



What is an advisor?

Advisors are mentors who provide expert knowledge and insight gained through experiences to the members. They are an integral part of the organization as they are familiar with organization policies, available for support and openly communicate with officers and members.

Communication is the key to being a successful advisor. Make sure to attend organization, officer and advisor meetings to encourage open communication between all parties.

What is the Role of an Advisor?

Provided by the University of Arizona website

Advisors are first and foremost educators. In this role you will provide information, present alternatives, encourage responsibility, support creativity, and challenge students to develop as leaders. In this role an advisor walks a fine line between leading the organization and giving the organization the strength to lead itself.

Advisors should not assume a role as a leader, officer, or voting member within the student organization. The various “hats” of an advisor can be placed into four categories: planning assistance, leadership skill development, resource guidance/policy interpretation, and transition.

Planning Assistance

The advisor will advise students in planning projects, competitions, events, or programs for the organization. This may include planning a meeting or social, fundraising drive, community service event, or sports event. Students often need assistance in ordering the process, involving other members or logistical considerations. They may not know the questions to ask.

Leadership Skill Development

Student leaders come into their positions with various levels of ability. If the advisor develops a relationship of trust the student will benefit from guidance in areas such as assertiveness, budgeting, time management as well as helping the group with problem solving, decision-making, cohesiveness. The advisor may work directly with officers in developing individual skills like public speaking and letter writing, or officers may ask him or her to assist in ways to increase motivation.

Advisors serve as liaisons between the university and the organization by providing information regarding university procedures and guidelines and making appropriate contacts. It is not the responsibility of the advisor to find monetary resources but students frequently need some guidance in deciding where to start.

Transition

As advisor you can help by offering to meet with the out-going and in-coming officers to discuss expectations and re-cap the previous term of office. Your presence as a facilitator will guide the students to exchange needed information. More detailed transition information is located in the transition portion of the manual.

Suggested Tasks for Advisors

- Assist the group in filing its Recognition Packet, an annual requirement of Arizona State University
- Create opportunities for the educational and personal development of students.
- Have knowledge of all plans and activities of the group.
- Discourage domination of the group by any individual or small groups.
- Assist in the orientation of new officers.
- Be available to meet with members of the organization at their regular meetings and events sponsored by the group. If the group meets weekly plan on attending at least once a month.
- Provide guidance in the planning and evaluation of programs.
- Assist the group in setting realistic goals and objectives for the academic year.
- Promote closer involvement between students, faculty and staff. Suggest the group apply for faculty student interaction monies (see the Funding Section of the Handbook.)
- Assist the group in abiding by all University policies, procedures, and regulations.
- Be familiar with the Policy Section of the Handbook.

Techniques of Advising

Understanding what a student officer expects of an advisor and what an advisor may expect of a student officer may enable one to more effectively fulfill the role of an advisor. It is strongly suggested that before agreeing to sign the annual recognition papers, advisors should meet with the student leaders to determine mutual expectations. Listed here are guidelines that may be helpful in determining these expectations.

What a Student Officer May Expect of an Advisor:

- Assist the group in formulating long-range goals and in planning and initiating short-term projects.
- Assistance with University procedural matters.
- Suggestions of ways the group meetings can be improved.
- Assist in evaluating group projects, performance, and progress.
- Make suggestions that will permit the officers to improve leadership skills.

What an Advisor may Expect of a Student Officer:

- Keep advisor informed of all organizational activities, meeting times, locations, and agendas.
- Provide advisor with minutes of all meetings.
- Meet regularly with the advisor and use him/her as a sounding board for discussing plans and problems.

Different Approaches to Advising:

The most important aspect of advising is to remember that one's main role is just that—to advise. The suggestions listed below are meant to help the advisor work more effectively with the student organization in the role of an advisor.

- Point out issues relating to ideas presented by the officer without imposing bias.
- If an idea is inappropriate, the advisor should encourage the students to consider other alternatives.
- Informal meetings are conducive to open and worthwhile discussion.
- If the officer asks "What should we do?" or "What do you think?" the question should be rephrased and handed back to him/her. The advisor is there to assist the officer but not to solve the problem for the student.
- The officer should be encouraged to take an occasional chance on some less proven members in delegating authority.
- The advisor may wish to periodically evaluate the student in his/her effectiveness as an officer.
- The advisor may feel comfortable participating in group discussions when the members have learned to recognize and accept the advisor's role as a co-worker whose opinions are respected for their value. This participation should not inhibit the prerogatives of anyone else.

The Role of the Advisor

Listed below are expectations student leaders have of their advisor. This list is designed to help advisors and student officers arrive at a clear and mutually agreed upon role of the advisor in club affairs.

The Role of the Advisor

1. Attend all general meetings.
2. Attend all executive committee meetings.
3. Call meetings of the executive committee when he/she believes it is necessary.
4. Explain University policy when relevant to the discussion.
5. Explain University policy to the executive committee and depend upon the officers to carry them out through their leadership.
6. Explain University policy to the entire membership at a general meeting once a year.
7. Reserve an appointment with the President (Chairperson) before each meeting.
8. Help the President prepare the agenda before each meeting.
9. Serve as parliamentarian for the group.
10. Speak up during discussion when he/she has relevant information.
11. Speak up during discussion when he/she believes that the group is likely to make a poor decision.
12. Be quiet during general meetings unless called upon.
13. Exert his/her influence with officers between meetings.
14. Take an active part in formulating the goals of the group.
15. Initiate ideas for discussion when he/she believes they will help the group.
16. Be one of the group except for the voting and holding office.
17. Attend all group activities.
18. Request to see the treasurer's books at the end of each semester.
19. Check the secretary's minutes before they are written in final form.
20. Request the treasurer to clear all expenditures with him/her before financial commitments are made.
21. Check all official correspondence before it is sent.
22. Get a carbon copy of all official correspondences.
23. Be custodian of all group paraphernalia, records, etc., during the summer and between changeover of officers.
24. Keep the official files in his/her office.
25. Inform the group of infractions of their bylaws, codes and standing rules.
26. Keep the group aware of its stated objectives when planning events.
27. Veto a decision when it violates a stated object, the bylaws, codes and standing rules or University policy.
28. Mediate interpersonal conflicts that arise.
29. Be responsible for planning Leadership skills workshops
30. State what her/his advisor responsibilities are, or as he/she sees them, at the first of the year.
31. Let the group work out its problems, including making mistakes and "doing it the hard way".
32. Insist on an evaluation of each activity by those students responsible for planning it.
33. Take the initiative in creating teamwork and cooperation among the officers group.
34. Let the group thrive or decline on its merits; do not interfere unless requested to do so.
35. Represent the group in any conflicts with members of the University staff.
36. Be familiar with University facilities, services and procedures which affect group activities.
37. Recommend programs, speakers, etc.
38. Take an active part in the orderly transition of responsibilities between old and new officers at the end of year.
39. Approve all candidates for office in terms of scholastic standing (GPA) and check periodically to ensure that officers are maintaining the required grade point average.
40. Cancel any activities when he/she believes they have been poorly planned.

Other suggested duties:

Help chapter set and meet goals

Encourage officers

Familiarize group with policies

Challenge officers to exceed predecessors

Be available for advice

Meet with officers on a regular basis

Help plan and chaperone events

Assist in calendar planning

Provide continuous support

Establish a relationship/become familiar with university admin

Help officers and organization understand their rights and responsibilities

Assist in designing a recruitment action plan

Help manage organization's risk utilizing university resources

Assist in the establishment of an emergency action plan