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**Student Organizations & Leadership**  
Office of Student Life

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# Advisor Guidebook

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2019 - 2020





## Welcome, Student Organization Advisors!

Welcome to the world of advising student organizations! Advising provides a wonderful opportunity for you to know students better and through those relationships, guide students towards successful organization development. The time you invest in organization leaders and members will produce learning opportunities for students. In organizations, students discover and identify their personal skills and qualities, practice skills that will translate to their long-term professional success, and apply knowledge learned in the classroom. That kind of learning environment will flourish even more with the support and guidance of a committed advisor.

## Purpose of This Guidebook

This guidebook serves as the primary resource for Organization Advisors and *is a supplement to the Student Organization Guidebook*, which can be found under “Resources” at [austincc.edu/studentorgs](http://austincc.edu/studentorgs). The Advisor Guidebook is a compilation of important procedures, resources, policies, and forms to assist you in your success. The guidebook is not meant to be a complete listing of all rules, regulations, and policies of Austin Community College, but rather a resource with information deemed relevant to Organization Advisors. The Office of Student Life looks forward to working with you, and we hope the guidebook will be a useful tool in making this year a success.

## Student Organization Contacts

You can always email [organizations@austincc.edu](mailto:organizations@austincc.edu) with any questions, or you can reach out to any of these Student Life Coordinators for Student Organizations:

**Lauren Christian**  
Office: EVC, P-108  
Phone: 512-223-5303

**Tim Prata**  
Office: CYP, 1122  
Phone: 512-223-2121



# Important Dates

August 2019						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2019						
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29	30					

October 2019						
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November 2019						
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December 2019						
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29	30	31				

January 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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February 2020						
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March 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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29	30	31				

April 2020						
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May 2020						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## Important Dates:

- August 1, 2019: Registration Opens
- September 1, 2019: First Day to Submit Purchase Proposals
- September 1, 2019: Fall MOR Window Opens
- December 1, 2019: Fall MOR Window Closes
- January 6, 2020: Spring MOR Window Opens
- April 3, 2020: Spring MOR Window Closes
- March 15, 2020: Registration Closes
- April 17, 2020: Last Day to Submit Purchase Proposals
- April 27, 2020: Financial Documentation Due
- May 15, 2020: Item Pick-Up Deadline
- May 15, 2020: Summer EPs Due

# Table of Contents

General Student Organization Information .....	<b>7</b>
Mission .....	7
Types of Organizations.....	7
Benefits of Recognized Organization Status.....	7
Responsibilities of Student Organizations .....	7
Student Organization Advisors.....	<b>9</b>
How Do I Become an Advisor?.....	9
What Are the Eligibility Requirements?.....	9
Staff/Faculty Advisor Term Length .....	9
Replacing a Staff/Faculty Advisor.....	9
Nuts & Bolts: Advisor Orientation .....	<b>11</b>
What is Nuts & Bolts?.....	11
When Do I Need to Attend?.....	11
What If I am Unable to Attend Within 15 Days?.....	11
What Is MySL? .....	<b>12</b>
How Do I Access MySL Account? .....	12
Events and Funding.....	<b>13</b>
Advisor Responsibilities .....	<b>14</b>
Responsibility to Organization Members .....	14
Responsibility to the Student Organization .....	14
Responsibility to Austin Community College:.....	14
Common Advising Opportunities.....	<b>15</b>
Managing Conflict.....	15
Common Causes of Conflict .....	15
Techniques for Avoiding and/or Resolving Conflict .....	15
Managing Officer Transitions.....	16
Helpful Hints for the Transition Process .....	16
Student Organization Recognition.....	<b>17</b>
Nite in the Life .....	17
Advisor Resources.....	<b>18</b>
Student Organization Guidebook.....	18

Student Organization Advisor Guidebook | 2019 - 2020

Communication Information.....	19
Advisor Commitment Form.....	20
Advisor Involvement Expectation Form .....	22
Advisor Travel Checklist.....	23

# General Student Organization Information

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## Mission

The mission of Student Organizations at Austin Community College is to enrich students' educational experience through student-led communities. Student Organizations encourage students to pursue personal, professional and academic development through membership, leadership and active participation.

