

RSO Advisor Resource Guide

2022-2023



**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
Student Activities

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Foreword

Student Organizations are important!

Organizations at Kennesaw State University actively participate in and contribute to a vibrant university community. The more than 300 Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) at KSU provide transformative experiences and opportunities for students to grow as individuals, leaders, and community members. The debates, social and cultural events, lectures, and many other activities organized by student groups, contribute to making the student experience the best that it can be.

The Department of Student Activities works proactively to guide student organizations by providing education, training, and consultation. RSOs and the Department of Student Activities exist as partners in the University community. Student Activities staff serve as facilitators to student organizations by defining appropriate boundaries, sharing information, and assisting in the decision-making process. We work to help RSOs appropriately manage their risks and achieve their goals.

Finally, research has shown that students who are involved on campus are more likely to be successful and to gain more from their time in college (Astin, 1984). Accordingly, student organizations provide opportunities to gain valuable experience in the practical aspects of leadership, communication, risk management, and teamwork. As such, student engagement in clubs and organizations are an important component to campus life at KSU that provide an outlet for the student voice to be heard and a vehicle for students to have a substantial impact on campus.

About this Resource Guide

This resource guide outlines the expectations and resources for RSO Advisors at Kennesaw State University as well as assists RSOs with their operations. It is created by the staff in the Department of Student Activities and revisited every year prior to the start of the academic year and may change from academic year to academic year. As such, this version of the resource guide should only be referenced within the academic year indicated (2022-2023). It is by no means exhaustive, but it is a great place to start if you are new to advising student organizations. In it you will find helpful information regarding the organization and operation of RSOs and policies that impact their work. Any updates to policies, procedures, guidelines, or regulations to RSO activities (e.g. meetings, events, programs, recruitment, tabling, elections, etc.) provided by Kennesaw State University, the University System of Georgia, or State of Georgia take precedence over any

previous documented policies, including those outlined in this resource guide.

For more detailed information on Registered Student Organizations, please refer to the 2022-2023 RSO Manual found on the Department of Student Activities website.

About the Department of Student Activities

Mission Statement: The Department of Student Activities fosters a dynamic campus environment by connecting KSU students to student organizations, campus programs, and events leading to moments of learning, ownership, community building, and self-discovery

All RSOs are supported and managed through the Department of Student Activities, which serves to facilitate the registration, oversight, and support of all RSOs. By completing the process for becoming an RSO, student organizations formally acknowledge the administrative authority of the Department of Student Activities. For RSO support, there are full-time professional staff and well-trained student staff on each campus.

Contact information for the Department of Student Activities is provided below. Additional contact information may be accessed on the [Student Activities website](#).

Department of Student Activities:

Kennesaw Campus

Room 366 Carmichael Student Center
(470) 578-6275

Marietta Campus

Suite 230 Wilson Student Center
(470) 578-3976

studentactivities.kennesaw.edu
owllife.kennesaw.edu
studentactivities@kennesaw.edu

SECTION 1: ADVISING BASICS

THANK YOU! Serving as an advisor to an RSO is an important role. Advisors provide the guidance necessary to help the group succeed in its endeavors. The Department of Student Activities is available to assist you in any way possible, and we appreciate your willingness to take on the role of advisor.

What is the Role of a Student Organization Advisor?

Each student organization is required to have a faculty/staff advisor and register with the Department of Student Activities. An advisor is expected to be actively involved in the affairs of the student organization(s) they advise.

Advising is a developmental process in which an advisor shares ideas and insights, provides a different perspective, counsels students, and facilitates learning to assist students in the academic, personal, and professional development. An advisor facilitates the maintenance of a strong organization by providing continuity and keeping new members and officers informed of the history of the organization. The advisor does NOT control the organization or make the decisions for the students, but provides a balanced perspective so students can make the most informed decisions possible.

The student organization advisor is a resource for the organization and can offer support and guidance in several broad areas:

1. Helping with the growth and development of students within the organization.
2. Serving as a source of information and continuity to the organization as members and officers transition.
3. Serving as a liaison between the University and the organization.
4. Advising the organization regarding program/event purpose, content, and logistics.

A developmental advising approach...

- is concerned about student potential and growth.
- requires establishing caring relationships with students.
- encourages students to take responsibility for their actions.
- provides opportunities for students to explore their ideas.
- encourages values of volunteerism, civic engagement, and social responsibility.
- builds connections between academic and student affairs to assist students in achieving goals.
- engages the advisor and the student with both making equal contributions to the relationship.

