

ADVISORS GUIDE & HELPFUL HINTS

The Advisor EXCELLENCE BY EXAMPLE

This Advisor's Guide section is intended to help advisors. It is a collection of suggestions, recommendations, expectations, and tips. They are not rendered with guarantees that, if faithfully observed, they will yield success. The guide should help enhance the effectiveness of the group, quality of rapport with the members and advisor(s), and meet the expectations of Student Life. If there are issues not addressed, please schedule an appointment with the Director or Assistant Director of Student Life.

Advisors can have a very positive impact upon their respective organizations. They are well-intentioned individuals, sincere in their desire to contribute positively to the community, and at times may be unsure of how to proceed.

All registered student organizations at Bowie State University are required to have one primary advisor. Organizations may have one alternate advisor in addition to their primary advisor. Advisors must be full-time members of the University faculty or staff.

WHAT THE ORGANIZATION MAY EXPECT OF ADVISORS

1. Attend meetings of the organization, on a regular basis, and to be available when emergencies and problems arise.
2. Be in attendance for the duration of organizational events, both on and off campus. You should arrive 1 hour before the start of the event.
3. To believe in the organization and to manifest the enthusiasm necessary to help the organization work toward its potential.
4. To understand the organization (constitution), to be aware of its purposes and to assist in formulating goals and planning for the organization.
5. To assist in developing procedures and methods for maintaining an effective organization.
6. To assist in matters of university procedures.
7. To assist in improving and providing leadership skills and opportunities.
8. To represent the organization in staff or faculty meetings when necessary, and to serve as the organization's liaison with the University.
9. To guide the organization in planning activities and programs.

10. To encourage and support the organization during periods of trial.
11. To help in the evaluation of group projects, performances, and progress as well as individual personal performances.
12. To serve where necessary as an arbitrator or impartial observer.
13. To be familiar with the financial procedures of the Organization and the University.
14. To serve as a resource and provide ideas as needed.
15. To participate in meetings and programs of the organization to the greatest extent possible.
16. Encourage members to attend meetings, retreats and training workshops.
17. To sign all activity, reservation and other related University forms and paper work.

NOTE: The advisor's signature must be on all activity and reservation forms.

WHAT THE ADVISOR MAY EXPECT FROM OFFICERS

In order for the advisor to serve effectively, the officers must also meet certain responsibilities. The advisor may expect the officers to:

1. Keep the advisor informed as to all organizational activities, meeting times, locations, and agendas.
2. Meet regularly with the advisor and discuss all plans and concerns.
3. Develop and use good records and sound financial procedures.
4. Provide minutes of meetings as well as other materials that are sent to members and the organization.
5. To make no commitments for the advisor without his/her consent.

NOTE: An organization must not assume an advisor will continue to serve as an advisor for the succeeding year unless the advisor has agreed to this.

WHAT THE UNIVERSITY EXPECTS OF ADVISORS

1. That an individual will not accept an invitation to serve as an advisor (or to continue to serve) if he/she is not prepared to fulfill the expectations of such.
2. Will assume an advisors' role voluntarily, however, though serving as a volunteer, he/she is expected to uphold the best interest of the university and organization.
3. To be a current employee, full-time member of the university faculty or staff and must retain status to continue to serve as an official advisor.
4. Will do all that is possible to assure that the organization will take reasonable precaution in its activities in order that policies and laws are not violated nor the welfare of members endangered.
5. Will participate in the organization to the fullest extent without actually making decisions or setting policies for the organization.

WORKING WITH THE GROUP

Advisors also play an important role in advising the total organization. Some advisors work with the officers and maintain a low profile during meetings. In most large organizations this is sometimes necessary. It is usually undesirable for an advisor to dominate discussions in organizational meetings, however, there are times when it is desirable for the advisor to question, recommend or present opposing views. It is advantageous for an advisor to be a participating and active member of the group. More often than not, the group will communicate the level of involvement it hopes its advisor will retain.

Sometimes the organization may be planning a questionable activity. Techniques have been suggested for the advisor to deal with these situations.

1. Other ideas should be suggested for the one that is questionable.
2. The difficulties inherent in the plan should be pointed out.
3. The advisor may request that the group obtain the opinion of individuals or groups affected by the action.
4. Many situations can be clarified through discussion with the appropriate members of the Student Life staff.

