

# 2024-2025 University of North Alabama Registered Student Organization (RSO) Handbook



## Introduction

Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) play an important role at the University of North Alabama. RSOs provide unique learning experiences outside of the classroom and create opportunities for students' personal and professional development. UNA also recognizes the positive impact that student organizations can have on recruitment and retention of students.

All RSOs must register with the Center for Student Engagement through [Campus Groups](#) in order to be recognized on campus, have access to student allocation funding, and utilize other campus resources. The registration protocol enables the university to maintain communication with student leaders, promote organizations and their activities to other students, and to provide several specialized services for RSOs.

Any student organization that is recognized by the university is subject to the policies and procedures as outlined in the *Student Handbook* and in the *Registered Student Organization Handbook*.

This handbook is published by the University of North Alabama Center for Student Engagement. Any statements in this book do not supersede other applicable *University Policy*, *State Policy*, *State Law*, or *Federal Law*.



## Table of Contents

<b>Registered Student Organizations (RSOs)</b>	4
Good Standing	4
Privileges of Good Standing	4
Annual Renewal Procedure	5
Leadership Transitioning Procedure	5
Categories of Organizations	6
Fraternities and Sororities	6
Unrecognized Student Organizations	7
Advisor Expectations	7
Campus Advisor Removal Guidelines	7
Registered Student Organization Advisor Removal	8
Advisor Removal by the University	8
Advisor Legal Obligations as Campus Security Authorities	8
Starting a New Organization	9
Re-Registering Inactive Organizations	9
Organizational Limitations	10
<b>Event Guidelines and Policies</b>	10
General Event Guidelines	10
University Staffing/Security at Events	11
Gambling	11
Hazing	11
Organization Discipline Procedures	11
Alcohol at Events	11
Student Conduct	12
GUC Operations Guidelines	12
Advertising on Campus	12
Reporting Incidents	12
<b>Additional Resources</b>	13
Equipment Checkout	13
University Print Shop	13
UNA Dining Services	13
Facilities Administration	13
UNA Police Department	13

## I. Registered Student Organizations (RSOs)

The University of North Alabama recognizes RSOs that seek to further the mission and adhere to the values of the university. As a condition for establishment of the affiliation relationship, the named RSO agrees to abide by all university regulations. RSOs establish their affiliation with the campus through the Center for Student Engagement and must renew their affiliation each academic year.

RSOs should be an asset for leadership and professional development on campus. RSOs must support and enhance the mission and purpose of the institution by one or more of the following ways:

- a. Develop the personal empowerment of those participating.
- b. Develop academic/career competency of those involved.
- c. Develop social/civic responsibility of those involved.
- d. Continue to improve the effectiveness of the university community.

RSOs that do not meet these standards will not be recognized by the Center for Student Engagement, therefore unable to receive student allocation funding and university resources.

### Good Standing

RSOs must be in good standing with the university to be eligible to use resources including: Student Engagement RSO resources and equipment, reserving spaces on campus, setting up promotional tables, team participation in university events, and applying for Student Allocation Funding\*.

To be granted *good standing* status:

- a. The RSO must maintain at least three (3) active student members who are currently enrolled in classes at UNA (except during summer semesters).
- b. The RSO must have no outstanding financial balance beyond 30 days with the university.
- c. The RSO must have at least one (1) representative complete the Campus Groups training.
- d. The RSO must have an active faculty or staff advisor at all times.
- e. The RSO must have fully completed the annual renewal process by the deadline.
- f. The RSO must have up-to-date information in their Campus Groups group, specifically the President and Advisor positions.
- g. All officers/leadership positions in the RSO must be held by enrolled students.

The Director of Student Activities & Leadership Development may revoke **good standing** status if an RSO is violating university policies, the student handbook, the RSO Handbook, or violates any conditions of registration. Organizations suspended from campus automatically lose good standing status.

*\*Please note that there are additional requirements that must be met in order for an organization to qualify for [Student Allocation Funding](#). Please refer to the current Student Allocation Manual for these requirements.*

### Privileges of Good Standing

Upon becoming a registered student organization (RSO), the RSO shall be:

- a. Eligible to utilize available university facilities, equipment, and services.
- b. Eligible to request allocation funding for travel and event purposes according to the

Allocation Manual.

