STUDENT ORGANIZATION HANDBOOK

CENTER FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
SPRING 2017

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I. Introduction

Greetings!

As a founder, officer, or member of a student organization at The George Washington University, you are making a meaningful contribution to student life. Student organizations, like yours, breathe life into GW and the larger Washington, DC community.

While being engaged in a student organization provides exciting opportunities to learn, explore, and have fun, it is not without its challenges. Navigating the policies of the institution, managing your organization, and anticipating your group's future can prove to be difficult and even overwhelming at times. With these challenges in mind, the Center for Student Engagement (CSE) has created this Student Organization Handbook.

The Student Organization Handbook touches on many different aspects of student organizations at GW. From founding a group to developing programs and preparing for the future, this Handbook is your guide to leading a successful Student Organization at GW. Refer to this guide if you have questions or need assistance, but do not hesitate to also contact your organization's staff advisor directly or the CSE at orghelp@gwu.edu.

Please know that the CSE is here to assist you in any way we can. We wish you the best of luck in all your student organization endeavors and look forward to working with you.

Raise high!

II. The CSE: Your Student Organization's Home

The Center for Student Engagement (CSE) serves as the home for all registered student organizations on campus. The CSE works with you to ensure the success of your group in a variety of capacities, many of which will be discussed in this Handbook.

A. CSE Mission

The Center for Student Engagement at the George Washington University is committed to transforming the student experience and empowering students to become active and engaged global citizens and leaders. Recognizing that GW is a community of scholars, the Center for Student Engagement (CSE) aims to bring learning out of the classroom and works to implement innovative four-year, competency-based student learning outcomes that are personalized to ensure you achieve your unique goals and aspirations.

B. Student Organizations and the CSE

Student organizations are an important and vibrant element of CSE efforts to bring learning outside of the classroom. Assembled under a variety of causes and interests, student organizations exist to provide GW students the opportunity to enrich their co-curricular experience and to produce a multitude of student activities that benefit and enlighten the GW community. With more than 400 registered student organizations, there are endless opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to get involved around common causes, interests, and experiences!

C. CSE Staff to Know

Student organizations, their officers, and their members are supported by the Student Involvement and Greek Life (SIGL) Team within the CSE. The SIGL team has a director, an assistant director, and three coordinators who work directly with student organizations.

Christina Witkowicki: Director, Student Involvement and Greek Life
Anne Graham: Assistant Director, Student Involvement (awein@gwu.edu | 202-994-0177)
Victoria Heithaus: Coordinator, Student Involvement (vheithaus@gwu.edu | 202-242-6677)
David Marquis: Coordinator, Student Involvement (dmarquis@gwu.edu | 202-994-3115)
Kaitlyn Schmitt: Coordinator, Student Involvement (kschmitt@gwu. edu | 202-994-8135)

While we are focusing on student organizations in this handbook, it is important to know that the CSE encompasses many components of GW student life including: Greek Life; First, Second, Third and Fourth Year Experiences (Residence Life); GW Bound; Summit; TRAiLS; Leadership Programs; and Community and Support for graduate, transfer, first generation, international, and off-campus, students. The CSE is overseen by Associate Dean of Students **Tim Miller**.

III. Defining Student Organizations at GW

A. What is a Student Organization?

A student organization that is officially recognized by The George Washington University is a group of ten or more students who have a unique mission and purpose and who have registered with the Center for Student Engagement (CSE). Student organizations must have at least three student officers who lead the group, manage its operations, and serve as the group's liaison to the University. Student organizations are also assigned a staff advisor to help them navigate the University, achieve their mission, and propel their organization to the next level.

As with individual students, student organizations are charged with the responsibility of upholding the Code of Student Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, potential violations such as: drug/alcohol violations, destruction of property, hazing, etc. (Code of Student Conduct, Section 3, d). Learn more about student organization policies in X. Policies Affecting All GW Student Organizations (page 20).

B. Benefits of Being a Registered Student Organization

Student organizations that are officially registered with the CSE are entitled to unique benefits only available to student groups. In addition to being held in a high regard on and off campus, student organizations have access to the following:

Advising: All registered student organizations are assigned a staff advisor. This GW staff member serves as a knowledge resource to student organizations in navigating GW policies and procedures, planning events, negotiating contracts, and planning travel. Additionally, staff advisors can help plan, grow, and mentor both the organization and the leaders within it. Learn more in V. Student Organization Advisors (page 11).

Finances: Registered student organizations receive access to apply for co-sponsorships from various institutional sources, most notably the Student Association. Registered organizations are also eligible to receive an allocation of annual funding from the Student Association. Additionally, registered organizations receive a revenue account with the University in the organization's name. Finally, registered student organizations receive access to the CSE Financial Services team which can facilitate the spending of organizational funds through check, credit card, or cash. Learn more in XII. Student Organization Finances (page 24).

Space: Registered student organizations have the ability to reserve event and meeting spaces across campus. Many spaces are free of charge for registered student organizations; however, some charges may apply, depending on the space, auxiliary services, and technology requested. Learn more in XIV. Programming & Event Planning (page 33).

C. Types of Student Organizations

There are four types of student organizations which are recognized at GW. These four types are based on the student populations which the group serves.

Undergraduate: Organizations composed mostly of members who are currently enrolled undergraduate students.

Graduate: Organizations composed mostly of members who are currently enrolled graduate students in GW graduate programs.

Undergrad/Grad: Organizations open to both current undergraduate and graduate students.

Umbrella: Groups affiliated with a University's academic or administrative department that have at least five organizations for which the overarching organization is financially responsible. For specific details and policies related to umbrella organizations, see XI. Umbrella Organizations (page 23).

D. Categories of Student Organizations

In addition to classifying groups by the student population being served, student organizations are categorized by the nature of the group's purpose and mission. Student organization officers are responsible for identifying the category to which they believe their organization belongs.

Academic: Organizations that may be affiliated with an academic department, a program of study, professional development, or an honorary society.

Advocacy and Awareness: Organizations that work to support or educate others about a particular cause. Causes may be related to cultural/ethnic, health and wellness, economic, environmental, political, religious or social justice issues.

Civic Engagement: Organizations that serve the community through direct outreach, educational programs, or philanthropic efforts.

Club Sports: Club sports are sports teams competitive at an intercollegiate level and affiliated and recognized by the Club Sports Council and the Office of Campus Recreation at GW.

Cultural/Ethnic: Organizations that serve and support members of a particular culture or ethnic group on campus. Often these organizations also educate the broader community about a particular culture or ethnic group and are open to all community members regardless of whether or not they belongs to the identity that is the focus of the organization.

Event Programming: Organizations that focus on large-scale student event programming.

Faith Based: Organizations that serve and support spiritual needs of students on campus through fellowship and education, ethnic and culturally specific groups, and interfaith organizations.

Fraternity and Sorority: Organizations that belong to the Interfraternity Council, the Panhellenic Council, or the Multicultural Greek Council. (Greek letter honor societies and special interest groups should be categorized in the Honorary, Civic Engagement, or Academic categories.)

Health & Wellness: Organizations that focus on programs, events, and initiatives that promote the health and wellness of individuals or the community.

Honorary: Organizations that serve as honor societies, typically in affiliation with regional, national, or international groups focusing on a particular population, content area, or field.

Media & Publications: Organizations that work to create and produce journals, newspapers, articles, blogs, shows, podcasts, and other content available for mass consumption both inside and outside of the GW community.

Professional: Organizations that are campus-based chapters for local, regional, national, or international professional organizations. Professional organizations typically center on a particular content area or professional field.

Recreational Activities: Organizations that exist to provide their members access to fun and organized activities such as hobbies and games.

Student Governance: Organizations that serve as governing groups on campus for, and in support of, students and student life at GW. Governing organizations are typically recognized by the University as an official governing voice of students.

University Spirit & Traditions: Organizations that strive to create, encourage, and support traditions and pride in the institution.

Visual and Performing Arts: Organizations that support the artistic pursuits of students such as dance, improv and theater, instrumental ensembles, and voice ensembles.

IV. Membership

A. General Membership Criteria

All members of a student organization must be currently registered and enrolled students of the University. For an organization to form and be considered active, there must be at least 10 currently enrolled GW students who are members. Friends who are not GW students (including alumni and family) are considered guests of the organization. Guests can participate in organization events, but cannot be official members or officers of the organization, vote, or handle money on behalf of the student organization.

B. Types of Organization Membership

The University allows organizations to set their own membership qualifications. Groups may choose to be open to all students currently enrolled at GW, or they may choose to add specific criteria that qualify members.

Open: The organization is open to all students currently enrolled in a degree-granting program and in good academic and judicial standing with the University, with no other selection criteria for membership other than interest in the group.

Selective: The organization is not open to all GW students, but has established membership criteria that relates to the mission of the organization and abides by all University Policies (including non-discrimination). Criteria for membership in a selective organization must be outlined in the student organization's approved Constitution on file with the CSE.

C. Organizational Officers

An officer is a member of an organization that accepts full responsibility for the organization, including its actions, conduct, and activities. Full responsibility includes, but is not limited to, ensuring payment for services and supplies needed to complement the organization's activities and events, as well as ensuring that the organization abides by all University policies.

To serve as an officer, one must be currently enrolled in a degree-granting program at GW and be in good academic and judicial standing.

Different organizations may have a different process or qualifications for becoming an officer outlined in their constitution; however, most organizations require officers to be elected by their peers in the group to serve one-year terms.

Different organizations may also allow for different officer roles depending on the mission and needs of the organization. Some groups may only need a president, a vice-president and a treasurer, while others might require a fundraising chair or a public relations coordinator. Groups are encouraged to determine what types of officer positions most fit their organizations and outline these roles in their constitutions.

V. Student Organization Advisors

Upon completion of all registration steps, your organization will be assigned a staff advisor. Advisors are primarily located in the CSE Office on Foggy Bottom (Colonial Crossroads MC 5th floor) or at Mount Vernon (Academic Building 115). Once you have fully completed registration, your staff advisor will contact you.

A. Role of Your Staff Advisor

Organizations are encouraged to utilize their staff advisor as a knowledge resource on a wide variety of topics related to GW policies, managing a student organization, planning events, and more. We also encourage you to reach out to your staff advisor and introduce yourself as an officer in your organization. They are interested in getting to know you and helping your organization any way they can!

i. Advisor Responsibilities

- Contact your organization with important updates throughout the year
- Meet with you about your events and organization concerns
- Process contracts on behalf of your organization
- Assist your organization in adhering to GW policies and procedures
- Help your organization be as successful as it can
- Offer ideas and answer questions about aspects of running an effective organization, including: running effective meetings, planning retreats, event planning, motivating group members, recruiting new members, elections, officer transitions, handling conflict, fundraising, and more

ii. Advisor Expectations

The CSE believes in providing stellar advisors for your organization and holds staff advisors to a set of high expectations. Be aware of what you should be able to expect from your staff advisor. If you believe your advisor is not meeting expectations, please speak with them or the CSE student involvement team (orghelp@gwu.edu).

Expectations are broken down into the following categories:

- **Transactional**: Support organizations in managing logistics, and understanding and following policies and processes. Student organizations often require advisor approval or advice before moving forward. Be accessible and respond in a timely manner.
- **Relational**: Define and develop relationships with student organizations and their members by serving as a knowledge resource and bridge to campus resources.
- **Transformational**: Provide a level of challenge and support that contributes to the organization's growth as well as the development of its members.

B. Faculty Advisors

The Center for Student Engagement does not assign student organizations a faculty advisor but encourages groups to seek a faculty member who specializes in their area of interest should this be beneficial. This is particularly helpful to organizations formed around a specific topic area that may be academically related (e.g., Mock Trial, Forensics, International Affairs). Organizations are not required to have a faculty advisor.

i. Recruiting a Faculty Advisor

As it is the responsibility of the organization to recruit a faculty advisor, think about the following when attempting to gain faculty support.

Connect with faculty who you, or your fellow group members, know. Think critically about what the faculty member is passionate about, and how your organization's work is related to that topic. If no faculty members align well with your group's purpose, think about which faculty members or even which departments might have an interest.

Faculty members are people; they want to engage in something that they find interesting, especially when you consider this is a volunteer role for them. Do not mass e-mail departments or individual faculty members; this is typically not well received. Do your research; look into what an individual faculty member's area of study is or what publications he or she may have published, and think about how the work connects to your group's mission. After that, you are ready to approach an individual faculty member and make a pitch tailored to that particular faculty member. They may turn you down – remember that they have a lot on their plate and that this is okay. Find another faculty member you believe may be a good fit and repeat until you find someone who is able to support your organization.

C. The Difference between Staff Advisors and Faculty Advisors

There is a difference between the role of faculty advisors and the role of staff advisors within student organizations. Faculty advisors can provide guidance surrounding the organization's interest area (ideas on speakers/programs, academic resources, etc.). Faculty can serve as expert counsel on issues, topics, and proposals your group may wish to discuss or put forth. Faculty members can also provide connections within a specific industry or field.

Regardless of whether you have a faculty advisor, your organization will have a staff advisor. Your staff advisor serves as your resource for the annual student organization registration process, University policies and procedures, reserving space at GW, funding, contracts, and managing and leading your organization.

VI. Forming a New Student Organization

The Center for Student Engagement (CSE) is ready welcome new student organizations to our diverse community! Forming a student organization takes some hard work, but in the end, it could be one of the most meaningful experiences you have during your time at GW. In order to successfully create a unique and significant organization on campus, follow these steps.

A quick guide to forming a new organization at GW is available online.

A. The Process

- ❑ **Develop the initial idea for a student organization.** Do you want to create a community for a particular topic? Are you trying to help yourself and your peers gain professional development in a certain field? Or is there a cause that you are fighting for?
- ❑ **Check to see if anything similar already exists at GW.** Use the Directory of Student Organizations to determine if there is an existing organization at GW similar to the one you would like to start. To form a new organization, your organization must be different than those that already exist at GW. (For example, if you'd like to form a singing group, how will this group differ from the one(s) that already exist?). The New Organization Committee and the Center for Student Engagement will not approve an organization that is deemed redundant or duplicative of another organization already in operation.
- ❑ **Finalize your idea.** You should think about why your group should exist, what it may bring to campus, and how it is significantly different than other groups on campus. You should then create a concise description of your proposed organization and a rationale for its creation.
- ❑ **Meet with a CSE staff member to discuss your idea.** The CSE staff member will walk you through the steps on how to proceed, the requirements of student organizations, what is needed for your constitution, and what you should prepare for the rest of the process. This meeting will include also discussion of goals, resources, and a four-year plan of action. To have this meet, stop by the Student Organization Resource Desk on the fifth floor of Marvin Center. Meetings are held on a walk-in basis during Resource Desk hours.
- ❑ **Start recruiting members for your organization.** In order to become an official student organization at GW, you need at least 10 currently enrolled students to be members, and at least 3 of them must be officers. Consider who would benefit from being a member of your group, who may be interested in being a member, and who may value programs your group presents. Now think about how you get these audiences engaged in what you are doing. Recruitment can be challenging, especially when your group is new and unknown. Take a look at our recruitment guide found in XVIII.A. Recruitment (page 51) for insights and tips on how to attract members to your group.
- ❑ **Consider recruiting a faculty advisor.** You may also wish to recruit a faculty advisor for the organization. While not required, faculty advisors can give meaningful insight in the work your group will do. See V.B. Faculty Advisors (page 11) for additional information.
- ❑ **Create a plan for your organization.** After you have a good idea of what your group will do, why it will do it, and who will be members, start thinking about how you are going to make your organization successful. How will you build your organization from year to year? What impact

will your organization have at GW in the long term? How will you design a sustainable organization so your efforts result in an organization that exists beyond your years at GW? For more information on strategic planning, see XVIII.D. Strategic Planning (page 61).

