



Making the Advisor Connection

AN ORGANIZATION'S ADVISOR IS:

- an educator outside of the classroom
- a supporter of an organization and its members
- a resource

How your advisor works with your organization may depend on the needs of the group, the knowledge of its leadership, and the constantly changing environmental factors affecting the organization. Making a connection with your advisor involves having some information about the advisor's role and then meeting to determine a role that both you and he/she are comfortable with.

FINDING THE RIGHT CONNECTION

Now that you have some information about what advisors and leaders see as the role of the advisor, you may need to find the right fit for the advisor of your organization. Every student organization must sign off on all event registrations and vouchers for an organization. However, beyond those responsibilities, it's up to you and your advisor to define additional roles. You may consider discussing some of the items outlined below with your advisor to help your organization get off to a great start.

- Meet with your advisor at the beginning of the year to talk about his/her perceptions of the role of the advisor. Negotiate a role you both agree on and clarify any other expectations at this time.
- Continue to meet with your advisor at least biweekly to touch base and keep informed what is happening with the organization, projects or programs.
- Develop an orientation/retreat for the organization.
- Discuss your group's history, traditions, major accomplishments, fundraisers, programs, etc.
- Review the organization's constitution together.
- Explore the relationship your group might have with others (ideas for co-sponsorship, recruitment, etc.).

- Review your budget.
- Discuss general goals for the organization to share with group members and receive input.

ROLE OF THE ADVISOR

To define the advisor's role at UNL, advisors, presidents, and treasurers of student organizations were surveyed by Student Involvement. Below is a list of the appropriate and inappropriate advising roles described by the survey results:

APPROPRIATE ROLES

- To be a resource
- To share specific knowledge in the development and implementation of programs
- To attend programs of the organization
- To interpret/clarify University policy and procedure to student organizations
- To attend organization meetings
- To suggest program ideas
- To provide historical continuity for the organization
- To provide ideas and guidelines for the recruitment of new members
- To be a personal role model
- To be a problem-solving agent
- To provide guidelines for programs
- To advise officers about meeting agendas

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For more information on organization and personal development skills in the SOAR series, stop by or call UNL Student Involvement, 200 Nebraska Union, 472-2454; or 300 Nebraska East Union, 472-1780. Staff members will be happy to assist you and answer your questions.

student involvement
<http://involved.unl.edu>

INAPPROPRIATE ROLES

- To run the student organization meetings
- To take care of last-minute program details
- To be ultimately responsible for program problems or failures
- To have veto power over decisions
- To help clean up after programs
- To respond only when asked by members
- To be ultimately responsible for the group's organization and decisions
- To be responsible for content and ideas expressed in programs
- To recruit new members for the organization

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