

STUDENT AFFAIRS OP 91.200: Student and Other University Organizations

Date: July 1, 1999

Purpose

To provide fair and reasonable guidelines and procedures for student and other organizations at Mississippi State University.

Voluntary associations of students in student organizations are an integral part of the educational process at Mississippi State University. The university has a positive responsibility to encourage such associations as a means by which students can develop civic and social awareness and responsibility. In doing so, it neither endorses nor disclaims any particular idea, system of thought, or point of view. Other university organizations also enhance campus life and contribute to the accomplishment of the mission of the university.

Policy

The university will maintain a procedure for registration and provide rules and regulations for university organizations.

Rules and Guidelines for Registered Organizations

1. University Organization Definition

University organizations are those whose active membership is composed entirely of students, and/or faculty, and/or staff. They are subcategorized into the following types:

- a. Student Organizations - groups organized for students;
- b. Student/Faculty Organizations - groups organized for both students and faculty;
- c. Faculty and/or Staff Organizations - groups organized primarily for faculty and/or staff.

2. Benefits and Privileges

The benefits and privileges of a registered organization follow:

- a. The opportunity to incorporate, as prescribed by university guidelines, the university name into the organization's name;
- b. Eligibility to reserve and use university facilities;

Listing in publications such as *The Reveille* or found online at <http://www.msstate.edu/web/security.html>, and

- d. The privilege to participate in university events such as orientation, homecoming, organizational fairs, etc.

3. General

- a. Only those organizations registered with the university may conduct activity on the university campus.
- b. The university shall not be responsible for injury or damage to persons or property resulting from the activities of the organizations or for any debts or liabilities incurred by such organizations.

- c. Organizations shall not engage in or condone any form of hazing. Hazing occurs when a person or organization who, in the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or to a third person.
- d. Organizations shall be held responsible for the conduct and actions of each member of the organization while acting in the capacity of a member or while attending or participating in any activity of the organization.
- e. Organizations must comply with all policies, regulations, and procedures established by Mississippi State University and with all laws, regulations, and ordinances, whether federal, state, or local.
- f. An organization must represent the interests of its members and control of the organization must rest with the local campus group. The organization must not have a knowing affiliation with an organization whose aims and goals are illegal.
- g. Registration of an organization (for other than a temporary period) will be on an annual basis and will be effective until the beginning of the next academic year (fall semester, unless rescinded sooner by the university). The registration of any organization shall be subject to renewal by the university for each ensuing year. Annual renewal of the registration shall be dependent on the organization's demonstration of compliance with its purposes, aims, and activities as stated in its constitution, and compliance with all rules and regulations of the university. Registration forms are located in the Colvard Union.
- h. Any registered student organization may be placed on probation, suspension, or restriction, or have its registration withdrawn by the Board of Students after having been accorded due process in accordance with provisions found online at <http://www.msstate.edu/web/security.html> (see OP 91.100). Other registered organizations (with the exception of faculty organizations) may have their registration withdrawn at any time by the Vice President for Student Affairs after having been accorded appropriate due process. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for reviewing faculty organizations, and may withdraw their registration after affording appropriate due process.
- i. Registered organizations may build, buy, rent, or lease a house or other facility on campus only with the written approval of the university. Arrangements can be made through the Colvard Union.

4. Student Organizations

Freedom and Responsibility of Registered Student Organizations

Freedom of action granted a registered student organization also implies a responsibility of the organization for developing the direction, scope, and character of the organization in promoting the total educational program of the university. The only limitations placed upon this freedom are those imposed by the stated purposes of the organization, by university and board policy, and by law.

The university, through the registration process set forth, seeks the freedom of existence for student organizations and ensures that designated privileges and support are readily available equally to all organizations that uphold the registration requirements. The university does not, however, automatically endorse the mission, goals, or purpose of any organization. Mississippi State University, while encouraging active participation in non-classroom activities, seeks to ensure that first and foremost students successfully meet their educational goals and requirements.

