MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

Student Club Resource Manual

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Center for Engagement
engagement@msubillings.edu
406-657-2387
Student Union Building, Room 213

Student Engagement Coordinator
Bailee Stenger
bailee.stenger@msubillings.edu
406-657-2320
Student Union Building, Room 216

Engagement Hub Director
Codie Wahrman
406-657-2376
Student Union Building, Room 213

Student Organization Registration Process

Registration Requirements

Student Organizations are required to register annually with the Center for Engagement. Registration forms are due the second week of October. Any existing student organization that does not complete the required registration paper work will be considered inactive and lose its registration status which will result in a loss of privileges which may include its budget.

The requirements for registration for a student organization are as follows:

- Complete the Annual Registration Form.
- Complete any Financial Forms if you have an on campus account.
- A current constitution and bylaws must be on file in the Center for Engagement (these must be updated at least every three years).
- All officers must be currently enrolled and in good academic standing.

An updated list of registered student organizations is prepared each semester by the Center for Engagement.

Establishing a New Student Organization

Any new student group may apply to be a recognized Student Organization by completing the following process:

- Recruit a minimum of four students
- Secure a Faculty or Staff Advisor
- Complete the Annual registration form
- Complete Financial Paperwork if you wish to have an on campus account
- Draft Constitution and By Laws
- Set up a meeting with the Center for Engagement

Student Organization Policies and Procedures

A. General Policy

Student Organizations are an important part of co-curricular programs and activities offered at Montana State University Billings.

1. An active chartered student organization is a private, voluntary, association and is not an official component of the University.
2. Montana State University-Billings in no way accepts liability for the action of such groups.
3. Chartering and annual registration is simply a means by which student organizations may receive standard privileges granted when certain minimum requirements are met.
4. Chartered student organizations may establish requirements from participation that exceed minimum standards set by the Board of Regents or in the Student Handbook.
5. The purpose and activities of the organization shall be lawful and not in conflict with University regulations as published by the University.
6. Membership in an organization shall be open to students of Montana State University Billings without regard to race, religion, sex, color, national origin, age disability, sexual orientation, marital or parental status. The only exception is in the case of fraternal organizations that are exempt from Title IX regulations concerning discrimination on the basis of sex.
7. The organization shall not duplicate the purposes and functions of a previously chartered or registered organization unless need for such duplication is substantiated.
8. All funds allocated to the organization from University controlled sources or raised through the auspices of a Montana State University Billings student club or organization must be maintained in a University account and spent in accordance with the financial policies and procedures of the University.
9. Any fundraising activity conducted off-campus must be coordinated with and approved by the MSU-Billings Foundation and the Center for Engagement.
10. The organization shall show promise of effectively meeting its stated objectives, be free from control by any other organization, and be lawful and peaceful in its activities.

B. Standard Privileges

1. Use of meeting and program space in the Student Union and other approved campus facilities and spaces
2. The right to engage in on-campus solicitation and fund raising activities, once proper paper work has been filed and approved
3. The option to apply for use of student fees allocated by Student Senate
4. Inclusion in printed materials created by the Center for Engagement and other selected University Publications
5. Access to other services and materials provided in the Student Organization Work/ Resource Room , Student Union 213
6. Eligibility to participate in student organization membership recruitment programs, these include the Student Organization Interest Form process, the fall and spring Student Organization Expo, and other events announced throughout the academic year and summer sessions.

C. Annual Registration

1. Existing student organizations wishing to continue using privileges granted by Montana State University Billings to such organizations must register annually with the Center for Engagement. Annual registration forms are distributed to all organization active in the previous academic year. Forms need to be completed with current officer and advisor

information by the stated deadline in order to be considered active for the current academic year. If a change in contact information occurs during the academic year, please update your records in the Center for Engagement.

2. The organization shall maintain its funds in accordance with General Policies, A8 and be in good standing with the University.
3. The organization shall conduct its affairs in a lawful manner in accordance with the constitution and by-laws it has on file and in accordance with applicable University regulations and state statues.
4. The organization shall be responsible for the observance of all applicable University-regulations by off-campus individuals or organizations whose appearance on campus is sponsored by the organization.