- ❑ **Assess the resources your will need to operate at GW.** Part of planning for the future includes understanding how your group will sustain itself financially. You will want to consider how much money you may need to be successful and where that money will come from. Does the University have the resources you need to exist? Will you need to procure your own resources? How would you do this?
- ❑ **Draft a constitution.** As a new organization, your membership will need to draft a constitution that aligns well with your stated mission and goals, as well as includes GW's three required clauses. An online guide on constitution writing is available.
- ❑ **Create your presentation.** Prepare a presentation no longer than 5 minutes that addresses your group's action plan, constitution, purpose, uniqueness, and contribution to campus. You will present your ideas to the New Organization Committee, a group of students that makes recommendations to the CSE on which groups should or should not be given recognition. The rubric the committee uses to make their decisions is available online.
- ❑ **Submit your application to become a new organization at GW via OrgSync.** Enter into the OrgSync system's registration portal and complete the Organization Registration Form. For assistance, see the step-by-step guide. You will need to upload the following:
  - A roster of all members (minimum of 10),
  - Your prepared constitution, and
  - Your presentation outline (PowerPoint presentation or Word document).
- ❑ **Present your proposed organization.** After your application is submitted, a CSE staff member will contact you to arrange a time for you to present your idea to the Student Organizations Committee. As many officers as possible should attend the presentation and be knowledgeable about the group. Use your outline to cover all pertinent information in 5 minutes or less. The Committee will then ask any questions they may have for the group.
- ❑ **Await final decision.**
  - **If approved**, your organization will be granted "Provisional Organization" status at GW. Effectively, you will have two years to prove that your organization is capable of being effective and successful on campus. During that time, you will need to:
    - Follow your constitution and all CSE and GW policies,
    - Attend CSE trainings
    - Host at least one successful event each year
    - Increase membership to at least 15 students
    - Transition leadership roles successfully at least once, and
    - Benefit the GW community.

    Additional information on these status goals and how the Student Organizations Committee tracks your progress will be provided to you once the status is granted.
  - **If denied**, your organization will be provided a rationale. Your organization may choose to appeal the decision to the Assistant Director for Student Involvement, but only on the basis that the decision was reached due to a clerical error or as a result of bias.

- [ ] **Complete new organization officer training.** At least two officers from your new organization are required to attend a one-hour training provided by CSE or your assigned staff advisor within one month of being granted Provisional Organization status. Work with your staff advisor to schedule this training. Failure to complete this training may result in the organization losing its registration status.
- [ ] **Claim your Student Organization OrgSync Portal, request an email address, and create a website.** After you are registered you will want to set up your means of communication with the campus community. See VIII. Creating an Email Address, Listserv and Website for your Organization (page 18) for more information.

B. Starting a New Greek Organization on Campus

All social fraternal organizations must be affiliated with, colonized and chartered by an Inter/National fraternal organization. The student organization must also be approved by the appropriate fraternal governing body (IFC/Panhellenic Association/MGC) according to the process outlined in that body's Constitution and By-Laws. The organization must also complete the annual student organization registration process through the Center for Student Engagement. For more information, go to the Greek Life website.

C. Starting a New Club Sport on Campus

In addition to the student organization registration process, all club sports need to connect with and be approved by the Office of Campus Recreation and the Club Sports Council. In order to begin this process, it is your responsibility to contact Aubre Jones, Director of Recreational Sports, at 202-994-7546 or aubre@gwu.edu . A recreational or competitive sport organization may form without formal recognition as a Club Sport.

VII. Student Organization Registration Process

In order to be considered active and eligible for all student organization benefits, organizations must register annually through OrgSync, the Center for Student Engagement's organization management and communication platform. A complete step-by-step guide is available online. The annual registration process takes place in February-March of each year for the following academic year (i.e. A group that is active in academic year 2016-2017 will need to register in February-March 2017 in order to remain active for the 2017-2018 academic year).

- ❑ **Enter your student organization's information into OrgSync**. Log in to OrgSync using your personal NetID and password.
  - o If you are an administrator for an **existing organization** wishing to re-register, navigate to your organization's portal. Follow the prompt at the top of your portal within an orange box. The orange box only appears when you are required to update your organization's registration. The prompt will provide a link to your organization's profile information which you can update.
  - o If you are an administrator for a **new organization** wishing to register for the first time, navigate to "Browse Organizations" from the homepage, then select the green "Create New Organization" button. You will then step through the profile information form. Please note that there are additional steps for new organizations. See VI Forming a New Student Organization.
- ❑ **Move through each step of the registration profile**. If you are renewing your registration, all of your previous answers will be saved within the form, so simply update your information. Your page will not update until your registration is submitted and approved by the CSE.
- ❑ **Upload a constitution.** During the online registration process, you will be asked to upload a copy of your organization's constitution. The constitution must include the following items in order to be approved:
  - o A non-discrimination clause:
    - ▪ *[Insert student organization name] does not unlawfully discriminate against any person on any basis prohibited by federal law, the District of Columbia Human Rights Act, or other applicable law, including without limitation, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.*
  - o A statement that organizations will abide by all University policies:
    - ▪ [Insert student organization name] will abide by all University policies.
  - o A membership statement:
    - ▪ *Only currently registered GW students are considered members of the organization; all others (alumni, friends, family, faculty, staff) are considered guests. Guests are welcome to attend events, but they cannot hold officer positions or handle money on behalf of the organization.*

  If a constitution is submitted without the above listed elements, the staff advisor for that organization **will not be able to register the organization** until their constitution is amended to include this information. This is a great opportunity to review your constitution with your organization and make amendments. A guide to constitution writing is available online.

- ❑ **Apply for office or storage space (optional).** Organizations wishing to use office or storage space in the Marvin Center during the upcoming year should indicate as such in the registration portal. Organizations that currently occupy space must re-apply. Complete the application via a separate form linked within the registration portal. Space requests must be submitted by the same deadline as the annual organization registration process.
- ❑ **Complete a budget request (optional).** Any student organization seeking operational funding from the GW Student Association in the coming year must complete a budget request. Indicate this plan in the registration portal and submit the request through your OrgSync portal's treasury. Navigate to the treasury, then budgets, then select the green "Create New Budget" button. This budget request must be submitted by the same deadline as the annual organization registration process.
- ❑ **Acknowledge the Responsibility Statement.** As part of the online registration process, an administrator for your organization is required to read and electronically sign the Responsibility Statement. See X.A. Student Organization Responsibility Policy (page 20) for more details.
- ❑ **Update officers and members.** After completing the steps in the registration portal, navigate the People section of your organization's portal. Make sure the list of members and officers is up to date; officers and administrators will not be automatically added to your portal.
- ❑ **Await final staff advisor review and approval.** Upon completion of the preceding steps, your staff advisor will review the submitted documents. From the day your organization completed the registration process, please allow five business days to hear about approval. You will know your organization has been approved when you receive an email from your advisor stating that your organization's registration is complete. The University reserves the right not to approve an organization.

VIII. Creating an Email Address, Listserv and Website for your Organization

Once your student organization is registered, you need to ensure clear lines of communication both within the group and outside of it. In today's technology-based world, it is imperative that your organization is able to communicate via email efficiently and be seen online. Below you will see options currently available for student organizations to set up these communication channels. For further leadership tips on organizational communication, see XVIII. Managing your Organization (page 51).

A. Creating an Email Address

If you would like to create an email address specifically for your student organization (e.g., studentorg@gwu.edu), visit the IT website. You should select the Organization Email Accounts instructions and follow the steps outlined for you. The Center for Student Engagement does not monitor or maintain student organizations email accounts or passwords. You can reset your password by resubmitting the necessary paperwork, but be sure to keep and share records of all of this information with your organization members, especially when transitioning officers.

B. Getting your own Listserv

After setting up the email account, each group may set up a listserv for their members. A listserv request must first be submitted electronically. To request or manage your listserv, or for more information, go online to the listserv homepage.

OrgSync also offers listserv-like features to organizations without much of the work and responsibility of the official listserv process. Within OrgSync, groups can access the Contact Books feature for non-member communication and either the News Post or Email tools for members listed within the portal. Learn more about OrgSync communication tools in XV.C.i. OrgSync Communication Tools (page 41).

C. Website Development

Currently, student organizations are not able to gain web space on the GW server. Instead, organizations are encouraged to create a website hosted by OrgSync at no cost. OrgSync has a fully customizable html website builder which is able to be integrated into an organization's OrgSync portal. OrgSync websites are easily accessible to anyone in the world without logging into OrgSync, but allow groups the ability to stay organized and consistent in their messaging with the connection to their internal members-only portal. For more information on the website builder, see a walkthrough online.

IX. Securing Student Organization Office Space

For many organizations, having physical office space can prove essential to their operations. If you believe you would benefit from having physical office space, you may be able to secure an office in the Marvin Center on the fourth floor. Please recognize, however, that there are around 450 student organizations on campus, many of whom believe they will benefit from having office space, and there simply is not enough space for everyone to have.

In an effort to create a fair system which seeks to give office space to the student organizations who will most utilize and benefit from the limited spaces available, the GW Student Association (SA) takes requests on an annual basis. The SA assesses the available spaces for student organizations and works with the list of organizations who wish to have space to determine which organizations will most benefit from and fit in the spaces. If your organization is selected to be given space in the Marvin Center, the SA and the CSE will provide you with the policies and operation information needed for you to be successful. Additionally, the SA is responsible for assigning the many bulletin boards and posting areas, as well as storage space on the fourth floor of the Marvin Center. The CSE is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the fourth floor offices and will assist organizations with moving in, moving out, and any issues that may arise.

To apply for office space, organizations will submit an application to the SA within OrgSync during organization registration renewal in the spring. Organization officers who are completing the annual registration process for all organizations will be prompted to complete the office space application as a part of their registration.

X. Policies Affecting All GW Student Organizations

In addition to the policies described in this handbook there are some general policies which impact every student organization. Please take note of these polices and understand that you and your organization are held responsible for any violations that may occur.

A. Student Organization Responsibility Policy

As part of the annual registration process, one officer from each organization is required to electronically sign the following Responsibility Policy to which all organizations are responsible for conducting themselves.

That policy reads as follows:

All events and activities sponsored, co-sponsored, or hosted by the organization on or off the GW campus will comply in full with the regulations governing student organizations: The Alcoholic Beverage Consumption Policy, Agreement to Use University Facilities, Distribution & Postering Policy, the Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Code of Student Conduct, all other policies of the Center for Student Engagement, as well as any other agreements made with authorized University officials regarding such events and activities.

If a student organization fails to pay a vendor/bill on time (on a specified date in the George Washington University Addendum) then present (non-contracted) and future events supported by this organization will be suspended until the outstanding bill is paid. However, in the event that a student organization is able to illustrate proper procedure history of said bill, then this clause will not apply.

If a student organization fails to follow Scheduling procedure, Contract procedure, etc. more than two times, and then all events for this organization will be cancelled for the remainder of the semester. In addition, all events planned for the following semester will only be allowed on a trial basis. If a student organization has rendered itself subject to any one of these planks, the organization in question must meet with both the Center for Student Engagement and Marvin Center Scheduling in order to reinstate a "standard" registration status. More specifically, if a student organization has violated this policy then they must meet with the aforementioned bodies to determine whether or not the organization is ready to return to its initial registration status.

All information used in the registration process, including but not limited to officers' names, phone numbers, email addresses, and addresses will be considered public information. By submitting this agreement and submitting it to the Center for Student Engagement, an organization agrees that this information may be released for any reason.

B. Hazing Policy

Hazing is a troubling tradition that is found in many organizations, not just Greek organizations or athletic groups. A violation of the Hazing policy can result in both group and individual disciplinary action from the University.

Hazing is defined as:

"…any action taken or situation created, intentionally, with or without consent, whether on or off campus, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule. Such activities and situations include but are not limited to: paddling in any form; creation of excessive fatigue; physical and psychological shocks; quests, treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, road trips, or any other such activities carried on outside the confines of the house or organization; wearing publicly apparel that is conspicuous and not normally in good taste; engaging in public stunts or buffoonery; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; and any other activities that are not consistent with the academic mission of the University. Groups will be held responsible for the actions of their members including pledges, associates, and any other pre-initiates."

C. Failing to Abide by Policies or Code of Student Conduct

Failure to follow the policies of the CSE, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Events & Venues, or any other University entity may result in both organizational and individual consequences. The consequences for violating policies, or not properly following procedures, are determined on a case-by-case basis. In the event it is believed that a University policy was violated by a student organization, Student Rights and Responsibilities will be notified. All other policy violations and procedural issues will be dealt with by the CSE.

The duration and severity of sanctions are determined on a case-by-case basis. While the sanctions themselves are determined by the office responsible for the case and vary greatly, typical sanctions for student organizations have included:

- Suspension of student organization travel privileges
- Suspension of student organization event privileges
- Suspension of student organization funding
- Student organization placed on probation
- Student organization loses registration status – organization disbanded

For questions regarding student organization conduct and potential consequences, speak with your staff advisor or CSE student organization staff.

D. Student Organization Legal Protection

It is the University's policy to provide protection from liability to registered student organizations and their members if they are sued or if a claim is asserted against them. This means that GW will retain counsel to represent the organization or student member, and pay any damage amounts that may be required whether a settlement agreement is reached or a judgment is entered against the University.

In order to be eligible for protection, however, the University must determine that the organization or student member is properly registered with the University, is in good standing, and was acting in accordance with University policies at the time the lawsuit or claim arose. Among the factors the University will look at when making such a determination are whether the organization and its members were acting in good faith and without willful negligence or misconduct, and whether the event that gave rise to the claim was undertaken with the permission and approval of the University.

In addition, it is very important that the organization or the member immediately notify the University if he/she knows or has reason to believe that a claim or lawsuit may be brought against the organization or him/her. If GW determines that representation for a student organization is appropriate, the University will control all aspects of the defense of the claim. The student organization or member must agree to cooperate in the presentation of the defense. Questions about this policy should be directed to the Office of the Vice President and General Counsel at 202-994-6503.

XI. Umbrella Organizations

Umbrella organizations are student groups that typically have some oversight and provide assistance to multiple student organizations (known as sub-organizations) which focus around a similar interest area or identity.

Traditionally, both the umbrella organization and the sub-organizations which fall under the umbrella register independently with the Center for Student Engagement annually. During the registration process, umbrella organizations indicate the sub-organizations which fall under their umbrella; while sub-organizations indicate the umbrella organization they fall under.

A. Informal/Undergraduate Umbrella Organizations

Undergraduate or general informal umbrella organizations are not officially recognized by the Student Association, and as such are not able to request funding on behalf of their sub-organizations. All sub-organizations are solely responsible for their finances, scheduling permissions, and status with the University.

Informal umbrella organizations typically provide assistance with leadership development, collaborative programming, and the management of shared resources. Informal umbrella organizations are fairly uncommon but they may prove useful or even necessary for certain student organizations that require significant collaboration amongst a cohort of similar groups.

