

**NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY  
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS**

**Student Organization Success Model  
For Empowerment & Achievement  
Operational Plan**

**MODEL OVERVIEW**

The Division of Student Affairs believes Recognized Student Organizations support a vibrant student centered environment by offering Northwestern State University students a learning lab with opportunities to develop personally and professionally. Through the Department of Student Activities, Recognized Student Organizations are encouraged to develop and achieve organizational goals. The Student Organization Success Model for Empowerment & Achievement provides the framework for student organizations to meet the challenge to create learning opportunities for students through several concepts. The concepts of organizational self governance with advisement, risk management, accountability, member recruitment, student retention, and scholastic achievement provide a foundation for Recognized Student Organizations to be empowered to achieve in all endeavors.

**ACTUALIZATION OF THE MODEL**

The Department of Student Activities actualizes this model through several procedures established to meet policy expectations. Seven components explain the use of the Student Organization Success Model.

- I. Recognition & Certification Process for Student Organizations
- II. Risk Management Policy
- III. Recognized Student Organization Regulations & Privileges
- IV. Advisor Development
- V. Intentional Leadership Preparation
- VI. Service Learning
- VII. Advanced Leadership Development
- VIII. Recognized Student Organization Awards

## **I. Recognition & Certification Process for Student Organizations**

### **Recognition.**

A group of students wishing to register an organization should consult with the Assistant Director of Student Activities. A petitioning group must meet all regulations for organizations and provide the following documents:

- A prospective student organization application
- A proposed constitution and by-laws of the organization which clearly contains the following:
  - a) The name of the group
  - b) The purpose of the group
  - c) Rules of membership
  - d) Terms & methods of membership selection
  - e) Officers and duties
  - f) Proposed nature and frequency of meetings
  - g) Proposed activities
  - h) Financial plans, including any proposed fees, dues assessments, and provision for distribution of all funds and assets in the event of dissolution
- Petition to Seek Recognition
- Name of the faculty advisor or administrative officer/staff member of the University who will sponsor the organization, attend meetings, activities, and supervise the plans of the organization.
- A letter from the proposed advisor indicating willingness to serve in that capacity
- A statement of compliance by the organization that it will comply with all rules, regulations, policies and procedures of Northwestern State University.

The Assistant Director of Student Activities and Organizations will forward only completed packets to the Committee on Organizations for approval.

### **Certification.**

Student organizations that have completed the Prospective Student Organization chartering process and received chartered status from the Committee on Organizations will certify the organization biannually. The certification process allows each student organization to maintain Recognized Student Organization Status. The process occurs in September during the Fall semester and February during the Spring semester. In order to certify the organization as a Recognized Student Organization, the officer must submit the following forms each semester: a Certification Information Card, Hazing Policy Compliance Form, Alcohol Policy Compliance Form, and Statement of Compliance with University Policies.

## **II. Risk Management**

The Division of Student Affairs mandates that each recognized student organization (RSO) at Northwestern State University practice risk management procedures. Through the practice of proper risk management procedures, a RSO commits to excellence in specific areas of organizational management leading to positive relations throughout the university community. Proper Risk Management Procedures at Northwestern State University are defined in four policies – Compliance, Alcohol & Drug Policy, Hazing, and Financial Management. Each RSO must renew its commitment to each policy annually through the recertification of recognized student organizations conducted through the Division of Student Affairs, Department of Student Activities, Office of Student Organizations, Greek Life, & Leadership Development. Additionally, each RSO must attend two-thirds of Northwestern State University Gavel Club meetings hosted each semester and complete a semesterly report detailing organizational activities with an attached calendar of events for the proceeding semester.

### **Statement of Compliance**

The statement of compliance acknowledges the Recognized Student Organization's practice of appropriate membership and officer selection guidelines.

Purposes and activities of the organization are in compliance with the rules and regulations of Northwestern State University, the national organization (if applicable) as well as local, state, and federal laws and statutes.

It is hereby acknowledged that the policies and practices of the organization pertaining to membership do not discriminate based on sex\*, race, religion, national origin, material status, disability, or age.

