

# **Student Organization Advisor Handbook**

## **2018-2019**

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# Welcome!

*Dear Faculty or Staff Member,*

Congratulations on becoming an advisor to a Purdue University Fort Wayne student organization. Whether you are experienced or new to the position, you are about to face a rewarding and exciting year and the Student Life and Leadership staff are looking forward to assisting you.

We have published the Student Organization Advisor's Handbook to provide you with a supplement to the student organization training manual. We also encourage you to become familiar with both along with our website, [www.pfw.edu/student-life](http://www.pfw.edu/student-life), where you will find a great deal of important information about student organizations.

Purdue University Fort Wayne provides students with a wide variety of opportunities to become involved on campus and throughout the community. There are over 170 registered student organizations here at Purdue University Fort Wayne including departmental, honors, religious, social Greek, special interest, sports, and student government groups. As an advisor, you can make a difference to these organizations and the way they impact student life at Purdue University Fort Wayne.

Student organizations provide students an opportunity to expand and enhance their overall educational experience, interact with others, gain self-confidence, take on responsibility, acquire leadership skills, and succeed in what they do.

Student Life & Leadership sincerely thanks you for your commitment to the role of advisor. If you have any questions, please contact our office at 260-481-6609 or stop by to see us in the Student Life & Leadership (SLL) office and the Student Organization Resource Center (SORC) on the second floor of Walb Student Union, rooms 210 and 214, respectively.

Sincerely,  
*Student Life & Leadership*

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Advisors of recognized student organizations are responsible for adhering to the policies and procedures contained within this handbook and within the student organization training handbook. Advisors are expected to read and understand the contents and recognize that their organizations will be held strictly accountable for operating within the parameters and policies described in their student organization handbook. This advisor manual is intended to be a summary; it is NOT a comprehensive listing of all the rules and regulations pertaining to student organizations. Student Life & Leadership reserves the right to change any procedure or policy listed without prior notice.

# Introduction

Please take some time to familiarize yourself with this handbook and the Purdue University Fort Wayne Student Organization Handbook (available at <http://www.pfw.edu/offices/student-life/resources>). These resources provide answers to questions about organizational responsibilities, advertising and publicity, membership, fundraising, event planning, and the services offered to organizations by both Student Life & Leadership (SLL) and the Student Organization Resource Center (SORC). If you find something that is unclear or not addressed, please let us know. Student Life & Leadership is committed to serving as a “human” resource for you and your organization. We strive to remove as many barriers as possible to make your experience as an advisor to a student organization a positive one, for both you and the organization.

## About Student Life & Leadership

**Mission Statement:** The Student Life & Leadership office is dedicated to the enhancement and advancement of Purdue University Fort Wayne students by providing co-curricular opportunities which compliment academic pursuits and learning beyond the classroom. The Student Life & Leadership staff seeks to provide an atmosphere in which students not only learn, but are challenged, supported, and heard, through diverse programming, dynamic leadership development, and impactful engagement opportunities.

## Contact Student Life & Leadership

**Purdue University Fort Wayne**  
Student Life & Leadership, Walb Union 210  
2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805  
260-481-6609

Hours: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. ~ Monday through Friday

# Function and Eligibility of Advisors

## What is an Advisor?

A student organization advisor is a faculty or staff member who provides support and guidance to officers and members of a student organization. The advisor not only serves as a representative of the group in an official capacity, but also as a student advocate. An advisor is one who gives ideas, shares insight, provides a different perspective, and encourages organization members. Rather than acting for student organizations, advisors should seek to challenge student organization members and support them as they make decisions.

## Why be an Advisor?

Advising a student organization can be a very rewarding experience. Working with students outside of the classroom allows faculty and staff the ability to share information and resources and encourage development in the student. This close interaction with students allows advisors the opportunity to promote skills such as leadership development, ethics, teamwork, appreciation of diversity, and self-discovery that are invaluable to students when they leave Purdue University Fort Wayne.

## Who can be an Advisor?

An advisor can be any full-time member of the Purdue University Fort Wayne faculty or staff who is willing to commit to advising a student organization. The advisor is responsible for a number of aspects of the organization including event assessment, planning, and contract negotiation. All advisors need to submit an Advisor's Responsibility Form (found online at <http://www.pfw.edu/offices/student-life/resources/new-organizations.html>) and fulfill the requirements outlined in the Advisor Responsibility section of this handbook.