B. Graduate Umbrella Organizations

Graduate umbrella organizations are very common and highly structured. This is primarily due to the Student Association only officially recognizing graduate umbrella organizations – all of which relate to an academic college or school. With SA recognition, graduate umbrella organizations are able to request annual allocations from the SA on behalf of their sub-organizations.

Recognized graduate umbrella organizations may choose to "opt-in" or "opt-out" of an SA funding model for their sub-organizations which provides funding to the umbrella (and by extension their sub-organizations) based on the enrollment of their academic school or college. This model provides funding in one large sum to the umbrella organization to distribute to its sub-organizations as it sees fit.

Organizations which "opt-in" to this funding model will still request their annual allocation through the Student Association by submitting a budget request form within OrgSync. The SA and the CSE still require a budget breakdown from each "opt-in" umbrella to set up and track the budget management system within OrgSync.

Organizations which "opt-out" of this funding model will accept budget requests from their sub-organizations offline. The umbrella will make their initial decisions of those requests and submit all requests for their sub-organizations as one larger request to the SA. The SA will then provide the final budget decision using their budget process. (Learn more about the SA budget process in XII.A.i. Student Association Account on page 24.)

XII. Student Organization Finances

Your student organization is required to utilize the Center for Student Engagement's financial services team for all your banking needs. This section is intended to provide a broad overview of financial policies impacting student organizations. For complete detail on student organization finance policies and procedures, please view the CSE Financial Policies Handbook. Organizations should also read the Student Association Senate Finance Committee's Financial Policy Manual, which details guidelines for obtaining, tracking, and spending funds allocated to your organization by the Student Association.

All financial accounts are viewable through each organization's OrgSync portal under Treasury.

A. Types of Student Organization Accounts and their Policies

As an organization, you are responsible for determining how much funding your organization needs and how you would like to acquire that funding. There are several different ways your organization can be awarded funding: from the University, donors, fundraising, and more. Here we discuss how you acquire, use, and save your organization's funding through different types of financial accounts.

i. Student Association Accounts

Student organizations can apply for funding through the Student Association (SA) on an annual basis. The Student Association is responsible for the allocation of budgets and approval of expenditures for student organizations that receive Student Association funding. Student organizations that are allocated Student Association funding will have a Student Association Account managed through OrgSync, with expenditures facilitated through the Center for Student Engagement.

Applying for SA funding

Student organizations can apply for funding from the SA once a year in the spring semester as part of the annual registration process. Requests are for the entire following academic year's budget. Money requested in the spring semester will be available July 1 for the next academic year. Money from an SA account must be used before a date at the end of the academic year (May) and does not roll over to the next year (organizations are informed of this date each spring).

Additionally, student organizations may request a co-sponsorship from the SA at any time throughout the academic year. SA co-sponsorships are deposited into an organization's SA account if it is awarded. This process is outlined in XII.B.ii. Financial Co-Sponsorships (page 26).

Both annual allocations and co-sponsorship requests are submitted through an organization's treasury in their OrgSync portal. A detailed step-by-step guide is available for each of these request processes within the documents section of each organization's portal in OrgSync.

Mid-Year Audit

Organizations that receive SA funding may be required to submit an online form for the mid-year audit process. Failure to do so could result in deduction of available funds for the remainder of the year. The Student Association facilitates this process, if it occurs.

SA Payment Requests

Student organizations wishing to utilize the Student Association funding in their account must submit a Student Association Payment Request within the OrgSync treasury for EACH financial transaction.

See a step-by-step guide on the payment request process here.

ii. Revenue Accounts

All student organizations have a Revenue Account. All student organizations are required to use the Center for Student Engagement for banking purposes, unless their national organization requires a separate banking account. All monies, including fundraising revenue, must be deposited into this account. Donations to the organization are also deposited into this account for student organizations once received by the CSE Finance Team from GW's Office of Development and Alumni Relations. Revenue Account balances roll over from year to year.

Making a Deposit

Complete a deposit request form within OrgSync then bring in cash or checks to the CSE Finance Team during their office hours. (Find a step-by-step guide online.)

The deposit will be credited to the student organization's Revenue Account. (This deposit is subject to reduction should a check be returned for nonsufficient funds.)

All checks must be written to "The George Washington University" with the name of the student organization in the memo section.

A night deposit bag and night deposit drop safe may be available should the student organization need to deposit monies after hours (for instance, following a ticketed event or cash fundraiser) – email csefinance@gwu.edu to request bag. The organization must submit a deposit request in OrgSync and meet with the CSE Finance Team the next business day to process the deposit.

A cash box is also available for rental from the CSE – email csefinance@gwu.edu to request box.

Withdrawal Requests

To utilize funds from the Revenue Account, organizations must complete a Withdrawal Request within their OrgSync portal's treasury for EVERY financial transaction.

See a step-by-step guide on the withdrawal request process here.

iii. Departmental/University Accounts

A select few organizations have departmental accounts. Money in these accounts is transferred from a University department or revenue source outside the typical student group funding structure. Departmental accounts are set up and closely managed by the CSE Finance Team in conjunction with the department serving as the funding source. These accounts are viewable under the Budgets section of an organization's OrgSync treasury. Money in a departmental account does not roll over from year to year.

iv. Use of departmental account

In order to utilize funds from a departmental account, the organizations must complete a payment request form within OrgSync in the same manner as requests for SA funding (but through the departmental budget).

See a step-by-step guide to this request process here.

B. Funding Opportunities

Funding may be critical to the success of your organization, but how does your group get this much needed asset? There are many ways to generate income for your organization; the most common are discussed below.

i. Student Association Financing

Student organizations can apply for funding through the Student Association in the spring on an annual basis. The Student Association is responsible for the allocation of budgets and approval of expenditures for student organizations that receive Student Association funding. Funds awarded to an organization in the spring application process will be available for use July 1.

Any funding acquired through SA financing will be deposited into and subjected to the policies of your organization's SA Account.

ii. Financial Co-Sponsorships

A student organization can receive co-sponsorships from the Student Association or from other student organizations. A financial co-sponsorship is a transfer of funding from one organization to another organization. In order to obtain an SA co-sponsorship, student organizations must submit a co-sponsorship application. A step-by-step guide to the application process is available here and saved within the Files section of each organization's OrgSync portal. Once the transfer has been completed, student organizations can utilize the funds in a normal fashion. A financial co-sponsorship typically does not involve a collaborative planning process.

iii. Programmatic Co-Sponsorships

Programmatic co-sponsorships provide student organizations with opportunities to participate in the planning of an event with another student organization or department. Programmatic co-sponsorships may involve sharing event expenses, or instead they might involve sharing the experiences of event planning, working with staff, and gaining organization exposure/promotion.

iv. Fundraising

Sales and/or solicitations by University departments and recognized student organizations are viable on-campus fundraising opportunities. Soliciting funds for sponsored events or charitable organizations is encouraged. Organizations wishing to have off-campus vendors participate in an activity must include the name and type of vendor on space reservation forms. Sales and/or solicitation on campus are permitted only when the organization has received the approval of the venue in which sales/solicitation would occur.

GW student organizations may not partner with any business or individual who is primarily concerned with the sale, distribution, or promotion of alcohol or drugs.

C. Making Purchases/Methods of Payment

Once you have money in your organization's accounts, you may make purchases utilizing the accounts set up for you. There are several ways to make purchases using your account, including using iBuy, checks, P-Cards, petty cash, honoraria, and transfers.

The policies associated with different forms of payment are different, including what form of payment can be used for what good or service you are purchasing. For example: Individuals who are providing your organization a service, a Vendor, may need to be registered with the University if you are writing them a check but not if you are using a P-Card.

i. Goods through iBuy Preferred Vendors

GW has partnered with several businesses to get preferential rates and deals, all of which include no tax without additional paperwork. From technology needs to furniture, a good first place to look is the iBuy portal when your organization needs something.

If you are interested in utilizing iBuy, work with your advisor or the CSE Finance Team to look up items and pricing information for you. If you wish to purchase something from iBuy, submit a payment or withdrawal request within OrgSync noting iBuy as the payment method.

ii. Check/Direct Deposit/Purchase Order/Wire Transfer Payments

For checks, deposits, purchase orders, and wire transfers, the individual being paid must be properly registered with the University (this does not apply to students or staff at GW). To get your vendor registered, have them complete the new vendor registration process online, then notify your staff advisor that it was submitted.

Any request for payment via check, deposits, purchase orders, or wire transfers must be submitted with an invoice/contract uploaded to the payment or withdrawal request within OrgSync.

Checks typically take 6-8 weeks to actually be paid out. Vendors should be informed in advance about this timeframe to prevent any miscommunications later.

iii. P-Card

The Purchasing Card, or P-Card, is a University credit card which can be used to make payments with any organization or business which accepts credit cards. Unlike with checks, vendors do not need to be registered with the University to make a payment via P-Card. Because of this, P-Card is arguably the easiest form of payment for student organizations.

If you wish to use a P-Card: find/organize what you wish to purchase and submit either a payment or withdrawal request within OrgSync. Then, meet with CSE Finance Team staff, either during their walk-in office hours (contact the CSE front desk for when these hours are) or by making an appointment with a financial services staff member.

iv. Petty Cash

Petty cash is available to all student organizations with money in their accounts. Petty cash can be used for small purchases if the need is known in advance.

Petty cash cannot be used to reimburse student organization members for payments they made in their own name. Reimbursements must follow the reimbursement policies (see XII.D. Reimbursements, page 28). Petty cash is limited to $150 per request and must be submitted three (3) business days prior to when you need the money.

To submit a request, select "Petty Cash" as your method of payment when submitting either a payment or withdrawal request within OrgSync. Once the money is available, the CSE Finance Team will notify the submitter.

Receipts and leftover cash are due back to the CSE Finance Team within 5 business days of when the cash was picked up. All receipts must be itemized, dated within 30 days, and taped to an 8.5x11 piece of paper.

v. Honoraria

To pay speakers (not through an agency) up to $2,500, you can work with your staff advisor and the CSE Finance Team to pay them through an honorarium. No supplier registration is needed for honorariums. You can find more information on how this process works and the honorarium payment request form that will need to be completed online.

vi. Transfers

Student organizations may need to make a payment to a GW University department or another student organization for various reasons; this is done via a transfer.

Student organizations can request a transfer of their funds by submitting either a payment or withdrawal request within OrgSync and selecting "University Transfer" as the payment method.

Student organizations can transfer funds the following ways:

- SA Account to SA Account
- SA Account to a University Departmental Account
- Revenue Account to Revenue Account
- Revenue Account to University Departmental Account

Organizations may not transfer funds from SA Account to Revenue Account or from Departmental Accounts to Revenue Accounts.

D. Reimbursements

Once you make a purchase on behalf of your organization, your organization may reimburse you if they have money in one of their GW accounts to do so. In order to be reimbursed you must:

- ❑ **Keep your receipts.** Original receipts are needed to process any reimbursement and to return petty cash. Receipts are also needed when utilizing the GW P-Card (credit card). All receipts must be itemized, dated within 30 days, and taped to an 8.5x11 piece of paper.
- ❑ **Decide where you want the money to come from.** Organizations are responsible for determining which account they would like a purchase reimbursed from: SA Account, Revenue Account, or Departmental Account. See a description of the different accounts and their policies in XII.A. Types of Student Organization Accounts and their Policies (page 24).
- ❑ **Turn in reimbursement request to CSE through OrgSync**. Submit an OrgSync payment request for using SA or departmental accounts or an OrgSync withdrawal request for using the revenue account. Upload the receipts directly into your request prior to submitting it for review.
- ❑ **Be patient.** GW is a very large and complex organization, which, in turn, slows down some processes. Consequently, the reimbursement process can take some time. If there are issues with your reimbursement, the CSE Finance Team will reach out to you. Please allow for a minimum of 6-8 weeks for reimbursement.

E. Collecting Payments

Student organizations may want to collect payments from their own members or from the public. In an effort to provide student organizations as many different opportunities to do this as possible, the CSE Finance Team has set up a few different systems to collect money and easily deposit it into your student organization accounts.

i. Collecting GWorld Payments

All student organizations have the opportunity to collet funds via GWorld. In order to utilize GWorld collection, partner directly with the GWorld Card Office to rent a GWord card reader. A contract is needed to complete this process, and both a representative of the organization and the staff advisor for that organization must sign.

ii. Collecting Payments Online

All student organizations are automatically set up to receive payments through an online payment system operated by the CSE Finance Team. This system is ideal for collecting dues and payments from members for items such as t-shirts. The system can also be used by individuals outside of the GW community; just be aware that it may require a bit more instruction to users.

To collect payments online follow these steps:

1. Have those paying visit: https://my.gwu.edu/mod/cse/.
2. The payee should fill out the personal information section.
3. The payee will then need to select “Student Organization” and choose your student organization from the drop down list of all groups.
4. The payee will then fill out the payment information. (The system allows them to choose from “Dues,” “Event Registration/Ticket,” “T-Shirt,” and “Other”.)
5. The payee should use the field next to specify what they are purchasing. If they are buying a ticket, they should say to what event.
6. The payee can then enter an amount that they will be paying.

7. After the first page is complete, they will be prompted to fill in billing/credit card information.
8. Make sure you email the CSE Finance Team at csefinance@gwu.edu to let them know that you are using this form of payment and to get the amount transferred to your organization's account.

iii. Collecting Cash Payments

If you collect cash on behalf of the organization for any reason, that cash must be submitted into your student organization's revenue account. See XII.A.ii. Making a Deposit (page 25) on how you make deposits with cash. The CSE Finance Team can provide you with money bags and locking money boxes upon request.

If your organization elects to collect cash at an event, the amount cannot exceed $10 per person without security being provided by the University Police Department. If your group wishes to exceed $10 per person, you should work with your staff advisor and University event planner for your event (if applicable) to organize UPD service and payment.

iv. Collecting Check Payments

If you collect checks on behalf of the organization for any reason, those checks must be deposited into your student organization's revenue account. See XII.A.ii. A.iiMaking a Deposit (page 25). All checks should be made out to "The George Washington University" with the name of the student organization in the memo section.

XIII. Contracts

Any time a student organization would like to receive a service from a non-GW entity, a contract should be created. The most common reasons a contract may be needed are: performances, catering, travel services (buses, hotels, etc.), and website design. Contracts may be a bit confusing, but your staff advisor will walk you through what needs to happen.

A. Steps to the Contract Process with Only a GW Contract

1. Any time an organization contracts with a non-GW entity, a Contract Information Sheet (CIS) should be filled out by the student organization and sent to their staff advisor. This is required whether the vendor will be paid or unpaid. The Contract Information Sheet is not a completed contract. **Note**: You should submit the CIS 6-8 weeks prior to your planned event.
2. The student organization's staff advisor will then use the CIS to draft a legally binding contract and review its content. Your staff advisor will also communicate the needs of the contract to any venues being used to ensure that we are able to accommodate the requests as noted (e.g., technical requirements regarding voltage).
3. The staff advisor will then send the GW contract to the vendor to review and sign.
4. Upon the signed contract being returned, your staff advisor will then send it to the University's signatory for student organizations, Danielle Lico, Associate Dean of Students for Student Administrative Services and Senior Advisor.
5. Once all the documents have been signed and the contract is finalized, the staff advisor will send a copy of the contract to you and you will submit either a payment or withdrawal request within OrgSync to initiate the payment process (unless your advisor indicates otherwise).
6. Your advisor will also send a finalized copy to the vendor for their records. At this point, you will also be able to release any desired advertisements to the public.

