

Effective July 1, 2023

RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATION

General Policy Manual

The University of Akron
2023-2024

The **SOURCE**
Student Organization Resource Center

Department of Student Life Mission Statement

The Department of Student Life is committed to building community through collaborative learning experiences that provide our students the opportunity to: Engage • Serve • Lead

SOuRCe Mission Statement

To promote opportunities for student engagement, educate our campus community about University policies, and facilitate training for organization leaders and advisors.

***Our goal and mission is to assist organizations...
help us help you by letting us know when you have questions or concerns!***

SOuRCe Contact Information

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Preface

While the Recognized Student Organization (RSO) Manual is intended to be a summary of information that is beneficial to student organizations and Campus Advisors, its readers should be aware that:

1. It is not a complete statement of all policies and procedures of The University of Akron.
2. The University of Akron reserves the right to change any policy, procedure, or program, without notice.
3. Divisions and departments on campus may have their own procedures and policies, which apply to student organizations.

Our goal is to make this manual as all-encompassing as possible, however policies and practices do change. If a policy outlined within does not seem accurate, please let us know and we will gladly review and update the manual accordingly.

Sources and Adaptations:

- The University of Akron School of Law Organization Handbook
- Kansas State University Office of Student Activities and Services
- Western Michigan University Student Activities & Leadership Programs
- Southern Methodist University Student Activities - Student Org. Manual
- University of Rochester Center for Community Leadership

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Recognized Student Organization Glossary of Terms

Annual Registration Process

All officially recognized student organizations will re-register each academic year.

- The steps to renewing annual registration will be shared by the SOuRCe each spring semester through emails and SOuRCe newsletters. The annual registration process takes place over the summer and into the fall semester.
- The registration deadline is the second Friday in September.
 - If registration expires and an organization has not completed the necessary steps, all privileges are forfeited until registration is completed.
 - Those who missed the Fall registration deadlines may have a chance to register for Spring. Spring registration opens in November and closes in December. Dates are communicated and set forth by the SOuRCe each semester.
 - Upon completion of registration, privileges will be reinstated.
 - Organizations that fail to register for two consecutive years will lose their status as a recognized student organization and will be required to go through the New Student Organization Recognition process. Any funding remaining in the organization's SAF (Student Activity Fund) account after two years will be forfeited.

In order to renew registration on RooConnect, the organization representative will need to be an officer and have "administrator" rights to the group's portal. To request admin access, email the SOuRCe.

Business Days Definition

References in this manual to business days are defined as Monday-Friday excluding University holidays or other days when the University is closed for business (ex. Due to inclement weather).

Calendar Days Definition

References in this manual to calendar days are defined as a twenty-four hour period from midnight to midnight. This includes Monday-Friday, but also Saturdays and Sundays.

Campus Advisor Requirements

In order to be considered officially registered and recognized, all student organizations will have a functioning Campus Advisor.

- To qualify as the Campus Advisor, the individual are required to have a classification of full-time faculty or contract professional at The University of Akron.
- Student organizations cannot limit their Campus Advisor requirements (stated in the organization constitution) to a person who represents a specific interest, discipline, academic area, etc.
- Organizations may utilize the talent and skills of professionals on campus to benefit their organization as they see fit. However, please note that only one person can be denoted as the official advisor to the group.
- The SOuRCe will conduct an annual Campus Advisor Audit. Organizations utilizing a Campus Advisor that has not met these classifications will have a pre-determined time period to arrange a new Advisor.
- Final approval of the Campus Advisor will rest with the Department of Student Life.
- If an organization wishes to change their Campus Advisor, the group may do so within the parameters set forth in the group's Constitution and the SOuRCe.

General Service Fee

Financial support (UAF/EAF) for registered student organizations comes from the General Service Fee

- Parameters of this fee include:
 - The General Service Fee is paid for by students taking credit courses and provides funds that support student activities and services, including:
 - the health professionals in Student Health Services
 - intramurals
 - UA-recognized student organizations
 - intercollegiate athletics
 - other co-curricular activities

Good Standing for Undergraduate Students

In order to be considered an active member of a student organization, the student must be in Good Standing with the University of Akron.

