

BASIC ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Meet on a regular basis, in the same location.
2. If possible, plan a retreat for the executive board, or entire group. The success of this event will determine the course of the organization for the next year.
3. Set goals with the group, and review them on a regular basis.
4. Delegate duties and responsibilities to other officers and members. Sometimes adopting a “job description” for each executive board position is a good way to establish duties for each officer. This provides each person with a set of expectations and provides guidance.
5. Plan activities with other groups, whether it’s a joint meeting or something social.
6. Do not plan regular meetings, executive meetings, or activities during finals week. If possible, allow your members the week before finals off to finish papers, and to study.
7. Review the organization’s constitution and by-laws regularly to keep them up-to-date. If you need assistance with this process, the Program Coordinator can assist you. Remember, a student organization’s constitution is a set of rules to work by and with, be flexible.
8. If you need assistance or guidance in goal setting, leadership development, meeting protocol, or other issues related to your organization, the Program Coordinator could point you in the right direction. The Campus Activities Center has numerous booklets, videos and other materials that can assist with your organization’s needs.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

All registered student organizations at Pittsburg State University are required to have the most recent Constitution for that organization on file at the Campus Activities Center, Overman Student Center. Constitutions will be reviewed periodically, and should be updated on a regular basis. If assistance is needed in this process, please make an appointment or contact Travis Smith, Program Coordinator for Campus Activities, x-4795.

What are Constitutions and By-laws?

A constitution is the document that contains general statements about the organization. A constitution provides for consistency within an organization, clarifies expectations for its members, and contains the basic structure and procedures that the organization will follow. By-laws are an addition to a constitution and contain specific rules and policies not included in the constitution. The vote needed to change the by-laws of an organization is usually lower than the vote needed to change an organization's constitution.

Constitutions should include...

- The basic structure of the organization
- The following outline (for example purposes)
 - Article I.....Organization Name
 - Article II.....Purpose
 - Article III.....Membership Requirements
 - Article IV.....Officers and Elections
(and removal of officers and members)
 - Article V.....Meetings
 - Article VI.....Quorum
(only if different than 50%+1)
 - Article VII.....Affirmative Action Statement
 - Article VIII.....Amending the Constitution
 - Article IX.....Ratification Date

By-laws should include...

- The details of the organization, procedures and policies
- The following, as suggestions:
 - Memberships - requirements, selection, rights, duties
 - Dues - amount, collection, payment procedures
 - Duties of Officers - job descriptions, authority, eligibility requirements, removal from office
 - Executive Board - structure, composition, authority
 - Committees - standing, special, chairperson election and duties
 - Parliamentary Authority - provisions for rules of order
 - Amendments - methods for amending, and vote needed
 - Other Rules or Policies as the organization sees fit

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure is an effective way for a meeting to proceed. The most commonly used procedures are in Robert's Rules of Order-Newly Revised, a copy is, or will be, available to borrow in the Campus Activities Center.

Basic Principles to Remember

- Members may speak only when recognized. No one may interrupt a speaker who has been recognized.
- Motions made are entitled to full and free debate.
- Every member has rights equal to every other member.
- The will of the majority must be carried out and the rights of the minority should be respected.

Motions

A motion is a proposal for the group to consider. Once a motion is made and seconded, the motion is debated and the group makes a decision whether to adopt or reject the motion. The way this works is:

- A member raises his/her hand to be recognized by the chair.
- Once recognized, the member proposes the motion by stating "I move that..."
- Another member then must second the motion.
- If the motion is seconded, the chair re-states the motion to the group.
- The motion is then debated. Only one person at a time may speak on the merits of the motion. All discussion must be limited to the subject of the motion. Discussion must end when the motion is called to a vote.
- The chair calls for the vote, either by voice, a show of hands or by balloting.
 - The members can vote three ways:
 - In favor of the motion
 - Opposed to the motion
 - Abstention-in which case the member's vote is neutral
- Motions may be amended at any time before the motion is called to a vote or after the motion has been approved. An amendment changes the motion in some way and must be proposed and approved of in the same manner as the main motion

Note:

Parliamentary Procedures need to be understood by all members of the organization. If Parliamentary Procedures are used, the group should have a Parliamentarian who is well versed in the procedures.

Order of Business

Sample

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Reading and Approval of Minutes
 - a. The minutes are a record of what was done in the previous meeting, not of what was said.
4. Officer Reports
 - a. President
 - b. Vice-President
 - c. Treasurer
 - d. Secretary
 - e. Other officers as delegated
5. Committee Reports
6. Chapter Reports
7. Unfinished Business
8. New Business
9. Announcements
10. Adjournment

At the end of your meetings always announce the time and place for your next meeting!

This helps your members plan ahead.

THE BENEFITS OF BEING AN ADVISOR

An organization advisor has a unique relationship with the group he/she advises. Being a faculty/staff advisor to an organization provides the following experiences for the advisor.

- A unique chance to get to know and work with students outside of the classroom or office setting. Barriers to effective and productive communication are often times hindered by the student/faculty relationship and its limitations.
- The rewards of watching the group develop to its fullest potential.
- The reward of watching students develop their individual skills and talents outside the classroom and providing incentive to use these newly developed skills and talents in the classroom.
- The chance to informally share your working knowledge and expertise on relevant topics.
- An opportunity to feel satisfaction and accomplishment through making a special contribution to the students, their development and the campus community through your service as an advisor.

For more information on your role as advisor contact the Campus Activities Center- we're here to help!

If your organization does not have an advisor and would like to have one contact the Campus Activities Center and talk to us about how to find an advisor!

Organization Advisors

Organization advisors are important, not only because they are role models for students, but also because their involvement in the organization provides a learning experience that provides life lessons beyond the college experience. In addition, an effective advisor helps provide a pleasant, constructive atmosphere for an organization. In order to assist the advisor and organization in understanding the roles of an effective advisor, we suggest the following responsibilities for advisors and organizations.

Advisor Responsibilities to the Organization:

- Serve at the discretion of the organization-know your boundaries.
- Assist officers in understanding their duties, administering programs and plans when needed, organizing projects and making appropriate transitions.
- Preserve the continuity of the organization through the constitution, traditions, files and minutes.
- Encourage the use of parliamentary procedures to ensure that meetings are run in an orderly fashion.
- Encourage students to understand and apply democratic principles, including the recognition of minority opinions and rights.
- Attend as many organization meetings and events as possible.
- Support the officers and offer your evaluations of their ideas as needed.
- Facilitate discussions among officers and between the officers and general members of the organization.
- Be familiar with national structure/affiliations if relevant.
- Assist the organization as necessary.

Organization Responsibilities to their Advisor:

- Notify the advisor of all meetings and events.
- Confer with the advisor on plans, projects and events as needed.
- Consult with the advisor before making structure or policy changes.
- Understand that although the advisor has no voting rights in the organization, he/she should be allowed to have speaking privileges.
- Remember that the responsibility for the success or failure of the organization, its events and projects rests ultimately with the organization and not the advisor.
- Acknowledge the advisor's time and energy donated and express your appreciation appropriately.
- State clearly and openly the expectations of the advisor in writing. This eliminates communication breakdown.
- Evaluate the advisor and periodically provide constructive feedback.
- Declare the advisor's length of service to the organization (one semester, one academic year).

Respect the advisor for his/her insights, talents and willingness to serve in this role. Advisors are usually busy individuals that have other jobs and responsibilities. Always be respectful.