

Texas Southmost College

# Student Organization Handbook

2024-2025



## **INTRODUCTION**

Student organizations at Texas Southmost College contribute to a vibrant college community by providing invaluable experiences and opportunities for students to grow as individuals, leaders, and community members.

Each year, student organizations sponsor conferences, seminars, lectures, debates, cultural and social events, and fine arts programs. These programs allow students to meet and interact with local, state, and nationally renowned scholars, artists, politicians, academicians, and other professionals.

In the course of planning and implementing organizational activities, recognized student organizations need information on the use of college facilities, budgeting, planning techniques, and a myriad of special arrangement concerns.

The Office of Student Activities works to be proactive in its approach to guiding student organizations by providing education, training, and consultation. Recognized student organizations and the Office of Student Activities exist as partners in the college community.

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## **STARTING A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

Individuals wishing to start a new student organization must adhere to the following procedures:

1. Complete the New Student Organization Form, which is available in the TSC website, or through the following link; [New Student Organization Registration Form \(wufoo.com\)](http://wufoo.com)
  - a. The form must be filled by the student organization advisor. The advisor is required to be a full-time faculty, administrator or professional staff member at Texas Southmost College. (more than one advisor is allowed)
  - b. The form must also be filled by a minimum of 4 students who are currently enrolled at Texas Southmost College.
2. Complete and Submit the New Student Organization Registration Form through Wufoo. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
3. The form will be reviewed by the Director of Student Life, who will grant or deny permission to create the new student organization.
4. Following approval by the Director of Student Life, the student organization will then have 30 days to submit a copy of their proposed constitution [sample constitution.pdf \(tsc.edu\)](http://tsc.edu) and the completed List of Officers and Active Members Form [Student Organization Fact Sheet \(wufoo.com\)](http://wufoo.com) to the Office of Student Activities. During this period the student group may function temporarily as a student organization.
  - a. The Director of Student Life must approve the constitution and any future amendments to the constitution by the student organization.
  - b. The advisor will be notified by e-mail or by telephone within 72 hours as to whether permission is granted or denied to become a recognized student organization.
  - c. Upon recognition, the organization officers and advisors must schedule and attend a mandatory orientation with the Office of Student Activities.
  - d. Should permission not be granted, appeals may be submitted in writing to the Office of Student Activities. All appeals will be decided by the Associate Vice President of Student Services.
5. There is no automatic guarantee that official recognition will be granted. Each organization will be evaluated according to the following criteria:
  - a. A registered student organization may state that its membership is composed of students and/or staff of Texas Southmost College, but it shall not suggest or imply that it is acting with the authority or as an agent of Texas Southmost College.
  - b. Student organizations may not use the name of the college or an abbreviation of the name of the college as part of its name. The organization may use such names as campus, college, or Texas chapter as a part of its name. You may NOT use "Texas Southmost College" at the beginning of your organization's name or "of Texas Southmost College" at the end of your organization's name. You may use "at Texas Southmost College" or "Texas Southmost College Chapter" at the end of your organization's name.
  - c. No registered student organization may have any person as a voting member who is not currently enrolled at Texas Southmost College.
  - d. All advisors of the student organization must either be a full-time faculty, administrator or professional staff member of Texas Southmost College.

- e. The student organization's membership shall consist of a minimum of five active members.
- f. The student organization will not deny membership on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including but not limited to sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, sexual preference or disability.
- g. The constitution of the student organization shall adhere to college philosophy, policies, and regulations set forth by the Board of Trustees and Texas Southmost College, and no statement contained in the constitution shall contradict any college rule, regulation, policy, or any public law.

## **HAZING**

The 70<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature enacted a law concerning hazing which became effective on September 1, 1987. Under the law, individuals or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with a criminal offense. According to the law, a person can commit a hazing offense not only by engaging in a hazing activity, but also by soliciting, directing, encouraging, aiding or attempting to aid another in hazing; by intentionally, knowingly or recklessly allowing hazing to occur; or by failing to report first-hand knowledge, in writing to the Director of Student Life, that a hazing incident is planned or has occurred. The fact that a person consented to or acquiesced in a hazing activity is not a defense to prosecution for hazing under this law.