(adapted from the *Academic Advising for Student Success and Retention*, Hovland, Anderson & Associates, 1997)

The Expanded Roles of the Advisor

Advisors wear many hats. They can act as supervisors, mentors, partners, role models, and teachers—all in a short period of time. It is important for the advisor to recognize when each of these roles is needed and to act accordingly. It is also important to limit each role and find a steady equilibrium.

- Educator:
 - Use the outcome of events to enhance student knowledge for future events. Members can learn from successful and less than successful events.
 - Show patience and a positive disposition when helping members to learn.
 - Help students make meaning of their experiences through reflection.
- Mentor:
 - Be open and willing to talk to members of the organization when needed. Provide support to members when necessary.
 - Guide officers to fulfill mission of the organization.
 - Know campus resources to further aid students.
 - Provide assistance through areas of expertise.
- Role Model:
 - Be a positive influence for members and officers.
 - Always be engaged during meeting and supportive of the members and their ideas.
 - Maintain appropriate behavior at all times when in the presence of members of the organization.
- Partner:
 - Be knowledgeable of the organization's constitution and bylaws.
 - Attend meetings and events.
 - Work with the members while allowing them to lead the organization.
 - Provide constructive criticism. Be a liaison between organization members and other faculty/staff when necessary.
 - Members should see you as a person to assist when help is needed and not as someone who tells them what to do all the time.
- Supervisor:
 - Provide oversight in maintaining direction of the overall organization and during the planning process of events.
 - Be knowledgeable with the organization's finances by assisting the treasurer with the preparation of the yearly budget.
 - Maintain continuity of the organization during transition periods.

EXPECTATION CHECKLIST

When serving as an advisor to a student organization, it is important to discuss the expectations for the relationship between the advisor and student organization and its officers/members. The following Expectation Checklist is meant to facilitate a conversation between advisor and students to help determine the role of the advisor:

- 1 = essential for the advisor to do
- 2 = helpful for the advisor to do
- 3 = nice, but the advisor doesn't have to do
- 4 = prefer the advisor not to do
- 5 = the advisor definitely should not do

	Attend regular meetings of the organization's officers/executive board.
	Attend regular general body meetings of the organization.
	Attend programs and events of the organization.
	Meet individually with officers or members.
	Take an active part in formulating goals for the year.
	Check in with organization on progress toward goals.
	Speak up during discussion when the advisor has relevant information.
	Speak up during discussion when the advisor thinks the group may be making a poor or incomplete decision.
	Be quiet during meetings unless called upon.
	Initiate discussion when the advisor has an idea or suggestion.
	Explain University policy when applicable to discussion.
	Plan a training/retreat for officers of the organization.
	Facilitate transition between incoming and outgoing officers.
	Help officers prepare an agenda for each meeting.
	Train group on University policy.
	Mediate interpersonal conflicts that may arise between officers/members.
	Be included on correspondence for the organization.
	Assist in planning events, programs, and initiatives.
	Intervene when events or initiatives are not planned in accordance with University policy.
	Recommend programs, events, or initiatives.
	Maintain records, files, and equipment in the advisor's office.

(adapted from Advisor Expectation Checklists by Brookdale Community College, California State University Northridge, and Colorado College.)

Advising Do's

- Have a genuine and student-centered approach to advising.
- Foster meaningful and development experiences for students.
- Empower students to take ownership over the organization and its programs
- Ask critical questions to expand students' thinking and planning.
- Develop strong working relationships with the organization's officers.
- Get to know members on an individual level.
- Be familiar with the organization's mission, purpose, and constitution/bylaws.
- Help officers and members set goals, plan events, and execute initiatives
- Facilitate transitions between incoming and outgoing officers
- Assist with membership recruitment, retention, and recognition
- Serve as a resource during intragroup conflict or discourse
- Attend meetings and events (when appropriate) to be visible and support students
- Model good communication and listening skills with your students.
- Provide feedback and encourage evaluation/reflection of skill development.
- Be knowledgeable about KSU policies; Board of Regents policies; and local, state, and federal laws.
- Understand your responsibilities to report incidents as a Campus Security Authority per the Clery Act.

Advising Don'ts

- Take over the responsibilities for the officers or members.
- Lead the meetings or events for the officers.
- Be afraid to let the group try new ideas, programs, or initiatives.
- Manipulate officers or members of the organization.
- Impose your own ideas of what the organization should do.
- Assume the organization's expectations, needs, and attitudes will remain the same each year.
- Tell the organization what to do (unless in emergency situations or when educating students on policy or law)

Types of Problems Organizations Face

The following lists are provided so that an advisor may have a better idea of the types of problems he/she may face with their organization (Lorenz & Shipton, 1984). This list is not inclusive, but may serve as a guide for the advisor.