\*Exclusion based on gender is applicable only to Greek-lettered organizations based on the Title IX Education Amendment of 1972, which allows social fraternities and sororities at an institution of higher education the ability to limit membership to members of one sex.

All members of the organization must be registered students at Northwestern State University. All officers (either elected or appointed) must be registered students and have both a cumulative and previous semester grade point average of at least 2.0.

### **Alcohol & Drug Policy**

Northwestern State University conforms to all local, state, and federal laws regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs on campus. Northwestern is a member of the Network to Promote Drug-Free Colleges and Universities and abides by their standards regarding policies, athletic programs, educational programs, enforcement, and assessment. Students and employees who fail to abide by university policies regarding alcohol and other drugs will be subject to disciplinary action according to the established university policies and procedures that conform to local, state, and federal laws.

Students and employees of Northwestern State University are hereby informed that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of controlled substances is prohibited on university property. Students and employees of the university found to be illegally manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using controlled dangerous substances on university property shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with applicable policies of the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors and Northwestern State University. In addition to university disciplinary action, students and employees found to be illegally manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using controlled substances shall also be subject to criminal prosecution.

The term “controlled dangerous substance” means a drug, substance or immediate precursor in Schedule I through V of Louisiana RS40:964.

Students and employees are advised that the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages on university property or during any trip sponsored by the University or one of its affiliated organizations, except as provided in University policy, is prohibited.

University policy requires prior approval for any event at which alcohol is served. Local and state ordinances governing the sale, possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages shall be observed. A copy of the University policy is available in the Office of Student Activities & Organizations, Room 214 of the Student Union.

Recognized Student Organizations are responsible for all items covered in the University Alcohol Policy on pages 34 – 38 of the Northwestern State University Student Handbook not mentioned above.

### **Hazing Policy**

In accordance with the purpose and philosophy of The University of Louisiana System, Northwestern State University and the laws of the state of Louisiana, which include the belief that true fraternalism can be nurtured only in an atmosphere of social and moral responsibility and that hazing is inconsistent with the responsibility of student organizations to conduct safe, constructive student education, and in order to eliminate the harmful practice of hazing, Northwestern State University establishes this policy to be complied with by all students and student organizations, clubs, and athletic teams.

- A. No Student organization shall employ a program of student initiation/pledge education, which includes “hazing”.
- B. Hazing shall be defined as:
  - 1. any action taken or situation created, whether on or off university property, which is life threatening to the individual; and

2. kidnapping, paddling, slapping, burning with a cigarette, or any such activities which are life threatening to the individual or intended to physically hurt the individual or humiliate the individual mentally.
- C. Hazing may include, but is not limited to the following activities that when these activities are life threatening or intended to hurt physically or mentally humiliate the individual:
1. physical exercise, scavenger hunts, road trips, any activity resulting in excessive fatigue, physical or psychological shock;
  2. wearing apparel that is uncomfortable to the individual, or if worn publicly, is conspicuous or not normally in good taste;
  3. engaging in public stunts or buffoonery, hair cutting, morally degrading or humiliating games or activities, giving of food or drink (alcoholic or nonalcoholic) which is distasteful or designed to provoke nausea or inebriation;
  4. any form of verbal harassment, any action or situation which subjugates an individual to a condition where he/she might tend to lose self respect or suffer injury to personal or religious values;
  5. any activities which interfere with the student's scholastic responsibilities; and
  6. the use of obscenities and vulgarities in dress, language or action.
- D. It shall be the duty of all current and prospective members to report immediately, in writing, any violation of this policy to the Vice President of Student Affairs and/or the University Police. Any alleged violation of this policy shall be investigated and appropriate disciplinary sanctions, as provided in The Code of Student Conduct, imposed if the allegation is substantiated.
- E. This policy shall be published annually in the Student Handbook to insure its dissemination each year. The Department of Student Activities and Organizations shall conduct a workshop focusing on "hazing" each year for the officers of each organization. The president of each organization will be required to certify that he/she attended the workshop and has disseminated the policy to the members of his/her organization.

