Student Organization Handbook

2023-2024

Northern Illinois University

Introduction

Welcome to the Student Organization Handbook for Student Government Association (SGA) Recognized Student Organizations at Northern Illinois University (NIU). As a recognized student organization at NIU, it is important to understand and follow all SGA and University Policies. This handbook provides student organizations information to become better informed on those policies and procedures. While the handbook will provide information on procedures it is important for student organizations to review the Student Organization Policy in the [SGA Bylaws](#) for more detailed information too. You can also find additional resources at the end of the document for reference throughout the year. If you need assistance throughout the year, please reach out to SGA or to Student_involvement@niu.edu. Go Huskies!

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Student Organization Recognition

Definition of Recognition

Temporary Recognition

A student organization that has begun the process of receiving full recognition from SGA. The organization has received approval from the Organization Oversight Committee but has not received full recognition from the SGA Senate. The student organization has some rights granted such as being able to reserve tables and rooms.

Full Recognition

A student organization that has received approval from both the Organization Oversight Committee and the SGA Senate. The student organization has all the rights and privileges of a fully recognized organization.

Benefits of Recognition

Being recognized by the Student Government Association (SGA) allows for student organizations to receive benefits at Northern Illinois University.

Benefits include:

Funding

Recognized Student Organizations can request funding in a variety of ways from the SGA. The different kinds of funding that is available to Student Organizations are Annual Funding, Supplemental Funding, and Executive Allocation. Student Organizations should refer to the funding and budget section of this handbook to learn more about each type of funding and their respective timelines.

Space Reservations

Recognized Student Organizations will have priority regarding space reservation over groups external to the university. Recognized Student Organizations will be able to reserve their space through the Huskie Link Event Registration page. Details on event registration can be found in the Event Registration Section of the Student Organization Handbook.

Involvement Fairs

Recognized Student Organizations are allowed to participate in the Annual Involvement Fair. Any Student Organization wishing to participate in the Annual Involvement Fair must have received full recognition from SGA and is in good standing with the

university. Recognized Student Organizations will also be informed of other involvement fair type opportunities to promote their organizations.

Service Opportunities

Recognized Student Organizations will be informed of any planned service opportunities as they are brought to University Staff or SGA.

Huskie Hub Page

Huskie Hub is our Student Involvement platform. Recognized Student Organizations will have a page listed in Huskie Hub and will be able to submit event registrations among other forms in Huskie Hub.

Process of Recognition

To begin the process of becoming a recognized student organization, a student or advisor of the organization will need to submit an Organization Registration Form under the groups tab on Huskie Hub.

Organizations will need to have the following when submitting their Organization Registration:

Organization Description

Organization Officers (President and Full Time Faculty/Staff Advisor)

At minimum four members in addition to the president (please note all members must be currently enrolled NIU Students)

Governing Documents:

Constitution and Bylaws

Any new Student Organization Registration will go through the following approval process within Huskie Hub.

Membership Approval

The organization membership (including officers) will need to confirm within Huskie Hub they are a part of the organization.

Student Organization Staff Review and Approval

Staff may follow up with additional questions to the person that submitted the organization registration.
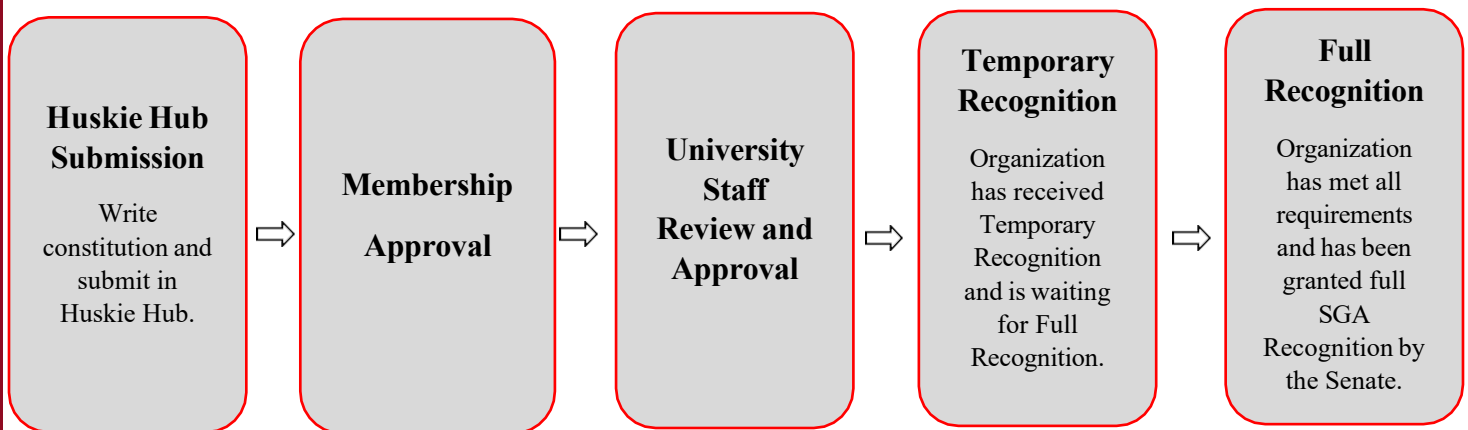
SGA Approval