B. Steps to the Contract Process with a Vendor-Created Contract

Sometimes, a vendor or performer may have their own contract which they require in order to book or use their services. The process for vendor-created contracts is similar but has some differences. **As a student, you cannot sign any contracts or make any formal agreements on behalf of your organization.** You must first submit the contract to your staff advisor.

1. Your staff advisor will review the contract and provide you initial notes on what the process will look like. Most times, he/she will add the standard GW contract to the vendor contract to ensure both your organization and the University are legally covered. In this case, your staff advisor may ask you to complete a CIS (Contract Information Sheet) to be returned to them before moving forward.
2. Your staff advisor will send your vendor contract (along with the standard GW contract if applicable) to the University's lawyer, Office of the Senior Vice-President and General Counsel. In some circumstances, the General Counsel's office will refer the contract to GW's Office of Risk Management for further review. This is typically done if there are any potential insurance issues, dangerous activities, or other high-risk activities.

3. General Counsel and Risk Management will send their comments, concerns, and required revisions back to your staff advisor, who will then pass these on to the vendor as well as the students responsible for the contract.
4. If revisions are needed, the vendor will need to approve them and sign the revised contract, as well as the GW contract if applicable. If they refuse to sign-off on the changes made to their contract, or would like to make revisions to the GW contract, they will work with your staff advisor to provide insight into their concerns. Your staff advisor will then bring their concerns back to the General Counsel; this is done until both parties agree to the terms of the contract or one party pulls out of the agreement process.
5. Once the vendor agrees to the contract, and the GW contract if applicable, they will sign it and send it back to your staff advisor. Your staff advisor will then send it onto the University's signatory for student organizations, Danielle Lico, Associate Dean of Students for Student Administrative.
6. Once all the documents have been signed and the contract is finalized, the staff advisor will send a copy of the contract to you and you will submit either a payment or withdrawal request within OrgSync to initiate the payment process (unless your advisor indicates otherwise).
7. Your advisor will also send a finalized copy to the vendor for their records. At this point, you will also be able to release any desired advertisements to the public.

XIV. Programming & Event Planning

Student organization events can provide an important avenue for creativity, collaboration, and the community engagement outside of the classroom. Events can range in nature from academic and philanthropic to social and political.

A. Event Planning at GW: Steps to Planning an Event

- ❑ **Determine the goals and learning outcomes for the program.** What do you want to accomplish with the event? How will the event impact your group or the larger GW community? What will students be able to accomplish as a result of your event? Also consider how this event is tied to the mission of your organization. What specifically is this event doing to help advance your group and meet your larger goals?
- ❑ **Determine the target audience and their needs.** Before you start planning, understand whom you are planning for. The goals and purpose of the event will likely determine your target audience. Create an event from the perspective of those who will be participating. What activities will most appeal to them? Are there any special needs that must be considered (e.g., accessibility issues, dietary concerns, or potential hazing complaints)?
- ❑ **Draft an anticipated budget.** How do you plan to pay for the event? What funding sources do you have available? Determine in advance how much you are willing to spend on the event. The budget you set will influence where your event will be hosted, what you will be able to do, and whom you will be able to invite.
- ❑ **Identify possible campus partners.** Who may want to serve as a co-sponsor for your event? What role might they be able to play: financial co-sponsor, programmatic co-sponsor, or both? Reach out to potential partners as early as possible to get them involved in the planning process and to provide them time to arrange the resources needed.
- ❑ **Determine a date and time for the event.** Look at the University Calendar to see if your event will conflict with another event happening at the same time.
- ❑ **Determine the projected size of the event.** Again, think about your target audience. Who is likely to attend? How many people make up this group? Your estimate does not need to be exactly right, but the more accurate you can be, the better – especially if you are providing food.
- ❑ **Book an event location and rain site or rain date.** See XIV.B. Venues and Available Spaces on Campus (page 34) for detailed information on available space on campus and how to book a space for your student organization.
- ❑ **Plan the activities that are to take place.** Working with your team, develop what activities will actually take place. Ensure that whatever you are doing appeals to your audience is a good use of funds, and can be reasonably accomplished within a realistic timeline.
- ❑ **Review any University or city policies that pertain to the event.** There are many policies that relate to student organization events at GW and in DC. To see common policy issues, see the sections below relating to hosting events with different elements: food, alcohol, entertainment, outside sponsorship, tickets, raffles, and sound.
- ❑ **Draft a planning timeline.** What needs to be completed, and by when, in order for your event to go off without a hitch? If you are working with an event planner through Events & Venues,

you will be asked to complete an "Event Checklist" prior to your event being approved. This checklist is typically used as the final review that everything has been completed, but it can also be used earlier in the process as a good guide to what needs to be done when. Work with your staff advisor to get a checklist and to get any other notes that may be helpful in planning a successful event.

- ❑ **Draft a marketing and publicity plan.** See XV. Marketing and Advertising for your Student Organization (page 40) for tips on how to make an effective marketing and publicity plan.
- ❑ **Determine assessment approach.** How will you determine the success of your program? What tools will you use to gauge success? How will you gain feedback from participants? Before your program happens, think about how you will obtain responses from those who participate, and make sure to gather that feedback to better the event for next time.
- ❑ **Communicate expectations.** Before the event, touch base with all of the people involved to set expectations. Talk with any vendors, performers, or service providers to ensure you both are on the same page. Inform event volunteers about their responsibilities and working time. Make sure everyone knows who is responsible for what during your program.
- ❑ **Implement your program!** At the event, check in with all vendors and volunteers at the event to confirm everything is running smoothly. Serve as a host to the event attendees. Solve problems as they arise. Finally, enjoy the fruits of your labor and have fun with your organization as you manage the program.
- ❑ **Debrief.** After the program, take time to sit down with your team to review the event and the assessment information you gathered during the event. What went well? What could be improved? If you were planning it again, what would you do differently? Create notes for whoever may be implementing the event next.
- ❑ **Write thank you notes.** It takes many people to create a successful event. Make sure to reach out to those who helped you make your event happen and thank them for their time and efforts. If nothing else, this can serve to improve your group's goodwill in the future across campus.

B. Venues and Available Spaces on Campus

As an urban campus, available space at GW is one of the most difficult things to come by. The University has many different offices that control space on campus, so you need to know where to go for which spaces and how to request each space.

i. Events & Venues

This office manages most spaces on campus and is able to accommodate many of the requests student organizations have. Events & Venues manages the following spaces:

- Marvin Center
- Most outdoor space (e.g., Kogan Plaza, University Yard, Square 80)
- State Room & City View Room (1957 E St)
- Alumni House (1918 F St)
- Jack Morton Auditorium & MPA 2nd Floor Lobby
- Lisner Auditorium

Events & Venues will provide your organization with an Event Planner upon receiving your request for space. Your event planner will be able to help you prepare for the many challenges and requirements of hosting an event on campus. For complete policy information related to Events & Venues and to submit requests for spaces, view the Events & Venues website.

In order to book an Events & Venues space, the organization must submit the names of three authorized schedulers via an OrgSync form. Once the names are submitted, Events & Venues will reach out to the three students and provide them login information for the E&V booking system.

ii. Academic Scheduling Office

If you are interested in booking a room in an academic building (e.g., 1957 E St, Duques, Funger, Gelman, Hall of Government, Media & Public Affairs Building, Monroe, Phillips, & Rome), you will need to book a room through the Academic Scheduling Office.

In order to book a room within academic space, you must be listed as either an officer or administrator within your organization's OrgSync portal. All individuals listed as administrators and officers are uploaded into the Academic Scheduling system which is accessible via the Academic Scheduling Office website.

Please also take a moment to review policies related to reserving classroom space on campus. There are restrictions on what a student organization can do within academic space. The best uses of academic space are for basic meetings, discussions, and lectures.

iii. CSE Reservations

The Center for Student Engagement is responsible for the management of District House, Mitchell Theater, Residence Hall Community Space, and the GW Museum and Textile Museum (select space to view specifications). The CSE holds these spaces primarily for student organizations - but they are also available to University departments.

In order to book a space with CSE Reservations you must be listed as an admin or officer within your organization's OrgSync portal. To see availability of CSE spaces, review the CSE Reservations Guidelines, and to submit a reservation visit go.gwu.edu/csereservations.

iv. Mount Vernon Events & Venues

If you wish to book space on the Mount Vernon Campus (specifically, Hand Chapel, Post Hall, Pelham Commons, Eckles Auditorium, or the Quad), you must contact the Mount Vernon Events & Venues Office. Find relevant venue request forms available online.

While the Vern may be a bit further away, it also tends to be much more readily available. Having an event on the Vern not only provides you with an opportunity to get away from some of the hustle and bustle of Foggy Bottom, but it also is more convenient for residents of the Mount Vernon Campus, who do not have as many programming opportunities.

v. Campus Recreation

If your organization wishes to utilize any athletic space on campus, you must request use of that space through Campus Recreation and possibly the Club Sports Council, depending on the event and the desired space. Club Sports organizations should submit their practice and competition schedules to the Club Sports Council at gwclubsportscouncil@gmail.com. Any other organization may contact the Office of Campus Recreation directly at 202-994-1626.

vi. Student Theater Council

If you are a member of the Student Theater Council, you are able to request campus performance space through STC. This process is outlined by STC and its leadership with the organizations who may utilize the group's reserved spaces (i.e., Lisner Downstage and Mount Vernon Black Box). If you would like to use either of these two spaces and are not currently in the STC, you may contact the STC leadership to check the very limited availability at stc@gwu.edu.

vii. Student Musicians Coalition

Members of the Student Musicians Coalition may book Shenkman Hall Practice Rooms through the SMC. Groups may request to become members of the SMC in order to utilize the SMC space. If groups meet the requirements set by the SMC, they may then reserve space through the SMC leadership. Contact the SMC about space and membership at studentmusicianscoalition@gmail.com.

C. Booking your space

Each space above offers different points of contact for booking, however your first step will always be to ensure that your organization has authorized schedulers set up. To assign schedulers for your organization follow this step-by-step guide.

Once schedulers are assigned, submit your request to book the space you wish to utilize following the procedure outlined above.

D. Cancellation of Space

Different spaces have different policies in regard to cancelling space. As a rule of thumb, your organization is responsible for canceling space if you know you are not going to be using it. Please be considerate of other student organizations and campus partners who may be looking for space with very limited availability.

Foggy Bottom Events & Venues provides a very clear rule in regard to space cancelation. In order to avoid receiving a no-show notice, your organization must cancel all meeting room space at least 1 full business day in advance and 10 business days in advance for major event space. (Major event space is defined as spaces which can host large numbers of people. Check with Events & Venues to see if your reserved space is considered major event space.) Failure to cancel your space in the appropriate time required may result in a penalty to your organization. You can easily cancel a reservation with Foggy Bottom Events & Venues online.

You may inquire about cancellation polices for other spaces by contacting to the managers of those spaces directly. Most space managers ask that you cancel reservations when you know you will no longer use it. Repeatedly booking space without using it may result in losing your organization's privilege to book space.

E. Hosting an Event with Food

Organizations hosting events where food will be provided or served should remember:

Food for events in the Marvin Center must be purchased from or provided by GW's Colonial Catering (operated by Restaurant Associates). If you require food for an event in the Marvin Center that Restaurant Associates is not able to provide (such as a full pig roast) then you may request permission from the Restaurant Associates Office to bring in food from an alternate source.

Restaurant Associates Catering provides a special Student Organization menu with items and prices that are not available to the general public or other University offices.

If you are hiring a catering company other than Restaurant Associates, you may want to formalize the agreement with a contract. While you do not need a contract for every food order you make for your organization, if you are making large orders or will be spending a substantial amount on catering, protect yourself with a contract. Further information on contracts is provided in XIII. Contracts (page 31).

If your event is in a public space or uses the street (e.g., food trucks), you may need to secure permits from the City of Washington, D.C. Talk to your event planner in Events & Venues or your staff advisor to see if you need to gain special food permits of any kind.

Food safety standards should always be a top concern for your organization. Make sure that if serving food, it is served in a hygienic environment, including using plastic gloves. If your organization is preparing food for others, ensure that the space in which food is prepared is clean and hygienic, the materials used are fresh, and the people cooking or baking are safely handling the food.

When planning a menu, consider those who may have food allergies or intolerances, such as vegetarians, people with celiac disease, or restrictions for religious reasons. Do your best to accommodate as many people as possible. If you are hosting an event where you know all the guests attending, make sure you ask them in advance if they have any dietary restrictions or concerns.

F. Hosting an Event with Alcohol

All organizations hosting events where alcohol will be served are subject to the rules and regulations of the Health Promotion and Prevention Services Office. As such, all events where alcohol will be served are required to register with HPPS. HPPS provides all event registration information online.

Registration requests for events with alcohol must be submitted no later than 10 full business days prior to the event via the OrgSync Events with Alcohol registration form.

G. Hosting an Event with Entertainment

"Entertainment" refers any outside vendor hired for the purpose of entertaining your event's audience. The most common entertainment options include performers, production companies, inflatables, novelties, and games. When utilizing entertainment rented or hired from outside of GW there are a few things to keep in mind.

Any time you are working with an entertainer or an entertainment company who is going to perform at or provide a service for your event, you must complete a contract; please see XIII. Contracts (page 31) for further details on this process. Some companies may ask you to sign a contract or agreement for them, but remember you cannot sign any of these contracts (or any contract for that matter). You must work with your staff advisor to get these agreements signed by the appropriate University authority.

In the event your group wishes to hire an entertainment vendor (production companies, inflatables, novelties, games, etc.) you will need to work with companies GW has pre-approved through the Office of Risk Management. There are several entertainment companies which offer a variety of entertainment options; the entire list of these approved vendors can be found online.

H. Hosting an Event with Outside Sponsorship

Some organizations will raise money for events by asking for donations or sponsorships from community members and businesses outside of the University. This is a great way to garner much needed financial (and sometimes logistical) support.

However, who you partner with will influence your success and your image – not always positively. Accordingly, GW student organizations are not permitted to partner with any sponsors who primarily promote, distribute, or sell alcohol or drugs. If you are unsure if you should partner with a business for an event, reach out to your staff advisor to see if a partnership would be appropriate.

Events that involve outside partners as a primarily element of, or the main financial backer for, an event may be deemed as “sponsored” by the Events & Venues office. An event that is considered “sponsored” will be subject to room rental and set up charges. For further information on sponsored events, contact Events & Venues or your staff advisor.

I. Selling Tickets to or Charging Admission for an Event

There are many ways to sell tickets for an event. Some spaces may require you to use a certain method, e.g., events in Lisner Auditorium must be ticketed through Ticketmaster. If a space requires a certain method of ticket sales or collection, the Events & Venues event planner responsible for those spaces will work with you to set up the necessary ticketing practice. If no specific ticketing method is required, you are free to do what works best for your organization. To better understand the different means of selling tickets, please see XII.E. Collecting Payments (page 29).

J. Hosting an Event with a Raffle

If you choose to host a raffle at, or as, an event, you are required by law to obtain a raffle permit. Obtaining a raffle permit can be an arduous process; other fundraising opportunities may be more appropriate for your organization.