In an effort to encourage reporting of hazing incidents, the law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to any person who reports a specific hazing event in good faith and without malice to the Director of Student Life or other appropriate official of the institution and immunizes that person for participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from that report. Additionally, a doctor or other medical practitioner who treats a student who may have been subjected to hazing may make a good faith report of the suspected hazing activities to police or other law enforcement officials and is immune from civil or other liability that might otherwise be imposed or incurred as a result of the report.

Hazing will not be tolerated. Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include students at an educational institution. Hazing includes but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity.
2. Any type of physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk or harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
3. Any activity involving consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance that subjects the student to unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of their student.
4. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, or that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the institution rather than submit to acts described in this subsection.
5. Any activity that induces, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation

of the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Organization Handbook, or State or federal law.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, submission to which is made a condition of a person's exercise or enjoyment of any right, privilege, power, or immunity, either explicitly or implicitly. In relation to the foregoing, sexual harassment may range from unthinking and often unintentional verbal denigration of a person on the basis of gender to actual physical assault. Some examples that may constitute sexual harassment are: offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or pressure for sexual activity; unwanted touching, pinching, or unnecessary brushes; unwanted exposure to sexual graffiti, photographs or suggestive objects; sexual innuendos or statements made at an inappropriate time or disguised as humor, or obscene gestures; disparaging remarks about one's gender; or any offensive or abusive physical contact.

Conduct, whether on or off college property, will constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to, or toleration of, such conduct is made (either explicitly or implicitly) a term of condition of employment or participation in other college-related activities.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's ability to function normally or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, is a Class A misdemeanor under the Texas Penal Code. For information on procedures for sexual harassment complaints, see the Student Handbook.

## **DEVELOPING A CONSTITUTION**

The constitution should include the fundamental philosophy of the organization and specific guidelines for operation of the organization. Your organization's constitution should also include a statement of purpose. The statement of purpose is a brief (1 or 2 sentences) description of the reason why you are forming the organization (each recognized student organization will be listed on the Student Activities web site along with their statement of purpose and advisor contact information).

Usually two-thirds or three-fourths vote by the organization members is required to officially adopt the constitution. Once the constitution is adopted by the student organization it must then be approved by the Director of Student Life. Any future amendments to the constitution must also be approved by the Director of Student Life before they become effective.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION STATUS**

### **Temporary Status**

Student Organizations that have applied for recognition will be subject to a 30 day probationary period in which they must attend a mandatory student organization orientation and submit all required documentation.

### **Recognized Status**

Student organizations who have completed the mandatory orientation and who are compliant with the policies and procedures set forth by the Office of Student Activities will achieve recognized status.

Recognized student organizations have the privilege of travel, using on campus facilities, raising funds, sponsoring speakers and public performances, distributing literature and calling upon the assistance of staff in Student Activities for program planning.

### **Probation or Suspension Status**

All student organizations that are placed on probation or suspension will lose recognized status.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION LEVELS**

There are two types of student organization at Texas Southmost College:

### **Affiliated Organizations**

Affiliated organizations receive a budget from the Office of Student Activities. These organizations may use the words "Texas Southmost College", "TSC", or other trademarked words in their name. Examples of affiliated organizations are the Campus Activities Board and Student Government Association.

### **Recognized Organizations**

Recognized organizations comprise the bulk of student organizations. Recognized student organizations may utilize college services and facilities, but they do not receive a budget from the college.

