

**MARIETTA COLLEGE**

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STUDENT  
ORGANIZATION  
HANDBOOK

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**PREFACE**

This handbook has been designed for use by Registered Student Organizations at Marietta College. The information contained in this handbook is designed to facilitate the initiation and growth of student organizations and includes pertinent information that affects student organizations and their operations within the College.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Office of Student Activities and Greek Life is committed to improving the quality of life outside the classroom for all Marietta College students; in order to accomplish this, we offer a wide variety of programs ranging from leadership development to traditional events.

As a group of students with mutual interest(s), you are integral to this process. Students who are involved in student organizations are the emerging leaders of today and tomorrow. In an effort to help you be more effective, we have put together this Student Organization Handbook. This handbook contains information on establishing and maintaining your organization, planning programs and events, and taking advantage of campus resources. In addition, we hope to challenge you to provide the kinds of valuable learning experiences that you and your members deserve.

## **OFFICE OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND GREEK LIFE**

The Office of Student Activities and Greek Life recognizes the importance of co-curricular activities as an integral part of the college learning experience. Active participation in organizations provides an opportunity for the development of leadership skills, social interaction and a sense of participation in the campus community.

Many studies have shown students who become involved in co-curricular activities in college, benefit personally, socially, as well as academically. We encourage students to become involved in student life on campus and to participate in the many co-curricular activities offered. We believe being involved in the total College community offers students learning and personal development, and contributes to the overall satisfaction with the educational experience.

The Student Activities and Greek Life Staff has an opportunity to work in an advisory, educational, consulting and resource role. With that in mind, the Office of Student Activities and Greek Life supports student organizations in a number of ways. They include:

- Assisting students in becoming involved with student organizations which fit their purpose, projects and issues;
- Encouraging successful involvement by providing leadership and skills development opportunities, specialized programs for student organizations and resource information; and,
- Offering professional advising and an array of organizational support services.

The Office of Student Activities and Greek Life Staff encourages students to become involved in existing organizations or to establish new and different organizations. The office is located in the Student Life Office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Andrews Hall.

## **SECTION I**

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATION PROCEDURES**

### **DEFINITION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

A student organization is a group of students joined together in the pursuit of a common purpose that supports the mission and core values of Marietta College. All student organizations must follow College policies and procedures as set forth in this handbook, the Student Handbook, and the Marietta College Creed. Students wishing to form a new student organization must follow the recognition process outlined in this handbook.

### **MISSION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Student organizations provide a great opportunity for students to enhance their classroom learning and to develop their leadership skills outside the classroom. Through this enhanced learning and leadership development, students learn to integrate the experience and knowledge of the classroom with everyday experiences of living and working in a diverse society.

### **STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION**

At what point do you move from a group of individuals with a common interest into a student organization with a purpose, set of goals, and College backing? This section of the Student Organization Handbook will walk you through the recognition and registration processes from start to finish, outlining the steps in the process and demonstrating the benefits of going through recognition and registration. All forms for recognition and registration can be found at the end of the publication.

### **RECOGNITION CRITERIA**

In order to gain recognition, groups must meet the following criteria:

- The mission of the student organization must reflect the values and the mission of Marietta College.
- The services and activities offered by the organization must be directly related to the organization's mission and must comply with the policies and procedures of Marietta College.
- The mission, services and activities of the organization should be inherently different from any other already existing student organization.
- Each student organization must have an advisor who is a full-time member of the Marietta College faculty, staff, or administration.
- Each student organization must have a solid leadership board/structure and have at least 5 active members.

### **HOW TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

In order to begin a new student organization and become recognized by Marietta College the following steps should be taken:

1. Pick up a Student Organization Handbook and a "Steps to Starting a New Student Organization" Packet from the Student Life Office in Andrews Hall.
2. Hold organizational meetings with interested students prior to becoming recognized.

3. Select a Marietta College advisor. Advisors must be a full-time member of the Marietta College faculty, staff, or administration. Graduate assistants are not eligible to serve as advisors.
4. Meet with the Director of Student Activities & Greek Life for a new student organization consultation. The consultation will include an overview of student organization policies, constitutions and mission statements.
5. Create a constitution and mission statement for your organization.
6. Submit recognition application (See Forms & Resources) of the proposed organization's constitution, mission statement, and a list of possible services and activities to the Director of Student Activities & Greek Life.
7. The Director of Student Activities & Greek Life will review the application within 30 days of the application date. The Director of Student Activities & Greek Life will grant approval, request additional information, or deny the application.
8. Once fully recognized, the student organization will be afforded all the privileges of a recognized student organization.

### **RECOGNITION STATUS DEFINITIONS**

*Petitioning:* A group seeking recognized status.

*Recognized:* A student organization officially recognized by the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life.

*Registered:* A recognized student organization that has submitted current registration materials to the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life and has attended required workshops/roundtables.

*Inactive:* A recognized student organization that has not submitted current registration materials and/or attended required workshops/roundtables and, therefore, has no privileges.

*Probationary:* A recognized student organization may be placed on probation for a specific period with limited privileges as determined by the Director of Student Activities & Greek Life for one of the following:

- Lack of faculty/staff advisor
- Non-payment of college bills
- Privileges restricted by the Office of Student Life

*Suspended:* A recognized student organization may be suspended for disciplinary or financial reasons. Suspended student organizations lose all privileges granted registered student organizations. An organization may be suspended for one or more of the following reasons:

- Non-payment of college bills for more than 90 days
- An organization is in violation of the Marietta College Creed, Student Organization Handbook and/or Student Handbook
- An organization is in violation of state or federal laws

*Revocation:* A recognized student organization may have its recognized status revoked for one or more of the following reasons:

- Non-payment of college bills for more than 120 days
- An organization consistently and seriously violates the Marietta College Creed, Student Organization Handbook and/or Student Handbook
- An organization is not registered for four consecutive semesters
- Violation of state or federal laws

## **MAINTAINING RECOGNITION STATUS**

Once the Director of Student Activities & Greek Life recognizes a group, it is the organization's responsibility to register with the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life by the Friday before finals in the spring semester. Failure to register a recognized organization by this date will result in the expiration of privileges.

