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Recognized Student Organizations Advisor Manual

2020 - 2021

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UNL Student Involvement 

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Dear Recognized Student Organization Advisor,

Welcome and congratulations on being a Recognized Student Organization (RSO) Advisor! On behalf of Student Involvement and the Student Organizations staff we would like to thank you for taking time to advise, coach, and educate students participating in RSOs at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. RSOs are an important part of the Husker experience. Involvement in student organizations encourages students to develop leadership skills, explore values, and begin laying the foundation for their professional careers.

Education, the central goal of the university environment, takes place in many different ways. As an advisor, you will have the opportunity to impact the lives of students in and out of the classroom. Advisors help students take full advantage of co-curricular learning and serves as a role model and mentor for members of RSOs. Your efforts provide opportunities for our students to develop holistically, so that they may lead lives of balance, generosity and integrity.

This handbook has been created to assist RSO Advisors in being successful in their roles. Resources, tips, expectations, and suggestions are included to help with your transition into a student organization advisor role and to provide continued resources and recommendations to experienced advisors.

In addition to this handbook, we recommend you familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures that pertain to RSOs, and you check out the RSO Advisor Resource Library, located online at <https://involved.unl.edu/rso-advisor-resources>. We believe these will serve as valuable resources to you and the student organization you advise. We welcome any questions you may have regarding organization and/or leadership development and encourage you to take advantage of other resources and assistance.

The Student Involvement office wants to establish strong lines of communication with organization advisors and has designed this publication to address the role of advisors, advisor responsibilities, and what the expectations of the University are for student organizations. If you have any questions or need further support, please feel free to contact the Student Involvement office at 402-472-2454, located in 200 Nebraska Union or on East Campus at 300 Nebraska East Union, 402-472-6797. You can also reach us by e-mail at involved@unl.edu.

Thank you for taking on this important leadership role. An advisor is crucial to the success of the student organizations you mentor. Your efforts are vital to both students and the campus community, and we greatly appreciate them.

Best Wishes,

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Student Involvement Overview

Show Up – Sign Up – Level Up

Student Involvement is the vibrant hub for involvement, connection, and service to the Nebraska community. Our four primary program areas provide developmental opportunities for students to engage in new experiences and communities. By creating and modeling inclusive environments, we integrate in-class and out-of-class learning to provide valuable programs, services, and events.

Show Up (Engage in New Experiences)

Campus programming and events play an important role in supporting campus engagement and ensuring a vibrant campus community. The Student Involvement Department works to ensure that all students are aware of and encouraged to attend various campus events. These activities and events offer new experiences for students, help them build connections, and create opportunities for students to engage with one another as well as the overall campus community. For a current calendar of Student Involvement events, visit https://events.unl.edu/student_involvement/

Sign Up (Find Your Community)

Student Involvement encourages UNL students to engage in the campus community by choosing to get involved in opportunities outside the classroom. Joining a RSO can provide an important avenue to engagement in the co-curricular experience, as well as provide unique opportunities where students can exercise their passion and their strengths with other students that share in a common interest and learn new skills. UNL averages over 550 student organizations. A full list of active Recognized Student Organizations can be found on [NvolveU](#).

Level Up (Co-Curricular Learning)

Student Involvement believes when students engage in leadership roles and experiences outside of the classroom, they are able to develop a greater transferable skill set, as well as improve their leadership competence. We encourage all students to grow personally and professionally throughout their time at UNL by taking on a leadership role within their RSO, obtaining an on-campus job or internship, or attending various educational programs to expand their knowledge.

Contact Information

Student Involvement
 200 Nebraska Union
 402-472-2454
 Involved.unl.edu

East Campus Student Involvement
 300 Nebraska East Union
 402-472-1780
 Involved.unl.edu

Student Organizations Financial Support
 200 Nebraska Union
 402-472-5667
 314 Nebraska East Union
 402-472-1776
 Sofs.unl.edu

Student Involvement Staff Contacts

Name	Responsibility	Email Address	Phone #
Veronica Riepe	Director of Student Involvement	vriepe2@unl.edu	2-8154
Reshell Ray	East Campus & Campus NightLife	rrey@unl.edu	2-8156
Melissa Griffith-Phelps	Student Organizations	mghelps@unl.edu	2-8153
Joe Hagerty	Student Organizations & Dance Marathon	jhagerty2@unl.edu	2-8132
Karen Wills	University Program Council	kwills2@unl.edu	2-9749
Kat Grier	Training & Assessment	kgrier3@unl.edu	2-8721

Nebraska Union Staff Contacts & Resources

Name	Responsibility	Email Address	Phone #
Carrie Jackson	Nebraska Unions Reservations	cjackson2@unl.edu	2-8167
Judi Augustine	Nebraska Union Reservations	jaugustine4@unl.edu	2-8168
Aaron Henry	Nebraska East Union Reservations	ahenry3@unl.edu	2-1776
Stacy Scott	SOFS	Sscott18@unl.edu	2-5667
Julie Keys	SOFS	jkeys1@unl.edu	2-9630
Jeff Rech	Accounting	jrech2@unl.edu	2-5668
Amy Stewart	RSO Space Allocations	astewart2@unl.edu	2-8172

Types of Organizations

There are a variety of types of student organizations at UNL. 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.

Recognized Student Organization (RSO)

This type of organization has filed for recognition through the Association of Students at University of Nebraska (ASUN) Student Government. Student organizations are required to have a minimum of 5 students to start an organization and a constitution in accordance with ASUN requirements. These organizations are recognized campus-wide and have access to institutional resources set aside or developed for their use. The Event Planning and Registration (EPR) process in Student Involvement is for use by these organizations.

Institutional Student Organizations

Only three organizations of this type exist and are defined by the Board of Regent's Bylaws. They include the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN) Student Government, the University Program Council (UPC) programming board, and the Daily Nebraskan (DN) student newspaper. These student organizations receive student fee funding from University Program and Facility Fees (UPFF).

Residence Hall Association (RHA) Recognition

The Residence Hall Association is an RSO-type organization recognized by the ASUN Student Government. RHA recognized organizations are defined as a "local government" within the RHA Bylaws. The Bylaws set forth requirements and process for this type of recognition. These organizations may access the full range of resources available under the RSO type of recognition (using the Event Planning and Registration process) by using RHA as an umbrella organization. Resources would be accessed under RHA's name followed by a "local government" name for identification purposes.

Sport Clubs

Sport Clubs are comprised of students who have a desire to compete or participate in a sport throughout their college career. These clubs exist to develop students' skills, dedication, and interest for specific sports. Each club's level of activity is unique and ranges from regional to national intercollegiate competitions. For more information about Sports Clubs, contact the Sport Club Staff at Campus Recreation, 402-472-3467, or visit <http://crec.unl.edu/sportclubs>.

