

University of North Alabama Registered Student Organization Handbook

Introduction

Student Organizations play an important role at the University of North Alabama. Recognized Student Organizations provide unique learning experiences outside of the classroom and create opportunities for students' personal and professional development. UNA also recognizes the positive impact that student organizations can have on recruitment and retention of students.

All student organizations must register with the Office of Student Engagement through Campus Groups in order to be recognized on campus, have access to student allocation funding, and utilize other campus resources. The registration protocol enables the university to maintain communication with student leaders, promote organizations and their activities to other students, and to provide several specialized services for student organizations.

Any student group that is recognized by the university is subject to the policies and procedures as outlined in the *Student Handbook* and in the *Student Organization and Student Activities Handbook*.

This manual is published by the University of North Alabama Office of Student Engagement. Any statements in this book do not supersede other applicable University Policy, State Policy, State Law, or Federal Law.

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I. Student Organizations

The University of North Alabama recognizes organizations that seek to further the mission and adhere to the values of the university. As a condition for establishment of the affiliation relationship, the named student organization agrees to abide by all university regulations. Organizations establish their affiliation with the campus through the Office of Student Engagement and must renew that affiliation each year.

Student Organizations should be an asset for leadership and professional development on campus. The organization must support and enhance the mission and purpose of the institution by one or more of the following ways:

- a. Develop the personal empowerment of those participating.
- b. Develop academic/career competency of those involved.
- c. Develop social/civic responsibility of those involved.
- d. Continue to improve the effectiveness of the university community.

Organizations that do not meet these standards will not be recognized by the Office of Student Engagement.

Good Standing

Student Organizations must be in good standing with the university to be eligible to use resources including: Student Engagement RSO resources and equipment, reserving spaces on campus, setting up promotional tables, team participation in university events, and applying for Student Allocation Funding*. To be granted good standing status:

- a. The organization must maintain at least three active student members who are currently enrolled in classes at UNA (except during summer semesters).
- b. The organization must have no outstanding balance beyond 30 days with the university.
- c. The organization must have at least one representative complete the RSO training on Campus Groups.
- d. The organization must have an active faculty or staff advisor at all times.
- e. The organization must have fully completed the annual renewal process by the deadline.
- f. The organization must have up-to-date information in their Campus Groups group, specifically the President and Advisor positions.
- g. All officers/leadership positions in the organization must be held by enrolled students.

The Director of Student Engagement may revoke good standing status if an organization is violating university policies, the student handbook, the RSO and Student Activity Handbook, or violates any conditions of registration or recognition. Organizations suspended from campus automatically lose good standing status.

**Please note that there are additional requirements that must be met in order for an organization to qualify for Student Allocation Funding. Please refer to the current Student Allocation Manual for these requirements.*

Privileges of Good Standing

Upon becoming a registered student organization, the organization shall be:

- a. Eligible to utilize available university facilities, equipment, and services.

- b. Eligible to request allocation funding for travel and event purposes according to the Allocation Manual.
- c. Eligible to collect reasonable dues and to sponsor fundraising events according to university policy.
- d. Eligible to receive awards and honors presented to university organization and members.
- e. Eligible to be listed in appropriate university publications.
- f. Eligible to participate in university sponsored events.
- g. Eligible to post materials on controlled university bulletin boards and digital screens according to university policy.
- h. Eligible to utilize the resources provided by Campus Groups: forms, files, website, events and attendance tracking, etc.

Any publication utilizing the University Logo must first be approved by the Office of University Communications and the Office of Student Engagement.

Annual Renewal Procedure

Annual renewal takes place between the first day of fall classes and October 1.

Organizations in good standing can maintain this status by renewing their registration with the Office of Student Engagement each year during the annual renewal period. Follow the timeline listed below in order to remain in good standing on campus and utilize the available resources:

1. Complete the Group Re-Registration form on Campus Groups.
2. All organizations affiliated with an inter/national organization or external governing board must have the inter/national organization or external governing board submit a letter of recognition from the inter/national organization or external governing board when they register. These letters should be on the inter/national organization's official letterhead and it should identify a point of contact for the inter/national organization or governing board. These letters must be dated within the past five years (i.e., the same letter may be used for 5 years).

Student Organizations that do not meet these requirements by October 1 will lose their good standing status and all resource privileges for the remainder of the fall semester. These organizations may redeem their good standing status for the spring semester if they update their online Campus Groups portal, and complete the student leader tracks and checklists training. Any organizations that do not meet the requirements by February 15 will become inactive, and be assumed to no longer function as a student organization.

