

Office of Campus Ministry
Student Group and Student Ministry Guide
2007-2008

Student Group and Student Ministry Standards

Preamble

Central to the character of Georgetown University is a rich and diverse campus life outside of the classroom. Students come together to pursue interests, gain leadership skills, and serve the community. Co-curricular life should be characterized by the same commitment to excellence reflected in the academic character of Georgetown.

Authority over student organizations and activities is vested in the Vice President (VP) of Mission and Ministry. The VP is assisted by the Office of Campus Ministry. Student organizations may receive access to benefits not available to the individual student; in turn student leaders are responsible for meeting all policies, rules, and standards associated with this access. Each chaplaincy serves and monitors student organizations in a variety of ways. The chaplaincy may provide advice, make budget recommendations, set standards, and monitor a group's activities. It is the responsibility of the chaplaincy to act in the best interests of both the organizations and the community, addressing violations of standards in an educational manner. The ultimate authorities over all matters concerning student organizations, including all violations of any university policy, rule, or standard, are the Director of Campus Ministry and the VP of Mission and Ministry.

The following prescribes the standards to which leaders and their organization members are held. An important aspect of assuming a leadership position is understanding the responsibilities outlined below and communicating these effectively to members. The Georgetown Office of Leadership Development (GOLD) has many resources to help student leaders.

Standards

Respect for Others

Respect for every person is at the core of Georgetown's Catholic, Jesuit identity. In a university it is particularly necessary that this respect encompass diversity and difference of opinion. A student organization may be held accountable for actions that violate the dignity of another member of the university community.

The following actions are specifically prohibited:

1. Discrimination (i.e., any act that distinguishes or excludes an individual on any criterion other than individual merit.)
2. Hazing (i.e., any ritual of membership that demeans, humiliates, injures, or weakens a student or otherwise interferes with the pursuit of an education by a student.)
3. Interfering with another group's freedom of expression (e.g., protesting an event or activity in such a manner that the speaker's right to free speech or others' right to see and hear a speaker is violated.)
4. Disruption (i.e., any activity that endangers or imminently threatens to endanger the safety of any member of the community or of any of the community's physical facilities.)

Use of University Resources

Through student organizations, university resources are used to enrich the university community and reflect its diversity. Student leaders are responsible for following university procedures in the use of university resources.

The following actions are specifically prohibited:

1. Spending organizational funds for purposes other than those authorized; incurring unauthorized financial obligations.
2. Failing to deposit revenue according to the cash handling procedures.
3. Making payments from un-deposited cash. (All revenue must first be deposited and accounted for in the University system.)
4. Failing to adhere to proper financial procedures as outlined in the Student Organization Guide.
5. Maintaining outside bank accounts. (Student organizations that receive university funding and/or operate from University accounts are expressly forbidden from maintaining any financial resources outside of their university account. Non-funded groups are advised to open an account in the Georgetown University Student and Alumni Federal Credit Union in the name of the organization.)
6. Providing partisan political support. (Using university resources or the university name to fund a political campaign or political action group or committee is strictly prohibited.)
7. Lobbying. Student organizations are prohibited from lobbying as a group. Individual students may lobby on behalf of themselves, however no Georgetown University affiliated organization may lobby.
8. Using university vehicles for other than the specifically approved vehicle request.
9. Advertising off campus without permission. (University facilities and resources are intended primarily for the use of the members of the university community, and special authorization must be received to advertise off campus.)
10. Using the name or privileges of a student organization to conduct a non-university profit-making enterprise.
11. Damaging university property through negligence or intentional action.
12. Taking organizational or university resources without permission.

Organizational Integrity

Georgetown University is committed to fostering the integrity of its student organizations. Groups are encouraged to follow their own constitutions, to remain true to their purpose, and to represent their activities to others properly.

The following are specifically prohibited actions:

1. Signing someone else's name without authorization.
2. Supplying false or misleading information on an application or request form.
3. Knowingly accepting or using false identification.
4. Allowing individuals not associated with an organization to direct, manipulate or improperly influence an organization's structure, activities or decisions.
5. Failing to follow the organization's constitution.
6. Holding improper elections; attempting to give any candidate an unfair advantage in an election.
7. Failing to comply with the directive of a university official.
8. Misrepresentation. (Any attempt to use the name or privileges of a student organization for other than the expressly stated purpose of an organization or its activity or event.)
9. Fronting. (Misrepresentation specifically designed to gain access to university benefits, especially facilities, for any person or group that would be otherwise ineligible for such benefits or eligible at a less favorable rate.)
10. Soliciting outside funding without prior approval. (Development efforts must be coordinated through the Office of Campus Ministry, the Office of Mission and Ministry, and the Office of Advancement.)

