



Student Organization Registration Policy
Student Leadership and Engagement
Policy Updated & Effective: April 1, 2021

Purpose:

Buffalo State recognizes that student clubs and organizations are an important part of the college experience. These learning experiences complement the college's commitment to the intellectual, personal, and professional growth of its students. Student organizations enhance the co-curricular education of Buffalo State students to empower them to succeed and are charged with providing meaningful, fulfilling, and culturally enriching contributions to the campus community.

General Policy:

Registration by Buffalo State allows student organizations to identify an affiliation with the institution. This includes use of the college name and logo, designated services and facilities, recruitment of Buffalo State students on and off campus, fundraising, and space reservation. In addition, all registered Buffalo State student organizations are expected to comply with campus [Student Code of Conduct](#), policies and procedures, rules and regulations, as well as federal, state, and local laws. Registration does not imply Buffalo State endorsement of the positions and views of the organization, nor does the college assume sponsorship of, or responsibility for, any of the activities of the group on and off property of the college.

Benefits of Student Organization Registration

- The college acknowledges the student organization as an affiliated entity.
- Use of the college's name to indicate location of the organization.
- Use of the college's logo and identity marks. Please refer to the college's rules and regulations on trademarks and licensing:
<https://financeandmanagement.buffalostate.edu/trademark-licensing>
- Space Reservation on campus: Registered clubs and organizations are eligible to reserve space in the Campbell Student Union, Butler Library, Academic Buildings, Recreation Fields, and the Houston Gym and Sports Arena.
- Pre-Scheduling Major Events: Registered student organizations can pre-schedule all major events one semester in advance.
- Access to Bengal Connect
- Access to Student Organization Resource Center (student organizations recognized by the United Students Government will receive priority for desk space)
- Ability to be funded through the student activity fee.

Student Organization Affiliation:

To ensure the educational integrity of co-curricular activities on campus, the college has established registration procedures for student organizations. Student organizations include clubs, organizations, fraternities, sororities, social fellowships, and honorary societies. Student Leadership and Engagement is responsible for the oversight of the registration process for student organizations. All student organizations must complete the registration process in order to be considered an affiliated entity of Buffalo State.

Students are prohibited from affiliating with any organization or group that had has its college registration withdrawn. Affiliation is defined as joining; rushing; pledging; accepting an offer of membership; residing in facilitated that are owned, rented, or controlled by the group; or being involved in any activity that would normally be associated with being a member of the group.

Bengal Connect Requirement

All student organizations registered with Buffalo State are required to have an updated and active Bengal Connect page. Bengal Connect is provided by the United Students Government (USG) to connect students with affiliated organizations and extra-curricular activities that enrich the campus community.

Registration Process for New Student Organizations

Students seeking to establish a new organization should verify that the proposed organization does not already exist or resemble the mission of another student organization in some capacity. Proposed student organizations seeking registration from Buffalo State are required to perform the following in order to be formally recognized:

1. Complete the New Independent Student Organization Application via Bengal Connect.
2. Schedule a “Starting a New Student Organization” advisement session with a representative from Student Leadership and Engagement.
3. Find ten (10) Buffalo State students interested in joining the organization.
4. Elect a full executive board to serve as the leadership for your organization. This includes a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary (these individuals count toward the 10-member minimum). All executive board members must be registered as full-time (12 credits), matriculated Buffalo State students.
5. Submit a constitution for the proposed student organization to Student Leadership and Engagement for review and approval.

6. Designate an Advisor who is a full-time Buffalo State faculty/staff member and supports the mission of the proposed organization. All Advisors must complete the [Advisor Agreement Form](#) prior to an organization becoming recognized. If you need an advisor, the Student Leadership & Engagement Office can assist in matching you to a full-time faculty/staff member through the [Advisor Interest Form](#).

Re-Registration Process for Returning Student Organizations

Student organizations already recognized at Buffalo State must apply for re-registration on an annual basis. It is the responsibility of the student organization to complete this process. Failure to comply with the re-registration process may result in a revocation of your student organization's registration status.

The re-registration period each year will begin on April 1st and end on May 31st each academic year.

1. Complete the student organization re-registration process via Bengal Connect.
2. Provide an updated active membership roster of at least ten (10) Buffalo State students, including the newly elected executive board (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary) for the upcoming academic year. All executive board members must be registered as full-time (12 credits), matriculated Buffalo State students.
3. Submit the student organization's most recent constitution and by-laws Bengal Connect.
4. Submit an updated [Advisor Agreement Form](#). Student organization advisors must be a full-time Buffalo State faculty/staff member. If you need a new advisor, the Student Leadership & Engagement Office can assist in matching you to a full-time faculty/staff member through the [Advisor Interest Form](#).

All student organizations will be required to attend the mandatory annual meeting with Student Leadership and Engagement to be trained on Buffalo State policies and procedures. This meeting will occur the first few weeks of the academic year. Each student organization will be required to send at least one representative to this meeting. Failure to do so may result in the following:

- All current space reservations will be placed on hold.
- Unable to reserve future space in the Campbell Student Union, Butler Library, Academic Buildings, Recreation Fields, and the Houston Gym and Sports Arena.

United Students Government (USG) Recognition

The United Students Government (USG) serves as an official recognizing agent at Buffalo State. USG recognition is a separate process and provides student organizations the opportunity to qualify for activity fee funds in addition to other benefits.

All currently recognized USG member organizations must complete USG re-recognition once every three-years. However, all organizations are required to register via Bengal Connect with updated roster, contact information, adviser, and constitution on an annual basis.