Leadership Transitioning Procedure

Transitioning leadership is the process of outgoing leaders/officers meeting with newly elected officers. Organizations that fail to do this struggle to maintain long-term organizational success. During registration and annual renewal, organizations identify when they host elections. Those that host elections in the Fall should update their Campus Groups portal by December 1. Organizations that host elections in the Spring should update their Campus Groups portal by May 1. That means that the outgoing officers can update who can access certain Student Engagement resources and who will receive communication.

Transitioning by the deadline ensures the correct individuals receive important communication. Until

updates are made, the organization is unable to utilize electronic resources and former officers will receive organization communication. If the outgoing officers fail to make the necessary updates by the deadline, new officers may schedule an appointment with Student Engagement to become oriented with Campus Groups and make the updates.

Categories of Organizations

A. Academic & Professional

These organizations are connected with an academic program, college, or department and are advised by a faculty or staff member in the program.

B. Faith Based

Faith Based organizations are centered around spiritual or religious values. These organizations may also have a point of contact with the organization who works closely with students (campus minister, ministry director, etc.)

C. Fraternities and Sororities

UNA defines a fraternity/sorority as an organization that exists to promote fraternal relationships and personal development; requirement for membership is subjective and is not limited to a specific field of study, class, year, etc; and members are not typically permitted to hold membership in other identified fraternities/sororities at the University. Organizations that engage in new member education, ceremonies of initiation, ritual and/or other Fraternity and Sorority Life artifacts (e.g., bigs/littles, wearing letters, etc.) will be considered a fraternity/sorority.

D. Governance

Governance organizations are entities responsible for establishing and overseeing the rules, policies, and decision-making processes within a particular group.

E. Honor Societies

Honor Societies recognize personal achievement and membership is limited to those chosen by the organization based on the objective membership requirements outlined by the intern/national organization.

F. Interest/Affinity

Special Interest/Affinity organizations organize around a specific interest or shared commitment.

G. Interprofessional

An interprofessional group is a collaborative team composed of individuals from different professional backgrounds who work together to provide comprehensive and integrated solutions to complex problems.

H. Service

A community service organization is a group or entity formed with the primary goal of addressing and fulfilling the needs of a specific community or a broader social cause. These organizations engage in various activities and initiatives that aim to improve the well-being, development, and quality of life for individuals within the community, often through volunteer work, charitable efforts, and advocacy programs.

I. Social/Recreational

A social organization fosters interpersonal relationships, shared interests, or common goals among its members. Social/recreational groups may be interchangeable with interest/affinity groups.

J. University Service

Members of these organizations are ambassadors for affiliated programs, departments, colleges, etc. Membership in these organizations is determined by university officials.

Fraternities and Sororities

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The University of North Alabama requires that all fraternities/sororities, as defined above, uphold the requirements of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life in order to maintain good standing. Most requirements and chapter status definitions can be found in the FSL Handbook at www.una.edu/fsl. Fraternities and Sororities may be exempt from certain renewal and registration requirements when approved by the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

Unrecognized Student Organizations

Groups that fail to register with the Office of Student Engagement or that have lost recognition from the university do not receive advice, support, or oversight from the university. Any unrecognized group claiming affiliation is operating in violation of university policy. Involvement with any unregistered organization can pose a significant risk and students are strongly advised to avoid engagement with these groups as the university is unable to monitor activities. Individuals who affiliate with unrecognized organizations may be susceptible to participation in activities that violate university policy and should understand that they will be held individually accountable for their actions.

Advisor Expectations

Advisors play a critical role in the wellbeing of a student organization. Below is a list of expectations the university has of its campus advisors. It is recommended that advisors and group members have conversations about the expectations they have for each other early in the year. There are resources available in the Student Engagement office to help advisors with these important conversations.

- A. Help the organization to identify its goals and assist the members and officers to clarify their areas of responsibility and related duties.
- B. Participate in major organizational planning.
- C. Encourage organizational officers to keep accurate and consistent records.
- D. Be aware of the purpose and activities of the organization.
- E. Provide information concerning the sponsored organization when requested by a university official.
- F. Be available as a mentor to organization members to assist them with problems and decisions related to the organization.
- G. Act as a source of general information regarding university policies and procedures.
- H. Provide the student leadership with elements of good organizational and administrative practice.
- I. Authorize university reservation request forms.
- J. Maintain an Administrator status of the RSO Campus Groups portal during the advisor term.
- K. Complete the annual Clery Act training.

Campus Advisor Removal Guidelines

Students have the right to remove an advisor from his or her role with the group based on the following procedures.