D. Faculty or Staff Advisor

Each active chartered organization shall have a University faculty or staff member serve as an advisor available to the officers and members for consultation about the organization affairs, to attend organization meetings and functions as often as possible, to certify the expenditures of the organization by co-signing Cash Purchase Orders, Departmental Purchase Orders and Banner Payment Authorizations, to offer suggestions regarding the operations of the organization, and to oversee adherence to University regulations and the organization's constitution and bylaws.

E. Officers

Officers of student organizations must be in compliance with the Student Code of Conduct and maintain a minimum cumulative 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale in order to hold an office.

Creating A Budget

In Order to maintain an accurate picture of your organizations finances it is essential to create a budget and maintain it carefully. Plan cautiously and realistically for income and expenses.

Make your budget work for you; create categories and line items based on your organization and your expenses. If you don't feel you need specific line item that is fine as well, just make sure that you are monitoring all of your income and expenses so that you can maintain an accurate account and maximize your funds.

Electronic Budget Format:

There is a simple format that can be used to maintain a budget using Microsoft Excel. The Center for Engagement would be happy to assist you in creating a budget in this format based on your current financial ledger. Email or call the Center for Engagement and set up an appointment to create your budget.

Reconcile your Budget:

You can receive financial statements from the Center for Engagement, you can then use these statements to reconcile your budget, the same way you would a bank statement and your check book ledger.

Depositing your money

- You must know your index number and the revenue account code you would like to deposit your money into.
  - Your index number is 6 digits that starts with a 6.
  - The revenue account is the "line item" you would like to deposit into.
- Deposits can be made at the cashier in the basement of McMullen or you can bring them to the Center for Engagement.
  - Keep all documentation of when you deposit or spend your money.
  - Keep a ledger either on paper or electronically.
  - Verify your ledger on a regular basis.
- Request an account balance from the Center for Engagement to match your ledger.

Travel

Registered Student Organizations are allowed to travel as part of an organization-related trip anywhere off-campus. Please submit the required forms no fewer than 14 days prior to the travel date. This is for DOMESTIC travel only.

Steps for Successful Travel

- Ensure your group has plenty of time to plan the trip and complete required paperwork. We recommend starting the planning process at least 4 weeks prior to departure.
  - Talk with your student organization adviser about the trip.
- Visit with the Student Engagement Coordinator (SUB 216) to ensure all pre-trip planning is underway.
- Complete the required forms for travel, found online or in the Center for Engagement (SUB 213).

- Plan out transportation, food, and lodging. Determine if any of these costs will be covered by the student organization.
- After travel, submit all original receipts related to the travel to the Center for Engagement (SUB 213) for reimbursement

Travel Forms

Student Travel Authorization Form - This form is necessary to inform the University where you are traveling, who is traveling, and how you can be reached in case of an emergency. This should be filled out by the trip coordinator or organizer. Only one of these needs to be submitted per trip. Please submit this form at least 14 days prior to departure.

Assumption of Risk Form - It is recommended that participants in off-campus activities should sign a general assumption of risk form. Even though this agreement may not prevent the University from being found negligent, we will at least be cautioning the participants of potential danger so that they will maintain personal responsibility. For examples of hold harmless agreements, please contact the Center for Engagement.

Travel Verification Letters

The Center for Engagement can provide a letter verifying your registered student organization travel which can be supplied to faculty if organized travel conflicts with academic obligations. Please visit SUB 213 or email engagement@msubillings.edu to request this letter.

Personal vehicle use

Student drivers should be informed that if they choose to drive their own cars for a University sponsored activity, an accident would not be covered by State insurance. All policies and registering club travel still apply. We do not encourage using students as drivers for off-campus activities, but if there are no university employees available, the State insurance will cover students when driving a State car.

A. The following procedures should guide student travel for which no advance (per-diem, or other expenses that require checks to be distributed to participants) is required:
   a. Complete a Student Travel Authorization Form. (One form per group, per destination).
   b. Fill out an Assumption of Risk form for EACH traveler. (One form per traveler).
   c. Upon completion of the trip, email the names and student ID numbers for ALL student participants to Business Services and the Center for Engagement within seven (7) days of returning from the trip.

Fill out a Clery Travel Form (within ten days of returning from the trip).