The SGA Vice President and/or the SGA Director of Organizational Development will provide temporary recognition at which point Student Organization staff will provide the temporary recognition notation. The Organization Oversight Committee will provide

a recommendation to the Senate for full recognition. Full recognition will be provided by the SGA Senate and will then be updated in Huskie Hub to reflect full recognition.

SGA Approval is multiple steps when it reaches that approval step.

1. The first step is to be reviewed by the Student Government Association Vice President or SGA Director of Organizational Development. The SGA Vice President will be reviewing the submission to make sure that all required documents are present. The SGA Vice President or SGA Director of Organizational Development may also reach out to the organization to get further clarification on the submitted materials. Once Temporary recognition is granted it will be sent to the Organization Oversight Committee.
2. The Organization Oversight Committee will meet with the student organization to review their materials once more. If the committee recommends for approval of full recognition the organization will have their request for full recognition be sent to the Student Government Association Senate.
3. Once the student organization has been sent to the SGA Senate for full approval the student organization's recognition status will be reviewed along with other student organizations for full recognition under one bill item. If the Senate deems it necessary, they may pull out an organization as a separate item to discuss the organization further. If the Senate recommends approval the student organization will receive Full Recognition.

Huskie Hub Submission		Membership Approval		University Staff Review and Approval		Temporary Recognition		Full Recognition
Write constitution and submit in Huskie Hub.	⇨		⇨		⇨	Organization has received Temporary Recognition and is waiting for Full Recognition.	⇨	Organization has met all requirements and has been granted full SGA Recognition by the Senate.

Transition Period and Re-Registration

Student organizations are required to complete two updates throughout the academic year. The two organizational updates that will happen are Transition and Re-Registration:

Re-Registration

Student organization Re-Registration happens at the end of the Academic Year and runs into September of the next Academic Year. There will be a period of early re-registration that will run through the end of May. After such time, the re-registration process will be closed until July for the regular re-registration period which will end at the end of July. The final time for re-registration will open back up on the first day of classes. Starting the first day of classes the late re-registration process will begin and go until the last business day in September.

If re-registration is not completed by the required date the student organization risks losing their recognition (temporary and full) and will have to complete the entire organization registration process again. All re-registrations must be completed by the last business day in September.

Re-Registration Process:

1. Any member of the organization can click on the "Groups" tab at the top of the Huskie Hub home page.
2. Select "All Groups".
3. Search your student organization.
4. Click on "Group Re-Registration".
5. Complete the form and submit.

Student Organization Funding

Student Organizations can request different types of funding through the Student Government Association. The three (3) types of funding offered are Annual Funding, Supplemental Funding, and Executive Allocation. The process for each type of funding varies from each other and is outlined in this section.

Funding Eligibility

Organizations will be unable to apply for any sources of funding if the organization is:

1. A Restrictive Organization

        OR

2. An Organization that charges dues

SGA Funding Categories

The 3 categories of funding that organizations may receive from the SGA are:

- Supplemental Funding
- Annual Funding
- Executive Allocation

Each category has its own separate process for requesting and applying for funding.

