Registration of Student Organizations

A student organization is a voluntary special interest group organized for educational, social, recreational, and service purposes and comprised of its members. Student organizations are separate legal entities from the University of Iowa and legally are not treated the same as University departments or units. Student organizations can exist whether or not the University endorses them pursuant to this policy. Unless otherwise denoted hereafter, the use of the term “student organization” shall include sports clubs registered by Recreational Services.

Student organizations are an important link in the co-curricular activities of the University of Iowa. They play an important role in developing student leadership and providing a quality campus environment. As such, the University encourages the formation of student organizations around the areas of interests of its students, within the limits necessary to accommodate academic needs and ensure public safety.

I. Registration of Student Organizations

The University of Iowa, through the Vice President for Student Life (hereinafter, "vice president"), has delegated the responsibilities and obligations of registering student organizations to the Student Organization Review Committee (i.e., on behalf of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership and Recreational Services) (SORC) and to deans of academic colleges. The SORC is a team of students and staff that determines the approval or denial of the application for registration. Registration of a student organization by the University does not constitute an endorsement of its program or its purposes, but is merely a charter to exist. The reasons for denying or withdrawing registration of a student organization shall not violate the University Policy on Human Rights.

It is the responsibility of each registered student organization to adhere to the mission of this University, its supporting strategic plan, policies, and procedures. Organizations must abide by all local, state, and federal laws. An organization’s goals, objectives, and activities must not deviate from established University policies and procedures. Because participation in student organizations may enhance a student’s educational experience and the University deems this important to our students’ success, registered organizations are entitled to certain privileges and benefits.

A. Benefits of Registration:
   a. Registration as a University organization;
   b. Establishment of an account in the Student Organization Business Office (SOBO), Fraternity Business Service, or Recreational Services and appropriate purchasing privileges in accordance with University policies;
   c. Eligibility to apply for funds from mandatory Student Activity fees (i.e., for student organizations) or Recreational Services fees (i.e., for sports clubs);
   d. Inclusion in appropriate University publications;
   e. Utilization of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership’s (CSIL) OrgSync software (funded by UISG & PSG)
f. Utilization of the University’s trademarks in accordance with the UI Trademark Licensing Department’s program and policies;

g. Eligibility for use of campus meeting facilities and outdoor spaces;

h. Eligibility, but not the right, to utilize UI Fleet Services vehicles in accordance with state and University policies, procedures, guidelines, and insurance requirements;

i. Eligibility, but not the right, to utilize University staff and programming resources;

j. Eligibility, but not the right, to utilize Information Technology Services Mass Mail once each semester;

k. Eligibility to apply for awards and honors presented to University registered organizations and members; and

l. Eligibility to apply for Student Organization Office Suite (SOOS) or Student Activity Center (SAC) office space and/or storage space.

B. Achieving and Renewing Registration

a. In order to exercise the privileges accorded to registered student organizations, organizations must file an online submission through OrgSync including organizational information and the organization’s Constitution and Bylaws. Upon receiving this information, the CSIL staff will review it and submit it to the Student Organization Review Committee (SORC) for consideration. If approved for registration, the SORC will assign the appropriate registration tier (see below).

C. Eligibility/Registration Requirements

a. Any group or organization which consists of and maintains at least 80 percent University students, whose purposes are consistent with the educational objectives of the University, and do not violate local, state or federal law, is eligible for registration by the University. To start a new registered student organization, the organization must consist of and maintain at least five (5) individuals as members, of which four (4) must be currently enrolled UI students.

b. Membership. It is the policy of the University that all registered student organizations be able to exercise free choice of members on the basis of their merits as individuals without restriction in accordance with the University Policy on Human Rights. The University acknowledges the interests of students to organize and associate with like-minded students, therefore any individual who subscribes to the goals and beliefs of a student organization may participate in and become a member of the organization.

Membership and participation in the organization must be open to all students without regard to race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preference, or any other classification which would deprive the person of consideration as an individual. The organization will guarantee that equal opportunity and equal access to membership, programming, facilities, and benefits shall be open to all persons.

