

Advisor Resource Guide

A Welcome Note to Advisors:

The Office of Student Life thanks you for volunteering your time, energy, and expertise to help our clubs/organizations be successful. We recognize the time and attention that you give to your group, and hope that you get a lot out of this experience. You are making a difference on campus! Thank you!

Drake University has the following basic expectations of all club/organization advisors:

- meet with the executive board as often as necessary
- explain institutional policy/procedure
- offer financial management advice
- provide continuity for the club/organization from year to year
- act as a resource to the group
- attend programs that may potentially have liability/risk for the institutions
- intervene when knowledge of illegal activity/activities contrary to Drake University policy occur
- Pursuant to the Cleary Act, serve as a mandatory reporter if any person reveals to them they have been the victim, witness and/or perpetrator of any incident that might involve a crime.

Tools you'll need to be a successful advisor include:

1. Club/Organization constitution/by-laws (the Student Life Office has these on file)
2. Contact list of officers and members
3. Calendar of events for the club/organization
4. History of the club/organization
5. Club/Organization policies and procedures
6. Attendance at meetings and events when possible
7. Knowledge of Drake University resources (See the [BULLDOG](http://www.drake.edu/life/studentlife/resources.php), <http://www.drake.edu/life/studentlife/resources.php>)
8. Willingness to assist the group and its members

What is Advising?

Being an effective advisor means developing a style that matches the club or organization's needs. When developing this style, it is important to keep in mind the purpose of the club, the types of activities they are involved in, and the mission of Drake University. Some groups will need more or less attention depending on the time of year. Negotiate with the group the time and attention they need from you before you agree to be their advisor.

Taking an active role in the organization (attending meetings, events, meeting with officers, giving advice) does not mean that you are running the organization. It means that you guide and assist the officers in their roles, not doing the day-to-day operations. You may attend fewer meetings, or meet less frequently with the officers if the organization does not need an active advisor.

The main objective of an advisor is to be available to guide and assist the officers or members in the mission and goals of the group. How active or passive you will be should be negotiated between you and the group. Communication is essential, and the Advisor Contract has been created as a tool to mutually determine how much you will be involved in the club or organization.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

1. What paperwork must an organization have on file with the Office of Student Life to be considered an "official" club?

- Registration form signed by advisor and president
- Constitution
- Purpose statement

2. What is my liability/risk associated with being a club/organization advisor? Can I personally be held responsible if something should happen with my group?

The simple answer is no, you will not be held personally responsible as long as you advise/guide in a manner consistent with common sense and follow Drake University and Office of Student Life policies and procedures. It is important for you and the group to learn the information on the Student Life web site and ask questions if you don't understand something!

All employees of Drake University are covered by institutional liability insurance as long as they are working within their job description and advising a Drake University club/organization falls within many job descriptions (e.g. service to the community if not explicitly stated).

It is very important for you to understand that if you know of any illegal activity, or activities that are not in line with the [Code of Conduct](#) and chose to do nothing about this, you could be held responsible.

Additionally, following industry standards (e.g. club sports teams wearing recommended protective gear, complying with film copyright laws), following Drake University procedures, (all travel or risky activities require a release/waiver form), following state and federal laws (e.g., hazing is illegal, drinking age), and using common sense go a long way in reducing your risk.

*3. The club/organization wants to have alcohol at their event or meetings, what do I do? **Alcohol is NOT allowed at any club/organization event on campus.***

4. How does my group go about getting funding? Who is eligible for student activity fee funds?

The Student Fees Allocations Committee (SFAC) is a Drake University Student Senate committee that allocates student activity fee funds to clubs and organizations on campus. They annually allocate over \$400,000 a year for events sponsored by Drake University groups. Please see the [Student Handbook](http://www.drake.edu/dos/handbook/index.php) (<http://www.drake.edu/dos/handbook/index.php>), SFAC guidelines section for more specific information on the process and who is eligible for funds.

- Allocations from the Student Activity Fee cover costs of putting on programs or attending conferences.
- All one time funding allocations must pass through the Student Fees Allocations Committee and Student Senate.