Fraternity or Sorority Chapter

This type of organization is recognized through the expansion process of the Interfraternity Council (IFC), Pan-Hellenic Association (PHA), Multi-Cultural Council, or the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC). Member organizations of these four Councils have exemption to Title IX and must comply with UNL expansion policies and guidelines. Greek Chapters are considered members of the recognizing Council. These organizations have access to resources similar to those under RSO status. In cases of a conflict between the Corporation Boards of the Greek Chapters and the University's not-for-profit status, resources will not be made available. This consideration applies to the use of UNL vehicles and UNL bulk mail permits, among others.

Where to Begin

There are a few key points to help you get started advising a RSO. By following these steps, you will be properly registered as your RSO’s Advisor and have a solid understanding of the task that is before you.

- *Make sure you are listed on the RSO’s NvolveU portal. The officers should be updated each year with the incoming President, Treasurer, Primary Programmer, and Advisor(s) of the RSO. A step by step guide to updating your officers in NvolveU can be found at <https://engagesupport.campuslabs.com/hc/en-us/articles/205187790-Changing-Position-Holders-in-your-Organization>*
- *Become familiar with Student Involvement. Check out the website at <http://involved.unl.edu> or stop by the Student Involvement office at 200 Nebraska Union, or 300 Nebraska East Union to meet the staff.*
- *Become familiar with the NvolveU system, the one stop shop for all things RSOs. <https://unl.campuslabs.com/engage/>*
- *Watch your e-mail for the RSO Advisor Newsletter, e-mailed once a month to all advisors of RSOs. The newsletter presents important announcements, resources, and development opportunities for everyone involved in RSOs. This is one of the primary ways Student Involvement communicates with Advisors. *Note: you will only receive this newsletter if you are listed as Advisor 1 or Advisor 2 in the RSO’s NvolveU portal.*
- *Attend an Advisor Annual Orientation which are offered a couple of times throughout each semester. This workshop is not required to be an Advisor, but can be helpful to get a sense of the RSO expectations.*

Things to think about and discuss with your officers:

How are you going to define your organization?

What will be the goals for your organization?

How do you plan to accomplish the goals?

What is unique about your organization?

What type of involvement commitment will members need to make?

What benefits will the organization offer its members?

Keeping Your RSO in Compliance

Each year, your RSO must renew through NvolveU to remain in “compliance”, and to maintain the RSO’s recognition status with ASUN. If the RSO is “out of compliance,” they will not be able to access University resources through the event registration process, schedule meetings or events on campus, or access their SOFS account. To assure that your RSO stays in compliance, the following must be done:

1. Renew Your Organization on NvolveU - <https://engagesupport.campuslabs.com/hc/en-us/articles/204942554-Re-registering-your-Organization>
2. Current Constitution – Maintain a current constitution on file with ASUN which has been approved.

3. **RSO Annual Orientation** – The President, Treasurer, and Primary Programmer of the RSO must attend an Annual Orientation, which is provided by Student Involvement. Annual Orientations include an overview of University policies as they pertain to RSOs, available resources and funding opportunities, as well as several reference materials for students to take with them.
4. ***Federal Tax Identification Number** – If a Recognized Student Organization makes over \$5,000.00 in a fiscal year paperwork must be completed with the SOFS Office to comply with Federal Tax regulations.

Common Roles of an Advisor

Each advisor perceives his/her relation to a RSO differently. Some advisors play active roles by attending meetings, working with student officers, and assisting in program planning and development. Others maintain a more distant relationship to the organization. No matter your style, keeping regular contact with the club is needed. An advisor accepts responsibility for staying informed about activities and for advising officers on the appropriateness and general merits of policies and activities. Advisors should be both accessible and interested and should provide whatever counsel a club or its members might seek.

Given the myriad of purposes, activities and objectives of various RSOs, the role of the advisor will vary in some degree between organizations. As groups vary in their expectations and needs, it is important that you, as the advisor, develop an understanding with the organization as to the nature of your involvement. The advisor, officers, and members should agree on a set of expectations of one another from the onset and should write this list down as an agreement between all parties. A helpful resource to do just that can be found online in the [RSO Advisor Resource Library](#).

The different roles include: ***Mentor, Team Builder, Conflict Mediator, Reflective Agent, Educator, Motivator and Policy Interpreter.***

Mentor

Many students will come to see their advisor as a mentor and the success of these relationships can last many years and be rewarding for both the student and the advisor. If the student is seeking an education and a career in your field, you may be asked to assist in his/her professional development. To be effective in this capacity, you will need a knowledge of their academic program and profession, a genuine interest in the personal and professional development of new professionals, and a willingness to connect students to a network of professionals. You may be approached to review resumes, to connect students with community resources, or to be a sounding board for their ideas of what they want to accomplish in the field.

At times, students will seek out someone to assist with their personal development. In this capacity, a mentor will have a basic understanding of student needs and perspectives, a desire to challenge students intellectually and emotionally while providing support to meet the challenge, and the ability to be present and attune to students' verbal and nonverbal communication. Students may want to talk to you about family or relationship issues, conflicts they are having with other students, or to have conversations about their ideas and thoughts on different subjects.

Team Builder

When new officers are elected or new members join the RSO, you may need to take the initiative in turning the students from individuals with separate goals and expectations into a team. Team building is important because it enhances the relationships of the students between one another and the advisor. Positive relationships help the organization succeed and to work through conflicts and difficult times.

To accomplish the goal of creating an effective team, it is necessary to conduct a session (if you and the students have the time, a full-scale retreat encompassing team building and goal setting could be planned) to engage students in this process. As the advisor, you may consider working with the student officers to develop a plan and to have the students implement it. Training students in effective techniques for team building will keep students invested in the organization and give them the opportunity to learn what it takes to build a team.

Conflict Mediator

Inevitably, students are going to join the RSO with different agendas, goals and ideas about how things should function and the direction they should be taking. When working with students who have come into conflict, if needed, meet with them and have them discuss their issues with each other. In many cases, remind them that they both want what is in the best interest of the organization. Ask them how they think they can work together, point out the organization's mission, and ask how their conduct is helping the organization achieve its mission.

Sometimes, one student may be causing problems with other students. In many cases, this student may not realize that his/her actions are causing a problem. In this case, speaking with the student individually could be helpful. Chances are that no one has met with the student previously and discussed how his/her attitudes are impacting other people and how those attitudes or actions can be changed to make everyone feel better. In many cases, the student will appreciate honest feedback.

Reflective Agent

One of the most essential components to learning "out of classroom" activities is providing time for students to reflect on how and what they are doing. As an advisor, you will want your officers to talk to you about how they think they are performing, their strengths, and their weaknesses. Give them the opportunity to discuss their thoughts on their performance. Then be honest with them. Let them know when you agree with their self-perceptions and in a tactful manner let them know when you disagree. Remember, any criticism you provide students should be constructive and you will want to provide concrete examples of actions the student took that seem to contradict their self-perceptions as well as examples of things they are doing well. When students discuss their weaknesses, ask them how they can improve those areas and how you can help them. Students usually have the answer to what they need; they just don't like to ask for help. Remember to have students reflect on their successes and failures.