Recognized Student Organization Advisor Removal

(Academic/Professional, Distinguished University Service, University Sponsored, and Honor Society Organizations)

- A. Recognized Student organizations that desire to change their on-campus advisor should first attempt to meet with the advisor to address and explain any concerns regarding the advisor's role in the organization.
- B. The organization and the advisor should agree on a specified period of time for the concerns to be properly addressed.
- C. If the organization and advisor cannot agree on a period of time or if both do and concerns are not addressed adequately, the majority of the membership listed on an organization's roster must vote in favor of appealing to the head of the sponsoring unit. If the unit head is also the advisor in question, it must go through their immediate supervisor.
- D. The head of the sponsoring unit will determine the outcomes, including the removal of faculty or staff member from the advisor role.

Registered Student Organization Advisor Removal

- A. Unless otherwise stated in the organization's governing documents or the documents of the affiliated organization that has oversight of the campus organization, registered student organizations that desire to change their on-campus advisor should first attempt to meet with the advisor to address and explain any concerns regarding the advisor's role in the organization.
- B. The organization and the advisor should agree to a specified period of time for the concerns to be properly addressed.
- C. If the organization and advisor cannot agree on a period of time or if both do and concerns are not addressed adequately, the majority of the membership listed on an organization's roster must vote in favor of appealing to the Office of Student Engagement.
- D. The Office of Student Engagement will determine the outcomes, including the removal of faculty or staff member from the advisor role.

Advisor Removal by the University

The organization's campus advisor is serving in a capacity on behalf of the institution. The university reserves the right to remove an advisor from his or her role with a student organization. Grounds for removal of a campus advisor by the institution include but may not be limited to:

- A. Behavior that violates the faculty or staff handbook
- B. Defiance of university policy, procedure, or protocol
- C. Failure to report known violations to the conditions of registration and/or recognition within a reasonable period (especially hazing incidents)
- D. Advocacy for or participation in illegal activities
- E. Promoting environments or activities of unreasonable or unnecessary risk for students
- F. Using student organization status as a means to circumvent a departmental restriction
- G. Failure to act in the best interest of the organization's leaders and its members or pressuring an organization or its membership to serve the advisor's self-interest

In the event an organization's advisor is removed, the organization will be given 30 days to find a new advisor before losing good standing status.

Advisor Legal Obligations

The Faculty/Staff Advisors for Recognized Student Organizations meet the criteria to serve as Campus Security Authorities per the *Clery Act*. The function of a campus security authority is to report to the official or office designated by the institution to collect crime report information, such as the campus police or security department, those allegations of *Clery Act* crimes that he or she receives. CSAs are responsible for reporting allegations of *Clery Act* crimes that are reported to them in their capacity as a CSA. This means that CSAs are **not** responsible for investigating or reporting incidents that they overhear students talking about in a hallway conversation; that a classmate or student mentions during an in-class discussion; that a victim mentions during a speech, workshop, or any other form of group presentation; or that the CSA otherwise learns about in an indirect manner.

Although there are some resources on campus that can maintain confidentiality, on-campus advisors are considered mandatory reporters of Title IX offenses. It is recommended that staff and administration working within these resources do not serve as RSO advisors due to the risk of a dual relationship with students. For those who are employed in these resources and serve as advisors, it is imperative that they discuss their relationship as an advisor to the students involved with the RSO and disclose that the advisor relationship does not provide confidential reporting. It is recommended that they pre-empt any possible conversations concerning Title IX offenses by sharing confidential reporting resources.

Starting a New Organization

Students interested in forming a new organization at UNA should first review the *Student Organization and Activities Handbook*. The handbook is available on the Student Activities website (una.edu/student-activities) or in the Office of Student Engagement.

To register a new organization, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Recruit 3 students as members of the organization. Members must be currently enrolled students at the university.
2. Obtain a faculty or staff advisor. Advisors may be full-time or part-time university employees.
3. Draft a constitution under which the proposed organization plans to operate. A sample Constitution may be found on the Student Activities website (una.edu/student-activities). Organizations affiliated with an inter/national organization may utilize the format approved by their affiliated organization.
4. Organizations affiliated with an inter/national organization or governing board must submit a letter of authorization from the inter/national organization or external governing board. These letters should be on the inter/national organization's official letterhead and it should identify a point of contact for the inter/national organization or governing board.
5. Finally, organizations must acknowledge they meet all registration certification requirements as outlined in this handbook.