Funding Tiers

Funding tiers are used by the finance committee to help identify the different organizations and their funding options. Student organizations can request information about which tier they are in and request to adjust their tier. Requests will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Tier 1:
University Departments and Department Organizations. These are defined as having office space on campus, office staff, and having a direct responsibility to the student body. There shall be no maximum for funding requests and no requirement to present budgets to the Finance committee.

Tier 2:
Governing Councils and Sports and Recreation. These are defined as any entity where a middleperson(s)/entity is involved for the distribution of funds to those under their oversight. There shall be no maximum for funding requests. Budget presentations to the Finance Committee are required.

Academic and Department Affiliated Organizations. These are defined as organizations affiliated with a specific academic interest or university department serving a larger section of the student body. The maximum amount of annual funding requested shall not exceed $2500. Budget presentations to the Finance Committee are not required.

Tier 4:

Sponsored Student Organizations. These are defined as organizations with a focus that serves their specific membership and have no real responsibility to the rest of the student body. The maximum amount of annual funding

How to Request Annual Funding

Organizations that have maintained full recognition for 1 calendar year (as of the date that budget requests are due) can request annual funding from the allocation of the student activity fee through the SGA. Annual funding may be requested by student organizations by creating and submitting a budget to the SGA for approval of funding.

1. Attend Budget Training

Budget training is **mandatory** for all organizations to receive funding. These trainings are to be completed each year, and budget trainings will be **held in the Spring Semester.**

2. Prepare a Budget for your Organization

After completing the budget training, organizations must have the president or designated entity prepare a budget to submit. For more assistance when preparing a budget contact the SGA treasurer.

3. Submit Budget Request to SGA Treasurer

The Budget request form can be found on Huskie Hub. These requests should be submitted before the budget request deadline. Budget requests should be approved by the president and faculty advisor of the organization before submission. The SGA Finance committee may request a budget presentation from any organization requesting annual funding.

General Timeline for Budget Requests

Tier 1 & Tier 2 Budget Submissions	First Week of November
Tier 3 & Tier 4 Budget Submissions	Last Week of February

How to Request Supplemental Funding

Any fully recognized student organization can apply for supplemental funding. Organizations seeking supplemental funding can do so through the following steps:

1. Complete Form for Supplemental Funding

The supplemental funding form can be found on the organization's page in Huskie Hub under Money. Organizations seeking funding must complete and submit their application for additional funding each time they are requesting funds. This step needs to be complete at least **2 weeks** prior to when the funds are needed.

2. Meet with SGA Finance Committee

Once the application is submitted on Huskie Hub, organizations will meet with the SGA Finance Committee to formally present the need for additional funding. This meeting must occur within **2 weeks** of submitting the application. It is recommended to submit your request prior to the 2 weeks to allow for time to purchase the items listed.

3. Receive Committee Decision

The SGA Finance Committee will deliberate and will give full approval, partial approval, or decline requests for supplemental funding.

How to Request Executive Allocation

Executive Allocation is a source of funding for larger campus initiatives. These initiatives can be department sponsored and/or collaboration between student organizations that would serve a large portion of students on campus.

1. Complete Form for Executive Allocation

The Executive Allocation form can be found on Huskie Hub under the Money section. Organizations seeking funding must complete and submit their application for each request. This step needs to be complete at least **2 weeks** prior to when the funds are needed.

2. Presidential Approval

Once the application is submitted on Huskie Hub, the president will review the application. The Finance Committee may request a presentation from applicants for Executive Allocation at the discretion of the SGA President.

University Policies and Procedures

As a recognized student organization, all student organizations are expected to abide by all SGA and University Policies as well as Local, State, and Federal Laws.

All Student Government Association policies pertaining student organizations can be found in the SGA Constitution and Bylaws. Additionally, student organizations will need to complete any required training on an annual basis to be able to utilize the benefits provided by SGA Recognition. Required training will be outlined on page 10.

Student Organizations will have to abide by University Policies and Procedures. These policies and procedures will be mentioned throughout the handbook but are described and linked below. For more information on forms and policies visit our Student Involvement website.

Freedom of Expression Policy

The Freedom of Expressions Policy outlines the rights of NIU students and student organizations regarding Freedom of Expression. Northern Illinois University is committed to freedom of expression and open discussion in all matters of public interest and is further committed to assuring all members of the University community have the broad latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn. For more information visit our website.