The District of Columbia laws define the term “raffle” refers to mean one or more drawings from a single series of chances sold by means of chance tickets. Guidelines for raffles include the following:

- All proceeds from raffles must go directly to the organization or the designated charitable organization.
- Only currently registered members of the student organization or employees of the University may conduct, manage and operate raffles on campus.
- The District of Columbia requires a permit for conducting a raffle. A copy of the permit must be submitted to your staff advisor and the appropriate scheduling office.
- Application and support documents must be submitted to DC Charitable Games Commission at least 30 business days prior to the event.
- Per GW policy, alcohol may not be raffled off by student organizations.

For more information, contact Events & Venues at 202-994-7470.

K. Hosting an Event with Amplified Sound

Events that have amplified sound are subject to the rules and policies of the space in which the event is taking place.

Academic buildings do not allow for any amplified sound or loud activities as this may disrupt classes taking place in neighboring classrooms.

Meeting rooms around campus (specifically those in the Marvin Center) do not allow for sound or loud activities as this may disturb activities in neighboring rooms.

Amplified sound is allowed in the two ballrooms within the Marvin Center – but organizations will work with their assigned University event planner to ensure their event does not impact other events happening at the same time within the building.

Outdoor spaces allow amplified sound, but the times and days amplified sound can be used is closely monitored by Events & Venues. If you are planning an outdoor event with sound, you must obtain permission from the Events & Venues office by submitting a sound request online.

XV. Marketing and Advertising for your Student Organization

A. General Marketing and Advertising Tips

Focus on your target audience. Maximize the value of your publicity efforts by concentrating on reaching the people who are most likely to care about your organization, initiative or event.

Sell your organization. Highlight what your group does, what benefits it can provide to members and participants, how your group is different the others, and why someone should join.

Establish an image. Be consistent with the message that you are delivering, the design it is delivered with (artwork, logos, etc.), and even the medium it is presented through. (For example, we all recognize the Target logo and a Target commercial when it is on TV because of their consistent branding and image).

Utilize OrgSync. GW's management and communication tool for student organizations is not only powerful for use within your organization it also reaches everyone on campus. Keep in mind what OrgSync can do when branding – especially since OrgSync is likely every new student's first stop to getting involved on campus.

Be creative. College students are often overwhelmed by the amount of advertisements that are directed toward them. This means that your advertising and recruitment techniques must be able to stand out. Use innovative means of advertising, use fun and memorable slogans, have great giveaways, etc. Think about your audience and create something that pops for them.

Consider your budget. Advertising can cost money, from printing materials to placing ads on Facebook, but it can also be free or low cost. Make a plan, know how much you want to spend, and then stick to it!

Choose the right space. Be selective of where and how you advertise to ensure that you are truly hitting your target audience. Choosing an audience is further discussed in XVIII. Managing your Organization (page 51). Take time to think about what locations or media types are best suited to communicate with your target audience and post your signs there.

Choose multiple spaces or media. While you want to be selective, you also want to spread out your advertising to multiple locations and media types. That will help you reach more members in your target audience and increase the visibility of your group. However, do not spread yourself too thin; you need to find a balance.

Test. Before you spend significant money or time on launching your advertising, ask a few members of your target audience to review your materials and provide feedback. Testing your publicity beforehand can save you a lot of work and headaches. For example, event planners sometimes forget to include key information like event date or location on their posters. They are so intimately involved with the event details that they do not notice important information is missing. Having another person examine your materials can minimize your chances of making such an error.

Monitor your ads. Ask new members who come to your meetings to tell you how they heard about your group. What form of recruitment worked best? Where did they see or hear about your group and how? Use this information to improve your publicity efforts next time.

Create buzz. Remember that word of mouth is the most effective advertising an organization can do! Keep talking to people about the group, and get those who are interested to talk to their friends as well!

B. Campus Press

GW Hatchet: For more information on GW Hatchet advertising, go to http://www.gwhatchet.com or call (202) 994-7080.

WRGW: Your campus internet radio station has a strong and devoted followership. Capitalize on this by advertising with WRGW. For more information on WRGW District Radio advertising, visit them online.

University Calendar is used to populate several GW websites and resources, as well as official University communications to the student body. To add an event to the University Calendar complete this online form.

GWToday is the official online news source for the University. The newsletter typically publishes interesting stories that highlight the accomplishments or activities of a wide variety of campus community members. In order to be considered for a story in GWToday, contact External Relations at gwtoday@gwu.edu.

Also consider tapping into other student media organizations on campus such as ACE Magazine or GWTV.

C. Other On-Campus Marketing Tools

i. OrgSync Communication Tools

OrgSync provides organizations several powerful communication tools. Never before have groups at GW been able to connect with as many students in the intentional and thoughtful way groups can with OrgSync. News Posts, Messaging, and Discussion Forums can keep current members informed and engaged. Additionally, Events, Contact Books, and your Website can reach out to students and community members not listed as members within your portal. Staff advisors are all well-trained on OrgSync communication tools and can serve as a great resource to making the most of the many tools available.

ii. Banners

There is one space in the Marvin Center designated for banners (located off of the H Street Platform hanging over the stairs leading to the Ground Floor H Street Entrance). All banners cannot be larger than the size of a full bed sheet and cannot be weighted in any way. All lettering/art on banners must be with non-water soluble ink or paint (acrylic paint, sharpie markers, etc). Banners that leave stains on the building will result in the student organization being assessed the cost of removing the stains.

Banners are to be hung with string or tape only. Failure to comply with any of the banner policies may result in the withdrawal of banner privileges. You can go online to the Events & Venues webpage to reserve the banner space.

iii. Lisner Vision

Events & Venues has the ability to project information and publicity about a registered organization's event onto the Lisner Auditorium. The projector operates daily from 7pm-midnight. The projector can be booked for up to a three day period for an event by a student group. Projector cancellations must be made at least 24 hours in advance or the group will be unable to register for the projector for the remainder of a semester. To get your event on Lisner Vision, contact GW Events & Venues at 202-994-7470.

iv. OrgSync Newsletter

Your organization can utilize the CSE Student Organization Newsletter that is sent out OrgSync to advertise for an upcoming event or program. Contact orghelp@gwu.edu to submit a request to be added to the newsletter. Unfortunately, we are generally unable to send out individual emails advertising student organizations or their initiatives and events.

D. Poster and Palm Card Design

Having posters that stand out is important in a world littered with marketing. Make sure, however, that whatever design you create does not take away from the event information you are trying to promote. Keep your posters and palm cards simple and memorable. Make all displayed information easy to read and include contact information for the group or event organizer.

While you want the design of any promotional items to reflect your organization and any event that you are hoping to promote, realize that you are promoting the University as well. Consequently, all your printed materials must have the University logo, "the George Washington University," or "GW" prominently displayed on them. Remember that any use of the University logo and wordmark is strictly regulated. Be sure that you are not using an unauthorized logo by checking the Standards Guide, available on the University Licensing and Trademarks Program's website.

All materials disseminated by your student group must also be inoffensive to be distributed around campus. Remember that others may interpret what you are saying in a different way than you intend. Get feedback on your posters and palm cards from staff, friends, and fellow groupmates prior to having the materials printed to ensure your communications match your intentions.

E. Posting and Palm Card Handout Guidelines

Once you have developed a poster, you need to display that poster around campus. In an effort to reduce waste, keep a clean campus, and ensure the effectiveness of postings, there are guidelines you must follow for posting on campus.

i. General Guidelines

- All materials may not be displayed until 20 days before the event, and all postings relating to an event must be removed within 48 hours of the event's completion. (Posters advertising a series of events may stay up until the series is completed.)

- No more than one type or style of poster per event is allowed.
- Postings on bulletin boards cannot exceed 11” x 17” in size.
- Posting is limited to one posting per event on any bulletin board and must not overlay other materials.
- The posting must be attached by masking tape, push pins, or staples only.
- No posters, flyers, or announcements may be attached to: trees, bathroom stalls, doors, sidewalks, benches, walkways, stairs, trash cans, newspaper boxes, recycling bins, GW signs or statues, or the Professors, Americas, and University Gates.
- Posting to painted, wallpapered, plastic, metal, or glass surfaces is prohibited, with the exception of the large glass windows in Academic Center.

There are additional regulations for postings regarding student elections. Posting policy for election candidates will be coordinated between the Joint Elections Committee and the Center for Student Engagement.

ii. Posting Locations

Some University spaces have their own posting policies; some are listed below. For Duquès Hall and 1957 E. St., consult their respective Academic Deans’ Offices.

Marvin Center

The Marvin Center offers a variety of means to advertise your event. Student organizations can request the following mediums: stanchion space, display, elevator display cases, bulletin boards, and fourth floor display cases.

Stanchion Space

Stanchions are permitted in the 5th Floor Lobby, 4th Floor Lobby, 2nd Floor Lobby, and Ground Floor H Street Lobby. Stanchions are not permitted in any other area.

Organizations are limited to 3 stanchion spaces per week. Stanchion advertisements larger than 11" X 17" must have a poster board backing. All stanchion postings must comply with general posting guidelines. Exceptions can be requested in writing and are subject to review by Marvin Center staff.

Display Advertising

Display advertising space is available in the 1st Floor H Street Entrance and in the Ground Floor Lobby of the Marvin Center.

Advertising in these spaces cannot exceed 8.5"x11" and must be in portrait layout. Display Advertising should be submitted to Marvin Center and University Conferences for posting pending availability and approval.

Elevator Display Case Postings

Elevator Display Cases are for the advertisement of events occurring within 7 days of the date the advertisement is posted.

Organizations wishing to have advertisements placed in the elevator display cases should bring 3 copies of the advertisement to Marvin Center and University Conferences (MC204) for approval and posting. Posting may not exceed 8.5"x 11". Elevator postings must comply with general posting guidelines. Elevator postings should be submitted to Marvin Center and University Conferences for posting pending availability and approval.

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards are located on the Ground Floor, the H street Stairwell, the 2nd floor lobby, and throughout the 4th floor for organizations to post advertisements. All postings must comply with the general posting policy.

Palm Cards

All palm cards distributed in any area under Marvin Center jurisdiction must adhere to the regulations previously listed. Any organization found to have littered with palm cards are subject to District of Columbia fines of up to $5.00 per palm card.

Academic Buildings

Academic buildings have many locations where student organizations post information and marketing materials. However, the policies for buildings vary widely, and you are always responsible to post only in areas that are allowed for posting. Many University departments allow student organizations to post on bulletin boards they control – for specific department information, reach out to the departmental office that controls the board you are interested in using. There are also general posting locations, where student groups can post; the most utilized are the windows in Rome and Phillips Halls, though similar locations exist around campus.

While it is always a good idea to have an advisor look at your posters and marketing materials before you post them, you are not required to have your posters approved prior to hanging, unless a department requires this of you to use their board.

There is no posting allowed inside of classrooms. If your poster is seen inside a classroom it will be removed and your group may be sanctioned by the Center for Student Engagement.

Residence Halls

Posting

Note that this is an overview of the policy. The full policy is available online.

Bring a copy of your poster to GW Housing, located in the John Quincy Adams House on I St NW. The front desk will approve your poster, and you can sign out an “all access” GWorld card from 9AM to 4PM. Your organization is responsible to go to all GW residence halls and post your advertisements. The card must be returned to Housing by 4:00PM, or a $300 fine will occur.

You may only post ONE POSTER on the ground floor lobby bulletin boards of the residence halls. All of the previously mentioned posting regulations apply. Expired posters and flyers will be removed every

Friday at noon. Posters with no expiration date will remain posted for approximately two weeks. For a list of residence halls in which you may post, contact GW Housing.

Palm Card Distribution ("Dorm Storming")

Your organization may choose to go door to door in the halls to hand out palm cards. If you wish to do this, however, you must first request and receive permission from GW Housing. There are specific times and policies related to dorm storming. These polices are laid out on the organization hall visits application that must be completed a minimum of five business days prior to your planned visit to the halls. Additionally, you must submit the names and personal information of those who will be entering the halls on behalf of your organization to GW Housing when you submit your application.

Posting on the Mount Vernon Campus

Mount Vernon offers a variety of means for marketing an event which you may access through MVC-specific resources. Note that some modes of marketing are restricted to events occurring on the Mount Vernon Campus.

Bulletin Boards

To post on Mount Vernon Campus bulletin boards, including residence halls, bring 15 copies of the flyer/poster to the Events & Venues Office on Mount Vernon located in the Webb Building.

All posters must have a GW logo and contact information for the sponsoring organization(s). Content must be approved. Posters must be coordinated through the Event Services Office at Mount Vernon. They may not be printed on 8.5"x11" orange paper as that format is reserved for GWPD emergency announcements.

Vern Express Posting

To post on the Vern Express, bring 15 copies of your flyer to the CSE Mount Vernon office. You can also leave copies in Mount Vernon's mailbox in the CSE Foggy Bottom office on the 5th floor of the Marvin Center.

Mailbox Palm Cards

To post palm cards in residents' mailboxes (8.5"x11" or smaller), contact Mount Vernon Campus Mail Services (202.242.6660 or mvcl@gwu.edu) to arrange a mailbox stuffing time. Mailbox stuffing times may be between 3:30PM and 5:00PM on a weekday and must be arranged at least 2 days in advance. You will need 800 copies. All previous posting regulations and rules apply, and you may not print any posters on orange paper, as this is reserved for GWPD emergency announcements.

Mount Vernon Campus Listserv

Events occurring on Mount Vernon can be advertised on the weekly email to the campus, "What's Happening @ Mount Vernon." To have your event included, submit your event to mvcl@gwu.edu with "What's Happening at Mount Vernon" in the subject line. Be advised that WH@MV is sent on Friday mornings. Submissions will not be included unless they are received by 10AM on the preceding

Thursday. Your submission should include the name of the event, date, time, place, cost, email address, phone number, and sponsor(s).

Mount Vernon Digital Signage

There are two digital signage screens that can advertise upcoming events or activities happening on either the Mount Vernon or Foggy Bottom campuses.

In order to have your advertisement displayed, the advertisement must have a GW logo and contact information for the sponsoring organization(s). Because of the formatting of the screen, a horizontal or landscape version of your poster in high resolution is required. Send a request to post on the digital signage screens to Mount Vernon Events & Venues at mvevents@gwu.edu.

XVI. Designing & Purchasing Imprinted Materials for your Organization

Creating and ordering imprinted materials for your student organization can be challenging due to regulations on designs involving the University logos or namesake as well as the vendors you can use to get the materials printed. T-shirts, sweatshirts, cups, Frisbees, and other promotional items with the University logo or namesake must follow the procedure described below.

A. Design

Create items that are memorable and have purpose. Everyone makes t-shirts, but what makes your shirt stand out from the others? Apparel and other imprinted items can be used to unify the group, but they can also be used as a means to market the group to those outside of it. Consider this when spending money on these items – what gets you the most bang for your buck? What designs help bolster and support your current members, while getting others to take notice of your organization?

Much like the design of posters and palm cards, discussed in XV.D. Poster and Palm Card Design (page 42), promotional items need to follow University design standards. In this vein, please ensure that all of your imprinted items have the logo, "the George Washington University," or "GW" prominently displayed on them. Remember that any use of the University logo and word mark is strictly regulated. Be sure that you are not using an unauthorized logo by checking the Standards Guide, available on the University Licensing and Trademarks Program's website.

