

Starting a New Student Organization

Starting a new student organization or reviving an inactive one is easy to do! First, decide whether to become an interest group or a recognized student organization. A university recognized interest group is required to have a minimum of one full-time student member and a full-time faculty or staff advisor. Interest groups are easier to start and may be a stepping stone to becoming a recognized student organization, but they are not eligible to receive funding from the Student Government Association. Recognized student organizations are required to have five members, three of which must be full-time students and a full-time faculty or staff advisor, and they can request funding from the Student Government Association. The process:

Forming an Interest Group:

1. **Find members:** Ask friends, classmates, and other students if they want to join the new organization. You may also consider posting flyers around campus to find others who may be interested in joining the organization.
2. **Find an Advisor:** Choose a faculty or staff member to serve as an advisor for your group. Think of faculty and staff whom you or other student members know; or consider those who might be interested in this type of organization. The Student Involvement Office may also be able to suggest individuals who may be interested to serve in this role.
3. **Register Your Interest:** Review the **Policy Statement on University Recognition of Student Organizations and Interest Groups** to understand the policies and procedures governing student groups. Complete the one-page **Application of Intent Form to start an Interest Group**. This form is available online or from the Student Involvement and Activities Office in Room 218 of the Ellison Campus Center. Once these materials have been submitted, the Student Involvement and Activities Office will determine whether to grant university recognition to your organization.
4. **Serve a Probationary Period:** Once you have completed the Application of Intent to Form a Recognized Interest Group Form, your group will begin serving a probationary period for at least one month, or longer until all of the other steps for recognition are successfully completed. In addition, your officers will complete a training session with the Student Involvement and Activities Office about campus policies and procedures.

Forming a New Recognized Student Organization:

1. **Find members:** Ask friends, classmates, and other students if they want to join the new organization. You may also consider posting flyers around campus to find others who may be interested in joining the organization.
2. **Find an Advisor:** Choose a faculty or staff member to serve as an advisor for your group. Think of faculty and staff whom you or other student members know; or consider those who might be interested in this type of organization. The Student Involvement and Activities Office may also be able to suggest individuals who may be interested to serve in this role.
3. **Register your Interest:** Review the **Policy Statement on University Recognition of Student Organizations and Interest Groups** to understand the policies and procedures governing student groups. Complete the one-page **Application of Intent Form to start a University Organization**. This form is available online or from the Student Involvement and Activities Office in Room 218 of the Ellison Campus Center.

4. **Serve a Probationary Period:** Once you have completed the Application of Intent to Form a Recognized Student Organization Form, your group will begin serving a probationary period for at least one month, or longer until all of the other steps for recognition are successfully completed.
5. **Write a Constitution:** Develop a constitution to govern your student organization. Use the **Constitution and Bylaws Workbook** available as a template for developing your organization's constitution. If you are re-starting a group that has existed previously, the Student Involvement and Activities Office may be able to provide you with historical information to assist in developing your constitution and/or purpose. Other resources to help with creating a new constitution include your advisor, your members, the Student Involvement and Activities Office Staff, and the Rules Chair of the Student Government Association. When your constitution is completed, turn it into the Student Involvement and Activities Office for their review.
6. **Choose Officers:** Meet with your new members and advisors to select officers for the organization. Officers must be full-time Salem State students who are in good academic standing.
7. **Register through the Recognition Packet:** Complete the **Student Organization Annual Recognition Packet** to identify all members, officers, and other key information about your new group. Once these materials have been submitted, the Student Involvement and Activities Office will determine whether to grant university recognition to your organization. If recognized by the University, the Student Government Association (SGA) will be notified and your group will be eligible to request recognition and funding from SGA. In addition, your officers will complete a training session with the Student Involvement and Activities Office about campus policies and procedures and if funded by SGA, with the SGA Treasurer to learn how to access and properly use funds.

Privileges of Recognized Student Organizations and Interest Groups:

1. Use of the University name as a representative of Salem State.
2. Reserve rooms on campus.
3. Reserve a table on campus to promote events or issues.
4. Post flyers on campus.
5. Sponsor events on campus and off, in accordance with campus policies.
6. Ability to fundraise for or on behalf of your organization.
7. Access to funding by the Student Government Association (For Recognized Student Organizations only).

Responsibilities of Recognized Student Organizations:

1. Submit the Student Organization Annual Recognition Packet to the Student Involvement and Activities Office. (For Recognized Student Organizations only).
2. Attend an annual training session with a representative of the Student Involvement and Activities Office and/or the SGA Treasurer to learn about campus policies and procedures.
3. Attend all meetings and events, as required by the Student Government Association (For Recognized Student Organizations only).
4. Comply with policies and procedures of the University and SGA, as applicable.