

Student Group Advisor Handbook

California College of the Arts

Office of Student Life

Updated: April 2020

Why be an advisor?

We know you are busy. You already have a full-time job. Being a club or organization advisor is an added responsibility. But it is a wonderful opportunity for both yourself and the students you'll interact with.

Being an advisor to a student group or organization allows faculty and staff to interact with students in a different setting than their normal day-to-do interactions on campus. This allows for the creation of bonds to form, allowing faculty and staff the ability to share resources, information, and ideas with students to help them grow and become Creative Citizens.

As an advisor you'll have the satisfaction of seeing students learn and develop new skills while taking part in a learning environment outside of the classroom or office.

You'll have the reward of watching the group develop to its fullest potential. You'll be able to share your knowledge as a mentor to the students you work with.

The role of an advisor is a challenging but rewarding one.

Thank you.

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1. About CCA Student Organizations

CCA student organizations are defined as a group of five or more students who meet regularly for a common purpose. This can be in the form of a club, a committee, or something else. Only current CCA students may hold offices. All student organizations must have a staff or faculty member as an advisor. Student organizations must complete the [Clubs, Groups, and Organizations Charter Form](#).

2. Important Contacts

CCA Student Organizations fall under the supervision of the Office of Student Life. Please contact the current Coordinator for Student Leadership & Engagement at studentlife@cca.edu for all club/organization related questions.

Student Life Offices:

San Francisco Campus
80 Carolina, First Floor
M-F: 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Phone: 415.703.9570

Oakland Campus
Irwin Student Center
M-F: 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Phone: 510.954.3678

Other Important Contacts:

Janeece Hayes	Associate Director of Student Life	janeece@cca.edu
Noki Seeko	Director of Student Life	noki@cca.edu
Vanessa Gorman	Senior Project Manager for Student Affairs	vgorman@cca.edu

Office of Student Life Portal Page - <https://portal.cca.edu/thriving/student-life/>

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3. Expectations of an Advisor

In this section we will go over the expectations of being an advisor of student organizations and give some tips and best practices on affective advising.

3.1. What Is an Advisor?

A student organization advisor is a faculty or staff member who provides support and guidance to officers and members of a student organization. The advisor not only serves as a representative of the group in an official capacity, but also as a student advocate. An advisor is one who gives ideas, shares insight, provides a different perspective, and encourages organization members. Rather than acting for student organizations, advisors should seek to challenge student organization members and support them as they make decisions.

Taken from the Perdue University in Fort Wayne Advisor Handbook

Advisor's Responsibilities:

- 1) Provide continued support and guidance to student group members.
- 2) Attendance required at one meeting or event per semester.
- 3) Are aware of the group's events, budgets, and plans.
- 4) All publications must be approved by the advisor.

Additional (optional) Duties:

- o Help students clarify the mission of the organization
- o Go over programming ideas with your group
- o Review event timelines for troubleshooting
- o Give advice to student leaders as needed
- o Help promote the organization to students and colleagues
- o Advocate to the college for the organization
- o Help students navigate forms and paperwork for events

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3.2. How To Be a Good Advisor - Tips, Tricks, and Best Practices

Followers' Four Basic Needs:

Trust -

Specifically, integrity. Following through when you say you will. "Trust increases speed and efficiency..." (pg 83)

Compassion -

Check in with your students' health, classes, personal lives. Ask them how they are doing.

Stability -

"As a leader, your followers also need to know your core values are stable" (pg 87). Your students need to know you will be there in times of need. "...nothing creates stability as quickly as transparency" (pg 88).

Hope -

"Hope gives followers something to look forward to, and it helps them see a way through chaos and complexity. Knowing that things can and will be better in the future is a powerful motivator." (pg 89)

Taken from Don Clifton's Strengths Based Leadership

Attributes of a Good Advisor:

Aware: Knows what is happening with the group at all times – problems, dates of functions, etc.

Dedicated: Always willing to assist the organization when necessary.
Enjoys being associated with the group and is very involved.

Visible: Attends meetings, social functions and other special activities of the group when possible.

Informed: Familiar with the rules, policies and regulations of the University and the bylaws and constitution of the organization. Is prepared to render assistance with their interpretation.

Supportive: Provides encouragement and praise to group members.

Open-minded: Willing to consider new ideas and approaches although they may not totally agree with them.

Respected: Earned through being trustworthy and honest and demonstrating a genuine interest in the welfare of the group.

