



Expectations of an Advisor

Setting expectations at the beginning of a relationship help to manage emotions and responsibilities of all individuals involved in attempt to limit conflicts later. As the advisor, you are not expected to do everything nor are you expected to carry the weight of the organization on your back. In the meeting when you set expectations be very clear and upfront with the officers about what you are able and willing to do, and listen to what they desire from you.

The following is a general list of expectations that an organization may have of its advisor. Discuss which items are the most important and the frequency of the activity/task.

- Attend general meetings and executive committee meetings.
- Remind officers/members of deadlines and calendar events.
- Be available to meet with the President/Chair before each meeting.
- Speak up during discussion if you have relevant information, otherwise let the students run meetings.
- Behave as an active member of the organization – showing interest in activities, dedication to organization, volunteer for appropriate tasks, etc. (except for voting and holding office).
- Provide alternative thoughts or contributions to help students see both sides of an issue.
- Attend organization activities, on and off campus. Be cautious of the social events that you attend. You do not want to put yourself in an awkward situation where underage drinking may occur.
- Request to see the treasurer's books at the end of each semester, and assist when needed with financial matters .
- Check major correspondences before they are sent.
- Provide continuity by acting as a custodian of organization paraphernalia, records, etc., during the summer and during officer transitions.
- Keep the official files and copies of official correspondence in your office, if needed.
- Inform the organization of infractions of its bylaws, codes, and standing rules.
- Keep the organization aware of its stated objectives when planning events.
- Mediate interpersonal conflicts that arise, or refer students to the Dean of Student's Office.
- Inform the organization of leadership opportunities in which members can participate.
- Let the organization work out its problems, including making mistakes and “doing it the hard way.”
- Encourage an evaluation of each activity by those students responsible for planning it and all organizational members.
- Encourage teamwork and cooperation among the officers of the organization.
- Be familiar with University facilities, services, and procedures that affect organization activities.
- Represent the organization in any conflicts with members of the University staff.
- Positively represent and recognize the organization in your university capacity, if applicable.
- Recommend programs, speakers, etc.

[Adapted from: Dunkel, N. W. & Schuh, J.H. (1998). Advising Student Groups and Organizations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.]

There is no more noble occupation in the world than to assist another human being -
to help someone succeed.