Policy Title: Policy on Student Organizations

Originator: Dr. Jim Hurd, Senior Associate Vice President

Responsible Office: Division of Student Affairs

Reason for Policy/Purpose:

This policy establishes the authority for forming and managing student organizations at the University of West Florida.

Who Does this Govern and Who Needs to Know this Policy?

Students interested in establishing clubs and organizations that seek the benefits of official recognition, and faculty and staff who work with student organizations.

Definition of Terms:

1. Departmental Student Organizations: For the purpose of this policy, “Departmental Student Organizations” are those organizations established specifically to advance the programs and services of a particular department or unit and which are generally maintained by departmental faculty or staff in varying degrees of collaboration with student volunteers and/or student staff. Examples include Campus Activity Board, Argo Camp, and Forensics.

2. Fraternities and Sororities: For the purpose of this policy, “Fraternities and Sororities” are defined as official interest groups, colonies, and actively chartered chapters of national or international organizations which are generally affiliated with either the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), the National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc. (NPHC), the National Multicultural Greek Council (NMGC), National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO), or National Asian Pacific Islander American Panhellenic Association (NAPA).

3. Registered Student Organizations: For the purpose of this policy, “Registered Student Organizations” are those organizations established and generally maintained by students and that officially register with the University to receive benefits including access to facilities and ability to apply for SGA funding. Examples include a variety of special interest groups, faith-based organizations, professional societies, honor societies, and academic clubs.

4. Sports Clubs: For the purpose of this policy, “Sports Clubs” are those organizations established and generally maintained by students sharing a common interest in a competitive sport or recreational

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activity and that officially register with the University to receive benefits including access to facilities and ability to apply for SGA funding.

5. Student Organizations: For the purpose of this policy, “Student Organizations” include all student clubs and organizations with an established affiliation with the University including Student Government Association, Departmental Organizations, Registered Student Organizations, Fraternities and Sororities registered as Student Organizations, and Sports Clubs.

Policy Statement:

All student organizations are subject to the University of West Florida Student Code of Conduct.

A. Student organizations (as defined above) are afforded the following benefits:

1. Eligibility to apply for Activity and Service Fee funding through Student Government.
2. Inclusion in appropriate University publications.
3. Use of the University’s trademarks in accordance with the UWF Collegiate Licensing Program’s policies and procedures.
4. Eligibility for use of campus meeting facilities and outdoor spaces.
5. Eligibility, but not the right, to utilize University staff and programming resources.
6. Eligibility to apply for awards and honors presented to University registered organizations and members.

B. The University Commons and Student Involvement Office (Student Involvement) shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining a standard process for officially recognizing Registered Student Organizations. Minimum documentation must include: a completed registration agreement form, an organizational constitution, and a list of charter members.

C. The following specific requirements and qualifications apply to Registered Student Organizations:

1. The organization’s purpose and activities must be lawful and consistent with University objectives.
2. The organization’s membership must be open to all regardless of race, color, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin and it may not illegally discriminate on the basis of sex. Specifically, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), student organizations are obligated to ensure that their meetings, programs, services or other activities are accessible to individuals with disabilities and that reasonable accommodations are made as necessary. A student organization whose primary purpose is religious will not be denied registration as a Registered Student Organization on the ground that
it limits membership or leadership positions to students who share the religious beliefs of the organization. The University has determined that this accommodation of religious belief does not violate its nondiscrimination policy.

3. The organization must warrant that it will comply with the university’s regulation on hazing practices.

4. The organization must conduct its affairs in accordance with its constitution and University regulations, policies, and procedures.

5. The organization must have an advisor (faculty, staff, alumni, or other responsible party) who is approved by the Student Involvement Office.

D. Student Involvement shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining a standard process for officially recognizing Fraternities and Sororities. This process shall at minimum:

1. Ensure the national or international organization’s status as a 501(c)(7) organization.

2. Document commitment from a person or group of individuals willing to serve as chapter advisor(s).

3. Document the national or international organization’s risk management policies related to alcohol, drugs, hazing and facility management (if applicable).

4. Document the national or international organization’s new member education/intake curriculum and processes.

5. Require submission of the national or international organization’s constitution and by-laws containing language that demonstrates compliance with the University and US Department of Education’s definition of and criteria for a fraternity and sorority; and any additional information or documentation requested by Student Involvement.

E. Recreation and Sports Services (Recreation) shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining a standard process for officially recognizing Sports Clubs. Minimum documentation must include: a) a completed New Sports Club Petition, b) an organizational constitution, and c) a list of charter members. In addition, the following specific requirements and qualifications apply to Sports Clubs:

1. Club must be sport-like in nature.

2. Club must be directly associated with a national governing body (membership is suggested but not required).

3. Club must be distinguishable from other active sport clubs.

4. Must maintain at least 10 active student members at all times.

5. Must have an advisor who is approved by Recreation.
F. Sponsoring departments shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining Departmental Student Organizations when appropriate to accomplish the mission of that department. Departmental Student Organizations must share a common purpose or function with the sponsoring department and exist to serve specific student programming and leadership functions. Sponsoring departments are expected to, within the context of resources and the consequences of varying outcomes, provide departmentally appropriate opportunities for student engagement in planning and implementing the programs and services that the Departmental Student Organization is charged to provide. Sponsoring departments have the authority to initiate and terminate departmental student organizations.

This policy is not intended to restrict UWF students from creating or joining unregistered student organizations but such groups are not eligible for the benefits afforded recognized organizations.

G. The University of West Florida Student Government Association shall be established pursuant to the Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.014 - Student Governments. The Vice President for Student Affairs or designee shall serve as the advisor to Student Government.

Procedures:

The Student Government Association, as required by Board of Governors Regulation 6.014, will adopt and maintain internal operating procedures (e.g., Constitution, Statutes, Bylaws) that shall be approved by the Board of Trustees or its designee. These procedures should address requirements related to the applicability of Florida public meetings laws (Section 286.011, Florida Statutes).

Student Involvement will develop and maintain detailed procedures, published regularly in the Student Organization Handbook, to appropriately recognize, monitor, and support UWF’s Registered Student Organizations.

Student Involvement will develop and maintain detailed procedures, published regularly in the Fraternity & Sorority Life Procedures Manual, to appropriately recognize, monitor, and support UWF’s Fraternities and Sororities.

Recreation will develop and maintain detailed procedures, published regularly in the Sports Club Handbook, to appropriately recognize, monitor, and support UWF’s Sports Clubs.

Departments sponsoring Departmental Student Organizations will develop and maintain appropriate internal operating procedures that shall be approved by the appropriate Director, Chair, Dean, or Vice President.
Change Justification:

This policy is being revised as the result of a five year review to reflect current regulatory requirements.

Authority and Related Documents:


APPROVED:   Dr. Judith A. Bense, President    Date:   5/18/15

History:

SA-22.00-07/01 Student Organization Registration Procedures, adopted July 2001; SA-22.01-07/10 Student Organization Registration Procedures, adopted July 2010; revised hereby.