Educator

As an advisor, your role of educator will often come through modeling behavior geared toward success, guiding the student in reflection of their actions, and being there to answer questions. One of the most difficult actions to take as an advisor is to do nothing, but sometimes this can be the most important action of all. Allow the students to make their decisions even if they do not agree with your ideas. Sometimes, students will succeed; other times, they may fail. The key is to return to the role of the reflective agent and give the students a safe place to reflect on their experiences.

Motivator

As an advisor, you may have to motivate students to excel and to carry out their plans and achieve their goals. Some students are easily discouraged and at the first sign of difficulty they may want to quit. You will need to be their "cheerleader" to keep them excited about all of the potential successes they will experience. You can motivate students through the recognition of their efforts, appealing to their desire to create change, and to connecting their experiences here at the University to the experiences they will have in the community.

Policy Interpreter

RSOs operate under policies, procedures, and rules. At times, students may not be aware of these policies and they will do things in an inappropriate manner. The more you know about these policies the better advising you can give to the students on their plans. The more proactive you can be, the better it is for everyone involved.

As an advisor you will assume numerous roles. A key idea to remember is that you are an advisor and not the leader. You provide guidance, insight and perspective to students as they work on projects, but you should not be doing the work. Students will learn if they are engaged. Be careful of being challenged into doing the work for a student project. The students make the decisions, and they are accountable for those decisions, and for the successes and failures of their organizations. However, by being an engaged advisor you may be able to assist in minimizing their mistakes without hindering their learning.

Adapted from ACPA Advisor Manual as of 6.2009

Other Common Roles of an Advisor

Mechanic	Knows how to fix and fine tune
Psychic	Can read people’s minds
Gambler	Willing to take risks
Musician	Keeps things in harmony
Analyst	Figures out all the angles
Diplomat	Knows what to say when
Disciplinarian	Confronts the people
Caretaker	Always aware of feelings
Mediator	Has to sit in the middle
Actor/Actress	Plays all the parts well
Counselor	Has a listening ear
Architect	Makes the plans and foundation
Soldier	Knows what battles to fight
Administrator	Takes care of the paperwork
Gopher	When no one else will do it
Quality Control	Makes sure performance is up to par
Friend	There for support
Devil’s Advocate	Looks at all sides
Teacher	Leads by example
Author	Who else write all those memos?!
Juggler	Handles more than one thing at a time
Motivator	Gotta keep them going
Gardener	Helps others grow
Navigator	Can get people from one point to another
Lawyers	Knows the liabilities
Auditor	Knows financial status

From Schreiber, V. and Pflieger, E. “Supervising vs. Advising”, UMR-ACUHO, 1999

ABC's of Advising

- A**ttend meetings and events regularly.
- B**e open to communicating with members and officers.
- Promote **C**ooperation rather than competition.
- Assist in **D**eveloping long term goals.
- E**ncourage discussion of relevant issues.
- F**oster a relationship of trust with students.
- Be a **G**ood listener.
- H**elp officers improve leadership skills.
- Discourage **I**nappropriate ideas.
- Don't **J**udge students.
- K**ick-start enthusiasm.
- L**et members know expectations and roles.
- M**eet regularly with organization leaders.
- N**otice organization and member accomplishments.
- Keep your sense of hum**O**r.
- P**raise publicly, criticize privately.
- Be accessible and available for any **Q**uestions.
- R**equest all agendas and minutes.
- S**trict – No, laissez-faire – No, middle ground – Yes.
- Avoid **T**aking sides and remain objective.
- U**nderstand the goals of the organization.
- Be a **V**aluable resource.
- Turn “**W**hat should we do?” into “what are you going to do?”
- Develop and use constitutional e**X**pertise.
- Provide reasons for **Y**our suggestions.
- Go to your organi**Z**ation for help. It builds confidence and team spirit.

Adapted from Advisor's Handbook 2008-2009 A Guide to Advising Student Organizations from the University of South Carolina.
<http://www.sa.sc.edu/studentorgs/Advisor%20Handbook.pdf>

Advisor Responsibilities & Expectations

Successful advising should keep in mind the responsibilities to individual organization members, the organization as a whole, and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

Responsibility to individual organization members

Advisors should help students find a balance between their academics and co-curricular activities. Many student leaders tend to over-commit themselves and, therefore, overextend themselves if not held in check. As an advisor, you have a unique opportunity to remind students of their academic responsibilities and personal well-being. Advisors should encourage participation from each member of the RSO, so that students feel invested and accountable for their membership in the organization. Whether a student holds an office or is a first-year member, they can be involved in various aspects of the RSO that will give them valuable leadership and planning experiences.

Responsibility to the student organization

Advisors should assist the organization in developing realistic goals for each academic year, be aware of all events and activities the organization is planning and alert students to University policies or regulations. Advisors should ensure that students are properly registering all events through NvolveU. The advisor should be able to provide continuity within the organization when students and/or officers of the organization graduate. Serving as the organization's continuity link, the advisor can help new officers build on history and develop long-term plans for the RSO.

Responsibility to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln

The advisor does have a responsibility to both the RSO and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to remind students of institutional policies so that violations do not occur. If violations do occur, the advisor is expected to work with the University and the Student Involvement office to ensure the violation does not happen again.

As an advisor, familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures that apply to RSOs, the Student Code of Conduct and ASUN Bylaws governing RSOs. All these documents are available online:

Student Code of Conduct: <https://studentconduct.unl.edu/student-code-conduct>

ASUN Bylaws Section 14: <https://asun.unl.edu/Documents/2015-Bylaws.pdf>

Advisors should have a copy of their RSO's ASUN-approved constitution. If the organization has ties with an off-campus organization, a copy of that organization's operating documents (particularly as they pertain to on-campus affiliates) must also be on hand. This is to help insure that the off-campus organization does not require the RSO to act in a fashion contrary to the policies governing UNL RSOs.

As an advisor, you may be responsible for signing off on financial transactions for the RSO to ensure compliance is maintained with the Student Organization Financial Services (SOFS) policies and procedures. The advisor's signature may be necessary on all Payment Request Vouchers to prove that the voucher has been reviewed and that the expenditures have been determined to be appropriate and reasonable. Even if the advisor's signature is not necessary, it is good for the advisor to be in the know when it relates to financial transactions. To see more regarding this topic, please visit the RSO Financial Guidelines Document [here](#).

Advising Styles and Skills

Situational advising allows you to change your advising style to match the development needs of the individuals, or organization you advise. Your advising style is the way you advise when you work with someone. It is how you conduct yourself, over time, when you are trying to influence the performance of others.

Advising Styles

Directing: The advisor provides specific instructions and closely supervises task accomplishments.

Coaching: The advisor continues to direct and closely supervise task accomplishment, but also explains decisions, solicits suggestions, and supports progress.

Supporting: The advisor facilitates and supports the efforts toward task accomplishments and shares responsibilities for decision making with the students.

Delegating: The advisor empowers the students to conduct their own decision making, problem solving, and delegating.

Advising Skills

Flexibility: You must be able to move from one style to another in order to meet the needs of the different types of students and multiple circumstances you will encounter.

Diagnosis: You have to learn how to diagnose the needs of the students you advise. Determining what is needed as opposed to what is wanted is sometimes a difficult task.