5. Student Organization Social Function Registration

- a. Definition - The term "social function" herein refers to parties, dances, swaps, mixers, picnics, or the like sponsored by an organization.
- b. Registration of Events - All on-campus social functions sponsored by or hosted by a student organization must be registered with the Colvard Union, using a Student Activity Coordination Form. The university will not approve registration of activities for any organization that is delinquent in its financial obligations to any department or agency of the university.
- c. Closed Parties - The following guidelines are for closed parties.
- (1) It is strongly recommended that all student organizations hosting a social function limit attendance to dates, and invited guests to minimize safety and legal risks. While security guards are not required at parties (with the exception of on-campus parties during football weekends and Super Bulldog Weekends) they are highly recommended.
 - (2) If an on-campus party is held outside of a student organization's house or other facility, a fence is required to enable the organization to limit attendance to members, dates, and invited guests. Specifications for the fence are provided by the university. The organization's officers are responsible for controlling guest attendance and established party entrance(s). A sign stating "By Invitation Only" must be prominently displayed at each entrance.
- d. Security – At all social functions on campus which are open to the general public, either free or through paid admission, the sponsoring student organization must hire security guards to assist with maintaining control over who attends and the behavior of those in attendance. (Security must be registered with University Police.) The number of security guards needed will depend upon the size and nature of the event and will be determined in consultation with the University Police.
- e. Alcohol – Unlawful sale, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, by students on campus is prohibited. While the university has no control over off-campus social functions, the following guidelines concerning the use of alcohol at student organizations off-campus functions are suggested:
- (1) Organizations and individual student members will abide by all federal, state, and local laws and Mississippi State University policies.
 - (2) No organizational funds may be used to purchase alcohol.
 - (3) When alcohol is present:
 - Non-alcoholic beverages should also be served;
 - Food (preferably low salt, high protein) should be served;
 - No alcohol should be consumed during the last hour of the event; and
 - An effective system should be in place to transport drinkers home (e.g., buses or non-drinking designated drivers).
 - (4) Appropriate and reasonable behavior is expected of all students and their guests who attend an event associated with registered organization of Mississippi State University. The health and safety of students and their guests will be taken into consideration when planning and implementing an activity.

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SUPERSEDED

f. Hours for Social Events - On-campus social events may be conducted on Sunday through Thursday until 12 a.m., and on Friday and Saturday until 1 a.m. the following mornings. In exceptional circumstances, special permission may be granted by the Colvard Union to extend the above times for termination of social events. The termination time must be specified on the Student Activity Coordination Form.

g. Outdoor Amplified Music - See OP 91.310: Outdoor Amplified Music.

6. Financial Policies for Student Organizations

See OP 91.209: Financial Policies for Student Organization Accounts.

7. Disciplinary Proceedings Against Organizations

See OP 91.100: Code of Student Conduct

Procedures

1. Registration of Organizations

a. Student, Faculty, Staff, and University Organizations

In order to obtain registration as an organization, a group must present their petition to organize to the Colvard Union, Division of Student Affairs. Applications and information are available in this office (325-3322). The five steps listed below constitute a petition for university registration:

- (1) Hold organizational meetings. Groups may hold three organizational meetings.
- (2) Elect officers. Fill out information requested on the application (submit 15 copies).
- (3) Draw up a constitution and by-laws (submit 15 copies).
- (4) Make a list of members' names and net IDs.
- (5) Provide the name(s) of organizational advisor(s).

b. All Organizations

- (1) Submit a statement of assurance of compliance signed by an officer of the organization that it will adhere to all rules and regulations, policies and procedures of Mississippi State University and with all laws and ordinances, whether federal, state, or local.
- (2) The petition is submitted to the Student, Faculty, and Staff Organizations Committee which renders a favorable or unfavorable decision. This decision is subject to review by the Vice President for Student Affairs, or in the case of faculty organizations, by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- (3) The petitioning group is notified as soon as the final university decision regarding registration is made. Upon receipt of the letter of registration, the group may then assume all privileges and activities of a registered organization until registration expires or is withdrawn. All on-campus activities of the petitioning group, both before and after registration, must be registered in the Colvard Union.

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2. Space Scheduling

- a. University organizations must contact the Event Services Coordinator (325-3228) to reserve the facilities needed. After contacting Event Services, the student organizations will provide the following information on the Student Activity Coordination Form: person in charge, time of activity, food service (if applicable), and custodial service (if applicable), details for "set-ups" for meetings, including microphones, lights, chairs, stages, etc. Other university organizations should also contact the building supervisor.
- b. The Event Services Coordinator will determine if requested facilities are available for use.
- c. The activity will be placed on the university's activity calendar by Event Services.
- d. Student Activity Coordination Forms will be routed by students to the proper person including: the representative of the scheduling organization, the organization advisor, the Colvard Union representative, and the building supervisor. If applicable, the Housing and Residence Life representative, the Director of the Longest Student Health Center, the University Police, and the Dean of Students will also need to sign the form.
- e. If outdoor space is desired for a function, the organization is encouraged to register the activity with Event Services in order to better coordinate activities.
- f. University-wide scheduled events have precedence for time and facility.

Note: All departments scheduling meetings within their facilities should notify Event Services of their meetings in order that an updated record can be kept on all university activities.

Review

The Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for the review of this operating policy every four years or as needed.

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**DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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