilltopCentral event requests are referred to appropriate offices and departments for verification and approval.
- The Student Activities Coordinator will review your request and give approval after receiving confirmation from all departments involved.
- Student organizations must submit any upcoming event to the SWOSU Room Reservations calendar if an on-campus room is required with the exception of the Student Union—contact the Student Union Director at 580.774.3166 for reservations directly.
- All events, meetings, fundraisers, and group community service are encouraged to be planned at least two weeks in advance to allow for all approvals, unless significant or mitigating circumstances affected scheduling.

2.2 RESERVATION OF FACILITIES

To reserve on-campus facilities or schedule events, student organizations may use the SWOSU web calendar. Below are the campus building and who to contact for approvals.

- Student Center facilities - Director of the Student Union
- Fine Arts Auditorium - Director of the Fine Arts Center
- Pharmacy/ Pharmacy Annex - Assistant Dean of Pharmacy
- Physical Education Building - Chair of HPER
- Berrong Music Hall – Music Department Administrative Assistant
- Business Enterprise Center – BEC Receptionist; bec@swosu.edu
- Campell Building – Jesse Kwak, Webmaster
- Chemistry, Pharmacy, Physics Building – Pharmacy Student Coordinator
- Hays Administration Building – President's Office Executive Assistant
- Hibler Education Center – CETL Administrative Assistant
- Hilltop Theatre – Creative Media & Visual Arts Department; Jessica Salmans
- Science Building – Jesse Kwak, Webmaster
- Stafford Center – Business & Technology Administrative Assistant
- Walter Strother Building – Pharmacy Student Coordinator

- Wellness Center – Center for Health & Wellbeing Director
- Clock Tower - Student Activities Coordinator and Director of the Student Union
- PEC - Director of the PEC
- Any athletic venues - Athletic Director

2.3 ASSISTANCE WITH PUBLICITY

When planning major events of campus-wide interest, the Dean of Students Office will be happy to assist with social media or disbursement of flyers for on-campus events. The Public Relations & Marketing Department should be contacted for off-campus events and advertisement. They can include the event on the master calendar for the campus and assist with media coverage when appropriate.

2.4 UNIVERSITY ACCOUNTS FOR ACTIVITIES

There are two types of accounts that active, registered student organizations can establish with SWOSU:

1. **Allocations Account** – Student organizations must apply for allocation funds at the beginning of each academic year. Organizations are awarded based on criteria determined by the Dean of Students and presenting to the Allocations Committee. No funds are guaranteed.

2. **Ineligibility** – Student organizations that received allocation funding in the previous academic year but failed to spend any of the money will be ineligible to apply for allocation funds for one academic year. Any organization that receives 290 University funding is ineligible to apply for allocation funds.

3. **Fund 7 Account** – Student organizations can establish a fundraising account through the University. This account is used for operating your organization outside of allocations. You can deposit fundraising money, monthly dues, etc. and access the funds in the same manner as allocations (see process for purchases). If your organizations account is inactive for 3 years, then all funds will be returned to the University. Please contact the Student Activities Coordinator or the SWOSU Grant Accountant for balance inquiries or to open a Fund 7 account. Any active student organization is eligible for this type of account.

2.5 FOOD AND BEVERAGE NEEDS

Student organizations can order food and beverages through SWOSU Food Services by contacting (580) 774-3783. Please note that events held in the Memorial Student Union are not allowed to bring in outside food without obtaining prior written approval from the Director of Food Services. More information can be found at https://www.swosu.edu/about/conference-centers-facilities/banquet-catering.php

2.6 EXPECTATIONS

The University supports student development by providing opportunities for student organizations to organize and provide experiences for students to organize and develop their professionalism

skills. As such, the Dean of Students expects student organizations to conduct themselves with appropriateness and professionalism.

Student organizations are expected to:

- Clean up trash, leftover items, decorations, pamphlets, etc. After each event student organizations should ensure the space, they used is cleaned.
- If needed, student orgs may contact Physical Plan to get assistance with cleanup and ask for trash cans to be present during events.
- Students and student orgs are expected to conduct themselves according to the SWOSU Code of Conduct and this resource guide.

2.7 TRAVEL

Each student traveling, whether in a University or person vehicle, will need to complete the Student Liability Release. The release is located in Etrieve under Student Services and is only visible to students. The form must be submitted to the event sponsor prior to the University activity.

Sponsors are also required to fill out a Travel Request for their organization.

