

Student Organization Registration Procedure & Expectations

SUNY Potsdam

Campus Life, Student Union 208, 315-267-2013

A. Student Group Registration Process Overview

1. In order to be in compliance with SUNY Potsdam policies and procedures and to take advantage of services provided by SUNY Potsdam, all student organizations must register with Campus Life, Student Union Room 208. Student groups must register within 10 days of the start of each semester. Note: SGA groups can submit their form to the SGA Office provided all forms are received by Campus Life within the first 10 days of each semester.
2. Registration by a student organization shall constitute an agreement by the organization, its officers, and its members to observe and abide by the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct; all College policies; and local, state, and federal laws.
3. Registrations are required at the start of the Fall and Spring semesters. The Fall semester registration is valid from the first day of the Fall semester through the last day of Winterim. The Spring semester registration is valid from the first day of the Spring semester through the last day of the final Summer session.
4. The President of each registered student organization shall be the official contact person for the organization. The organization shall be accountable to SUNY Potsdam for all actions and financial commitments of the organization.
5. Presidents of organizations will be sent approval of their group's Registration Form via campus mail by Campus Life. Once this approval is received, the registration process is complete.

B. Benefits of registration include:

1. Use of the College name along with, but not in place of, identification of the sponsoring body in accordance with College policy.
2. Use of College facilities for the purpose of meetings and activities that further the organization's stated goals and that are consistent with College policies governing the use of space by student organizations. Examples: the ability to reserve rooms, reserve campus outdoor spaces, reserve tables in the Union Lobby, etc. A listing of registered student groups will be sent to all campus building administrators. This listing will be reviewed before space can be reserved by a student group.
3. The opportunity to utilize all aspects of campus publicity including, but not limited to:
 - a. Posting fliers in campus buildings. Note: Student organizations must comply with the College's Posting Policy:
<http://www.potsdam.edu/studentlife/safety/campuspolicy/posting.cfm>
as well as the guidelines for posting as specified by each building administrator. The posting policy for Residence Halls can be found at:
<http://www.potsdam.edu/studentlife/ResHalls/CampusLiving101/policies.cfm>
 - b. Inclusion in the Club and Organization listing on the College's web page.
 - c. Being featured on the College's digital signage system
 - d. Having an organizational banner/photo wall display created and hung in the Student Union.
 - e. Submitting event information to be included in SUNY Potsdam Weekly (SPW) event listings to include: table tents, fliers, campus TV channel, web page, digital sign and Facebook group.

4. The ability to participate in Student Leader Conference Programs and related programs such as the Welcome Weekend Carnival.
5. The ability to participate in Student Organization Fairs.
6. Assignment of a student organization mailbox.
7. Being eligible for college financial services (the ability to have accounts with SGA, the Foundation and/or PACES in accordance with established rules). Please note that all registered groups, with the exception of approved Greek Life groups, must utilize college financial services.