1. Student organizations must complete the annual registration packet in its entirety by the Friday before finals in the spring semester. The following information must be included in the registration packet:
  - Completed Officer/Membership Form – listing the names, campus box numbers, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the officers and advisor(s) of the organization. Subsequent changes in the officer information should be reported to the Director of Student Activities & Greek Life within 10 working days of an election or changes.
  - Advisor Authorization Form – signed by the Advisor that verifies his/her status as a college employee and willingness to serve as the organization's advisor. Any changes in adviser information should be reported to the Director of Student Activities & Greek Life within 10 working days of the change.
  - Revised Constitution and bylaws – copies of current governing documents (constitution and bylaws) must be kept on file in the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life. Should an issue or controversy arise, the most current constitution on file in the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life will be considered the official constitution. If affiliated with a national or parent organization, a copy of its constitution and/or bylaws must also be on file.
  - List of all current members of the organization.
2. In addition, attendance at the mandatory Presidents Roundtable offered each semester is required. If the president/executive officer is unable to attend another officer may serve as the organization's representative.

## **PRIVILEGES OF A PETITIONING STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

During the waiting period, a petitioning student organization can take advantage of the following privileges to aid in finding potential members and forming a group:

- Access to the Student Activities and Greek Life staff and resource materials;
- Posting privileges – prospective organizations will be allowed to publicize for no more than three months;

- Opportunity to participate in Club MC at the beginning of the fall semester;
- Use of campus facilities for recruitment and organization meetings and functions for no more than three months.

### **PRIVILEGES OF A RECOGNIZED AND REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

All recognized student organizations must register with the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life in order to obtain the following benefits and privileges.

- Access to the Student Activities and Greek Life staff and resource materials;
- Posting privileges across campus;
- Opportunity to participate in Club MC at the beginning of the fall semester;
- Student organization financial account through the Marietta College business office;
- Ability to charge items at the print shop and mailroom to financial account in the business office;
- Eligibility to receive funds from Student Senate;
- Referral of students interested in joining your organization;
- Use of campus facilities for meetings and functions;
- Use of college owned vehicles;
- Opportunity to participate in official College events, such as Homecoming and Family Weekend;
- Receive campus mailings from the Student Activities & Greek Life office including the monthly SOLiD newsletter;
- Use of student organization lockers in Andrews Hall;
- Permission to create a student organization web page that is linked to the web page of the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life;

### **ADVISOR SELECTION**

Every recognized student organization must have an advisor who is a full-time member of the Marietta College faculty, staff, or administration. The following guidelines apply to advisor selection:

- A graduate assistant shall not be asked to serve as the official advisor for a student organization but may serve as an additional advisor.
- Any given individual may not serve as advisor for more than two student organization at any given time.

Advisor responsibilities:

- Assist the organization to function in accordance with its mission as stated in the organization's constitution.
- The advisor serves as a liaison between the college and the organization he/she is advising.
- Become familiar with the events and activities sponsored by the organization when possible attend the student organization's meetings.
- Provide advice and counsel by sharing expertise, insights, and making recommendations when appropriate.

- An advisor may not plan, encourage, or engage in hazing. He or she must report all hazing activities directly to the Director of Student Activities & Greek Life.
- Help prevent any violations of student organization policies and the College Creed. An advisor must be familiar with the Student Organization Handbook and the College Creed.
- Attend off-campus events and/or retreats.

## **EXPECTATIONS AND STANDARDS FOR ORGANIZATIONS**

Establishment of, and membership in a student organization provides members a number of rights, opportunities, and benefits; however, there are a number of expectations and standards which the organization and its members must uphold. In addition the expectations and standards listed below, student organizations must abide by all student organization policies listed in the Student Handbook, Student Organization Handbook and the College Creed.

### **Expectations**

The following are general expectations the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life has for student organizations at Marietta College:

- Uphold the ideals and standards of Marietta College which are stated in the College Creed;
- Maintain an active, worthwhile student-centered program;
- Elect officers and chairpersons who meet organizational and college standards;
- Manage financial matters in such a way as to justify on-going expenses;
- Have an advisor, as previously mentioned, and keep the advisor informed of all meetings, events, and business of the organization;
- File updates on officers, chairpersons, advisor(s), and a general calendar of events with the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life.

### **Standards**

The following standards are provided by the Office of Student Activities & Greek Life for student organizations at Marietta College to ensure these organizations support the overall educational mission of the College. Student organizations at Marietta College should strive to:

- Provide opportunities for high academic achievement through assistance and reward programs;
- Provide opportunities for personal development through leadership positions, self-awareness programming, and regular social events;
- Provide ways to give service to others through community service and campus outreach projects;
- Promote Marietta College through active participation in college events and positive relationships with other organizations;
- Develop a clear definition of goals and ideals, and educate members on the group's identity.

## SECTION II ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

### **You and your organization**

#### *Getting started with your organization*

- Arrange for an informal meeting and make sure all members understand the time and place of the meeting.
- Get to the members early enough to have friendly exchanges with some of the individual group members as they arrive.
- Make sure the members know each other – help them remember each other’s names.
- Draw the group into a discussion to bring out their desires, expectations and needs. Try to find out what they want the organization (or committee) to do for them.
- Examine the established goals and objectives for the group.

