



**STUDENT
ACTIVITIES**
GET INVOLVED

Advisor's Guide

Tips and suggestions for effective
coordination with student leaders
and organizations

Welcome to the University of Northern Colorado Student Activities Office Advisor’s Guide!

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an Advisor to one of the UNC’s chartered student groups!

Your commitment to supporting students in their co-curricular involvement helps provide them with the guidance and advice needed to enhance their personal and professional development and growth. Please use this guide as a resource for tips, suggestions and inspiration when communicating and connecting with student leaders and student organizations.

A student organization is a group of students joined together by a common cause, interest or purpose. The general membership of a student organization may include faculty, staff or community members as the organization’s constitution outlines. However, the student leaders are responsible for the governance, and operation of the organization.

In order to be recognized as an officially chartered student organization at UNC, the group must complete and submit any paperwork outlined in the “club charting and funding” processes online and in the by-laws of UNC’s Student Senate. Students interested in forming a new club should contact the Director of Student Organizations or the Student Activities Office at (970) 351-2871.

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Resources Offered by the Student Activities Office

University Calendar:

All clubs may post events, programs, and meetings on the UNC event calendar. Events will appear on the University calendar website and may be added to the "Around Campus" student e-mail.

Mailbox:

All clubs have a mailbox in the Student Activities Office. Club leaders should check their mailbox at least once a week, as it is where all correspondence for clubs is stored.

Fax:

All clubs may send and receive faxes. Our fax number is (970) 351-1055. We ask that all faxes be relevant to the purpose of the club. If a fax is sent to a particular club, it will be placed in that club's mailbox.

E-mail:

Registered student clubs and organizations may have a University e-mail account. This account must be submitted in writing to the University Technical Support Center. Forms can be obtained from the Student Activities Office website at: <http://www.unco.edu/clubs/Assets/forms/EmailApp.pdf>

Website:

All student organizations may have a web site connected to the Student Senate Clubs and Organizations site. If a club is interested in creating a web site, its members must complete and submit the Application for a UNC WWW Account. The application must include the signatures of the club Advisor, the Director of Web Communications and the Director of Student Activities. The form is located on the Student Activities Office website at: <http://www.unco.edu/clubs/forms.html>

Informational Message System:

After a student organization submits chartering information, Presidents and Advisors are automatically included on the Student Clubs and Organizations messages distributed by the Student Activities Office in order for them to receive information regarding Student Activities processes, updates and events.

Event Planning:

All student organizations may receive assistance in planning and executing any events. Attached to this document is a Program Planning Guide, which includes a checklist for aiding in a successful event. For more information on how to plan an event, please contact Ria Vigil, Program Coordinator for the University Program Council, at Ria.Vigil@unco.edu.

Event Funding:

All chartered student organizations may apply for funding per event through UNC's Student Senate. The application process includes the completion and submittal of a Funding Proposal Questionnaire and a Funding Request Budget. The student group is required to send a representative to the meeting at which the request is reviewed. The club is required to submit an Event Follow Up Form within 14 days of the event. For more information regarding the funding process, including appropriate funding purposes, please see the Student Senate by-laws online at: <http://www.unco.edu/studentsenate/assets/Bylaws/Ch.%2009%20-%20Charter%20Process.pdf>

Financial Account Access:

We encourage all student organizations that might be using finances of any sort to activate a financial account with the UNC Business Office, located in the University Center. We discourage the use of outside banking resources for student organizations, due to the eventual transition of student officers and possible loss of essential information and access.

Room Reservations:

All chartered student organizations may request room reservations across campus through the University Scheduling and Events Office . For more information, please see the UC events and meetings website at: http://www.unco.edu/uc/events/book_meeting.html

Club Advisor Tips and Suggestions

As a club Advisor, you play an integral role in the development of student leaders. As a UNC faculty or staff person working in an advisory capacity, you have various responsibilities. These include responsibilities to the organization, the student leaders, and UNC.