Membership in a student organization must be composed primarily of UI students (minimum 80% student membership) and be controlled and directed by UI students. Members are individuals who self-select to join an organization; “membership” is different from the audience a student
organization targets, serves, or represents. The “audience” is not automatically considered a part of the organization’s membership. Only UI student members shall have voting rights in a student organization. Membership is not open to persons under the age of 18 who are not enrolled UI students. Non-university community members who are at least 18 years of age may participate in the activities of student organizations but may not be voting members. If the student organization desires to allow persons under the age of 18 who are not UI students to participate in the activities of the student organization, the student organization must follow the requirements contained in the Youth Programs Policy Manual for RSOs, including that the youth participant must have permission to participate from a parent or guardian.

Since some University services and benefits require knowledge of a student’s membership in the student organization requesting the service or benefit, all organizations are encouraged to have a full membership roster on file with the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership via OrgSync. For example, if a member of a student organization wants to request approval to drive or ride in a university vehicle for an organization event or activity, that member must be listed on the organization’s full membership roster located on OrgSync.

The student organization must be nonprofit in nature; student organizations affiliated with for-profit businesses are not eligible for registration. Student Representatives and student organization members must not profit or benefit financially from student organization membership.

c. Primary and Secondary Student Representatives. Student Representatives are individuals who are authorized by the organization to speak for or represent the organization in its relations with the University and who are authorized to receive for the organization official notices, directives, or information from the University. Every student organization or potential student organization, registered with the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership/Recreational Services/academic deans via OrgSync must include the names of two student representatives in its Org Profile. Both Representatives must be currently enrolled UI students, and in academic and non-academic good-standing. One name will be designated as the Primary Representative and the other as the Secondary Representative. It is the responsibility of each student organization to update the Org Profile with the current names of Student Representatives. A student organization no longer under the direction of currently enrolled students may lose its registration.

d. Access to University Resources. Registered student organizations are guaranteed an equal opportunity to apply for funds from mandatory Student Activity fees (i.e., for student organizations) or Recreational Services fees (i.e., for sports clubs) or for any other benefit conferred by the University of Iowa Student Government (UISG) or Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) or their constituent bodies, without differentiation for reasons that violate the University Policy on Human Rights or inhibit the group’s exercise of First Amendment rights of free expression and association. Nothing in this section shall be construed to create or guarantee any expectation of the receipt of funding or other benefits from UISG and/or GPSG and/or Recreational Services by any
student organization or to prohibit the individual consideration of the program merits of funding or other proposals submitted by such student organizations.

e. Registration Procedure. Throughout the year on an ongoing basis, the University will consider applications from student organizations that request to be registered. Registration of student organizations is granted by the Student Organization Review Committee (i.e., on behalf of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership and Recreational Services) or an academic dean. Registration granted for sports clubs, and fraternities and sororities are subject to additional policies administered by their respective department or student governance organization(s). In order to receive funds from mandatory Student Activity fees (i.e., for student organizations) or Recreational Services fees (i.e., for sports clubs), a student organization must be confirmed by the UISG and/or GPSG or Recreational Services. Greek-letter social organizations are registered by the University of Iowa Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, Multicultural Greek Council, or the National Pan-Hellenic Council. To start an organization a student must sign in to OrgSync (https://idp.uiowa.edu/idp/Authn/UserPassword) and complete a personal profile. Once signed in, view the list of organizations, and select the "Register New Organization" tab to complete the required information.

Registration of student organizations that are residential living units (i.e., residence hall organizations, fraternities, and sororities) is granted by their respective student governance organization (i.e., Associated Residence Halls [ARH], Interfraternity Council [IFC], Multicultural Greek Council [MGC], National Pan-Hellenic Council [NPHC], and Panhellenic Council [PHC]) with the concurrence of the vice president.