Off-Campus Events Policy

The Off-Campus Social Events Policy is for any event that a student organization is hosting that is not on the NIU Campus. There are different categories of events, and some categories may require training being completed prior to hosting the event. See the Off-Campus Events Policy for more details.

On-Campus Events Policy

The On-Campus Event Policy is for any event that is happening on the NIU Campus. Student organizations will be able to reserve space at a variety of areas including the Holmes Student Center, NIU Recreation, and other On-Campus locations. No specific training will be required to host an event, but other policies may apply in conjunction to the On-Campus Events Policy. See the On-Campus Events Policy for more details.

Poster and Chalking Policy

Recognized Student Organizations are allowed to hang up posters in designated locations on campus. All posters must be approved by the university by submitting your posters at posters@niu.edu. Any poster without a poster stamp will be taken down. Chalking must be in accordance with the chalking policy otherwise will be removed. See the Poster and Chalking Policy for more information.

Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct outlines the process the university follows when charging students with an alleged violation. The code explains sanction options for those students who admit to or are found responsible for a violation. For more information, visit the Student Code of Conduct Website.

DeKalb Laws and Ordinances

Student organizations are required to abide by local, state, and federal laws. These may include but are not limited to the City of DeKalb ordinances. Some city laws may affect student organization event planning such as the DeKalb Raffle Ordinance or for Mass Gatherings. Below are some common laws that student organizations should consider when functioning as an organization or planning an event. For more information or to ask questions visit dekalbcounty.org.

DeKalb County Raffle Ordinance

Student organizations looking to host a raffle for their organizational event will need to obtain a Raffle License from DeKalb County. Licenses may take time to be approved and is recommended that student organizations should request a license ahead of event registration. License request can be found on the DeKalb County Website.

DeKalb Application for Mass Gathering

For more information, please visit DeKalb Mass Gathering.

Trainings and Expectations

Student organizations are expected to attend the Student Organization Conference. Not attending this conference will result in a loss of privileges until the make-up trainings are completed or, if the training is no longer offered, until the end of the academic year. If a student organization continues to neglect the training, it could lead to further extended loss of privileges or be brought to the SGA for a loss of recognition. There may be additional training or expectations based on your organization type. If you are unsure if your organization should be completing any additional training or have any additional expectations to follow, please reach out to studentinvolvement@niu.edu.

Required Training:

Student Organization Conference

Every student organization will be required to have their president or another executive board member attend in place of their president the Student Organization Conference. Failure to attend the conference will result in loss of privileges such as the ability to request annual funding and/or host events. The Student Organization Conference will be held on August 4th, 2023, and run from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM.

Should the student organization be unable to send their president or an executive board member in their place, they will have to complete the make-up session with Student Involvement. The make-up session will consist of the executive board attending the Positional Roundtables happening throughout the semester. More information about Positional Roundtables can be found in the Other Training Offerings section.

Other Training Offerings

Student involvement will provide other training offerings throughout the school year. While these will not be required (unless your student organization needs to make up the conference requirement) it is highly encouraged to attend as these training workshops will provide valuable information that could help your organization succeed. There are two types of other training workshops we will be offering which will be Positional Roundtables and Organizational Workshops. In addition to being valuable information to learn, by attending more of these sessions your student organization could win prizes for your organization such as funding for an event.

Positional Roundtables

Positional round tables are sessions where your executive board will meet with Student Involvement Staff and discuss ways to succeed in your positions and for Student Involvement Staff to hear challenges you may be facing in your position. There will be sessions for the following position types: President, Vice President, Treasurers, and Secretaries. Dates for these Positional Roundtables can be found on the Student Involvement website.

Organizational Workshops

Organizational Workshops are workshops that are focused on a specific topic. These workshops will provide information around core functions of a student organization, which are membership, finances, events, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Any member of the organization can attend these workshops, but the executive board would be highly recommended to attend these workshops.

Other Requirements

Some student organizations may fall into a category where they have additional expectations and requirements, they must complete outside of what is listed in this handbook, student conduct policy, or SGA Constitution and Bylaws. If an organization falls into one of these categories, they must abide by all previous expectations and requirements listed in this handbook and elsewhere in addition to what is provided by the office(s) overseeing that organization category.