1. Leadership Problems
 - a. The leader does not consult with the organization before making significant decisions.
 - b. The leader appears to lack self-confidence, is non-assertive, and lacks an interest in the organization.
 - c. A rivalry exists between leaders in the organization.
 - d. The leader has work overload, and too many time-conflicts.
2. Membership Problems
 - a. Low attendance at meetings
 - b. Members has low satisfaction and morale, are bored, do not communicate well, feel left out, or are apathetic
 - c. Members compete for attention
 - d. An individual member's goals differ from those of the organization
 - e. There exists a lack of trust among the members
 - f. Programs fail
 - g. There is a lack of ideas
3. Organizational Problems
 - a. Meetings are disorganized
 - b. Meeting are too long
 - c. The organization suffers from financial problems
 - d. There is no continuity from one year to the next
 - e. The organization has no "plan of action"
4. Inner-organization Problems
 - a. Disagreement between an organization and other student organizations
 - b. Disagreement with institutional policies and procedures
5. Advisor Problems
 - a. Organization members avoid the advisor
 - b. Organization members do not pay attention to the advisor's advice
 - c. The advisor is overwhelmed by their responsibility
 - d. The advisor assumes a leadership function

SECTION 2: STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

RSO Categories

Students who have a special interest in a certain area and want to form a group for others who are interested in that particular area can create organizations. At KSU, organizations fall into the following categories:

- Academic and Professional
- Applied Academic Competition Teams
- Community Service
- Cultural-Based and International
- Faith-Based and Spiritual
- Graduate
- Honor Society
- Military
- Performance and Fine Arts
- Political
- Publications and Media
- Social Action
- Special Interest

Responsibilities of Student Organizations

- Abide by all Department of Student Activities and KSU policies and procedures as well as all federal, state, and local laws.
- Conduct business without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Membership and all privileges, including voting and officer positions, must be extended to all students as stated in the Kennesaw State University Non-Discrimination Statement.
- Maintain a minimum of six (6) KSU student members at all times; all members must be currently enrolled students.
- Maintain a full-time faculty or staff member as the Advisor.
- Attend mandatory meetings and complete the required registration or renewal application annually.
- Update the Department of Student Activities with changes, including contact information, officers, authorized signatures, election reports, constitutions, etc.
- Be good stewards of all facilities, student activity fees, campus resources, and services provided on behalf of the organization (i.e. audio/visual equipment, cubicles, student offices, etc.).
- Have a great time!

Organizations must re-register with the Department of Student Activities every year. Your organization will be marked inactive if it is unable to successfully re-register by the initial or extended deadline.

When an organization becomes registered, it accepts the responsibility of adhering not only to federal and state laws, but to University regulations as well. All organizations are subject to the Student Code of Conduct; Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Policy; Sexual Misconduct Policy; Tailgating Policy; Programs Serving Minors Policy; and any other applicable university policies that may be outlined in the Registered Student Organization Manual. The Vice President for Student Affairs, or designee, may place any organization on a probationary or inactive status if the organization fails to comply with the Student Code of Conduct, University policy, Board of Regents policy, Department of Student Activities policy, or fails to complete annual registration with the Department of Student Activities by the initial or extended deadline.

Accountability for Registered Student Organizations

The Codes of Student Conduct, in addition to all KSU policies and regulations, apply to behaviors that take place on any KSU campus, at University-sponsored events, and may also apply off-campus when the Dean of Students, or designee, determines that the off-campus conduct affects a substantial University interest. As such, Registered Student Organizations are collectively responsible for any actions committed by members while at organizational events or when representing the university. For more information about the RSO Accountability Processes, please go to the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website.

KSU will refuse to register an RSO (either upon the RSO's initial registration or the renewal registration) or deny or revoke a student organization's RSO designation at any time if KSU determines that the student organization:

- a. Seeks to accomplish its objectives, goals, purposes, or activities through the use or promotion of violence;
- b. Engages in activities that materially or substantially interfere with the discipline and normal activities of KSU or with the rights of others, including activities that present a danger to property, individuals, or the orderly functioning of the University;
- c. Seeks personal gain;
- d. Falsifies or forges an official University record or document;
- e. Refuses to comply with federal or state laws, Board of Regents' policy, and KSU policies and procedures, including KSU's Code of Conduct, or states an intention to do so;
- f. Fails to provide all necessary registration information to KSU; or,
- g. Fails to meet financial obligations to the University.