The Student Organization Review Committee (SORC) shall review all student organization registration applications. Depending upon the results of its evaluation, the Committee will 1) register the student organization and forward the organization’s application to the appropriate student governance organization or college/department/unit for confirmation; 2) register the organization subject to specific conditions on activities the organization is permitted to sponsor; or 3) reject the application. If an application is rejected the organization may appeal the decision of the SORC. The organization has 30 calendar days to appeal the Committee’s decision upon the receipt of their denial of registration letter. Appeals must be submitted in writing to either the Director of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership (i.e., for student organizations) or the Director of Recreational Services (i.e., for sport clubs). The denial of registration letter will specify where an organization may submit its appeal. If an organization appeals and is not satisfied with the decision rendered by the Director of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership or the Director of Recreational Services they may then submit another appeal in writing to the Dean of Students. There is no further appeal after the Dean of Students.

f. Constitution and Bylaws. In order to complete the registration process, all student organizations must have an approved constitution and bylaws. Sponsored and affiliated student organizations (see Section 8, Registration Tiers) must also provide a copy of the charter, constitution, and/or bylaws of
any organization external to the University with which such organization may be affiliated. Student organizations are required to include mandatory clauses within their organization constitutions.

g. Registration of Inter/National Chartered Organizations. In addition to observing all University rules, an organization that is chartered by an inter/national organization, such as a Greek-letter social fraternity or sorority, must maintain its affiliation with the inter/national organization in order to retain its University registration. University registration will cease when the inter/national organization no longer recognizes or sponsors the student organization as an active organization. In this situation, the organization is no longer eligible to affiliate with their respective student governance organization, to participate in activities sponsored by the governance organization or its member organizations, or to access the privileges granted to registered student organizations. Once the inter/national organization has officially returned the student organization to affiliation status, the student organization representatives may apply to the University and the respective student governance organization for registration, although re-registration is not guaranteed. When the University removes registration of a student organization for violating University rules but the organization remains affiliated with the inter/national organization, the student organization will not regain their University registration by virtue of their relationship with the inter/national organization.

h. Housing Organizations. Student organizations that provide off-campus housing to their student members are considered Housing Organizations. These include Professional Residence Groups, fraternal organizations with a professional focus that are recognized by an academic college, and Undergraduate Residence Groups, which includes Greek-letter organizations that are affiliated with their respective student governance organization.

a. In addition to all other student organization policies, Housing Organizations must fulfill the following expectations due to the level of responsibility and complexity involved in the service they provide:

i. Manage their housing unit;

ii. Enforce internal organization rules;

iii. Ensure that relevant national, state, and local laws and regulations are observed;

iv. Provide safe and healthful lodging and cooperate with city or state agencies responsible for enforcing applicable health and safety laws; and

v. Observe relevant University policies in their housing facilities, including the Anti-Hazing Policy and the Sexual Misconduct Policy.

b. Housing Organizations are eligible for the same privileges granted to registered student organizations which do not provide housing.

c. The responsibility for the regulation and governance of professional fraternities that maintain chapter structures shall be with the Dean of the respective college, including professional fraternities registered by the College of Medicine, the College of Dentistry, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Graduate College.

d. The possession or consumption of alcohol is prohibited in recognized undergraduate residence group housing except where explicitly authorized in writing by the vice president.
i. Governance Organizations.
   a. Registered student organizations are governed by the University of Iowa Student Government (UISG), Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG), or Associated Residence Halls (ARH).
   b. Undergraduate men’s and women’s social fraternities are governed by the University of Iowa Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, or the Multicultural Greek Council, which may establish, consistent with the University Policy on Human Rights, additional rules and regulations for recognition of new fraternities, membership selection standards, and standards of conduct.
   c. Reviews. In order to determine whether a student organization is in compliance with a student governance organization regulation or policy, University officials may from time to time review the organization’s record. Information gathered as part of the review may include, but is not limited to, the following: aggregate grade point averages, membership figures, financial reports, internal rules and policies, insurance coverage schedules, educational programs for members, safety and security precautions, compliance with relevant municipal ordinances and state laws, and complaints to the Iowa City police.

II. Registration Tiers

Each student organization granted registration with the University of Iowa is classified as general, affiliated, or sponsored. The registration tier is determined by assessing the student organization's relationship to the University, the purpose and scope of its activities, the University population served, and the perceived potential risk to participants and the University.

The relationship of student organizations to the University is determined by evaluating the student organization’s mission, goals, and activities as they relate to the mission, vision, goals and culture identified by the University in its Strategic Plan.