Contracting: You have to learn how to come to some agreements with students. It can be helpful to work together to reach an agreement as to which advising style they seek from you.

Advisor Expectations

Expectations may vary based on the type of RSO and the advisor. RSO and advisor expectations may also vary from year to year, and person to person. Advisors and student leaders should connect regularly to determine the appropriate expectations that apply. At a minimum advisors should:

- *Be available to the officers and/or members of the RSO for advising and required approving of documents.*
- *Assist both the old and new leadership in transitions and provide historical continuity.*
- *Ensure your organization properly registers newly-elected officers each year, and that those officers attend Annual Orientation.*
- *Assist the group with reviewing and updating the constitution every couple of years.*
- *Allow the student leadership to exercise primary decision-making authority with regard to organization goals, objectives and activities within the limitations of the expectations above.*
- *Meet with organization officers and members as determined by the organization.*
- *Assist the organization in developing goals and planning projects or events.*
- *Empower members of the organization to become better leaders and advance the work of the organization or group.*

Advisors and students are encouraged to develop a list of their own expectations for each other. For a helpful checklist of expectations you can discuss with your officers check out the [RSO Advisor Resource Library](#).

The Advisor’s Approval

As an advisor you may be asked to approve a number of different activities for your organization. When approving anything, review each item carefully and ask questions. Do not just approve without reviewing the information.

Events

When event requests are submitted by an RSO that you advise, you will be added to the event request as a “Reviewer”. If you have not already done so with your RSO, now would be a good time to walk through some of the questions below to make sure the event will run as successfully as possible:

- *Has the event been planned carefully?*
- *Is there support for the event? Are the members and other students excited and willing to participate in the event?*
- *Is the event inclusive? Check out the helpful checklist on the [RSO Advisors Resource Library](#) page.*
- *Are students aware of University policies and state and federal regulations that may be relevant? Identifying policies may be a useful opportunity to help members learn how to plan ahead.*
- *Are contracts needed for this event? If so, please note that contracts cannot be signed by advisors, nor officers or other members. Contracts presented to RSOs should be brought to the Student Involvement office to obtain the proper signatures. For more information regarding contracts, see page 27 of this manual.*

You do not need to “approve” anything for the event request to move forward through the approval process, however, if you have an issue with any of the pieces within the event registration form, or if for some reason you do not want to “approve” this event, PLEASE leave a comment within the event registration form on any pieces that you have an issue with. The Student Involvement team will pause the approval process until that comment can be dealt with.

Finances

As an advisor, you may be responsible for signing off on financial transactions for the RSO to ensure compliance is maintained with the Student Organization Financial Services (SOFS) policies and procedures. The advisor’s signature may be necessary on Payment Request Vouchers to prove that the voucher has been reviewed and that the expenditures have been determined to be appropriate and reasonable. For internal control purposes the following signature combinations must be on the Payment Request Voucher when a payment is made to an individual with account signature authority:

Payment made to:	RSO Advisor	RSO President	RSO Treasurer
Signatures required:	RSO President RSO Treasurer	RSO Advisor RSO Treasurer	RSO Advisor RSO President

All RSO events must be registered through Student Involvement. If an event is not properly registered, SOFS may not be able to make payments requested by your RSO related to the event. Without properly registering an event you may not have all the necessary tax forms required. For more information regarding payment request vouchers and other SOFS items, please visit the RSO Financial Guidelines Document [here](#).

Space Usage

An event registration form through the NvolveU system must be completed, and approved to utilize any University space. Reservation requirements and contacts vary depending on the facility being requested to utilize. If you have questions about who to contact to reserve a space on campus, please contact Student Involvement at involved@unl.edu or 402-472-2454.

Working with Your Members

Hosting an Organizational Retreat

Why Your Organization Should Have a Retreat/Workshop

Organization retreats and workshops enable RSOs to briefly get away from the distractions of school and work and to focus on the needs of the RSO, and the needs of the individual members of the RSO. Planning for the future will enable an RSO to operate more efficiently. As you begin to plan your retreat think about the following:

Establish the Purpose(s) for Your Retreat

- Team Building, Skills Training, Communications, Goal Setting, Problem Solving, Planning, Learning, Orientation, Socializing, Transition, Revitalization, Conflict Resolution

Determine Who the Retreat is for

- New Officers, Executive Board, All Organization Members, etc.

Select a Facility

- On Campus vs. Off Campus; Convenience vs. Isolation; Urban vs. Rural Getaway. When looking for an off campus retreat location consider nearby summer camps. They often charge cheap rates in the off season. Be sure to check availability, accessibility and accommodations. Don't forget about costs and contracts. The Student Involvement office has contact names and numbers for retreat locations.

Transportation

- If your event is off campus, members should be provided with adequate and safe transportation.

Food and Drink

- Before deciding on a menu consider cost, cooking facilities, preparation, and clean up. Try cooking together, it makes a great team building activity. On a tight budget? Consider potluck.

Selecting the Best Format

- Workshops presented by an "expert" such as advertising, program planning, public speaking, fundraising, etc.
- Experiential Exercises such as team building, brainstorming, communications skills, ropes course, etc.
- Recreational Exercises such as skiing, hiking, canoeing, biking, etc.

Selecting the Facilitators and Presenters

- Organization Officers, Organization Members, Faculty Advisor, Other Faculty Members, Student Involvement Staff

Planning the Retreat

- Have members sign up to participate on committees. Remember people support what they help to create. Suggested committees: Transportation, Food/Drink, Lodging, Recreation, Programming, and Clean-Up

Resources in Developing Your Workshops and Exercises

- Structured experiences books, reference books, videotapes; Faculty Advisor; Faculty Members

Evaluating Your Retreat

- **Evaluation Forms.** Ask members what they thought of the experience. What would they change? What would they keep the same? Ask the presenters what they thought of the experience. What could have made it better?

Need help planning a retreat with your RSO? Student Involvement staff are available for consultation! Contact us at involved@unl.edu or 402-472-2454. Also check out the [RSO Advisor Resource Library](#) for a sample retreat schedule!

Officer Transitions

One of the most important functions of an advisor is to assist in the transition from one set of RSO officers to the next. As the stability of the RSO, the advisor has seen changes, knows what works, and can help maintain continuity. Investing time in a good officer transition early on will mean less time spent throughout the year nursing new officers through the semester. The key to a successful transition is making sure new officers know their jobs BEFORE they take office. Expectations should be clearly defined. There are a number of ways to conduct the officer transition. The following examples demonstrate two commonly used methods.

The Team Effort

The team effort involves the outgoing executive board, the advisor, and the incoming executive board. This method involves a retreat or series of meetings where outgoing officers work with incoming officers on:

1. *Past records/notebooks for their office and updating those together.*
2. *Discussion should take place regarding previous year projects that have been completed; upcoming/ incomplete projects; challenges and setbacks; and anything the new officers need to know to do their jobs effectively.*

The Advisor's role may be to:

- Facilitate discussion and be a sounding board for ideas.
- Organize and provide the structure of a retreat.
- Offer suggestions on various questions.
- Refrain from telling new officers what they should do.
- Fill in the blanks. If an outgoing officer doesn't know how something was done, or doesn't have records to pass on to the new officer, you can help that officer by providing the information he or she doesn't have. The advisor's role in this process is to provide historical background when needed, help keep goals specific, attainable and measurable and provide advice on policies and procedures.

