

Student Organization Recognition Policy

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Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes guidelines for the recognition of undergraduate student organizations at West Chester University of Pennsylvania (WCUPA). The aim is to ensure that all student organizations operate within the framework of the University's mission and values, fostering an environment of inclusion, respect, and academic excellence. The University recognizes student organizations in accordance with procedures and criteria set forth in this Policy.

This policy is owned by the Office of Student Engagement and provides a uniform set of criteria and guidelines by which student organizations will be formally recognized. This policy also sets forth the privileges of recognition and standards for maintaining recognition.

Policy Statement

Recognized student organizations are officially recognized by the University through the Office of Student Engagement and/or other authority under the criteria described Section 1c.

The University reserves the right to withdraw recognition or alter the status of an organization that fails to comply with the University's policies or the Student Code of Conduct, engages in actions that harm the University community, or violates the rights and well-being of students or other stakeholders. Such termination will follow a process of due investigation and, where applicable, disciplinary action through the managing department and/or the Office of Student Conduct.

1. **University-Student Organization Relationship Statement:** This policy sets forth the mutual understanding and expectations between West Chester University and the student organizations recognized by the University. It serves as a

foundation for cooperation, responsibility, and accountability in the operation of student organizations on campus. By recognizing student organizations, the University affirms its commitment to fostering an inclusive, dynamic, and supportive environment for student engagement, leadership, and development.

a. Organization's Responsibilities

- i. The organization shall operate in accordance with the University's guidelines for student organizations, including but not limited to financial management, event planning, and membership recruitment.
- ii. The organization shall be responsible for maintaining accurate records, including meeting minutes, event documentation, and financial statements.
- iii. The organization shall provide a clear and transparent process for leadership transition and ensure that all officers and members are aware of their roles and obligations.
- iv. The organization acknowledges that it is responsible for the safety and well-being of its members during activities and events. The organization will comply with the University's guidelines for student organization events.

b. University's Responsibilities

- i. The University will provide the organization with access to resources, including facilities, funding, and guidance on event planning, as appropriate.
- ii. Student Services, Inc. maintains insurance requirements for student organizations.
- iii. The University will offer training and development opportunities to student leaders to ensure that organizations are able to function effectively and in accordance with University policies.

- iv. The University will facilitate communication between student organizations and administration to address concerns, resolve conflicts, and ensure adherence to University policies.
- c. Student Organization Managing Offices
 - i. Student Organizations may be managed by an additional department at West Chester University. Student organizations reporting to these offices are required to follow the specific procedures, requirements, and expectations from those departments in addition to this policy.
 - ii. Each managing office will work in tandem with the Office of Student Engagement to define the purview of student organizations under their leadership.

2. Recognized Student Organization Membership

- a. Recognized student organizations agree to follow and are to include in its bylaws and constitution WCU's Non-Discrimination policy.
- b. Recognized student organization membership shall be limited to persons who are members of the Student Government Association as defined as an undergraduate, full-time or part-time SSI fee-paying student.
- c. Selective Membership is permitted under the following circumstances:
 - i. Fraternities and sororities may select members based on gender (see Regulations under Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972).
 - ii. National articles of incorporation will be required to be submitted at the time of the Request to Organize.
 - iii. If no student is excluded from participation, separate club sports may be offered based on gender where selection for such teams is based upon competitive skill or the activity involved is a contact sport (see Regulations under Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972).

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- iv. Any student organization with selective membership is not eligible to receive student activity fee funding through the Student Government Association.
- d. Performance Based Organizations
 - i. Selective membership is not permitted for performance-based organizations. However, if no student is excluded from membership, music/performance-based organizations may make requirements for performances based on skill level so long as selection criteria is distributed in advance and adhered to.
- e. Organizational Misconduct
 - i. Any reported organizational misconduct must follow the process outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
 - ii. Student groups held responsible for violating the Student Code of Conduct, often in consultation with the national, University, and/or group administration, may be subject to changes in recognition of status.

3. Requirements for Initial Recognition for Recognized Student Organizations

- a. The Office of Student Engagement will work in collaboration with managing departments to ensure that each managing department has an updated set of procedures for new organization recognition.
 - a. The current set of procedures for each managing department can be found below:
 - i. [Fraternity and Sorority Life](#)
 - ii. [Campus Recreation](#)
 - iii. [Office of Student Engagement](#)
- b. Managing departments will update the Office of Student Engagement once new organizations have successfully completed their processes.

