

## **Welcome Letter**

Dear Advisor:

Thank you for becoming a club/organization advisor for the 2023-2024 academic year! You have been chosen to become a guide and mentor for a group of passionate and organized students on the ECU campus. This Advisor Handbook aims to help you navigate your role and provide resources for you as a club advisor. Whether you are as passionate as your advisees about the club's mission or simply agreed to be on board for another year to keep a club afloat, you have been assigned the role of offering guidance and support to that student club. Out of all the possible candidates, the club members likely chose you because your background or attitude somehow clicks with what they are trying to achieve through their club activities. It is that rare opportunity in their lives where they can surround themselves with other students who share their keen interest in art, sports, religion, culture, scholarship, community service, and ponder ways to weave it into the fabric of campus life. Through the course of the year, you may find yourself amazed at their drive and resourcefulness, sometimes foresee a sticky situation imminently striking, or potentially caught up in the adventure of advising a club. This guide gives you helpful information on how to be a successful advisor. You've probably said the next phrase to students in the past. One of the best ways to learn is through experience. Reading about swimming feels nothing like doing the butterfly stroke. What this handbook offers are tips to remind you how to keep the club afloat and out of hot water. You yourself are more than capable of knowing how to have fun once you get the hang of advising.

Good luck!

Sincerely,

Michelle Allen

Coordinator of Student Leadership, Development, and Activities

## **Basics of Advising**

### **Purpose of the advisor**

Advisors wear a variety of hats within the organization they advise. The advisor is a volunteer mentor of the organization that provides direction, advice, guidance, and stability to the members and officers in order to develop cohesion and involvement.

Every club at ECU must have an advisor that is a current full-time faculty, staff member, or administrator that is well-informed (institutionally and within the individual club/organization) and involved in club activities and dealings. The advisor is a representative of ECU administration that serves as a resource to the organization, assists with goal-setting, provides counsel and guidance, and approves paperwork as necessary.

An advisor is ALL of the following:

Mentor – An advisor is more than just a figurehead for the club and a reference for the executive board. Often, students seek out advisors for issues both relating to club practices and those of a more personal nature. Be prepared to make lasting connections with students, challenge them intellectually/emotionally, and encourage leadership in the organization. Always be a guide to the organization and the executive board and understand the needs and perspectives of all those involved.

Team Builder – An advisor is often the glue that assists in holding the organization together and assists in creating cohesive teams and building positive relationships. The advisor can play an integral role in helping with transitioning officer's year to year or executive board to executive board. The advisor can often serve as the constant in these situations.

Conflict Mediator – Sometimes the advisor must step in and hold the role of mediator with members or leaders who have different agendas, opinions, goals, etc. The advisor is expected to be unbiased and represent what he/she feels is best for the organization and its members.

Educator/Interpreter of Policy – As a representative of ECU administration, an advisor may have to interpret and intervene when institute policy is in question. In these instances, the advisor is expected to guide the group within these standard operating procedures and notify appropriate authorities of any activities that may

occur outside institute policy with the support of the Club and Organizations handbook.

Motivator – A key role of the advisor is to motivate students to excel, carry out their plans, set stretch goals, and dream big! As a motivator, advisors should encourage the club to continue with their goals despite failures and always offer constructive feedback/support.

**An advisor is NONE of the following:**

Uninvolved – As stated in “Expectations” (below), an advisor is expected to attend events on an as-available basis and is required to attend executive board meetings as necessary to provide guidance and support in whatever way they can.

Controlling – An advisor is not the leader of the group. As an advisor, it is crucial to remain unbiased and look out for the well-being of the group despite the advisor’s personal beliefs.

Omnipotent – Advisors are not expected to know everything. If the advisor utilizes this handbook effectively and communicates with the University, the advisor should be able to provide enough guidance to point the club/organization leadership in the right direction. Just there to sign paperwork – The advisor is not just around to sign club documentation. The advisor should know the inner workings of the club and have a strong idea of past initiatives, present standing, and future goals. If the advisor notices that they are not being as involved as they should, it is their responsibility to approach the club leadership or (if necessary) the Coordinator of Student Leadership and Development to intervene.

## **HINTS AND TIPS**

Communicate regularly and meet at least twice a semester with your executive board members

Make sure your students have your most up-to-date information for contacting you!

Try to regularly attend club meetings, to show your club support

Look for a co-advisor. Advising can be fun but to help find balance at busier times it’s nice to have someone else the students can rely on!

ADVISOR HANDBOOK

If you're unsure – ask! Email [Micaall1@ecok.edu](mailto:Micaall1@ecok.edu) Coordinator of Student Leadership and Development or SGA Club and org director with any club or advising questions you may have!