Chapter 3 - Student Organization Application

3.1 PROCEDURE

Any group of five or more students with the intention to organize and pursue a common interest may request to be an official student organization. To request recognition from the University to be considered a SWOSU student organization, students must:

Application:

1. Submit a letter of proposal to the Dean of Students listing purposes and objectives of the new organization. A major consideration toward approved organizational membership shall be based upon proof that the proposed organization shall not in any way, at any time, create a substantial disruption of the education process.
2. A letter signed by a full-time Southwestern Oklahoma State University faculty or staff member agreeing to sponsor the proposed organization for one year according to the outlined purposes and objectives mentioned above must be submitted to the Dean of Students. This letter should accompany the letter of proposal.
3. Develop and submit a constitution: A basic outline for the constitution is included at the end of this document. **Two** copies of the organization's constitution must accompany the application.
4. Elect and/or select officers. A roster with names and contact information (student emails) of the officers and members, who are currently enrolled, must accompany the application.
    a. 5 enrolled SWOSU students are required to begin an organization.
5. Submit details of initiation procedures. This applies **only** to Social Fraternities or Sororities.

Evaluation:

6. Consideration is given to the need and objectives of the proposed organization and evaluation as to repetition or conflict with organized groups already sanctioned on campus. Consideration is also based in part upon whether the proposed organiza0tion shows evidence of a lasting or continuing nature. This evaluation is conducted by the Office of the Dean of Students.

Approval / Denial:

7. Proposed organizations are required to present their constitution and bylaws to the Dean of Students who will give consideration and approval. (Each developing organization must be chartered by the Student Senate according to its approved constitution.). Final recognition of all student organizations is granted by the Dean of Students. If you have questions about the recognition procedure, contact the Dean of Students (ext. 3767) or the Student Government Association (774-0615).
8. Newly approved organizations are encouraged to work with SGA to become a charted organization through student governance.

Please reference Appendix B for more information

3.2 APPEAL

Any organization being denied official recognition may appeal its case to the Student Appeals Board which is composed of three students appointed by the President of the Student Senate and two faculty members appointed by the President of the Faculty Senate. Such notice of appeal should be made in writing within five days of notice of denial and addressed to the Chairman of the Student Appeals Board, c/o Vice President for Student Services, Administration Building, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, 100 Campus Drive, Weatherford, Oklahoma 73096. Failure to give notice of intent to appeal within three days mentioned above will automatically waive the right of appeal. Any four members of this tribunal shall constitute a quorum for purposes of conducting a hearing. A majority vote of the tribunal is required to over-ride the administrative decision. The decision of the Student Appeals Board is final and the organization will have exhausted its rights of appeal within the institution at this level. Any proposed organization having been denied official recognition by the Student Appeals Board may reapply for recognition after two full semesters have expired, excluding the semester in which application was made.

All recognized student organizations are eligible to use the same services and enjoy the same rights extended to any campus department or agency, and they are expected to operate within University policies and procedures except where exempt by the Office of Civil Rights.

3.3 STUDENT ORGANIZATION SPONSOR

1. **Sponsors:**
    - Sponsors are group consultants – a faculty member or staff chosen by the group to help guide it toward its objectives.
    - To be chosen by a group is regarded as an honor and privilege. In return, the individual in accepting the sponsorship has certain obligations and responsibilities to the group.
    - Student organizations have the discretion to change their Sponsor at the beginning of each academic school year.
2. **Responsibilities of the sponsor:**
    - Attend meetings of the group when needed
    - Help the organization define objectives and goals
    - Serve as a resource person providing, when necessary, information on parliamentary rules, University requirements and regulations and traditions
    - Make recommendations and provide feedback for the organization
    - Approve social events and money-raising events of the organization. Approve purchases and see that no debts are incurred
    - Attend social functions of the organization when needed
    - Provide guidance when conflicts arise
    - Represent SWOSU and the State of Oklahoma in dealing with the organization.
3. **Responsibilities of the organization to the sponsor:**
    - Keep in touch with sponsors and keep them informed
    - Cooperate with them

- Become informed of campus policies and the Student Code of Conduct and follow their guidelines
- Regard sponsors and their spouse or guest as friends when they attend social functions – introduce yourself and your guests

4. **Selecting a sponsor or co-sponsor:**
   Usually, members of the organization are aware of faculty/staff that have shown an interest in the organization and would be willing to serve as a sponsor, if asked. If they accept, notify the Dean of Students office with the name or the change in name of sponsors and ask them to send a brief letter of acceptance for the sponsor's role. Student organizations have the discretion to change their Sponsor at the beginning of each academic, school year.
5. **Sayre organizations:**
   Student organizations that were previously approved as a functioning student organization at SWOSU – Sayre shall be granted official status at SWOSU in the event the organization transitions from Sayre to SWOSU. The Dean of Students will coordinate with SGA review committee in the event Sayre has an org that transitions to the main campus.

