



U N I V E R S I T Y O F

SOUTH CAROLINA
S U M M E R

**GUIDE TO THE
ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION
OF A
STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

- I. In order to function as part of the University, a student organization must be registered and approved. Only recognized and approved organizations are permitted to use the name and the facilities of the University of South Carolina Sumter, hold fund-raising and/or campus wide activities, invite speakers to campus, hold on-campus social activities, apply for University funds, or distribute materials, leaflets, etc. When an organization does this, it accepts regulation by the University. Recognition as a student organization may be withdrawn for violation of University regulations. Policy governing student organizations is found in the Student Handbook which is available on-line from the USC Sumter homepage at <http://www.uscsumter.edu/students/Handbook.pdf>.
- II. A group of 10 or more students wishing to form a new campus organization should observe the following procedures: (Forms and other information are available in the Student Life Office.)
 - A. Submit a proposed constitution. This document should state the purpose, organizational structure, functions, and rules of the proposed organization. The new organization will be permitted to meet on campus, pending approval, only to organize and set up the organization. This does not mean the organization may hold open meetings, bring in speakers, have public events, or participate in fund-raising efforts until formal registration and recognition has been granted.
 - B. Officers MUST have a 2.0 or better cumulative GPA.
 - C. Secure the signature of a faculty/staff advisor.
 - D. Secure the signatures of ten (10) or more proposed members who are USC Sumter students.
 - E. Submit full documentation to the Director of Student Life and the SGC for approval.
 - F. The Director of Student Life will recommend to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, after receiving the recommendation of the Student Government Association, approval or disapproval of the application for charter. The Director of Student Life has three options: approve the application, refer it back to the group for revision, or deny the request.
 - G. If approved, the new organization may proceed in accordance with its stated purpose and exercise the rights and privileges of recognized student organizations at USC Sumter.
- III. Meetings held prior to the official chartering of a student organization will be termed organizational meetings for the purpose of forming the proposed organization. Business during these meetings should be limited to constitution drafting and forming the structure of the organization. The students organizing the proposed organization may schedule three (3) of these meetings.

IV. Privileges and Obligations of an Approved Student Organization

- A. Upon official recognition by the University, an organization becomes eligible to participate in University approved Student Activities.
- B. Each student organization pledges itself to maintain a satisfactory financial status, to sponsor only such projects as will benefit both the group and the University, and to serve and uphold University standards of conduct, and Student Life regulations.
- C. Each organization is responsible for maintaining adequate communication with the Director of Student Life.
- D. An officially chartered student organization will not use its official status for any purpose other than its own organization; this shall include, but not be limited to: sponsoring activities for an unchartered group, reserving facilities and carrying on business for an unchartered group.
- E. Recognition shall be denied if the evidence presented shows the proposed organization will present substantial likelihood of material interference or conflict with the educational process of the University or any of the following:
 - 1. The regular and orderly operation of the University.
 - 2. The requirements of appropriate discipline within the University community.
 - 3. The academic pursuits of teaching, learning, and other campus activities.
 - 4. The laws or public policies of the State of South Carolina and the United States.
 - 5. The statutes and regulations of the University and the policies of the Board of Trustees.
 - 6. The Constitution and By-Laws of the Student Government Committee.

- V. The recognition of a student organization at the University of South Carolina Sumter is made on the basis that the organization conforms to the "Privileges and Obligations" as stated in Part IV of this document. Failure on the part of the organization to conform to conditions of approval as mentioned above will subject the organization to recall. Recall will result in an officer and advisor of the organization appearing before the Director of Student Life, and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs to answer any charges which have been brought against the organization.

The Director of Student Life and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs reserve the right to administer such disciplinary action(s) as they may deem necessary against the organization. This action could be a probationary period for the organization or completely revoking the charter. Special situations may result in referral to the Discipline and Grievance Committee for recommendation.

When the charter of an organization is revoked, that organization, approved, may never be reinstated at the University of South Carolina Sumter. Approval as a new organization will be necessary after a period of one year.

- VI. The steps for appealing when recognition has been denied are as follows:
- A. Groups may appeal the denial by submitting a written statement of reasons for the appeal to the Student Life Office within thirty (30) days of denial.
 - B. Appeals will be reviewed by the Dean of the University who will report a decision to the petitioning group within thirty (30) days of receiving the appeal. The Dean of the institution will render a decision after considering the following questions:
 - 1. Will the organization interfere with the stated purpose and mission of the institution?
 - 2. Is the stated purpose of the organization in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, and with statutes and policies of the University and the Board of Trustees?
 - 3. Were appropriate procedures followed by those reviewing the initial application?

