

GUIDE TO CHARTERING NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

You must also complete the Blue Card: <http://www.usm.edu/union/studentactivities.php>

The principle vehicles for student activities at The University of Southern Mississippi is the student organizations. Student organizations at The University of Southern Mississippi are chartered by the university and, when chartered, become officially recognized organizations that may avail themselves of all privileges relating thereto. An officially chartered student organization will not use its official status for any purpose other than its own organization; this shall include, but not be limited to, financial gain for individuals, sponsoring activities for an unchartered group, and reserving facilities and conducting business for an unchartered group.

Student organizations are characterized by a written constitution and bylaws, officers, an adviser, and a program of projects and activities through which they attempt to carry out their objectives. The following chartering policies apply to all student organizations except social fraternities and sororities that are current or past members of the Inter Fraternity Council, College Panhellenic Council or the National Pan Hellenic Council, which are chartered through a process originating in the Greek Life Office.

A. REQUIREMENTS

A group of ten (10) or more full-time students wishing to form an organization and seek official status from the university by obtaining a charter may do so, provided the following requirements are met:

1. The group does not duplicate an existing organization.
2. The purpose is to ensure continuity and stability of the organization.
3. The group does not organize under the sponsorship of an existing organization.
4. If nonstudents are affiliated with the organization in a capacity other than an advisory role, they may only be associate members. Associate members may not hold office or vote.
5. If any person is paid for instruction through a student organization, a budget must be approved by a majority vote of the members, by the Student/Faculty Committee on Student Organizations, and the Recreational Sports Department for sports clubs. Any payment for ongoing instruction must be provided through Recreational Sports or Continuing Education, whichever is appropriate.
6. A formal constitution is submitted outlining the purpose of the group seeking the charter and framework of the organization.

7. The application for chartering a new student organization is completed and filed with the director of the Union and Programs together with proper supporting documents.
 - a. Student Organization Committee Form (Blue Card)
<https://southernmisstudentactivities.wufoo.com/forms/student-organization-blue-card/>
 - b. A completed copy of the constitution must be uploaded to the application form:
<http://www.usm.edu/union/studentactivities.php>
 - c. President and Adviser Agreements
 - d. Letter of support from the adviser of the proposed student organization
 - e. A letter from the department with which the proposed organization will affiliate (If no affiliation is planned, no letter is required.)
 - f. Chartering application:
<http://www.usm.edu/union/studentactivities.php>
 - g. Health and Human Services Form, which states the proposed organization does not have any statement in its charter, bylaws, or other regulations that restrict membership on the basis of sex, race, religion, color or national origin unless allowed to do so under federal exemption. This form is attached to the bottom of the Chartering application and will be signed by the President and Advisor at the Student/Faculty Committee on Student Organizations meeting.
8. The organization has an adviser who is a member of the full-time faculty or staff.
9. The organizational president and adviser meet with the Student/Faculty Committee on Student Organizations regarding the proposed organization.

B. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

Three meetings may be held prior to the official chartering of a student organization. Business during these meetings should be limited to constitution drafting and forming the structure of the organization. A member of the Student Activities staff will meet with the group for aid and counseling in the forming of the new organization.

C. CONSTITUTION

Once a constitution has been approved by the Student/Faculty Committee on Student Organizations, said constitution is filed and becomes the official reference copy. No changes will be recognized without committee approval, and in the event of any controversy within the group, the official office copy will be used to determine points in question.

D. ORGANIZATION STEPS

1. The director of the Union and Programs will present the request to the Student/Faculty Committee on Student Organizations at its next meeting; he or she will request the president and adviser of the proposed group to be present to answer any questions that might arise.
2. The recommendation of the committee is forwarded to the vice president for Student Affairs for final action.
3. The director of the Union and Programs will advise the president and adviser of the proposed organization of final action.
4. The organizational president is responsible for meeting with assistant director of Student Activities to review campus policies and procedures.

PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS OF ALL CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

Upon official recognition by The University of Southern Mississippi, there are certain privileges afforded a new student organization, and certain obligations the new organization is expected to discharge. These privileges and obligations are as follows

- A. Upon official recognition by the university, an organization becomes eligible to participate in university-approved student activities, to sponsor activities that may be included on the Master Calendar, to reserve university facilities, and to rent a university post office box.
- B. Each organization's officers are required to register their organization (with a minimum of ten (10) full-time students and an on-campus advisor) with the Student Activities Office annually by completing a Student Organization Commitment Card (blue card) <http://www.usm.edu/union/studentactivities.php> Otherwise, the organization will become inactive and will lose its privileges mentioned above. Immediately following each election, lists of new officers or adviser(s) with addresses should be submitted to the Student Activities office.
- C. Each organization commits itself to sponsor only such projects as will benefit both the group and the University and to uphold the University regulations,

including the University Student Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics for Student Organizations, the Student Activities Policy, city ordinances, and all state and federal laws.

RECALL

The approval of a student organization at The University of Southern Mississippi is made on the basis that the organization will conform to the Privileges and Obligations of Chartered Organizations as stated above. Failure on the part of the organization to conform to the above mentioned obligations, to conditions of approval and any breach of Student Activities and/or University policy may subject the organization to recall by the Student/Faculty Committee on Student Organizations or the Fraternity/Sorority Committee. Recall may result in the president and advisor of the organization having to appear before the appropriate committee to answer any charges that have been brought against the organization. The committee also reserves the right to impose disciplinary measures, which may include revoking the charter of any organization. The organization will be inactive for a period of time, which will be determined by the Student/Faculty Committee on Student Organizations.