

Student Organization Policy and Procedure Manual

This manual is intended to serve as a collection of all rules and regulations concerning student organizations at West Chester University out in place by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement and the Student Government Association. This manual shall also govern the Bylaw Review Committee of SGA, and its operation. No part of this manual shall conflict in any way with the *Ram's Eye View* Student Handbook which outlines all rules and regulations put forth by the Division of Student Affairs, or the Bylaws of the Student Government Association. This manual does not refer to the Constitution of any organization. If an organization has a Constitution in place of, or in addition to, bylaws, this manual should be interpreted to apply to it as well.

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A. **Organization Approval Process**

Below is the step by step process by which an organization can be recognized by the Student Government Association. A current document outlining these procedures can be found with LEAD, Leadership Empowerment and Development. (<https://ramconnect.wcupa.edu/organization/leadership-empowerment-and-development>)

1. The spokesperson must complete a “Request to Organize” form on the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement website (<https://ramconnect.wcupa.edu/organization/student-leadership-and-involvement>). Next, an appointment with a member of the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement staff to discuss the rest of the process and forms that you need to fill out that are required by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement and Student Government Association.
2. Personnel
 - a. A group of at least five students, including the Executive Board, must be assembled, with one acting as the contact person. At the point the organization should have a full Executive Board chosen.
 - b. No one person can have multiple Executive Board positions in the same group.
 - c. A full-time or part-time university staff member, faculty member, or administrator must be secured as an advisor.
3. The organization must create bylaws that govern the make-up, operations, and perpetuation of the organization. The SGA parliamentarian may be contacted for assistance. See the SGA RamConnect for further information. (
4. The organization must submit a current list of members noting Executive Board members and the contact person, as well as the bylaws to the SGA parliamentarian via email.
5. The Bylaw Review Committee will review the bylaws submitted. The committee can reject the bylaws for any problems in functionality, clarity, or if they are incomplete. The SGA parliamentarian will work with the contact person to correct any problems that may arise during the review, these changes must be made and submitted to the SGA parliamentarian

before the group may proceed to the next step.

6. Upon approval by the committee, the SGA parliamentarian will invite the organization to give a brief presentation to explain the purpose and goals of the group to the SGA Senate for approval.
7. The approved bylaws will be forwarded to the vice president of Student Affairs, or designee, and the Student Services, Inc. executive director. Any of the above may reject the organization's recognition if they deem it to be contrary to the university's mission, or presents undue hardship and/or liability to the University or Student Services, Inc.
- 8.
9. After being recognized by the senate, the organization must meet with a leadership consultant from LEAD to create their organization RamConnect portal.
10. After recognition, an organization must maintain at least five (5) students, including a full Executive Board to retain active status. This refers to the president, vice president, treasurer and secretary.
11. Procedure for groups not recognized by SGA:
 - a. If the group would like to appeal the decision, they must meet with the SGA parliamentarian to discuss the reason(s) for denial. This is the only way to start the process of resubmission.
 - b. After a period of no less than two weeks, the prospective organization may re-submit their revised bylaws to the Bylaw Review Committee.
 - c. The Bylaw Review Committee will discuss the changes and table the group for a period of no less than one week.
 - d. After that period of no less than one week, the Bylaw Review Committee may vote to bring the group to the senate for recognition. The prospective organization may go through this process only once, before the group must wait until the following academic semester to re-submit their bylaws.

B. Organization Bylaws

1. All organizations' bylaws must follow the format of the "Blank Bylaws" as found on RamConnect. Organizations may add components to their bylaws but may not have less than what is already contained in the "Blank Bylaws."
2. Organizations are required to follow and operate within their own bylaws. If any West Chester University student feels that any of the above are being violated by the organization, that student can petition the Bylaw Review Committee to consider the situation. (See section C of this manual for SGA judicial review of organizations.)

C. Organization Rules and Regulations

1. Organizations are required to follow all the SGA policies and their own bylaws. These policies include the SGA Student Organization Policies and Procedures, Bylaws and Financial Policies and Procedures. The Bylaw Review Committee shall investigate any complaint brought to it by any WCU student against a recognized student organization for violation of *any* of the below. This can be done through contacting the SGA parliamentarian via email.
 - a. If an organization is found to be in violation of its own bylaws or the SGA policy, the Bylaw Review Committee will consider sanctions including a warning, suspension, or derecognition; as defined by the *Ram's Eye View* Student Code of Conduct, Part II, section B.
 - b. An organization shall be considered on suspension immediately following the Bylaw Review Committee's decision to suspend or derecognize. The SGA Senate will be informed of the Bylaw Review Committee's decision to warn or suspend an organization, and can overturn a suspension by a 2/3 vote by the senate.
 - c. If the Bylaw Review Committee's decision is to derecognize an organization, the SGA parliamentarian will make such a motion to the SGA Senate. A majority vote shall be sufficient to pass the motion. If the motion fails, the organization is still considered to be on suspension unless overturned by the Senate. The Bylaw Review Committee shall consider the time of the suspension at their next meeting.
 - d. An organization sanctioned by SGA may appeal the decision to the the vice president of Student Affairs, or a designee. Their decision

on the matter is final.