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SUMTER
STUDENT ORGANIZATION LICENSE FOR YEAR
20_____ - 20_____**

Organization's Full Name: _____

Acronym: _____

Membership Information:

* Is your organization open to all students? _____ Yes _____ No

* If no, what restrictions does your organization have in regard to membership?
Please explain: _____

Do you have updated bylaws and/or constitution on file with the Student Life Office?
_____ Yes _____ No

Approximate number of active members: _____

Local, state, or national affiliations: _____

How often does the organization meet? _____

Day, time, and place of meetings: _____

Brief description of your organization (purpose): _____

Please check type of organization:

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honor | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Publications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interest | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Sport |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | <input type="checkbox"/> Social | |

OFFICER INFORMATION: (PLEASE PRINT)

All officers **MUST** have a 2.0 or better cumulative GPA.

President: _____
Name E-mail

Address Phone #

Vice President: _____
Name E-mail

Address Phone #

Secretary: _____
Name E-mail

Address Phone #

Treasurer: _____
Name E-mail

Address Phone #

Advisor: _____
Name

Campus Address Campus Phone #

The University of South Carolina Sumter offers equal opportunity in its employment, admissions, and education activities in compliance with Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1974, Amended, Sections 503, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other state and federal non-discrimination laws. We hereby certify that the above named student organization complies with all regulations stated above (unless exempt under Title IX).

President of Organization Date

Advisor of Organization* Date

*Advisor **MUST** sign the form before license is valid. Received by: _____

License runs one calendar year, must be renewed by _____

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SUMTER
OFFICER UPDATE FORM**

Organization _____

Advisor's Name _____ Campus Phone # _____

Advisor's Campus Address _____ Building _____
Department _____

Date of Election _____

President: _____
Name _____ E-mail _____

_____ Address _____ Phone # _____

Vice President: _____
Name _____ E-mail _____

_____ Address _____ Phone # _____

Secretary: _____
Name _____ E-mail _____

_____ Address _____ Phone # _____

Treasurer: _____
Name _____ E-mail _____

_____ Address _____ Phone # _____

STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISORS

As one means of promoting positive student-faculty and student-staff interaction, all USC Sumter student organizations are required to have a full-time faculty or administrative staff person to serve as an advisor. The advisor agrees to assist the organization, to provide an educational experience for its individual members, and to be familiar with its programs and activities. An advisor is just that; someone who advises! The advisor will act as a consultant to a student organization and is available for its needs. The student organization advisor is also a valuable resource for organizational involvement. An advisor is available for assistance in the management of the student organization and will provide guidance when necessary. The advisor is responsible for overseeing events programmed by the student organization. The relationship between student and advisor can be positive and rewarding. An advisor can provide the necessary guidance and direction in the running of a student organization. This relationship can lend itself to a valuable experience. The student organization advisor can be a friend and mentor and is here to help the organization and its members!

KEEP IN MIND THE FOLLOWING:

1. An advisor must be an on-campus person who is a full-time member of the faculty, staff, or administration.
2. Be sure to ASK the individual to be the organization's advisor.
3. Give the advisor all the necessary information on the organization (membership, constitution, by-laws, goals and purpose, etc.).
4. Let the advisor know what the organization's expectations will be of them as an advisor. Be articulate in communicating to them the level of involvement that the organization would like to see from them.

The responsibilities of the advisor shall include but not be limited to:

1. Interpreting university policies and regulations.
2. Acting in an advisory capacity to their organization. The following educational functions are cited as examples:
 - a. providing the officers with the elements of good organizational and administrative practice
 - b. teaching the techniques and responsibilities of leadership, delegation, and follow-up
 - c. teaching the principles of effective group operations