- c. Eligible to collect reasonable dues and to sponsor fundraising events according to university policy.
- d. Eligible to receive awards and honors presented to university organization and members.
- e. Eligible to be listed in appropriate university publications.
- f. Eligible to participate in university sponsored events.
- g. Eligible to post materials on controlled university bulletin boards and digital screens according to university policy.
- h. Eligible to utilize the resources provided by Campus Groups: forms, files, website, events and attendance tracking, etc.

*Any publication utilizing the University Logo must first be approved by the [Office of Enrollment Marketing and Digital Communications](#) and the [Center for Student Engagement](#).*

## Annual Renewal Procedure

Annual renewal takes place between the first day of fall classes and **October 1<sup>st</sup>**.

RSOs in good standing can maintain this status by renewing their registration with the Center for Student Engagement each year during the annual renewal period. Follow the timeline listed below in order to remain in good standing on campus and utilize the available resources:

- Complete the Group Re-Registration form on Campus Groups by **October 1<sup>st</sup>**.
- All RSOs affiliated with an inter/national organization or external governing board must have the inter/national organization or external governing board submit a letter of recognition from the inter/national organization or external governing board when they register. These letters should be on the inter/national organization's official letterhead and it should identify a point of contact for the inter/national organization or governing board. These letters must be dated within the past five years (i.e., the same letter may be used for 5 years).

RSOs that do not meet these requirements by **October 1<sup>st</sup>** will lose their good standing status and all resource privileges for the remainder of the fall semester. These RSOs may redeem their good standing status for the spring semester if they update their online Campus Groups portal and complete the student leader tracks and checklists training. Any RSO that does not meet the requirements by **February 15<sup>th</sup>** will become inactive, and be assumed to no longer function as a student organization.

## Leadership Transitioning Procedure

Transitioning leadership is the process of outgoing leaders/officers meeting with newly elected officers. RSOs that fail to do this struggle to maintain long-term organizational success. During registration and annual renewal, RSOs identify when they host elections. Those that host elections in the Fall must update their Campus Groups portal by **December 1<sup>st</sup>**. RSOs that host elections in the Spring must update their Campus Groups portal by **May 1<sup>st</sup>**. That means that the outgoing officers can update who can access certain resources and who will receive communication.

Transitioning by the deadline ensures the correct individuals receive important communication. Until updates are made, the RSO is unable to utilize electronic resources and former officers will receive communication. If the outgoing officers fail to make the necessary updates by the deadline, new officers may schedule an appointment with the Director of Student Activities & Leadership Development to become oriented with Campus Groups and make the necessary updates.

## Categories of Organizations

### A. **Academic & Professional**

These organizations are connected with an academic program, college, or department and are advised by a faculty or staff member in the program.

### B. **Faith Based**

Faith Based organizations are centered around spiritual or religious values. These organizations may also have a point of contact with the organization who works closely with students (campus minister, ministry director, etc.)

### C. **Fraternities and Sororities**

UNA defines a fraternity/sorority as an organization that exists to promote fraternal relationships and personal development; requirement for membership is subjective and is not limited to a specific field of study, class, year, etc.; and members are not typically permitted to hold membership in other identified fraternities/sororities at the University. RSOs that engage in new member education, ceremonies of initiation, ritual and/or other Fraternity and Sorority Life artifacts (e.g., bigs/littles, wearing letters, etc.) will be considered a fraternity/sorority.

### D. **Governance**

Governance organizations are entities responsible for establishing and overseeing the rules, policies, and decision-making processes within a particular group.

### E. **Honor Societies**

Honor Societies recognize personal achievement and membership is limited to those chosen by the organization based on the objective membership requirements outlined by the intern/national organization.

### F. **Interest/Affinity**

Special Interest/Affinity organizations organize around a specific interest or shared commitment.

### G. **Interprofessional**

An interprofessional group is a collaborative team composed of individuals from different professional backgrounds who work together to provide comprehensive and integrated solutions to complex problems.