All imprinted items created and used by your student group must also be inoffensive to be disseminated or seen around campus. Remember that others may interpret what you are saying in a different way than you intended. Be sure to get feedback on your posters and palm cards from staff, friends, and fellow groupmates prior to having the materials printed.

B. Ordering your Imprinted Items

Only licensed manufacturers may be used for the production of merchandise containing the name or trademarks of the George Washington University. A complete and up-to-date list of vendors is available from the Licensing and Trademarks Program website. Artwork and merchandising questions can be emailed to LTP@gwu.edu.

Work with a vendor of your choosing to create the designs that you would like for your organization. Once you have the designs, submit the design, an invoice for the items you want printed, and your payment or withdrawal request to your staff advisor through OrgSync. The vendor will typically submit your designed materials to Licensing and Trademark Programs for approval for you. (If not, make sure you submit the design mock-up to LTP@gwu.edu). L&TP will review the item and request changes if needed. Once they approve the item, you can then arrange to come in to the CSE and make the purchase utilizing the form of payment outlined by the vendor and your payment/withdrawal request.

XVII. Traveling as an Organization

Many organizations travel as a group from around the District to around the world. Travel can be a meaningful way for your organization to interact with the world outside of GW. However, there are inherent risks associated with travel, which the University hopes to help overcome by asking all groups to register their travel and follow the applicable travel policies for their trip.

A. Domestic Travel

i. Registering your trip

Most trips/travel must be registered with Center for Student Engagement. Make sure you register your travel if: you will be staying overnight somewhere, if you will be participating in a hazardous or potentially dangerous activity, if you will be chartering transportation (e.g., buses, rental cars, watercraft, or train), or if you will be traveling beyond the DC metropolitan area (defined as outside the “Beltway” – the I-495 loop around DC).

In order to register you must complete the Domestic Travel Registration form on OrgSync at least ten (10) business days prior to your trip. These forms must be filled out completely in order to ensure that your group will be as safe and well-prepared as possible for your trip.

ii. Booking your trip

Before you can book your trip, you need to contact your staff advisor in order to begin preparations for your travel, including the travel registration process.

To book your travel, first research how you want to travel (e.g., flight, train, rental car) and where you want to stay during your trip (e.g., which hotel).

Once you know what you would like to book, complete a payment or withdrawal request within your OrgSync portal treasury, selecting the payment method appropriate to your type of travel (Airfare, Car Rental, Ground Transportation, Lodging, etc.). You will then be prompted to enter information specific to your trip and the portion of that trip you would like to book.

Simply filling out a form does not guarantee that the travel will be booked in the manner you request. Travel will not be booked at all if you do not turn in the forms by the deadline.

You will then be contacted by the CSE Finance Team to book your travel if your payment/withdrawal and travel request forms are filled out correctly.

iii. Using bus transportation

If you choose to travel by chartered bus, you must utilize a bus company that has been pre-approved by the Office of Risk Management. The current list of all bus vendors can be found online.

iv. Student driver policies

Any student with your organization who wishes to drive either a rental car or a personal vehicle must become a registered driver with the Office of Health and Safety. You must have held a driver’s license for at least one year prior to being authorized as a driver. You must also have a clean driving record for the past three years. In order to register, fill out the Driver Authorization Application. If you are planning to rent or drive a 12 passenger (or more) van, you must fill out the 12-Passenger Van Acknowledgement Form.

After filling out the form, you must turn in the driver authorization form and a copy of your driver's license to your staff advisor who will then process your request. Once your paperwork is processed, you will be sent a link by the Office of Health and Safety for an online driving test that must be completed and passed prior to being an authorized driver.

Authorized drivers must be reauthorized every year.

Student drivers are limited in the distance they can drive in one day. All drivers, regardless of age and the type of vehicle they are driving, cannot drive in excess of 300 miles in a single direction for a trip (a maximum of 600 miles roundtrip) for their student organization.

v. Using a rental car

To utilize a rental car, you must have a driver who is 21 years of age or older and who is also an authorized driver through the Office of Health and Safety (see above).

To reserve a rental car, submit a payment or withdrawal request within your OrgSync portal marking "Car Rental" as your method of payment. You will then be prompted to fill out additional information related to the trip for which you are booking the car or car(s). You must submit a rental car request a minimum of ten (10) business days prior to the date of your requested rental. The CSE Finance Team will then process this request and provide you with the necessary pick-up/confirmation information you will needs in the days prior to your rental. All rental cars are obtained through Enterprise.

vi. Using your own car

If you are over 18 years old, you may use your own car (or a car rented in your name such as through Zipcar) to travel to events, but you must be a registered driver with the Office of Health and Safety prior to driving any passengers on behalf of your student organization.

Aforementioned distance restrictions still apply even on personal vehicles.

B. International Travel

While domestic travel has challenges and safety considerations, travel that leaves the United States inherently adds significant planning and risk. Additional procedures should be followed in order to ensure your trip abroad is safe, well thought out, and ultimately successful.

At a minimum, your organization should register your trip one month prior to your departure date, or earlier if your trip is more extensive or you are traveling to a location that may be considered more dangerous. Also, note that there are deadlines for when you are able to plan travel. (For example, you will not be able to plan a trip for spring 2016 during the spring 2016 semester. You will need to complete that registration either during winter break or the fall 2015 semester).

Begin your planning with a meeting with your staff advisor, who can walk you through the specifics of international travel. During that initial meeting, you should be prepared to discuss your desired travel plans, including where you would be going, how you would be traveling, where you would be staying, and what exactly you would be doing.

After consulting with your advisor, you will be able to begin filling out your online registration, available through GW Passport. That registration will be reviewed by several University officials and will be sent back to you if there are any questions or concerns that need to be addressed.

XVIII. Managing your Organization

A. Recruitment

Whether you are starting a new student group or looking to increase the membership in your already existing organization, there is always a need to recruit members. Recruitment is often easier said than done, especially for groups that are just forming. Here we provide some of the most common and most successful recruitment techniques.

i. Understand your Audience

Every student group is going to have a different recruitment base or target audience. This will be students who are more likely to join your student organization than others due to their existing membership in other student groups, living in a specific residence hall, pursuit of a particular degree, or existing interests and hobbies. For example, if you are in the Physics Club, physics majors are going to be a large part of your audience.

In order to recruit effectively, you must understand the student population you will be targeting. Keep in mind that you may want to expand beyond the students who are easy to get interested in your group; for example, the Physics Club will be able to recruit physics majors with relative ease, but perhaps non-majors would be interested in the organization as well. Regardless of what specific associations or characteristics your target audience has, if you can understand those characteristics you will be able to tailor your marketing and recruitment campaign toward them.

Targeting a specific audience means understanding where they may congregate, what types of recruitment styles will be most compelling, when they may be most inclined to join a student organization, and how they may respond to advertisements. After you decide what group, or groups, of students you would like to target, think about what characteristics makes them unique and what would be the most effective means to get in contact with them.

ii. Recruitment Techniques

Event Based

Many organizations use events to get potential new members in the door. Events can serve as an opportunity for potential new members to see what your group is about. Event-based recruitment typically falls into two categories: events that are entirely designed around recruitment with new member acquisition being the primary focus of the events, and events which revolve around something the group would typically do with an added recruitment component.

Regardless of how recruitment is incorporated into an event, hosting an event is not necessarily easy for all groups, especially those that are not established yet. Events take planning, volunteers, creativity, and often funding, which makes it difficult for groups with few members to pull off successfully.

For more information on how to successfully plan and implement an event (recruitment or otherwise), see XIV. Programming & Event Planning (page 33).

Organization Fairs

People may know about your group, or they may be unsure of what how they would like to be involved on campus; in both cases you may be able to cultivate interest in your student group. Sharing with students what your group does can allow them to envision themselves in your group.

The CSE hosts two student organization fairs during the academic year. These fairs allow students to talk to representatives from many different student groups at once. Participating in the Student Organization Fair is a great opportunity to meet potential new members face to face at little cost. Information about how to participate in the Student Organization Fair can be found at https://studentengagement.gwu.edu/student-organizations.

Invite Based

Some organizations have found that they best recruit by extending invitations to potential members to join. This often makes groups more exclusive and prestigious, as you need to be invited into the organization to become a member. While obvious examples of this type of recruiting are fraternities and sororities, some honors societies and performing arts groups also operate this way. Invites might be based on auditions, nominations from faculty and staff, academic performance, or even recognition on campus through awards or being well-known.

Invite recruitment has its advantages, such as that the group seems more prestigious and can successfully gain members with little effort. However, there are also disadvantages: others might feel excluded, the group may not be able to gain a solid following on campus, or the organization may need more people involved than what it can gain through invite-based recruitment.

Word of Mouth

There is no recruitment method more effective than word of mouth. Being able to share what your group does and how people can get involved in it with someone face-to-face is incredibly powerful. People are more likely to listen to what you are saying, respond to you, and spread the word about your group if you speak with them directly.

How do you get the campus buzzing with news of your organization? It is not an easy task. Use the contacts you have on campus. Ask those whom you know and those who are already interested in your organization to spread the word by talking to their friends and classmates about the group, what it does, and how they can join. If your contacts in turn encourage their friends to also spread the word about the group to their friends, you will have created a network around campus. This mixed with your other means for advertising can ensure that news about your organization will be well-known.

Advertising

Whether you are recruiting using an event, passing word around through classes, inviting members or the like, you will likely still want some form of advertising to inform people of how they can join your organization. For this purpose, effective printed and electronic materials are key; see XV. Marketing and Advertising for your Student Organization (page 40) for more tips on creating marketing materials.

iii. Becoming a Member

Often students will have heard about your organization from your outreach efforts or the Center for Student Engagement and will want to join, but they will be unsure how to get involved. If you are looking to recruit new members, your group needs to be relatively easy to join. This is not to say that your group cannot have high standards for new members; however, you should have a clear process for joining the organization.

Make it obvious. How do interested students get more information about your group and how to join? Make this readily available. If you have a website, use Facebook, or any other social media, make sure to have information about joining and a contact email or phone listed.

Make it simple. Even if you have high membership standards, make sure to simplify the joining process as much as possible. If someone is qualified and interested they should not face unnecessary obstacles to joining. It may help to make a flow chart or a list of steps to join that explains your process, which can be provided to interested students. (It can also help you review your process to see if any of the steps are unnecessary or overly difficult!)

Allow sampling. While it may not be practical for every group, you should provide interested students opportunities to learn more about the organization they are about to join. Invite potential members to come to meetings or "open houses" for your group. Allow them to experience some of the good things to come from being a member. You can use this as an opportunity to explain in person how to join.

iv. Staying a Member

Once you have recruited members for your organization, it is important to keep them in the group. This allows your group to focus on what you actually want to do and not simply recruit for an entire year; this also helps ensure the longevity of the group on campus. Here are some helpful tips on how to retain your members.

Keep track of everyone. Big or small, your group leadership needs to know who is actually in the group and how they are involved. Gather new members' contact information and keep up-to-date records for your current members. This is easier than ever with the use of your organization's OrgSync portal – utilize this guide to set up your portal and import members.

Once you know who is officially a part of the group, take attendance at meetings and events. How often are people coming? Which events are most or least popular? OrgSync events allows you to invite guests as well as track attendance utilizing GWorld cards – which capture each attendee's name and email address when being swiped into your event. To learn more about OrgSync events see this online walk through. Card swipes can be checked out from the CSE by emailing orghelp@gwu.edu.

Keep everyone informed. Use the contact information you have for your members to make continued outreach. Email, Facebook, Twitter, text messages, and OrgSync are all popular means of communicating with members. Your method of informing people about the group's activities or upcoming events or meetings is less important than your membership knowing where and how to find relevant information.

Engage members. Few things will keep members involved like making sure that they feel like they are a part of the organization. Members are more likely to feel invested in an organization if they are actively contributing to its success. Try giving general members some responsibility, starting at the first meeting they attend. Allow members an opportunity to lead the group, challenge plans, and take on responsibilities. The group will benefit, as many hands make light work. Additionally, your members will feel included in the decision making process and give them a sense of ownership in the organization, which will encourage them to stay involved.

Hold members accountable. People want to be a part of a group that is cohesive and where everyone works together. In order to ensure the success of your group, and to ensure your members work together, it may make sense to have an attendance policy. An attendance policy clarifies expectations for members, specifically how many meetings or events someone can miss. If you have an attendance policy, designate someone in the group to be responsible for keeping attendance and informing the group's leadership if someone has missed more events/meetings than allowed. If a member misses several meetings, give them a warning and check in with them to see what is going on; but, if the member continues to not participate, inform them that they will not continue to be a member until they change their behavior.

For some groups, this is entirely impractical. If you have a formal organization with a lot of interest from students, but you want to maintain a specific number of members, then an attendance policy is great. However, if your group is more informal, with members coming and going throughout a given year based on their availability, then an attendance policy is not an ideal solution for member retention.

Reward members. The group should have ways to recognize individuals who are going above and beyond the expectations. Some groups have a "Member of the Month," where an individual is recognized for their work in the previous month. Other groups allow for prizes or gifts to members who have done something excellent. Singling members out is a great way to highlight an ideal member, whom others can see as a role model. But also make sure to reward the entire group for their efforts at the end of the semester, year, or event. Hosting a social event such as dinner serves not only as a reward to members, but also as an opportunity for members to form personal connections with one another.

B. Running Effective Meetings

Meetings are an important part of any organization. These opportunities to sit down with members of your organization and gain feedback, disseminate information, or make decisions are a necessary, but often cumbersome, experience. People often struggle to facilitate an effective meeting. "Effective" is defined as allowing everyone to feel valued, heard and understood, while being able to efficiently conduct the business at hand. In this section, we describe how to move meetings from boring and unhelpful to meaningful and sometimes even exciting.

i. Types of Meetings

Remember that each organization has different types of meetings and different purposes for meetings. Some groups meet weekly, while others may only meet once a semester. It is up to you how often you meet. The ideal number of meetings is exactly enough to complete the business you need to without having meetings simply for the sake of meeting. You must determine what kind of meetings you wish to hold, and how often you believe it makes sense to hold them. A few of the most common meeting types are Executive Board, general body, and committee meetings.

Executive Board Meetings

Every organization must have an executive board of some kind. Most often, this includes your president, vice-president and treasurer. Many organizations have more officers who would also be included on an executive board. Meeting as an executive board can be quite important, especially in large groups or in groups where the general membership does not meet often. The executive board typically will discuss an agenda for general body meetings, the activities of the organization and what resources may be needed to support those activities, the budget, and sometimes specific members of the organization who may be a concern (for example, to determine how to sanction someone who has violated an organizational policy or how to support someone who may need extra guidance).

Executive board meetings can be informal or formal. If you have a large executive board (more than 10 people), it may make sense to formalize who is leading the meeting, an agenda that must be followed, and even rules of order (discussed below). This allows you to be efficient even with a large group. However, if you have a small executive board, usually informal meetings are sufficient. Following an agenda and having someone moving the meeting forward is all you may need.

General Body Meetings

The general body is all members of your organization. Depending on the business of your organization, you may not meet very often. Some groups meet only to hold elections and give updates. Others may meet regularly to vote on the operations of the organization, get interest and consent for activities from members, and to brainstorm.

