Office of Student Activities:
STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISOR HANDBOOK

Thank you for volunteering your time to serve as an advisor to one of our student organizations. The Office of Student Activities has created this guide to assist you with developing your role as an advisor. Our hope is that, together, you and the student organization will work together to achieve their goals.

All student organizations have the ability to choose if they want to work with an advisor, and if so, who that person(s) will be. The Office of Student Activities does not require student organizations to have an advisor, so if you are unable to continue your service in this role, simply alert your student executive board and the Office of Student Activities so that we may update our records.

If you have any questions about the information in this guide or would like assistance facilitating a meeting with your executive board, feel free to contact anyone in the office.
We are looking forward to a successful year working alongside you.

Contact Information

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Advisor Responsibilities

An advisor is proven to be an asset to an organization by sharing their life experience, candor, and wisdom, and connecting students to resources. A new group or a well-seasoned organization will utilize an advisor to steer them in the right direction and support their mission and vision for their organization's success. Any faculty or staff member of Farmingdale State College is eligible to serve as an Advisor.

Responsibilities to the Student Organization

- Determine what type of advisory style is appropriate for the organization.
- Assist the student organization in developing realistic goals - this will contribute to the educational and personal development of the students involved
- Inform the student organization of college policies and guidelines that may affect programs and/or events that they want to sponsor
- Provide continuity within the student organization especially in times of Executive Board changes
- Help the students find balance between their academics and their co-curricular activities

Responsibilities to the Office of Student Activities

- Uphold the College's mission and values as well as the student organization's mission and goals
- Communicate as needed with the Office of Student Activities
- Ensure the organization takes reasonable precaution in its activities to comply with college policies and protect the safety of individuals

Responsibilities to the Farmingdale State College Community

- Faculty/staff advisors are considered "Responsible Employees" under Title IX. Any incident of sexual violence, sexual or gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or retaliation reported to a Responsible Employee or which they observe or learn about must be immediately reported to the Title IX Office.

- Faculty/staff advisors must report crimes they observe or learn about from allegations made in good faith to University Police at 934-420-2111 or in person.
    - Hazing is a violation of University policy and New York State law. For more information, please click here.
        - We encourage all advisors to complete the "Faculty and Staff" Section of Prevent Zone Farmingdale. That can be found here.

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- Under the Clery Act, student organization advisors are considered Campus Security Authorities (CSAs). As a CSA, you are responsible for reporting to University Police:
  - A crime must be reported if it occurred:
    - On the main campus or satellite campuses
    - Non-campus building or property
    - Public property on/immediately adjacent to campus and easily accessible from campus
    - On an off-campus trip
    - When in doubt, any potential violations of the Clery Act should be reported.

Program Advisor v. Faculty/Staff Advisor

As stated previously, not every group has an advisor, but they will turn to their Program Advisor for guidance. Only a professional staff member from the Office of Student Activities will be assigned to a club/organization and act as their Program Advisor. Program Advisors have a portfolio of student organizations in which they would be working throughout the academic year, and depending on the needs of the student organization, will meet with them periodically for things like event management, club dynamics, or policy review that the organization needs to remain in compliance with our department. Faculty/staff advisors are NOT responsible for the operations of a club or organization, including but not limited to room reservations, funding requests, club registration, and other general club operations.

If an organization does not have a faculty/staff advisor, it can use its Program Advisor for club management needs. In this case, a Program Advisor will also act in an advisory capacity.

Program Advisor	Faculty/Staff Advisor
Purpose: Assist organizations in program planning, assess risk, and ensure compliance with policies and procedures.	Purpose: Assist organizations in their topical area, providing guidance and consistency.
Who they are: Office of Student Activities Professional staff who serve as advisors as a function of their job	Who they are: University faculty or staff members who volunteer to serve in the advisor capacity
Responsibilities: Approving requests for space, signing required documents, assisting with organizational management, program planning, approving events On RamCentral, assessing the risk associated with events/programs, and ensuring	Responsibilities: Being a mentor, a source of student support, and a role model are important. Assist with program ideas, networking opportunities, speakers, etc. The advisor and the student

compliance with university and departmental policies	organization should agree upon the level of involvement.