One-on-One Advisor Training with Officers

While it is ideal to have the outgoing officer team assist in training the incoming officers, often it is left up to the advisor to educate the incoming officers. In this case, there should be a joint meeting of the new officers. The advisor should then meet individually with each officer; examine the notebook of the previous officer (or create a new one).

The notebook should include items such as forms the officer may need to use; copies of previous meeting agendas; and a copy of the RSO's constitution and bylaws. Talk about what the officers hope to accomplish in the forthcoming year. Assess the officer's role in the RSO. What are the expectations of each position? What are the student's expectations of the position and his/her goals?

Information provided by Jim Mohr, Advisor for Student Organizations and Greek Life, Eastern Washington University. Adapted from the ACPA Advisor Manual, 6.2009

Common Student Officer Positions

Each student organization writes its own constitution and bylaws, which should outline the basic role of each organization officer. It is solely up to the members of the organization to assign responsibilities to a specific officer. This reviews some possible position responsibilities. For a list of tips and tricks for advisors to increase organizational productivity check out page 21 of this manual.

Although a student organization's constitution lists some specific positions' responsibilities, each officer should have the freedom to personalize his/her office. Individual interest areas and skills often dictate the amount of time an officer spends on a particular responsibility. However, a good officer never forgets what the basic responsibilities are. To view potential wording in a sample constitution, click [here](#).

Role of the President

Some Potential Responsibilities:

- Presides at all meetings of the organization
- Schedules all practices, classes, and other activities of the organization
- Prepares and files any report required
- Completes annual renewal process
- Represents organization at official functions
- Maintains contact with organization alumni
- Maintains contact with national organization
- Votes in cases where there is a tie
- Calls special meetings of the organization
- Appoints committee chair people
- Attends RSO Meetings
- Maintains contact with organization advisor
- Maintains contact with affiliated department or section
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making processes
- Coordinates RSO elections

Role of the Treasurer

Some Potential Responsibilities:

- Keeps all financial records of the organization
- Collects organization dues
- Prepares an annual budget
- Advises members on financial matters (i.e. vendors, ticket selling procedures)
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making processes
- Pays organization bills
- Prepares and submits financial reports to the members
- Prepares all budget requests for funds Is familiar with accounting procedures and policies
- Coordinates fund raising drive
- Represents organization at official functions

Role of the Primary Programmer

Some Potential Responsibilities:

- Obtains appropriate facilities for organization activities
- Plans officer's orientation and organizational retreats
- Leads RSO events and activities
- Remains fair and impartial during organizational decision making processes
- Completes event process and any additional forms necessary

Role of the Vice President

Some Potential Responsibilities:

- Assume the duties of the President as needed
- Plans officer's orientation and organizational retreats
- Represents organization at official functions
- Coordinates organization elections
- Serve as an ex-officio member of standing committees
- Coordinates organizational recruitment efforts
- Remains fair and impartial during organizational decision making processes

Role of the Secretary

Some Potential Responsibilities:

- Keeps a record of all members of the organization
- Keeps and distributes minutes of each meeting of the organization
- Notifies all members of meetings
- Coordinates organization elections
- Prepares and files any report required
- Manages organization office space
- Represents organization at official functions
- Keeps a record of all activities of the organization
- Creates and distributes agendas for each meeting of the organization
- Prepares organization's calendar of events
- Handles all official correspondence of the organization
- Collects organization mail from the advisor or wherever mail is received
- Remains fair and impartial during organization decision making process

Other possible positions: Parliamentarian, Recruitment / Retention Coordinator, Liaisons, Community Service Chair, etc.

Adapted from ACPA Advisor Manual as of 6.2009

Student Involvement staff are available to discuss with the RSO what responsibilities fit best with what position based on the particular RSO. Please feel free to contact us at involved@unl.edu or 402-472-2454.

Tips to Increase Organizational Productivity

1. Know what the students expect of you as an Advisor.
2. Let the organization and individual members know what you expect of them.
3. Express a sincere interest in the organization and its mission. Stress the importance of each individual's contribution to the whole.
4. Assist the organization in setting realistic, attainable goals. Ensure beginning success as much as possible, but allow the responsibility and implementation of events to lie primarily with the organization.
5. Have the goals or objectives of the organization firmly in mind. Know the purposes of the organization and know what things will need to be accomplished to meet the goals.
6. Assist the organization in achieving its goals. Understand why people become involved. Learn strengths and emphasize them. Help the organization learn through involvement by providing opportunities.
7. Know and understand the students with whom you are working. Different organizations require different approaches.
8. Assist the organization in determining the needs of the people the organization is serving.
9. Express a sincere interest in each member. Encourage everyone to be responsible.
10. Assist the members in understanding the organization's dynamics and human interaction. Recognize that at times the process is more important than the content.
11. Realize the importance of the peer group and its effect on each member's participation or lack thereof. Communicate that each individual's efforts are needed and appreciated.
12. Assist the organization in developing a system by which they can evaluate their progress. Balance task orientation with social needs of members.
13. Use a reward system and recognition system for work well done.
14. Develop a style that balances active and passive organization membership.
15. Be aware of the various roles that you will have: clarifier, consultant, counselor, educator, facilitator, friend, information source, mentor, and role model.
16. Do not allow yourself to be placed in the position of chairperson.
17. Be aware of institutional power structure—both formal and informal. Discuss institutional developments and policies with members.
18. Provide continuity for the organization from semester to semester (not mandatory but encouraged).
19. Challenge the organization to grow and develop. Encourage independent thinking and decision-making.
20. Be creative and innovative. Keep a sense of humor!

(Adapted from M.J. Michael) Office of Student Leadership Development Programs at East Carolina University, as shown in ACPA Advisor Manual 6.2009

Motivating Officers & Members

It is NOT money or personal gain that most people want. They want intrinsic satisfaction. People will work harder for intrinsic satisfaction than they will for monetary income. The following are some ways that you as a leader can help people satisfy those intrinsic needs:

People Need to Feel Important

See people as worthwhile human beings loaded with untapped potential; go out of your way to express this attitude.

Give Praise

Reinforce for continual achievement. All people need praise and appreciation. Get into the habit of being “praise minded.” Give public recognition when it is due.

Give People Status

The more status and prestige you can build into a committee or an organization, the more motivated the members become. There are many status symbols you can use to make others feel important. For example, develop a “Member of the Week/Month” Award or “Committee Chairperson of the Month” Award. In addition, simply treating people with courtesy is a way of giving them status.

Communicate

People like to know what is going on in the organization. They want to be told about problems, objectives, and “inside information.” They feel recognized and important when they are kept informed. Two-way communication within the organization is necessary in order to achieve a mutual understanding. Mutual understanding leads to motivation!