Fraternity and Sorority Life

Student organizations that fall under Fraternity and Sorority Life are organizations that are a Fraternity or Sorority that are a part of the Fraternity and Sorority Life Office. Typically, social, or cultural in nature these organizations will have specific expectations and requirements outlined in the Fraternity and Sorority Life Handbook. Honor societies that are a Fraternity or Sorority do not fall under this category unless otherwise specified.

Locations On Campus

Academic Buildings

Student organizations can request rooms/classrooms inside academic buildings. These spaces vary in size and technology capability. For specific layout and available technology information can be provided as a part of the event registration on Huskie Hub.

Asian American Resource Center

The Asian American Resource Center enhances the quality of college life for Asian American students on campus through heritage programs, academic support and student organization events that foster inclusion. View a virtual tour of the Asian American Resource Center.

Center for Black Studies

The Center for Black Studies (CBS) plays a significant, essential and unique role in advocating for Black students at NIU, the larger DeKalb community, and the university's commitment to multiculturalism and diversity. Established in 1971, the CBS supports the university's mission of excellence and engagement in teaching, learning, research, scholarship, creativity, artistry and service.

Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) offers guidance, services and resources to help you succeed at NIU. We will work with you to determine your needs and develop a plan to meet them. Come prepared to discuss issues related to accessibility that may impact your success at NIU.

Latino Resource Center

The Latino Resource Center is a unit of the Division of Academic Affairs at NIU. Better known as the LRC by students and staff, the Latino Resource Center focuses on student-centered service by developing partnerships focused on student learning while establishing an inclusive community that builds collaborative relationships across campus and the surrounding community.

Gender and Sexuality Resource Center

At the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center, we're your home away from home—inclusive of gender and sexual identities. We're committed to helping you find the resources and support to complete your degree at NIU. We celebrate all identities and intersections and collaborate with the Asian American Resource Center, Center for Black Studies, Disability Resource Center, Latino Resource Center, Military and Post-Traditional Student Services and Career Services.

Event Planning

Planning an Event – Steps to consider

This may be your first time planning an event or program for your organization, or you could have planned many events or programs for your organization. Regardless, this section will help you think about the different steps of planning an event or program.

Step one – Initial Planning

- What do you want your event to be about? Is this a social event? Will you be doing a fundraiser?
- Will you be the only person planning this event or will you have a committee to plan the event? If you have a committee, you will have to think about everyone's schedules when setting planning meetings.
- Think about the location of the event. Where do you want to host the event? Will you have the event on – campus or off- campus? Keep in mind you will need to follow the proper policy aligning with the location.
- What will you need for the event? Will you need to order catering or rent technology? Will you need staff to assist with the event?

Step 2 – Submitting in Huskie Hub

- All student organizations will need to submit an Event Registration on Huskie Hub for an event.
    - Events must be submitted by the given deadline but can be submitted before the deadline for early approval.
- *Quick Tip: you may want to have the event registration form up while you are completing step one. There may be questions on the form you did not think about and will need to submit the form. Having the form up will allow you to ask those questions and fill out the form at the same time.*
- Review all the information and do one of two things:
    - Submit the event for approval!
    - Save your submission as a draft to revisit and complete.
        - Keep in mind you will need to submit your event for approval if you want your event to be approved.

Step 3 – Approval Processes

The approval process is dependent on which kind of event is submitted:

On – Campus Events

President and advisor are Notified via E-mail

If the president and/or have a concern about the event, please contact studentinvolvement@niu.edu

NIU Police and Public Safety is notified

If there is a need to meet with NIU PD a representative from NIU PD will reach out to the person that submitted the request.

University Representative Approves

A university representative will make sure the organization is in good standing and that they are in line with the On-Campus Event Policy.

Venue Approves

Keep in mind the venue will not approve until all necessary meetings and contracts are completed.

If charges are applied the student organization will be responsible for paying those charges by the specified date and time.

Off – Campus Events

President and advisor are Notified via E-mail

If the president and/or have a concern about the event, please contact studentinvolvement@niu.edu

NIU Police and Public Safety is Notified

If there is a need for security for your off-campus event, please contact NIU PD.