Chapter 4- Fraternity & Sorority Programs

4.1 SOCIAL FRATERNITY OR SORORITY

Social Fraternities and Sororities are members of Greek programs at SWOSU. They are held under the same policies and standards as student organizations recognized by the University (except where exempt by the Office of Civil Rights).

Social Fraternities and Sororities are defined by the following criteria:

1) Fraternities and sororities are exclusive organizations. Members of one social fraternity or sorority are restricted from joining other social fraternities or sororities.
2) Fraternities and Sororities are selective of their potential members and may require their participation in Rush and Pledging to determine official membership.
3) Fraternities and Sororities use Greek letters and/or symbols to differentiate their organizations.

4.2 PROFESSIONAL FRATERNITY OR SORORITY

An affirmative answer to any of the following questions is evidence that the organization is professional, service, or honorary in nature and not a social fraternity or sorority for Title IX purposes.

1) Is the organization's membership limited to persons pursuing or having interest in a particular field of study, profession, or academic discipline?
2) Is the membership limited to individuals who have a high level of achievement in scholarship or any other endeavor?
3) Are the members permitted to hold membership in other fraternities or sororities at the same level of education?

4.3 OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS EXPLANATION OF TITLE IX EXEMPTION

Title IX does not apply to the membership practices of a social fraternity or social sorority if the active membership consists primarily of students in attendance at an institution of higher education and the fraternity or sorority is exempt from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code. 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)(6)(A); 34 C.F.R. § 106.14(a). All other programs and activities of social fraternities and sororities are governed by Title IX if they receive any Federal financial assistance.

Professional fraternities and sororities and service and honor societies are subject to the requirements of Title IX and may not exclude members on the basis of sex. 34 C.F.R. § 106.31(b)(7). An affirmative answer to any of the following questions is evidence that the organization is professional, service, or honorary in nature and not a social fraternity or sorority for Title IX purposes.

1) Is the organization's membership limited to persons pursuing or having interest in a particular field of study, profession, or academic discipline?
2) Is the membership limited to individuals who have a high level of achievement in scholarship or any other endeavor?
3) Are the members permitted to hold membership in other fraternities or sororities at the same level of education?

4.4 SWOSU GREEK COUNCIL

This council will provide guidance to Greek programs at SWOSU. This council will consist of one representative from each University-recognized Social Fraternity or Sorority. These representatives will be the acting presidents of the Social Fraternities and Sororities, or a designee student within that Greek organization.

The objectives of Greek Council are as follows:

1) Greek Council Rules: Greek Council will annually submit official policies and rules to the Dean of Students office that determine the means, timeline, and expectations by which all Social Fraternities and Sororities will abide when determining Rush & Pledge for new membership. Any changes to Greek Council Rush, Pledge, or meeting rules shall be approved only if two-thirds of the Greek Council representatives approve. No Greek Council rules shall be approved without the consent of the Dean of Students or their designee.
2) Convene Greek Council meetings: Greek Council will determine criteria that outline when and how an official council meeting will be convened. Council meetings will not be convened without notice provided to the Dean of Students 48 hours in advance.
3) Greek week: Greek Council will determine expectations and rules that govern all Social Fraternities and Sororities when conducting Greek week.

The Dean of Students office shall be presented with any proposed changes and will determine final approval for all policies, rules, and expectations set forth by Greek Council.

Any incident which violates the SWOSU Code of Conduct, University policies or procedures, or federal, state or municipal law may constitute removal of the Fraternity or Sorority from Greek Council and/or removal of official student organization status provided by the University.

4.5 RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Greek Council of SWOSU requires all members of SWOSU fraternities and sororities to be responsible for annually instructing their members about the risk management policy and hazing policy.

