

How to Start a Student Club / Organization

Official Recognition

To become an official student club at Knox you need to...

- Find an *advisor* who is a member of the Knox College faculty, staff or administration who is not on sabbatical or leave.
- Complete a *New Club Registration Form*, available through the Groups page of CampusGroups. The New Club Registration Form will ask for the following:
 - The Group Name
 - At least 10 members - this includes required officer positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Faculty/Staff Advisor.
 - Group Mission - What does your club stand for and what will you do on campus?
 - Governing Document or Constitution - This document should outline the following
 - Mission, Goals, and Objectives - see resource guides below:
 - Officer Responsibilities
 - Advisor Responsibilities
 - Membership Selection/Recruitment (if applicable)
 - Process by which officers are elected/appointed/selected

After submitting this information through Campus Groups you will need to **meet with the Student Senate Finance Committee during their regular meeting time** (Times TBD, Student Senate office). If/when they recommend your club, you will want to attend the **Student Senate general meeting** (Thursday 7pm, in Ferris Lounge.) If/When approved by Senate: Student Organization members can schedule a new club orientation meeting with Campus Life Staff.

Benefits of Recognition - Recognized student organizations...

- Can request and receive funding from the student senate.
- Have access to the craft room supplies to create advertisement for events, meetings or activities
- Can reserve rooms throughout campus for meetings and events
- Are invited to participate in the Student Organization Fair; designed to introduce the many opportunities for involvement to new and returning students.
- Are listed on the Group directory for Campus Groups
- Have access to resources available through Campus Life. The staff will help your club through individual consultation or group meetings with things like budget planning, meeting preparation, leadership training, fundraising and more.

Maintaining Recognition - to maintain recognition clubs should do the following:

- Provide an up-to-date roster of officers and members for the next Fall term
- Participate in the budget process in the spring

Resource Guide: Mission, Goals, & Objectives

Why are Mission Statements, Goals, and Objectives effective?

- To clarify and define why an organization exists
- To give direction
- To focus and motivate members
- To provide a way of recognizing accomplishments and successes

How are organizations that develop clear missions and goals more effective?

- They motivate members and increase commitment at meetings and activities
- They assist in the recruitment of new members
- Securing new leadership for a sustainable organization on campus

Definitions

Mission Statements: Broad, general statements that tell why your organization exists. These do not normally change from year to year.

Goals: Statements that describe what your organization wishes to accomplish, which stems from your purpose or mission. Goals are the ends toward which your efforts will be directed and will often change from term to term or year to year, depending on your group.

Objectives: Descriptions of exactly what is to be done, and are derived from the goals; clear specific statements of measurable tasks that will be accomplished as steps toward reaching your goals. Objectives are short term and have deadlines.

6 Easy steps for setting Goals and Objectives

1. Brainstorm a list of potential goals and objectives as a group.
2. Choose from the brainstormed list those you would like to implement.
3. Prioritize your choices. Where does the group want to start?
4. Determine objectives for each goal, and a plan of action for each objective. Remember, there can be several objectives for each goal.
5. Move into action and follow through. Many groups fail to evaluate and revise their goals; thus, their goals are abandoned and are often never achieved.
6. Evaluate your progress on a regular basis. Remember that circumstances change so be flexible and allow your objectives to change with them.

Action Plan: Your Action Plan is a list of very practical steps needed to accomplish your objectives in a timely manner.

Questions which need to be answered in your action plan:

1. How will the objectives be accomplished?
2. What are your resources in terms of people, money, and materials?
3. Who is responsible for each task?
4. What is the deadline?
5. How will you know when it is accomplished? How will you measure the results?

Sample Student Organization Officer and Advisor Agreement

Officer Responsibilities:

- We affirm that neither the organization nor the officers or members acting on behalf of the organization will represent themselves as official “agents” of Knox College.
- We understand that we may not sign any contracts on behalf of our organization or Knox College.
- We affirm that this organization does not discriminate unconstitutionally in its membership practices or its activities against any otherwise qualified person based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or any other form of identity.
- We affirm that the officers of this organization are currently enrolled, full-time Knox College students.
- Following any election, an officer update will be provided to the Office of Campus Life.
- We affirm that this club will abide by all college, local, state, and federal policies, regulations, and laws.

Advisor Responsibilities:

In requiring registered student organizations to have advisors, the college assumes that advisor will take an active role in the organization. The nature and style of that role is left to the determination of the organization and its advisor. The student organization advisor is primarily responsible for providing advising and guidance for the organization and to act as a resource to the group. The duties and responsibilities of the advisor include, but are not limited to, the following functions:

- Have concern for the ongoing function of the organization. This includes attending meetings or reading the meeting minutes and being familiar with the group’s mission and purpose.
- Schedule a specific time during which the organization officers and members may consult with you.
- Serve as a resource person for planning events and programs, resolving issues confronting the group and orienting new members and officers.
- Encourage the organization to function within College guidelines and do not condone any activity that does not adhere to College policies.
- Remain aware of the organization's financial status and encourage accurate bookkeeping.
- Encourage the learning process and remember that it is the student’s organization and they are free to make their own decisions.
- Provide a signature for any documents requiring an advisor’s signature.
- Attend advisor workshops hosted by the Campus Life Office when you are available.