

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION</b> Division of Student Development		<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> 558
<b>POLICY TITLE</b> Student Organizations		
<b>DATE OF REVISION</b> December 20, 2024		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b> Director of Campus Recreation & Student Life		<b>ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE</b> Office of Student Life

### **Registered Organizations**

The University of South Carolina recognizes the right to exist and the mutual benefit of co-curricular activities. The University, in the registration process set forth, seeks the freedom of existence for student organizations and ensures that designated privileges and support are 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.

### **Definitions:**

#### ***Student Organization***

A student organization shall be defined as any group, consisting entirely of USCB students who desire to come together to support a particular view, explore common interests or accomplish identified tasks, which do not:

- a) Have illegal goals and objectives.
- b) Advocate or support the overthrow of the United States Government.
- c) Propose or participate in activities which would violate regulations of the Board of Trustees; the University; federal, state, or local laws and regulations; or materially disrupt activities and discipline of the University.
- d) Advocate incitement of imminent lawlessness which may produce such action referred to in (c) above; or
- e) Discriminate based on age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, or any other bases under federal, state, local law, or regulations.
- f) Promote the use of illegal substances or underage alcohol consumption.

The University views student organizations as private affiliations and does not endorse the mission, goals, or purpose of the organization. The University of South Carolina Beaufort does not allow its name to be used in the organization's name in any form or allow the organization to represent the University on behalf of the University. Registered organizations exist only on the University of South Carolina Beaufort campus. Registered student organizations shall be referred to as "--", a registered organization at the University of South Carolina Beaufort."

### ***Privileges and Responsibilities***

To function as part of the University rather than as an outside organization of citizens, student organizations must be registered to obtain the following privileges:

- a) Reserve and use of campus facilities and spaces.
- b) Conduct meetings on campus.
- c) Solicit funds/request funds (if eligible).
- d) Use University services (i.e., catering, Presence, conference set up, maintenance requests etc.)
- e) Use of a USCB campus address.
- f) Use of the University Logo with permission from the Marketing Department.
- g) Formal training and professional development

Student Organizations must also complete the following list of responsibilities to retain their active membership status.

- a) Register all changes that occur within the organization immediately to the Office of Student Life. Executive board members and advisor information must always be up to date. This includes name & USCB email for all.
- b) Have one representative at Sharkapolooza in August. This date is always the first Friday of the academic year.
- c) At least one executive board member, preferably the President, if possible, attend the monthly leadership meetings hosted by Student Life. These dates will be published at the beginning of each semester.
- d) Host one public event each semester that benefits the entire student body, for two public events each academic year.
- e) At least one executive board member must attend the Annual Leadership Retreat in early April. The date will be made known at least eight weeks in advance every year.

Organizations who do not complete these responsibilities may be given reprimands at the discretion of the Office of Student Life, which could include the following:

- a) Initial written warning and conversation with the Office of Student Life
- b) Restriction of university services and spaces for one month and a required meeting with all executive board members and their advisor with the Office of Student Life.
- c) Probation of three months of an academic calendar year (summer excluded), which includes loss of all privileges and use of any funding. They also must explain why the responsibilities weren't met. Probation will only occur following unsuccessful meetings and interventions with the Office of Student Life.

Following the three-month probationary period, student organizations that want to be reinstated must complete an appeal process within four weeks prior to the probation's end.

## **General Student Organization Requirements**

### **Membership**

Active membership in registered student organizations shall be limited to persons officially connected with the University as faculty, staff, and students.

- a) To become or remain an active organization, the organization must have four students and a faculty or staff advisor.
- b) With groups of only four members, at least two members must meet the requirements of the executive board members.
- c) Student organizations may not, in any form, discriminate based on age, ancestry, color,

disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, or any other bases under federal, state, local law, or regulations in membership selection/admission (unless specifically exempt under Title IX\*). Membership criteria may be implemented by a student organization if applied fairly and evenly to all prospective members and can be shown to have a relationship to the organization's mission, purpose, and goals. It is suggested that the criteria be objective and not subject to personal interpretations (e.g. “of good character” is difficult to define).

\*Due to policies set forth by Title IX regulations, Club Sports and social fraternities and sororities are allowed to be separated by gender.

Active membership in a registered student organization will be granted to the following students:

- a) Any student enrolled in at least 6 credit hours.

Any person not meeting the above requirement shall not be eligible for active membership in a registered student organization.

### ***Registration***

Registration shall be defined as the collection and recording of specific information required of qualified student organizations. The registration, in turn, affords those organizations certain privileges.

When an organization becomes registered, it accepts the responsibility of adhering to federal and state law and university regulations.

