

# Student Involvement

## LOOKING FOR A FACULTY/STAFF ADVISOR?

As you know, Faculty Advisors are now required for all student organizations (graduate and undergraduate), regardless of your recognition on campus. If you haven't already, now is a great time to start looking for a UAlbany faculty or staff member to serve as the Advisor to your organization!

An Advisor offers continuity from each year to the next and is a source of guidance and support. The primary function of the Advisor is to serve as a resource for the organization. Advisors may be someone who shares a similar interest in the nature of your organization or may have served as a mentor or past professor to one of the officers. As you approach faculty or staff members about serving as an Advisor to your organization, please share the following with them:

### **FACULTY/STAFF ADVISOR RELATIONSHIP STATEMENT**

Each student organization is required to select an advisor who is a faculty or staff member at the University at Albany. Organization officers are responsible for all communication with their advisor. It is important for an advisor to understand that an organization and its members want and need different things at different times. It is helpful to talk early in the year with organization members to determine what roles, style, and functions you may want to use for the year. Advisors and officers are encouraged to discuss expectations of each other.

### **Role and Responsibilities of Advisors:**

Faculty/Staff Advisors voluntarily serve in their role as a Student Organization Faculty Advisor. All Advisors are expected to mentor club officers as needed and will be invited to attend an Advisor Training Meeting with The Office of Student Involvement & Leadership.

### **Some Tips for Advisors:**

- Be familiar with the governing documents of their respective organizations. Constitutions/by-laws can be found in the Documents section of each organization's page on MyInvolvement.org. For organizations recognized by the Student Association (SA) or Graduate Student Association (GSA), SA governing documents can be found [here](#) and GSA governing documents can be found [here](#).
- Be familiar with UAlbany's policies and rules which govern registered student organizations found in the [Student Organization Handbook](#)
  - Additional guidelines for club sports can be found in the [Club Sports Handbook](#)
  - Additional guidelines for Fraternities and Sororities can be obtained by contacting Student Involvement & Leadership at 442-5566
- Encourage members to adhere to these policies as well as to obey local, state, and national laws
- Be listed on the organization's roster on MyInvolvement.org
- Meet regularly with the officers to offer input into the club's decision-making processes, but should not assume a leadership role in the organization
- Help to develop leaders by encouraging the growth of initiative, responsibility, and leadership in the club's student officers and student members of the club
- Lend experience, judgment and knowledge and assist the officers and members in the development of the club
- Provide continuity and historical context of organization and University policies and procedures whenever possible
- Offer assistance in developing and overseeing the club budget
- Offer assistance in officer transitions.

- Obtain copies of agendas, minutes, calendars and organizational materials so that they are aware of what is going on and so that they have records to help present to future members.
- Challenge members to excel academically

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why do student groups need a faculty/staff advisor?

A: The research is clear that the more we engage students with faculty – inside and outside the classroom – the higher the chance for student success, retention, and satisfaction. Involvement with student organizations is no exception. Faculty also benefit from their involvement with student organizations. The group benefits, too!

Q: Must the Advisor attend every weekly meeting or all events?

A: Most organizations officers will invite their Advisors to attend but the choice to attend lies with the Advisor.

Q: Who do we talk to about questions or concerns that are not addressed in the Student Organization Handbook?

A: The Office of Student Involvement & Leadership has identified a professional staff person to serve as a resource to all Faculty/Staff Advisors. Please feel to contact Elizabeth (Beth) Conrad at [econrad@albany.edu](mailto:econrad@albany.edu) or (518) 442-5566.

Q: What responsibilities does an Advisor have if the group plans to travel or have field trips?

A: Advisors should be aware of travel plans and off-campus events and encourage students to employ risk management strategies to ensure a safe event.

Q: Does the Advisor need to be present at off-campus programs/events?

A: Most organizations officers will invite their Advisors to attend but the choice to attend lies with the Advisor.

Q: How long is this commitment?

A: The length of the commitment is negotiable but can last for as long as you feel it's a productive relationship. Many will serve for at least a full year but most serve for multiple years.



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