## Types of Organizations

There are three types of student organizations at ACC. Each type has access to slightly different resources and processes. All student organizations, regardless of type, are responsible for compliance with appropriate policies, processes, regulations, and codes. Based on the information provided in the registration form, Student Life will categorize all Student Organizations into one of three categories: ACC Funded, Social Group, or Area of Study. When making that categorization, Student Life will consider attributes of the organization such as:

- Structural, financial, or missional relationship with an ACC academic department or program area
- Affiliation with an external organization (e.g., non-profit; community organization; or national fraternity, sorority, association, or corporation)
- Requirements for membership (e.g., student of a particular academic program or GPA minimum)

## Benefits of Recognized Organization Status

Becoming a recognized Student Organization provides a number of practical benefits that include but are not limited to:

- Financial assistance with Student Organization operations
- Room reservation access across all ACC campuses
- Advertising distribution across all ACC campuses
- Student Life support and advocacy
- Ongoing guidance on laws, policies, and systems relevant to Student Organization operations to minimize liability and risk to leaders, members, and participants
- Expanded networking opportunities
- Professional experience

## Responsibilities of Student Organizations

It is the responsibility of every student organization and/or its representatives to:

- Register their student organization with Student Life every three years;

General Student Organization Information | Student Organization Advisor Guidebook  
2019 - 2020

- At least two student officers must attend a Nuts & Bolts: Officer Orientation session, which includes the state-mandated risk management training;
- Manage itself and carry out its activities listed within its constitution, as well as obeying all local, state, and federal laws, as well as ACC regulations and policies;
- Anticipate, provide for, and meet all legitimate financial obligations;
- Act in the best interest of its members and ACC;
- Comply with all distributed organization information;
- Take reasonable precautions for the safety and comfort of participants at organization events;
- Immediately notify Student Life of any changes in the organization's representatives, addresses, telephone numbers, emails, or constitution;
- Communicate with Student Life regarding any questions;
- Utilize Student Life for expert knowledge in all events and activities.

# Student Organization Advisors

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## How Do I Become an Advisor?

The following are the three ways you can become an advisor of a Student Organization at ACC.

- *Assignment* – College faculty or staff can be assigned to work with student organizations as part of their job responsibilities.
- *Chartering a Student Chapter* – College faculty or staff may partner with a national organization and charter a chapter to bring to ACC. Departments are encouraged to charter professional associations or organizations to enhance the student experience of the students in their program.
- *Be Requested* – A student organization may approach you and ask you to serve as their advisor.

## What Are the Eligibility Requirements?

Advisors must be currently employed by Austin Community College as a full-time staff member or as an adjunct or full-time faculty member.

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements, advisors must also fulfill the following mandatory requirements:

1. Complete the Advisor Commitment Form. Completion is required prior to the organization receiving recognition from the college. The form must be submitted by October 1st of each academic year. Advisor Commitment Forms must be signed each academic year. The form can be found on MySL\* (found under the “Forms” tab on MySL: [austincc.campuslabs.com/engage/forms](http://austincc.campuslabs.com/engage/forms)).
2. Attend Nuts & Bolts: Advisor Orientation, which includes state-mandated risk management training.\*\*

\*See “What Is MySL?” later in this Guidebook.

\*\*See “Nuts & Bolts: Advisor Orientation” later in this Guidebook.

## Staff/Faculty Advisor Term Length

The default term for any Advisor is three academic years or as long as the organization maintains recognized status (whichever is shorter). Advisors must maintain eligibility throughout their term. A Student Organization may choose to have an Advisor’s terms shorter than three academic years; any Advisor who is selected mid-year, however, must complete the eligibility confirmation process before stepping into the role of Advisor.

## Replacing a Staff/Faculty Advisor

If an Advisor either falls out of eligibility (e.g., full-time staff member becomes part-time), decides to step down from his or her position, or is removed from the position by the Student

Organization, the organization will have 15 business days or the length specified by their constitution (whichever is shorter) to find an eligible replacement. After 15 business days, the organization will lose its recognized status if: (1) no replacement has been found and (2) the organization has less than one eligible Advisor of record. Once recognized status is lost, the registration process will need to be completed again before any official activity can take place.

