

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.