Give Security

People will look to you for intrinsic security. For example, they must know that you like them, respect them, understand them, and accept them not only for their strong points, but also for their weaknesses.

People Need You – People Need People

They need you to give them what they want and need: intrinsic satisfaction. When you give them what they want, they will give you what you want. This is what motivation is all about. It is not something you do to other people, but something they do for themselves. You give them the reasons and that makes you the motivator – a person who gets things done through others.

Develop Purpose

Always explain why. Instill in the members that their assistance is vital for success. Share ways that participation can encourage personal growth.

Encourage Participation in Group Goal Development

Include all members when planning goals. Consider and follow through on members’ suggestions. Remember that we support that which we help to create.

Develop a Sense of Belonging

People like to belong. Those who feel like they belong will more likely invest themselves.

Adapted from ACPA Advisors Manual 6.2009

Specific Ways to Increase Motivation

- Give others credit when it is due.
- Use “We” statements, and not “I.”
- Play up the positive and not the negative.
- Make meetings and projects appear attractive and interesting.
 - When you are wrong, admit it.
 - Use members’ names often.
- Let members in on the early stages of plans.
 - Be fair, honest and consistent – show no favoritism.
 - Be careful what you say – do not gossip.
 - Listen to others.
- Expect only the best and be proud when members achieve it!

GRAPE Theory of Motivation

Growth - Being able to increase one’s skills and competencies, performing new or more complex tasks, participating in training programs.

Recognition - Promotion within the organization, praise for achievements, positive and constructively critical feedback, receiving an award, printed references to an individual’s activities, being “listened to.”

Achievement - The opportunity to solve a problem, to see the results of one’s efforts, to reach goals that one has established to create a ‘whole’ tangible product.

Participation - Involvement in the organizational decision making, planning and scheduling one’s own work and controlling one’s own work activities.

Enjoyment! - Having fun in a warm, friendly, supportive atmosphere.

RSO Recognition

Student Impact Awards

One of the best ways to recognize students in your RSO is to nominate them for a Student Impact Award, presented annually at the Student Impact Awards event in April. Awards are presented to RSO members including: Outstanding President of the Year, Outstanding Officer of the Year, Outstanding Member of the Year, Outstanding Advisor of the Year, Outstanding New Advisor of the Year (for Advisors with three or less years of advising experience), and Program of the Year.

Nomination forms are available on NvolveU each year in early spring. A committee of campus representatives reviews the nomination forms, and the finalists are honored at the program in April. For more information on the Student Impact Awards, refer to the website: <https://involved.unl.edu/student-impact-awards> or give us a call at 402-472-2454.

50 Ways to Informally Give Recognition

- Smile
- Put up a volunteer suggestion box
- Treat to a soda
- Ask for a report
- Send a birthday card
- Arrange for discounts
- Give service stripes
- Treat to ice cream
- Plan annual ceremony occasions
- Recognize personal needs and problems
- Be pleasant
- Post honor roll in reception area
- Respect their wishes
- Give informal socials
- Keep challenging them
- Send a Thanksgiving card to the person's family
- Say "Good Morning"

- Greet by name
- Provide a pre-service training
- Help develop self confidence
- Award plaques to sponsoring group
- Take time to explain fully
- Be verbal
- Give additional responsibility
- Afford participation in team planning
- Respect sensitivities
- Enable to grow on the job
- Send newsworthy information to the media
- Say "Good Afternoon"
- Honor their preferences
- Create pleasant surroundings
- Welcome them to staff meals
- Have a public reception

- Take time to talk
- Defend against hostile or negative staff
- Make good plans
- Throw a pizza party
- Plan a theater party
- Recommend to prospective employer
- Utilize as consultants
- Praise them to their friends
- Say "Thank you"
- Smile
- Be a real person
- Plan occasional extravaganzas
- Send impromptu fun cards
- Attend a sports event
- Have a picnic

Events & Your RSO

Covid-19 Related Guidance

- Student organization advisors should encourage the group and members to follow the [guidance, policies, and guidelines of the University](#) and the [current directed health measures](#) as stated by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services regarding the prevention of spread of COVID-19.
- Affiliated Student Organizations should follow the guidelines of the Departments that support them as well as the RSO guidelines set by Student Involvement, which can be found [here](#).
- Encourage student members to be conscientious of the parameters of physical distancing and avoiding high risk activities and environments. An excellent resource for assessing the risk of an activity or event can be found in the [Risk Assessment Matrix](#).
- We encourage you to continue to meet regularly with your organization, but make your level of comfort with face to face meetings with the group clear. If you prefer to meet with them through virtual means that should be an option.
- Help students understand the importance of wearing a face covering and physically distancing themselves when that is not possible. Many resources highlighting the importance of [wearing a face covering](#) and [physically distancing](#) can be found on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website.
- Help students understand that some people cannot wear face coverings, or do not feel comfortable meeting/participating in person. We recommend that the RSO have virtual opportunities to participate when possible. If your group would like assistance in offering a virtual option, the Student Involvement team would be happy to help.
- Coach/mentor students on how to make thoughtful decisions about having conversations with their members or guests about wearing face coverings and/or physically distancing.

Event Registration Information

All RSO events and activities must utilize the event registration process through NvolveU if University resources of any kind are to be used, or the event is occurring on University property.

The purpose of the event registration process is to assist student organizations in planning, promoting, executing and evaluating successful events and activities. The event registration process fulfills this purpose by:

- *Providing a process for student organizations to reserve facilities and services for events and activities.*
- *Assisting the components of the University that provide support for organization events and activities with a standard method of reserving, authorizing, and receiving payments for goods and services provided to organizations.*
- *Insuring that all proper policies as well as local, state and federal regulations and codes have been followed.*

- *Insuring that UNL liability insurance covers the organization activities, if appropriate and recommend the purchase of additional insurance if the event warrants it.*

When should an RSO start the Event Planning and Registration process?

An eligible RSO should start the event registration process as early as possible. The necessary forms need to be completed at a minimum 3 days prior to the event date, but depending on the scale of the event, it could take up to two weeks.

How does the process work?

The event registration process is located entirely on the NvolveU system. A step by step guide to submitting an event request form can be found here <https://engagesupport.campuslabs.com/hc/en-us/articles/204033924-Creating-a-New-Event-in-your-Organization>. Students can also meet with a Student Organization Consultation Desk staff member, talk about the event's details, discuss policies and procedures, and even get advice on funding, entertainment, and other event particulars. A consultation can help your RSOs event process run more smoothly, and thus be more fully prepared to put on a successful event.

The form will ask your RSO a series of questions about the event (i.e., location, date, times, attendance number, etc.) Make sure the member completing the form is prepared to give many details regarding the event. The more information provided the better.

Once the form is complete, you as the advisor will be added as an event registration form reviewer. Then other University reviewers that will need to approve aspects of the event will be notified. If our staff has any questions, or needs additional information regarding the event, they will contact the form submitter through the messaging feature on NvolveU.