4.6 ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

1) The possession, use and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages, while on University premises, during an official SWOSU sorority and fraternity event, or in any situation or setting sponsored or endorsed by the chapter, must be in compliance with any and all applicable laws of your state, county, and city.
2) The sale of alcohol, by any SWOSU sorority and fraternity is prohibited. This prohibition includes any action that is a functional substitute for the sale of alcohol such as: charging for admission to parties, passing the hat, selling empty cups, or selling drink tickets.
3) Alcoholic beverages may not be purchased with SWOSU sorority and fraternity funds. Nor, may the purchase of alcoholic beverages be undertaken or coordinated by any member in the name of or on behalf of the chapter.
4) SWOSU sorority and fraternity events may not involve the use of bulk quantities of alcohol, kegs of beer or any common source container of alcohol. All alcoholic beverages consumed at SWOSU sorority and fraternity functions must be purchased and brought by the individuals attending the function or through a cash bar operated by a licensed establishment where the function is held. Any legal use of alcohol should not involve unlimited quantities, the

encouragement of rapid consumption, drinking games, or the direct or indirect pressuring of any person to consume alcohol.

5) No SWOSU sorority and fraternity shall sponsor open parties, meaning those with unrestricted access and without specific invitation, where alcohol is present.
6) All recruitment activities shall be dry; that is without the use of alcoholic beverages.
7) No alcohol may be present at any associate (non-initiated) member activity.
8) No SWOSU sorority and fraternity may co-sponsor, co-promote, or co-finance an event with a bar, tavern, distributor of alcohol, charitable organization, or student organization where alcohol is sold, given away or otherwise provided.
9) The possession, sale and/or use of any illegal drug or controlled substance at any SWOSU sorority and fraternity sponsored event is prohibited.

Chapter 5 - Student Organization Conduct

5.1 VALUES

SWOSU strives to be the premier public university in the region by advancing student and campus community successes in academic program innovation, workforce responsiveness, individual belonging, responsible citizenship, professional advancement, lifelong learning, and individual growth. Student organizations help achieve these values through the promotion of:

- Safety
- Healthy Environment
- Community
- Collaboration
- Commitment to SWOSU

5.2 STUDENT ORGANIZATION DISCIPLINE POLICY

To uphold the expectation that student organizations align with SWOSU's mission and values, any incident involving a student organization which violates the SWOSU Code of Conduct, University policies or procedures, or federal, state or municipal law may result in the sanctioning of an organization. Sanctioning may include financial or service reparations, student organization probation, temporary removal of an organization's official status, the permanent removal of an organization's official status, and/or another sanction determined by the Dean of Students.

For events hosted by 5 or more members from an organization (regardless if the event is intended to be hosted by an organization), the student organization may be considered the responsible party for the conduct violation.

Failure to complete assigned sanctions by an organization within the timeline assigned by the Dean of Students may result in the removal of an organization's University official status.

Student Organizations are afforded an appeals process outlined in the SWOSU Student Handbook.

5.3 STUDENT ORGANIZATION DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Student Organizations will be afforded a conduct process as outlined in the SWOSU Student Handbook when determining responsibility and sanctioning. The Dean of Students, or another University staff person designated by the Dean of Students, will be responsible for conduct investigations and assigning sanctions or reparations to an organization when they are held responsible for misconduct.

Reports of Student Organization misconduct should be submitted to the Dean of Students office.

Chapter 6 - Resources

These resources provide guidance and support to student organizations when organizing, coordinating, and developing into an effective organization. Any student organization seeking assistance with their development should look to their faculty/staff sponsor for help and guidance.

Leading Your Group

No doubt your peers selected you as their leader for many reasons – your past success at completing group tasks, ability to persuade effectively, sound judgment, enthusiasm and commitment to group goals and ability to make people feel good about themselves when you work with them. These skills will definitely be very valuable to you in your leadership role.
However, when you accepted the position of president you agreed to a very subtle change in your responsibility to the group –you are now responsible for seeing that the work gets done, not for doing it yourself. That may not sound like much of a change, but it is. As president, you can no longer afford the luxury of involving yourself in every activity, as you may have done in the past. Trying to do so can cause problems for you and your group, and you may even find that the behavior that earned you the respect of your peers when you were co-workers will not earn you their support now that you are their president.