# Nuts & Bolts: Advisor Orientation

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## **What is Nuts & Bolts?**

Nuts and Bolts is an in-person advisor orientation that highlights the ins and outs of organization success. Each session goes over best practices, campus involvement, MySL, event support, risk management, and funding.

## **When Do I Need to Attend?**

Each Staff/Faculty Advisor must attend a Nuts & Bolts: Advisor Orientation within 15 business days of the date their Advisor Commitment Form is approved by the Office of Student Life. Upon confirmation as a student organization advisor, a Student Life Coordinator will reach out to you with dates for this mandatory training.

## **What If I am Unable to Attend Within 15 Days?**

If the Advisor needs more than 15 business days to fulfill the Nuts & Bolts attendance requirement, a Student Officer should file a Policy Exception Request.

# What Is MySL?

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MySL serves as the portal through which Student Officers request approval to host an event or fundraiser, request space on campus, advertise, or apply for one of Student Life's various funding opportunities.

## How Do I Access My MySL Account?

1. Go to [austincc.edu/mysl](http://austincc.edu/mysl) and click "Sign In."
2. Log in with your ACCeID and password.
3. If it is your first time logging in, MySL will prompt you to fill out your profile and other details.
4. Under Notification Settings, make sure to have Text Messaging Notifications switched to "On" and enter your phone number as well as your mobile if desired. Then click "Save."
5. Click on the "Organizations" tab to search for and join the organization for which you serve as an advisor.

# Events and Funding

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A Student Officer must submit an Event Proposal (EP) for all organization activity. For any funding requests, a Purchase Proposal (PP) must also be submitted. As an Advisor, you must review all EPs and PPs for your organization. Anytime these forms are submitted, you will be added as a reviewer and will receive an email with a link to the EP or PP. Review each item carefully and ask questions. Do not just approve without reviewing the information.

*Note: The Advisor may **not** submit forms on behalf of his or her organization. The Advisor will be required, however, to review and approve all Event Proposals and Purchase Proposals before any organization activity or funding allocation occurs.*

# Advisor Responsibilities

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As an Advisor, you play an integral role in the development of student leaders. Many students need nothing more than encouragement from someone who has an active interest in what they are doing. Advisors can motivate students in ways that ensure that they are learning and having fun.

At the same time, as ACC faculty or staff working in an advisory capacity, you are responsible to three groups: (1) individual organization members, (2) the student organization, and (3) ACC.

## Responsibility to Organization Members

An Advisor's influence is most directly felt by the individual students he or she supports. There are a number of ways an Advisor can assist individual student officers and organization members, including:

1. Help students find a balance between their academics and their co-curricular activities.
2. Encourage each individual to participate in and plan group events.
3. Encourage students to accept responsibilities for specific roles within the group.

## Responsibility to the Student Organization

While student officers may change each academic year, the Advisor benefits from ongoing experience with their student organization and ACC. An Advisor is responsible to help student officers and student organization members consider how their choices: (1) better the organization's mission, (2) aligns with past organization initiatives and its founding purpose, and (3) builds healthy relationships among members.

## Responsibility to Austin Community College:

The Advisor acts as an extension of the college in the organization. The Advisor must maintain the best interest and integrity of both the Organization and ACC. The Advisor does not have direct oversight of the programming initiatives but has a responsibility to advocate for the best interest of ACC to student officers and organization members during the brainstorming and planning process.

# Common Advising Opportunities

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Advisors may be asked to provide support in a number of scenarios, but some are more common than others. When student organizations encounter difficult points in the year, they will depend on your support and guidance. Below is information on how Advisors can best support student organizations in common sticky scenarios.

## **Managing Conflict**

Conflict is normal and can be a sign that members and leaders are engaged and invested in the organization. Unmanaged conflict, however, will create complications. Here are some things to keep in mind and remind your students about conflict and conflict management:

- Conflict is inevitable; however, conflict can be minimized, diverted, and/or resolved.
- Conflict develops because organizations deal with peoples' lives, jobs, pride, and sense of mission or purpose.
- There are strategies that are available, and they DO work.