#### *Establish Contact with the Group*

- Develop a friendly enough relation with at least two or three members so that you can ask them after the meeting “how did things go? How could things have gone better?”
- Observe the faces and postures of the members. They can tell you a great deal about the individual’s interest and the value of the experience to them.
- Do the members participate enough for you to judge whether they really understand the purpose of the organization?
- What does attendance tell you about the success in “keeping contact?”
- What you talk about should be partly determined by the expressed needs and interests of the group.
- What happens when the meeting breaks up? Does a “rap session” continue?

#### *Help the group grow*

- Encourage members in their discussion to bring out examples from their own experiences to tie in with the discussion.
- The group should have more ideas per meeting and raise more questions than before.
- Things should begin to move along smoothly with you doing less talking or demonstrating than before.
- Encourage members to spontaneously work on problems between meetings.
- Encourage discussion, reading, practice, trying out.
- Encourage group members to raise more intelligent questions and problems.

### **What makes a good leader!**

- **Be well prepared** – Know leadership takes work as well as practice.
- **Be group minded** – Regard yourself as a part of the group. Say “We” instead of “I”; do not try to run the crowd. Instead, be guided by the crowd’s wishes.
- **Be open** – Be understanding and friendly.
- **Be poised** – Don’t let irritations bother you.
- **Have humility** – Be confident, but not too cocky. Don’t be afraid to reveal that you don’t know everything.

- **Be a hard worker** – Don't ask anyone to do something you yourself would not be willing to do.
- **Be responsible** – Live up to your words and duties.
- **Be cooperative** – Know how to work with others and enjoy working with them.
- **Be a fun-lover** – Enjoy life...the simple things as well as the big.
- **Have vision** – Help people in your group learn and grow through the activities.
- **Be clear** – Be able to express yourself effectively.
- **Be proud** – Be proud of what you do. Take pride in being a leader, but earn it.
- **Be courteous** – The words “please” and “thank you” pay dividends.
- **Think ahead** – Know members' opinions and be ready to meet changing situations.
- **Set goals** – Make them high, but be sure they are reachable.
- **Take advice** – But do your own thinking.
- **Get the facts** – Analyze them before you draw conclusions.
- **Do your best** – At all times. Plan to make the most effective use of your time.

### **Evaluate yourself as a leader: Are you growing as a Leader?**

- Do you find it increasingly easy to relax and not feel you have to answer and “let them know I know?”
- Do you find it increasingly easy to say “I don't know, let's find out about that?”
- Are you finding it more and more fun to throw solutions out at the group rather than “dishing out” the answers?
- Are you thinking more and more about how to draw certain members into the discussion and how to interpret member's remarks to one another?
- Are you finding that your major problems of leadership are shifting from “having enough” to problems of “getting better participation” and “finding out what they really need?”
- Are you beginning to feel that you “belong” rather than that you are “doing well?”

**Remember:** It is the responsibility of the leader to recognize how the group is functioning. You cannot overlook the other loyalties and responsibilities of the members. In case of conflict, always try to find an alternate plan which will be mutually satisfying to both demands. Conflicts within your group are accentuated by misunderstandings. Try to help members understand each other. Make sure everybody has a chance to participate in the conversation, planning, etc. Be alert to the individual's problems, but help the council or organization members focus on the group's problems – otherwise there may be no group.

### **The art of relaxation**

The best strategy for avoiding stress is to learn how to relax. Unfortunately, many people try to relax at the same pace that they lead the rest of their lives. For a while, tune out your worries about time, productivity, and “doing right.” You will find satisfaction in just being, without striving. Find activities that give you pleasure and that are good for your mental and physical wellbeing. Forget about always winning. Focus on relaxation, enjoyment and health. Be good to yourself.

## Signs of Stress

- General irritability, hyperactivity or depression.
- Pounding of the heart.
- Dryness of the throat or mouth.
- Impulsive behavior, emotional instability.
- The overpowering urge to cry or run and hide.
- Feelings of unreality, weakness, or dizziness.
- “Floating anxiety” or fear without knowing why you are afraid.
- Emotional tension and alertness, feelings of being “keyed up.”
- Trembling, nervous ticks.
- Tendency to be easily startled.
- High pitched, nervous laughter.
- Stuttering and other speech difficulties.
- Insomnia
- Frequent need to urinate.
- Diarrhea, indigestion, vomiting.
- Migraine headaches.

## Ten Commandments of good communication

Every good leader today realizes that communication is the most vital management tool. S/he is aware that s/he not only communicates with words, but through attitudes and actions. Communication obviously encompasses all human behavior that results in an exchange of meaning. The following ten commandments of good communication might serve as help to improve a leader’s skills of communication with superiors, subordinates and associates.

1. **Seek to clarify your ideas before communicating** – A prime reason for ineffective communication is the result of the initiator not having a clear concept of what s/he intended to communicate in the first place.
2. **Examine the purpose of each communication** – A clear determination must be made of what the communicator really wants to accomplish with his/her message. A good guideline to follow is “Don’t try to accomplish too much with each communication.” The sharper the focus of the message, the greater its chances of success.
3. **Consider the total physical and human setting whenever you communicate**– Meaning and intent are conveyed by more than words alone. The circumstance under which a communication is transmitted has a great deal to do with the effectiveness of that communication. The physical setting, the social climate and past practices will have an impact upon the net results of effective communication.
4. **Consult with others, when appropriate, in planning communications** – Such consultation often helps give additional insight and objectivity to the message. Moreover, those who have helped plan the communication will tend to give their active support.
5. **Be mindful, while you communicate, of the overtones as well as the content of your message** – Your tone of voice, expression and apparent receptiveness to the

- responses of others all have tremendous impact on those you wish to reach. Although frequently overlooked, these subtleties of communication often affected a listener's reaction to a message even more than its basic content.
6. **Take the opportunity, when it arises, to convey something of help and value to the receiver** – People on the job are most responsive to the leader that values the message of the receiver and are perceived as helpers.
  7. **Follow up on your communication** – This can be done by asking questions, by encouraging the receiver to express his/her reactions, by follow up contacts and by subsequent review of performance. Make certain that every important communication receives feedback so that complete understanding and appropriate actions result.
  8. **Communicate for tomorrow as well as today** – Be sure that long range interests and goals of the organization are taken into consideration.
  9. **Be sure your actions support your communications** – In final analysis, the most persuasive kind of communication is not what you say, but what you do. When a person's actions or attitude contradict his/her words, others tend to discount what s/he said.
  10. **Seek not only to be understood but to understand. Be a good listener** – Listening is one of the most important, most difficult and most neglected skills in communication. Only when you are listening can you detect the overtones and hear the feedback of the speaker's communication. A person cannot talk and listen at the same time.