## **MAINTAINING RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATION STATUS**

Each student organization must adhere to the following guidelines to maintain recognized status:

1. Update changes in officer/advisor positions as they occur.
2. Submit an updated List of Officers and Active Members Form, each year, no later than October 13th. The Student Organization Fact Sheet is linked above and available on the TSC Website.
3. Minutes from meetings must be maintained for at least one year. The Office of Student Activities will utilize minutes from meetings to resolve disputes within the organization.
4. Comply with college policies, procedures, the student code of conduct and the procedures outlined in this handbook.
5. Student organization members must attend all mandatory training seminars, workshops, and orientations as mandated by the Office of Student Activities to achieve and maintain recognized status.

## **ADVISOR EXPECTATIONS**

College regulations require each student organization to have a primary faculty/staff advisor. For financial authorization purposes, it is in the organization's best interest to have a secondary advisor in the event that the primary advisor is out of the office or unavailable. The following information is designed to assist student leaders in selecting an advisor and in developing a clearer understanding of his/her functions in this role.

### **The Role of the Advisor**

While the role of an advisor can vary due to the students and activities associated with the organization, advisors can make a tremendous impact on students and organizations. An advisor adds to the continuity of the organization by making sure that successive officers of the organization understand the responsibility

they share in this office, as well as explaining to the officers the rules established for student organizations. Further, advisors aid in the area of program content and purpose by helping student officers exercise good judgment in selecting programs and activities. Through facilitation of student learning, advisors play a vital role in student organizations.

### **Advisor Expectations**

Advisors must be a Texas Southmost College employee as defined by the Human Resources Department and must advise at a level consistent with the categorization of the organization:

1. To advise an affiliated organization, the individual must be a full-time professional staff member whose job description designates them as the primary advisor of the organization.
2. To advise a registered organization, the individual may be a faculty member or a professional staff member employed by the College.
3. It is important that the advisor be familiar with activities of the organization and have (or be willing to obtain) an appropriate level of experience, resources, and knowledge related to those activities and the mission of the organization.
4. The advisor should meet with the officers of the student organization to discuss expectations for roles and responsibilities. In order to stay connected with the organization, the advisor should regularly attend executive as well as general meetings and be available outside those meetings for advice and consultation related to the operations of the organization. Additionally, the advisor should assist the organization in developing realistic goals for the academic year. This will contribute to the educational and personal development of the students involved.

An advisor may perform the greatest service by facilitating opportunities for students to exercise initiative and judgment within a proper measure of autonomy when coordinating events and activities. The advisor should participate in event planning and attend events when possible or when identified as necessary through the planning process.

Recognized student organizations at Texas Southmost College are required to coordinate financial transactions with the Finance office. The Advisor is expected to keep a detailed ledger of all financial transactions.

An advisor should be aware of the Student Organization Handbook, which will be provided to them upon formation of the student organization. The advisor should seek to ensure that the group and its officers know where rules and guidelines are published, what the rules are, why they exist, and the consequences for choosing to operate outside these parameters. As an employee of Texas Southmost College, advisors are expected to report all rule violations or potential violations to the appropriate college official. The advisor should be familiar with the organization's constitution and all other governing documents and should seek to assure that the organization operates within the scope and authority of its defined purpose and procedures.

The organization-advisor relationship is not a one-way street. The student organization and its leaders also have responsibilities. These responsibilities include maintaining an appropriate level of communication, providing opportunities for advisor interaction, and a commitment to the success of the organization as a whole. As such, both the advisor and the student leaders should spend time early in their relationship establishing a clear understanding of the roles each will play.

Should the time come when the advisor feels that he or she is unable to continue to function in this vital capacity, please provide a letter of notification to the Office of Student Activities and the organization's officers.