Advisors for Student Organizations

All student organizations affiliated with Buffalo State must have a full-time faculty/staff member serve as their advisor. Graduate Assistants or Interns are not eligible to serve as a student organization advisor. The role of the advisor is an essential role in the development and success of student organizations. Furthermore, the advisor serves in partnership with Student Leadership and Engagement, the student government, and the academic/administrative offices at Buffalo State.

Roles and Responsibilities of Advisors

- Have knowledge and understanding with the student organization(s) mission, values, and history, lending continuity to the organization.
- Be aware and attend (when necessary) activities, meetings, and programs sponsored by the student organization.
- Build trust with the student organization and establishing guidelines for their role as advisor.
- Encourage members to assume responsibility for their actions and effectiveness of their programs.
- Guiding, while at the same time, allowing freedom for members to plan and coordinate their own activities and programs.
- Providing knowledge and information relevant to the needs of the organization through expertise and experience.

Advisor Agreement Form

All student organization advisors are required to complete an [Advisor Agreement Form](#) through Student Leadership and Engagement. This serves as an official agreement between the advisor, the student organization, and Student Leadership and Engagement that the faculty/staff member understands the roles/responsibilities associated with the position. The Advisor Agreement Form must be annually renewed each spring semester as part of the student organization re-recognition process.

Advisor Interest Form

All student organizations are required to have a full-time Buffalo State faculty/staff member serve as their advisor. If an organization does not have an advisor at the time of their re-

registration, the Student Leadership & Engagement Office can assist in matching you to a full-time faculty/staff member through the [Advisor Interest Form](#).

Student Conduct & Community Standards

Student organizations add value to the campus community and the overall student experience. All recognized Buffalo State student organizations are expected to comply with campus [Student Code of Conduct](#), policies and procedures, rules and regulations, as well as federal, state, and local laws. Student organizations recognized by the United Students Government (USG), in addition to compliance with Buffalo State's Student Conduct and Community Standards, must adhere to the policies and procedures under USG's Judicial Council.

Discrimination and Harassment

Buffalo State is committed to the need for proper treatment of all members of the college community. The college can achieve its educational mission only in an atmosphere of mutual respect which is free from intolerance, and which offers equal opportunity to all. Every member of the college community shares the responsibility for addressing incidents of disrespect for dignity of others, acts of discrimination, racism, bigotry, harassment, exclusion, abusive language, or mistreatment of individuals or groups.

Among the goals of the college is the empowerment of a diverse population of students to succeed as citizens of a challenging world. The college is dedicated to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual vitality, collegiality and collaboration. It will not have attained its goal until and unless all in its midst obtain fair and equitable treatment in employment and education. For this reason, Buffalo State condemns, and pledges itself to fight against all acts of invidious discrimination, bias, intolerance, or harassment.

Racial discrimination is a particularly serious problem. The goals of the college are undermined and human dignity is offended where employment or educational benefits, opportunities or privileges are denied or restricted on the basis of race, religion, color, or national origin, or where a racially hostile environment exists. Racial discrimination and illegal discrimination of any sort limit the opportunity for individuals to realize their potential and deny them the rigors, joys, and fulfillment of intellectual curiosity.

Therefore:

It is the policy of Buffalo State to provide an employment and educational environment free from invidious discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital or veteran's status. It shall be a violation of this policy for any agent, student or employee of Buffalo State to discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, marital or veteran's status against any individual with respect to the terms of employment, education or benefits of any program or activity at Buffalo State.

Non-Discrimination in Membership and Programming

No club or organizations shall be registered if its constitution, rules, regulations or practices violate Buffalo State's Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

Exceptions: Greek lettered organizations, social fellowships, Honors groups or other organizations allowed to have selective membership requirements. These groups are not allowed to receive funding from the Mandatory Student Activity Fees.

Hazing Policy

Hazing, is defined and prohibited by both college regulations and New York state law. These regulations apply to all groups and organizations operating on campus.

New York State Anti-Hazing Law

(Education Law S.6831-B or A.11012B)

“The trustees or other governing board of every college chartered by the regents or incorporated by special act of the legislature shall adopt rules and regulations for the maintenance of public order on college campuses and other college property used for educational purposes and provide a program for the enforcement thereof. Such rules and regulations shall prohibit, among other things, any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers mental or physical health or involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs for the purpose of initiation into or affiliation with any organization. Such rules and regulations shall govern the conduct of students, faculty, and other staff as well as visitors and other licensees and invitees on such campuses and property. The penalties for violations of such rules and regulations shall be clearly set forth therein and shall include provisions for the ejection of a violator from such campus and property, in the case of a student or faculty violator, his suspension, expulsion or other appropriate disciplinary action and, in the case of an organization which authorizes such conduct, rescission of permission for that organization to operate on campus property. Such penalties shall be in addition to any penalty pursuant to the penal law or any other chapter to which a violator organization may be subject. . .”

New York State Penal Law

(Paragraph 120.16 and 120.17)

A person can be found guilty of hazing in the first degree (Class A Misdemeanor) if, in the course of a person's “initiation into or affiliation with any organization,” that person “intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk or physical injury to such person or a third person and thereby causes such injury” (Penal Law, paragraph 120.16). A conviction of this offense now carries a potential penalty of a fine up to \$1,000, one year in jail, or both. A new offense designated as hazing in the second degree (a violation) incorporates a

nearly identical definition except that no actual injury to any person need be proven (Penal Law, paragraph 120.17).