The definition of Good Standing implies that:

- Student will have at least a 2.0 GPA.
- Be clear of academic probation or suspension.
- Be clear of disciplinary probation or suspension.
- Be clear of unsatisfied financial obligations to the university.
- Be in good standing as defined by the student's academic college or program.

Good Standing for Graduate & Law Students

In order to be considered an active member of a student organization, the student must be in Good Standing with the University of Akron.

The definition of Good Standing implies that:

- Student will have at least a 3.0 GPA [Law: 2.0 GPA].
- Be clear of academic probation or suspension.
- Be clear of disciplinary probation or suspension.
- Be clear of unsatisfied financial obligations to the university.
- Be in good standing as defined by the student's academic college or program.

Membership

As indicated in the Recognition Agreement for organizations:

- Only students who complete Hazing Prevention Training are eligible for membership in any student organization.
- *It is the policy of this institution that there shall be no unlawful discrimination against any individual in employment or in its programs or activities at the university of Akron because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, status as a parent during pregnancy and immediately after the birth of a child, status as a parent of a young child, status as a foster parent, military status, genetic information, or status as a veteran. The university of Akron prohibits sexual harassment of any form in all aspects of employment and in its programs and activities and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual and racial or ethnic orientation in employment and admissions. See UA Board Rule 3359-38-01 (A2).*
- Membership is intended only for University of Akron students which are enrolled in credit bearing classes and are deemed in Good Standing with the University.
- Students enrolled in the Sixty-Plus (60+) Program have the opportunity to audit credit classes on a space-available basis. Auditing allows students to enroll in courses, but college credit is not awarded.

- Since these students do not take credit-bearing courses, they are not eligible to partake in student organizations on campus (see General Service Fee).
- Students enrolled in the postsecondary program (College Credit Plus) at the University are provided the opportunity to enroll in a college or university to earn both college and high school credit.
 - Though these students pay certain aspects of student fees, they are not eligible to partake in students organizations on campus - this policy is in place due to liability and risk management concerns.

Organization Updates

As organizations plan to change advisors, officers, or guiding documents, they are required to update their information with the SOuRcE. It is the organization's responsibility to ensure that the most up-to-date information is on file within the "Details", "Documents" and "Roster" tabs within RooConnect.

- It is required that organizations submit any changes in officers and members to the SOuRcE through the "New Officer or Member Roster Updates form." It is an organizations responsibility to make proper updates to their rosters after a decision is made from the form submission.
 - Organizations cannot add new members or officers to their organization or place them on their roster until it is verified that hazing education training has been completed.
- A constitution template is provided for organizations to use and organizations are expected to use the template. Please check the SOuRcE website for the document.

Registration Statuses

- Active [Registered] & Recognized: Registration has been fully completed for the academic year.
- Inactive: Organizations that did not complete all the registration requirements for the academic year but do wish to re-register in the near future.
 - Often due to officer turnover or miscommunication, these groups miss the deadline but intend to re-register in the near future.
 - These groups are still considered "recognized" during this time, however they are "unregistered" until all updates are made in RooConnect and attendance at officer training (per the offerings of their classification – Law, Club Sports, FSL, Student Life).
- Unregistered & Non-Recognized: Organizations that have not been recognized on campus or are no longer within the two year window to do so.
 - In order to be considered active/registered on campus, these organizations will go through the New Student Organization process with the SOuRcE.

Registered Student Organization Privileges

Privileges and resources shall be available to officially recognized student organizations currently registered with the Department of Student Life, including, but not limited to the following:

- Eligibility to apply for funding through the Undergraduate/Extracurricular Activities Fund (UAF/EAF) and/or contingency funding process.
- Ability to deposit/spend SAF funds.
- Use of Jean Hower Taber Student Union and campus facilities (i.e., meeting rooms and concourse tables).
- Participation in all campus events such as Homecoming (eligibility to nominate candidates for Homecoming King and Queen), LIFE awards, RooFest, Involvement Fairs, etc.
- Participation in available educational and developmental student organization programs and workshops as provided by the SOuRcE.