So—if a leader isn't supposed to do the work, what is a leader supposed to do? Well, leaders inspire. That's tougher than it sounds. In organizations, leadership is recognized as the process of inspiring individual contributions toward a common goal. As your group's leader, you are in the unique position of having access to information and resources necessary to see THE BIG PICTURE. This makes it easier for you to plan work in ways that will keep the group headed toward achievement of its goals. Specifically, you may find yourself:

- Supervising officers in delegated tasks;
- Maintaining reward systems for members;
- Giving personal feedback to members;
- Educating or training workers;
- Developing next year's leaders;
- Assessing the moods of group members;
- Facilitating a group working toward its goals;
- Identifying work that needs to be done; and
- Delegating responsibilities.

In the following sections of this manual we will continue to explore the responsibilities of leadership. We have included those things we feel will be most beneficial in helping you to become a successful leader, no matter how you define the term. We hope that you will read it, use it and grow with it. People have entrusted you with a responsibility, and we believe that you will meet it and deal with it wisely.

Leading an Effective Meeting

Student organization meetings are essential for planning events and building community. As a student leader, the way you run meetings can spark enthusiasm and boost team motivation—or cause members to lose interest. The success of your group often depends on how well your meetings are organized and led. Here are some helpful tips for running effective meetings, split into two key areas: General Meeting Guidelines and Creating an Agenda.

I. General Meeting Rules

A. **Start on Time.** Respect everyone's time by beginning the meeting promptly. Starting late encourages lateness.
B. **Create a Welcoming Environment.** Make meetings comfortable and friendly so everyone feels encouraged to speak up. Snacks or drinks can be a great way to break the ice.
C. **Use Name Tags When Needed.** If not everyone knows each other, visible name tags help people connect faster.
D. **Open With a Recap and Clear Goals.** Begin with a brief recap of the last meeting and lay out realistic goals for the current one.
E. **Involve Everyone.** Keep the discussion balanced. Avoid long back-and-forths with just one person—this can make others feel left out.
F. **Redirect Questions to the Group.** Instead of answering every question yourself, open the floor for others to chime in. Encourage experienced members to support newer ones.
G. **Stay on Track.** Gently redirect the conversation if it goes off-topic, and kindly remind members not to hold side conversations.
H. **Manage Time Wisely.** If a topic is taking too long, set a time limit. For example, say: "Let's take 3 more minutes on this, then we'll decide how to move forward."
I. **Use Visual Aids.** Jot down key points or ideas on a whiteboard or shared screen. Seeing their input recognized helps members feel heard and encourages more participation.
J. **Empower the Group.** Guide the discussion, but let the group make decisions together. This builds ownership and teamwork.
K. **Share Responsibilities.** Don't try to do everything yourself—delegate! Giving members tasks helps them stay engaged.
L. **Keep It Short and Focused.** Aim to keep meetings under **60 minutes**. People are more likely to show up when they know their time will be respected.
M. **Wrap Up Clearly.** Before closing, summarize key takeaways, clarify who's doing what, and confirm the next meeting's date, time, and location. Invite members to suggest agenda items for next time.
N. **Be accessible for all members!** Consider this for date, time, and location of meetings. Maybe offer options for members who cannot attend in-person.

II. Creating the Agenda

A clear agenda is the backbone of a productive meeting. Distribute it ahead of time (or at the start of the meeting) so members come prepared and ready to participate.

Include the following in your agenda:

- Items from members
- Items from the last meeting (unfinished)
- Items or updates from officers

Arrange the agenda logically—group similar topics together and consider starting with quick wins to build momentum.

Tip: When members know, they'll be asked to give brief updates or input on specific topics, they're more likely to stay engaged and attend regularly.

Remember, the greater the spirit, morale and interest of your group, the greater participation you will have from the members. So, **make your meeting fun and positive!**

Team Building

Strong student organizations are built on strong teams—and teamwork doesn't just happen on its own. It takes intention, effort, and time. **Team building** is the process of strengthening how members interact, collaborate, and solve problems together so the group becomes more effective, cohesive, and fun to be part of.

Why Team Building Matters

When done well, team building can:

- Improve communication and problem-solving skills
- Reduce misunderstandings and interpersonal conflict
- Build trust and a sense of belonging
- Help members see and support each other's strengths
- Create a more energized and motivated group

In short: teams that enjoy working together get more done—and have a lot more fun doing it!

Ways to Build Your Team

Team building can be structured or casual, goal-oriented or just-for-fun. The most important thing is that everyone gets involved and feels like they belong.

