

## STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE MANDATE

The Student Life Committee shall serve as the principal agent of the faculty in matters concerning student life and learning beyond course work unless specifically assigned to another standing faculty committee. It shall work in close advisory relationship with the Student Life Division to ensure the distinctive Christian character of its programs, services, policies, and interventions within the framework of the educational goals of Calvin College.

Its duties shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

1. Promote student involvement in the learning community of Calvin College through appropriate programs and policies.
2. Support and if needed review co-curricular learning activities to ensure their consistency with the established educational policies of the college and their relevance to students' needs.
3. Review policy, evaluate services, and propose improvements for first-year, transfer, and international student orientation.
4. Advise all relevant units of the Student Life Division, including recommending improvements to respective administrators and reviewing annual reports.
5. Promote cooperation among faculty members and Student Life Division educators to accomplish mutual goals.
6. Oversee the chartering and the assigning of advisors for all student organizations according to committee policy and procedures. (See Appendix A)
7. Oversee the organization, policies, and activities of the Calvin College Media Sub-Committee. (See Appendix B)
8. Ensure that student cultural affairs express the goals and purposes of the college and conform to those policies, which have been adopted by the faculty or established in the charters of the organizations concerned. It shall have the authority to regulate all student-sponsored lectures and related presentations held on campus according to its established policies and procedures. (See Appendix C)
9. Report annually (October) to the Faculty Senate.

Composition: Four faculty, four students, dean of student development, resident director, vice president for student life, assistant dean of student development.

Approved: Student Life Committee, April, 2003

Approved by Committee on Governance, October, 2003

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**GUIDELINES FOR CHARTERING AND ADVISING OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Student organizations are an integral part of campus life at Calvin. Their presence on campus underscores our belief that education occurs not only within classrooms but outside them as well. The faculty and administration encourage students to participate in organizations that suit their interests and broaden their horizons. The Student Life Committee, Assistant Dean of Student Development, and the Dean of Student Development oversee student organizations and seek to ensure their continued positive impact at Calvin. This use of “chartered organizations” also implies all recognized constitutions.

- A. Guidelines to seek and maintain charter status; each student organization will:
1. Seek to reflect the educational mission of the college and provide benefit to Calvin students or the campus as a whole. In addition, an organization's activities may, at times, be interesting or beneficial to communities beyond Calvin College.
  2. Welcome any interested Calvin Student. In addition, faculty and staff may be invited to participate in the activities of a student organization.
  3. Submit an organizational charter each academic year. The charter will include the following information:
    - a. Organization's Name
    - b. Organization's Leadership (names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of officers)
    - c. Organization's Advisor (name, telephone number, and e-mail address)
    - d. Organization's Mission Statement (including a rationale for its existence *vis-à-vis* Calvin's mission statement)
    - e. Organization's Calendar of Scheduled Events
    - f. Organization's Structure (decision-making procedures, perpetuation strategies, and so on, if necessary)
    - g. Signature(s) of persons who prepared the charter and organization's advisor
  4. In addition to the chartering process, a justified budget request must be submitted.
  5. Report its operations and activities on a yearly basis to the Student Life Committee (see Evaluation Form, part D).
  6. Receive funding from the student allocation budget based on the Student Life Committee's approval of the organization's charter and a satisfactory annual evaluation.
  7. Seek approval (using the Event & Activity Form) for organizationally sponsored events at least one week in advance of the event.
  8. Commit to an active dialogue with the organization's advisor, making sure to invite them to the activities of the group.
  9. Send at least two representatives to a student organization informational and recruitment meeting at the beginning of the school year (September) for new and returning students.

- B. Guidelines for funding of chartered student organizations

1. An organization may collect dues (to be included in charter and reflected in budget) with the prior approval of the Student Life Committee.
2. An organization may sponsor fundraisers (to be included in charter and reflected in budget) with the prior approval of the Student Life Committee and consistent with the college's policies on fundraising (as published by the Development Office).
3. An organization such as *Chimes* may receive advertising revenue with the prior approval of the Student Life Committee. Such anticipated revenue must be included in charter and reflected in budget.
4. Organizations such as the Gospel Choir and New Beginnings may collect free-will offerings or fees for services rendered with the approval of the Student Life Committee. Such anticipated revenue must be included in charter and reflected in budget.
5. An organization may not solicit or receive any form of external funding for general operating budget.
6. An organization may solicit and receive external funding for a particular speaker, special project, or event. The speaker, special project, or event, funding source and amount of funding must be approved in advance by the Student Life Committee. External funding for speakers, special projects, or events as well as, the funding source and amount must also be approved in advance by Calvin's Development Office.
7. Organizations should be familiar with and follow the financial guidelines and procedures provided by Student Senate.