C. In order to become registered, student organizations must:

1. Complete a Student Organization Registration Form within the first 10 days of each semester and submit the form to Campus Life (Student Union Room 208, 315-267-2013). Note: SGA groups can submit their form to the SGA Office provided all forms are received by Campus Life within the first 10 days of each semester.
2. Agree to abide by the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, all college policies, and local, state and federal laws.
3. Agree to abide by academic policies regarding student organizations. Specifically, Executive Board members may not be on academic probation as specified in the Academic Standards Policy on p. 52 of the College Catalog: <http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/catalog/undergraduate/index.cfm>. Campus Life will check academic eligibility of all Executive Board members each semester and notify the club's leadership that ineligible students have been removed from office so that they may conduct an election in accordance with their constitutional guidelines.
4. Have an advisor who is a non-student member of SUNY Potsdam's faculty or staff to include staff employed by PACES or the SUNY Research Foundation. (See section G for more information).
5. Have all members, to include the Executive Board, be comprised solely of SUNY Potsdam students. Local fraternities and sororities under the Greek umbrella are exempt from this policy and must follow the guidelines established in the College's Fraternity and Sorority Recognition & Governance statement.
6. Maintain their official affiliation with their parent organization/area (SGA or Greek Life). Registered student organizations that lose the recognition of their parent organization will have their registration withdrawn until such time that recognition is reinstated.
7. Have a constitution. For SGA groups, constitutions will be kept on file in the SGA Office. For Greek recognized groups, constitutions will be kept on file by the Coordinator of Greek Life. For all other groups, constitutions will be submitted and kept on file in Campus Life.
8. Provide proof of general liability insurance. Please note: all SGA & Greek recognized groups have this insurance. Groups without this insurance that can demonstrate they are not participating in activities that the college defines as "high risk," may petition to operate without such insurance.
9. Update their registration forms within 5 days of a change taking place (Ex: Executive Board Officer or Advisor name change).
10. All registered groups, with the exception of approved Greek groups, must utilize college financial services.
11. Athletic groups and selective groups see guidelines below in sections D & E.

D. Athletic Groups

1. Athletic clubs are defined as groups whose mission involves physical activity such as a competitive sport or other fitness activity as determined by the College. In addition to expectations listed in section C, athletic groups must submit proof of the items listed below via their recognizing entity.

- a. Be recognized by either SGA or the Athletics Department
- b. Have all members sign either an SGA or Athletics Department waiver, which explains the individual risks inherent in participation as well as the responsibilities for participation.
- c. Provide proof of each individual participant's comprehensive health insurance plan along with proof of their identity (SUNY Card or Drivers License). Students without individual health insurance cannot participate in athletic groups.
- d. Have at least two students designated to serve as 'safety officers' at all group practices/games/functions. These students must attend the Club Sports Safety Training once per academic year, and must also have up-to-date CPR/FA certifications. Club activities cannot take place without a person who has attended the training present. The Club Sports Safety Training will be offered at least once per semester.
- e. Some clubs that are deemed to have a higher level of risk will also be required to have a designated 'coach.' This individual may be a student, faculty/staff or a community member with a higher level of knowledge regarding the specific Club activities. This higher level of knowledge may be demonstrated through a 1-on-1 interview with Recreational Services, or through the submission of licenses and certifications. The Assistant Athletic Director for Facilities and Recreation will decide what clubs require a 'coach' and what knowledge/credentials they must possess. If a club wishes to hold activities without the presence of a coach they must receive prior approval from Recreational Services and must have a safety officer present. All coaches must also meet with the Asst. AD for Facilities and Recreation once per year for safety training.

E. Selective Groups

1. All Greek organizations should submit their registration form to Campus Life. Greek groups that have not meet the criteria for recognition as articulated in the College's Fraternity & Sorority Recognition & Governance statement, cannot become registered groups.
2. All other groups that are selective in nature (meaning not open to all SUNY Potsdam students) must complete the Student Organization Registration Form and submit it to Campus Life. Selective groups must provide proof of general liability insurance. This expectation may be waived for groups that the College does not define as "high risk" and/or groups that are managed either directly or collaboratively by a College department or office. Groups will have an opportunity to provide a statement requesting a waiver of this requirement on the registration form, which will be reviewed by the Student Organization Review Committee comprised of: the Director of Campus Life, the Coordinator of Greek Life, the President of SGA, the President of AGC, and 1 Student-at-Large. Each of the individuals mentioned may send a designee in their place if needed. Should the committee determine that the group must provide proof of general liability insurance, the group will be unable to operate at SUNY Potsdam until such time that this insurance is obtained. Appeals of the decision of the committee can be made to the Dean of Students who will consult with the Vice President of Business Affairs. Should the committee determine that a group need not provide general liability insurance, a detailed list of expectations may be provided to the group to help ensure for student safety. The expectations for an individual group will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the specific mission and activities of the group.
3. The officers of student organizations that engage in selective membership practices may be required to attend an information session(s) that explains specific risk management issues relevant to the selective nature of the organization.