General body meetings vary greatly from group to group based on the purpose and size of the organization. Large organizations need substantially more guidance and management than smaller ones. It is recommended that you set rules of order for organizations that are large and often cumbersome; these rules, discussed below, outline who can speak when, how to propose an idea or a change, and who manages a meeting. For small organizations, it is much easier to be informal and just ensure you are completing all the business at hand. However, even small groups can still get sidetracked easily. You want to make sure that your meetings are not simply a social get-together, but instead an actual business meeting. Keep people on track and remind them that everyone can hang out after you get the business handled.

Committee Meetings

Some organizations have committees that are composed of a portion of the membership. Committees have a specific purpose and complete business related to that topic. Committee meetings are typically meant to be informal work groups, though some may be more formalized depending on the organization. Understand what the purpose of the committee is and base your meeting styles around the work that is being completed. If the committee is responsible for approving finances, perhaps a more formal approach is needed, rather than if the committee is responsible for implementing programming.

ii. Creating an Agenda

One of the most important first steps in creating effective meetings is creation of an agenda. No matter how small the meeting, attempt to create an outline of what is to be discussed. If there is no need for an agenda, there may be no need for the meeting. Agendas communicate the purpose of the meeting, topics to be discussed, the person introducing each topic, and the time allotted for each topic. It is important to disseminate the agenda prior to the meeting time to allow those attending to be prepared for what will be discussed.

To create an agenda:

1. Reach out to everyone who will be attending the meeting and ask if there is anything that they would like to discuss during the meeting.
2. If people respond to your request stating that there are things they would like to discuss, ask them for details and a rough idea of how much time they might need.
3. If there needs to be a vote on an item, please consider this in the amount of time you allocate to something as well.
4. If anyone will have handouts, send them to the membership in advance electronically, as well as have copies available for the meeting.
5. Once you have all the topics to discuss, you must prioritize discussion topics. It is easy for discussions to run over allotted time, yet it is always a good idea to end your meetings on time to respect the people involved. Decide which items are most pressing and what order they should be discussed. You may want to work with your executive committee on this.
6. If you have a specified amount of time for a meeting, make sure that you do not attempt to squeeze an unrealistic amount of agenda items into one meeting. Use your prioritization to decide what could be delayed until your next meeting. If you find you always have too much to discuss, consider lengthening the meeting – but clear it with all people involved first.

iii. Rules of Order

If your organization needs formal structure to your meetings then it may make sense to adopt Robert's Rules of Order, a standard decision-making procedure used by organizations all over the world. These rules are intended to facilitate accomplishing organization business by majority vote while ensuring that all members have the option of being heard. These rules can work for organizations of any size, but are typically used for large organizations where people may not feel like they can speak easily about whatever is being discussed by the group.

While rules of order may feel a bit cumbersome, and overly formal, they can greatly improve the efficiency of your organizational meetings. Also keep in mind that you can alter Robert's Rules of Order to fit your organization's needs and membership.

Find the complete Robert's Rules of Order online at: www.rulesonline.com.

Robert's Rules of Order are not the only option for a group decision-making process. In fact, with Robert's Rules, sometimes those who understand the rules can overpower those who are not as practiced. On the other hand, many groups use consensus decision-making, where discussion is used to modify an idea until there is general agreement. This process is more informal and time consuming, but for some groups, it is more successful at ensuring everyone's voice is heard.

iv. Tips to Making Boring Meetings Meaningful!

Make your objective clear. Meetings without purpose are agonizing. It is evident you are simply wading through the unknown. Establish what the meeting will be about prior to meeting even beginning. Are you seeking input? Are you hoping to make a decision on a particular item of business? Are you brainstorming or problem-solving? You may work with your executive board, or even with your at-large membership, to get an idea of what needs to be accomplished. Additionally, stating the meeting objective can help you determine if you even need a meeting. Sometimes people hold meetings when the same purpose could be accomplished with an e-mail.

Consider who is invited. Sitting through an entire meeting that has absolutely nothing to do with you is incredibly frustrating. Make sure you have the right people in the room for the right topics. It is often preferable to discuss a topic with the most necessary individuals and then bring it to the larger group to update and ask for feedback. Having the entirety of your membership working on a single decision may not be very effective.

Stick to your agenda. Since you have created an agenda, follow it. Send the agenda out prior to the meeting so people know what is to be discussed and can be sufficiently prepared.

Reel in the outliers. Meetings can go off-track easily when one person starts to rant or provide long winded responses. Set ground rules early and enforce them. You want to spark debate and challenge ideas – that is why group work can be meaningful – but you cannot let the outliers on a topic take over simply because they can talk the loudest and longest.

Start on time and end on time. Your agenda should have a start time and an end time. No one is going to be able to pay attention in a meeting that literally and figuratively has no end. Hold yourself and the group accountable to staying within your scheduled time. You can always push a topic to another meeting if necessary.

Create ground rules. Work with those who are attending your meetings to create a set of group standards for meetings. People are more likely to be invested and follow the expectations if they help set them. Ask the members, "What are your expectations of one another during our meetings?" Or, "What ground rules do you think would help us be efficient during our meetings?" Write down what is said and then have everyone agree to these rules.

Ban technology: Smartphones, tablets, and laptops are fantastic tools, but can be a huge distraction in meetings. Setting the standard about technology in advance can help alleviate problems in the future. Talk about this when you set ground rules for your meetings. If banning technology completely seems extreme, consider designating some parts of the meeting "laptop-open" and others "laptop-closed."

Having “laptop-closed” time can reduce distractions and encourage group discussion. And if you see someone with a phone out, call them on it, reminding them of the ground rules for the meeting.

Designate action items. Meetings where nothing is produced or decided can be disheartening. Establishing what needs to be done outside of meetings makes a meeting more productive. During your meeting, take note of action items and select a person to be responsible for each task. Make sure all members understand everyone’s assignments so they can hold each other accountable and not duplicate efforts.

Follow up. No one will be able to recall every bit of information that is presented during a meeting. Confirm what was discussed, agreed upon, and assigned during a meeting by sending an email within 24 hours of the meeting that recapitulates the major points. Often, organizations have a dedicated officer on their executive board who take notes, often called meeting minutes, and then sends these to everyone. This is also a good way to clarify who is responsible for particular action items and to inform members who were absent from the meeting about what was discussed or decided.

C. Conflict Management

When most hear “conflict” they think of fist fights, big blow up screaming matches, and everlasting feuds. Conflict is associated with negative feelings in our society. However, conflict is an extremely natural and unavoidable part of our lives. In student organizations, where people come together over a shared passion for a particular topic, conflicts will arise on a regular basis. With passion and heart going into the work people do, they may get defensive or easily irritable when they disagree with someone else. As a leader, or even a member, of a student organization, it is good to have a basic understanding of how to best resolve conflict.

i. A new view on conflict

Most people do not like dealing with conflict, but there are some benefits to conflict if dealt with in a positive way. Conflict can represent the need for something to change. Conflict can spur people into action and drive a passion for resolution. And conflict can be positive and productive while serving as the starting point for great problem solving. Change your organization’s culture on conflict. As a result of taking a positive view on conflict, your group can have better ideas, more original programs, and a membership who is happy to share their opinions.

ii. Different means of conflict resolution

We all deal with conflict in different ways. People resolve conflict differently depending on the situation, the individuals involved, the topics being discussed, the location the disagreement is taking place, and their role in the disagreement. However, most people approach a particular conflict in one of five ways:

Competing (high assertive, low cooperative): An individual who competes is pursuing his or her own concerns at another party’s expense. Competition is typically used when one party feels like they must win. Competing works well if you need to protect yourself or take quick action. In organizations, those who compete often seek leadership positions, where they can use their role to take control of an argument to win, regardless of the potential cost of this win on the group’s membership. Obviously, the drawbacks to competing include losing the respect of those who you work with, making it difficult to truly work together in a group.

Accommodating (low assertive, high cooperative): Essentially the opposite of competing, someone who accommodates neglects their own concerns in order to satisfy the others in the conflict. Often accommodations happen in order to keep the peace, show goodwill and reasonableness, and simply end a dispute. Accommodations work well if the issue is not particularly important to you, but can cause issues if you do truly care and just do not want to argue about something. Accommodations happen all the time in student organizations and often issues will resurface because they have not been truly resolved.

Avoiding (low assertive, low cooperative): An individual avoids when they walk away from a dispute or pretends that a dispute does not exist. Similar to accommodating, avoidance works well if the issue is truly not important to you, but can prove problematic if you do care and simply do not want to have an argument because the conflict will resurface. Avoiding also works in situations where you need to walk away for a while to gain composure, perspective and a plan; just remember that you do need to return to the disagreement to resolve the issue.

Compromising (moderately assertive, moderately cooperative): Individuals compromise when they work together to resolve a conflict by partially satisfying the concerns of all parties involved. While a very common means of resolving conflict, compromises do not ensure that parties leave fully satisfied, since inherently everyone must give up a piece of what they want in return for getting a piece of what they want. Compromises can work very well in the student organization setting: splitting dates, duties, and budgets lend themselves well to compromises. However, compromise is sometimes described as a "lose-lose" approach, since nobody really gets what they want.

Collaborating (high assertive, high cooperative): In this case, all the parties involved come together to find some solution which fully satisfies the concerns of everyone involved. Where compromise is "lose-lose," collaborating is "win-win." In order for this to work, those participating in the dialogue to resolve the conflict must feel empowered to speak their mind and discuss all the issues at hand. Ultimately, everyone must feel listened to and that they had a significant role in the creation of the solution. The best collaborative solutions may not be the most obvious, but they manage to address everyone's concerns. Collaborations require time, creativity, and trust, which is why this style of conflict resolution is often underutilized in student organizations.

iii. Steps to managing conflict

Conflict resolution involves 4 basic phases. These phases are presented as steps, but conflict is not always linear. As you work through conflict, you may need to move forward through the steps and then jump backwards; this is perfectly normal.

Step 1: Diagnosis

You must first identify the disagreement or issue that should be addressed. You should consider at this step what the root cause of the conflict is. Is this a personal issue? Or perhaps a values conflict? What ultimately is bothering you, and what do you want to happen?

This step should be taken regardless of what conflict management style you are using. You may determine that there is nothing you would really like to change, as the issue is not very important. If so, you may avoid or accommodate at this stage and skip the remaining steps.

Step 2: Initiation

Once you have identified what the conflict is and what you would like to have happen, you need to speak with the other parties involved in the conflict. You may do this in a variety of ways depending on how you would like to deal with the disagreement.

If you are competing, you will likely take a more aggressive means of initiating the discussion, mostly because you are not greatly concerned what the other person may say. Your position is relatively inflexible – once you initiate you are looking to win at all costs and would not proceed onto the next steps.

If you are compromising, collaborating, or accommodating, you will likely want to open the initiation in a much different manner. You will be looking to engage the individual in a conversation, and prepare them to respond. For this you may use an “I” statement. Simply state: When you (do whatever the action at hand may be), I feel (your emotional response) because (some tangible effect or impact that their behavior has on you). This opening allows the conversation to focus on you, not the others involved; continue in this mindset throughout your conversation.

Step 3: Active Listening

Now that you have opened the conversation up you will likely illicit some reaction from the other parties involved in the disagreement. Especially if you are looking to compromise or collaborate, you should try to spark a meaningful and productive conversation. If the other parties involved use “low blows” such as name calling, personal attacks, or even negative language, use active listening skills to push the conversation forward. Do not simply be thinking about what you intend to say next, truly engage in what they are saying. Attempt to gain a better understanding of what they are saying by communicating both verbally and non-verbally. Restate what they have said, removing any “low blow” remarks, and ask questions that allow them to expand upon what they are saying. Someone may be willing to disagree in a negative matter at first, but if you can stay on the high road you will likely be able to get them to join you there fairly quickly once they see you are not reciprocating their behavior.

You will certainly actively listen for both a compromise and a collaboration, but the extent and depth may be different. If you are simply looking for a resolution which solves the problem at hand and you start to get a pretty good understanding that a compromise may be in order, then move to the final step. If however, you are looking to really dive deeper and ensure you address all the issues at hand, use active listening to gather up and share all the information that you can. Getting it all out will provide the basis for the problem solving step.

Step 4: Problem Solving

After you have gone back and forth about the issue or issues at hand with the other party, it is time to solve the problems together. No matter what, conflict may be scary and challenging, but it really comes down to problem solving. You simply want different things and have different perspectives, so how do we overcome those in order to find a solution?

A compromise is usually pretty easy to put together if they exist. Discuss the issue at hand and recommend a compromise that seems reasonable. You may need to go back and forth in order to find a compromise you can both live with. Then plan how the compromise will be implemented.

When collaborating, your task is a bit more challenging. Work through the issues one at a time. Do not be afraid to ask more questions and to gather more information. Brainstorm possible solutions to each issue together, then work out how a possible idea may or may not work. Finally, decide together which solutions work best and plan how to implement them.

iv. Basic tips for conflict

- In student organizations, stopping at competing, avoidance or even accommodation can be dangerous for the effectiveness of the group. Organizations should strive to solve problems in their entirety to ensure the same issues do not resurface again and again.
- Separate people from the problem or problems at hand. Pointing fingers is not productive and just increases emotions and tension. Focus on the issue at hand and the potential underlying issues that may exist instead.
- Notice your verbal and non-verbal cues throughout the conversation(s) to resolve the issues, as well as those of the other parties involved.
- Time, place, and manner are extremely important. Attempt to be cognizant of how someone may feel or react in certain locations. If you suspect the person may not be very willing to collaborate, then put the conversation more on their “turf” to allow them to feel more comfortable.
- Avoid the snowball effect: be proactive and empower yourself, as well as others in the group, to deal with conflict and disagreements in a positive manner, before issues get out of control. Do not let issues compound; break the reactive cycle. If someone does something that upsets you, deal with it before it grows and you end up going back and forth all year with someone.
- Accept differences while finding the common ground you share. There usually is much more you agree upon than disagree about. If you are both members of the same group, remembering why and the shared passions you have can put you both in the right frame of mind to collaborate.

D. Strategic Planning

One of the most meaningful things a leader can do is work with their organization to create a solid plan of action. You want to change the world? Then you better be prepared to come up with who, what, how and when. A strategic plan can set your group up for success not only in the coming year, but in years to come.

There are many ways to complete a strategic plan, but first you need to take a critical look at your organization. Strategic planning will ask your organization’s members to analyze and create a vision statement, a mission statement, goals, and strategies on how to achieve those goals. These elements are influenced by your organizations values, as well as your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Taken together, these pieces result in a plan for your organization's future.

i. Getting the right people involved

A strategic plan is best developed by a group of people who deeply care about the organization and its future. The leaders of the organization should be heavily involved, but remember that the many members of the organization should also play a critical role in creating a strategic plan. Not only does this mean that there are more people to help write the plan and that there are going to be more ideas and comments impacting the plan, it also is a great way to energize the general membership of the group and get them excited to accomplish it.

However, too many people can cause your meetings to be unproductive. Gather input from as many people as possible, but limit the actual decision making and plan creation to a group of no more than 5 or 6 people. This group should include both organizational officers and general members.