### H. **Service**

A community service organization is a group or entity formed with the primary goal of addressing and fulfilling the needs of a specific community or a broader social cause. These organizations engage in various activities and initiatives that aim to improve the well-being, development, and quality of life for individuals within the community, often through volunteer work, charitable efforts, and advocacy programs.

### I. **Social/Recreational**

A social organization fosters interpersonal relationships, shared interests, or common goals among its members. Social/recreational groups may be interchangeable with interest/affinity groups.

### J. **University Service**

Members of these organizations are ambassadors for affiliated programs, departments, colleges, etc. Membership in these organizations is determined by university officials.

## Fraternities and Sororities

The University of North Alabama defines a fraternity/sorority as an organization that exists to promote fraternal relationships and personal development; requirement for membership is subjective and is not limited to a specific field of study, class year, etc.; and members are not typically permitted to hold membership in other identified fraternities/sororities at the University. Organizations that engage in

new member education, ceremonies of initiation, ritual and/or other Fraternity and Sorority Life artifacts (e.g., bigs/littles, wearing letters, etc.) will be considered a fraternity/sorority.

The University of North Alabama requires that all fraternities/sororities, as defined above, uphold the requirements of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life in order to maintain good standing. Most requirements and chapter status definitions can be found in the [FSL Handbook](#). Fraternities and Sororities may be exempt from certain renewal and registration requirements when approved by the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

## **Unrecognized Student Organizations**

Groups that fail to register with the Center for Student Engagement or that have lost recognition do not receive advice, support, or oversight from the university. Any unrecognized group claiming affiliation is operating in violation of university policy. Involvement with any unregistered group can pose a significant risk and students are strongly advised to avoid engagement with these groups as the university is unable to monitor activities. Individuals who affiliate with unrecognized groups may be susceptible to participation in activities that violate university policy and should understand that they will be held individually accountable for their actions.

## **Advisor Expectations**

Advisors play a critical role in the wellbeing of RSOs. Below is a list of expectations the university has of its campus advisors. It is recommended that advisors and group members have conversations about the expectations they have for each other early in the academic year. There are resources available in the Center for Student Engagement to help advisors with these important conversations.

- A. Help the organization to identify its goals and assist the members and officers to clarify their areas of responsibility and related duties.
- B. Participate in major organizational planning.
- C. Encourage organizational officers to keep accurate and consistent records.
- D. Be aware of the purpose and activities of the organization.
- E. Provide information concerning the sponsored organization when requested by a university official.
- F. Be available as a mentor to organization members to assist them with problems and decisions related to the organization.
- G. Act as a source of general information regarding university policies and procedures.
- H. Provide the student leadership with elements of good organizational and administrative practice.
- I. Authorize university reservation request forms.
- J. Maintain an Administrator status of the RSO Campus Groups portal during the advisor term.
- K. Complete the annual [Clery Act training](#).
- L. Ensure their RSO has completed the appropriate reclassification from year to year.
- M. Report any concerning RSO behavior to the Center for Student Engagement in a timely manner.

## **Campus Advisor Removal Guidelines**

Students have the right to remove an advisor from his or her role with the group based on the following procedures.

## Registered Student Organization Advisor Removal

- A. Unless otherwise stated in the RSOs governing documents or the documents of the affiliated organization that has oversight of the campus organization, RSOs that desire to change their on-campus advisor should first attempt to meet with the advisor to address and explain any concerns regarding the advisor's role in the organization.
- B. The RSO and the advisor should agree to a specified period of time for the concerns to be properly addressed.
- C. If the RSO and advisor cannot agree on a period of time or if both do and concerns are not addressed adequately, the majority of the membership listed on an RSO's roster must vote in favor of appealing to the Center for Student Engagement.
- D. The Center for Student Engagement will determine the necessary outcomes, including the possible removal of faculty or staff member from the advisor role.

## Advisor Removal by the University

The RSO's campus advisor is serving in a capacity on behalf of the institution.

The university reserves the right to remove an advisor from his or her role with an RSO. Grounds for removal of a campus advisor by the institution include, but may not be limited to:

- A. Behavior that violates the faculty or staff handbook.
- B. Defiance of university policy, procedure, or protocol.
- C. Failure to report known violations to the conditions of registration within a reasonable period (especially hazing incidents).
- D. Advocacy for or participation in illegal activities.
- E. Promoting environments or activities of unreasonable or unnecessary risk for students.
- F. Using RSO status as a means to circumvent a departmental restriction.
- G. Failure to act in the best interest of the RSOs leaders and its members or pressuring an RSO or its membership to serve the advisor's self-interest.