F. Registration Process for New Groups

1. Students desiring to form a new student organization will need to provide proof of starting the process of being recognized by either SGA or Greek Life. If for some reason, the group cannot be recognized by either SGA or Greek Life, a representative of the group should meet with the Director of Campus Life to discuss potential other options.
2. The benefits afforded to registered student groups may be granted to a new group for no more than one semester to allow them to fully complete the recognition process with their parent organization. During this time, new groups are expected to complete all the steps outlined in section C, with the exception that additional time may be granted to develop a constitution and/or provide proof of general liability insurance unless the group is deemed to be “high risk.”

G. The Role of an Advisor

1. Registered student organizations are strongly encouraged to take full advantage of the valuable role an advisor serves. The general purpose of an organization advisor is to provide insight and guidance that assists a student organization in furthering its purpose and enhancing the meaningfulness of organization membership.
2. As a general rule, the advisor should counsel the organization in the exercise of responsibility, be familiar with the organization’s programs and be familiar with College policies and procedures. Advisors do not have authority to control the policies of an organization.
3. Specific written duties or expectations of an advisor shall be mutually agreed upon by the advisor and the student organization. Some examples of what an advisor’s responsibilities might entail are listed below. Please note, these are simply suggestions of what an advisor’s role might include.
 - a. Provide continuity for the student organization by assisting with the transition of officers.
 - b. Be reasonably informed of the purpose and activities of the student organization.
 - c. Assist the student organization in complying with this policy, on registered student organizations, the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct, and other written College policies and procedures.
 - d. Accompany and/or assist, as needed, organization officers in their dealings with SUNY Potsdam or the outside public on behalf of the organization.
 - e. Be reasonably informed of the student organization’s financial matters.
 - f. Assist the student organization in setting goals and objectives.
 - g. Be available to the organization’s officers and members for consultation.
 - h. Provide constructive feedback.
 - i. Review and sign the student organization’s “Student Organization Registration Form.”
 - j. Assist in other responsibilities mutually agreed upon between the advisor and the student organization.
4. Advisors to registered student organizations, once named by the executive board of a registered student organization, shall be officially appointed by the Dean of Students. As such, organization advisors shall be protected from liability in accordance with the Public Officers Law of the State of New York in carrying out their responsibilities.
5. Student groups are able to change their advisor for any reason deemed necessary in accordance with the guidelines outlined in their constitution. Notification of a change in advisor must be made to Campus Life within 5 days of the change taking place.

H. Parent Organization for “Other Groups”

1. **Existing Groups:** All currently operating student groups that meet the requirements for recognition by either SGA or Greek Life, will be directed to petition for

recognition under those umbrellas. For existing groups that cannot be recognized by either entity, Campus Life will serve as the parent organization. Each of these groups will complete the registration process, and in so doing, indicate if they have general liability insurance and/or complete a waiver to be considered by the Student Organization Review Committee. If the committee deems that a particular group need not provide general liability insurance, the group would become “recognized” by Campus Life and as such be covered as part of the College.

2. **New Groups:** New groups wishing to form that cannot be recognized under SGA or Greek Life, will be reviewed for recognition by Campus Life via a the Student Organization Review Committee comprised of the Director of Campus Life, Coordinator of Greek Life, the President of SGA, the President of AGC, and 1 Student-at-Large. Each of the individuals mentioned may send a designee in their place if needed. The Committee will be convened by the Director of Campus Life, when a request for recognition emerges. Groups that can be recognized by SGA or Greek Life, will not be recognized by Campus Life.

Student groups found not to be in compliance with the stated expectations in this policy will be subjected to the loss of their status as registered groups. Late registrations will be accepted. However, the benefits of registration will not be granted to a student organization until such time that their registration form is completed and approved.