## Attributes of a Good Advisor

**Aware:** Knows what is happening with the group at all times – problems, dates of functions, etc.

**Dedicated:** Always willing to assist the organization when necessary. Enjoys being associated with the group and is very involved.

**Visible:** Attends meetings, social functions and other special activities of the group when possible.

**Informed:** Familiar with the rules, policies and regulations of the University and the bylaws and constitution of the organization. Is prepared to render assistance with their interpretation.

**Supportive:** Provides encouragement and praise to group members.

**Open-minded:** Willing to consider new ideas and approaches although they may not totally agree with them.

**Respected:** Earned through being trustworthy and honest and demonstrating a genuine interest in the welfare of the group.

# Roles and Responsibilities of Advisors

Purdue University Fort Wayne recognizes that co-curricular activities are vital to academic excellence and personal development. To promote the success of student organizations, the university requires each organization to have an advisor to be selected from the full-time faculty or staff at Purdue University Fort Wayne.

Each year student organization advisors are required to sign an Advisor's Responsibility Form outlining their role within the student organization. In addition, each student organization advisor has access to a Student Organization Advisor's Handbook which more fully outlines their roles and responsibilities.

1. **Be there.** College students are adults; every meeting does not need your attendance. Still your frequent presence is important at executive board or officers' meetings and monthly or general meetings. Set up frequent meetings with the president to plan the agenda for executive and general meetings. It demonstrates your interest and provides continuity.
2. **Help plan.** Successful activities take planning. Encourage foresight. Help the group think through its event plans. Pay attention to other University activities and dates and help the group be realistic. The SLL staff can help in planning.
3. **Know University Policies:**
  - ✓ General responsibilities
  - ✓ Procedures for forming and maintaining a student organization
  - ✓ Requirements for holding office
  - ✓ Room reservations
  - ✓ Contracts
  - ✓ Publicity
  - ✓ Finances
  - ✓ Hazing
  - ✓ Violations of rules
4. **Use Community.** Every student organization event is required to be entered and approved in Community. The student organization officer/member in charge of the event should enter the event in Community at least two weeks in advance of the event. Student organizations can schedule events up to 3 months in advance of the event date. Advisors should not be scheduling events in Community for the student organization as this is not teaching students how to be responsible. If you are a departmental student organization advisor, please do not schedule space for the student organization through your department.
5. **Know about money.** You may sign checks if an urgent situation arises when the treasurer cannot take care of business. Encourage a treasurer's report in each executive board meeting. The Business Manager for Student Affairs will help give

current account information. Expect a copy of notice from SLL if your group has an overdue bill. No outside bank accounts are permitted.

6. **Keep the Office of Student Life and Leadership (SLL) informed with:**
  - An up-to-date Report Form with names, phone numbers, and addresses (a form should be completed within 1 week after your election)
  - Any changes in officers
  - Problems the group is having
  - Awards or honors received by individuals or the group
7. **Give praise.** Students can get useful positive feedback from you. Don't hesitate to tell them they've done well. Your opinion means a lot.

## I. Responsibilities to the Student Organization

1. **The advisor should assist the group in developing realistic goals, strategic planning, and training for the academic year.** This will contribute to the education and personal development of the students involved. The advisor must take an active role, rendering advice and counsel as circumstances dictate.
2. **The advisor should be aware of all plans and activities of the group and inform the group of institutional policies that may affect these plans.** The advisor should see that the group and its officers know where policies are listed, what the policies are, why they exist, and the channels to be followed for changes, revisions, or exceptions to policies. Advisors should also participate in the planning/review of each activity.
3. **The advisor should be available to organization officers/members and regularly meet with the organization.** Being visible is one key aspect of being an advisor. When members feel like they can talk to their advisor about issues within the organization or other things that are bothering them an organization will be better off.
4. **The advisor should discourage dominance of the group by any one individual and should encourage less involved students to take initiative.** Eager leaders often provide strong leadership more often than necessary. This can lead to resentment by some or pressure others into silencing themselves. The advisor can help provide a balance by pointing out such concerns in a one-on-one setting with the students or the organization leadership.
5. **The advisor may need to refer students to counseling.** Invariably, during interaction with the group's members, the advisor will encounter students with personal problems. The counseling role might require individual consultation on a personal level or referral to the student counseling service. Please contact Student Life and Leadership if you have any additional questions or need additional resources.