2. Organizations are required to follow all university policies. If an organization is found to be in violation of any university policy, the Bylaw Review Committee's decision shall be announced to the senate, but forwarded to the Dean of Students for their consideration. Normal university judicial policies apply. See *Ram's Eye View* for these policies. At this stage, the SGA parliamentarian may act as plaintiff on behalf of the original student complaint.
3. The Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will inform Sykes Union staff, other appropriate facilities staff, and the SGA treasurer of any suspended or derecognized organizations to ensure the loss of privileges.
4. Every organization must have an advisor who is a full-time member of the faculty or university staff.
5. Officers of all recognized clubs must maintain a 2.25 cumulative GPA.
6. After recognition, an organization must maintain at least five students, including a full Executive Board (president, vice president, treasurer and secretary) to retain active status. If an organization falls below the required number of students there will be a period of one academic semester probation, in which the organization must recruit new members. During this time of probation, minutes and member attendance will be request from the organization periodically and randomly by the SGA Parliamentarian. If by the end of the semester probation has not shown growth, they will be derecognized.
7. If a derecognized group feels that their derecognition is unfair they may apply for an appeal to the Bylaw Review Committee. They must submit, in writing, a notification of appeal to the SGA parliamentarian after the derecognition has been announced. A deadline for the notification of appeals will be set by the SGA parliamentarian.
8. Recognized organizations are required to hold elections, in accordance with the SGA Blank Bylaws, for Executive Board officers (president, vice president, treasurer and secretary) for the following academic year by March 31st of the current academic year (Beginning March 2019).
 - a. This excludes clubs/organizations defined by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement as "Greek Letter Organizations" or "Honor Societies".

9. All organizations must complete the *Organization Re-Registration Process* from the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement at the end of **every spring semester**.. Failure to do this by the deadline set by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will result in the automatic suspension of an organization until the registration is complete. If an organization fails to register by the last SGA Senate meeting of the Fall semester, it will be officially de-recognized. The Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will inform SGA, Sykes Union staff, and other appropriate facilities staff, in order to ensure the loss of organizational privileges.

10. As a condition of re-registration, all SGA recognized organizations are required to send at least one newly elected Executive Board officer to attend the SGA Officer Training Seminar. The SGA Officer Training Seminar will be facilitated by the SGA in conjunction with the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement. The date and location of the SGA Officer Training Seminar will be established and announced to take place during every spring semester by the SGA president by the conclusion of the preceding fall semester.
 - a. Officers of clubs/organizations defined by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement as “Greek Letter Organizations” or “Honor Societies” will not be required to attend the SGA Officer Training Seminar as a condition of re-registration.
 - b. Failure to attend the SGA Officer Training Seminar without written excuse from the SGA Executive Board or Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will result in an organization becoming ineligible to complete re-registration.

11. Organization Executive Board officers (president, vice president, treasurer and secretary) are encouraged to complete an online officer training module on D2L to ensure they understand the responsibilities and SGA/university policies regarding their positions.

12. The SGA Officer Training Seminar will cover, but is not limited to, the following information:
 - a. Officer Roles and Responsibilities
 - b. SGA and Student Leadership and Involvement Policies and Procedures
 - c. Student Services, Inc. Policies and Procedures
 - d. 25 Live and Program Planning Guide
 - e. RamConnect Training

13. All organization are required to keep their RamConnect portal up to date.
 - a. All members of the organization be on the roster.
 - b. All Executive Board officers (president, vice president, treasurer and secretary) be current and active.
 - c. All bylaws are to be online, current and updated, and visible to everyone.