### **Policy on Recognized Student Organization Financial Management**

Realizing that student development is augmented through opportunities to become involved and to serve, the Division of Student Affairs emphasizes the importance of sound financial management as a cornerstone of proper Risk Management practices for Recognized Student Organizations. Accordingly, the Division ensures the acceptance of fiduciary (fiscal) responsibility by a Recognized Student Organization through the establishment of minimum standards of financial management. Compliance with the minimum standards demonstrates the existence of a structure that encourages fiduciary responsibility among student leaders who are duly appointed or elected officers of a Recognized Student Organization. The Committee on Organizations stipulates compliance of a prospective student organization, as well as those recognized student organizations seeking recertification, to meet the following:

### *Minimum Standards*

As a proof to the Division of Student Affairs that the organization maintains a proper structure assuring fiduciary responsibility, the duly appointed or elected officer of a Recognized Student Organization agrees to . . .

- Require at least two signatures for all transactions, with no withdrawal authority or acceptance of checks made payable to cash, if an account with a local financial institution is maintained by the organization.
- Adhere to the Northwestern State University policy regarding the Louisiana Attorney General Opinion No. 94-167 which states:  
*It is the policy of the University that University employees **not** have the **Care, Custody, and/or Control of any funds of Student Organizations, Clubs, Groups, and Other Organizations affiliated with the University**, and that the duly appointed and/or elected officer (e.g. treasurer) of said organizations who are **not** employees of the University be solely responsible for the receipt, deposit, and/or expenditure of organization funds.*
- Disclose at any time, with or without notice, any and all financial accounts maintained on-campus and off-campus to the Division of Student Affairs.
- Comply with a request for information on all financial operations pertaining to the organization through the Office of Student Organizations, Greek Life, & Leadership Development reporting system.
- Complete the financial management section of the Certification Information Card for Recognized Student Organizations obtained through the Office of Student Organizations, Greek Life, & Leadership Development to include the name of the financial institution, name of account, account number, and persons with approved access to the account with detailed minutes certifying their approved access. Treasurer(s) or president(s) of a Recognized Student Organization shall report any changes to this information to the Division of Student Affairs, Department of Student Activities, Office of Student Organizations, Greek Life, & Leadership Development in the same manner or upon request at any time.

## **Recommended Risk Management Practices**

The Division of Student Affairs, Department of Student Activities suggests usage of the following proper risk management practices.

- Recruit New Members
- Participate in activities sponsored by the University
- Publicize events where appropriate
- Host Educational Activities
- Participate in sound financial practices and maintain accurate records
- Attend leadership development workshops, conferences, etc.
- Pre-plan all events sponsored by your organization
- Utilize the Office of Student Organizations & Greek Life as a chapter development resource
- Train Officers and Members on their proper roles
- Encourage advisor involvement in organizational activities
- Follow the Event Management Plan
- Attend Gavel Club Meetings

## **Event Management Suggestions**

The Department of Student Activities supports student organizations in their efforts to prevent poor event implementation by proper planning. The use of the Event Management Suggestions provides a framework for student organizations to host events with student safety as the top priority.

### **➤ Event Checklist**

The Event Planning Checklist included as Appendix F in this manual serves as a guide to ensure that all event bases have been covered. Special attention by an organization's executive officers should be given to those responsible for the event by educating those persons about state, local, national laws as well as organizational policies regarding certain types of events.

### **➤ Social/Major Events**

- A. Recognized Student Organizations hosting any social event on or off campus should hire one post certified off duty uniformed police officer per 100 guests.
- B. For all social events with *under* 100 participants, a post certified off duty uniformed police officer should be present.
- C. Recognized Student Organizations hosting events with alcohol must conform to all University of Louisiana System, local, state, and national laws as well as their organizational specific risk management policies.
- D. When a Recognized Student Organization's national affiliate does not address risk management practices in any directives, manuals, etc. or in a case where a national affiliate does not exist (local organizations), the Department of Student Activities recommends organizations follow the Fraternity Insurance Purchasing Group (FIPG) Risk Management Manual. (A copy of guidelines in the manual will be made available upon request in Room 214).

### **III. Recognized Student Organizations Regulations & Privileges**

#### **Regulations Governing Recognized Student Organizations**

Northwestern State University recognizes the right of groups to freely assemble, but also accepts that responsibility to protect the rights of members of the campus community from organizations which infringe upon the purposes of Northwestern State University and the Board of Supervisors of the University of Louisiana System.