Many students need nothing more than encouragement from someone who has an active interest in what they are doing. Advisors can motivate students in ways that ensure that they are learning and having fun.

Below is a collection of various enlightening suggestions for working in the Advisor capacity, as proposed by Advisors and former student executive officers with similar situations.

Working with student leaders:

- Develop opportunities for the personal development of student leaders; encourage more individuals to get involved.
- Try to be available to the members of the club. At times, they will need advice and guidance and they will look to you as a mentor. Help individuals balance academic and work commitments with program development.
- Meet with club officers as regularly as possible to gain an understanding of the club's progress toward its goals. Try to learn how you can foster leadership development. If you are unsure how to help, just ask the club's executive officers. They will tell you exactly what they need! Also, feel free to seek support from the Student Activities Office staff.
- Encourage members to play an active role in the governance of their organization.
- Encourage students to reflect on what they have learned from being a part of a student organization.

Working with the organization:

- Be familiar with the organization. Read its constitution, learn how it was formed, and understand its expressed mission.
- Learn about pertinent UNC policies and procedures and advise officers and general members on adhering to them.
- Attend club meetings and/or executive meetings, as needed. Discourage domination of the group by any individual or subgroup.
- Get to know as many members as possible as they may become the club's leaders in the future.
- Assist the group with the development of realistic goals.
- Act as a resource person for the organization, sharing your knowledge of internal and external networks and information that may be helpful to your student group.
- Be aware of plans and activities of the group where assistance might be needed, including events, trips, expenditures, etc.
- Try to be present at the signature or most important events or activities sponsored by the group.
- Encourage student interest in evaluating and assessing their meetings and programs.
- Provide insight and assistance with the orientation of newly elected student leaders, thereby providing long-term continuity within the group.

Working with UNC staff:

- Try to guide the group in accordance with the goals of the organization and the educational mission of UNC.
- Consider yourself as a person who works *with* students, not one who controls or directs the group's events and/or operation. Always remember, this is a *student* organization.
- Become familiar with the policies and procedures at UNC, particularly those pertaining to programming or finances.
- When in doubt, contact the Student Activities Office staff, they are here to help!
- If possible, review the club's account balances with the students.
- Help establish traditions and a positive reputation.

Suggestions for maintaining a student-focused environment:

- Please do not direct the activities of the club. Allow students to make their own decisions and learn from their experiences.
- Failing is part of the learning process. Mistakes will happen. While it may be your first reaction to intervene and fix all of the mistakes you see, this is not the role of the advisor. Take advantage of failures, and use them as teachable moments with students.
- Conversely, while it may be easy to sit back and say, "Everything is a learning experience; I won't interfere with what they say or do," it *is* your responsibility to ensure that students understand the consequences for decisions they make. In other words, be as proactive as possible when a potentially controversial/policy-related situation/decision arises.
- Please do not control the finances of the club. Part of the educational experience students learn in leadership positions is how to formulate a budget and maintain records of expenditures. Your primary role regarding finances will be helping them monitor appropriate expenses and provide feedback on how to allocate the budget.

Rewards of serving as a student organization Advisor:

- Having a direct impact on the development of students outside of the classroom or your office.
- Receiving positive recognition (often unexpected) from the students for your involvement in their organization.
- Serving as a mentor for students, sometimes even after they have graduated.
- Providing the opportunity to develop students' leadership skills by putting into practice your *outstanding* teaching and leading abilities.
- Developing networks with other faculty and staff who advise similar organizations.
- Providing service to UNC and enriching the environment of campus and community life.

Adapted from the University of Notre Dame, S.O.U.R.C.E (Nebraska Union), the University of Alaska at Anchorage and the University of Connecticut.

A Cooperative Quiz for Advisors and Students

Sometimes students and advisors have different ideas and expectations of what role the advisor plays in a student organization. This exercise is designed to begin the discussion of the advisor's role and involvement in the student club.