Here are some great options for student orgs:

- **Participate in campus events** like Homecoming, intramural sports, or student competitions
- **Plan a retreat** at the start of the semester to build relationships and set goals
- **Host social events** like game nights, volunteer days, or themed hangouts
- **Work together** on a meaningful project that everyone cares about
- **Celebrate wins** together—big or small

The earlier in the year you build connections, the stronger your group will be. So don't wait!

Your Role as a Leader

As a leader, you're not just managing the group—you're shaping its culture. Be present. Be approachable. During the early stages, act like a great party host:

- Make sure everyone feels welcome
- Introduce people who might not know each other
- Encourage participation from all members
- Show your own enthusiasm and commitment

When your members feel seen and valued, they'll be more motivated to work together and contribute to the group's goals.

When to Revisit Team Building

Team building isn't just for new groups—it can help at any stage. Consider planning team-building activities when:

- People seem bored, unmotivated, or disconnected
- Members are clashing or avoiding each other
- The group feels off-track or lacks direction
- You've just returned from a long break (like summer or winter vacation)
- You want to re-energize the group or try something new

A little fun and connection can go a long way in bringing your team back together.

People join student organizations for a sense of purpose—but they stay for the people. When you take the time to build your team intentionally, you're setting your organization up for success both now and in the future.

Advertising

A. The more creative and intentional your advertising, the more people will show up!
Whether you're promoting a fundraiser, meeting, or campus-wide event, your goal is to grab attention, share key info, and generate excitement.

B. Make sure all advertisements contain:

1. Event name (make it catchy, but appropriate!)
2. Date & Day (e.g. Tuesday, October 14th)
3. Time (a.m. /p.m)
4. Location (include building & room, off-campus location if applicable, or link for virtual events)
5. Cost (or state if it's free!)
6. Who's sponsoring/hosting (org name, any co-hosts, or sponsors)
7. Special Information or Extra Details (food, guest speaker, dress code, RSVP required, etc.)
8. If funded by allocations, "Funded by SWOSU Student Activity Fees"

C. Follow Campus Promotion Policies

- Be respectful of posting zones and removal deadlines
- Avoid covering other orgs' materials
- Only use sidewalk chalk where permitted
  (*Note: Sidewalk chalk requires an application in HilltopCentral*)
- For digital advertising (social media, group chats, etc.), follow your school's policies and branding guidelines if applicable.

D. Creative Publicity Ideas:

Print & Physical Promotions

- Posters/Flyers (approved locations only and must be stamped by DOS Office)
- Bookmarks
- Stickers
- Buttons
- Keychains
- Doorknob Hangers (great for residence halls!)
- Save-the-Dates
- Table Tents (in dining halls or study spaces with approval of building/location manager)
- Sidewalk Chalk (*must be approved via HilltopCentral*)
- Branded giveaways (pens, lanyards, wristbands, etc.)

Digital & Social Media Promotions

- Instagram Reels & Stories (behind-the-scenes, countdowns, polls)

- TikToks (funny or themed promos)
- Email newsletters (student org email lists or school-wide, must contact PR & Marketing)
- Digital signage (TVs/screens in student centers or dorms, must contact PR & Marketing)
- Event RSVPs on HilltopCentral
- Tabling in high-traffic areas (must get approval in HilltopCentral and by building managers)
- Classroom shout-outs (ask professors for a quick plug)
- Residence hall programs
- Collaborate with other orgs to cross-promote and increase reach

Tips for Success

- Start early: Begin promotion **2–3 weeks out** and **ramp up the week of the event**
- Use a consistent **visual theme** across all platforms (colors, logos, hashtags)
- Create a **social media plan** with scheduled posts, reminders, and interactive content
- **Track what works** (engagement, turnout, shares) and adjust for future events

Advertising isn't just about getting people to show up—it's your chance to **build your organization's reputation**. So be clear, creative, and confident! Your promo efforts reflect the energy and professionalism of your group.

Appendix A. Oklahoma Anti-Hazing Statutes

21 OK Stat § 21-1190 (2020)

A. No student organization or any person associated with any organization sanctioned or authorized by the governing board of any public or private school or institution of higher education in this state shall engage or participate in hazing.

B. Any hazing activity described in subsection F of this section upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with an organization sanctioned or authorized by a public or private school or by any institution of higher education in this state is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if the student willingly participates in such activity.

C. A copy of the policy or the rules and regulations of the public or private school or institution of higher education which prohibits hazing shall be given to each student enrolled in the school or institution and shall be deemed to be part of the bylaws of all organizations operating at the public school or the institution of higher education.