- Use of The University of Akron trademark, and logo, per University policy with approval. Review the procedure for requesting approval to use University logos listed herein.
- Limited insurance coverage as an official University organization.
- Access to a RooConnect account.
- Access to a University issued VISA card.

Unauthorized Conduct

All student organizations should be aware that The University of Akron will not support the recognition of organizations that:

- Utilize behavior modification techniques, mind control techniques and similar forms of coercive behavior.
- Does not permit or limits free speech, self-criticism and the right to leave the organization without penalty.
- Impairs, makes captive or destroys an individual's freedom of thought through physical stress or subtle or covert techniques.
- Refuses to reveal and explain if requested, the organization's financial structure and support.

Guiding University Policies for Registered Student Organizations

In order to ensure all organizations are representing the University in an appropriate manner, and upholding necessary guidelines, the following policies are in place:

Use of University Logos

Registered student organizations may not use the logos or trademarks of The University of Akron for any of the organization's activities, materials, publications, or websites without the prior approval of the Office of University Communications and Marketing ("UCM") and must use the logos or trademarks consistent with all applicable restrictions.

1. Procedure for Requesting Approval to Use University Logos
 - a. Contact UCM to obtain permission for use of the University logo. The request should be sent to ucm@uakron.edu and include: (a) an explanation of how the logo will be used, including a sample, (b) a point of contact for the registered student organization, and (c) the intended date of use.
 - b. Use of the logo must be consistent with established University standards
 - c. The registered student organization must include the following disclaimer on any website or printed materials for which use of the logo is approved:
 - i. *Disclaimer:* This student organization is a registered student organization at The University of Akron. Registration shall not be construed as approval, endorsement, or sponsorship by The University of Akron of the student organization's publications, activities, purposes, actions, or positions.
 - d. A registered student organization that is denied approval for use of the University logo may appeal the decision to the Office of Student Life by submitting a request for review to: bpf9@uakron.edu. The appeal should include the information submitted in the request for approval and the registered student organization's basis for appeal.
 - e. Registered student organizations that (a) use the University logo without permission, (b) fail to include a required disclaimer, or (c) use the University logo to indicate University approval or

endorsement of any activities, purposes, actions, or positions of the register student organization that are not sanctioned by the University may be subject to discipline under the Code of Student Conduct.

Advertising on Campus

Student organizations are encouraged to market programs and events throughout campus, however policies are in place which may dictate the manner in which your organization chooses to advertise.

- a. Emails: students are encouraged to utilize Zipmail and RooConnect to advertise upcoming programs, events or membership information. Mass-emails to email addresses not directly provided to an organization is discouraged.
 - a. Zipmail link: <https://share.uakron.edu/mailAll/presubmit/Zipmail>
- b. Posters: student organizations are encouraged to post information about upcoming events on public posting boards throughout campus.
 - a. These boards can be found in a variety of campus buildings and it is the responsibility of the organization to hang and take down information. Student organizations are discouraged from hanging signs on walls, in restrooms, or on other fixtures not approved as public posting areas.
 - b. Please remember when using posters that the Student Organization Disclaimer must be included at the bottom of the flyer or poster. The disclaimer can be found on the SOuRcE's RooConnect page or listed in the section above.
- c. Design: Students wishing to create marketing pieces for their organization are encouraged to utilize the free marketing services provided by the Department of Student Life. These services are provided by graphic design students who can assist organizations with the creation of t-shirts, posters, flyers, etc. Please contact the SOuRcE for more details.
- d. Promo Materials/Giveaways: Students wishing to purchase giveaways, t-shirts, banners, etc. must use an approved vendor (listed herein).
- e. Candy/Food: If an organization wishes to hand out candy or a food item with a flyer as a promotional means, the item must be pre-packaged and not homemade or baked.
- f. Chalking: Chalking is permitted on campus as a means of advertising organization events. Chalking is permitted only on outside, horizontal, exposed surfaces where rain can wash the chalk away. Chalking is not permitted on vertical surfaces, buildings, under overhangs or on steps, posts, trees, tables and the like. The university reserves the right to remove chalking at its convenience.

Conduct: Hazing, Risk Management, and Prevention Training

Information in this section related to hazing in the State of Ohio is subject to change pending statewide updates to Ohio Revised Code 2903.31 after the passage of Collin's Law.