Taken from the Perdue University at Fort Wayne Advisor Handbook

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Reminder:

The organization-advisor relationship is not a one-way street, with the advisor doing all of the giving and the organization doing all of the taking. The organization has some definite responsibilities to its advisor. Here are some tips from the Perdue University of Fort Wayne Advisor Handbook to guide you in your advisory capacity:

1. Establish a clear understanding between yourself and the organization as to the advisor's role and function. Set up a time to discuss this at length. Talk about the purpose of the group and its needs. Determine what you as the advisor have to offer, and then agree on the nature of the relationship.
2. It is the responsibility of the organization to communicate its needs to the advisor. Advisors should be willing to get involved with the organization, but they should not "butt in."
3. Establish lines of communication. Find the best way to keep the flow of information moving smoothly between yourself and group members. Check your schedule for times you can meet with the organization. Tell the organization what information you, as an advisor, would like to receive on a regular basis (e.g. meeting notices, minutes, event announcements, etc.) and check to see it is sent.
4. As the advisor, you often have other responsibilities like a family, job, and financial concerns that don't always permit giving undivided attention to the organization. Organizations can extend an invitation, but shouldn't be offended if the advisor must say "no thanks."
5. The advisor should let the organization know what type of talents he/she can offer. Recognize that as the advisor you are a resource person with a wealth of expertise. Offer opinions, advice, and creative ideas.
6. An advisor is an integral part of the organization, but not a member. The advisor's job is to coach and guide the organization in its function, not to perform tasks for the group.

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Desirable Role and Characteristics of Student Group Advisors:

- Develop strong working relationships with club members.
- Have institutional credibility and access to higher-level decision makers.
- Model creative problem solving, a positive and optimistic approach, and a balanced lifestyle.
- Serve as a mentor, motivator, and cheerleader.
- Help to set high yet achievable performance standards for the club.
- Provide assistance with team-building, performance planning, and communication skills.
- Are supportive, ethical and good listeners.
- Set clear boundaries.
- Are aware of their biases.
- Communicate individually and are available to each club member.
- Allow students to make their own mistakes.
- Admit they don't know everything and are able to admit to their own mistakes.
- Act professionally.
- Demonstrate a good sense of humor.

Taken from Gavilan Community College's Advisor Handbook

Don't Take It Personally:

It is important to remember that your success as an advisor is not always reflected in the performance of the club; these activities are all about learning leadership skills. As the advisor, you are not expected to be, and should not be, the club's workhorse. Delegate work to the students, oversee the progress, and allow them the opportunity to grow as leaders by doing the work themselves.

Taken from the Rogue Community College's Advisor Handbook

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4. Starting a New Club/Organization

To charter a student organization / group a minimum of 5 current CCA student members are required.

- [Student Organization Handbook](#)
- [Student Club/Organization Charter Application](#)

5. Club/Organization Meetings

- ◆ You do not have to attend club meetings
- ◆ Remind your student leaders to take notes/minutes of the meetings
- ◆ Help student leaders navigate conflicts as needed
- ◆ Advise them to do some type of group personality team building
- ◆ Below are some slide decks the OSL have put together for student leaders:

- ◆ [Leading So Others Will Follow](#)
- ◆ [Understanding Your Role on a Team](#)

6. Programs/Events

- When your club/organization is putting on a program or event, the main way the advisor can help is by tempering their expectations. Student leaders may struggle with creating realistic expectations involving the time, complexities, and funds an event takes. Advisors can help them create a detailed plan and budget to stay on track.
- Student leaders may also experience disappointment if attendance is low. When choosing dates and times for events, remind students to take into account other activities on campus, the time of year it is, and class schedules.
- Promoting an event through advertising is key. Remind students that they have access to the Poster Making Center in the Office of Student Life. The OSL will also print out fliers/posters for students, as well as help with promotion through email blasts and social media. Contact studentlife@cca.edu for help with advertising.

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Remember: Sometimes events will fail. And that's OK! Help your students through these times by making it into a learning experience. Whether the event/program gets cancelled before they even really start planning, or postponed due to unexpected situations, if only two people (or none!) show up, if something goes wrong during the event, or if feedback about the event is negative... it's OK. These things happen to the best of us.

Help your students to process those feelings of disappointment, and use it as a way to strategize what they can do differently next time.

Most importantly, remember that you are not alone! The Office of Student Life is here to help you and your organization through all of this. Please do not hesitate to reach out!