D. Any organization sanctioned or authorized by the governing board of a public or private school or of an institution of higher education in this state which violates subsection A of this section, upon conviction, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and may be punishable by a fine of not more than One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars ($1,500.00) and the forfeit for a period of not less than one (1) year all of the rights and privileges of being an organization organized or operating at the public or private school or at the institution of higher education.

E. Any individual convicted of violating the provisions of subsection A of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and may be punishable by imprisonment for not to exceed ninety (90) days in the county jail, or by the imposition of a fine not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00), or by both such imprisonment and fine.

F. For purposes of this section:

1. "Hazing" means an activity which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any organization operating subject to the sanction of the public or private school or of any institution of higher education in this state;
2. "Endanger the physical health" shall include but not be limited to any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, alcoholic beverage as defined in Section 506 of Title 37 of the Oklahoma Statutes, low-point beer as defined in Section 163.2 of Title 37 of the

Oklahoma Statutes, drug, controlled dangerous substance, or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual; and

3. "Endanger the mental health" shall include any activity, except those activities authorized by law, which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

Added by Laws 1990, c. 165, § 3, eff. July 1, 1990. Amended by Laws 1995, c. 274, § 6, eff. Nov. 1, 1995.

Appendix B. Sample Constitution for Student Organizations

Article I

Name of Organization: The name of this organization shall be…

Article II

Purpose: The purpose of this organization shall be to…

(Comment: This article should provide a concise statement of the purpose and/or objectives of the organization.)

Article III

Officers:

Section 1. The officers of this organization shall be…

(Comment: Normally, an organization will have a president, vice-president(s), secretary, and treasurer. Other titles, however, may be more appropriate for your organization.)

Section 2. The qualifications for officers in this organization shall be…

(Comment: To be an officer in a student organization, a member should be in good standing in the organization, a full-time student at Southwestern Oklahoma State University and have at least a 2.0 grade point average. The minimum grade point average may be established at a higher level if that is more appropriate.)

Section 3. The duties of the officers shall be…

(Comment: This section should specifically enumerate each office of the organization and the duties of the office.)

Section 4. The elections of this organization…

(Comment: This section shall include all relevant information about elections: when and how often elections will be held (annually or semi-annually, time of the year, etc.). Also included shall be the terms of office and the method whereby vacancies will be filled)

Section 5. Faculty Advisor…

(Comment: This section should stipulate such information as to how the faculty advisor is to be selected, the length of time a faculty advisor is to

serve and the area from which a faculty advisor is to be selected, if such is appropriate. Also included should be the duties of the faculty advisor, such as meeting with and advising the organization, signing vouchers and other duties as are appropriate for the group. The faculty advisor must be a full-time faculty or staff member at SWOSU and must have the approval of his department and the dean.)

Section 6. Other organization officers and committee members…

(Comment: This section should include any other material which relates to other officers and/or committee chairpersons, such as their responsibilities, method of selection and term of office.)

Article IV

Quorum: A quorum for this organization shall be…

(Comment: Usually, a quorum will be established as a percentage of the total membership although this is not a necessity. An organization should consider a method whereby a sufficient number of members are present at meetings to conduct business while not allowing the group to be run by a small number of individuals.)

Article V

Membership:

(Comment: This article should delineate those persons who would be eligible for membership, such as grade point average, major subject or field of interest, experience or skill and other requirements. Southwestern Oklahoma State University does not permit the exclusion of membership to any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin or sex. Some organizations utilize the term "in good standing" to indicate membership status. If such is the case, it's necessary to define what constitutes a member being in "good standing" with the organization. Organizations which find it necessary to cite procedures for the removal of any member or official should exercise great care in drafting such procedures to ensure that the member's right to due process and appeal are protected.)

Article VI

Dues:

(Comment: This article should include the details as to the amount of dues, how and when these shall be paid, and delinquencies, penalties for nonpayment, reinstatement procedures and method to expend moneys. No organization is required to charge dues. The amount of dues may be included in the by-laws rather than in this section if desired.)

Article VII

By-laws: A by-law may be passed at any regular business meeting of the organization by a majority vote of those in attendance provided a quorum is present.

(Comment: If a group has the need to draft by-laws and these are not adopted at the same time as is the constitution, provision for such should be included in the constitution. Generally speaking, by-laws are the details of an organization that are not defined and specified by the constitution.)