## **Goal-setting**

### **Goals**

Goals are statements describing what your organization wishes to accomplish. Goals are the ends towards which your efforts will be directed. Remember to change your goals from term to term or year to year, depending on your organization.

### **Why set goals?**

- Gives direction, helps avoid chaos
- Can help motivate members
- Clarify and communicate what you are striving for
- Define your organization
- Are a basis for recognition, accomplishment and realizing success
- Saves time and makes the group become more aware of problems in time to develop solutions

### **Objectives**

Objectives are descriptions of exactly what is to be done and are derived from goals. Objectives are clear, specific statements of measurable tasks that will be accomplished as steps towards reaching goals. They are short-term and have deadlines. You will probably have a number of objectives for each of your goals.

### **Setting Goals**

It is best to set goals as a group. This will create many positive results.

- Better commitment. People support what they help create.
- More motivation among members and officers.

- Clarity of goals. Better understanding of goals and the rationale for selecting them.
- Better goals more ideas/opinions in the decision process.

### **Steps for setting and achieving goals**

1. Brainstorming goals with the group
2. Choose the goals you want to fulfill from the brain-storming list
3. Prioritize as a group
4. Determine objectives for each goal, then a plan of action for each objective
5. Move into action and follow through
6. Continually evaluate your progress
7. Be flexible; allow your objectives to change to meet new circumstances

### **Action planning**

1. What is to be done (your objective)?
2. How is it to be accomplished?
3. What resources are needed – people, money, materials?
4. Who will carry it through?
5. When will it be accomplished?
6. What results are expected and how will they be measured?

### **Delegation**

Part of building a team is getting people involve in the group. If you try to do everything yourself you will not only burn yourself out, but you will find little support for your event or program. There is an old saying “people support what they help to create.” By using delegation, everyone takes responsibility for a part of the event and completes the giant puzzle. The following are a few tips about delegation that should help pave your way to a successful program:

#### **By delegating you –**

- Allow more people to become involved
- Distribute the workload
- Identify talents and interests of other members of your team and give them all the opportunity to shine
- Help prevent burnout for all concerned
- Help the organization run smoother

#### **What and when to delegate –**

- Matters that keep repeating themselves
- Minor decisions made most frequently
- Details that take large amounts of time
- When you feel someone has particular qualifications which suit the task
- When someone expresses an interest in the task

#### **What and when NOT to delegate –**

- Something you yourself would not be willing to do (the menial work)
- Something involving trust or confidence
- Emergencies
- Appraisals (telling someone they did well or poorly)
- Jobs requiring your position

### **To whom do you delegate –**

- Don't overlook the "unlikely people"
- Delegate to the person with the most unused time
- Delegate away from the "core" group of busy people

### **Methods of delegating**

- Ask for volunteers: interest and belief in something is one of the greatest motivators for success.
- Suggest someone you feel would be good for the task. Silence in response to a request for volunteers does not necessarily mean lack of interest. Often someone will not volunteer for a task because s/he lacks self confidence.
- Assign the task to someone. They can always decline.
- Spread the good around: "good jobs" give people status and value. Make sure the same people don't always get the good tasks.

### **Common problems in student organizations**

Listed below are five common problems which may be encountered in the groups you lead or of which you are a member. Should any of these be insurmountable or if you would like assistance in addressing the problems, please feel free to stop by the Student Life Office.

#### **Lack of Participation**

##### ***Possible causes***

- Members may feel insecure
- More aggressive members may not give others a chance to participate
- Members may not know how to participate
- Members may not be interested in activities

##### ***Suggested solutions***

- Make sure members have a part in developing objectives
- Make sure members have a part in planning programs and activities
- Set up programs and activities with a goal of 100% participation of the members
- Provide chances for younger members to serve on a committee where they can gain experience before giving them a big assignment they might not be able to handle
- Promote a friendly, helpful group spirit where no one laughs at or ridicules others
- Take the opportunity to seek out timid individuals and encourage them to participate

#### **Failure to accept responsibility**

##### ***Possible causes***

- Members or leaders may feel insecure
- Members or leaders may have other things to do that are more important to themselves
- Members may not know what is expected of them

### ***Possible solutions***

- Make sure members and leaders have a part in planning the program and that they understand the objectives
- Make sure leaders and members understand what is expected of them when they are asked to serve
- Help members or leaders understand the importance of assignments
- Try to match assignments with members' abilities
- Give recognition and thanks for work done

### **Poor Standards of Operations**

#### ***Possible causes***

- Members may lack interest
- Members may not know what is expected of them
- Group may have fallen into bad habits
- Some members may feel insecure and are trying to gain attention

#### ***Suggested solutions***

- Discuss problems with members. What standards do they want?
- Encourage members to state their expectations
- Hold workshops for members and leaders for increased knowledge and skills in such areas as parliamentary procedures
- Change meeting time if it does not fit the group

### **Maintaining Involvement**

#### ***Possible causes***

- Some people may not know about the group, what it does, or who may belong
- Present members may not try to welcome new members
- The organization may not be of interest to present or prospective members
- Some members may not have a way to get to meetings
- Other groups may have more attractive programs
- The group may have served its purpose and is no longer needed

#### ***Suggested solutions***

- Involve members in setting group objectives
- Involve members in planning the programs they want
- Involve members in carrying out the program. They should have challenging responsibilities which they can carry out successfully
- Give members recognition for their contribution
- Dissolve the organization. No interest, no need

### **Leadership self-evaluation**

As a leader in your organization, you have a great deal of responsibility for the success of your organization. Your leadership must help your group move through the stages of understanding the group, developing a group philosophy, defining group goals, planning and organizing all phases of group functions and activities, following through on all group projects and commitments and evaluating your group performance.