In the event an RSO's advisor is removed, the RSO will be given 30 days to find a new advisor before losing good standing status. On a temporary basis, the Director of Student Activities & Leadership development (or other designee), will act as the RSO advisor.

## Advisor Legal Obligations as Campus Security Authorities

The Faculty/Staff Advisors for RSOs meet the criteria to serve as Campus Security Authorities (CSA) per the [Clery Act](#). The function of a CSA is to report to the official or office designated by the institution to collect crime report information, such as the campus police or security department, those allegations of *Clery Act* crimes that he or she receives. CSAs are responsible for reporting allegations of *Clery Act* crimes that are reported to them in their capacity as a CSA. This means that CSAs are **not** responsible for investigating or reporting incidents that they overhear students talking about in a hallway conversation; that a classmate or student mentions during an in-class discussion; that a victim mentions during a speech, workshop, or any other form of group presentation; or that the CSA otherwise learns about in an indirect manner. More information about the Clery Act and Campus Security Authorities can be found on the [UNA Police website](#).

All UNA faculty and staff are considered mandatory reporters of [Title IX](#) offenses unless employed in an office that is identified as a confidential resource. Employees that work in areas considered to be confidential resources are encouraged not to serve as on-campus advisors to RSOs due to the risk of a dual relationship with students. For those who are employed in these resources and serve as advisors, it is imperative that they discuss their relationship as an advisor to the students involved with the RSO and disclose that the advisor relationship does not provide confidential reporting. It is



recommended that they pre-empt any possible conversations concerning Title IX offenses by sharing confidential reporting resources. More information about confidential resources can be found on the [Title IX website](#).

## Starting a New Organization

Students interested in forming a new organization at UNA should first review the *Registered Student Organization Handbook*. The handbook is available digitally on the [Center for Student Engagement website](#) or printed in the Center for Student Engagement office.

To register a new organization, students must meet the following criteria:

- Recruit and maintain three (3) students as members of the organization. Members must be currently enrolled students at the university.
- Obtain a faculty or staff advisor. Advisors may be full-time or part-time university employees.
- Draft a constitution under which the proposed organization plans to operate. A sample Constitution may be found [here](#). Organizations affiliated with an inter/national organization may utilize the format approved by their affiliated organization.
- Organizations affiliated with an inter/national organization or governing board must submit a letter of authorization from the inter/national organization or external governing board. These letters should be on the inter/national organization's official letterhead and it should identify a point of contact for the inter/national organization or governing board.
- Finally, organizations must acknowledge they meet all registration certification requirements as outlined in this handbook.

Once the above requirements for starting a new organization have been met, the charter member must register the organization on Campus Groups using the following steps:

1. Log in to [Campus Groups](#) on a desktop, laptop, or tablet.
2. When logged in, click on "Groups" located at the top of the page.
3. Click on "Register New Organization"
4. Complete the information requested and submit.

The deadlines for submitting new organization information are as follows:

- Fall semester: by **October 1<sup>st</sup>**                      Spring semester: by **February 15<sup>th</sup>**

The Center for Student Engagement will review the submitted information and approve, ask for modifications, or reject the request. Requiring modifications means that there is information that needs to be corrected before the request can be approved. Once the Center for Student Engagement has approved the registration form, the organization is entitled to all the rights and privileges of an RSO and must follow the proper steps to maintain good standing with the university. All new organizations must wait one semester after approval before the group is eligible to request Student Allocation Funding.

## Re-Registering Inactive Organizations

1. Students interested in re-registering an inactive RSO must follow the same guidelines and procedures as starting a new organization.
2. The Center for Student Engagement will review the former RSO's information to confirm there were no records of violation of university policies, outstanding bills, or other required documentation. If any matters initiating the closure of the organization are unresolved, the new organization will be denied registration until such matters are resolved.
3. If the organization is eligible for reactivation, the RSO will be approved on Campus Groups.