University Representative Approves

If applicable: The university representative will check to make sure that any necessary trainings are completed by the student organization (i.e., risk management training for events with alcohol).

Advisors

The real definition of an advisor floats somewhere between being a counselor, supervisor, educator, and mentor, in which no single label applies entirely to the role. An advisor is one who gives ideas, shares insight, provides a different perspective, and counsels. In general, advisors have three main functions:

- Help with the growth and development of students.
- Add to the continuity of the groups as members graduate.
- Assist in program content and purpose.

The staff within Student Involvement offer support to student organization advisors. One such support system is the Monthly Advisor Town Halls where advisors will meet with Student Involvement Staff and other advisors to receive important updates and talk through some situations the advisor is facing with the organization they are advising.

Student involvement staff will have advisors watch a quick video to learn about important resources and knowledge that will be helpful for advisors to have in assisting their student organization. Advisors will also have access to an Advisor's Handbook which will have information that will have information on recourses that the advisor can utilize in assisting their student organization. To also help advisors throughout the year, we will have advisors complete a monthly check-in form to help us know how your organization is doing and if challenges are coming up how student involvement will be able to help.

Additionally, Student Involvement Staff houses a variety of materials that cover a wide range of topics including meetings, icebreakers/team builders, communication skills, leadership styles, ethics, recruiting members, fundraising, problem solving, multicultural awareness, presentations and programming, publicity, stress management, volunteerism, training, delegation, and conflict resolution.

Advisor Agreement

The Advisor Agreement is to be signed on a yearly basis by the Full Time Faculty/Staff Advisor. This is an agreement for the Faculty/Staff Advisor to use as a guide and expectations when interacting with their student organization(s). If an advisor changes for whatever reason the Faculty/Staff Advisor Change Agreement must be signed prior to the new advisor taking on those responsibilities.

If an organization is in the process of looking for an advisor the student organization can reach out to the Director of Student Organizations at studentinvolvement@niu.edu or fill out the Faculty/Staff Advisor Request Form.

If a Faculty/Staff member would like to serve as a Student Organization Advisor and do not have a specific organization in mind they can fill out the [Student Organization Advisor Interest Form](#).

Resources

Writing a Constitution

Constitution/Bylaws for student organizations must be preapproved by and meet all requirements set by the executive branch of the Student Government Association. A constitution must contain all the following components and sections:

- Organizations Name
- Purpose
- Faculty Advisor Section
- Requirements for Membership
- Method of Officer Selection (nominations, elections, special elections)
- Filling Vacant Positions
- Impeachment Process
- Non-Discrimination Clause
- Meetings
- Amendments
- Behavior and Etiquette

Any New Student Organization must submit a constitution, along with the Constitution Checklist , for their organization in Huskie Hub for approval.

A Sample Constitution is provided by the SGA that gives descriptions of each section required for approval. Students are encouraged to refer to the Sample Constitution when writing or reviewing their organizations constitution.

Communications

Student organizations will receive many different communications throughout the year. There are several kinds of communications that are provided to student organizations to keep up to date on what is happening at NIU. All communication will be sent to the Z-ID e-mail of each student.

Accessibility

NIU is committed to providing access and will provide sign language interpreters and CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) services as able for university-related events in accordance with applicable law. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is funded to provide this service to eligible, enrolled students for their class-related academic activities. For other activities, or when a non-student request interpreting services, the department or organization conducting the program, service, or activity is responsible to fund the cost of the interpreting services.

Organizations can request either sign language interpreter or CART (aka live captioning) services for events on the CART Reservation Site.

If you have pre-recorded video media that needs closed captions added, you can submit a closed caption request through this request form.

Student Organization News Website

Anyone wanting to find communications that went out to student organizations can visit our Student Organization News Website. Students, Faculty, Staff and the larger NIU and DeKalb community can see what has been shared with our student organizations to keep up to date on what is being communicated and what is happening with our student organizations.

Weekly Student Organization Communications

Every week student organization leadership and advisors will receive a Weekly E-mail from University Staff outlining Updates, Opportunities, and Announcements available to all student organizations. Anyone that is not a part of the student organization leadership or advisor list can also sign up to receive these weekly e-mails by subscribing on the Student Involvement Huskie Hub Page.

Revised August 2023