## **Advisor Responsibilities**

- Attend all general meetings
- Attend all executive committee meetings
- Call meetings of the executive committee when believed to be necessary
- Explain College policy when relevant to the discussion
- Explain College policy to the entire group once a year
- Depend on the officers to observe College policy throughout their terms
- Meet with the chief student leader before each meeting
- Help the chief student leader or other officers prepare an agenda before each meeting
- Speak up during discussion when the advisor thinks the group may make a poor decision
- Take an active part in formulating the goals of the group
- Initiate ideas for discussion when the advisor believes they will be helpful to the group
- Be one of the group, except for voting and holding office
- Attend all group activities, meetings, events, etc.
- Monitor the treasurer's records
- Check the secretary's minutes before they are written in final form
- Check all official correspondence before it is sent
- Be a custodian of all group paraphernalia, records, etc. during the summer and between officer transitions
- Keep the official files of the organization
- Inform the group of infractions of their bylaws, codes, and standing rules
- Make the group aware of its stated objectives when planning events
- Veto a decision when it violates a stated objective, the bylaws, or College policy
- Mediate interpersonal conflicts that may arise
- Let the group work out its problems; allow for mistakes and "doing it the hard way"
- Insist on an evaluation of each activity by those students responsible for planning it
- Represent the group in any conflicts with members of the College staff
- Be familiar with college resources and procedures that affect group activities
- Take an active part in the orderly transition of responsibilities between old and new officers at the end of the year
- Cancel any activities when you believe they have been inadequately planned, will violate College rules, or are unsafe

## **FINANCES**

1. The Office of Student Activities will request an account to be set-up for each new organization. It is the advisor's responsibility to ensure that the organization keeps all finance records up to date and that all accounting and fiscal matters adhere to the policies and procedures of Texas Southmost College.
2. Student organizations and/or college personnel are not allowed to open accounts at banks or to keep cash on hand. Doing so may result in the suspension of recognized status and possible disciplinary action upon completion of an investigation conducted by the Director of Student Life.
3. The advisor is responsible for ensuring that the organization adheres to all financial guidelines.
4. The advisor serves as Financial Manager for his/her student organization, which includes the responsibility for the deposits, expenses and balances maintained in the organization's fund.

## **DEPOSITING AND WITHDRAWING MONEY FROM THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION'S FUND**

**\*To fundraise, deposit, or withdraw funds, the organization must be fully recognized by the director of Student Activities.\***

## **DEPOSITING**

1. All money must be deposited intact at the cashier's window no later than 48 hours (2 working days) following an event. It is imperative that deposits are made on a timely basis. Failure to deposit money on time may result in sanctions against the organization and/or advisor.
2. Consider the cashiers closing hours when planning deposits as the cashiers need to perform their final cash counts.
3. Money is not to be held from fundraiser receipts to be used for expenses.

## **WITHDRAWING**

1. The Student Organization Account Withdrawal form needs to be sent to [AccountsPayable@tsc.edu](mailto:AccountsPayable@tsc.edu). The form needs to be emailed by Monday afternoon so we can include the check run for that week. The form needs to include the student advisor's contact information.
2. The student advisor will be notified via email when the check is ready for pick up at the cashier's window at the Student Center.
3. The unused funds using the Student Organization deposit form need to be returned to the Cashier's window at Student Center.

## **RECEIVING DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS**

Student Organizations may seek donations from the community, according to the following guidelines:

1. The organization may say that it is a recognized student organization at Texas Southmost College, but it must not imply or claim that it represents the College or that Texas Southmost College will endorse or promote any person, business, non-profit organization, or corporation.
2. The organization must complete and submit the Receipt of Donation Form to the Office of Student Activities.
3. Texas Southmost College prohibits student organizations from engaging in solicitations, personal loans, or similar requests made on behalf of the college without the knowledge and consent from the Director of Student Life.

## **ACCESSING MONEY FROM THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION'S FUND**

In order to access money from the student organization's fund, the student organization must complete a requisition and follow all applicable Finance Office procedures.