## Organizational Limitations

RSOs may not represent, enter into contracts, or speak on behalf of the university. The Center for Student Engagement will investigate any possible violations and may refer RSOs/individuals involved to the proper governing boards.

RSOs are not allowed to use “The University of North Alabama” in the official title of their organization’s governing documents.

- **Permitted:** “Study Club” or “Study Club at UNA”
- **Not-Permitted:** “UNA Study Club”

RSOs that are affiliated with a campus department, program, or university sanctioned initiative may use the UNA name if proper documentation and approval is granted by the Dean, VP, or University Cost Center Head of the related program or initiative.

No RSO may ever participate in hazing activities.

No RSO may incite or participate in any interference with or physical disruption of the university or its programs.

RSOs proposed with the intent/purpose of defying university policy, local, state or federal law, or the purpose of inciting or participating in any interference with or physical disruption of the university or its programs, will not be recognized.

RSOs proposed for the purpose of marketing, promoting or selling a specific business, product, individual campaign, or service will not be recognized.

## II. Event Guidelines and Policies

### General Event Guidelines

1. Organizations must be recognized in order to host or promote any event on campus.
2. Only RSO leaders and members who have completed the leadership training checklist on Campus Groups may reserve space on campus.
3. For GUC Operations, the individual that submits the campus space reservation form is the point of contact for the event and will be held financially responsible for damages, cancellation fees, etc.
4. Any misrepresentation of oneself or entity on an event form will be grounds for referral to [Student Conduct](#) and may require the payment of fees. This includes using your credentials as an RSO officer to schedule an event for another entity (i.e., using RSO status to schedule an event for a non-campus group).
5. Events may not be scheduled on or after study day until final exams are completed.
6. Student organizations may not reserve Norton Auditorium or Flowers Hall unless they pay the standard rental fee.
7. The university reserves the right to require campus safety support at certain events. Social events and events where money will be collected require police officers at the expense of the host organization.
8. Four (4) weeks is the minimum notice required for large events or events that require significant security.
9. If the University must unexpectedly close for any reason (inclement weather, security

- threat, pandemic, etc.) any scheduled organizational events must be cancelled.
10. For the avoidance of doubt, closed organizational meetings and information tables are not considered events but still may be subject to other facility-use guidelines from the university.
  11. RSOs may not schedule events on any days when the university is closed for a holiday.
  12. An RSO's campus advisor or other designated staff member should be present at any event with anticipated attendance over **100** people.

## **University Staffing/Security at Events**

Any RSO hosting events that meet any of the following requirements must pay for necessary university staff/security personnel. A minimum of one (1) personnel is required per event. Venue capacity, anticipated attendance, layout, etc. will be used to determine the number required. Personnel are scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. Four (4) weeks is the minimum notice required for events requiring significant security:

- A. Events where money is collected.
- B. Social parties not restricted to an organization's membership. An officer is required when the attendance is the organization's roster + **50%**.
- C. Events open to non-members anticipating more than **100** attendees.

## **Gambling**

According to [Section 65 of the Alabama Constitution](#), lotteries and gift enterprises are prohibited. Any activity that involves the sale of tickets to a raffle in which a prize is awarded by chance is prohibited.

## **Hazing**

The University of North Alabama defines hazing as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or that destroys or removes public or private property, for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization. Participation or cooperation by the person(s) being hazed does not excuse the violation. Failing to intervene to prevent and/or failing to discourage and/or failing to report those acts may also violate the anti-hazing policy.

Hazing is not only against the UNA student code of conduct, but is also against the [law](#). Reports or concerns of hazing can be submitted through the [UNA reporting website](#).

## **Organization Discipline Procedures**

All RSOs are subject to the Code of Student Conduct and Conduct Sanctions as outlined in the [Student Handbook](#) on pages 36-41.

## **Alcohol at Events**

In addition to adhering to all local, state, and federal laws regarding alcohol consumption, RSOs that plan to host an event or events where alcohol will be consumed must meet the following requirements:

- A. The RSO must notify the Center for Student Engagement at annual registration of

- their intent to host events where alcohol will be consumed.
- B. The RSO must submit a Certificate of Liability Insurance including a Host Liquor Liability with \$1 million minimum coverage.
  - C. The RSO must schedule a special meeting with the Director of Student Activities & Leadership Development to review the Event Guidelines for RSOs that Intend to Consume Alcohol published by Fraternity & Sorority Life.
  - D. The RSO must adhere to all guidelines outlined in the Event Guidelines for Organizations that Intend to Consume Alcohol published by Fraternity and Sorority Life.