Directions:

- Print out two copies of the exercise. Give one copy to the club officers and one copy to the advisor.
- Read each statement concerning the role of the advisor carefully.
- The club officers should check off the box that best represents their views on the statement involving the advisor's role. The advisor should do the same on his/her form.
- After the officers and the advisor have finished the exercise, they should compare the similarities and differences between the two and have a discussion around areas of concern.
- After discussing all items, the officers and advisor can create a set of expectations for the year based on the discussion.

Questions	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
Attendance			
Attend all regular meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attend all officers meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attend club's campus-wide activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attend club's internal activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting Involvement			
Assist in the preparation of meeting agendas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Call emergency meetings of the officers, if necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inform members about possible violations of University policies or the club constitution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide personal viewpoint during discussions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Be quiet at meetings unless asked for input.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review minutes for accuracy before they are distributed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goal Setting Process			
Participate in goal setting process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide feedback to officers on progress toward goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Require committees to follow-up with advisors on progress towards goals, with frequent updates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Club Development			
Coordinate leadership development workshops.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research and present leadership development opportunities available on campus, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explain University policies and procedures to the membership.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cancel events when poorly planned by students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instill teamwork and cooperation within the club.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engage in conflict mediation when conflict arises among officers or membership.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representation			
Speak on behalf of the club to the campus community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speak on behalf of the club to the general public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assist with mediating conflicts with the University administration, other clubs, or other entities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elections			
Attend all elections and ensure they are conducted fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide officers feedback on each candidate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional Responsibilities			
Receive copies of all official correspondence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review and proof all official correspondence before distributed. (newsletters, proposals, letters, posters, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sample of an Advisor/Officers Expectations Agreement

The Expectations Statement listed below can serve as a guide in creating a set of expectations between yourself and your student leaders. Feel free to create as detailed a document as necessary to meet the needs of your organization.

Student expectations of the Advisor:

- Support and encouragement
- A resource in leadership and campus activities
- Assistance with goal-setting
- Assistance with prioritizing goals, projects, and programs
- Someone you can voice your concerns to
- Someone who will help you see all sides of a situation (i.e. play “devil’s advocate”)
- Someone who will, if needed, advocate on your behalf
- Someone who can be depended on to carry through when asked to fulfill a responsibility
- Someone who will hold you accountable for your organization
- Someone who will try to help you grow, learn, and get the most from this experience
- An energetic, enthusiastic, and approachable person to work with
- Someone who is genuinely interested in you as a student and in your organization

Advisor expectations of the student leader/executive officers:

- To establish a regular club meeting schedule
- To be informed of your club agenda (by way of correspondence and communication)
- That your club work fairly and ethically
- That you share your work and distribute responsibilities fairly
- That you recognize and fulfill your duties individually and collectively
- Open, honest communication between all of us
- Confidentiality when appropriate
- That you treat your fellow students, administrators, and me with respect
- That you want to learn, grow, and become better leaders through this experience

Student and Advisor expectations of one another:

- Be accountable and do what you say you are going to do
- Use open, honest communication
- Have FUN and work HARD
- Address concerns with other students as they arise and get the advisor involved when necessary

Adapted from FCLC's United Student Government expectations 2000-2001.

Club Development Tools

Member recruitment:

Student Clubs often have difficulty recruiting new members. Below, find a few creative and useful recruitment tools that may work for your organization.

To Do:

- Participate in the UNC Bizarre at the beginning of the fall semester.
- Post flyers on campus when hosting open meetings or events.
- Post your meetings online in the UNC Calendar: <http://calendar.unco.edu/calendar>
- Talk to other students about your club. Word of mouth advertising is a very effective tool!
- Ask members of similar clubs to join your club or collaborate on a project.
- Network with the freshmen students. Volunteer to help with student move-in or speak in a First Year Experience class.
- Put a flyer in the other club mailboxes to educate other groups about your existence.
- Sponsor events, especially during the first few weeks of the semester.

Member retention:

Too often, clubs focus on club recruitment without taking the time to work with new members and help get them acclimated to the group. Other student members look up to the student leaders of the organization, and will follow their lead when it comes to the attitude and atmosphere of the group. The following are some suggestions for club officers to help increase membership retention efforts.