1. Any organization shall be open to all students of Northwestern State University who otherwise meet membership requirements. An organization may not deny membership on the basis of race, national origin, gender\*, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a veteran. (\*Exclusion based on gender is applicable based on Title IX Education Amendments.)
2. Membership in student organizations shall be limited to currently enrolled students.
3. Individuals and groups are responsible for conducting activities in accordance with the rules, regulations, standards and the Northwestern State University Code of Student Conduct.
4. Organizations shall not require of its members any activity incompatible with scholastic attainment or acceptable general development of the individual.
5. To be eligible for election to or to serve as an officer of an organization, or in any elected or appointed position, a student must be in good standing with the University and maintain both a cumulative and previous semester grade point average of 2.0. It is the responsibility of the Advisor and the President of the organization to ensure that this policy is enforced. Failure of the Advisor or the President to enforce this policy does not negate any sanctions which may be imposed on the organization or the members for failure to enforce this policy.
6. All organizations must maintain an NSU Post Office Box in the organization's name. Organizations may elect to have their mail delivered to the office of their advisor, provided that provisions for doing so have been approved with the advisor.
7. Organizations must maintain one faculty advisor. Persons who hold the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Instructor or Staff Member shall be considered eligible to serve as advisors of organizations. The advisor must be notified of, and encouraged to attend meetings and functions of the organization and to assume partial responsibilities for the organization's activities.

8. Student organizations that have completed the Prospective Student Organization chartering process and received chartered status from the Committee on Organizations will certify the organization biannually. The certification process allows each student organization to maintain Recognized Student Organization status. The process occurs in September during the Fall semester and in February during the Spring semester. In order to certify the organization as a Recognized Student Organization, the officer must submit the following forms each semester: a Certification Information Card, Hazing Policy Compliance Form, Alcohol Policy Compliance Form, and Statement of Compliance with University Policies.
9. Officers of student organizations are responsible for informing the Office of Student Activities of any officer or advisor changes that occur during the academic year.
10. Presidents of recognized student organizations are responsible for attending monthly Gavel Club Meetings during the Fall and Spring semester to represent the organization. Recognized Student Organizations, which fail to have an officer present at two-thirds of the monthly Gavel Club meetings during an academic year, may be sanctioned by the University Committee on Organizations.
11. All student organizations shall conduct business in accordance with the University Advertisement, Promotion and Solicitation Policy, which is published annually by the Division of Student Affairs through the Student Handbook.
12. Recognized student organizations which have established bank accounts for organizational funds must report this information to the Office of Student Activities each year or as officer changes occur. This information will be kept confidential and shared only with appropriate University officials. This information should be reported using the Financial Account information section on the Certification Information Card for Recognized Student Organizations.
13. The Northwestern State University Committee on Organizations shall exercise jurisdiction over all recognized student organizations at Northwestern State University.

### **Privileges of Recognized Student Organizations**

A recognized organization is entitled:

1. To use the name of Northwestern State University of Louisiana in connection with organizational activities.
2. To be listed as a recognized student organization by the Office of Student Activities and Organizations.

3. To reserve the use of University facilities and to promote student organization events on campus in accordance with University policies pertaining to these activities.
4. To post signs and distribute literature in accordance with University regulations.
5. To use campus mail services.
6. To request advertising in and news coverage in campus publications normally open to organizational interests.
7. To host a web page on the University website in accordance with the policies set forth by NSU Information Systems.
8. To solicit membership on campus.
9. To apply for organizational grants through the Student Government Association and Student Activities Board.
10. To sponsor or present public performances on University property.
11. To raise funds or make other permissible solicitations on University property under the guidelines of Advertising, Promotion and Solicitation Policy published annually in the Student Handbook.
12. To nominate in Student Government Association elections as provided in the SGA Election Code.

#### **IV. Advisor Development**

Understanding the role of advisors in assisting organizations to make the best decisions, the Department of Student Activities sponsors Fall & Spring Faculty Institute Luncheons. These luncheons serve as the primary forum to provide advisors with the Recognized Student Organization Manual, tips on best advising practices, and answers any questions.