As cited in the Code of Student Conduct - <https://www.uakron.edu/studentconduct/code-of-conduct.dot>

- "Student organization." "Student organization" means any number of persons who have complied with the formal requirements for or are actively seeking university recognition as a student organization.
- University authority should not be used merely to duplicate the function of general laws. The University of Akron Code of Student Conduct applies to the conduct of all students and student organizations that occurs on university owned premises or on non-university premises, where the conduct away from university premises is seemed by the university to affect the university of its students and university employees, including but not limited to:
 - Any activity sponsored, conducted, or authorized by the university or by students organizations including but not limited to social events, athletics contest and philanthropic activities.

Hazing defined by the Ohio Revised Code in section 2903.31 states:

- “Hazing is defined by the Ohio Revised code as any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization or any act to continue or reinstate membership in or affiliated with any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person, including coercing another to consume alcohol or a drug of abuse.”

Hazing as defined by the Ohio Revised Code and federal law, is prohibited. It is a violation of this rule for an individual, knowing that hazing has been or is being committed, to knowingly fail to report such information to law enforcement authorities or to student conduct and community standards. Officers of a student organization will report any hazing incident(s) of which they are aware. The consent of the victim is not a defense.

Every member, including officers, of the organization is required to complete Hazing Education Training. This will be verified with the SOuRCe and the Dean’s Office. The full organization roster must be submitted at the time of registration. Failure of all members and officers on the roster to complete the Hazing Prevention Training will result in an organization’s loss of recognition.

Organizations may not accept new members or officers who have not completed the Hazing Prevention Training. Organizations accepting new members or officers after the initial roster has been submitted during registration, are required to submit the changes to the SOuRCe to verify that Hazing Prevention Training has been completed. Organizations may not add new members or officers without notifying the SOuRCe and confirming that Hazing Prevention Training has been completed. It is an organization’s responsibility to ensure all roster updates are communicated to the SOuRCe, and to prohibit membership from those who have not completed the training

In order to ensure student organizations are acting in accordance to University policy and procedures, it is always in an officer, Campus Advisor, or member’s best interest to inform the SOuRCe of an issue as soon as possible. This may include but is not limited to concerns regarding fiscal management, hazing, utilization of space on campus, discrimination, violation of a policy included herein, etc.

Auctions/Raffles or Games of Chance

Raffle ticket auctions, sometimes used in fundraising, are not permitted by most registered student organizations.

- These are auctions in which several prizes are available to win, each with a separate basket for the opportunity to place a raffle ticket into.
- Additional information, if needed, can be located in the Ohio Charitable Gaming Bingo Laws.
 - If your organization is looking to host an activity that may violate this policy, please contact the Assistant Director, Student Organizations and Involvement via the SOuRCe.

Fronting

“Fronting” refers to a manner in which a registered organization reserves a space, table, venue for an organization or group of people who have not formally started a student group on campus.

- Fronting is prohibited, as only registered student organizations should benefit from the rights and privileges provided and noted herein. Issues of fronting will be addressed immediately.

T-Shirts and other Promotional Items

- The University has agreements with three local vendors:
 - Consolidus LLC (The UA Shop)
 - Global Promotions & Incentives (Shop UA Store)
 - AG PrintPromo Solutions
- Student organizations are restricted to utilize these vendors when looking to purchase promotion items, t-shirts, giveaways, etc. These vendors are aware of institutional brand standards and offer competitive pricing to University-affiliated parties. If a student organization chooses to utilize a vendor that is not approved, the University does not have to issue payment from the organizations UAF/EAF or SAF account, the balance will be left to the organization members to pay.

Release of Liability, Photo, & Video

- If a student organization is hosting an event which may require - or benefit from - a waiver, the group will utilize the approved waiver provided by the SOuRCe.
 - To obtain a copy of this blanket waiver, please see RooConnect or a SOuRCe liaison.