You can advise more than one club at a time!

If you don't hear from your club don't assume they're doing well – make the intentional effort to outreach to the members to see where the club is at and to try and set up a meeting to touch base.

DO	DON'T
Be knowledgeable of the organization's purpose and constitution, and help your members to adhere to these policies and procedures.	Be afraid to let the group try new ideas.
Learn and comply with federal, state, and local laws/ordinances, in addition to campus policies	Manipulate or impose/force your opinions on the group.
Address situations that might lead to a poor public perception of the student group or University.	Miss group meetings or functions you committed to attend.
Plan and encourage member attendance at leadership trainings	Close communications.
Empower students to act in seeing the student organization succeed or fail.	Request money from SGA. This responsibly falls within the club members.
Learn when to speak up and when to be passive. Remember to let the students make their own decisions while you support them with guidance and advice	Plan and execute events by yourself. Your role is to advise therefore all actions needed to take place fall within the members. Event forms must be submitted by the Club/organizations members.

## **Advising Styles**

Your advising style is the way you interact with the students. An advisor may identify with a particular style or use a combination of styles. At different points in an organization's formation and development, an advisor may play various roles. It is important to determine what role an advisor would like to play in the group, and if that role will meet the needs and expectations of the students.

### **Developmental:**

The advisor provides guidance in the decision-making process and opportunities for growth.

### **Administrative:**

The advisor provides the organizational structure of events and focuses on policy and budget.

### **Delegator:**

The advisor empowers the students to conduct their own decision making, problem solving, and delegating. Use this style with students/groups that are at a high level of readiness.

### **Coach:**

The advisor continues to direct and closely supervise task accomplishment, but also explains decisions, solicits suggestions, and supports progress. Use this style with groups that have a few leaders that are at a higher readiness level who will need your support with the rest of the group to get things accomplished.

### **Supporter:**

The advisor facilitates and supports the efforts toward accomplishments, and shares responsibilities for decision making with the students. Use this style with groups that are just starting to understand the concept that will lead to success - with a group that is just starting to "get it."

### **Director:**

The advisor provides specific instructions and closely supervises task accomplishments. Use this style with students/ groups that are at a low level of readiness. Use this style with newly formed organizations or organizations that did not have a smooth officer transition from the previous year.

### **Programmatic:**

The advisor provides skill development for students and event planning.

## Expectations

Advisors will develop their own styles for interacting with their club depending on the executive board's needs, the status of the club, its purpose, activities, etc. In addition to this regular involvement, advisors are held to the following expectations:

- Communicate regularly and effectively with club members, officers, and SGA club and organization director;
- Make sure proper documentation is submitted properly and on time;
- Make every effort to meet with your executive board during their regularly scheduled meetings (or as often as necessary);
- Explain and represent institution policy/procedure;
- Offer financial guidance and advice;
- Provide continuity for the club through the years and assist with executive board turnover and new officer training;
- Assist club officers in the planning, promotion, and facilitation of events/activities Engage in annual planning (budgets, calendar, goals, etc.);
- Act as a resource and liaison to institute staff and convey problems, successes, questions/concerns as necessary;
- Be familiar with national structure, services, and procedures (if applicable);
- Know your group's limits and help students find a balance between activities and academic responsibilities;
- Create opportunities for member recognition;
- Help students manage their time between multiple leadership roles and classes;
- Keep record and account of club and organizations funds;
- Submit rosters per semester during a 1 on 1 meeting with the SGA director of Clubs and Orgs and the Coordinator of Student Leadership and Development.
- Faculty advisors must participate in one training per academic year. Training will be held in person.

## ADVISOR APPLICATION

Must be submitted with all club/organization renewal forms

The members of \_\_\_\_\_ (organization)  
request \_\_\_\_\_ (Full  
Name) to serve as Advisor of the organization for the academic year of  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Duties, responsibilities, and expectations of the position are as follows: (List responsibilities and expectations of the Advisor and organization)

a.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Duties and responsibilities may be reconsidered at the request of the Advisor, president, or majority vote of the membership in a regular meeting.

President's/Chairperson's: Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have met with the president of the above-named organization and discussed the duties and responsibilities of Advisor as listed above. I agree to serve as Advisor and will fulfill these duties and responsibilities to the best of my abilities.

Applicant sign here: \_\_\_\_\_

Date here: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee role at ECU: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

This agreement is effective for \_\_\_\_\_(year) and may be renewed each year thereafter upon the agreement of both parties.

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**Approved by:**

**Coordinator of Student Leadership, Development, and Activities**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SGA Director of clubs and organizations**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_