Once the above requirements for starting a new organization have been met, the charter member must register the organization on Campus Groups using the following steps:

1. Log in to Campus Groups on a desktop, laptop, or tablet. una.campusgroups.com
2. When logged in, click on "Groups" located at the top of the page.
3. Click on "Register New Organization"

4. Complete the information requested and submit.

The deadlines for submitting new organization information are as follows:

- Fall semester: by October 1st
- Spring semester: by February 15th

The Office of Student Engagement will review the submitted information and approve, ask for modifications, or reject the request. Requiring modifications means that there is information that needs to be corrected before the request can be approved. Once the Office of Student Engagement has approved the registration form, the organization is entitled to all the rights and privileges of a Registered Student Organization and must follow the proper steps to maintain good standing with the university. All new organizations must wait one semester after approval before the group is eligible to request Student Allocation Funding.

Re-Registering Inactive Organizations

1. Students interested in re-registering an inactive student organization must follow the same guidelines and procedures as starting a new organization.
2. The Office of Student Engagement will review the former student organization's information to confirm there were no records of violation of university policies, outstanding bills, or other required documentation. If any matters initiating the closure of the organization are unresolved, the new organization will be denied registration until such matters are resolved.
3. If the organization is eligible for reactivation, they will be approved on Campus Groups.

Organizational Limitations

Organizations may not represent, enter into contracts, or speak on behalf of the university. The Office of Student Engagement will investigate any possible violations and may refer organizations/individuals involved to the proper governing boards.

Registered student organizations are not allowed to use "The University of North Alabama" in the official title of their organization's governing documents.

Permitted: "Study Club" or "Study Club at UNA"

Not-Permitted: "UNA Study Club"

Recognized Organizations that are affiliated with a campus department, program, or university sanctioned initiative may use the UNA name if proper documentation and approval is granted by the Dean, VP, or University Cost Center Head of the related program or initiative.

No student organization may ever participate in hazing activities.

No student organizations may incite or participate in any interference with or physical disruption of the university or its programs

Organizations proposed with the intent/purpose of defying university policy, local, state or federal law, or the purpose of inciting or participating in any interference with or physical disruption of the university or its programs, will not be recognized.

Organizations proposed for the purpose of marketing, promoting or selling a specific business, product, individual campaign, or service will not be recognized.

II. Student Guidelines and Policies

General Event Guidelines

1. Student organizations must be recognized in order to host or promote any event on campus.
2. Only student organization leaders and members who have completed the leadership training checklist on Campus Groups may reserve space on campus.
3. For GUC Operations, the individual that submits the campus space reservation form is the point of contact for the event and will be held financially responsible for damages, cancellation fees, etc.
4. Any misrepresentation of oneself or entity on an event form will be grounds for referral to Student Conduct and may require the payment of fees. This includes using your credentials as a student organization officer to schedule an event for another entity (i.e., using a Registered Organization to schedule an event for a non-campus group).
5. Events may not be scheduled on or after study day until final exams are completed.
6. Student organizations may not reserve Norton or Flowers unless they pay the standard rental fee.
7. The university reserves the right to require campus safety support at certain events. Social events and events where money will be collected require police officers at the expense of the host organization.
8. Four weeks is the minimum notice required for large events or events that require significant security.
9. Groups must comply with the Code of Alabama in regards to political campaign involvement and events.
10. If the University must unexpectedly close for any reason (inclement weather, security threat, pandemic, etc.) any scheduled organizational events must be cancelled.
11. For the avoidance of doubt, closed organizational meetings and information tables are not considered events but still may be subject to other facility-use guidelines from the university.
12. Registered Student Organizations may not schedule events on any days when the university is closed for a holiday.
13. An organization's campus advisor or other designated staff member should be present at any event with anticipated attendance over 100.

University Staffing/Security at Events

A group hosting events that meet any of the following requirements must pay for necessary university staff/security personnel. A minimum of 1 personnel is required per event. Venue capacity, anticipated attendance, layout, etc. will be used to determine the number required. Personnel are scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. Four weeks is the minimum notice required for events requiring significant security:

- A. Events where money is collected.
- B. Social parties not restricted to an organization's membership. An officer is required when the attendance is the organization's roster + 50%.

C. Events open to non-members anticipating more than 200 attendees.

Gambling

According to Section 65 of the Alabama Constitution, lotteries and gift enterprises are prohibited. Any activity that involves the sale of tickets to a raffle in which a prize is awarded by chance is prohibited.

Hazing

The University of North Alabama defines hazing as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or that destroys or removes public or private property, for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization. Participation or cooperation by the person(s) being hazed does not excuse the violation. Failing to intervene to prevent and/or failing to discourage and/or failing to report those acts may also violate the anti-hazing policy.

Hazing is not only against the UNA student code of conduct, but is also against the law. Reports or concerns of hazing can be submitted through the UNA reporting website at report.una.edu.

Organization Discipline Procedures

All student organizations are subject to the Code of Student Conduct and Conduct Sanctions as outlined in the *Student Handbook* on pages 36-41.

