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Forming a Student Organization is not as complicated as you may think. There are a few steps that you have to complete before you can be recognized as an established organization. The steps can be easily followed because they are all connected and flow together making the process of forming an organization accomplishable in approximately three weeks. This handbook is designed to explain those steps in detail so that you have all the information necessary to form an organization. The above-mentioned steps are:

1. Meet with Student Organizations Program Advisor of Student Activities
2. Reserve space to hold an interest meeting to solicit membership
3. Create a Constitution
4. Elect Executive Board Members
5. Select an Advisor
6. Complete Authorized Signature Form
7. Petition SGA through Budget & Management (BAM) for approval and recognition

If these seven steps are followed as specified below, you will have no problems in getting your organization started. If you run into any problems throughout this process, you should make an appointment to see the Student Organizations Program Advisor or Director of Student Activities.

MEETING WITH STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

The first step in creating a new club or organization is scheduling a meeting with the Student Organizations Program Advisor or Graduate Intern in the Office of Student Activities to present and discuss your idea. They will determine if your idea is ready to go through the full process or if it needs more development.

THE INTEREST MEETING

When an individual or group of students is interested in forming an organization, they should advertise to the total University Community that there will be a meeting for anyone interested in belonging to the specific organization. You must be aware that any organization is open to all registered Eastern students who want to join it. A temporary secretary should be selected to take minutes at this meeting. At the meeting, it is important to explore the group's interests so you can formulate the organization's purpose. Once you have agreed to a statement that best describes the organization's functioning purpose, this will be noted in the organization's constitution.

THE CONSTITUTION

There is no specific format for the Constitution. Each organization's constitution is as different and unique as the many organizations themselves. The following is a list of sections or articles that are usually contained in a constitution:

1. Name of Organization
2. Purpose of Organization
3. Membership of Organization
4. Officers and Responsibilities
5. Elections
6. Vacancy of Office
7. Impeachment
8. Meetings
9. Amendments
10. Parliamentary Authority
11. Advisors
12. Ratification
13. Ratified Date

Sample Constitutions are available in the Student Center/Activities Office and on the website: Forms and Policies - Eastern

When the constitution is completed, the members must vote to ratify the constitution, and this must be done by 2/3 vote. A record of this ratification should be kept in a set of minutes that a temporary secretary kept for the organizational meeting(s).

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Officers for your organization must be elected according to the guidelines set forth in your constitution. You are not required to have the traditional President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, but your officers should be able to handle the same functions. Officers should be dependable and responsible students that are willing to put in extra time so that the organization will run smoothly. Officers are the backbone of an organization so be careful to select the people that will best meet your needs. To hold an office, a student must have a minimum 2.5 or better cumulative grade point average.

SELECTION OF AN ADVISOR

An advisor is determined to be an employee of the University and not a student. When selecting an advisor, you should consider persons who have training, interest or expertise in the purpose of the club. If it is a Jogging Club, then perhaps it would be best to select someone from the Physical Education Department who specializes in jogging. It's always best to do so, but in cases where this is impossible, you should try to select someone who will best meet the organization's needs. This person should be attending some meetings, out-of-state travel and activities sponsored by the organization and should be readily available for advice, and to sign appropriate forms.

Once the Advisor has been selected, you should then fill out the Authorized Signature Form.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE FORM

The Authorized Signature Form was designed to allow the Student Activities Office to know exactly which club members of the organization can sign paperwork for the organization. These signatures will be needed when the organization plans to spend funds, therefore, it is mandatory that documents are countersigned by the advisor. In case of a vacancy, a new Authorized Signature form should be completed when new executive members are elected.

THE FINAL STEPS

Once all the forms are completed and approved, the group officers must meet with the Student Organizations Program Advisor to discuss them. Student Organizations Program Advisor will review them to ensure that they contain nothing that violates any University policies, State or Federal Laws. Student Organizations Program Advisor will approve and forward them to the committee assigned to fund the Organization (Budget and Management). If the forms are not approved, the group will be asked to review the items in question and resubmit them when corrected.