## **EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Registered student organizations may conduct activities on or off campus. Consultation with the Office of Student Activities staff in the early planning stages can save time and effort and will ensure compliance with appropriate institutional regulations. Staff members are available to provide advice on planning strategies and the applicability of college regulations. A student organization which has been granted official recognition will be permitted to conduct activities in accordance with the following criteria:

1. An Activity Request Form ([Student Organization Activity Request Form \(wufoo.com\)](http://wufoo.com)) is submitted to the Office of Student Activities at least 10 working days before the event or activity

and approval is granted by the Office of Student Activities.

2. All proposed flyers and other documents are submitted for approval through [samantha.lead@tsc.edu](mailto:samantha.lead@tsc.edu).
3. Student organizations cannot co-sponsor activities on campus with non-college enterprises or organizations (including the use of corporate logos), unless approval is granted in advance by the Director of Student Life.
4. Fundraising activities may not be conducted for private gain of individuals or for-profit businesses. Any money collected must be deposited in the student organization account according to procedures outlined in the "DEPOSITING MONEY IN THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION'S FUND" section of this handbook. Remember, when soliciting funds, the student organization may state that its membership is composed of students at Texas Southmost College, but it shall not suggest or imply that it is acting with the authority of or as an agent of Texas Southmost College. All organizations are subject to random audits of all financial records.

All fundraising activities, and especially planned sales of t-shirts, mugs, caps, or any items that use the name of the college or any of its trademark symbols, must be reviewed by the Office of Student Activities staff to ensure compliance with college regulations. Products that violate trademark or licensing regulations will not be approved for sale or distribution. Products in violation of copyright or trademark regulations may be confiscated. Early review and advice from staff members is highly recommended.

1. Gambling is not permitted. In Texas, three basic elements comprise the offense of gambling: consideration, chance, and prize. Raffles are considered a form of gambling.
2. The area where fundraising activity is held must be cleaned after use. All trash must be picked up and if necessary, the table tops and chairs must be wiped down and dried.

### **SELLING OR GIVING AWAY FOOD**

Texas Southmost College follows all local and state health and sanitation regulations and guidelines with regard to food handling. Pursuant to distribution or sale of food and beverages on or in college properties, including off-campus preparation for distribution or sale on campus, students must have a current food handler's permit. Failure to follow the guidelines may result in the loss of privileges to serve food on campus.

### **TAX EXEMPT STATUS (Non-Profit Associations)**

Texas Administrative Code §3.16(k)(4) states that student organizations can obtain a tax-exempt status when a written certification is filed by the college to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The Office of Student Activities will file and the certification for each recognized student organization. No organization may conduct fundraising activities until the certification is approved.

### **TAXES**

House Bill 596, 74<sup>th</sup> legislature (effective October 1, 1995) allows registered student organizations to sell items tax-free one day each calendar month. Student organizations that only sell taxable items one day each month will not be required to have a sales tax permit and collect sales tax on items sold. When these organizations buy taxable items to resell, they may issue an exemption certificate to the vendor to purchase times without paying sales tax. Fund-raisers involving non-taxable items (i.e., bake sales) never require organizations to collect sales tax and may be held more than once each month.

If student organizations sell taxable items at times other than their one-day monthly fund-raising drive, they must have a sales tax permit and collect sales tax during the fund-raiser. These organizations should

issue a resale certificate to their suppliers when buying taxable items for sale. Student organizations must pay tax when buying taxable items for their own use unless the organizations qualify for exemption under Tax Code 501 (c) (3). To obtain tax-exempt status, contact the following address:

Exempt Organization  
P.O. Box 13528  
Austin, Texas 78711

If your organization is making less than \$5,000, it is recommended that the organization not apply for exempt status. Organizations making less than \$5,000 a year do not pay federal taxes on money raised through fund-raisers. If the organization makes \$5,000 or more, federal taxes will need to be paid on the \$5,000 and the money raised over the \$5,000. Any questions regarding taxes may be directed to the Office of Student Activities, or the State Comptroller's Office at (512) 463-4000.