To Do:

- **Be respectful of other people's time.** This includes meeting regularly and making sure everyone is aware of the meeting time, date, place and agenda. Don't have a meeting for no reason. Plan and coordinate effective meetings. Also, making sure you are attending the meetings in a responsible manner. If the situation arises where you will be late or absent, alert the appropriate other officers or members.
- **Be respectful of other people's voices.** Allow others to provide their reports or updates at a meeting. Try not to speak over others when they have the floor. Occasionally ask the quieter members for their thoughts and opinions without being too aggressive. When was the last time someone asked for your personal opinion?
- **Learn the names of members and use them.** Use names in meetings, but also outside of meetings. Club members are more likely to stay invested if they have a personal relationship with you outside of the club. The more you get to know each other, the more likely the group will work together more effectively.
- **Bonding.** Coordinate a team building activity regularly. Have a little fun at your meetings and learn about one another's roles within your team. Organize a social event for club members only. Go to a movie, a museum, etc.
- **Learn to delegate.** Delegation is one of the most difficult things to do, however you'll have greater peace of mind if you don't micromanage the others in your organization. Learn members' talents and put them to use. What better way to get people involved than to give them a task they are good at? Assign tasks to everyone, especially during the planning stages. People are more likely to support what they help to create and it gives other students the opportunity to grow, learn and develop their skills.
- **Paying attention to group dynamics.** Keep in mind why everyone got involved in your group in the first place. People learn and accomplish things at different paces, but everyone is there for the same purpose. Some members need more attention than others. As a student leader in a group, you will encounter a variety of people in different levels of need and development. Try using empathy to consider their circumstances.

- **Implement a mentoring system with upperclassmen and underclassmen.** Make new friends and develop future leadership. Let new members know how they can get involved in the club. A little attention now pays off later. Let students know they are valued. Ask them how they think the group is operating. Perhaps you ask other officers to help create an orientation program for new members. This would also assist to inform new members of the group's expectations.
- **Do as I say, AND as I do.** As an officer, you set the tone for the organization. Other members will follow your lead. If you intend to have the organization members act in a certain manner, you need to emulate that attitude.
- **Balance positivity and honesty.** People like being around positive people. However, everyone has bad days! Try to be aware of how the results of a bad day affect how you treat those around you. Remember to take care of yourself, too!
- **Recognition and "thank you".** Praise your club members. Failing to give credit where credit is due causes distrust amongst group members. Saying "thank you" will get you a long way. Use them regularly, especially if someone has gone out of their way to assist you.
- **Mea Culpa.** Sometimes you personally have to take responsibility for the good, the bad and the ugly. This is a good time to visit with your club Advisor and it helps if you've maintained a strong relationship with open communication.
- **Allow for new ideas and voices.** Try to be open to new ideas. Talking through seemingly crazy, extraneous and out of control concepts can help bring focus to new thoughts and subject matter. Try to be creative and break out away from "traditional events" or the "we've always done it this way" thought process.

Fundraising:

Clubs should consider fund raising when they want to raise funds for a specific purpose, whether that purpose is for internal club use or as a charitable contribution. Clubs which attempt to fund raise for "stock piling" purposes are more likely to fail. You will want to establish a few expectations during your planning process:

Purpose:

- Why are we raising the funds? (People will want to know where their money is going and it should be for a good cause.)

Financial goals:

- How much do we need to raise? How much do we want to raise? How much can we anticipate raising with the proposed activity?

Initial cost:

- How much will it cost to produce this fundraiser? Do we have the money in our account to cover the front-end costs of the project?

Effectiveness:

- Will the idea work? Can we really raise money doing this fundraiser? Will we at least break even? Take the time to choose fundraisers that could be effective, and take the time to plan and publicize them properly.

Goal setting:

Many different theories, styles, outlines, and programs exist for individuals and groups to set goals. The following outline should help your club understand where it currently is in its development, where it wants to go in the future, and how to get there. This is a great activity to do during the club officer transition period. The bulleted items offer a sample club process.