There may be additional forms that your RSO will need to complete for liability insurance, travel insurance, contracts, co-sponsorships, etc. depending on the event. As your RSO member works through the form, they will be prompted to complete the additional documents as needed.

Contracts

Contracts may be utilized to enter into agreements with local businesses, speakers or performers. Contracts cannot be signed by advisors, nor officers or other members. Contracts presented to RSOs should be brought to the Student Involvement office to obtain the proper signatures. RSOs do not have the legal authority to enter into a contract. Student Involvement has a procedure in place to allow RSOs to enter into contracts, by having the Board of Regents enter into the contract on their behalf.

Zero dollar agreement contracts will need to be signed for anyone that is not affiliated with UNL who is rendering services for the group. For example, even if a DJ is donating their time for the RSO's event, they will still need to complete a zero dollar agreement.

Any person that signs a contract, except for the University approved signatories, will become personally liable for the agreement. Authorization to sign contracts on behalf of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska is regulated by Regents Policy 6.3.1.4.

Contract templates, tax withholding forms and advising to RSOs is provided by the Student Involvement office as part of the event registration process. Student Involvement has tools to assist RSOs with processing contracts, which can be found here: https://involved-apps.unl.edu/a/Contract_Request/

Food & the Event

Food is a useful tool for your RSO to draw participants to events, getting members to attend meetings, and even to raise money. Depending on the type of event your RSO is interested in putting on, there are different policies that impact providing food. To see a full listing of policies regarding food on campus, please reference the University Wide Food Policy found [here](#).

Alcohol at the Event

The event registration process must be completed for ALL RSO events at which alcohol is present. An [Alcohol Services Request form](#) will also be required, and University Police must also approve all alcoholic events. For more information and full University policy regarding alcohol, please visit: <https://bf.unl.edu/policies/policy-serving-alcoholic-beverages>

Risk Management & the Event

Liability and risk are hot and current issues. Many advisors worry about something going “wrong” during an event. It’s important to know that the following are high risk activities: athletics or any sort of physical event, events involving transportation, minors, non-UNL affiliated individuals, alcohol, etc. Please take time before each event to review the risks with your RSO. Ask questions to help the students understand the importance of risk & how to help reduce risky behavior with organizations. For example:

- *What’s the worst that can happen?*
- *What if that happened? How would we respond?*
- *What steps can we take to make sure the worst doesn’t happen?*
- *Are there alternatives to this event if it is too risky? How can we make sure we are managing the risk the entire event/trip?*
- *Does our event need waivers?*
- *Event Planning during Covid-19? Check out our helpful [Risk Assessment Matrix!](#)*

The Student Involvement staff are available to discuss with the RSO how to best manage risk for their upcoming event or program. Please feel free to contact Melissa Griffith-Phelps at mgphelps@unl.edu.

Insurance

The University has general liability insurance which provides coverage for claims of bodily injury and property damage against the University arising out of the negligent actions of the insured party. RSO advisors are insureds under the University policy which also covers them for their service to RSOs. However, RSOs and their individual members are not covered by the University’s general liability insurance.

Coverage for On-Campus Activities

While RSOs do not have general liability insurance coverage from the University, the University does not require RSOs to purchase additional insurance for most of their on-campus activities. Except for those noted below.

On-campus activities that DO NOT need additional insurance

- Group meetings
- RSO sponsored concerts attended by University students (*Entertainers must have liability coverage*)
- All RSO meetings and events within Nebraska Union facilities and outdoor spaces adjacent to the unions
- Campus space reservations
- RSO on-campus events and programs intended for and attended by University community and students.

On-campus activities that DO need additional insurance

- Athletic events including 5K or fun runs
- Activities or events at which the general public is the primary audience
- Activities involving the use of amusement devices (e.g., rides, slides, inflatables, bungees, dunk tanks)
- Activities or events which involve animals
- Activities determined by Student Involvement and the UNL Risk Management Office to be a potential risk to the University or its community
- Sports Clubs and similar organizations need to obtain their own general liability coverage (*Your governing body may be a source for such coverage*)

Where insurance is required, RSO's will be required to provide a certificate of insurance in order to conduct events at University facilities. In these cases, insurance requirements for RSO's must be consistent with the terms of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's agreement with other third-party users of University space.

To conduct excluded activities in University facilities, RSO's must provide proof of general liability insurance coverage (i.e., a certificate of insurance) covering that organization's event, naming the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska as an additional insured and evidencing coverage with a limit of not less than \$1,000,000.00 combined single limit for bodily and personal injury and property damage. The University has a Tenant User Liability Program where a RSO can purchase the liability coverage for the events on-campus. To get information on this program, please contact the UNL Risk Management Office at 402-472-3101.

Coverage for Off-Campus Activities

In addition to not being covered by the University for their on-campus activities, RSOs and their individual members are not covered for liabilities arising from their off-campus activities by any University general liability insurance. The University recommends that RSOs consider purchasing their own general liability insurance coverage for their off-campus activities. While the University cannot provide this coverage, other insurance agents may be able to provide coverage for your organization.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is required for all trips where UNL students participate as a RSO beyond a ten-mile radius of the campus. General insurance is not required, but is available and may be purchased for travel/events within a ten-mile radius of the campus if requested. Student travel sponsored by RSOs must be approved in advance by the RSO's advisor and Student Involvement through the event registration process. **RSO travel always requires an event registration form through NvolveU and travel insurance regardless of the destination or type of transportation.**

All students traveling officially for the University beyond a ten-mile radius of the campus must be covered by a minimum of \$30,000.00 accidental death insurance and \$2,500.00 of accidental medical insurance. The University offers this amount of coverage to RSO's for \$0.25 per UNL student, per day. These funds can be deducted directly from the RSO's Student Organization Financial Services (SOFS) account.

*Student Involvement will provide educational support addressing insurance issues, and shall provide current information regarding insurance coverage options during Annual Orientations. Proper registration of an event or activity by a RSO with the Student Involvement Office insures the organization under this policy. **FAILURE TO REGISTER AN EVENT MEANS THE ORGANIZATION IS NOT INSURED.** For more information contact the Student Involvement Office at 402-472-2454.*

Movie Screenings/Showings

Movie and video presentations can be an easy way for an RSO to host an event. It is important to note that there are differences between having a public viewing and a private viewing of a movie or film.

- A **private viewing** is one where a movie is shown to a closed audience (i.e., just your RSO), you do not charge any money and do not advertise on public fliers or invitations. In a private viewing, you do not need to obtain public viewing rights.
- A **public viewing** is one where you are opening up a movie to the campus/the public, one where you are charging money, OR where you are advertising through public venues (bulletin boards, emails, and social media posts). In a public viewing, you need to obtain public viewing rights.

To avoid copyright infringement and possible legal penalties, the RSO should gain public viewing rights for any videos/movies being shown in a public event. If you or your RSO needs help with this process, please contact the Student Involvement Office at involved@unl.edu or 402-472-2454.