## **SALES TAX**

1. A sale of a taxable item by a qualified student organization is exempt from sales tax if:
  - a. The student organization sells the items at a sale that lasts for one day only, and the primary purpose of the sale is to raise funds for the organization
  - b. The student organization holds not more than one fund-raising sale each calendar month for which the exemption is claimed
  - c. The student organization has as its primary purpose, a purpose, other than being engaged in business or performance of an activity that is designed to make a profit.
  - d. The sales price of the taxable item is \$5,000 or less, except that a taxable item that the organization manufactures or has received by donation may be sold tax free during the one-day sale, regardless of sales price, if the item is not sold to the donor.
2. A taxable item acquired tax free under paragraph (1) of this subsection is exempt from use tax on its storage, use, or consumption until the item is resold or subsequently transferred.
3. The first \$5,000 of a qualified student organization's total receipts from sales of taxable items in a calendar year that are not exempted under paragraph (1) of this subsection are exempt from sales tax.
4. A qualified student organization must be affiliated with an institution of higher education as defined by Education Code, §61.003, or a private or independent college or university that is located in this state and that is accredited by a recognized accrediting agency under Education Code, §61.003. A student organization must file with the comptroller a certification issued by the institution, college, or university showing that the organization is affiliated with the institution, college, or university. A college, university, or institution may designate one of its departments or officers to compile a list of registered or certified student organizations and submit the list to the comptroller in lieu of having each student organization submit individual certifications. The certification is valid until the institution, university, or college notifies the comptroller that a student organization is decertified, suspended, or otherwise loses its campus privileges or affiliation with the institution, university, or college.

## RESERVING ROOMS OR FACILITIES

Student Organizations can reserve rooms, facilities and media equipment on campus for their events and meetings. Submit an Activity Request Form to Student Activities at least 10 working days before the event and the Office of Student Activities will reserve the facility for you.

## PUBLICITY

1. Before posting flyers on campus, student organizations must submit the original (attach to Activity Request Form) to the Office of Student Activities for approval. Upon approval, student organization members may then make copies of the flyer.
2. Student organizations are not allowed to contact media (television, radio, newspaper) or publicize events or activities off campus without prior written approval from the Office of Student Activities.
3. Any publication (flyers), form of electronic media, web page or other form of communication produced by students must include the following statement:

Students, under the direction of advisors, are responsible for producing and publishing this document. Students bear the primary responsibility for this production and its contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions and beliefs of the Texas Southmost College faculty, staff, administration and Board of Trustees.

4. Student organizations are not allowed to use trademarks or logos owned by commercial entities in conjunction with any activity promoted or conducted on campus, unless approval is granted in advance by the Director of Student Life.
5. Trademarks of Texas Southmost College shall not be used without prior written approval from the Office of Student Activities, and all products must be produced by licensed vendors that are authorized, pursuant to license agreement, to use Texas Southmost College trademarks.
6. The following guidelines apply for posting signs on college property:
  - a. Outdoor  
Signs may not be posted on trees, lamps, columns, trash cans, or other physical structures on campus.
  - b. Indoor  
Signs may be posted only on approved bulletin boards. A bulletin board is under the jurisdiction of the department or administrative office that maintains it. A student organization shall apply to the appropriate department or administrative official for permission to use a bulletin board, and shall not use a bulletin board without such permission.
    - i. Use thumbtacks, not staples.
    - ii. Do not post over another organization's posting.
    - iii. Signs may not be posted on doors, windows, walls or in bathrooms.
  - c. Removal of Signs  
A student organization should remove each of its signs no later than 14 days after posting or no later than 24 hours after the event to which it relates has ended, whichever is earlier.
7. A student organization may not post, distribute or carry a sign which promotes an off-campus business, organization, agency, national association, or charitable group, unless approval is granted in advance by the Director of Student Life.