Note: See Student Senate's "Student Organization Financial Procedures" for more information.

#### C. Time Line for Chartering and Budgeting Processes (second semester)

- Week 5 Student organizations are notified by the Dean of Student Development's Office that the chartering process begins; student organizations receive chartering information (evaluation form, guidelines for what should be included in a charter, general guidelines for student organizations) and budgeting information.
- Week 8 ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTERS AND ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGETS ARE DUE. Chartering information (charter, or constitution revisions, two (2) copies of the proposed budget, and the evaluation form) should be submitted to the Dean of Student Development Office.
- Week 9 Sub-committees of the Student Life Committee review submitted charters and documentation.
- Week 10 Sub-committee of the Student Life Committee reports its recommendations to the Student Life Committee.
- Week 10 Student Senate Finance Committee meets to review submitted budget information and determines preliminary allocations to organizations.
- Week 11 Organizations notified of chartering status and preliminary budget allocation.

Week 11 Revisions to organizational charters (if necessary) are completed.

Week 12 Any required revisions to organizational charters are due and should be submitted to the Dean of Student Development Office.

Week 12 Budget appeals (if an organization is dissatisfied with Student Senate's preliminary allocation); sign-ups at the Student Senate Office.

Week 12 Student Life Committee meets to review the status of organizations that were required to submit revisions.

Week 13 Organizations that were required to submit revisions are notified of their status.

Week 13 Student Senate Finance Committee Budget Appeals and Final Decisions.

#### D. Student Organizations Evaluation Form

*Please respond, in typewritten form, briefly yet substantively to the following questions (use additional paper if necessary).*

1. Describe your overall impressions regarding the operations of your organization this year.
2. Describe how others may perceive your organization on campus.
3. Please reflect on the relation between your annual goals and the mission statement of your organization.
4. How successful has your organization been in accomplishing its goals this year?
5. Evaluate your organizational budget in relation to the accomplishment of organizational goals.
6. What obstacles if any has your organization encountered this year?
7. Did your organization's advisor meet your expectations for involvement?
8. How has your organization reflected Calvin's mission?
9. How has your organization benefited Calvin and/or the broader community?
10. How might your organization improve its operations?
11. What kinds of information/advice would be helpful to your organization during the course of the school year?

## E. Guidelines for Organizational Advising

### 1. Review of Organizational Advising

Student involvement in campus organizations allows students the opportunity to develop organizational and leadership skills. Leadership in an organization allows students to enhance the learning that takes place in the regular course work, with opportunities to grow and develop beyond. These groups are a vital link in the seamless education that we hope to provide for Calvin students. Student organizations can be a valuable tool in the educational journeys of Calvin students. In support of the students continuing their education, it is important that persons with experience and wisdom assist students in these endeavors.

- a. Student organization leaders may request a faculty member, administrator, or a staff member as an Advisor, but the final selection and appointment is the prerogative of the Committee on Governance.
- b. Advisors are appointed for one academic year, renewable terms. Advisors will receive a letter of appointment or re-appointment from the office of the President, to whom they are ultimately accountable.
- c. The President's office shall inform the respective organizational leaders of advisor appointments.
- d. Advisors, as members of the faculty, administration, or staff, represent the common core of Christian beliefs and values of Calvin College and its constituency.
- e. Advisors will be available to consult with the Student Life Committee and be liaisons to the Faculty Senate, if the need arises.
  
- f. Ordinarily, the Dean of Student Development will ensure that all organizational leaders meet the eligibility requirements recorded in the Student Handbook. Advisors, however, will be available to assist in special cases.