### **Prospective Organizations**

A prospective student organization is an organization that is trying to form on campus but hasn't gathered all the required documents or enough members to submit a registration form. Before the prospective organization is officially registered, the prospective organization may use the following steps to form interest and gather members to meet the requirements to register to become an official organization.

- a) It may meet on campus no more than two times in a university facility. These meetings must be set up through the Office of Student Life.
- b) These meetings shall be for organizing. The organization shall not sponsor speakers, fundraising efforts, or any program or event.
- c) The organization may publicize meetings and invite membership but is not eligible to use the name University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) in association with the organization. It must be specified that the meetings are for organizational purposes only.

Failure to follow these guidelines could impact the approval/disapproval of the organization's registration.

### **New Organization Registration Procedure**

Students wishing to form a new student organization should contact the Office of Student Life and

follow the following procedure:

- a) Set up a preliminary meeting with the Office of Student Life or attend a “how to become a student organization” informational session.
- b) Fill out the “Organization Registration” on Presence. As you fill this out, you will need the following items to complete the application:
  - a. A constitution or set of bylaws. There is a template on the USCB Student Life Student Organization website. You may also use a National or International set of bylaws if your organization has one.
  - b. Advisor Information and Confirmation Form. This form can be found on the USCB Student Life Student Organization website.
  - c. A minimum of four student members, two of which must meet the qualifications for an executive or leadership role.
  - d. A name for the organization deemed appropriate by the Office of Student Life. An appropriate name would not degrade other groups of individuals, use foul language, or have sexual innuendos.
- c) Following the submission of the form, the Office of Student Life will review the request and determine if all the necessary documents are provided and that it isn’t a repeat of an organization that we already have on campus.
- d) Upon final approval from the Office of Student Life, the organization will be considered a registered organization, and an on campus financial account will be set up for the organization through the Business Office.
- e) Should an organization be denied registration, the representatives will be notified in writing no later than five business days after all criteria have been turned in and reviewed. The organization may appeal to the Director of Campus Recreation and Student Life or their designee.

### **Denial of Registration**

Organizations which are not in compliance with the above-stated criteria or who do not appropriately complete the registration procedures will be denied registration. Organizations may also be denied registration based on similarity of purpose to previously registered organizations; the mission statement of similar groups must be different enough to grant registration, this includes the names of such organizations.

### **Annual Renewal Process for Returning Organizations**

All registered student organizations must renew their registration annually via the Presence Transition process.

- a) Renewal of active organizations will be due by the **1st Friday in April** for the following academic year.
- b) Exceptions to this deadline can only be granted by the Office of Student Life. Extensions must be requested **before the 1st Friday in April** deadline. An example of why a deadline extension would be granted are:
  - a. The organization does not have the necessary number of members to fulfill the membership requirements.
    - i. If this is the situation, the organization must request an extension by the original registration deadline. Approval is at the discretion of the Office of Student Life

- ii. Any organization who requests an extension for renewal will forfeit their right to receive any SGA allocation funding for the fall semester.
- b. The renewal deadline for organizations granted an extension will be the 4th Friday after the academic year begins.
- c) The Office of Student Life shall be responsible for the communication of official deadline dates, and the student organizations shall be responsible for completing all necessary requirements before the deadlines.
- d) Any name changes to organizations for the next academic year must be approved by The Office of Student Life before the organization can submit for renewal.

### **Failure to Renew**

Failure by an organization to renew its registration or ask for an extension by the deadlines listed above shall result in loss of access to the following:

- a) Privilege to operate on the university campus and use of the university facilities.
- b) Request allocation monies from the Student Government Association.
- c) Access any monies that remain from previous account balances.

### **Post Deadline Renewal/Registration Procedure for Existing Organization**

If a currently registered student organization fails to neither meet the renewal deadline nor ask for an extension in time, they may be considered for reinstatement following a one-semester suspension by:

- a) Meeting with the Office of Student Life before Dec 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss if they have all the proper material and members to re-register for the following semester.
- b) The organization may host one interest meeting while on suspension to gather interest and members before Dec 1<sup>st</sup>.

Following the meeting with the Office of Student Life, the Office will grant re-registration before the beginning of winter break if the organization has proved they have all qualifying material and members. At the time of organization registration approval, the organization will have access to any funds that were carried over from the previous year.

### **Loss of Registration Status**

A registered student organization may lose its status of registration, and all privileges associated with the registration status if any of the following occur:

- a) A student organization submits a written notification of its disestablishment,
- b) A constitutional provision deactivates an organization as of a certain date.
- c) The outcome of an organization conduct hearing.
- d) They fail to renew their organization, as listed above.

Student organizations that lose their registration status in the middle of an academic year forfeit the use of all remaining funding that they have been allocated, and there will be no refunds of any dues to members who have paid.