2. If KSU denies or revokes an RSO's registration or designation, the student organization may appeal the decision in writing to KSU's Associate Dean of Students within five (5) business days of notification of the decision, unless the denial or revocation was initiated under KSU's Code of Conduct, in which case appeals are handled in accordance with KSU's Code of Conduct. Appeals of decisions by the Associate Dean of Students may be further appealed to the Dean of Students in writing via email to deanofstudents@kennesaw.edu within five (5) business days of the notification of the decision of the Associate Dean. The decision of the Dean of Students is final and no further appeal is available.

Benefits for Student Organizations:

Being part of an organization at Kennesaw State University has many benefits. RSOs have the privilege of the following resources:

- Reserve space on campus
- 200 black/white copies per semester
- 2 paper banners per semester
- Reserve card readers for event check-in
- On-campus mailbox
- Owl Life page
- Access to SABAC (Student Activities Budget Advisory Committee) Funds
- Ability to participate in Student Involvement Fairs

One of the most important benefits is access to the staff in the Department of Student Activities for assistance in program planning, risk management, conflict resolution, fundraising, or other areas of student organization management.

Owl Life (owllife.kennesaw.edu)

Owl Life is the name of KSU's organization management software. It is comprised of organization pages for all active organizations, event notifications, and announcements. It serves as a recognized channel for all correspondence between student organizations and Student Activities, and maintains all organizational records such as officers, roster, and constitution.

Owl Life features include:

- Roster section with messaging features
- Event announcements
- Documents section for storing organization files
- Forms that allows organization to solicit feedback
- Elections tool that allows organizations to build digital elections
- Finance tab that tracks allocated SABAC funds

STUDENT ACTIVITIES BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SABAC) FUNDING

Registered Student Organizations requesting financial support from KSU are required to complete and submit a Budget Request form to the Student Activities Budget Advisory Committee. All decisions made by SABAC are advisory recommendations to KSU's Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA). SABAC and the VPSA are both bound by the funding decision-making criteria set forth in the SABAC Protocol Manual.

KSU will allocate a minimum starter amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) to each RSO for its first year of operations as long as the RSO submits a request for the starter kit amount with its RSO application along with a brief written outline of its anticipated activities for the year. A first-year RSO may obtain additional funding beyond the starter kit amount by submitting requests for either an Annual Budget or Supplemental Funding using the processes and complying with the deadlines set forth below.

Items typically funded through SABAC include:

- Independent contractor fees for outside speakers and entertainers (which can include travel related expense, but flat-rate contracted fees are preferred)
- Required licensing and leasing fees and/or related support expenses for risk management related to events and programming
- Event production and promotion expenses (including equipment rental, printing, etc.)
- Prizes or awards only when equally available to all students, within individual value limits (excluding cash), including awards for contests and competitions
- Food and refreshments for student activities when open to all students (closed meetings, club member specific meetings/socials/banquets, or officer meetings are excluded)
- Promotional items directly associated with student events, within individual value limits (note: limited quantity t-shirts for event promotion are permissible, but t-shirts specifically for organization members are not)
- Salaries and benefits for staff members (when role/function directly and specifically relates to serving students engaged in extra-curricular activities, excluding voluntary faculty/staff advisors)
- Stipends and/or student salaries for departments/offices that provide designated services and/or activities to students
- Related operating expenses for units that directly and specifically relate to serving students engaged in extra-curricular activities (excluding expenses allocated through institutional or auxiliary budgets)

- Furniture, fixtures, or equipment directly and specifically used related to serving students engaged in extra-curricular activities (with appropriate inventory control)
- Travel that is directly related to a student organization's purpose and through which the members traveling will represent KSU (see SABAC Protocol Manual for more details)

This list is not exhaustive, but is meant to establish baseline parameters within which SABAC will evaluate requests for funding. Some expenditure types are only appropriate organizations based on the purpose, mission, or goals of the organization. Inclusion on this list does not mean that every organization is guaranteed financial support for those items. All funded programs, events, and activities must be directly aligned with the primary RSO mission and purpose. Even when SABAC allocates funds to an organization for certain intended purposes, the actual expenditure of the funds is still governed by the policies and protocols established by the BOR and KSU. Organizations may be required to comply with specific restrictions related to which vendors may be used, how expenses may be processed, and specific amounts of funds that may be allocated for specific purposes.