### 2. Responsibilities of Advisors

It is important that prospective Advisors understand the responsibilities involved before making a commitment to a student organization. These responsibilities include:

- a. Provide assistance and direction to the organization. Encourage the leadership core to develop programs and events that add to the educational mission of the college. Provide direction and counsel to ensure that meetings are run in an orderly and efficient manner.
- b. Help maintain continuity from year to year through reviewing the charter, keeping records of past activities and traditions, while also ensuring that the new leadership is aware of responsibilities and duties.
- c. Ensure that the organization and its leadership function in a non-discriminatory manner.
- d. Hold a meeting with the leadership core, at the beginning of the year, to begin dialogue concerning the expectations and role of the Advisor in the organization. Standards should also be set to determine the appropriateness of content or type of event for that organization. Meet with the leadership during the semester to continue a dialogue concerning the group and its purposes.

- e. Advisors are not required to attend all regular meetings of their respective student organizations, since the students are responsible for the routine management of the organization. It is required, however, that Advisors attend some regular meetings to become acquainted with the personnel and activities of the organization.
  - f. Advisors have the right to postpone an activity or publication, if they deem it inconsistent with the mission or official policies of the college, until it is brought before the Student Life Committee for review. The recommendations to the President and the Faculty Senate for action.
  - g. The relationship of the student organization leaders and the Advisor is both personal and professional, designed for effective working of student organizations. Advisors will be readily available to student organization leaders, to give advice and to consult on programs.
  - h. Understand Calvin College's policies and procedures, listed in the Student Handbook. Be a resource to the group concerning these policies and procedures.
3. The Organization's Responsibility to the Advisor
- a. Notify the Advisor of all meetings, events, and major projects. If an event or publication has the possibility of being perceived as inappropriate, the Advisor should be consulted before the event is scheduled or publication produced.
  - b. Consult the Advisor before any changes in the structure of the group or policies of the organization are made.
  - c. Remember that the responsibility for the success or failure of the group's events rests ultimately with the group, not the Advisor.
  - d. Dialogue with the Advisor, and set expectations for both the roles of the Advisor and the leadership. Continue to dialogue, give feedback, and bring up any problems or concerns.
  - e. Acknowledge and express the value of the Advisor's time and energy.
4. Suggestions for Effective Advising
- a. Be involved but not too involved. Advisors share, assist, and facilitate. Growth depends on the students' development of leadership and organizational skills.
  - b. Set expectations early. The organization and the Advisor need to understand what respective roles each will play. Dialogue early. Some groups will need more of an Advisor's involvement than others will, but both the organization and the Advisor must be aware of responsibilities.
  - c. Make yourself available. For an Advisor to play an effective role in a group they must be easily accessible to the leaders. Make sure they can reach you through e-mail, office number, and even your home phone number.
  - d. Challenge the group. Encourage the group to try new and creative programs, to not be satisfied with what has been done in the past, but to develop programs that enhance the educational mission of the college.

## CONSTITUTION OF MEDIA SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE

### PREAMBLE

Traditionally, Calvin College has maintained a policy of “responsible freedom” in matters of communications media. Participants are free to formulate their own opinions, to develop their own styles, and to exercise their own aesthetic judgements. Undue restrictions on these are to be discouraged. But, participants should exercise their freedom in a way that is consistent with Christian belief and behavior. They should be continuously aware of their obligation to “cultivate Christian discernment, discretion, and maturity of judgement” (*Acts of Synod, 1963*). Participants must also carry on their efforts with respect for the opinions, styles, and aesthetic judgements of readers who may differ with them.

The Student Life Committee will: 1) establish, support, and govern student communications media through a Media Sub-Committee; 2) provide opportunities for students to get broad experience in these media; and 3) assure the continuity of responsible leadership in these media.

The college community expects participants in student communications to be committed to the Christian faith as the basis for the concept of responsible freedom. It expects student expression to be consistent with a loyalty to Scripture, particularly as interpreted in the Reformed confessions. These standards, and not mere tradition, establish the limits of good judgement. Students are expected to be conscious that they function in the context of the greater Body of Christ. Thus, participants should not needlessly give moral or religious offense, seeking rather to build and enrich the Christian community.