5. Who can be an advisor?

Any Drake University faculty or exempt staff member can be an advisor to a club or organization. Off-campus people are not allowed to advise Drake University clubs/organizations for many reasons: knowledge of the campuses and policies, insurance/risk management issues, and building a stronger campus community are just a few of these reasons. It is important to note that all clubs/organizations are required to have an advisor, therefore, your role is important. It is also important to note that off-campus individuals may not become members of Drake University clubs and organizations.

6. My group wants to plan an event, what should they do?

The Office of Student Life and Student Life Center have many resources available for planning events. Our staff is here to help students plan successful events whether they are small activities

or large events. It is very important to note that if outside speakers/performers/etc. are going to be used, that you advise the officers to work with the Student Life Office on contracts. Students may not sign contracts. Advisors also do **not** have the ability to sign contracts on behalf of the club/organization. You will want the Assistant Dean of Students or Director of Campus Programming to review and sign the contract to ensure consistency with institutional policies.

7. Who do I contact for questions?

You may also call the Student Life Office staff at 271-3711 (or send us an e-mail: student.life@drake.edu) and we'll get back to you as soon as we can. The Assistant Dean of Students Melissa Sturm-Smith (melissa.sturm-smith@drake.edu), is also available for consultation and can be reached at 271-3761.

Rewards of Advising

- Recognition from the students, the organization, and (hopefully!) the institution.
- Serving as a mentor and role-model for students.
- The opportunity to observe fads, student culture, and subtle changes that occur in student life. You'll have your "finger on the pulse" of the student body.
- The opportunity to teach, lead and coach involved students.
- The opportunity to form networks with other colleagues involved in advising or other aspects of Drake University, and the ability to network with advisors of similar organizations on a regional or national level.
- The opportunity to serve Drake University and simultaneously build your resume.
- The opportunity to participate in a club/organization whose purpose you enjoy.

Along with the rewards come some challenges. These include:

- Time management issues and becoming over-committed.
- Trouble defining your role within the group (getting too involved or not involved enough).
- Knowing what should be done in a group and not just doing the tasks yourself.
- Frustration with some officers/members and/or the organization.
- Being patient in the growth and development process of students and organizations

Advisor Contract

The Advisor Contract is a tool to help advisors understand and meet the expectations of the organization they are advising.

CLUB/ORGANIZATION ADVISOR CONTRACT 2007-2008

The members of _____, by the selection process outlined in
(club/organization name)

our constitution hereby announce that _____ will be our advisor for the academic year.
(advisor name)

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The following expectations are to be negotiated between the advisor and the club/organization:

- ___ attend all meetings
- ___ attend all executive meeting
- ___ meet with the President/Chairperson before/after meetings
- ___ attend a specified number of club/organization events
- ___ help to prepare the agenda for meetings
- ___ speak up during meetings with relevant information
- ___ challenge group members/officers to think creatively
- ___ take an active part in formulating the goals of the group
- ___ take an active part in facilitating the development of group goals
- ___ promote group activities to other faculty/staff
- ___ other (list)

The above expectations and responsibilities may be reconsidered at any time based on the needs of all parties. I have met with the club/organization and discussed the expectations/responsibilities and will fulfill these to the best of my ability.

Advisor Signature

Date

Campus Address

Club/Organization Leader

Date

Campus Address

The "Do's" and "Don'ts" of Advising:

Do:

Allow others to fail	Trust yourself and the group
Allow others to succeed	Serve as a resource person
Know your limits	Teach the art of leadership
Know the group's limits	Be available in emergency situations
Keep your sense of humor	Be consistent with your actions
Inform the group of policies	Be visible
Learn when to speak/when not to speak	
Assist officers with procedural matters	

Don't:

- Control the group
- Manipulate the group
- Take ownership for the group
- Close communication
- Be afraid to try new ideas
- Know it all
- Take everything so seriously
- Be the leader
- Say "I told you so..."
- Impose your own bias
- Tell the group what to do