When all the forms have been approved, they will be forwarded to Budget and Management, who will further review them for violations of university policies, State or Federal Laws. If no violations are found, Budget and Management will, in the form of a committee, motion to present the organization to the Student Government Association at its next scheduled meeting for full SGA approval.

The organization has the right to and is encouraged to be present at both the Budget and Management and the SGA meetings to defend or clarify their purpose.

HOW TO FORM A SPORTS CLUB

In addition to the normal procedures of forming a regular student organization there are several steps that must be completed before an organization can be recognized as an established Sports Club. Following student activities procedures, the organization must be recognized by the Student Senate, funded by the Budget and Management Committee of SGA, and report to the Recreation Specialist and the Director of Student Center /Activities. A sports club is defined as "any organization whose purpose is to practice, play, and/or compete in athletics with other institutions on and/ or off the campus that does not have Varsity Sport status. This section is designed to help explain the steps in detail to provide the information necessary to form a sports club.

It is important to note that while the Student Government Association may have approved the establishment of a student organization it does not guarantee the University and the Department of Athletics are required or able to provide facilities and or fields for the club sport which it does not possess or have access to.

- Establishing a club sport. The base criteria to consider a Club Sport for recognition are:
  - An expressed interest by students for an athletic activity which is not available at the intercollegiate varsity level.
  - Appropriateness of activity for the University.
  - A qualified coach is approved by the Recreation Specialist.
  - A designated Club Advisor.
  - Competitive and physical activity involving competition with other teams on a club or collegiate level which holds progressive competition.
  - Appropriate clothing and equipment to participate in a safe and effective manner. All equipment must be approved and certified by (or in consultation with) the Recreation Specialist. All athletic equipment must conform to NCAA Standards for that sport when appropriate. For sports not recognized or sanctioned by the NCAA, clubs will conform to the rules and regulations set forth by the official governing agency for that sport. Copies of current rules and regulations can be attained from the NCAA website or from the official website governing that sport. The Coach will be responsible for ensuring that equipment meets appropriate safety standards before each practice or game.

*Some club sports may be required to have the equipment annually certified.

Adequate resources:

1. Adequate facilities are available for practice and competitions. (space must be approved by a University Administrator)
2. Sufficient funding.

Sports Clubs are responsible for purchasing/providing their own equipment, uniforms, and all materials necessary for practice and competition. The Athletic Department does NOT FUND, nor provide equipment for Sports Clubs.

  - An understanding that the club does not conflict with varsity and sub varsity programs.
  - A team roster consisting of enough players to field a team with at least 20% of the roster available as replacement players.

- Disestablishing a club sport.

The base criteria to disestablish a club sport are:

  - The club sport no longer warrants continued operation.
  - A varsity sport is established in the same sport.
  - The club forfeits more than three contests because it cannot field enough roster players.
  - The club fails to submit required reports.
  - A team fails to practice on scheduled practice days.
  - The Club averages less than 75% attendance of its roster during practices and games.
  - A coach and/or Advisor are not available.

The following steps are the responsibility of the Club Captain/President

1. Outline the need for facility usage (practices and games), equipment, travel, etc. Adhere to the practice parameters established by the University (not to exceed 8 hours/week of official practice)
2. Research the scope of competition possibilities for the club. Things to consider are: who will play and what league (if any) the club will compete in.
3. Submit a roster to the Recreation Specialist which contains the names, campus and home addresses, and phone numbers of all students who intend to participate in the club.
4. Contact Athletic trainers in Athletics to ensure that all members have a physical exam on file with Health Services and have completed a recent health survey through Health Services.

If any problems occur while in the above process, an appointment to see the Recreation Specialist is to be made.

SELECTION OF AN ADVISOR

An advisor MUST be a full-time employee of the University. This person is responsible for attending all campus events sponsored by the organization, inclusive of home contests and is responsible for scheduling security, crowd control, and adherence by the group to University policies and regulations. The Advisor should be readily available to sign appropriate forms and offer advice when needed.