D. **Council of Organizations**

1. The first Tuesday of each month at 7:15pm, unless deemed otherwise by the SGA president, will be deemed “Council of Organizations.” Every student organization will be required to send an Executive Board representative to this meeting. If an organization fails to attend this meeting with no written excuse to the SGA secretary within 48 hours, this organization will be suspended by the SGA until the commencement of the next Council of Organizations, meaning that all SSI accounts will be frozen, and the organization will be demoted one level within the room reservation rating tier.
 - a. If a student organization feels as though they were unfairly suspended, they will have the ability to appeal their suspension to the full senate.
 - i. A student organization must express their intent to appeal via an email sent to the secretary no later than one (1) week after the date of the missed meeting.
 - ii. Upon presentation to the senate, the senators will vote on whether or not the decision of suspension will be affirmed or reversed.
 - b. Organizations with recurring academic commitments at the time of Council of Organizations must submit a written explanation to be excused from attendance to every meeting. The request will be accepted upon approval of the SGA Senate.
 - c. Each organization shall be responsible for producing a report on the semester’s activities by the last Council of Organizations meeting via an online form.
2. The room reservation rating tiering system for missing Council of Organizations meetings will follow as such:
 - a. Good Standing: All organization will begin with “good standing”
 - b. 1st Absence “Warning”: No action against the organization will be taken with regards to room reservations.
 - c. 2nd Absence “Probation”: The organization will not be permitted to submit any new space request through 25 live.
 - d. 3rd Absence “Bad Standing”: Cancellation of all the organizations reservations.

E. **Bylaw Review Process**

Upon taking office, the SGA parliamentarian shall familiarize themselves with this manual, as well as the mechanics of bylaws. They may consult with the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement for help in this matter.

Every organization shall undergo a regular review of their bylaws every three years. The schedule, beginning with the 2019-20 academic year, shall follow this pattern:

- Fall 19: Academic and Professional Organization
 - Spring 20: Academic and Professional Organization cont., Religious Organizations
 - Fall 20: Greek Letter Organizations
 - Spring 21: Greek Letter Organization cont., Special Interest Organizations
 - Fall 21: Music Organizations, Student Governing/Campus Programming Organizations, Honor Societies (for collections only, see section 7)
 - Spring 22: Publications and Media Organizations, Service Organizations, Sports Clubs
 - Fall 22: Repeat
1. The Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will review the bylaws currently in the RamConnect portal when an organization is up for review.
 2. When an organization submits its bylaws each year the copy must be dated, and any amendments made must be indicated and dated, or no changes must be stated on the copy. If an organization wishes the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement to refer to a previous copy on the file, the organization must submit a written and signed request from the president and advisor to the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement stating that no changes have been made during the previous three years. This does not excuse the organization from review.
 3. If an organizations fails to submit bylaws in a timely manner after three (3) attempts by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement to collect them, the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will notify the Bylaw Review Committee and the organization may be placed on suspension. The procedure for suspension will be followed as outlined in Section C.
 4. The Office of Student Leadership and Involvement shall examine each set of collected bylaws for the following:
 - a. Violations of the *Ram's Eye View* or other university or SGA policies

- b. Contradictions within the bylaws
 - c. Unclear or confusing wording
 - d. Missing required components (see “Blank Bylaws” section B 1)
 - e. Infeasible provisions
 - f. Any other serious problem the Bylaw Review Committee feels would hinder the operation and success of the organization
5. Honor Societies will not undergo full review by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement. The Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will collect bylaws from Honor Societies as the schedule dictates for filing purposes only.
6. When the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement finds bylaws that do not meet the previously defined standards, they will notify the SGA parliamentarian of these findings. The SGA parliamentarian will then present the organizations bylaws to the Bylaw Review Committee for review and shall contact the president of the organization in question. They may proceed in one of the following ways..
- a. If the changes needed are simple, and the organization does not wish to contest the findings, the Bylaw Review Committee may suggest changes to the organization, allow two weeks for changes to be made, and receive a revised copy to confirm that said changes have been made. The Committee will then give final approval to the new bylaws.
 - b. If the changes need more work, or the organization is reluctant to make changes, a meeting with representatives of the organization and the Bylaw Review Committee will take place. After this meeting, if the Bylaw Review Committee does not change its ruling, the organization may submit to the SGA parliamentarian proposed changes or ask the Bylaw Review Committee to suggest changes. Once changes are made, the organization will submit the new bylaws to the SGA parliamentarian for the final approval of the Committee.
 - c. If the group refuses to make changes, the SGA parliamentarian will report the Bylaw Review Committee’s findings to the SGA Senate and motion to suspend the organization. The organization will receive notice of this, so as to give them the opportunity to appear before the Senate and argue their case. If the Senate votes to

suspend, the suspension can only be lifted by an affirmative vote on the organization's bylaws by decision to the vice president of Student Affairs, or a designee. Their decision on the matter is final.