SABAC cannot fund the following items:

- Alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or any other related illegal or restricted items
- Actual or in-kind contributions to campaigns, candidates, or political parties
- Off-campus organizations or agencies and their related activities and membership fees for civic organizations
- Fundraisers, donations, or gratuities (certain programmatic expenses are excluded provided that no entry fee is required to gain access to the fundraising event and no SABAC funds are used to purchase items sold to raise funds)
- Scholarships or individual membership fees
- Prizes or promotional items exceeding state value limits
- Gifts and other items intended primarily for personal use
- Services for individual benefit or of a personal, individual nature
- Items of direct benefit to non-students (including employees)
- Salaries or instructional costs for faculty, including payments for advising
- Employee recognition and meals (including student employees)
- Sales tax
- Events that are not open to all KSU students
- Expenditures that violate applicable law, Board of Regents' policy, and KSU policies and procedures.

ROOM RESERVATIONS AND EVENT PLANNING

Reservations

All RSOs have the ability to request space for meetings and events on campus through KSU's Reservations portal at reservations.kennesaw.edu. Not all spaces are available for reservation by student groups (e.g. the Jolly Lodge). More information about how to access the KSU Reservations portal system, what spaces can be accessed, and what rules and regulations exist for space use can be found in the Kennesaw State University Reservations and Events Policy, the online training at campustraining.kennesaw.edu, and on the [Department of Student Activities website](#).

Catering

All events held on campus that require setup and/or on-site service (such as chafers, sterno or other heat source, banquet attendants, servers, etc.) or any food that requires temperature maintenance is considered catering and must go through [KSU Catering](#) or have an approved "[Secondary External Caterer Request Form](#)" to use an off-campus catering service. The "Secondary External Caterer Request Form" may be completed for any event with catering needs as defined above and must be approved by KSU Catering at least ten business days prior to the event. For a link to the "Secondary External Caterer Request Form" and a list of exceptions to the catering definition, visit the [KSU Catering website](#).

RESOURCES

Helpful Offices and Websites for RSOs:

- Department of Student Activities: <https://studentactivities.kennesaw.edu/>
- Dean of Students: <https://deanofstudents.kennesaw.edu/>
- Division of Student Affairs: <https://studentaffairs.kennesaw.edu/>
- Department of Student Leadership and Service: leadserve.kennesaw.edu
- Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI): scai.kennesaw.edu
- Department of Public Safety (Campus Police): police.kennesaw.edu
- University Information Technology Services (UITS): uits.kennesaw.edu
- Campus Services (Card Services, Dining, Parking, Door Access, etc.): campusservices.kennesaw.edu
- Environmental Health and Safety: ehs.kennesaw.edu
- KSU Reservations: reservations.kennesaw.edu
- Owl Life: owllife.kennesaw.edu

Applicable University Policies

All RSOs are bound by all applicable policies set forth by the Board of Regents and Kennesaw State University. Policies that apply to RSOs include but are not limited to the following:

- Registered Student Organization Manual: <https://studentactivities.kennesaw.edu/rso/policies-procedures.php>
- Student Codes of Conduct: <http://scai.kennesaw.edu/codes.php>
- Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drug Policy: <https://policy.kennesaw.edu/content/alcohol-and-other-drug-policy>
- Catering Policies and Procedures: <https://catering.kennesaw.edu/policies.php>
- Contract Approval and Signature Authority Policy: <https://kennesaw.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=30&public=true>
- Environmental and Occupational Safety Policy: https://ehs.kennesaw.edu/docs/policy/Environmental_and_Occupational_Safety_Policy_34_0.pdf
- Event and Reservation Procedures: <https://events.kennesaw.edu/procedures/eventprocedures.php>
- Freedom of Expression Policy: <https://publicforum.kennesaw.edu/docs/ksu-freedom-of-expression-policy.pdf>
- Hazing Policy (within Student Code of Conduct): <https://kennesaw.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=68&public=true>
- Motor Vehicle Operator Policy: <https://ehs.kennesaw.edu/policies-procedures/policy.php>

- Programs Serving Minors Policy: <https://policy.kennesaw.edu/content/programs-serving-minors>
- SABAC Protocol Manual: <http://sabac.kennesaw.edu/forms.php>
- Security Policy: <https://events.kennesaw.edu/event-resources/GO%20701%20-%20Special%20Events.pdf>
- Sexual Misconduct Policy: <https://policy.kennesaw.edu/content/sexual-misconduct-policy>
- Smoking Policy: <https://smokefree.kennesaw.edu/>
- Solicitation and Posting Policy: <https://studentlife.kennesaw.edu/postings.php>
- Tailgating Policy: <http://www.ksuowls.com/sports/2016/8/10/football-gameday-central-tailgating.aspx>
- Trademark Licensing Policy: <https://trademarklicensing.kennesaw.edu/groups.php>