8. All improperly posted signs are subject to removal. Violations of sign posting policy are subject to review, and disciplinary action may be taken against a student organization and may result in losing recognized status.
9. A student organization may distribute literature on campus if the group complies with these guidelines:
  - a. The literature identifies the name of the student organization.
  - b. The literature is not a promotion for an off-campus event, business, organization, agency, national association, or charitable group. All literature of this nature must be reviewed by the Director of Student Life.
  - c. The student organization may not approach students directly or distribute literature by hawking or shouting. The organization may set up a table and speak to students who approach the table for information.
  - d. The distribution of literature at an event sponsored by another organization or college department must be approved in advance by the event sponsor.
  - e. Distribution may not unreasonably obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
  - f. The literature may only be distributed by members of the student organization.

## **PUBLICITY ON THE WEB**

The Office of Student Activities will promote all student organization activities on their online calendar whenever possible.

Student Organizations are encouraged to create a website promoting their organization. A link to the student organization web site will be placed on the Office of Student Activities web site.

## **TRAVEL**

Prior to departure, the appropriate travel documentation must be completed and approved by the Office of Student Activities. Travel documentation must be submitted a minimum of three weeks (15 working days) in advance. Only recognized student organizations are eligible for travel.

1. Complete the Student Travel Authorization form and submit it to the Office of Student Activities.
  - a. You must obtain a quote (in writing) from the vendors along with their Federal Tax ID number and a completed W-9.
  - b. Registration Fee - specify if the check will be hand carried or if you want it to be mailed in advance.
  - c. Per Diem - calculate money needed for meals.
  - d. Lodging – include in the amount for the hotel the room rate, city tax amount and state tax amount.
  - e. Transportation - attach the reservation number and a copy of the driver's license and car insurance for each individual driving. Remember, only full-time employees of the college

are approved to drive vehicles.

- f. Signatures – if traveling out of state the Student Travel Authorization Form must be signed by the Vice President of Student Services.
2. Attach the advisor(s) Travel Authorization Form with their supervisor's signature. Advisors may use the organization account to pay for their travel expenses.
  3. Attach Travel Release Waiver and Emergency Contact Forms for each student going on the trip.
  4. Attach the Trip Itinerary form.

## **TRAVEL RULES**

1. Each driver must possess a valid driver's license with no more than one moving violation within the past 12 months.
2. The vehicle should not carry more than the recommended number of occupants. Each occupant must have and wear a seat belt. There must be at least one passenger in the front seat while driving, and this passenger must remain awake during the trip.
3. For trips longer than four hours, there should be more than one driver. No driver should drive more than four hours in duration without at least a two hour rest. Break up the trip into segments, stopping frequently to rest. Drivers must have at least eight hours of sleep before each day of driving. Driver must pull over in a safe location if they become drowsy and let someone else drive (if they meet the requirements to drive).
4. No driving allowed between 11:00 p.m. and 5 a.m.
5. Total daily driving time should not exceed 12 hours without a sleep break at a motel, camp site or other appropriate location.
6. Do not exceed the posted speed limit. Slow down if adverse weather conditions exist.
7. Do not overload the van with equipment. Equipment must be properly secured.
8. Understand the locations of lights, windshield wipers and other switches on the instrument panel.
9. Plan routes out in advance and caravan whenever possible.
10. Do not consume, possess, or transport alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs.
11. Advisor has copies of Travel Waiver & Release Forms with emergency contact numbers and medical information.
12. At least one cell phone in each vehicle for emergencies.
13. If an accident or breakdown occurs, know and follow set emergency procedures.
14. During the trip it is very important to keep all receipts. These will be submitted following the trip.
15. If there are any questions or concerns regarding interpretations of the set travel guidelines while traveling contact the Director of Student Life.

After the Trip:

Complete travel paperwork and submit with original receipts to the Office of Student Activities for signature. Paperwork must be submitted within ten days (two weeks) from day of returning. For assistance in completing documentation contact the Office of Student Activities.

