



Policies and Procedures for Student Organizations at Virginia Commonwealth University

Policy Type: Administrative
Responsible Office: University Student Commons and Activities
Initial Policy Approved: 02/07/1997
Current Revision Approved: 07/01/2019

Policy Statement and Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the policies and procedures of student organizations at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Students and student organizations have a right to expect the enforcement of the policies and procedures outlined in this document. The University also has the right to expect students and student organizations to abide by them as members of the University community.

University Student Commons and Activities (USC&A) has the authority to determine policies and procedures for student organizations. Authority for altered and/or additional policies for sponsored or affiliated student organizations may be delegated to the unit or department on campus with direct oversight for those organizations, whose policies and procedures will be outlined in their respective handbooks or manuals. Links to these handbooks are included at the end of this document.

Noncompliance with this policy may result in loss of status as a recognized student organization at VCU and individual disciplinary action when and where applicable. VCU supports an environment free from retaliation. Retaliation against any student or employee who brings forth a good faith concern, asks a clarifying question, or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

Contacts

The University Student Commons and Activities officially interprets this policy. University Student Commons and Activities is responsible for any revisions this policy. Please direct policy questions to University Student Commons and Activities and the Director, University Student Commons and Activities.



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Who Should Know This Policy

All members of student organizations are responsible for knowing this policy and familiarizing themselves with its contents and provisions.

The provisions of this document are applicable to all student organizations on the Monroe Park and MCV Campuses. Statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, city or county codes, and federal laws apply on University premises, and violators of such laws will be subject to the provisions thereof, in addition to the sanctions of this document. In general, it is the policy of Virginia Commonwealth University not to become involved in adjudicating off-campus conduct of registered student organizations. However, the institution also has a commitment to protect its own welfare and that of its members. Thus, in those circumstances where the off-campus behavior of a member or members of a registered student organization significantly impairs the University-related functioning of another member of the University community or gives rise to serious danger to the University community or when an event or travel is funded with Student Activity fees, the provisions of this document will apply to off-campus behavior. Such conduct may subject the violator to the provisions of law, in addition to the sanctions of this document.

Definitions

Student Organizations

Student Organizations at VCU are entities whose membership is comprised primarily of VCU students and may include VCU alumni, faculty or staff and that offer educational, service, recreational, or social opportunities to their members. Each student organization is designated into three tiers as either Sponsored, Affiliated, or Registered. The tier is determined by assessing the student organizations relationship to the university, the purpose and scope of its activities, the university population served, and the potential risk to participants and the university.

Sponsored Student Organizations

Sponsored Student Organizations are those groups considered critical not only to its membership and officers but also to the vision, mission and culture of the university. These organizations work in a collaborative partnership with an identified university department or office. These organizations are inherently linked to the university because of their role representing VCU and/or in presenting events of broad appeal that are considered an integral part of the institution and community.

Sponsored student organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Student Government Association
- Graduate Student Association
- College Panhellenic Council
- National Pan-Hellenic Council
- Interfraternal Council
- Multicultural Greek Council



- Sport Club Council
- Student Media Commission
- Alternative Spring Break

The events and activities presented by a sponsored student organization should accurately and positively reflect the mission, vision, goals and culture of the University, as well as the rules and standards of the institution. Sponsored student organization will need to follow any additional appropriate criteria and guidelines from each respective university department or unit in order to receive services and benefits.

Additional rules, guidelines, and requirements for sponsored student organizations or links to specific council rules and guidelines can be found in the [Related Documents](#) section of this policy.

Affiliated Student Organizations

Affiliated organizations are those that serve the broad interests of students and the general public, not just its members. Affiliated student organizations contribute to the mission, vision, goals and culture of the University by routinely presenting university-affiliated programs and services for their members and guests. Affiliate organizations, given their inherent risk and/or public visibility, as an extension of a University department/unit, are provided guidance and/or direct oversight for the organization and its activities by that respective department or unit. Affiliated organizations may also be directly associated with an academic class or class requirement.

Affiliated student organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Student Today Alumni Tomorrow
- Student Media outlets
- All fraternities and sororities
- All VCU Sports Clubs

The events and activities presented by affiliated student organizations should positively reflect the mission, vision, goals and culture of the university, as well as the rules and standards of the institution. Affiliated student organizations will need to follow any additional appropriate criteria and guidelines from each respective university department or unit in order to receive services and benefits.

