



The Care and Feeding of Advisors

Overview

Although your club at UC Davis is not required to have an advisor, it is strongly encouraged and recommended. Advisors may be UC Davis staff, faculty, or community members.

Purpose

Advisors can provide continuity of information and expertise that might otherwise be lost with the shifting student population. They can supply information that will enable the organization to avoid repeating past mistakes and capitalize on successes. It is important to give them a real sense of belonging and to make them feel that they are honestly needed . . . because they are!

Facts About Advisors

Advisors volunteer to work with student organizations because they want to do it, and because they feel they can make a contribution to the organization's success. Advisors are human.

The student organization can help the advisor by:

- making clear the role they would like the advisor to take in the organization
- making them feel like a member of the organization
- making sure they have an updated constitution and by-laws of the organization
- taking the initiative in arranging for regular executive committee meetings
- asking them to be a "sounding board" for various ideas
- making use of their background of experience with the organization and the campus
- keeping the advisor informed of the organization's plans and problems
- working out tentative solutions to problems before going to them whenever possible
- observing lines of responsibility
 - o Don't go "over their head" or bypass them entirely.
- inviting them to all activities and not taking their attendance for granted
 - o Do they attend "free"?
 - o Are their families invited?
- showing an appreciation for their services (e.g. with a letter, by making appropriate comments at meetings and other occasions, or by nominating them for campus awards)
- touching base with them regarding how they feel about their role as advisor
 - o Are they enjoying working with the organization?
 - o Would they like to change their advisory role in some way?

UC Davis Policy on Advisors

Advisors may:

- provide information/advice to the group;
- participate in member selection discussions;
- participate in orienting and training new members and officers;
- attend group meetings; and
- participate in discussions.

Advisors may not:

- select members;
- determine of direction the group's programs, goals, or performances;
- control the group's finances;
- vote;
- hold office;
- reserve campus facilities for the organization; or
- represent the group to the University or community.



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Activity

Listed below are some possible expectations student leaders may have of their advisor. The advisor and leaders should each respond to the following items, then discuss their answers and resolve differences. For items that are determined not to be the responsibility of the advisor, it would be valuable to clarify which officer will assume that responsibility.

For each of the statements, determine whether the function is:

- 1 - Essential for the advisor to do
- 2 - Helpful for the advisor to do
- 3 - Nice, but advisor does not have to
- 4 - Would prefer the advisor not do
- 5 - Absolutely not an advisor's role

The advisor should:

- _____ 1. attend all general meetings
- _____ 2. attend all executive committee meetings
- _____ 3. call meetings of the executive committee when they believe it is necessary
- _____ 4. explain college policy when relevant to the discussion
- _____ 5. explain college policy to the executive committee and depend upon the officers to carry them out through their leadership
- _____ 6. explain university policies to the entire membership at a general meeting once a year
- _____ 7. schedule an appointment with the president/chairperson before each meeting
- _____ 8. help the president prepare the agenda before each meeting
- _____ 9. serve as parliamentarian for the group
- _____ 10. speak up during discussion when they have relevant information
- _____ 11. speak up during discussion when they believe the group is likely to make a poor decision
- _____ 12. remain quiet during general meetings unless asked for advice
- _____ 13. exert their influence with officers between meetings
- _____ 14. take an active part in formulating the goals of the group
- _____ 15. initiate ideas for discussion when they believe they will help the group
- _____ 16. be one of the group – except for voting, holding office, and conducting business on behalf of the group
- _____ 17. attend all group activities
- _____ 18. review group finances with the treasurer
- _____ 19. request to see the treasurer's books at the end of each quarter
- _____ 20. check the secretary's minutes before they are written in final form
- _____ 21. check all official correspondence before it is sent
- _____ 22. get a photocopy for all official correspondence
- _____ 23. be custodian for all group paraphernalia, records, etc. during the summer and between



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transition of officers

- _____ 24. keep the official files in their office
- _____ 25. inform the group of infractions of their bylaws, codes, and standing rules
- _____ 26. keep the group aware of its stated objectives when planning events
- _____ 27. mediate interpersonal conflicts that arise
- _____ 28. be responsible for planning leadership skills workshops
- _____ 29. state what their advisor responsibilities are as they see them at the first meeting of the year
- _____ 30. let the group work out its problems, including making mistakes and “doing it the hard way”
- _____ 31. insist on an evaluation of each activity by those students responsible for planning it
- _____ 32. take the initiative in creating teamwork and cooperation among the officers
- _____ 33. let the group thrive or decline on its own merits; do not interfere unless requested to do so
- _____ 34. be available to assist the group in any conflicts with members of the university staff
- _____ 35. be familiar with college facilities, services and procedures that affect group activities
- _____ 36. recommend programs, speakers, etc.
- _____ 37. take an active part in the orderly transition of responsibilities between old and new officers at the end/start of the year
- _____ 38. advise the group to cancel any activities when they believe they have been inadequately planned

Please add any other expectations you have for the advisor's role: