Recognization 2002-2003

RE: Advising a Recognized Student Organization

Dear Student Organization Advisor:

The Department of Student Activities appreciates your commitment to serve as an advisor to a recognized student organization at Texas A&M University. The advisor plays an integral role in helping student leaders create an environment within their organizations that is productive, safe, enjoyable, and educational. To this end, we believe it is important to provide clear guidance and support regarding the expected role you will play as you interface with the organization.

Advisor Expectations

- When serving as an advisor, you must be a Texas A&M University employee as defined by the Human Resources Department and must advise at level consistent with the categorization of the organization you advise. To advise an affiliated organization, you must be a full-time university employee (faculty or staff) with the skills and/or training necessary to advise the organization. It is critical that you be familiar with the activities of the organization and have (or be willing to obtain) an appropriate level of experience, resources, and knowledge related to those activities and the mission of the organization.

- You should meet with the officers of the organization you advise to discuss expectations for roles and responsibilities. In order to stay connected with the organization, you should regularly attend executive as well as general meetings and be available outside those meetings for advice and consultation related to the operations of the organization. Additionally, you should assist the organization in developing realistic goals for the academic year. This will contribute to the educational and personal development of the students involved.

- As an advisor, you will perform your greatest service by facilitating opportunities for students to exercise initiative and judgment within a proper measure of autonomy when coordinating events and activities. In keeping with this approach, you should participate in event planning and attend events when possible or when identified as necessary through the planning process.

- Recognized student organizations at Texas A&M University are required to coordinate financial transactions with the Student Organization Finance Center (SOFC). As an advisor you will regularly receive statements from the SOFC and should be aware of the organization’s financial status via review of these statements and approval of expenditures. Completion of the on-line education process for the SOFC is required of all organization advisors. This training can be accessed online at [http://sofc.tamu.edu](http://sofc.tamu.edu).

- As an advisor, you should be aware of the University Student Rules and other institutional guidelines that establish expectations for student behavior and activities. You should ensure that the group and its officers know where rules and guidelines are published, what the rules are, why they exist, and the consequences for choosing to operate outside their parameters. As an employee of Texas A&M University, you are expected to report all rule violations or potential violations to the appropriate university official. You should be familiar with the organization’s constitution and all other governing documents, so that you may advise effectively.

The organization-advisor relationship is not a one-way street, in that the student organization and its leaders also have responsibilities. These responsibilities include an appropriate level of communication, providing opportunities for advisor interaction, and a commitment to the success of the organization as a whole. Both you and the student leaders should spend time early in the advising relationship establishing a clear understanding of the roles each will
play. Should there be a time when you as an advisor feel that you are unable to function in this vital capacity, please provide advance written notification to the Department of Student Activities and the organization’s officers.

The Department of Student Activities will continue to be a resource for you as an advisor in a variety of capacities. You will be required to attend a certain number of educational sessions aimed at enhancing your advising skills and helping you to meet the expectations established above. Topics addressed in these sessions will include event planning, accountability, and organizational development. Aside from required education sessions, you will have the opportunity to attend supplemental sessions related to specifically to student organization advising issues. You will also receive an e-mail from Student Activities once a week, which will contain a link to the StuAct News website. This website will provide important updates on university policies and procedures and other items of interest to advisors.

By signing below, you affirm that you have read and understand these expectations and are willing to serve as advisor to the student organization named below. A space has also been provided for the signature of the student organization president, to indicate that a discussion regarding these expectations has taken place between the student organization and the advisor. If you have any questions regarding the information presented in this document, please contact the Department of Student Activities at (979) 845-1133 or student-activities@tamu.edu. Additional information may be found on the Department of Student Activities website at http://studentactivities.tamu.edu. Thank you for your time and effort in support of student involvement at Texas A&M University.

__________________________________   _____________
Student Organization Advisor Signature           Date

__________________________________   _____________
Student Organization President Signature           Date

Name of Student Organization

*Some sections adopted from Resource and Policy Manual, Virginia Commonwealth University*