- d. developing procedures and plans for action
 - e. keeping the group focused on its goals
 - f. developing self-discipline and responsibility in the group
 - g. stimulating and initiating activity
3. Being available to the officers and members in order to share ideas about organization affairs.
 4. Meeting with the officers as a group at least quarterly to discuss the progress and direction of the group.
 5. Attending as many meetings and functions as possible.
 6. Advising and consulting with the organization and its officers in its financial affairs to see that proper budgets are formulated as well as proper distribution of and accounting for funds of the organization are maintained.
 7. Granting approval for any off-campus activities in which students represent the organization such as meetings, conventions, etc.
 8. Signing or co-signing appropriate University forms such as Request for Funds forms, Activity Information Sheets, purchase orders, travel requests, etc.
 9. Providing financial and budgetary advice. The advisor should be aware of the organization's financial status and encourage the group to maintain accurate and efficient financial records. **ALL financial transactions for funded organizations MUST BE HANDLED THROUGH THE STUDENT LIFE OFFICE!**
 10. Serving until a successor is selected, if for any reason it is impossible to continue as advisor to the organization.
 11. The advisor can serve as a resource for their area of competence as well as be a source of information for other resources and ideas.
 12. The advisor should expect that they will be consulted regularly by officers and members of the organization. The advisor should be aware of any programs or activities planned by the group and offer suggestions and ideas freely without dominating the planning.
 13. The advisor assists the group in setting realistic goals and objectives each academic year.
 14. The advisor should encourage each individual to participate in the group in order to promote educational and personal development.

15. Group members may need guidance as they try to decide to what degree they should participate in activities. The advisor seeks to assist the individual students in maintaining a balance between the academic and co-curricular aspects of student life.
16. The advisor works with the individual members to help them understand the importance of their role in relation to the group goals.
17. Advisors should work with students, not as directors, but as guides for the group in accordance with the purposes and educational objectives of USC Sumter.
18. The advisor is a representative of USC Sumter, and as such, should advise the group to uphold university policies and procedures.

I. The Role of an Advisor

- ** Advisors are consultants to help the organization's growth and development. The advisor should be available for advice, to help with group motivation, and to make the organization aware of alternatives.
- ** An Advisor adds to the continuity of the organization by making sure that successive officers of the organization understand the responsibility they share with the Student Life Office as well as explaining to the officers the policies and regulations established for student organizations.
- ** Advisors aid in the area of the program content and purpose by helping student officers use their best judgement in selecting programs.

II. How to Work with the Advisor

- ** It is best to meet with the advisor at least one day before meetings to go over the agenda and topics to be discussed.
- ** Be open to suggestions and constructive criticisms from the advisor. Their knowledge and background experience will be helpful in coming up with solutions and organizational procedures.
- ** If an advisor cannot attend a meeting, be sure to brief them on what happened.

III. Hints on Recruiting an Advisor

Before making a selection, keep in mind the following:

- A. Find someone who will have the time to devote to the organization.
- B. Find someone who will take on the role willingly and seriously.
 - ** When approaching the potential advisor for the first time, make sure that they have a clear understanding of what would be required of them pertaining to their role, duties, and time involved.
 - ** Allow the person a reasonable length of time to consider their decision.
 - ** If possible, choose someone the organization feels would share some of the same interests as the organization.
 - ** Try and choose someone with whom members come in contact and are familiar.
 - ** When starting a departmental organization, find someone in that department to act as advisor.

PLEASE NUMBER ALL PAGES OF YOUR CONSTITUTION!

CONSTITUTIONS

The constitution of an organization contains the fundamental principles which govern its operation. The by-laws establish the specific rules of guidance by which the group is to function. All groups must have their basic structure and methods of operations in writing. By definition, an organization is a "body of persons organized for some specific purpose, as a club, union, or society." The process of writing a constitution will serve to clarify your purpose, delineate your basic structure, and provide the cornerstone for building an effective group. It will also allow members and potential members to have a better understanding of what the organization is all about and how it functions. If you keep in mind the value of having a written document that clearly describes the basic framework of your organization, the drafting of the constitution will be a much easier and more rewarding experience.

Remember the reasons for having a constitution: it articulates the purpose of your organization and it spells out the procedures to be followed for its orderly functioning. Constitutions usually require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership for adoption. Once you have developed your constitution, review it often. The needs of your group will change over time and it's important that the constitution be kept up to date to reflect the current state of affairs.

Make sure every new member of the organization has a copy of the constitution. This will help unify your members by informing them about the opportunities that exist for participation and the procedures they should follow to be an active, contributing member. A thorough study of the constitution should be a part of officer training and transition.

The Student Life Office MUST have a copy of your organization's current constitution.

Be sure to always keep a copy on file with Student Life.