Additional rules, guidelines, and requirements for affiliated student organizations can be found in the [Related Documents](#) section of this policy.

Registered Student Organizations

The University is a state agency with the powers of a public corporation, and registered student organizations are not part of that agency, but rather exist and operate independently of the University. Registered student organization are not an agent or employee of the University, and neither has authority to act for the other or commit the other to any activity, transaction or



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agreement. As members of the University community, officers and members of a registered student organization are responsible for complying with applicable law and policies.

Additional rules, guidelines, and requirements regarding registered student organizations are managed by the University Student Commons and Activities. These rules, guidelines, and requirements can be found on the University Student Commons and Activities website at <https://usca.vcu.edu/> and in the [Related Documents](#) section of this policy.



Policy Specifics and Procedures

Registration:

Students desiring to establish a new registered student organization must complete the following

- Certify that there are without question, no limitations on selection of members and customary rights and privileges of membership in the organization as a result of race, creed, sexual orientation or national origin of the student, faculty or staff member desiring membership
 - Notwithstanding these provisions, a religious or political student organization may determine that ordering the organization's internal affairs, selecting the organization's leader and members, defining the organization's doctrines, and resolving the organizations disputes are in furtherance of the organization's religious or political mission and that only persons committed to that mission should conduct such activities.
 - If such a determination is reached, the organization may limit the selection of members or customary rights and privileges of membership in the organization. Such determination shall be certified in the registration form.
 - Exemptions have been granted to social fraternities and sororities with regard to limitations based on sex under the provisions of Title IX of the educational Amendments and IRS Code 501.c.3.)
- Certify that the purposes and activities of the proposed organization are not in violation of local, state or federal statutes or of University regulations or objectives as published by the University.
- Submit a GPA authorization form for student organization officers as required by University Student Commons and Activities
- Complete registration forms and trainings required by the University Student Commons and Activities as outlined in the [Student Organization Manual](#) by the appropriate deadline(s).

Re-Registration:

Student organizations are required to re-register each academic year. Student organizations that are looking to re-register must:

- Currently be in good standing with the University Student Commons and Activities
- Complete registration forms and trainings required by the University Student Commons and Activities as outlined in the [Student Organization Manual](#) (or altered/additional requirements for registration as determined by the unit/department with delegated authority and direct oversight for sponsored and affiliated organizations and outlines in their handbook/manual) by the appropriate deadline
- Submit a GPA authorization form for student organization officers as required by University Student Commons and Activities

Denial of Registration:

University Student Commons and Activities may deny the registration of any organization if:

- The organization has failed to meet any of the requirements outlined in this policy or the [Student Organization Manual](#) by the required deadline.
- There is evidence that the student organization is no longer active



Naming of Student Organizations:

Registration of student organizations does not imply University approval or disapproval of the organization or its goals.

- A Registered Student Organization may not use the University's name in the name of the student organization in such a manner to suggest the organization is sponsored by the University.
 - Registered Student Organizations may use "of VCU" or "at VCU" following the name of the student organization, so that the location of the organization is reflected in the name.
- Affiliated and Sponsored Student Organizations may be permitted to use the University's name in the name of the student organization to reflect the formal relationship with and oversight provided by a university department or unit.

Membership:

The members of student organizations must:

- Must be currently enrolled students at VCU.
- Officers must maintain academic requirements as set forth by the University Student Commons and Activities and stated in the [Student Organization Manual](#)
- A minimum number of members is required as stated in the [Student Organization Manual](#)

Funding:

All student organizations should make provisions for the businesslike management of its funds and are given an organizational account with the University assigned by the University

- All registered student organizations may be eligible to apply for allocations from the Student Activity Fee through the [VCU Student Government Association Appropriations Bylaws](#)
- All student organizations receiving funds from the Student Activity Fee must maintain these funds in a University account which can only be accessed by the appropriate organization officers.
- Organizations that generate revenue in addition to Student Activity Fee funding have the option of maintaining a separate non-University account, at an off-campus bank or credit union, for funding that is revenue generated
- Organizations that do not receive funding from the Student Activity Fee may maintain their funds in a University account or a non-University account with an off-campus bank or credit union

Promotions and Advertising:

Students or student organizations promoting or advertising membership or activities on behalf of their organization must follow these guidelines:

- No promotion of the organization or its activities may contain references to "alcoholic beverages," "cocktails," "keg" or other terms or illustrations descriptive of alcoholic beverages or their consumption