### ***Common Causes of Conflict***

- Poor communication and lack of openness
- Individuals and or factions within the group seeking power
- Dissatisfaction with the current leadership style

### ***Techniques for Avoiding and/or Resolving Conflict***

- Meet conflict head-on – address it right away as waiting can lead to bigger problems at a later time.
- Plan for and communicate frequently and as honestly as possible – do not lie to your members and be sure to share with them what is happening with the organization.
- Be honest about concerns – talk about the problem honestly and do not dance around the issue.
- Build cooperation among people through learning more about each other.
- Get individual ego out of leadership style – separate the problem from the person and work to resolve the situation.
- Agree to disagree – understanding healthy disagreement will build better decisions.
- Let your team participate in the goal planning process – people will support what they help create through a shared vision.
- Discuss differences in values openly – make sure everyone knows where each member of the group stands and that they are accepted for who they are and for the opinions that they hold.
- Provide as much data and information as is needed – share successes and failures with the group and any feedback to make your group better.

As an advisor, it is your job to help students identify, navigate, and resolve conflicts as they arise. If necessary, the advisor should email [organizations@austincc.edu](mailto:organizations@austincc.edu) for ongoing conflict management support.

## **Managing Officer Transitions**

How well organizations transition their officers can help to ensure an organization's smooth transition from year to year. An Advisor can and should play an active role in the transition process by keeping officers focused on the most important elements:

- Selecting new officers
- Identifying key information to be shared
- Communicating key information to new officers
- Officers assuming their new roles

### ***Helpful Hints for the Transition Process***

- Review the organization's leadership roles.
- Review the organization's previous events and program initiatives.
- Be realistic about future planning based on the previous year's accomplishments.
- Review policies and procedures.
- Review the organization's constitution, bylaws, and mission statement for a refresh of the organization's goals.
- Build a relationship between new organization members and the advisor(s).
- It's a new year, don't be afraid to try something new.

# Student Organization Recognition

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## **Nite in the Life**

One of the best ways to recognize students in your organization is to nominate them for a student organization award, presented annually at the Nite in the Life event in April. Awards specific to Student Organizations include Organization of the Year, Organization Event of the Year, and Organization Advisor of the Year.

Look for nominations to open in early spring. A committee of campus representatives reviews the nomination forms, and the finalists are honored at the program in April.

# Advisor Resources

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## Student Organization Guidebook

The Student Organization Guidebook provides basic details about starting, maintaining, managing, and funding a Student Organization at ACC. Please use the Student Organization Guidebook as an additional resource. Topics covered include:

- Become a Student Organization
- Recognized Student Organizations
- Registration
- Student Officers
- Staff/Faculty Advisors
- Constitution
- Nuts & Bolts: Organization Orientation
- Membership
- Managing a Student Organization
- The Event Proposal (EP)
- ACC Facility Reservation
- Special Activity Considerations
- Travel
- Food
- ACC Resources Available to Student Organizations
- Finances
- The Purchase Proposal
- Funding Sources
- Purchasing Deadlines
- Prohibited Purchases and Payments
- Gift Cards
- Vendors
- Fundraising and Donations
- Storing Organization Funds
- Expectations for Student Organizations
- Organization Discipline

- Hazing
- Sexual Harassment and Discrimination
- Important Documents
- Appeal to Policy Request Form
- Travel Packet
- Pre-Purchase Approval (PPA)
- Prize Winner Form
- Constitution Template
- Event Planning Worksheet
- Sample Agenda
- Planning Effective Meetings
- Administrative Rules
- AR#1.01.004: Prohibition of the Use of Alcoholic Beverages at ACC Student Life Sponsored Events
- AR#1.04.006: Student Standards of Conduct and Disciplinary Process
- AR#1.04.011: Student Activities
- AR#1.05.001: Student Travel to College Sponsored Events
- AR#3.02.006: Publications and Printed Materials

## **Communication Information**

The *Advisor Newsletter* is sent out to all advisors once a month during the academic year. The newsletter contains information about upcoming events, updates from Student Life, and helpful articles related to policies, processes, and advising your organization.

The *Student Organizations Newsletter* is sent out to all student officers once a month during the academic year. The newsletter contains information about upcoming events and updates from Student Life.