Raffles at the Event

Raffles are another fundraising opportunity for your RSOs to utilize. All raffles must be registered with the Student Involvement Office. This is to ensure that students are informed about state laws regulating raffles. Each RSO must complete the event registration form on NvolveU, and Raffle Authorization Form, from the SOFS Office, with all required signatures before ordering or selling raffle tickets.

State Law

According to state law, all raffle proceeds must go to a charitable organization or be used for community betterment purposes such as donations, scholarships, speakers, etc. The law states that gross proceeds must not exceed \$5,000.00 and that gross proceeds may be used solely for charitable or community betterment purposes, awarding of prizes to participants and operating costs. To qualify for a raffle, 100 percent of the prizes to be awarded must be merchandise prizes not redeemable for cash.

Additional Raffle Regulations

Raffle regulations include Ticket Regulations, Pre-Sale Audit, Post-Drawing Regulations and other requirements based on the particular aspects of a given raffle. For the most current and detailed information contact the SOFS Office at 402-472-5667.

Finances & Your RSO

Additional RSO Funding Sources

If your RSO would like to plan an event or attend a conference, but does not have the funds to make it successful, RSOs can apply for additional sources of on-campus funding. Each year, various departments or organizations on campus set aside money to support RSO activities. For more information regarding the funding opportunities below and how to apply for them, simply click on the title.

- [*Student Affairs Diversity Conference Attendance Fund*](#)
- [*Student Affairs Diversity Program Fund*](#)
- [*Pepsi Diversity Program Fund*](#)
- [*Pepsi Student Events Fund*](#)
- [*University Program Council \(UPC\) Fund Allocation Committee \(FAC\)*](#)

In addition, individual colleges and academic departments may have funds available for RSOs. In order to find out which fund best suits your RSO's needs, read more about each of them on the RSO Resource Library page [here](#). The application process, guidelines, deadlines, and requirements may be slightly different for each fund.

Budgeting

One task RSOs face is the development of a plan to be fiscally responsible with funds. A budget can be a helpful method for keeping track of RSO funds. It is also good practice to have the RSO's budget reviewed, explained if necessary, and approved by the entire RSO membership.

A Budget is:

- *A tool for planning and controlling RSO funds.*
- *A formal written guideline describing your RSO's future goals expressed in financial terms within a set period of time.*
- *A detailed statement of estimated income and expenses.*
- *A historical record of the RSO's activities during a given period.*

A Budget can:

- *Help refine goals that reflect the realistic resource environment.*
- *Compel RSO members to use funds efficiently and appropriately.*
- *Provide accurate information to adjust, analyze, and evaluate programs and activities.*
- *Aid in decision making.*
- *Provide a historical reference to be used for future planning.*

Adapted from Leader Bits, The University of Kansas

Developing a Budget

1. Begin preparations a month or more before the close of the current year.
2. Prepare an outline of the RSO's planned activities for the coming year.
3. Determine the available funds (carry over balance from previous year, cash on hand, funds in bank, interest, etc.).
4. Estimate expected income and when it is expected to be available (dues, sales, etc.).
5. Get price quotations on big expenditures, delegate responsibilities to members.
6. Rank order by their relative importance, which activities/programs are the greatest expenditures of funds.
7. Choose programs to initiate; ask how much is available to allocate.
8. Negotiate as necessary: eliminate or limit less essential expenditures.
9. Revise, review, coordinate, cross-reference, and then assemble into a final budget; the budget must be flexible to anticipate conditions which might have been overlooked during planning.
10. Vote to approve the budget.

Managing the Budget

1. Set and maintain a minimum cash balance.
2. Formulate procedures and policies needed to achieve objectives.
3. Keep an accurate log of financial transactions (income/expenses); maintain in a record book (check and balance records regularly).
4. Set up internal controls designed for safeguards and accurate accounting data.
5. Control cost-allow only approved expenditures.
6. Assess budget regularly.

Other Information for Advisors

Communication Information

RSO Advisor Newsletters

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

RSO Newsletters

The RSO Newsletter is sent out to all presidents, treasurers, and primary programmers on the 1st and the 15th of each month during the academic year. Other RSO members who are interested in receiving the RSO Newsletter may opt in at the link below. The newsletter contains information about upcoming events and updates from the Student Involvement Office. It is also available for RSOs to advertise their upcoming events, submit information that may be valuable to other RSO leaders, or seek out volunteer opportunities. Ads may be included in the RSO Newsletter by submitting the information at <http://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/rso/submit>. Through this link RSOs are also able to submit their story or event to the Next@Nebraska Newsletter, which gets sent to all UNL students.

Travel Information

All travel events require that an event registration form be completed. Your RSO should begin registering their travel event as early as possible. The event registration process will help students understand their options when traveling as an RSO, and be informed about all the necessary paperwork involved with traveling as an RSO.

RSOs have several options when driving to their destination. They may use their own private vehicles, they may rent a University vehicle through Transportation Services, or rent vehicles from an off-campus rental company (i.e. Enterprise, Hertz) **No matter which option you choose, all students traveling must obtain travel insurance, and all drivers must be registered as an authorized driver by the University.**

Driver Authorization

All drivers must be authorized through the University, no matter what kind of vehicle the RSO will be using for their travel. To see if a driver has been authorized by the University, go to Transportation Service's website at: <http://transportation.unl.edu/> and under the Vehicle Rental category, click on "Check Driver Authorization" and enter the driver's NU ID Number or Driver's License Number, and their birth date. If the driver is not on the list of authorized drivers, go back to <http://transportation.unl.edu> and click on "New Driver Authorization." There is a \$3.00 charge to check Nebraska Driver's Licenses, and rates for out-of-state driver's licenses vary. The money will be charged to your RSO's SOFS account, which you will need to enter at the time of the request. For questions about this process, call Transportation Services at 402-472-2422.

Renting a University Vehicle

Transportation Services has three types of vehicles your RSO may rent: sedans, mini-vans, and large passenger vans. There is a cost per day, as well as a cost per mile for each vehicle. To see the most up-to-date rates, go to the Transportation Services' website at: <http://transportation.unl.edu/rental/#rates>

Miscellaneous Information

RSO's E-mail Account

RSOs in compliance may apply for an e-mail account on the University's system. All University policies regarding the use of e-mail accounts and hardware/software resources apply. The account, if approved, will be provided for the student organization's use. This means that personal use is not to be permitted. The information that the organization receives by e-mail should be made available to the officers/leadership and/or members of the organization as appropriate. As the advisor of the organization you will be held accountable for the e-mail account. More information for creating an RSO email account, and or listserv can be found here: https://involved.unl.edu/organizations/website_email

Student Absence Due to RSO Activity

Occasionally a RSO will have activities that conflict with academic class requirements. When this occurs, students may wish to have an excused absence from their faculty or staff member. Students should notify their faculty or staff member as soon as possible prior to their absence. Please note that faculty or staff members may or may not grant the excused request, as it is at the personal discretion of each faculty or staff member.

The form linked below is strictly optional, however highly recommended for student organization members and you, their advisors. It is provided only as a means of assisting faculty and students in keeping records of agreements made if a student needs to miss scheduled classes. [This form](#) must be accompanied by a letter from the advisor.