In the first part of this evaluation, rate your own leadership abilities on a scale of high-medium-low. Good use of this evaluation will help you best utilize your strong points and further develop your weaker points.

1. My organization's respect for me	H	M	L
2. My respect for my organization as a whole	H	M	L
3. My respect for individual members of my organization	H	M	L
4. My ability to influence my organization as a whole	H	M	L
5. My ability to motivate my organization into action	H	M	L
6. My ability to stimulate positive discussion	H	M	L
7. My ability to involve members in decision making	H	M	L
8. My ability to guide my organization in developing goals	H	M	L
9. My ability to guide my organization in carrying out plans	H	M	L
10. My ability to teach the concept of belonging	H	M	L
11. My personal ability to lead	H	M	L
12. My ability to be a mediator in disputes	H	M	L
13. My ability to make all members feel important and needed	H	M	L

Next, list responses to the following statements:

1. My strongest points of leadership are:
2. My weakest points of leadership are:
3. Things I would like to do in relation to my office:
4. Things I hope my organization will do this year:

### **RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING**

A successful meeting does not “just happen” with the right people. Further, it is the end result of careful planning, implementation and evaluation. The amount of time required to initiate the following steps for success vary with the different kinds of meetings. The following brief outline can be directly related to planning your program as well as your meetings.

#### **Before your meeting: Planning**

1. Decide the purpose of the meeting
  - a. Problem solving
  - b. Information giving
  - c. Committee function
  - d. Entertainment planning
  - e. Discussion group
2. Determine the time and place for the meeting with regards to when the majority of members are available. Reserve the room through the appropriate MC office. Give notice in advance of the meeting and follow up with participants.
3. Be aware of, and ready for, who will be attending.
4. Group comfort: Keep the following in mind when making arrangements
  - a. Arrange seating to allow for face-to-face interactions
  - b. Provide a blackboard/dry erase board for brain storming or group discussion

- c. Provide committee members with paper, writing instruments and copies of any charts, calendars or other information that will be helpful
  - d. Provide a room free from excessive noise or visual distractions
  - e. If needed, provide name tags
5. Plan the meeting
    - a. Always plan the agenda ahead of time; i.e., what topics are to be covered, in what order will they come, old business or new business, how much discussion, announcements, etc.
    - b. Consult resource people before the meeting to know as much as possible before the meeting starts.
    - c. **DON NOT MEET JUST FOR THE SAKE OF MEETING!!!** If the agenda is not important enough, postpone the meeting
  6. Balance the length of time in order to keep people interested. Adjust the length of your meetings to allow for sufficient discussion of meeting topics, yet not so long as to lose members' interests.
  7. Decide on the style and attitude that best lends itself to the purpose and topic of the specific meeting; i.e., autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, stern, friendly, direct, indirect, etc.
  8. Determine how you are going to keep the members involved in the meeting, the group, etc.
  9. Make use of publicity if needed, and don't forget the details, i.e., food, set-up, special needs, etc.

### **During the meeting**

1. Keep pad and pencil (or laptop) on hand to jot down notes, ideas, volunteers, etc. or designate a recording secretary to do this.
2. Hints:
  - a. Always be on time
  - b. Be pleasant
  - c. Be flexible
  - d. Be responsive to everyone's suggestions
  - e. Stay on the subject being discussed
  - f. Remain patient and tolerant
  - g. Be aware of individuals' expressions, comments and actions
  - h. Set a time limit and stick closely to it
  - i. Remain calm under pressure or when frustrated
  - j. Give others a chance to express their views by including everyone at the meeting
3. Have other people observe the meeting and offer you criticism, both positive and negative.

### **Ten tips to enhance the meeting**

1. Provide agendas for all members. It is easier for members to feel involved when they can see the plan of the meeting.

2. Invite and facilitate communication. Formal classroom style seating gives members the non-verbal clue that all action and wisdom comes from the front of the room.
3. Plan an activity for those who arrive early. This may include a question for discussion, paired interview, etc.
4. Avoid long introductions of speakers, consultants, etc. by providing printed information on anyone you feel needs a long intro. When possible, give a short, warm, relevant welcome.
5. Outline in advance any time limits that speakers, reporters, etc. have when making presentations. It is better for them to know beforehand what the limits are than to cut them short.
6. Utilize all your resources. Have more than one resource person available, so alternatives can be more openly and fully identified.
7. Deal with the feelings of participants. Often groups are so task oriented that they skip even obvious feelings that need to be dealt with in order to more effectively complete the task.
8. Keep minutes. Minutes serve as a record of the proceedings that can then be used as a reference. These can then become the history of the organization.
9. Be sure decisions and commitments are followed through. This will carry the group “into the future” and guarantee a pay off.
10. Undoubtedly, you can add additional tips from your experiences with meetings that will be helpful in ensuring better meetings for you, your participants, and your program.