6. **The advisor should provide continuity within the group and should be familiar with the group's history and constitution.** Membership turnover in student organizations is high and often the only link with the immediate past is the advisor. The advisor can steer group members clear of mistakes and help them avoid the proverbial reinventing of the wheel. Serving as the group's memory and continuity link, the advisor can help new officers build on history and develop long term plans for the future of the organization.
7. **The advisor should offer ideas for projects and events.** The advisor will perform his/her greatest service by providing opportunities for the students to exercise initiative and judgment and to enjoy a proper measure of autonomy in self-directed social, educational, recreational, cultural, and spiritual activities. He or she should not dominate the program planning process. However, advisors should ensure that the group understands a program's complexity and has discussed the necessary steps that need to take place in order for the program to be successful. The advisor should remember that it is the task of the active members to operate the organization. Removing this responsibility from the members would deprive them of an important educational experience.
8. **The advisor should assist the group in evaluation.** This includes evaluating individual programs as well as doing a complete evaluation at the end of the academic year. The advisor must be willing to give constructive criticism when necessary and offer words of praise for work well done.
9. **The advisor should maintain continuity and tradition of organization as members graduate.** This includes knowing the history, and being passionate about teaching the new members what the organization means.

## II. Responsibilities to Individuals in the Group

1. **The advisor should help the students find balance between their academics and their co-curricular activities.** Student leaders often have the tendency to burn the candle at both ends and may overextend themselves. The advisor has a unique opportunity to remind students of their academic obligations and personal needs.
2. **The advisor should encourage each individual to participate in and plan group events.** Some students fade into the background if not effectively encouraged. Being a member of a student group can provide students with valuable interpersonal and/or leadership skills, but these will not develop if the student is not involved.
3. **The advisor should encourage students to accept responsibility for specific roles within the group.** The advisor should help them realize the importance of these roles. From officer positions to committee members, each student should feel invested in and accountable for their specific role.

## III. Responsibilities to the University - Purdue University Fort Wayne

1. **The advisor should attend sponsored training activities.** Although some advisors have been an advisor before, it's important that advisors attend all training sessions created for them. New things happen in the SLL and SORC and we want to keep advisors as up to date as possible.
2. **The advisor should work with the group, but not direct its activities.** Although the advisor's role is not regulatory or disciplinary, the advisor has a responsibility to both the institution and the organization to keep their best interests in mind. At times, the advisor may need to remind the organization of institutional policies so that violations do not occur. The advisor may also work with the organization's officers to establish and maintain internal group standards and regulations for conduct.
3. **Occasionally, an advisor can help an organization during an emergency.** Although this type of intervention is rarely necessary, the advisor's good judgment can be the saving grace in the event of mishaps, internal conflict, or personal crisis. Assisting the group's president as a spokesperson or serving as the main contact for the University can help in these cases. In the event of an emergency, contact Student Life and Leadership immediately.

## Advisor Expectations

The organization-advisor relationship is not a one-way street, with the advisor doing all of the giving and the organization doing all of the taking. The organization has some definite responsibilities to its advisor. Here are some tips to guide you in your advisory capacity:

1. Establish a clear understanding between yourself and the organization as to the advisor's role and function. Set up a time to discuss this at length. Talk about the purpose of the group and its needs. Determine what you as the advisor have to offer, and then agree on the nature of the relationship. Review the relationship periodically and encourage the organization to let you know how you may advise the group better.
2. It is the responsibility of the organization to communicate its needs to the advisor. Advisors should be willing to get involved with the organization, but they should not "butt in."
3. Establish lines of communication. Find the best way to keep the flow of information moving smoothly between yourself and group members. Check your schedule for times you can meet with the organization. Tell the organization what information you, as an advisor, would like to receive on a regular basis (e.g. meeting notices, minutes, event announcements, etc.) and check to see it is sent.
4. As the advisor, you often have other responsibilities like a family, job, and financial concerns that don't always permit giving undivided attention to the organization. Organizations can extend an invitation, but shouldn't be offended if the advisor must say "no thanks."
5. The advisor should let the organization know what type of talents he/she can offer. Recognize that as the advisor you are a resource person with a wealth of expertise. Offer opinions, advice, and creative ideas.
6. An advisor is an integral part of the organization, but not a member. **The advisor's job is to coach and guide the organization in its function, not to perform tasks for the group.**