Spending club funds for travel

If your student group plans to spend money on this trip (i.e. meals, gas, fees), please visit the Center for Engagement so that these can be arranged in advance if time allows. If a staff or faculty member is traveling with the student group, they may use a purchasing card for all purchases related to the trip, which can later be billed to the student group's account. All original receipts must be submitted at the end of the trip to the Center for Engagement. If purchases are made with a student's personal finances and the student would like to be reimbursed, submit all

original receipts to the Center for Engagement. Reimbursements will be deducted from the club's account and may take a few weeks to process. If your student group would like to apply for additional funding for an upcoming trip, use the ASMSUB Contingency Funds Request Form found on the ASMSUB webpage.

Benefits of Advising

There are many benefits associated with advising a student organization. A few are:

- The satisfaction of helping students learn and develop new skills
- Watching a group come together to share common interests and work towards common goals and understanding differences
- Develop personal relationships with students
- Further personal goals or interest by choosing to work with an organization that reflects your interests
- Sharing your knowledge with others
- The opportunity to learn from students
- Knowing what is going on in the minds of college students
- Helping students implement what they have learned in the classroom
- The satisfaction and reward in seeing the organization grow
- Making a difference in student's lives!

Advisors Roles

Each advisor perceives their relations to a student organization differently. Some advisors play very active roles and others maintain a more distant relationship to the organization. We hope that each Advisor maintains regular contact with their organization. Advisors should be both interested and accessible to their student organization.

Given the wide variety of student organizations and their missions, the role of the Advisor with also vary between groups. The purpose of this section is to outline the basic role of an Advisor. As organizations vary in their expectations and needs it is important that you as an Advisor develop an understanding with your organization about the role you plan to play and the nature of what your involvement will be.

The following are some roles that you may play as an Advisor:

Educator

Your role of educator will often be in the form of helping students reflect on their actions and answering questions that they may have of you. One of the most challenging roles of an advisor is to do nothing, but sometimes this is the most important action of all. Allow students to make decisions. Sometimes students will succeed and sometimes they may fail, as an advisor the main thing is that you are there to help them reflect on the experience.

Mentor

Many students will come to see their advisor as a mentor and these relationships can last many years and be rewarding for both the student and the advisor. At this time in their lives students are often seeking someone to help assist them in both their personal and professional development. This is also sometimes a challenging time for students so having someone they can talk to about their lives, ideas, thoughts and perspectives is important.

Team Builder

It may be the advisor of a group that needs to take the initiative to turn students from individuals into a team. Team building is important because it enhances the relationship students have with one another and with you as an advisor. Positive relationships will help the organization to be strong and work through conflict or difficult occasions.

Policy Interpreter

Student Organizations operate under policies, procedures and rules some from the University and some that they may have within their constitution and by laws that govern their individual organization. Students will often rely on their advisor to help them in interpreting policy.

Conflict Mediator

Inevitably, students will join organizations with different ideas and personalities. When working with students who have conflict, it may be necessary at some point for the advisor to serve as the mediator.

Motivator

As an advisor, you may have to motivate students to carry out their plans and work to achieve their goals. Do not let students be easily discouraged, act as their cheerleader and keep them excited about all of the potential success that is to come.

Advisor Role on Trips:

1. While on a trip with students do students need 24/7 surveillance or can they do their own thing in a responsible manner?

- They're adults and don't need 24/7 supervision. Set standards which you expect them to abide by like times set in which they need to be in their rooms and times in which they need to be up.

2. If they are of age, can they drink on the trip at dinners or anything like that?

- Advisor can make the decision. If they are of age, they can do what they want long as rental cars are not involved along with University Funds.

Off Campus Advisor:

- **Supportive Guidance**: Be available for students to seek advice but avoid direct involvement in their activities unless requested.
- **Resource Access**: Help clubs find resources and information but encourage them to seek solutions independently.
- **Advertisement**: Allow students to create their own flyers and disperse them but be ready to support if needed.
- **Encourage Leadership**: Foster leadership skills by encouraging students to take initiative and make decisions.
- **Tabling/Room Reservation**: Given student leaders should be making room reservations and doing their own tabling. Provide support where it's needed but encourage them to be independent to accomplish the task their selves.
- **Networking**: Facilitate connections with external resources or contacts, encouraging students to build their own networks.