### **Executive Boards/Leadership Positions Within an Organization**

- a) The election of officers/executive board members, or appointment of the board by a faculty member, must be completed by the 1st Friday in April, unless election dates are predetermined by a national or international constitution outside of the University.
- b) To serve in an executive or leadership position within a student organization, students must comply with general membership requirements, as well as the following:
  - a. Hold a 2.5 cumulative GPA/overall institution GPA by the beginning of the summer semester before the school year in which they've been elected to serve. (e.g., summer 2024 for the 2024-2025 academic year)
  - b. Be registered for at least 12 credit hours.
  - c. Have no active student conduct sanctions.

At any time during the active year, should an executive board or leadership member fall out of compliance with the above statements, their executive or leadership position may be revoked.

## **Money and Other Procedures**

### ***Requests for Student Activity Funds Allocation***

Student organizations are funded through student tuition. The Student Government Association (SGA) receives its operating revenue primarily from a portion of the student tuition charged to each undergraduate student attending USC Beaufort during the Fall and Spring semesters.

### **Purpose of Club and Organization Funds**

Student Government Association allocations at the University of South Carolina Beaufort aim to support student development and enrich personal and social experiences through co-curricular activities. These funds provide a platform for diverse interests, views, ideas, and knowledge, contributing to a well-rounded educational experience for all students. They are allocated to student organizations in line with their specific goals, as outlined in their constitutions and bylaws and to programs and activities that support the university's mission.

### **Definitions**

- a) SGA Allocated funds are university funds intended to support organizational activities, events, and special projects that engage the student community. This means the event/objects are open or available to anyone on campus who would like to participate.
- b) Non-Allocated funds are monies either fundraised, donated, or deposited as a source of dues or other revenue.

All funded organization advisors, officers, and members should become aware of and adhere to the following:

- a) Under no circumstances shall any organization spend funds without proper authorization from the Office of Student Life. Always plan in advance. Nothing will be processed without the necessary paperwork and authorization.
  - a. To obtain authorization, see the procedures listed below.

### **Eligibility for Funding from SGA Allocations**

Any student organization which has been granted registration by the Office of Student Life is eligible to apply for SGA allocations.\*

Programmatic activities of clubs and organizations receiving SGA allocations must be predominately educational, recreational, or social in nature. Membership must be open to all individuals within the student body.\*\*

\*The following would not be eligible for SGA allocations:

- a) Religious Organizations that are exclusive of certain denominations
- b) Political Organizations that are meant to help individuals campaign for an office.
- c) Social Fraternities and Sororities
- d) Organizations whose memberships receive academic credit for participation.
- e) Organizations whose students are required by their curriculum to attend or join.

\*\*Due to policies set forth by Title IX regulations, Club Sports are allowed to be separated by gender and still receive SGA allocations.

### **Requests for Student Government Association (SGA) Allocations**

Any student organization which has been granted registration by the Office of Student Life, has been active on campus for at, and has an active volunteer advisor who is a full-time employee of the university is eligible to apply for SGA Allocations. Official allocations will be awarded on July 1<sup>st</sup> and can be used until the Friday before spring commencement for that academic year. All purchase requests must be submitted two weeks in advance via the Intent to Spend form on Presence.

Organizations wishing to request funds for the upcoming fiscal year should submit their applications via Presence during the allotted allocation window. The deadline will always be in the middle of April and will be announced at least eight weeks in advance.

If a new organization registers in the middle of a semester, they may request a one-time, \$50 allocation directly from the Office of Student Life to host an interest event/meeting. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

It is the responsibility of the SGA to allocate funds within the D-funds accounts (see article 300.30 in the SGA Financial Policy for account structure explaining D-funds to approved campus organizations).

### ***Disciplinary Procedures***

See the Student Code of Conduct for information regarding disciplinary procedures for violations of university policies, procedures, rules, and regulations by registered organizations.

### ***Advisors***

To encourage positive interactions amongst faculty, staff, and students involved in student organizations, every student organization is required to have an advisor. The advisor must be selected from full-time or part-time faculty or administrative staff members at USCB. The Office of Student Life will (upon request) assist organizations in securing advisors. The Office of Student Life will also assist advisors

with questions concerning their organizations.

It is the responsibility of the advisor to guide the group in accordance with the purposes and ideals of the University of South Carolina Beaufort and the organization. The relationship of the advisor to the group will vary depending on each organization and its members. Therefore, the responsibilities and duties of the advisor will vary according to the group's needs.

#### **HISTORY OF REVISIONS**

<b>DATE OF REVISION</b>	<b>REASON FOR REVISION</b>
July 31, 2007	Creation of policy
December 20, 2024	Major revisions in line with current practice