The privileges and responsibilities associated with each type of registered student organization are outlined below.

A. General Student Organizations: The privileges of becoming a registered student organization at the University are not extended without careful consideration. General student organizations are those that are consistent with the mission and culture of the University and engage primarily in activities that benefit their membership. These organizations are primarily interest groups capable of functioning with minimal support. The University registers but does not support or endorse the purposes of these general organizations and may not accept responsibility or liability for the activities undertaken by the student organization.

In addition to the University resources available to all registered student organizations, general student organizations may receive third priority consideration for:
• Student Organization Office Suite (SOOS) or Student Activity Center (SAC) office or storage space; and
• Reservable space for University-wide annual events at the Iowa Memorial Union, other University facilities, and outdoor venues through the IMU Event Services process and other University scheduling processes.

B. Affiliated Student Organizations: Affiliated student organizations are those that serve a specific University interest and may provide support to University programs and initiatives. They contribute to the mission, vision, goals, and culture of the University by routinely presenting events for their members, the campus, or their related department’s or unit’s members and invited guests. A University department or unit must provide oversight and direct responsibility for the organization and its activities. Affiliated student organizations also may be directly associated with an academic course and its requirements.

In addition to the University resources available to all registered student organizations, affiliated student organizations shall comply with any rules, procedures, and expectations established by the responsible University department or unit.

Because of their broad impact, affiliated student organizations may receive second priority consideration for:
• Student Organization Office Suite (SOOS) or Student Activity Center (SAC) office or storage space; and
• Reservable space for University-wide annual events at the Iowa Memorial Union, other University facilities, and outdoor venues through the IMU event services process and other University scheduling processes.

Affiliated student organizations will need to follow appropriate criteria and guidelines from each University department or unit to receive these services and benefits.

C. Sponsored Student Organizations: Sponsored student organizations are those considered critical to the mission and culture of the University and work in partnership with a University department or unit. These organizations are linked to the University because of their role representing the University or in presenting events of broad appeal that are considered an integral part of the institution and its activities. Sponsored students organizations routinely present events for the campus and broader community, and typically work in a collaborative relationship with a University department or unit. The student organization’s purpose and effect are to serve a broad segment of the campus community, not just its membership.

Once registered, the events and activities presented by the student organization should accurately and positively reflect the mission, vision, goals and culture of the University, as well as the rules and standards of the institution and its activities. The registration process requires action by both student leaders and University officials. As such, this process creates a mutually beneficial relationship between sponsored student organizations and the University.
In addition to the University resources available to all registered student organizations, sponsored student organizations shall have:

- A full-time professional staff or faculty member whose job description designates them as the primary adviser to the sponsored student organization in accordance with student organization registration requirements. These advisers are considered experts within the respective student organization's area of interest;
- A University department or unit that provides oversight and direct responsibility for the student organization and its activities; and
- Routinely presented events of broad appeal for the campus and community. Student organization operations and event planning are complex, and the majority of the events/programs are University-wide. Sponsored student organizations routinely present events for the campus and broader community, and are expected to work closely with the appropriate University department or unit in the planning of these events.

Because of high complexity, sponsored student organizations may receive first priority consideration for:

- Student Organization Office Suite (SOOS) or Student Activity Center (SAC) office or storage space; and
- Reservable space for University-wide annual events at the Iowa Memorial Union, other University facilities, and outdoor venues through the IMU event services process and other University scheduling processes.

Sponsored student organizations must follow appropriate criteria and guidelines from each respective University department or unit to receive these services and benefits.

III. Tier Appeals

An appeals process exists for those organizations desiring a registration tier different than that into which they were initially placed. Based on additional information, an organization's registration tier or may be modified also by the Student Organization Review Committee (SORC).

A. Appeals – Recognition Tier Decision. A student organization has the right to appeal a tier designation decision of the SORC or the determination by the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership to change or modify a student organization's recognition tier. An appeal provides a limited review of the original decision. It is not an opportunity to present the evidence again or to re-evaluate credibility. If an error has been made, in most cases the matter will be returned to the SORC so that the error may be corrected.