### **After the Meeting: Follow up**

1. Do what you say you will do between meetings – keep your credibility.
2. Type up the minutes/notes taken at the meeting and distribute the copies.
3. Evaluation
  - a. Did the meeting accomplish its purpose?
  - b. Were the needs of the group satisfied?
  - c. What were the strong and weak points of each part of the meeting?
  - d. What were the suggestions, ideas or comments from the members and how might they be implemented next time?

### **Agenda Preparation**

An agenda is an outline for an organizational meeting that should be written and distributed before the meeting, or at least at the beginning of the meeting. It contains the order of items that will need to be covered during the meeting.

### **Aids to facilitating**

Here are examples of comments that promote clear communication to help get the job done:

- “Let’s check that out with the rest of the group.”
- “Do you see it differently?”
- “How do you see the problem?”
- “Sounds like that’s a problem we ought to address.”

- “I still don’t have a handle on the real problem. What is it?”
- “What would you like to be doing?”
- “Oh, your perception is... (Describe). That’s how you see the problem?”
- “Sounds like this is a real problem.”
- “What are we doing right now?”
- “Say a little more about that.”
- “What’s the purpose of this presentation?”
- “Hold on. I think we’re talking about two problems, problem X and problem Y. I think they are both important, but let’s talk about them one at a time.”
- “It’s a big agenda today. Do you want to get through the whole agenda? (yes) Okay, if I push through it too fast let me know.”
- “What do you want to have happen?”

### **Information on rules of order**

*Use for reference during meetings*

#### **The order of business**

A typical order of business includes:

- Call to order
- Roll call (or determine quorum)
- Reading and approval of the minutes from the last meeting
- Reports of officers and standing and special committees
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Adjournment

Possible additions: invocation or ceremony, communications, announcements, a speaker, etc.

#### **Typical language used by the Chair**

- “I call this meeting to order.”
- “Will the secretary (state the members name), please call the roll?”
- “We have a quorum. Will the secretary please read the minutes of the last meeting?”
- “Are there any corrections to the minutes?”
- “If there are no (further) corrections, the minutes stand approved (as read/as corrected).”
- “We will now move to officers’ reports. Will the treasurer (state name), please submit his/her report?”
- “Are there any questions concerning the Treasurer’s report?” If none, “Thank you, will Vice President (state name), please give his/her report?”
- “We will now move on to unfinished business. At the last meeting Member AAA from the social programming committee moved that...Is there discussion?”
- “The meeting is now open for new business.”
- “The Chair recognizes...”
- “It has been moved and seconded that...Is there and discussion?”

- “We will now vote on the motion...All in favor say ‘Aye’. All opposed say ‘Nay’. The motion is carried (voting by a show of hands or ballot can also occur).
- “If there is no objection, the meeting is hereby adjourned.” (Or, “is there a motion to adjourn?”)

### **Types of motions**

- The **main motion** introduces new business before the group. They take the form of proposing actions. Example: “I move that we reduce our first semester dues for new members.”
- **Motions that return** to a question previously addressed by the assembly provide ways to readdress a motion considered earlier, but in the same meeting. Example: “I move we reconsider the motion, that we reduce...:
- **Subsidiary motions** propose various ways of dealing with a main motion that is on the floor. Example: “I move that we refer this motion to committee.”
- **Privileged motions** deal with issues requiring immediate attention but not related to the motion on the floor. Example: “I move that we recess until 7:00pm this evening so that members may attend the dinner program.”
- **Incidental motions** deal with procedural matters that must be resolved before the meeting continues. Example: “Point of order. We do not have a quorum.”

### **Handling the main motion**

1. Members ask for and is recognized by the chair,
2. Member says, “I move that...” Another member seconds the motion, or the chair asks, “Is there a second?” (If the motion is coming from committee then a second is not required).
3. The Chair restates the motion and asks for discussion
4. Members ask to be recognized and enter into debate. Maker of the motion has first right to the floor. Debate only on merits of motion, addressed only to Chair.
5. Debate is closed when no members seek floor, or when previous question (the motion) is moved, seconded and voted upon.
6. Chair puts question to vote.
7. Chair announces results of vote.
8. While a main motion is pending, no other main motions may be introduced. Privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions are permitted.

### **Basic contents of minutes**

- The kind of meeting being held: regular, special, adjourned
- The name of the organization
- The time, date, and place of the meeting
- The names of the secretary and presiding officers serving at the meeting
- For small gatherings, the names of all members present and a list of those absent
- Approval of the previous minutes, and any corrections
- Summaries of reports (separate paragraphs for each)
- Exact final wordings of all main motions, with names of movers and seconders

- The results of votes on main motions. When votes are counted or taken by ballot, the numbers of votes on both sides are usually included
- Motions that have been tabled or postponed
- Points of order raised and appeals made, with the chair's ruling on each
- Announcements
- The time of adjournment
- The signatures of the acting secretary and chair

### **Types of votes**

- Voice vote – most often used
- Rising vote – members stand to be counted
- Show of hands – used in smaller groups instead of voice or rising votes, if no member objects
- General (or unanimous) consent – members vote by remaining silent when asked for objections
- Ballot or roll call – must be done when majority orders it

### **How to have an effective executive board**

#### **The function of an executive board**

- It is the clearing house for all organizational problems. This includes problem identification as well as the delegation of responsibilities.
- It coordinates all organizational activities both within the organization and with other organizations.
- It takes official action required by the By-Laws.

#### **Executive board membership and meetings**

- Membership usually includes the officers, the standing committee chairs and the advisor.
- Executive boards are most necessary in large organizations.
- The frequency of Executive board meetings will depend upon the effectiveness of the organization's business and the efficiency of the officers. Most groups find it helpful to have an Executive Board meeting to prepare for each regular meeting of the group.

