CHARTERING A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Policy Statement

The principle vehicles for student activities at The University of Southern Mississippi are 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.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

This policy is required for the effective communication of university policy regarding the chartering of a new student organization.

Who Needs to Know This Policy

All members of The University of Southern Mississippi community.

Website Address for this Policy

www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-stua-una-011

Definitions

Policy/Procedures

An officially chartered student organization will not use its official status for any purpose other than its own organization; this shall include, but is 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 Interfraternity Council, College Panhellenic Council or the National Pan-Hellenic Council, which are chartered through a process originating in the Greek Life office.

REQUIREMENTS

A. A group of 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 by 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.

B. The application for chartering a new student organization is completed and filed with the Office of Student Activity with proper supporting documents.
   2. The proposed constitution signed by officers, chartering members and adviser (In the event the group seeks to affiliate with a state, regional or national organization, three copies of that constitution must also be appended.)
   3. Letter of support from the adviser of the proposed student organization
   4. A letter from the department with which the proposed organization will affiliate. (If no affiliation is planned, no letter is required.)
   5. Chartering application.
   6. 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.
   7. The organization has an adviser who is a member of the full-time faculty or staff.
8. The organizational president and adviser meet with the student/faculty committee on student organizations regarding the proposed organization.

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.

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.

ORGANIZATION STEPS

A. The director of 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.

B. The recommendation of the committee is forwarded to the vice president for Student Affairs for final action.

C. The assistant director of Student Activities will advise the president and adviser of the proposed organization of final action.

D. The organizational president is responsible for meeting with assistant director of Student Activities to review campus policies and procedures.

Review

The Director of University Union and Hub is responsible for the review of this policy every four years (or whenever circumstances require immediate review).

Forms/Instructions

Application to charter available at http://www.usm.edu/student-activities/charter-steps

Appendices
N/A

Related Information

N/A

History

11/01/11: Formatted for Institutional Policies website.
02/27/13: Formatted for template. Minor editing throughout.
**Amendments:** Month, Day, Year – summary of changes
Authorization

UNION COMPLEX GENERAL POLICIES
STUA-UNA-011

As the Responsible Officer, I have reviewed this policy and believe it represents the current policy.

[Signature]
Responsible Officer

4/9/13
Date