One of the following two conditions must be used as a basis for appeal:

- Discovery of new information that was not available at the time of the decision; and/or
- The appropriate processes for registering student organizations were not followed.

The Director of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership or Recreational Services will act as the appeal administrator. The Associate Director of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership or
Recreational Services will act as the appeal administrator if the Director is unable to serve due to conflict of interest or absence.

Written documentation stating the grounds for appeal must be filed with the appeal administrator within ten (10) business days of receipt of the original SORC decision.

The appeal administrator will decide one of the following:

- Uphold the original decision;
- Remand the case back to the SORC for reconsideration consistent with the findings of the appeal administrator;
- Remand for a new registration process review of the student organization; or
- Modify the registration tier assigned by the SORC.

The appeal administrator will provide a written decision to the SORC Chair within ten (10) business days of the appeal review. An appeal may be taken within ten (10) business days to the Dean of Students.

IV. Registration Renewal

A. Each student organization must renew its Profile on OrgSync at or near the beginning of the fall (between Aug. 1-Sept. 15) and spring (Jan. 1-Feb. 15) semesters, even if there are no changes from the previous semester in primary and/or secondary representative and contact information. A student organization that does not update and renew its profile will lose its registration automatically for one semester. Any changes in primary or secondary representative or changes in contact information must be reflected in the profile. Registered student organizations must provide complete and accurate information as requested in the profile. If additional information is needed, student organization representatives must provide information upon request to the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership or Recreational Services. For those student organizations that are registered by an academic college as well as by a student government, student leaders are advised to check with the college/department/unit regarding registration deadlines.

B. From time to time, the Student Organization Review Committee reviews the status of student organizations to ensure the safety and welfare of students who participate in activities sponsored by the organization. Depending upon the results of its evaluation, the Committee will 1) register the student organization; 2) register the student organization subject to specific conditions on activities the organization is permitted to sponsor; or 3) recommend to the Director of the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership or Director of Recreational Services that registration be denied.

V. Organizational Registration Changes

A. During the year, registered student organizations must report to the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership or Recreational Services any amendments to or changes in its student organization name, constitution, by-laws, student representatives, and/or advisers within two weeks of the changes
becoming effective. Registered student organizations also must submit any additional information requested from time to time by their respective registering body.

VI. Advisers

A. Student organization advisers are strongly encouraged for all registered student organizations. Advisers shall be faculty members whenever possible in order to promote student-faculty interaction beyond the classroom. Professional & Scientific staff with advising experience and/or relevant expertise also may serve as student organization advisers. Merit staff, with advising experience and/or relevant expertise also may serve as student organization advisers upon approval from the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership, Recreational Services, or academic dean. A non-University affiliated individual may serve as an adviser to a student organization only if they serve as a liaison to a local/regional/national organization with which the registered student organization has an official affiliation.

B. Student organization advisers must be employed at the University on at least a .5 FTE basis. The Division of Student Life shall have the right not to approve advisers of student organizations who are on disciplinary status as determined by the appropriate University department or unit.

C. All student organization advisers are strongly encouraged to participate in the adviser training programs sponsored by the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership. The Center for Student Involvement & Leadership and Recreational Services will provide specific information to student organizations about these requirements.

D. Graduate assistants, with at least 50% appointments, may serve as additional advisers in conjunction with student organization advisers who meet the requirements stated above; however, they will not have signatory authority (e.g., financial transactions, contracts, vouchers).

VII. Space Allocation for Registered Student Organizations

A. Limited office or storage space is available to registered student organizations in the Student Organization Office Suite (SOOS) or Student Activity Center (SAC) in the Iowa Memorial Union. Student organizations allocated space in the SOOS or SAC must abide by the policies in regard to use of office or storage space. Application forms for the office and storage space are available online through the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership website (http://csil.uiowa.edu/). Office and storage space requests are reviewed annually by the CSIL Space Allocation Committee and recommendations for assignment of space are made to the Director of the Iowa Memorial Union and Center for Student Involvement & Leadership. Sport Clubs are required to follow all policies in regard to storage space established by Recreational Services.