Organizations must maintain one campus advisor, who hold the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Instructor, or Staff Member. The advisor must be notified of, and encouraged to, attend meetings and functions of the organization and to assume partial responsibilities for its activities.

The Department of Student Activities encourages advisors of Recognized Student Organizations to focus on the following identified advising goals:

- To enable the student to learn to assume control and take responsibility for tasks at hand.
- To be visible and involved with the organization and be accessible to student members.
- To meet with the new officers early in the academic year and to continue to do so throughout the year.

## V. Intentional Leadership Preparation

The Department of Student Activities believes in the intentional preparation of students for leadership positions in student organizations, at the University, and in local, state, and national communities. Programs and activities are designed to promote personal growth and the acquisition of valuable life skills. Moreover, the Office of Student Organizations and Greek Life provides resources to aid in the success of organizations in developing leadership qualities among members.

### Services:

- **Leadership Library**  
Books, fliers, manuals available in Room 233 for use in advancing programming efforts.
- **Consultation**  
Professional staff members are available to assist with goal setting, program planning, special programming, and provide tailored interactive workshops to suit an organization's needs.
- **Leadership TO GO! Outreach Program**  
Student leaders trained by the professional office staff provide workshops, seminars, and teambuilding to student organizations free of charge.

### Programs:

- **Emerging Leaders**  
Freshmen and sophomore students receive free leadership training through multi-night adventure sessions focusing on individual, team, and organizational leadership skills.
- **Campus Leader Speakers Series**  
The best campus issue speakers in the nation present on topics such as alcohol, drug use, date rape, leadership, hazing, sex, motivation, and much more!!

## VI. Service Learning

Service Learning remains a cornerstone of the Department of Student Activities Student Organization Success Model. Recognized Student Organizations are encouraged to adopt organization specific philanthropic projects that coincide with their individual organizational missions, philosophies, and creeds. In addition to organization specific service projects, the Student Activities Board Service Learning Committee offers opportunities to participate in campus wide service such as food can and clothing drives, blood donor programs, and campus clean-ups. Student organizations receive recognition for their participation in these efforts.

## VII. Advanced Leadership Development

### Opportunities:

- ***Emerging Leaders – Leadership Team Facilitators***  
Presidential Leadership Program participants, Presidential Ambassadors, Emerging Leader graduates, and other student leaders have the opportunity to further their leadership skills through selection as a Department of Student Activities Leadership Team member. Team members are trained in small group facilitation as well as event planning and implementation.
- ***High School Outreach Facilitators***  
Those student leaders demonstrating the ability to plan, promote, and implement successful interactive teambuilding, skill building, and program planning workshops have the opportunity to be selected as a High School Outreach Facilitator. HS Outreach Facilitators work with high school organization advisors to plan and implement a training program to assist the high school student organization with a specific area.
- ***Low & High Ropes Course Participation***  
The Department of Student Activities certified staff provide the option for student organizations and student leaders to experience the challenge to apply problem solving and teambuilding skills through Low & High Ropes Courses.
- ***State, Regional, & National Conferences***  
Student organizations are encouraged to participate in local, state, and national conferences to gain additional training in specific organizational areas. The Department of Student Activities believes participation in these events by Recognized Student Organizations reflect the group's commitment to growth and success in organizational management. Conferences also provide a networking opportunity for student leaders to gain access to future employment and other career opportunities.

## VIII. Recognized Student Organization Awards

Recognized Student Organization Awards allow the Department of Student Activities to recognize achievements of Recognized Student Organizations. Award areas include: Outstanding Student Organization, Special Program of the Year, Student Leader of the Year, Advisor of the Year, and New Student Organization of the Year. Recognized Student Organizations must complete certification packets for the fall and spring and have the President or a representative present at each Gavel Club meeting. Recognized Student Organizations also will be acknowledged for participation in service learning efforts, intentional leadership preparation opportunities, and advanced leadership programs. Award & Recognition packets are disseminated during Gavel Club meetings during February of each year. The Student Organization Awards program offers an organization an opportunity to gain recognition for its exemplary programs throughout the academic year.