

# Student Group Advisor Expectations

## **Be familiar with the student group mission, vision, history, and constitution.**

*Why it's important:* Understanding the direction, governance, and context of an organization empowers you to provide comprehensive advisement. Fully understanding the mission and vision of the group makes your job easier when challenging leaders on group decisions that may not align with the mission.

*Examples:* Carefully read the constitution and review it with group leadership. Ask leaders to explain their goals and vision for the group. Connect with campus partners to understand the history and context for the group.

## **Set clear and mutual advisor expectations with group members.**

*Why it's important:* Each group is different and will have different needs and expectations of their advisor. Establishing your role from the beginning will ensure that you meet the needs of the group while maintaining appropriate boundaries and considering your time.

*Examples:* How often will you meet with leadership? How many general body meetings you will attend? How will information be shared? How will you be involved in leadership transition? etc...

## **Be familiar with relevant University and Student Union policies, procedures, and resources.**

*Why it's important:* You should be able to provide recommendations, provide context, point out potential outcomes and consequences, and be a supportive and knowledgeable guide through decision making and planning. One of your roles is to ensure that student groups are within University guidelines.

*Examples:* Refer to How Things Work and the Student Involvement and Leadership website. Ask the student group which policies, procedures, and resources the commonly encountered or utilized. Connect with colleagues that deal with these policies, procedures, and resources so you may find follow-up information.

## **Use questions and feedback to challenge and support group development.**

*Why it's important:* Each interaction with a group member can be a teachable moment. Take time to reflect with group members, ask why and spur critical thinking. This is where most learning occurs.

*Examples:* Why do you think it's always been done this way?, What lead you to that decision?, How does that impact the community?, If you were in their shoes how would you feel about that?, How would you do it differently next time?

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**Ensure that the group and its efforts are inclusive and respectful of all communities.**

*Why it's important:* Two main pillars of WUSTL's community values are respect and include, they provide a foundation for student growth and personal discovery. Without these tenants we alienate and devalue members of the student body.

*Examples:* Guiding students through the Responsible and Inclusive Programming statement, ensuring that recruitment is open and welcoming with a focus on nondiscrimination, how members portray themselves or the group on social media, thoroughly vetting programming dates to ensure that no religious groups are excluded.

**Encourage accountability amongst the group.**

*Why it's important:* Accountability is important. We, as advisors, hold student groups accountable to their word, mission, constitution, etc... We help emphasize the importance of accountability by encouraging students to hold themselves accountable. By holding ourselves accountable we model integrity.

*Examples:* A student writes an apology email to negatively impacted campus partners due to a disregarding university policy, a student has a conversation with the advisor when it's found out they lied about a group incident, a student apologizes to the group at a meeting because they disrespected multiple members.

**Advocate for and support the group and its mission when appropriate.**

*Why it's important:* As a faculty and/or staff member your voice has power that is different than a student voice, use it to advocate for the group or their cause. This shows your commitment to the group and advances their mission in ways they may not be able to on their own.

*Examples:* Speaking for or against a policy that directly impacts an event the group plans, sharing stories with other administrators that focus on an issue the group cares deeply about, providing context for a group issue being discussed amongst administration, faculty, and/or staff, suggesting that students within the group be present for a meeting they otherwise would not be included in.