#### **Some ideas for success**

- The Executive Board must be thoroughly informed on the organization's By-Laws, objectives and traditions. These items should be fully discussed at its first meeting of the year.
- The Vice President should exercise much of his/her responsibility in the Executive Board. Some organizations name him/her chairperson of the Board, and the President presides over the general meetings.
- Strive for the idea of teamwork on the Executive Board. The members should be encouraged to support others on the committee with ideas for the success of specific assignments.
- It is at Executive Board meetings that the advisor can be most helpful. In this small group s/he can speak more openly about organizational problems. Advisors

generally prefer to remain in the background during the general meeting of organizations.

- The Executive Board should be allowed the authority it deserves. The tendency is to make a play for “democracy” by restricting the activities of this most important group.
- Important business should be discussed in Executive Board meetings before it is brought up at a general meeting.
- Business requiring general membership support should always be fully considered by the general membership to the point of obtaining “felt commitments,” but the Executive Board should give a great deal of thought to the problems in advance. It should develop various alternatives and prepare checklists, panel discussions, role playing, etc., in order to stimulate general membership involvement in the ultimate decision.

### **Recruiting members**

Your organization must attract new members in order to survive. You may do this by formal procedures as in the case of Greek rush, or informally, but it must be done. The following are suggestions on how you can build your group’s membership numbers.

- Tell a friend about your group – invite him/her to a meeting.
- Talk about the benefits of membership. Tell people what is in it for them.
- Put up posters inviting people to an organizational meeting.
- Identify target students who might be interested in your group. Call them, send them a postcard or invite them personally to your organizational meeting.
- Promote group events.
- Get into the campus newspaper.
- Be active in the Student Senate, if possible. People like to associate with leaders.
- Have a booth at Club MC and other large campus wide events. Sell your organization, be visible and have fun.
- Do group projects that make you visible on campus and in the community.
- Ask for assistance from the office of Student Activities and Greek Life.

### **Programming**

Programming is the art of creating, planning and implementing activities that help build and provide a sense of community, and addresses the student, organizational and community needs, while providing leadership opportunities for those involved in the planning and implementation. Programs can offer a diversion from academic life while providing a cultural, educational and/or an entertaining experience.

When initiating a program, keep the following question in mind:

- Who will do the program? Will it be your group alone or will you co-sponsor the program with an academic department, another group or an outside agency?
- How will the program be financed? Will it be paid for from the organization’s budget or treasury? Will the revenue from the program cover the cost?
- Where will the program be held? How many people do you expect? What size room do you need? Does the program fit the facility you’d like to use?

- Who is the intended audience for the program? Will the audience consist of students, the entire College community, members of your organization or academic department?
- What type of publicity will be needed for this program? Who is the target Audience?
- What College services will be needed to produce the program? Will you need to have food catered, maintenance, security, a sound system, printing, and transportation?

## **Program Planning**

The following is a list of things an organization needs to consider when planning a program.

1. Leadership
  - a. Who will be the central person in charge?
  - b. What committees will you need to have involved in the planning?
  - c. Has an advisor been contacted about the event?
2. Resources
  - a. How much will the event cost?
  - b. How will it be funded?
  - c. Where will the funds come from, and how long will it take to get the money?
  - d. Who will be in charge of the money?
  - e. What other organizations could help you with the event, either with food, prizes or money?
3. Speakers, materials, equipment & bands
  - a. Have you received a contract from the speaker, singer, or band?
  - b. What special needs do you have and who will be responsible for making sure they are met?
4. Food requests
  - a. Have you contracted Chartwells for the refreshments?
  - b. How will food be paid for?
  - c. Have you secured needed paper items such as napkins, plates, cups?
  - d. What about trash?
5. Scheduling
  - a. What is the best time to have the event?
  - b. Have you checked the campus calendar for any conflicting events?
6. Advertising
  - a. How do you plan on marketing your event?
  - b. What materials will you need for publicity?
  - c. Who will do the publicity?
7. Clean-up
  - a. What specific tasks need to be done?
  - b. When does the facility need to be cleaned up?
  - c. Do you have the equipment to clean it up?
  - d. Who will be responsible for making sure the facility gets cleaned?
8. Follow-up/Evaluation

- a. How will you know if the event was a success?
- b. Has all the money been accounted for and receipts turned in?
- c. Have thank you notes been sent?
- d. Are there records for the people in charge next year?

### **Low cost programming**

We often find ourselves in the position of wanting to do some kind of unique program but lack the funds to carry it off. In circumstances such as this, a little creativity can go a long way toward having a successful event. The suggestions listed below are examples of activities you can do under the heading of low cost programs. Try a few out. Better yet, use this as a guide for your own ideas. We challenge each of you to develop a “cheapie.” We think it will be worth the non-expense.

#### **Lecture/Demonstration**

- Shop the yellow pages. You will be amazed at the amount of information and ideas you can get from the phone book. The people you contact will very often do a program for you for the cost of gas or at no charge. *Example: Veterinary Clinic – a veterinarian will do a program on how to take care of your puppy, bird, iguana, etc.*
- Use campus organizations for programs
- Utilize faculty and community (Alumni also count) who have a particular hobby or area of interest. Many professionals are happy to speak in an area of interest they have outside their academic background.

#### **Recreation**

- Sponsor free foosball, pool, backgammon, etc. lessons in the Gathering Place. It will give students something to do with their free time as well as give them a chance to learn new skills or improve on existing ones.
- Hold a bike rally, canoe race, ultimate Frisbee tournament, etc and craft fair, etc.
- Do a program on getting your car ready for the winter, auto tune-ups or what you should know before buying ski equipment.

#### **Cultural Arts**

- Do a photo display of students. Contact instructors and students and reserve gallery space (if possible).
- Art shows – aside from the obvious painting, sculpture, and photo exhibits – you can do baseball card exhibits, birdhouse collections, stamps and coins, comic books. You would be amazed at what people and fellow students collect.
- Utilize the fine arts and music departments of other colleges and universities. Many of them have musicians and artists willing to come for a performance, demonstration, master class, etc.