### ARTICLE I: PURPOSE

- A. The Media Sub-Committee of the Student Life Committee shall be the responsible publisher of all student publications and the regulating body of the TV stations. In these capacities it shall formulate basic policy, shall give general editorial and program direction, and shall supervise business policy and practice. Editorial opinions, however, shall not be restricted by the limitations given in the preamble to this constitution.
- B. The organizations under the jurisdiction of this sub-committee are *Chimes*, *Dialogue*, *Prism*, and CVN.
  1. *Chimes* shall be the student newspaper, and as such it shall concern itself with news and editorial comment about the Calvin community as well as news and comment of interest to members of that community.
  2. *Dialogue* shall be both a forum for discussion of important issues and a medium of artistic expression available to all members of the Calvin community.

3. *Prism* shall be a meaningful and representative record of Calvin community life, particularly within the current school year.
4. CVN shall provide television programming for educational, informational, and entertainment purposes to the Calvin College community, and shall offer students an opportunity to gain experience in television journalism and production.

## **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP**

This Media Sub-Committee shall consist of one current media head from each organization, two students from the Student Life Committee, the faculty advisor of each organization, two faculty members of the Student Life Committee (one of whom shall chair the Media Sub-Committee) and the Assistant Dean of Student Development. Normally it shall meet not less than one time per semester during the academic year.

## **ARTICLE III: DUTIES AND POWERS**

- A. The Media Sub-Committee shall seek candidates, interview candidates, and recommend appointments of the communications heads to the Student Life Committee at the times stipulated.
  1. Application: after general publicity during the designated month, the sub-committee shall complete a list of applicants for each position. To be eligible for consideration, all applicants must meet the college eligibility standards and complete the application requirements.
  2. Requirements: each applicant must submit the following:
    - a. Completed application, including a signed acceptance of the provisions of the constitution of the Media Sub-Committee of the Student Life Committee.
    - b. Two statements of endorsement by student peers
    - c. Two letters of recommendation by professors or administrators
    - d. Written prospectus of editorial plans and staff personnel for the coming year
    - e. Signed release for sub-committee to review the applicant's academic transcript and discipline history.
    - f. Portfolio, or some other appropriate example, of the applicant's work
  3. Selection: in addition to reviewing the materials submitted by applicants, the sub-committee will interview each applicant. Based on these two components, the sub-committee will make recommendations with supporting rationale for each media position to the Student Life Committee for review and recommendation to the Faculty Senate and Student Senate. If the Student Life Committee does not approve an appointment recommendation from the sub-committee, it will be referred back to the sub-committee with specific instructions for further action.

- B. Any changes in staff positions shall be reported to the Media Sub-Committee.
- C. The Student Life Committee, through its Media Sub-Committee, shall have the authority over all student media bearing the name of the College or student body and over all other student publications not sponsored by an academic department.
- D. Although the Calvin College communications policy is to avoid prior restraint whenever possible, the Media Sub-Committee or the Student Life Committee may require the communications head to make available to the appropriate advisor material to be published or broadcast. The Media Sub-Committee or the Student Life Committee reserves the right to instruct the communications head regarding the publication or broadcast of potentially offensive or sensitive material.
- E. The Media Sub-Committee shall initiate disciplinary action when it finds that this constitution has been violated or that the communication heads have not lived up to the guiding principles as stated in its Preamble in the performance of their respective tasks. The communications heads shall, in all cases, be responsible for the activities of their respective organizations. In cases of alleged irresponsibility, the communications head shall be given the right to a hearing before the Media Sub-Committee. (Cases of misconduct by the communications head that are violations of the Student Conduct Code shall be referred to a senior judicial advisor for adjudication in the college disciplinary structure.) If the Sub-Committee finds that sanctions with respect to the student's communications position is necessary, it shall recommend a course of action to the Student Life Committee for implementation. If the Student Life Committee disagrees with the recommendation, it shall send the case back to the Media Sub-Committee for reconsideration. The Student Life Committee may ultimately overrule the Media Sub-Committee and has final authority to implement sanctions and shall report its action to the President of the college. The President is authorized to adjudicate any appeal that may result from such action by the Student Life Committee. Sanctions in cases of failure to execute the responsibilities of the communications head position may range from written reprimand to permanent removal from the office.