# Advising Tips

*Getting and keeping groups productive!*

Every student organization will differ and may require a different approach by the advisor. The following information can serve as a starting point.

1. Know and understand the students with whom you are working. Different groups require different approaches.
2. Have the goals or objectives of the group firmly in mind. Know the purposes of the group and what needs to be accomplished to meet the goals.
3. Know what the students expect of you as an advisor.
4. Let the group and individual members know what you expect of them.
5. Express a sincere interest in the group and its mission. Stress the importance of each individual's contribution to the whole.
6. Express a sincere interest in each individual in the group. Encourage each member to be responsible.
7. Encourage the Mastodon Tracks Program.
8. Assist the group in determining the needs of the persons the group is serving.
9. Assist the group in setting realistic, attainable goals. Ensure success in the first project undertaken, then increase responsibility.
10. Assist the group in developing a system by which they can evaluate their progress. Balance task orientation with social needs of the members.
11. Assist each member in meeting his/her needs while helping the group achieve its goals. Know why people become involved. Learn strengths and emphasize them. Help each person grow and learn through their involvement by providing opportunities.
12. Assist the members in understanding the group dynamics and human interactions. Recognize that at times the process is more important than the content.
13. Realize the importance of the peer group and its effect on each member's participation or lack thereof. Acknowledge and communicate that each individual's efforts are needed and appreciated.
14. Do not allow yourself to be placed in the position of the chairperson.
15. Develop a style which balances active and passive group membership.
16. Be aware of the various roles you' will have:
 

consultant	information source	clarifier
counselor	facilitator	educator
17. Be aware of the institutional power structure-both formal and informal. Discuss institutional developments and policies with members.
18. Provide continuity for the group from semester to semester.
19. Challenge the group to grow and develop. Encourage independent thinking and decision-making.
20. Be creative and innovative. Maintain a sense of humor!

# Advising Club Sports

Responsibilities for advisors of club sports are different from other types of student organizations. This section is designated to provide understanding about what is involved in advising a club sport as well as to provide awareness about club sports programs at Purdue University Fort Wayne.

## A Different Ball Game

Club sports programs are run by Student Life and Leadership and are for the primary purpose of engaging in extramural or intercollegiate competition.

Purdue University Fort Wayne sponsors several different club sports programs. Though the club receives facility usage, the faculty advisor is a key to a successful program.

## Responsibilities of Club Sports Advisors

Being an advisor for a club sport is not a job to be taken lightly. There is a major time commitment in advising a club sport, especially if this also involves coaching in the squad.

Before consenting to advise a club, one should find out how much time the group will need. Some sports are active only at certain times of the year, while others go all year.

The faculty/staff advisor is the liaison to the University. He/she is responsible for making sure all club sport regulations are followed. Some important regulations:

- An advisor should be aware that the finances of the club are under jurisdiction of the University.
- No club sport member is eligible to participate in a club sports-related activity unless he/she has signed release on file with the SLL office. Releases are good for the current academic year though summer session.
- Water sports requires that students pass a swimming test. Members must pass the swim test each academic year.
- Every club sport is required to have a constitution approved by the Student Government Association (SGA).
- There are numerous rules about scheduling home and away contests and advisors should consult the Club Sports Handbook about these important regulations.
- The University's General Liability Policy provides insurance for club sports that are recognized as student organizations and the activity involved is one which has been approved by SLL. It is also suggested that club sport members have a medical insurance policy in effect during any club-related activity.

Advisors should have a copy of the Club Sports Handbook available in the Student Life & Leadership Office and online.

# Risk Management

Advisors have a duty to protect all students in the student organization and their guests from known or reasonable foreseeable dangers. If you are in doubt in any given situation, please ASK Always put important information or decisions in writing.