Alcohol at Events

In addition to adhering to all local, state, and federal laws regarding alcohol consumption, student organizations that plan to host an event or events where alcohol will be consumed must meet the following requirements:

- A. The Student Organization must notify Student Engagement at annual registration of their intent to host events where alcohol will be consumed.
- B. The Student Organization must submit a Certificate of Liability Insurance including a Host Liquor Liability with \$1 million minimum coverage.
- C. The Student Organization must schedule a special meeting with Student Engagement to review the Event Guidelines for Organizations that Intend to Consume Alcohol (published by Fraternity & Sorority Life).
- D. The organization must adhere to all guidelines outlined in the Event Guidelines for Organizations that Intend to Consume Alcohol published by Fraternity and Sorority Life.

Student Conduct

All student organizations are expected to follow the Code of Student Conduct.

The Code of Student Conduct and the student conduct process apply to the conduct of students and University of North Alabama affiliated student organizations. The Code of Student Conduct applies to

behaviors that take place on campus, and at UNA-sponsored events and may also apply off-campus when the Director of Student Conduct or designee determines that the off-campus conduct may present a danger or threat to the health or safety of him/herself or others; and/or impinges upon the rights, property or achievements of self or others or significantly breaches the peace and/or causes social disorder; and/or is detrimental to the educational mission and/or interests of the University.

GUC Operations Guidelines

The Guillot University Center (GUC) is scheduled through the Department of University Center Operations and Events Management.

Rooms can be tentatively scheduled through the University Center Operations and Event Management Office. Reservation forms are available in GUC 107 and on the Department Webpage and should be returned to GUC 107. Checking the University Events Calendar is helpful in selecting dates for major events and avoiding conflict with previously scheduled events. Unless you receive confirmation, do not consider your event as booked. Completion of a form does not constitute a booked event. Reservations are not confirmed until a Reservation Form has been completed and received by the University Center Operations and Event Management Office and a confirmation email is received by the requestor stating that the request has been processed and on the calendar. Reservation requests for academic areas can be made after classes have been in session for two weeks of the current semester.

Campus Reservation Forms and a full list of GUC Operations policies can be accessed on the University Center Operations and Events Management web page: una.edu/events/reservation-forms

Flyer Distribution

Flyers are to be placed on public bulletin boards only. Nothing is to be taped to windows, doors, elevators, or painted surfaces. Anything posted in unapproved areas will be removed and discarded. Push pins are not to be used in the walls.

Reporting Incidents

To report incidents that may be a violation of University of Alabama policies, please visit report.una.edu. Reports will be reviewed and addressed by the appropriate office. The reporter may be contacted for clarification or further information. In the case of an emergency please contact 911, local police, or University of North Alabama Police Department.

III. Additional Resources

Equipment Checkout

Student organizations in good-standing have the opportunity to utilize Student Engagement resources. A full list of available equipment that can be checked out can be found on the Student

Activities webpage (una.edu/student-activities). In order to check out equipment, organizations must complete the online reservation form no less than 24 in advance of when the equipment is needed. A staff member will review the reservation and confirm that the items are available for the requested dates and times. The student organization is responsible for picking up the equipment during the Office of Student Engagement's hours of operation. All checked out equipment must be returned back to the office no later than 24 hours after the event ends. If the event ends on a Friday, or on a day that has a weekend or holiday following, the equipment must be turned in by the next available business day.

University Print Shop

The University Print Shop is available for a number of print needs for your organization's events. Any RSO wishing to utilize the print shop will need to first set up a Student Printing Account through the Print Shop website (una.webdeskprint.com/psp/app/). For questions, students may also meet with the Print Room Operator located in the basement of Cramer Way for a consultation. Please note that fees will apply based on your print needs.

UNA Dining Services

Student Organizations must work with UNA Dining to help plan food arrangements for any event that is being held in the Guillot University Center or the Wendell Gunn Commons. Dining Services are also available, but not required, for events that take place on campus and outside of these required buildings.

Facilities Administration

If an organization's event will be held on campus and electricity, custodial services, or trash/recycle bins are needed, please request these services through the university's Facilities Administration office. Facilities needs at least a one-week notice. Costs might be associated with custodial cleanup and supplies as well.

Facilities Administration must approve any signs, tents, or any other items that may penetrate the ground. If staging is going to be used, Facilities must approve. Any groups that plan to hang banners on the exterior of campus buildings, or outside on other parts of campus, must go through Facilities to get this approved.

UNA Police Department

UNA Police officers shall be present at any **campus** functions where alcohol is to be consumed. Please refer to the Events and Alcohol section above.