OUTLINE OF SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE (i.e. Statement of Purpose)

We, the members of the University of South Carolina Sumter (name of organization), hereby associate ourselves to (statement of purpose, activity, etc). We hereby adopt and establish this constitution as the guiding instrument of our organization.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization will be: _____

ARTICLE II

MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. Membership in (name of organization) will be open to persons officially connected with the University as students and faculty and staff. (Specify requirements.)
- Section 2. Membership in (name of organization) will not be limited to persons based on their race, creed, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
- Section 3. A quorum of membership for voting purposes will be reached when _____ of the regular members are present. (Group may decide---a quorum varies from one-half (1/2) to two-thirds (2/3) of membership.)

ARTICLE III

OFFICERS: DUTIES AND GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

The officers of the organization will be: the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and (any other desired). Their duties will be (set forth below):

- Section 1. The duties of the President will be to preside at all meetings of the organization, to enforce the constitution, to decide questions of order, to appoint committee heads, to call special meetings, to nominate a faculty/staff advisor to be approved by the active members, to act as a spokesperson for the organization, and
- Section 2. The duties of the Vice President will be to preside at all meeting in the absence of the President, to be ex-officio member of all committees, and ...

- Section 3. The duties of the Treasurer will be handle all financial transactions, make expenditures, keep books, render regular reports upon request, and ...
- Section 4. The duties of the Secretary will be to keep records of the meetings, to maintain the membership roster, to take roll call, to handle correspondence, and ...
- Section 5. Duties of any other officers.
- Section 6. All officers must be student members in good standing with the university at all times and have a cumulative GPA not less than 2.0. Failure to meet any one of the above qualifications will result in automatic removal from office.
- Section 7. The Faculty/Staff Advisor to (name of organization) will be chosen by the organization. The Advisor must be selected from full-time regular faculty or staff members at the University. The Advisor will serve as a liaison with the University and help in the transition period between officers. The Advisor will be invited to and be notified of all (name of organization) meetings and activities.

ARTICLE IV

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The officers of the organization will be elected from the active members. Any student seeking to hold or holding office must be a minimum cumulative 2.0 GPA. Officers must be members in good standing.

- Section 1. All officers will be elected on or before _____ of each year and will serve one year terms.
- Section 2. All officers will be elected by a majority of the votes cast. Only active members are eligible to vote. If no candidate for an office receives a majority of the votes cast, then only the top two candidates will be placed on a second ballot for the office until a majority is reached.
- Section 3. A quorum of the active membership will be required for all meetings where officer nominations or elections take place.
- Section 4. All elections will be conducted by secret ballot. Votes will counted by _____.

** Some organizations also include when nominations will take place (day of election, preceding week, etc.) and when installation of new officers will take place.

ARTICLE V

DUES AND FINANCES

- Section 1. (Name of organization) will not make payments of dues mandatory for membership.
- Section 2. (Name of organization) will finance its activities through allocated funds and fund raising efforts.

ARTICLE VI

MEETINGS

- Section 1. The first meeting of the Fall Semester will be held within two weeks after classes start.
- Section 2. Regular meetings will be held at least once a month during the school year at times set by the organization.
- Section 3. The meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.
- Section 4. The basic agenda at regular meetings will follow:
- A. Call to order
 - B. Roll call
 - C. Approval of minutes
 - D. Executive committee report
 - E. Officer reports
 - F. Committee reports
 - G. Old business
 - H. New business
 - I. Announcements
 - J. Adjournment
- Section 5. Action on any business, old or new, requires a quorum of the active membership of the organization.

ARTICLE VII

REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

- Section 1. An officer whose dereliction of duty adversely affects the operations of the organization will be subject to disciplinary action and/or removal from office.
- Section 2. A written request stating the reasons for dismissal and signed by at least three (3) active members of the organization must be submitted at a regularly scheduled meeting. Also, a copy must be sent to the organization Advisor, Director of Student Life, and the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.
- Section 3. By the next regularly scheduled meeting, written notification of the request and the reasons for dismissal must have been given to the offending officer, who should come to that meeting prepared to speak.
- Section 4. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of all members is required to remove the officer from office.

ARTICLE VIII

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. The constitution is binding to all members of (name of organization) but is not binding unto itself.
- Section 2. Amendments to the constitution may be proposed in writing by any active member of (name of organization) at any regular meeting at which two-thirds (2/3) of the active members are present.
- Section 3. Proposed amendments will become effective following a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of the active members.

ARTICLE IX

RATIFICATION

We, the undersigned students of the University of South Carolina Sumter, after a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of those members present, do hereby agree to follow the guidelines of this constitution.

Signed: _____, President Date: _____

Signed: _____, Advisor Date: _____