- Student organizations are reminded that promotions that could be interpreted as demeaning based upon gender differences, racial and ethnic groups, or individuals subscribing to nontraditional and/or alternative lifestyles have been found to be offensive and objectionable

Rules of Conduct for Student Organizations:

All student organizations and/or their members are also subject to the requirements of the following documents, and the provisions of this document are applicable for organizations that may violate any of these documents:

- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [VCU Student Organization Conduct Committee Procedures Manual](#)
- [Student Organization Manual](#)
- [Reservations and Use of Space](#)
- [Alcohol and Other Drugs](#)
- [Event and Meeting Services: Guidelines and Procedures](#)
- [University Trademarks & Licensing](#)
- [Computer and Network Resources Use](#)
- [VCU Honor System](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination](#)

Conduct

When individual student's or group of students' actions evolve from or are in any way related to their association with or the activities of a student organization, the student organization may be held responsible for the behavior of these members. Members of student organizations that commit offenses against local, state or federal laws are subject to prosecution by those authorities and may subject the organization to University disciplinary action when such conduct violates University standards.

Knowledge of these rules and regulations can prove most beneficial to students, student organizations and their advisors in utilizing and protecting their rights. It is important to add, however, that unfamiliarity with University policies and procedures does not excuse infractions.

Conduct procedures for all student organizations can be found in the [VCU Student Organization Conduct Committee Procedures manual](#). Conduct procedures for individual members of student organizations who violate the VCU Code of Conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Forms

There are currently no forms associated with this policy and procedures.



Related Documents

1. [Student Organization Manual](#)
2. [Student Organization Conduct Procedures Manual](#)
3. [VCU Student Government Association Appropriations Bylaws](#)
4. [Sport Clubs](#)
5. **Virginia Commonwealth University Special Provisions for Fraternities and Sororities**
6. [Fraternal Organization Agreement](#)
7. **FSL Allocation Process**
8. **CPC Constitution and Judicial Process (located on RamsConnect)**
9. **IFC Constitution and Judicial Process (located on RamsConnect)**
10. **MGC Constitution and Judicial Process (located on RamsConnect)**
11. **NPHC Constitution and Judicial Process (located on RamsConnect)]**

Revision History

This policy supersedes the following archived policies:

Approval	Revision Date	Title
02/07/1997	05/05/2008	Rights and Responsibilities of Registered Student Organizations at Virginia Commonwealth University
11/19/1993	08/05/2004	Procedures for Registered Student Organizations on the Monroe Park Campus of Virginia Commonwealth University



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FAQ

[Student Organization Manual](#)

1. Where can I learn more about student organization funding allocations from the Student Activity Fee?

[VCU Student Government Association Appropriations Bylaws](#)

2. Question

Appendix A: Benefits and Resources for Student Organizations



Sponsored Organizations	Affiliated Organizations	Registered Organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a full-time professional staff/faculty member whose job description designates them as a primary advisor of the organization ● Have a university department or unit providing oversight and direct responsibility ● Have University support in regards to risk management and contract review ● May use the University's tax-exempt status for approved purchases ● Access to student activity fee funds appropriated by the sponsoring department/unit ● May have office space on campus (if available) ● Have priority use of reserved space for University-wide annual events through their sponsoring department/unit ● Ability to use University logos and trademarks in accordance with University approval ● Ability to use "VCU" as a component of the organization's name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a full-time professional staff/faculty member whose job description designates them as a primary liaison to the organization and provides support in regards to risk management /assessment, legal advice, and contract review ● Have a university department or unit providing guidance for the organizations and it's activities ● May use the University's tax-exempt status for approved purchases ● Access to student activity fee funds appropriated by the sponsoring department/unit ● May have office space on campus (if available) ● Have priority use of reserved space for University-wide annual events through their sponsoring department/unit ● Ability to use "VCU" as a component of the organization's name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have access to a full-time professional staff member whose job is to provide guidance to registered student organizations ● Have the ability to reserve available University space for meetings and activities through the EMS reservation system ● Access to student activity fee funds through an application process to SGA ● Utilize the resources in both The Underground & The Hub which includes, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 150 copies per month ○ 25 buttons per month ○ Paint materials ○ Computer stations ○ Banner paper ○ The space itself to meet (first come, first serve) ○ Webpage in Ramsconnect where student organizations can provide upcoming events ● Advising from our Student Involvement Ambassadors in regards to registration, resources in our centers, and purchasing-related questions