Define the current state:

- XYZ Club is a group of 15 people who are very energetic and have the potential to be one of the strongest, most recognizable groups on campus. However, we have had problems recruiting new members, particularly upper classmen.

Brainstorm:

- What will we need to work on? What areas can we focus on? What has been successful/unsuccessful? What are some potential roadblocks? What resources do we have available to accomplish our goals?

Refine brainstorming to create goals:

- XYZ Club will improve membership recruitment over the next two years. XYZ Club will work more collaboratively with other student organizations this year.

Establish objectives:

- XYZ Club members will be responsible for getting three people to join by February 1. XYZ Club's membership will reach 50 by this time next year. XYZ Club will become better known on campus.

Coordinate activities:

- XYZ Club will hold informational meetings to introduce students to the organization. XYZ Club will create a standard logo and implement an awareness campaign via advertisements on campus and events.

Implement the activities:

- The Vice President will be responsible for keeping track of each member's progress in recruiting new members. The Secretary will coordinate all informational meetings and related social events with the primary purpose of recruiting members. The President will be responsible for coordinate the logo creation and other related marketing.

Effective club meeting strategies:

For most clubs, meetings are the only time to get all club members together to discuss business and inform members about upcoming events, activities, and opportunities. Members' time is valuable, and you must spend the time wisely.

Before the Meeting:

- Decide if you really need to meet. Never have a meeting just to have a meeting.
- Decide who should be invited. (All members? Special Guests?)
- Reserve a room/location.
- Create an agenda and any necessary handouts. Make photocopies as needed.
- Remind members of meeting (via e-mail or voice mail).

At the Meeting:

- Arrive at the meeting early, with a smile.
- Start the meeting on time.
- Have the secretary keep detailed minutes of who arrives and when.
- Stick to the agenda.
- Make everyone a part of the meeting.
- After decisions have been made, restate the decisions.
- Announce the time and the place of the next meeting.
- End the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.

After the Meeting:

- Clean up the room.
- Collect the agendas/other paperwork left behind.
- Meet with anyone who needs to discuss unresolved issues.
- Ensure that minutes are distributed within 48 hours (via e-mail is the most effective way).
- Add any unfinished business from the meeting to the next meeting's agenda.
- Discuss with your club officers their effectiveness in running the meeting. Review strengths and weaknesses.

Club officer transition:

Most successful student organizations implement some form of an officer transition program. In order to be most effective, club officer terms should provide at least one month of overlap so that new officers have the opportunity to work closely with outgoing officers in order to understand the roles and responsibilities of their respective leadership positions. The following information should assist your club in creating a sound officer transition program.

Why have a transition process?

- To prepare incoming officers for the responsibilities of their new positions.
- To prevent incoming officers from “reinventing the wheel.”
- To instill a sense of comfort and pride with the incoming officers’ new positions.
- To provide an opportunity for outgoing officers to reflect on their successes during their administration.
- To help formalize the end of the last administration and provide outgoing officers an opportunity to step down.
- To introduce incoming officers to the advisor in a more personal way.

Suggestions for effective transition:

- Arrange for a meeting with the outgoing and incoming officers and include the club advisor. Discuss past, current, and future issues so that the incoming leadership is prepared.
- Discuss the financial status of the club.
- Pass down records (financial, internal, etc.) during a transition meeting. Be sure to highlight important information.
- Create informational resource binders for every important leadership position in the organization.
- Create a reflection and goal setting session with the entire club membership. Find out what direction they want to take the club. Then, meet as an executive board to establish goals and objectives for the club.

**Adapted from the University of Notre Dame and the University of Connecticut.*

Student Activities Office Contact Information

Once again, thank you sharing of yourself as a student organization Advisor! You are one of UNC's most important resources. If you find yourself with questions or concerns, please contact the Student Activities Office at (970) 351-2871. And visit our website at: www.unco.edu/studentactivities

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