Specifically Prohibited Groups

The freedom to associate with others who share common interests is an important part of the university community, and students are free to join and form lawful associations. Some types of groups have either activities or principles that are inconsistent with accepted values at the University. For this reason, the following types of organizations are expressly prohibited from having access to university benefits, and existing groups that are found to represent any of these types of organizations will be subject to loss of benefits.

1. Organizations with discriminatory membership practices: any organization that excludes members on an illegal basis. (Exceptions may be granted to a group, such as performing arts groups that wish to select members for performances based on special criteria such as talent and individual merit.)
2. Groups with ritualized, demeaning or secret membership practices, and specifically those organizations affiliated with the national Intrafraternity Council, Pan-Hellenic Association, and Pan Hellenic Council.
3. Secret societies (Groups that do not disclose their purpose, membership or activities, or whose purpose, membership, or activities are discriminatory.)

4. Commercial groups (Groups whose purpose and activities are designed as private profit-making endeavors for the benefit of their members or outside sponsor.)
5. Groups that foster hatred or intolerance of others because of their race, religion, nationality, sex, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation, or ability.
6. Organizations that are considered inconsistent with acceptable conduct at an American university committed to the Roman Catholic moral tradition.
7. Groups that are unlawful or in violation of University policy.
8. Groups that endanger or threaten to endanger the safety of any member of the University community or of any of the University's physical facilities.
9. Groups that disrupt or obstruct the functions of the University or threaten such disruption or obstruction.

Compliance with University Policies

There are many policies that govern the activities and events of student organizations such as the alcohol and substance abuse policy, the outdoor events policy and the policy on speech and expression. Leaders and organizers are expected to be familiar with all relevant policies. All members are expected to comply with all university policies which can be accessed online at <http://www12.georgetown.edu/student-affairs/policies.html>.

The University reserves the right to modify and to add policies at any time, and to hold students accountable for abiding by such policies. The University also reserves the right to hold groups or individuals accountable for inappropriate actions not specifically listed in these standards.

Violations of Rules and Policies by Student Organizations

All Georgetown University Student Organizations are held to the rules and policies as outlined in this guide. Any violation to these rules and policies will be subject to an investigation and subsequent sanctions for the Student Organization itself or any individual members.

When an alleged violation by a student organization also involves conduct of any student in violation of the Student Code of Conduct, referral may be made to the Student Discipline System. Such referral will not preclude sanctions against the organization as outlined above.

For organizational violations, generally the aim of any response to such violations will be to preserve the integrity of the group and educate the group or individuals involved. Violations of Student Organization Standards and sanctions imposed by the Office of Campus Ministry will not become part of any individual's student record.

The investigation process is as follows:

1. Complaints are to be filed with the Office of Campus Ministry by students, faculty, staff, or community members.

2. For alleged violations in which the conduct is not contested, the Director or other designated University official may fashion a procedure on a case-by-case basis to discuss concerns and to impose sanction(s).
3. For alleged violations in which the conduct is contested, the case will be referred to the appropriate chaplaincy, which will conduct a hearing, according to procedures that it devises consistent with this paragraph. The chaplaincy will then make recommendations to the Director or other designated University official concerning factual determinations, responsibility, and sanction(s). Notice of the hearing will be given to the respondent through at least one of its officers at least three working days before the hearing. Both the complainant and the respondent organization will have the opportunity to present information and argument at the hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Legal counsel will not be permitted to participate in the hearing. The chaplaincy will provide its recommendation to the Director or other designated University official within two working days after the hearing. The Director or other designated University official can accept, reject, or modify the recommendation.
4. The accused organization can, in writing, contest the ruling of the Director of Campus Ministry (DCM) to the Vice President of Mission and Ministry (VP), who will review the evidence and decide upon the appropriateness of the findings. The ultimate decision of any disciplinary procedure lies with the VP.

Questions about this and other policies or programs regarding student organizations may be addressed to:

The Director of Campus Ministry
Office of Campus Ministry
113 Healy Hall
Georgetown University
Washington, DC 20057
(202) 687-5259