FACILITY USAGE

A request should be developed for each season explaining the need for the use of the campus facilities. Some questions to think about: What is the competition season? When, where and how often will the club practice? When, where and how often will it compete? What kind of equipment will you need? Club Sports will practice and compete only on facilities designated and approved by the Athletic Director and Recreation Specialist. The Club will submit a facility request form with their advisor's signature well in advance (minimum of two weeks' notice) of the requested practice/competition date. The Athletic Director has the right and responsibility to determine the playability of all Eastern facilities and may cancel any practice/competition based on weather and field conditions. ANY off-campus facility use MUST be approved by the Director of Student Activities or Recreation Specialist.

COACHING:

Each sport must have a coach who satisfies the following conditions.

1. One-two years of collegiate playing/or coaching experience
2. Minimum of a bachelor's degree
3. May not be a player/coach
4. Certified in First Aid, CPR and AED training

The Club will submit resumes of interested candidates to the Recreation Specialist along with the names and phone numbers of three individuals who can provide professional recommendations for the candidate. Director of Student Activities or designee will be responsible for approving the hiring of a coach. The Sports Club must allocate a portion of its budget to pay a stipend to its coach. Once the Director of Student Activities has approved a Coaching Candidate all required paperwork will be processed by the Club's advisor or the Director of Student Center/Activities or his/her designee.

Roles & Responsibilities of a Coach

1. Adhere to the policies and guidelines set forth by the University, and the Athletic Department.
2. Establish conditioning and training programs to physically and mentally prepare the participants for competition. Provide a schedule (practices/games) and information on any tournament competition in advance to the Recreation Specialist
3. Attend all practices and contests except under prior arrangement.
4. Be attentive to student needs, concerns and potential problems.
5. Employ a sense of fair play encouraging the development of skills and recognizing the importance of active student participation.
6. Develop and employ safety standards; inspect equipment and facilities for potential safety problems prior to use.
7. Recognize, along with participants, potential health or injury problems and counsel as necessary.
8. Promote participant responsibility in the display of proper conduct, and promotion of good sportsmanship, both on and off the field.
9. Ensure compliance with any conference, league or union rules governing eligibility, competition, and financial obligations.
10. Display the proper image befitting that of a coach and/or instructor and representative of Eastern and the Department at all times.

Coach Administrative Policies

1. Assist the Club officers with their assigned responsibilities as outlined above.
2. Assure that all Club financial obligations are met (league membership, officials' fees, etc.)
3. Maintain complete inventory records of all Club equipment and uniforms.
4. Keep records of all transactions involving Club accounts and Club budgets and provide accountability on use of all funds.
5. At the end of each fiscal year, submit an accurately itemized budget to the appropriate SGA Committee for the following year, and be prepared to defend the proposal.

INJURIES/INSURANCE

Any and all injuries (even those seemingly minor) must be reported to the club's coach and to the Recreation Specialist immediately.

For more serious injuries, Campus Police will be called to determine whether medical attention is necessary.

Participants who refuse medical assistance or choose to go to their own doctor or to the hospital of their own accord do so at their own risk and will be required to sign a statement to that effect.

Anyone seeking payment of medical bills associated with an injury incurred during participation in club sports must have reported the injury via email at the time of injury. Furthermore, participants must submit claims to their own insurance company first; the University's accident insurance will only reimburse for covered expenses incurred within two years of the date of the accident which exceeds any applicable deductible, or the total of benefits received from any other insurance. Any insurance claims made against Eastern Connecticut State University must be turned in to and processed by the Club's Advisor.

RISK MANAGEMENT

First Aid Kit

There must be a first aid kit at the site of all practices, games and/or matches at all times. It will be the club's responsibility to purchase a complete First Aid kit and replenish it with the necessary supplies as necessary. This will NOT be supplied by the Athletic Department, but its contents must be reviewed and approved by one of the two Certified Athletic Trainers employed by Eastern Connecticut State University.

AED

An AED must be on the site of all competitions and within 2 minutes of the site of practices. It is the responsibility of the Advisor to secure an AED from either the University Police Department or the Athletic Department.

Certified Athletic Trainer/or EMT:

A certified Athletic Trainer or EMT must be present and on site for all games or matches considered to be home contests. *Some club sports may be required to have an Athletic Trainer or EMT present at all practices. This will be determined by the Recreation Specialist.