University Food Policy

- Per the contract between the University and Aramark, dining services has first right of refusal on all food orders across campus. Additionally, due to health and liability issues, food purchased or made by an outside source is prohibited, unless proper approval has been granted by Aramark (University Catering Waiver).
- Aramark is aware that there are many dietary needs, including specific religious and ethnic requests, and will work with organizations to meet these needs and accommodate our guests.
- In the event an organization wishes to bring food on campus, the “University Catering Waiver Request Form”, found on the Aramark website and/or RooConnect, should be completed and turned in prior to the event - through the procedures/timelines stated on the form. The form should also be completed and approved before submitting an expenditure form.
- Please note: bake sales are strictly prohibited on campus (see Terms & Conditions).
- Aramark also offers a “Student Organization Budget-Friendly Menu” - be sure to ask when scheduling food for your event so you can potentially save money.
- Contact Aramark at 330.972.8215 with questions.

Utilizing an Outside Vendor/Contracts

- Any student organization wishing to utilize an outside contractor (DJ, Photographer, Lecturer, etc.) should complete an expenditure request on RooConnect at least 3 weeks before any anticipated event, program, or performance. An official invoice from the vendor should be included as the documentation in the expenditure. Screenshots of emails or texts from vendors are not sufficient.
- The organization event/program where a vendor is being utilized must be an approved venue by the University of Akron.
- Lodging/travel expenses/food for the vendor will be approved through the contract creation process and payment included in the contracted fee.
- After receiving this request, the SOuRCe will contact the vendor to ensure they complete various vendor documents/paperwork. The paperwork and documents are required in order to be paid. If the vendor is not responsive or does not fully complete the forms, they will not be paid. The SOuRCe will contact your organization if this is the case. Organizations are responsible for assisting with communications and confirmation when vendors are not responsive to staff.

- Note: the SOuRCe will not send a contract to a vendor without verifying available funds for the organization - this includes SAF/EAF/UAF.
 - In the event an organization is requesting funding support from the government(s), the SOuRCe will wait until an allocation has been made to send the agreement to the vendor(s).
- Note: if the vendor you wish to use for your event is a University of Akron staff, faculty or student, they may be required to be paid through University Payroll, thus incurring additional fringe benefit costs to the student organization. The vendor, if a university employee, will also be taxed on their payment.
- The signed and completed agreement should be returned to the SOuRCe by the vendor, at least 10 days before your event date.
 - From there, completed paperwork is sent off to Accounts Payable to create and send out payment. Payments are not sent to vendors before services are rendered.
 - Failure to turn in the paperwork within 10 days before your event, by either the organization or the vendor, may result in the inability to pay the vendor or delayed payment.

Student organizations are not permitted to enter into any type of verbal or written contract other than the University Services Agreement.

Registering Travel

- Student organizations who travel are required to register their travel through the SOuRCe.
- The funding source for the travel will determine the form to fill out to register the travel.
 - If using SAF funds, personal funds, affiliated department funds or any funds other than UAF/EAF funds, organizations should fill out the Intent to Travel form 30 calendar days in advance of the travel, with all travel details including dates, travel roster, waiver upload etc.
 - If looking to use UAF funds, organizations should complete an allocation request form 30 days in advance of the travel, and insert all travel details right through the allocation request form.
- All travelers should be members of the organization, and in good standing.
- Failure to submit forms timely may lead to denial of travel.

Reserving Rental Vehicles

- All student organizations are strongly encouraged to utilize a rental vehicle if traveling more than 140 miles away from the institution.
 - Due to liability and the unknown condition of student vehicles, the University strongly advises that student organizations utilize the rental agreements with two national car vendors.
- The University has agreements with national vendors who are considered “preferred” rental vehicle vendors for campus. It is encouraged organizations use Enterprise.
 - Students over the age of 18 may rent a vehicle with these vendors
 - The University does not endorse the utilization of 15-passenger vans.
- If utilizing a rental vehicle, be sure to also request a gas card for your expenses.
- For a direct link to reserve a rental vehicle, please visit Purchasing’s website:
<http://www.uakron.edu/purchasing/facultystaff/travel-information--forms.dot>

Bus Vendors

- Student organizations wishing to utilize any type of bus services for pre-approved travel are encouraged to use one of the university's approved vendors. These include Anderson, Great Day, Barons, and Cardinal. Any other bus company needs to be approved prior to booking.
Student organizations are not permitted to enter into any type of verbal or written contract other than the University Services Agreement with the SOuRCe office.