Advisors have a duty to explain the law and or campus regulations to students. It is important that advisors point out the risks the student and/or organization may encounter if the individual or group chooses to violate a law or campus regulation. If you have questions, please contact Student Life and Leadership.

Advisors of a student organization are included in the liability coverage provided by the University for student organization activities. **For events involving greater risk, your presence will be required at these events.** Events which include alcohol and activities such as bonfires are examples of such type of activity. In addition, the student organization may be required to submit proof of additional comprehensive liability coverage before an event will be authorized. Consult with the SLL staff when planning an event involving risk.

## Hazing Policy

Hazing, defined by the Purdue University Fort Wayne Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct as: "Any conduct that subjects another person, whether physically, emotionally, or psychologically, to do anything that may endanger, abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent." **Hazing is prohibited.** Even if your group has conducted membership activities as traditions, it does not mean they are of value. They could even demean members or prospective members. When you wonder about the value of an activity, something may be wrong. Consult with SLL to craft a method of modifying these activities.

*-Excerpt from the Purdue University Fort Wayne Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct. Part II, Section B, 12.*

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Purdue University Fort Wayne prohibits discrimination against any member of the university community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, genetic information, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran. The university will conduct its programs, services, and activities consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and orders and in conformance with the procedures and limitations as set forth in Purdue University's Equal Opportunity, Equal Access and Affirmative action policy which provides specific contractual rights and remedies. Additionally, Purdue University Fort Wayne promotes the full realization of equal employment opportunity for

women, minorities, persons with disabilities and veterans through its affirmative action program.

### **Events Involving Alcohol**

Student organizations are permitted to host events which involve the consumption of alcohol. Should a student organization wish to host an event of this nature, they will need to fulfill the requirements as outlined in the Alcohol Service packet (found at: <http://www.Purdue University Fort Wayne.edu/offices/student-life/resources/org-forms.html>) and receive University approval at several levels before any promotion is to take place. **It is important to know as the University advisor that you become the person responsible for the event and that you are required to be involved in the decision-making of the event.** The Alcohol Service packet is also available in the SLL office, and you may want to familiarize yourself with its regulations.

### **Campus Safety**

Being aware of campus safety concerns can make you a valuable resource to the students you advise. The Purdue University Fort Wayne Police Department publishes a report reflecting monthly statistics of the Purdue University Fort Wayne community. This publication is widely circulated throughout campus and is available upon request. Helping students in your group interpret statistics and understand faculty perceptions that are held in general public are ways you can help them be aware of safety concerns.

Another important way you can help is to make students aware of college campuses, like Purdue University Fort Wayne, are not isolated communities. Robberies, rapes, assaults, and vandalism do happen. While students may feel that they are not in the “real world” while attending college, they are indeed in a world where crime does take place.

Urge your students to use common sense. While it may be “easier” to walk home alone than to call the escort service, students should realize the possible ramifications of their actions.

Some students think that it is “Purdue University Fort Wayne’s responsibility” to provide a safe campus. This is true in a sense, but students should take personal responsibility.

Students should also be aware of the world around them. Things as simple as landscaping can pose safety threats. Walking in well-lighted areas and staying away from areas where bushes are located are helpful steps for safety.

By helping students become conscious about safety issues, you can help them become more accountable for their own safety while here at Purdue University Fort Wayne and also later on in the “real world”. As an advisor and authority figure to students, you can make a difference in their “safety scene”.

For some activities, student organizations will be asked to have participants complete Hold Harmless or Volunteer Agreements. While these agreements certainly do not protect against harm, they do assure the University and the student organizations, that participants are fully informed of risks that could be a part of the activity.

# Contact Information

*Please feel free to stop by the office anytime you need anything. If for some reason we are not in the office please contact us using our information below.*

## **Student Life & Leadership Office**

phone – 260-481-6609  
fax number – 260-481-5714  
email - [stulife1@pfw.edu](mailto:stulife1@pfw.edu)  
Walb Union 210  
Office Hours – M-F 8:00am-5:00pm

## **Student Organization Resource Center (SORC)**

Walb Union 214  
Office Hours – M-F 8:00am-5:00pm

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