Transportation

If University vans are used to travel to games and practices, only the coach and employees of the University with appropriate valid license will be allowed to drive. If traveling out of state, the club must complete a travel authorization form, signed by the Club Advisor and in doing so they assume all risks associated with such. Only professional (not student) employees of the University may drive university vans out of state. All travel by organizations and clubs must have the approval of the Director of Student Center/Activities.

Membership

Membership in all recognized student club and organizations at Eastern Connecticut State University must be open to all currently enrolled full-time students. Organizations may establish reasonable requirements for active membership, such as attendance, participation, or dues, provided they are applied fairly and are consistent with university policies.

See the following link on the Clubs - Eastern for the current list and web pages of Student Government Association approved clubs and organizations at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Club Membership

Membership in an organization recognized and funded by the Student Government Association must be open to all Eastern students, part time or full time. To be an executive board member of a club, students must be registered for 9 credits or more and hold a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.

Political Endorsement

An official action or public statement by a recognized student organization in good standing with SGA and BAM expressing support for a candidate seeking elected office, or encouraging others to vote for that candidate.

Recognized student organizations may endorse political candidates in their capacity as independent student organizations. Such endorsements do not constitute endorsement by Eastern Connecticut State University. Organizations making endorsements must clearly identify themselves as the sponsoring organization, include the required institutional disclaimer on all public communications, comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, and adhere to all institutional policies governing student organizations, facilities, communications, and conduct. The institution will administer this policy in a viewpoint-neutral manner and will not approve or deny endorsements based on political affiliation, ideology, or the identity of the candidate.

Policy

1.) Organizational Authority

Endorsements represent the student organization, not individual members unless explicitly stated.

Examples:

- Endorsements must be approved through the organization's established governance process (i.e. membership vote).
- The organization should maintain documentation of the vote.
- The organization should identify who is authorized to make public statements on its behalf.

Nothing in this policy limits personal political speech or activities of individual students acting in their personal capacities. Individual members do not speak on behalf of the organization unless authorized through the organization's governance procedures.

2.) Clear Disclaimer

Organizations must be clear that they are not speaking for the institution.

Examples:

"This endorsement is made solely by [Organization Name] and does not represent the views or endorsement of Eastern Connecticut State University, its administration or faculty.

This disclaimer should appear:

- On social media posts
- Press releases
- Flyers
- Event advertisements
- Websites
- Candidate endorsement letters

3.) Use of Institutional Resources

Not Allowed:

- Use of university logos in a manner implying institutional endorsement
- Student activity fee money cannot be used to make contributions to campaigns

Recreational Sports

Eastern offers students, faculty, and staff the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of recreational activities. Flag football, basketball, racquetball, indoor and outdoor soccer, volleyball, dodge ball, wiffle ball, softball, tennis, and floor hockey are typical offerings and are open to all matriculated students. Any member of the Eastern community interested in recreational sports, as a participant or an official, should contact the Recreation Specialist.

Student Government Association

See the following link on the Student Activities Website for information regarding Eastern Connecticut State University's Student Government Association.

Campus Lantern

The Campus Lantern, a student newspaper, informs the Eastern community of news, sports, activities, and other newsworthy information. All interested students are welcome to join the staff. Send an email to lantern@my.easternct.edu. Additional information is available on the Student Activities website at Campus Lantern Student Newspaper - Eastern

Creative Writing Club

Eastern Exposure is a literary publication of short stories, poetry, and artwork submitted by students, faculty, and staff. The Creative Writing Club publishes Eastern Exposure once a semester and welcomes all submissions. Information regarding the Creative Writing Club is available on the Student Activities website at Creative Writing - Eastern

WECS 90.1 FM

WECS 90.1 FM is operated by the Communication Department as an "on-air" laboratory for students to gain practical experience in the field of broadcasting. Many positions are open each semester, including air personalities, news reporters, recording engineers, music directors, copywriters, sportscasters, and managers. The station has an ongoing training program and is open to all students with an interest in broadcasting. For more information, stop by the studio in the Communications Building. In addition, WECS Radio club is available on the Student Activities website at: WECS Radio - Eastern