There is a tendency for an organization to follow tradition and plan the same programs year after year. In some cases this is desirable, but if the advisor feels there is need to

change the program, he/she should feel free to advise the group to consider other alternatives. One system that can be productive, in some situations, is brainstorming. This method calls for rapid fire, uninhibited, top of the head suggestions from all members. It allows for participation and allows for the generation of ideas that are often inhibited by a fear of criticism or rejection. The advisor may also recommend that other resource people be contacted for ideas including the Student Life staff. While it is desirable for the advisor to make recommendations, as need arises, he/she should help the officers become aware of resources. They should also be urged to evaluate the program and become aware of the need for change, as well as the needs of the University community. In many instances, the advisor is given an opportunity to make some closing remarks at the end of meetings. They may include valuable statements, commendations, inspirational statements, or just general comments. Not all advisors would want to do this, but it helps to provide recognition. It is desirable that the advisor be accepted as a co-worker and as a person whose opinions are respected.

Workshops, retreats, and events are times during which an advisor can become more acquainted with members of the organization. These are designed primarily to bring members of the group together, but they also serve to bring the advisor into the group in a more intimate fashion.

The suggestions and recommendations listed are to help make the advisor's efforts count. The Office of Student Life needs your continued support and commitment. If you have any additional questions please ask because the advisor's role is important to this office as well as the organization.

Your Purpose at Functions

The purpose of faculty/staff attendance at student functions is two-fold. Firstly, the presence of faculty/staff members affirms the desire of the University to create a meaningful co-curricular program with full faculty or staff support and participation. Secondly, the presence of faculty/staff members fulfill the requirements of responsible supervision incumbent upon the institution. The faculty/staff advisor assumes the role of official institution representative at the function and has responsibility for decisions affecting the safety, welfare, and proper conduct of those in attendance.

Responsibilities of Advisor (General)

The faculty or staff member who accepts the position of advisor must be aware of the responsibilities inherent in the function. Generally, it can be stated that the advisor is an authority in any decision that must be made during a function pertaining to the safety, welfare, and conduct of those attending. Such authority extends even to the decision to terminate the event. However, Student Life and the University Centre Staff, or Campus Safety may make final determination with regards to safety and the welfare of others.

Specific decisions that might arise could relate to such matters as overcrowding, possible fire hazards of decorations, request to extend or curtail the hours of the event, admission

of undesirable person (i.e. inebriates), and improper use of university equipment. In all these and other similar matters, the advisor(s) will act with Campus Safety in the best interest of those present and the University.

Responsibilities at Functions

1. One advisor must be present at all times, two are suggested for large events.
2. When the scheduled building/room is first opened, the advisor should familiarize him/herself with any equipment being used.
3. Security Personnel will have been previously secured and directed to report to one of the advisors who has been designated by name. The advisor should discuss their duties and keep in touch with them throughout the evening. The number of security present at an event is to be determined by the Campus Police Event Coordinator.
4. Before the event, if admission is charged the advisor should check out the procedures for admitting people and collecting money and make whatever suggestions he/she feels should be helpful. We strongly suggest that you sell tickets in advance, and never collect cash at the door (all ticket sales for dances in the gym will be conducted from the Wiseman Student Center).
5. During the evening, the advisor(s) and the student(s) in charge of the event should be in frequent communication concerning the progress of the activity and any potential trouble areas that may be developing.
6. In case of an emergency, such as fire, disorderly conduct or personal injury, the advisor or student leader should notify the proper authorities, who will take charge of the situation.
7. At the close of the event, security and the advisor should inspect the rooms/building, to see that everything is in order and that all persons have gone. This should be done by completing the post-event form given by the Wiseman Student Centre.
8. If an emergency or incident of a serious nature takes place, such as a personal injury or loss of property, the advisor should prepare a written report and submit it to the Dean for Student Affairs and Campus Life and the Director of Student Life the next business day.

9. In the event that neither advisor can be present during a sponsored event that event will be canceled, unless the advisor and organization has received approval to proceed with OSA approved chaperones.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. The number of assigned security personnel to events held on campus is at the discretion of Campus Police. No organization may hire or engage a private security group or agency, without the expressed written consent of the Campus Police.
2. All organizations assigned or requesting security at specific events are responsible for the payment of fees for those services.
3. Payment of fees incurred for the use of other university personnel (electrician, carpenter, etc.) and other services may be made through the Wiseman Student Centre.
4. Maintenance personnel, and other services for events may be required or requested by the Wiseman Student Centre to assure quality, cleaning and/or security. All fees associated with these services are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization(s).

Suggestions for Effective Advisement

The American College Testing Service offers the following list of suggestions to conscientious advisors:

- Care about students as people by showing empathy, understanding and respect.
- Establish a warm, genuine and open relationship.
- Be available; keep office hours appointments.
- Know how and when to make referrals, and be familiar with referral sources.
- Keep in frequent contact with students. Take the initiative; don't always wait for students to come to you.
- Don't make decisions for students. Help them make their own decisions.
- Focus on students' strengths and potentials rather than limitations.
- Monitor students' progress toward goals.