Strategic planning can be rather overwhelming and time consuming, so you want one person (maybe two at most) to be considered the leader of your strategic planning initiative. This individual should facilitate the strategic planning sessions, make sure the group is working through the different sections of a strategic plan efficiently, and challenge the group to push beyond their first instincts. This individual may be the organization's primary leader or it may make more sense to have someone take on the role who is not in that official position; the choice is really up to the organization and those involved with creating the strategic plan.

ii. Do your research

Before you get started with visions, missions, and goals, you need to start with gaining an understanding of your organization and the University at large. You undoubtedly have an understanding of what you want your student organization to do. But the real question is not necessarily what you do, or even how you do it, but why you do it. Prepare your organization for success by starting your planning through gaining an understanding of the environment. Your organization needs to know what others are doing and what they are not doing. Others may be doing things that are similar to what you are attempting to accomplish, so what would make your organization unique? There may be many reasons for creating and running a group on campus, but one of them must be that you are filling a void; you are providing something that would not otherwise be there.

iii. Vision Creation

Once you understand your environment, you can work on your vision. Vision statements look toward the future: what you ultimately hope your group will be able to accomplish in the long term. What will the future environment look like if your group is successful?

The best visions are inspirational, clear, memorable, and concise. The vision statement should serve as a clear communication to those in the organization, and those outside of it, what you are seeking to achieve.

For example: the Human Rights Campaign's vision is: "Equality for everyone." Feeding America's vision is: "A hunger-free America."

Some vision statements speak more in the present tense, but still have a forward-thinking lens. These statements are still speaking to the long term goal of the organization while being more firm in their belief that the work they are doing will make the change stated.

For example: the ASPCA's (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) vision states: "The Vision of the ACPA is that the United States is a humane community in which all animals are treated with respect and kindness."

Begin by working with your group to determine what you ultimately hope to accomplish. What are the long term goals of the group? Often people want to think about individual projects or initiatives instead; this is okay. Take notes of what they are saying and return to this list later in the strategic planning process. In the meantime, challenge the group to think bigger. Keep asking people "why?" This may be somewhat irritating, but eventually the answers you receive to your whys will turn into the meaning behind your organization and its ultimate goal: its vision. You may also want to consider what are major issues or problems that need to be changed and what success looks like to your organization.

iv. Mission Development

Once you have a vision of what you ultimately hope to accomplish, you can then start crafting a mission statement that explains what your organization does to achieve the vision. Unlike your vision that speaks to an inspirational goal, your mission is much more practical and tangible. Missions help steer your group's priorities, goals, and even member responsibilities. Missions should be clear and easy to explain. At its heart, a mission should embody and explain who you are, what you do, why you do it, and how you do it.

For example: The Human Rights Campaign mission statement reads: "The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against LGBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all."

Feeding America's mission statement reads: "Our mission is to feed America's hungry through a nationwide network of member food banks and engage our country in the fight to end hunger."

Mission statements can be longer than vision statements, as shown above, or they can also be very short and to the point; the length is really determined by those who are drafting the statements. As your group works together to develop a mission statement, think in terms of actualizing your vision.

Like when drafting a vision, people will have a tendency to think too narrowly about a specific program. Notice how the examples are vague about their specific activities. It is about general concepts or themes (e.g., HRC notes they will achieve equality for the LGBT community "by inspiring and engaging all Americans…" but does not list out the programs that do this). While remembering ideas for programs, services, and goals for later, push your group to think through what you accomplish via potential programs to get to why you do what you do.

v. Values Discussion

At the heart of every organization are values. Whether you have stated them before or not, your organization is driven by these unbreakable constants. Values are powerful drivers and should be discussed and agreed upon. Ultimately, when you sit down to work through a strategic plan you need to incorporate a conversation about what the organization values above all else. When push comes to shove, what will you always choose to do? You do not need to list every single value that individuals creating your plan have; instead, articulate what the driving forces for the organization as a whole are. Write down the values that you have decided upon and keep them in mind throughout the remainder of the strategic planning process.

> *For example: Feeding America lists out several values for their organization. They state that their priorities, goals, and decisions are driven by these values. They list Respect, Stewardship & Accountability, Collaboration, Urgency, Service, Integrity, and Diversity & Inclusion. In addition, they explain how each one of their values affects what they do and why they value that item.*

vi. Organizational Goals

A mission statement is really a starting place for your organizational goals. Goals explain how you intend to achieve your mission. The term "goal" is a bit confusing in strategic planning because a goal answers "what," not "how." Goals describe the broad themes and topics that allow you to achieve the mission, not the specific programs that you will complete.

> *For example: Feeding America has three main goals to achieve their mission to "feed America's hungry." These goals explain what they actually will do to forward their mission utilizing themes. First, "[Feed] the hungry [by] obtaining nutritious food to feed more people more often." Second, "[Strengthen] the system [by] efficiently distributing food to those who need it most. Third, "[lead] the nation [by] engaging our country in the fight against hunger."*

When writing goals, be careful to not jump ahead in your planning to how you achieve what you would like to accomplish. Goals are intended to provide direction and therefore not change regularly. The ways in which you achieve your goals are much more dynamic and practical.

Work with your group to come up with your overarching goals. If you start with your mission, understand what broader things need to be accomplished in order for your mission to come to fruition. You will easily discuss programs and events you wish to host at this stage –as previously mentioned, do not use these specific programs as goals. If programs and event ideas come up, write them down and start to break them into categories that explain why you want to sponsor a certain program. These categories likely will start to develop into themes you can use for your goals.

vii. Objectives:

All good goals need to be measurable on some level. Objectives allow for your group to come up with ways to determine if you are actually accomplishing your stated goals. Objectives include measurable language speaking to a change, such as increase or decrease. The best objectives are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. Your objectives can be tied to either your goals or strategies that help accomplish a goal.

No matter what you are working on, you should make sure you have a means of measuring success. How will you know that your organization is actually accomplishing what you desire to, if you do not stop to gauge how well you are meeting your stated goals? Consider how you will assess your work well before you start to implement your initiatives.

viii.SWOT Analysis

Another step in strategic planning is to think about your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Critically examining and reflecting upon what impacts your organization, both internally and externally, can allow you to tailor your strategies toward overcoming challenges while making the most use out of your opportunities. This reflection is fairly straightforward if you complete a SWOT analysis.

Internal Strengths include things that already exist in the organization, such as: certain individuals in the group who have a strong knowledge basis or background in the content area of the group; assets of the group for operational needs like equipment or funding; or a well-established, positive reputation on campus.

Internal Weaknesses include things that are challenges within the organization, such as: fluctuating leadership, limited membership interest, or a lack of expertise in a needed area like marketing.

External Opportunities include things that are outside of the organization that could benefit the group with a bit of work, such as: the desire of other groups to work with yours, or groups like yours; potential funding opportunities; or an untapped group of students who could be interested in the work you are doing.

External Threats include anything that is external to the organization and may make your efforts more challenging, such as: university or DC policies and ordinances, limited amount of available space, or the possibility of another group working on a similar project to yours.

With your group, think about what internal strengths and weaknesses exist, as well as what external opportunities and threats may be present. It does not matter in what order you complete the analysis, but it is often easier to try to complete one category at a time. In the end, you will be able to apply what you have compiled during your SWOT analysis when you begin creating your strategies and tactics.

ix. Creating Strategies and Tactics

Finally, you have reached the final steps of your strategic planning process: the creation of strategies and tactics. In these final stages you will discuss and create a plan for the actual programs, services, and initiatives. Think about your broad goals, which were based on your mission. What programs and services can your group, or does your group, provide to achieve those broad goals? This stage usually is already pretty well developed from your previous conversations during the planning process. It is encouraged that any programs or services which come up at earlier stages are kept on a running list and then discussed in this final stage.

> *For example: If your nutrition group's mission is to "transform the diets of GW students to be healthier and more sustainable" and one of your goals is to "educate GW students about their daily diets and nutritional intake," then your strategies might be to "host a nutritional fair on campus, with partner organizations and campus offices," and to "present about nutrition in college in front of freshmen participating in the NewU program sponsored by the CSE."*

Creating strategies is usually straightforward and fairly exciting. You want to work with your group to come up with a few items that you know for sure you will accomplish and some that you would like to accomplish. Strategies are not written in stone; they should change as your organization develops. Once your group brings your strategic plan to the whole of your group's membership, then others will be able to add their own initiatives and programs to the strategies of the organization where appropriate.

Strategic planning can serve as both a long-term and short-term plan only if you work collectively with your organization to make the plan as complete as possible. Work to put all the strategies that you can anticipate into your strategic plan. Not only will this help with getting others to understand how their work is relevant and impactful for the group, it also allows for you to plan out the logistics of your initiatives as early as possible.

Finally, your strategies will be enforced by tactics. This portion is somewhat difficult to map out long in advance, but really includes the planning and implementation of your strategies. If you host a nutrition fair, as outline in an example above, your tactics would include: getting the most meaningful presenters involved, making people aware of the event, and working with those creating the event to prepare an environment at the event that is both engaging and educational.

Tactics are often determined while planning a specific event. While they prove helpful for making the event successful, they also remind organizational members to relate all events and activities back to the mission and goals of the organization throughout the year.

E. Transition

You may have made great advancements during the course of the year, but all student leaders leave. You need to ensure that your group will continue to grow in years to come. In the end, the group will be left to a new leader or leaders, and it is your responsibility as the outgoing leader to properly prepare them to take over the organization.

Effective leadership transitions can be formal or informal, lasting an hour or weeks, or based on documentation or conversation. Your organization will need to determine what the most effective transition for your group is. No matter how you choose to do this, you will work with the incoming leader to review and learn from previous events and programs to prepare for the upcoming year.

i. Outgoing officer to-do list

In order to ensure that you do not leave your group high and dry, make sure to double check that you have completed the following:

- ❑ **Work with the executive board and advisor to coordinate new officer selection or elections.** Your constitution and bylaws should describe exactly what this process looks like for your group. If your organizations documents are unclear, speak with your staff advisor to determine how to hold elections. Additionally, if your constitution or bylaws are unclear, ensure that you clarify your election procedures – and have your organization amend your documents prior to your elections.
- ❑ **Complete re-registration amending your roster with CSE to include new officers.** Toward the end of the spring semester, the CSE will contact your organization to register for the following year, including asking you to provide new officer information.
- ❑ **Develop an action plan and timeline for new officer transition.** Likely, the transition will include:
    - One-on-one meeting between incoming and outgoing officer
    - Sharing information, job responsibilities, and tasks with incoming officer
    - Give incoming officer an overview of your group's financial situation
    - Introductions to key individuals your group interacts with
    - Shadowing of outgoing officer by incoming officer
    - Required CSE Student Organization Leadership Training (for treasurer and one other officer, typically the president)
- ❑ **Prepare a transition binder/ folder.** Likely, the transition binder or folder will include:
    - Organizational files (constitution, bylaws, mission, etc.)
    - Leadership job descriptions
    - Organizational calendar (when does your group typically host events, meetings, etc.)
    - Strategic planning report or organizational goals write-up
    - Budget information
    - Year-end reports from officers or committees
    - Important contact information
    - Event planning and assessment information
    - Any other tips, passwords, combinations, etc. that are needed for success
- ❑ **Reserve space for annual events.** If you know events happen at the same time each year, work with Events & Venues up to 365 days in advance to your event to book space for next year. Handing room reservations over to the next officers will give them a helpful leg up when it

comes to event planning. Make sure to include your room reservation information in your transition binder.

- ❑ **Submit all contracts, bills, and invoices.** Do not leave the incoming officers any outstanding payments to process. If something is in the process of being paid out by the CSE, make sure to include this information in the budget section of your transition binder.
- ❑ **Finish all necessary correspondence.** Reach out to all of the individuals you have worked with throughout the year to introduce the incoming officers. If you have been working closely with someone on a particular project, wrap up your conversations prior to your departure. You can do this by simply referring them to the new officer who will take your place. If there is important correspondence (emails, phone calls, or mail) which needs to be taken care of by the new officer, make sure to include this in your transition binder.

ii. Incoming officer to-do list

In order to truly have a successful transition, the incoming officers need to be active participants in the transition process. There are many things one needs to complete or work on prior to officially taking over an officer position in an organization. In order to be prepared for the year to come, you should complete the following:

- ❑ **Meet your staff advisor.** One of the first things you should do is introduce yourself to your staff advisor. This individual can serve as a great resource to you in the year to come, and can point you in the right direction while you are preparing to take over. For more information on what your advisor can provide you, see V.A. Role of Your Staff Advisor (page 11).
- ❑ **Work with the outgoing officer to create a transition action plan and timeline.** While the incoming officer may not know what they need to learn and understand prior to taking over an organization, they should still play a significant role in planning what the transition will look like and what topics are covered.
- ❑ **Shadow the outgoing officer.** One of the most meaningful experiences you can have is simply watching the current officer closely to understand what they do, how they do it, and why it needs to be done.
- ❑ **Introduce yourself to members and important organizational partners.** Attempt to work with the outgoing officer to arrange introductions to important individuals with whom your organization works. For email correspondence, you may wish to write an email with the outgoing officer who introduces you. Alternatively, you may also have them send an email which introduces you, and then you can follow up.
- ❑ **Get to know your role and your organization.** Review your constitution, bylaws, and position statements, as well as meet with the outgoing officer to better understand what your responsibilities and role are.
- ❑ **Start setting goals for the year to come.** Work with the future executive board to review or create a strategic plan and update or set organizational goals and priorities. What are the challenges that may prevent you from completing these goals? What resources may be available? What questions may you have about the goals that were passed down to you?
- ❑ **Prepare for and hold your first meeting.** Your first meeting can often set a tone for all those that follow and even the year to come. Be prepared to take the reins and lead in a manner that

fits what you hope to accomplish. See XVIII.B. Running Effective Meetings (page 54) to prepare logistically for the meeting. Also, make sure that you work with the outgoing officers to host a joint meeting, or at the very least, discuss their experience with running meetings.

- [ ] **Attend CSE Student Organization Leadership Training**

XIX. Student Organization Recognition

A. Excellence in Student Life Awards

According to the CSE website, "the Excellence in Student Life Awards honor the most outstanding students, student organizations, faculty, and staff members at GW. Offices from across campus come together to present over 20 awards during the largest celebration of excellence."

While many individual students, staff, and faculty are recognized, student organizations are also nominated and selected to be recognized for their outstanding contributions to the GW community. Nomination information is sought via email toward the beginning of the spring semester. You are strongly encouraged to make nominations for awards.

Student organizations fortunate enough to be recognized with an Excellence in Student Life Award or nomination continue to be recognized by the CSE throughout the following year. Recognized organizations are identified at all student organization fairs.

B. Spotlight Awards

Each month during the academic year the Student Organization Advisement Team (SAT) selects one student group to receive a spotlight award. Organizations are nominated by their advisor with a short description that highlights how the group has:

- Fostered programs and services that support the mission and values of GW, as well as their organization;
- Completed work that enhanced the prestige and brand of GW and the CSE;
- Worked collaboratively on projects with other organizations or departments;
- Overcame challenges or struggles within their organizations with grace; or
- Created far-reaching and outstanding events.

The group that is selected from the nominations is highlighted as the Spotlight Award winner in the student organization newsletter and receives a monetary prize from the CSE.

XX. Critical Dates

Student organization leaders and members may view all dates critical to the operation of their groups online within OrgSync's community calendar. Beyond large events such as EngageGW, the spring org fair, Colonial Inauguration, and Midnight Breakfast, groups will also see dates (and news posts) related to when re-registration opens/closes each spring, and when spending and budget deadlines may me.

Critical dates and deadlines will also be emailed to all officers and administrators, as listed in OrgSync.

Make sure you keep your officers and administrators up to date, take note of dates and add them to your personal calendars as they are released - failure to know when a deadline is, is not an excuse for missing it.

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