## **Student Conduct**

All student organizations are expected to follow the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

The Code of Student Conduct and the student conduct process apply to the conduct of students and University of North Alabama affiliated RSOs. The Code of Student Conduct applies to behaviors that take place on campus, and at UNA-sponsored events and may also apply off-campus when the Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Student Conduct or designee determines that the off-campus conduct may present a danger or threat to the health or safety of him/herself or others; and/or impinges upon the rights, property or achievements of self or others or significantly breaches the peace and/or causes social disorder; and/or is detrimental to the educational mission and/or interests of the University.

## **GUC Operations Guidelines**

The Guillot University Center (GUC) is scheduled through the Department of University Center Operations and Events Management.

Rooms can be tentatively scheduled through the University Center Operations and Event Management Office. Checking the [University Calendar](#) is helpful in selecting dates for major events and avoiding conflict with previously scheduled events. Unless you receive confirmation, do not consider your event as booked. Completion of a form does not constitute a booked event. Reservations are not confirmed until a Reservation Form has been completed and received by the University Center Operations and Event Management Office and a confirmation email is received by the requestor stating that the request has been processed and on the calendar. Reservation requests for academic areas can be made after classes have been in session for two (2) weeks of the current semester.

Campus Reservation Forms and a full list of GUC Operations policies can be accessed on the University Center Operations and Events Management [web page](#).

## **Advertising on Campus**

Please refer to the Advertising on Campus procedures outlined on the [GUC Operations & Event Management](#) website.

## **Reporting Incidents**

To report incidents that may be a violation of University of Alabama policies, please visit [here](#). Reports will be reviewed and addressed by the appropriate office. The reporter may be contacted for clarification or further information. In the case of an emergency please contact **911**, local police, or University of North Alabama Police Department.

### III. Additional Resources

#### Equipment Checkout

RSOs in good-standing have the opportunity to utilize Center for Student Engagement resources. A full list of available equipment that can be checked out can be found on [Campus Groups](#). In order to check out equipment, organizations must complete the online reservation form no less than 24 hours in advance of when the equipment is needed. A staff member will review the reservation and confirm that the items are available for the requested dates and times. The RSO is responsible for picking up the equipment during the Center for Student Engagement's hours of operation. All checked out equipment must be returned to the office no later than **24** hours after the event ends. If the event ends on a Friday, or on a day that has a weekend or holiday following, the equipment must be turned in by the next available business day.

#### University Print Shop

The University Print Shop is available for a number of print needs for your organization's events. Any RSO wishing to utilize the print shop will need to first set up a Student Printing Account through the [Print Shop website](#). For questions, students may also meet with the Print Room Operator located in the basement of Cramer Way for a consultation. Please note that fees will apply based on your print needs. **(256) 765-4256**

#### UNA Dining Services

Student Organizations must work with [UNA Dining](#) to help plan food arrangements for any event that is being held in the Guillot University Center or the Wendell Gunn Commons. Dining Services are also available, but not required, for events that take place on campus and outside of these required buildings. **(256) 765-5829**

#### Facilities Administration

If an organization's event will be held on campus and electricity, custodial services, or trash/recycle bins are needed, please request these services through the university's [Facilities Administration office](#). Facilities needs at least a two (2)-week notice. Costs might be associated with custodial cleanup and supplies as well.

Facilities Administration must approve any signs, tents, or any other items that may penetrate the ground. If staging is going to be used, Facilities must approve. Any groups that plan to hang banners on the exterior of campus buildings, or outside on other parts of campus, must go through Facilities to get this approved. Refer to the Advertising on Campus section. **(256) 765-4274**

#### UNA Police Department

UNA Police officers shall be present at any student organization function on or off campus where alcohol is to be consumed. Please refer to the Events and Alcohol section above. **256-765-HELP (4357)**