## **Advisor Commitment Form\***

(\*The electronic version of this form can be found on MySL)

### ***Eligibility***

An Advisor must be either an adjunct or full-time faculty member or full-time staff member of Austin Community College.

### ***Term of Service***

The default term for any Advisor is three academic years or as long as the organization maintains recognized status (whichever is shorter). Advisors must maintain eligibility throughout their term.

### ***Mandatory Requirements***

Each Advisor must attend the state-mandated risk management training that is included in the Advisor Nuts & Bolts sessions. Upon your confirmation as a student organization advisor, a Student Life Coordinator will reach out to you with the dates of this mandatory training.

### ***The Advisor's Responsibilities***

**Responsibility to Organization Members.** An Advisor's influence is most directly felt by the individual students he or she supports. There are a number of ways an advisor can assist individual student officers and organization members, including:

1. Help students find a balance between their academics and their co-curricular activities.
2. Encourage each individual to participate in and plan group events.
3. Encourage students to accept responsibilities for specific roles within the group.

**Responsibility to the Student Organization.** While student officers may change each academic year, the advisor benefits from ongoing experience with his or her student organization and ACC. An advisor is responsible to help student officers and student organization members consider how their choices: (1) better the organization's mission, (2) aligns with past organization initiatives and its founding purpose, and (3) builds healthy relationships among members.

**Responsibility to Austin Community College.** The advisor acts as an extension of the college in the organization. The advisor must maintain the best interest and integrity of both the Organization and ACC. The advisor does not have direct oversight of the programming initiatives but has a responsibility to advocate for the best interest of ACC to student officers and organization members during the brainstorming and planning process.

For further information about the advisor's role, please refer to the Student Organization Advisor's Handbook. In addition, the Student Organization Guidebook contains extensive information on policies and procedures relating to student organizations.

**Organization Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor Name (First and Last):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that I am the individual named on this form and that I agree to abide by the terms outlined in this commitment form.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Advisor Involvement Expectation Form

*Directions:* Please complete the questionnaire below to help your advisor gauge your expectations for their involvement. Different events and programming can change your expectation level, but this is to be used as a platform to set standards and open communication.

	Low Involvement				High Involvement			
1. Attendance at meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Comments:								
2. Speaking at meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Comments:								
3. Serving as a resource during meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Comments:								
4. Assist with event planning and development.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Comments:								
5. Attendance at events and programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Comments:								
6. Available to meeting individually with members and officers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Comments:								
7. Making decisions with the organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Comments:								
8. Other								
What are your preferred means of communication?								
What are your preferred meetings days and times?								

## Advisor Travel Checklist

### Planning

- Attend a Student Life travel Risk Management Training.
- Ensure Travel Proposal is submitted for approval 30 business days prior to travel.
- Ensure mandatory student risk management information is provided to participants prior to travel.
- Submit all forms to the Office of Student Life within the allocated time frame (i.e. Travel Proposal Form, Travel Commitment Form, and Waiver of Liability Form, Designated Driver Form).
- Document how many students will be traveling with the group and how many students will travel in their own vehicles.
- Ensure that the 10:1 student ratios will be observed and that a trained additional advisor is present if necessary.
- Establish a travel route (this will be especially helpful in the event of caravanning).
- Confirm all student attendee documentation at least 48 hours prior to the trip. Due to liability issues, no late entries can be accepted.
- Prior to departure, check for information regarding inclement weather at your destination location. In the event of inclement weather, cancel within 24 hours.
- Keep all Student Life travel forms in the advisor's possession while traveling.
- Carry a copy of the Student Life Organizations Handbook, ACC Student Handbook, and, if possible, at least one cellular phone or another two-way communication device in each vehicle for emergency purposes.
- Carry copies of all student waiver forms for reference while traveling.

### Pre-Departure

- Headcount, completed number of students traveling \_\_\_\_
- Review Travel Commitment, Waiver of Liability, and expected behaviors with students.

### Arrival

- Complete room assignment.
- Complete a minimum of one-bed check during the night.
- Complete one headcount in the morning.

### Return

- Property check
- Final headcount after loading return vehicle \_\_\_\_

**Join.**

**Start.**

**Lead.**