4. Requirements for Continuing Recognition for Recognized Student Organizations

- The organization agrees to maintain its status as a recognized entity by adhering to all University policies and procedures.

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- a. Recognized student organizations must complete the annual re-registration process as administered by the Office of Student Engagement.
- b. Recognized student organizations must operate in conformance with their bylaws, similar governance documents, or statements of purpose as provided upon application.
- c. Bylaws must be consistent with current policies and procedures with any coordinating national organization, managing office, and Student Code of Conduct. Recognized student organizations must promptly communicate leadership changes and transitions.
- d. Recognized student organizations must maintain four officers (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) as well as a faculty/staff advisor.
- e. Recognized student organizations must attend all required trainings offered by the Office of Student Engagement.
- f. Recognized student organizations officers are responsible for assuring compliance with general University policies and procedures and for fulfilling the reasonable administrative requests of appropriate University officials. This includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Student Code of Conduct
 - ii. Student Organization Event Procedures
 - iii. Student Government Association Allocation Bylaws
 - iv. Student Services, Inc. Policies and Procedures
 - v. University Anti-Hazing Policy
- g. Failure to comply with general University policies, procedures, or the provisions of this statement may result in changes in the organization's recognition status by the Office of Student Engagement, or designee, for all student organizations.

5. **PRIVILEGES OF RECOGNITION** - Officially recognized groups and organizations have the following privileges (availability of these benefits is not guaranteed and/or is subject to availability):

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- a. Listing on the online directory of WCUPA student organizations and use of the membership portal platform to organize the business and communication affairs of the group, as well as hosting a public-facing external website.
 - b. Use of the name of The West Chester University and other indicia of association, subject also to the approval of the University Brand Guidelines.
 - c. Eligibility to apply for funding through the Student Government Association budget process. This excludes organizations that practice selective membership, as defined in Section 2c.
 - d. Use of University buildings and grounds without a rental charge. Charges will only be assessed for the cost of services (event labor, custodial, security, and similar expenses) provided in support of an event.
 - i. RSOs may not authorize or allow other parties to use any privileges of recognition and may not make space reservations on behalf of external groups or individuals. See Facility Use Policy.
 - e. Establish an account with Student Services, Inc. to accept revenues and pay expenses of the group or organization, subject to requirements associated with such accounts; accounts may not elsewhere be established using the name "West Chester University" or similar characterization.
 - i. Use of Student Services, Inc. tax exemption certification.
 - f. Ability to market using University resources including on-campus digital screens.
 - g. Use of the resources and space in the Center for Student Involvement in Sykes Student Union.
 - h. Participation in Involvement Fairs and other University events on a first-come, first-served basis as space permits.
6. **LEVELS OF RECOGNITION:** Student organizations may move through various levels of recognition. Procedures for moving through these levels will be

determined by each managing department and/or the Office of Student Conduct.

a. The current set of procedures for each managing department can be found below:

- i. [Fraternity and Sorority Life](#)
- ii. [Campus Recreation](#)
- iii. [Office of Student Engagement](#)

b. Levels of Recognition

- i. **Forming:** Organizations who have started the recognition process but have not yet gained formal recognition.
- ii. **Recognized:** Organizations who have completed the recognition process and have formally gained recognition through a managing department.
- iii. **Loss of Privileges:** Due to violations of policy and procedures, student organizations may lose some or all privileges listed in Section 5.
- iv. **Disciplinary Group Suspension:** The group is prohibited from conducting any and all group activity on or off-campus. All events should be canceled immediately and not resume until the stated date. This includes, but is not limited to, meetings, recruitment, fundraising, educational programs and socials. During the suspension period, if the group is found operating without permission from the University, they would be subject to additional violations of the *Student Code of Conduct*. For reinstatement to occur, within 30 days of the conclusion of the suspension period, a designated group leader will need to make an appointment with the Office of Student Conduct or designee to arrange for the removal of the University ban and hold on the group's status. A student group who fails to or submit sanction conditions as directed during this period will be subject to a separate charge for

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failure to comply and a new sanction condition that may include Group Disestablishment.

- v. **Disciplinary Group Disestablishment:** The group loses formal University recognition and is prohibited from conducting any and all group activity on or off-campus for a specified period of time. All events must be canceled immediately. Should the group wish to return to campus after the sanctioned date, they must meet all current group establishment procedures published by the appropriate University office upon application for reestablishment.
- vi. **Closure:** This can be voluntary or due to lack of re-registration within the appropriate time period.

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Approved by: Dr. Jasmine Buxton

Vice President for Student Affairs

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