7. Reserving Spaces

- Please see the [Student Organization Handbook](#) for more information.
- Note that students are capable of making room reservations on EMS themselves, but may require help the first time.
- Remind students to book at **least 2 weeks** in advance.
 - Especially for larger spaces such as Nahl Hall, book as early as possible
 - Remember that larger campus events may take precedence in certain spaces even if you've booked it in advance (ie, if the president of the college needs the space)
 - Even tabling spaces need to be booked on EMS
- Typical spaces clubs/organizations use:
 - Nave (for tabling)
 - A2 Patio (Oakland) (for tabling)
 - Nave Presentation Space (for larger events)
 - West 1 and/or West 2 (for meetings)
 - B2 (Oakland) (for meetings)
 - Nahl Hall (Oakland) (for larger events)

While we encourage Student Groups to take full advantage of the facilities available to them on campus, please show respect to our campus by not defacing or misusing school property.

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8. Finance

8.1. Fundraising

- Any fundraised money is independent and does not need to go through this process., but will be put into consideration when applying for additional funds.
- Fundraising events or activities are designed to increase the base funding of your student group as well as to increase visibility of your group. They can also be a fun opportunity for members to take the lead on a project.

8.2. Student Life Funds

The request of funds is an open process. You can submit any/all requests you want. Student Organizations do not have individual budgets, rather, are directly connected to the Office of Student Life's Budget.

- Please see the [Student Organization Handbook](#) for more information.

9. Risk Management and Policies

9.1. Inclusion Policy

Membership to all chartered CCA Student Groups & Organizations **must be open to all** California College of the Arts students. CCA strives to foster an inclusive and diverse community throughout its two campuses. All students are expected to support this spirit of openness and acceptance by refraining from discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sex, ethnic background, religion or sexual preference.

9.2. Student Conduct

All Student Group members are expected to demonstrate CCA's Student Code of Conduct while conducting group activities by displaying mutual respect to all students, faculty and staff as well as the CCA campus and institution. Furthermore student groups or any members thereof shall not conspire to engage in hazing or commit any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces, or intends to injure, degrade, or disgrace any fellow student or person attending the California College of the Arts. For more information about the Student Code of Conduct visit

<https://portal.cca.edu/thriving/student-handbook/>

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9.3. Alcohol on Campus

Alcohol is not allowed for all undergraduate student events.

For graduate student events a number of conditions apply to events where alcohol may be served including:

- [A Request to Serve Alcohol Form](#) (wine and/or beer only) must be submitted and approved by the Director of Student Life at **least three weeks** before the event (a signed copy of the form must also be available at the event).
- CCA student groups will observe all State of California restrictions regarding the possession, sales, service, and consumption of alcoholic beverages. No alcoholic beverages may be served to any persons who cannot verify their age is 21 years or older, including anyone whose judgment or physical performance has already been affected by alcohol consumption.
- Other nonalcoholic refreshments and food must also be made available.
- Alcoholic beverages may neither be sold on campus nor may admission be charged for events where alcohol is to be served unless appropriate license is obtained according to regulations published by the State Alcoholic Beverages Control Department.
- Individuals may not bring alcoholic beverages onto campus for their private consumption.

9.4. Risk Management

Try to anticipate risks which may arise out of any decision or situation, and then discuss with your club leaders/members what they can do to minimize these risks. Regardless of what organization or activity is involved, there will always be an opportunity for something out of the ordinary to happen. However, if decisions are made consistently and in good faith, and reasonable precautions are taken, then the risk involved can be minimized. Please contact the Student Life staff if questions arise.

- It is important to be aware of CCA policies and regulations as they affect student organizations.
- The CCA website and the Student Organization Handbook are great sources for College rules and regulations.
- The staff members in the Office of Student Life staff can also serve as resources for you if you have specific concerns or questions.
- In the case of an emergency always alert Campus Public Safety immediately.

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9.5. Film Screenings

CCA is legally required to pay a licensing fee to screen films on campus **that is accessible to the larger public**. The fee for most films is between \$450-\$800. If you plan to hold a campus film screening please make an appointment to speak with the Office of Student Life staff ASAP so we can troubleshoot any possible problems.

10. Resources

- ◆ [Belmont University Student Organization Handbook](#)
- ◆ [Perdue University at Fort Wayne Advisor Handbook](#)
- ◆ [Gavilan Community College Club Advisor Handbook](#)
- ◆ [Rogue Community College Club Advisor Handbook](#)
- ◆ Rath, T., & Conchie, B. (2009). *Strengths Based Leadership: Great Leaders, Teams, and Why People Follow*. New York: Gallup Press.
- ◆ [Clifton Strengths Test](#)