F. **Special Circumstances**

1. Sports Clubs: Any Sport Club must be recognized by the Sports Club Council before gaining SGA approval. The aspiring club should begin the process specified by the Sports Club Council between steps 2 and 3 of this policy (see section A).
2. Fraternities: A new Fraternity must be recognized by either the Inter-Fraternity Council, Multicultural Greek Council or the National Pan-Hellenic Council before gaining SGA approval. The interest group should begin the process specified by the Inter-Fraternity Council, Multicultural Greek Council or the National Pan-Hellenic Council between steps 2 and 3 of this policy (see section A).
3. Sororities: A new Sorority must be recognized by either the Panhellenic Council, Multicultural Greek Council or the National Pan-Hellenic Council before gaining SGA approval. The interest group should begin the process specified by the Panhellenic Council, Multicultural Greek Council or the National Pan-Hellenic Council between steps 2 and 3 of this policy (see section A).
4. The Graduate Student Association, Council of Communicating and Off-Campus Students, and the Residence Hall Association can be reviewed or investigated by cannot be sanctioned by the Bylaw Review Committee. Any finding of fault with these organizations must be forwarded to the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement for their consideration.

G. **Composition of the Student Government Association Senate**

As a representative body of the undergraduate student population at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, the Student Government Association will seek to ensure students are represented by maintain a student Senate comprised of Senators representing student life, academic colleges and university admirative departments as outlines in the SGA Bylaws. Additionally, the Senate may be composed of one Senator representing each undergraduate governing body contingent upon a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the SGA Senate for the approval of said governing body seat.

H. **Governing Body Approval for Undergraduate Organizations**

1. A governing body shall be defined as an organization that fulfills all of the following criteria:
 - a. Acts as a liaison between its constituent groups and the Student Government Association of West Chester University.
 - b. Petitions the SGA Finance Committee for funds and distributes them to its constituent groups.
 - c. Recognizes newly forming constituent groups prior to their presentation to the Bylaw Review Committee.
2. Organizations must govern over at least four constituent groups. During this time, these groups must be in good standing.
 - a. Governing Bodies must be created via an application process. The student organization must download the application form found on RamConnect. The SGA parliamentarian may be contacted to assist during this process.
 - b. The application must be completed in full and submitted to the SGA parliamentarian via email.
 - c. The group must submit documentation of their budget, bylaws, member roster, attendance records, and list of potential constituent groups to the SGA parliamentarian from the last one (1) to three (3) years.
 - d. A recommendation letter is required from the group's current president, advisor, and the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement.
 - e. The group requesting to govern must present to its constituent student organizations and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of approval is required from each. A signature is then required from each organizations president and advisor to document the approval.
 - f. A presentation must first be given to the Finance Committee and passed with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of approval.
 - g. Following approval from the Finance Committee, the group must present to the Bylaw Review Committee where its application will

be reviewed. They must be passed by the committee by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of approval.

- h. The SGA parliamentarian then arranges for the group to present a PowerPoint presentation to the Senate who will deliberate and vote on the matter. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of approval is required to establish the governing body.
 - i. A group that is denied the right to govern may repeat the process the following academic semester. .
3. If a governing body is not performing the responsibilities as prescribed in their bylaws the SGA parliamentarian reserves the right to recommend for its de-recognition. Once this charge has been made a vote must take place in the Senate at which time the group may come to plead their case. After a debate has occurred the Senate will vote. Should the group be dissolved they may reapply using the above steps in order to regain recognition as a governing body.

I. **Amendment Policy**

Amendments to this policy must be passed by a majority vote of the Bylaw Review Committee, and the SGA Senate. The vice president of Student Affairs must also approve all changes to ensure no contradictions with university policy.

Written by Adam Swope, SGA Treasurer 2001-02

Amended 12-03-2002 by Jay Mazzerle, SGA Parliamentarian 2002-03

Amended February 2006 by Julie France, SGA Parliamentarian 2005-06

Amended April 2008 by Laura K. McGregor, SGA Parliamentarian 2007-08

Amended 9-2008, 10-2008, 2-2009, and 3-2009 by Colby M. Langweiler, SGA Parliamentarian 2008-2009

Amended 04-10-12 by Alex Jose Paez, SGA Parliamentarian 2011-2012

Amended 04-39-13 by Kyle VanHart, SGA Parliamentarian 2012-2013

Amended Spring 2019 by Sean Milligan, SGA Parliamentarian 2018-2019