Gas Card vs. Mileage Reimbursement

- Student organizations wishing to utilize a rental vehicle for organization travel will be asked to utilize a gas card for all gas expenses.
 - This card can be checked out in the SOuRCe and helps to track the expenses accurately for your trip.
 - To arrange a gas card for an upcoming trip, please see the SOuRCe liaisons.
- If a student wishes to drive their personal vehicle on an organization trip, though discouraged by the University, the student organization can only be reimbursed for mileage.
 - The rate for mileage reimbursements will be dictated by the University's current rate - which can be found on the Controller's website: <http://www.uakron.edu/controller/travel.dot>
 - Reimbursement may not be awarded for mileage, if driving a non-rented vehicle, for trips outside of 140 miles from campus. The Campus Advisor will approve the reimbursement.

Student Organization Sponsored Events/Programs

Student organizations wishing to request space on campus can do so through RooConnect.

Requesting Space or a Concourse Table:

- Space requests should be made via the "Campus Space Request Form" found on RooConnect.
 - Log into RooConnect by going to <https://rooconnect.uakron.edu>
 - Click on "Forms" at the top of the page
 - Click on "Campus Space Request Form"
- This process and form are monitored by the scheduling and events area within the Department of Student Life.
 - The Department of Student Life will then process and confirm space request(s) based on availability and on a first come, first serve basis.
 - Once a form is "approved" in RooConnect the organization will receive a confirmation email detailing the event time, location, and room set-up.
 - Note: an "approved" form does not necessarily mean that the organization has received the desired space - the group should wait for the official "event confirmation" email sent from scheduling and events.
 - It is recommended that you save this confirmation for your records.
 - If an organization has any questions, comments, concerns, or has not been contacted after two (2) business days after submitting the Campus Space Request Form, please contact sueventplanning@uakron.edu or 330.972.7373

Jean Hower Taber Student Union Reservation Policy:

- Student organizations who fail to show up or check-in for their reserved space (meeting rooms or concourse tables) in the Jean Hower Taber Student Union more than two (2) times may lose the privilege for the remainder of the semester.
 - Despite the circumstances, it is the organization's responsibility to be aware of all reservations.
 - To check on reservations, officers may email sueventplanning@uakron.edu

Cancelling Space on Campus:

- Should the student organization determine that an event will be cancelled; the student organization should contact the Department of Student Life prior to the event via e-mail to sueventplanning@uakron.edu . Failing to show up to your event without contacting staff about the cancellation may lead to the inability to reserve campus space any longer.

Reserving Outdoor Space:

All registered student organizations on campus wishing to reserve a space outside on campus grounds should complete the Campus Space Request Form, which includes a request for outdoor space.

- This form can be found on RooConnect.
 - Log into RooConnect by going to <https://rooconnect.uakron.edu>
 - Click on "Forms" at the top of the page and select "Campus Space Request Form"
- Once this form has been completed, the form will be directed to Student Life for processing through a review committee on campus.
- Additional policies related to outdoor space:
 - It is suggested that registered student organizations request the use of outdoor space through the RooConnect form no later than seven (7) days before the scheduled event.
 - No vehicles are permitted on the Commons except for emergency or required maintenance vehicles or unless special permission has been obtained.
 - Activities scheduled should not impede emergency vehicle traffic flow, disrupt services of the University food carts, create any noise problems or complaints, create litter or damage the brick and/or light poles.
 - The distribution and/or selling of all food outdoors should be arranged and approved through the University Catering.
 - Student organizations may be permitted to set up booths/tables outdoors for the sale of miscellaneous merchandise for fundraising purposes or to promote their organization.
 - Any excessive sound which interferes with academic pursuits is prohibited.
 - Physical setup of tables, chairs, risers, electrical needs, etc. outdoors should be approved and arranged through the Department of Physical Facilities Operations Center (PFOC). Organizations are permitted to use their own materials/equipment. Tent stakes are not permitted on any of the grassy areas due to underground plumbing and electrical.