Here are some important issues to consider when making your travel plans:

### Safety Education

If your organization is planning an outdoor recreation trip, it is recommended that the organization sponsor a safety education workshop as a condition of attending the trip. Although this is not a foolproof way to prevent injuries or accidents, it can educate members and help them to avoid mishaps due to lack of knowledge on the proper procedures.

### Orientation Meeting

Organizations should hold a meeting of all participants before the trip begins. This is a good time to familiarize participants with the itinerary, costs, your expectations, emergency procedures, and any other details associated with the trip. If the organization is paying for students to attend a conference or workshop, the organization may have certain expectations of which programs members will attend, how they will dress, how they will report their experiences back to the organization, etc. In addition, any expectations regarding alcohol usage should be discussed. Texas Southmost College prohibits the use or possession of intoxicating beverages during college-related trips.

An advisor must accompany all student groups while traveling. In addition, all rented vehicles must be driven by a full-time employee of Texas Southmost College.

If you are involved in an accident:

1. Stop immediately and notify local police or call 911. If someone is injured in the accident call 911 immediately and obtain medical attention.
2. Notify the college by contacting one of the following:  

Office of Student Activities	956-295-3591
Coordinator of Student Life	956-295-3712
3. Fill out police report - necessary for insurance purposes.
  - a. Obtain names and addresses of all witnesses.
  - b. Do not make any statements as to who is at fault, nor should you make any offers to pay damages - fault or legal liability will be decided by the appropriate authority.
  - c. If you are driving a rental vehicle, follow the procedures outlined in the rental packet.

If a breakdown occurs:

1. Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Non-Emergency Roadside Assistance: 800-525-5555. When traveling outside Texas you may still call this number for assistance.
2. Notify the College by contacting one of the following:  

Office of Student Activities	956-295-3591
Coordinator of Student Life	956-295-3519

Each vehicle should contain:



- First aid kit (Available at the Office of Student Activities).
- Cell phone and cell phone numbers for others traveling in your group.
- Emergency phone numbers:
  - DPS Roadside Assistance 800-525-5555
  - Office of Student Activities 956-295-3419
  - Director of Student Life 956-295-3519
- Credit card for gas or emergencies.
- Flashlight.
- Maps of your route.

After returning to campus:

Have each participant complete an evaluation and offer comments, opinions, or suggestions for future trip planning.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The Office of Student Activities, upon assessing reports of a student organization's violation of college policies, procedures, the student code of conduct or this handbook, may take appropriate disciplinary action in the form of one of the following actions:

### Reprimand

When a student organization is reprimanded, written notification shall be made to the organization advisor, warning that continuation of specified conduct may be cause for further action. A reprimand becomes part of a student organization's disciplinary record. A reprimand may also include notification to the student organization's chapter headquarters. Subsequent reprimands may result in probationary status or expulsion.

### Probation

When a student organization is placed on probation, written notification shall be made to the student organization advisor of a probationary status for a specified period of time. Probation appeals may be submitted to the Office of Student Activities and will be decided by the Vice President of Student Services

Terms of probation for student organizations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The student organization may be denied use of college facilities.
2. The student organization may be prohibited from engaging in certain organizational and/or college programs or functions.
3. The student organization may be required to make monetary restitution, particularly in the case of theft, property damage, or injury to others and members may become subject to criminal prosecution.
4. The student organization may be required to send members to mandatory workshops, training sessions, or complete community service hours as a condition of probation.

### Suspension

1. Failing to correct behavior, even after probation, may result in the dissolution of the student organization. Any violation of college policy, procedure, or the Student Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action to an individual or the organization as a whole. Suspension appeals may be submitted to the Office of Student Activities and will be decided by the Associate Vice President of Student Services.
2. Advisors who violate college policy may be subject to an investigation by the Office of Human

Resources. Advisors found to be negligent in their duties or in violation of Texas Southmost College policy may be permanently prohibited from advising student groups and face additional sanctions by the college.