#### **Music**

- Capitalize on any student music recital. Also, contact community and local school musicians about recitals they have scheduled and ask if they would be willing to have their recitals on campus.

- Rent some cheapie silent movies and provide live piano accompaniment and popcorn (keep in mind all copyright laws, for more information contact the Director of Student Activities and Greek Life).
- Work with our international students for a night of decidedly different musical enjoyment.
- Set up a student poetry reading with musical accompaniment.
- Work with the music department staff for a one evening program on the classical influences in modern rock.

Whatever you do, keep in mind that you are not aiming to make a big splash with your programs. Don't be disappointed if you expect 300 people to show up and you only get 15. The program can still be a great success in the eyes of the people who attend.

### **Programming: the pitfalls**

- Not knowing where or how to look for resources. Be patient and persistent.
- Repeated use of the same individuals. The same individuals, though they may be excellent resources, can be over used.
- Know your program and your resources. Meet or talk to your resources and form an impression before making a commitment.
- If your needs and interests are not adequately expressed, you may not get exactly what you want.
- The purpose of programming is defeated if you simply program for the things you personally like. Get to know the interests of other people.
- Bad timing. Some programs are seasonal and this more appropriate at certain times of the year.
- Insufficient publicity. Spread the news about the program. Don't keep it a secret or act like you have something to hide.
- Unimaginative program, posters and/or publicity. Get their attention! Be daring!
- Not enough advance notice. Publicize your program in advance so group members can make the time in their schedules.
- Putting your advertising up too far in advance. People forget and posters get torn down. Always re-publicize a day or two before to make sure everyone remembers.
- Waiting until the end of the semester. Packing all of the programs in at the last minute. Those who wait too long run out of time altogether.
- Too limited distribution. A single isolated poster in an obscure location won't do the job.
- Conflicts with other activities and events. Keep up with the calendar of campus events. Learn what events your group is likely to attend. Do not try to compete with the biggies.
- Unrealistically high expectations for an event. Be honest with yourself and your presenter.
- Poor location. You should select a site that is not only acceptable but easy to find, comfortable and relatively distraction free.
- Don't leave anything to chance. Plan and prepare: BE READY.

## **How to promote your event**

When planning a program, you will be concerned with the best way to inform your audience of the event. Before you can plan a successful advertising campaign, it is important to keep the following in mind:

- You and your committee must know your program inside and out before you can convince a stranger that it is worth attending!
- Your promotion should be made of an established plan of action based on persuasive communication (including the use of ticket sales, advertising, and publicity) which makes people aware of the program and attracts and convinces them to attend a program.
- Know what kind of audience you want. Brainstorm with your committee members to decide what will motivate the public to attend your program and plan your campaign.

## **Determine your audience**

Everyone knows a good promotional campaign is essential for the success of a program, whether it is a concert, film, lecture, dance, or coffeehouse event. Since the right promotion for your program depends on the type of program, it might be helpful to think about the questions below before you start your promotion.

- Why are you programming this event?
- It is recreational, cultural, and educational? Do you wish to make a profit, break even, or merely call the community's attention to some neglected area?
- What type of program is it?
- Can the audience participate, or is it a "sit down and listen" type?
- To whom do you want to attract?
- Students, Faculty, (which departments?) People from the community, or special interest, such as those interested in art, music or cinema?
- What time will the event be held?
- Where will the event be held?
- The size of the room selected will determine how many people will be able to attend. This will determine the amount and type of promotion needed. If the event is held off-campus you might need to give directions.

## **Promotion and Publicity Techniques**

The list of techniques below is by no way complete. Instead, it is hoped that this list will spark other ideas or gimmicks which will promote your events more efficiently.

- Logo – a logo is a trademark or symbol that is consistently associated with a product, event or series. An example would be a strip of film or a projector silhouette for events in a film series. A logo should be used consistently on all visual publicity materials that focus on one event or program of series.
- Giveaways – giveaways always attract attention and provide the individual with a souvenir to take home as a reminder of the event. These may include: bumper stickers, bookmarks, posters, blotters, pocket calendars, etc.

- Displays – Set up displays at tables in the lobby of high traffic locations (after receiving approval). Obtain or compile press kits from agencies, which may include photos and reviews, biographies, sample records, books, newspaper articles, etc.
- Living Displays – Use sandwich boards to publicize events; hang them on people and have them walk around campus. Have a graphic artist make posters for an upcoming event in the middle of a well-travelled area. Use costumed people to pass out information. Publicity stunts can be used to double a program's publicity. Create "extemporaneous happenings" and while the crowd forms, pass out leaflets and spread the word. Create a core group of people with extensive information about the program who will then speak to campus clubs and other organizations. One-to-one contact is time consuming but is often the most productive means of publicity.
- Utilize other programs – Have the master of ceremonies at an event make an announcement about your program. Co-sponsor some events with other organizations – there are more people to get the word out.
- Teaser campaigns – Use teasers in the form of ads, posters, buttons, pins, radio announcements, newspaper ads, etc. to begin a publicity campaign. A teaser campaign usually is begun several weeks before the program and is calculated to arouse curiosity by being mysterious – such as leaking one word a week until the entire program title is complete.
- Other gimmicks – use the corner of a blackboard in classrooms for your program information (if allowed). Make huge banners and hang them in approved locations.
- Contact faculty – ask them if they would be willing to promote your program in their classes (focus in on faculty whose interests may lie in the program area).
- Make table tents of advertising to place in eating areas and reading lounges around campus. For variety, use different designs, odd sizes, etc. Issue personalized invitations.
- Word of mouth is still perhaps best.
- Technical Tips – use odd shaped posters (triangles, hexagons, ovals, etc.)