**ARTICLE IV: GUIDELINES FOR THE PUBLICATION OR BROADCAST OF POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE MATERIAL BY STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE CALVIN MEDIA SUB-COMMITTEE**

- A. Publications or broadcast of any material devoted, in whole or in part, to satire, parody, caricature, or the like, is subject to all of the guidelines, rules, and regulations of this constitution, and to all other guidelines, rules and regulations officially instituted by the Student Life Committee.
- B. For any publication or broadcast devoted in the main to satire, parody, caricature, or the like, the communications head responsible for the publication or broadcast must file with the Media Sub-Committee prior to publication and broadcast, a declaration of intent in publishing the material, including a statement of the purpose(s) she/he intends to achieve by such a publication or broadcast.
- C. For any publication or broadcast devoted in part or in whole to satire, parody, caricature, or the like, the communications head must, PRIOR TO PRINTING OR BROADCAST, inform the appropriate Advisor of such material and seek her/his advice and counsel. Should the communications head disagree with the Advisor's advice or should either desire further advice in such matters, either person may appeal to the Media Sub-Committee and finally to the Student Life Committee, whose decision shall be final.

**ARTICLE V: ADVISOR**

- A. The communications head may recommend an Advisor or Advisors to the Media Sub-Committee. These recommendations shall be reviewed by the Student Life Committee and then submitted to the Committee on Governance for official appointment by the President prior to a change in leadership of the media organization. After the Advisor has been appointed, the communications head and the Advisor should thoroughly discuss their relationship and program of activities.
- B. The advisor shall have various functions:
  - 1. The advisor, as a member of the Calvin College faculty or staff, represents the common core of Christian beliefs and values of Calvin College and its constituency. The relationship of communications head and Advisor is both personal and professional, designed for effective working of the communications organization.
  - 2. The Advisor shall be a member of the Media Sub-Committee and shall be a liaison between the organization and the faculty.
  - 3. The advisor shall be available during regular College hours to the communications staff for advice and discussion.
  - 4. The Advisor and communications head should meet regularly for advice and discussion.

5. The Advisor shall be available to the communications organization as an arbiter of internal disputes.
6. In matters of disagreement between the Advisor and the communications head, the issue may be brought before the Media Sub-Committee, the official agent of the College, which then may make a decision and if necessary make recommendations to the Student Life Committee for action.
7. The Advisor is not required to attend all regular meetings of the communications organization, since the communications head is responsible for the daily management of the organization. It is advisable, however, for the Advisor to attend a majority of the meetings to become well acquainted with the personnel and activities of the organization. The frequency of these meetings should be clearly understood by the communications head and Advisor before they assume office.

**POLICIES FOR STUDENT CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

**A. Scheduling and Calendar**

1. The Student Life Committee may make evaluations of building-use policies and assignments for student organizations in order to provide an equitable use of College facilities. It shall act as an appeals board on questions involving such assignments of these facilities.
2. Campus Events shall maintain a college event calendar following appropriate College guidelines. This calendar shall list events sponsored by student organizations as well as other all-college events, whether sponsored by student or faculty groups. All organizations planning all-campus or public programs shall consult the calendar when planning schedules. Student Senate and the Student Development Office shall receive periodic updates of the campus calendar for review or public posting. In addition, the Student Development Office shall use the calendar as a resource when it reviews scheduling policies and evaluates building use.

**B. Review and Appeal**

1. The Student Life Committee may consider or review, with the right of approving or denying any event planned or sponsored by student organizations. Such review shall be conducted only when requested by a member or Advisor of the sponsoring organization, by a member of the Student Life Committee, or by an administrator with responsibility in this area.
2. Public or all-campus events sponsored by chartered student organizations or student groups sponsored by academic departments shall require the prior approval of the Dean of Student Development. Approval is granted by securing the Dean's signature on the Event and Activity Form available in Campus Events. The Dean of Student Development may consult the Student Life Committee before granting such approval, but need not do so. Organizations have the right to appeal an adverse ruling of the Dean of Student Development to the Student Life Committee.

**C. Channels of Communication**

Chartered student organizations shall normally deal with the Student Senate, the office the Dean of Student Development, and the Student Life Committee. However, any student organization wishing to appeal a decision of the Student Life Committee, or wishing to present a charter revision or change in policy which the Student Life Committee has refused to approve, may, with Student Senate endorsement, present its case directly to the Faculty Senate. In such cases the student organization shall communicate with the chairperson or secretary of the Faculty Senate, who shall place the item upon the agenda of the next faculty meeting.