FAQs: Best Advising Practices

1. What are my expectations as an advisor?

We do have many expectations, but here are some suggestions that we have for you: ultimately, we hope that our advisors do the following:

1. Fill out our Advisor Agreement Form during Re-Registration or during the time that they agree to be a group Advisor
2. Complete online hazing prevention training. (advisors who have not completed this training will receive correspondence from our office with instructions).
3. Be knowledgeable about our Community Guidelines as a reference for meeting with your student group
4. Have an interest in the organization you are advising
    a. Know the organization's Statement of Purpose and ensure that you understand their intentions as a group.
    b. Read your organization's constitution – it is the foundation for the group's operation.
5. Assist in the growth and development of the students, managing the group. Continuity is key in many instances, so if you are an advisor to an older group, grab history to ensure you put them on the correct trajectory.
6. Provide the ability to connect resources for the group to utilize when appropriate. Creating networks and connections can help with the growth of our organizations.
7. Discuss your relationship and expectations with the group.

2. What is the time requirement to be an advisor?

This is very dependent on you and the student group. Before agreeing to be an advisor, we recommend meeting with leadership to determine the following:

- Their Statement of Purpose
- How they are hoping to be structured
- What they are hoping to achieve
- What do they want from YOU as an advisor
- What can you give them?

At the bare minimum, an advisor should check in with the group monthly and make sure they are on track to successfully set the goals they intend to have for the academic year. You can always stop by for a guest appearance at a meeting or an event if it suits your schedule, but check with the group to see what they are looking for. Overall, your agreement to be an advisor should be to mentor and provide the TLC they need to strive for.

3. Can I receive overtime/comp time for being an advisor?

The Office of Student Activities does not have the jurisdiction to offer these amenities. Please consult with your supervisor to see if this is something you can receive.

4. Do I approve/submit budgets or spending requests?

Spending is submitted by Presidents or Treasurers who have completed the necessary SGA Finance trainings.
Those are reviewed and approved by the SGA Treasurer and Accountant and then approved by the SGA Accountants office.

5. Do I approve club events on RamCentral?

Only Program Advisors will approve a group's event on RamCentral. If you are aware of an event, please ask your group if the event has been approved on RamCentral.

6. Can I book space for my advising group?

Your organization should not be asking you to book space directly. All organizations have access to a RamCentral account, and their club leadership should be the ones to book space requests. Once submitted, they will work with their Program Advisor on space that meets their event needs.
Please note: Groups should not be coming to you for a last-minute request but should adhere to our offices' Timelines.

7. Is there a specific style I should be advising?

Everyone has a different advising style, and when you meet with leadership, you'll understand what your style may be. Some advisors are active; others are there just to be a cheerleader. You'll better understand what they need from you when you meet with them. Our overall intention is for our advisors to maintain consistent communication with their group. When accepting the advisor role, you agree to accept responsibility for keeping informed about the organization's activities, advising the officers on the appropriateness and general merits of the organization's activities, and informing our department of any pertinent matters. However, advisors are not responsible for the organization's actions; students are.
Advisors should be both accessible and interested and should provide whatever counsel a group or its members might seek.
There are many ways in which an advisor may provide feedback and advice to a student group: from a mentor to an educator to a motivator; the ways in which someone may advise really depend on the qualifications and qualities you bring to the table.

8. What does an initial meeting look like to determine the best fit for being a group's advisor?

Both you and the student leaders should really be looking for the best fit for each other to ensure your resources are being used and the group feels comfortable knowing you are their advisor. Think of it as an interview; you wouldn't just jump into something without knowing if someone is the right fit for you; it's the same concept. This meeting should ask the right questions that both the group and you should consider. Such things as time commitment, goals they have, goals you have, and what you can offer should be discussed.

If you are willing to accept the role as advisor please sign and date below:

Tools and Resources:

Here you can find direct links to all SGA and OSA policies:

These are the resources that are given to your students:
OSA Manual
OSA Newsletter
Program Advisor List