Student Organization COVID-19 Protocols
Student Leadership and Engagement
Effective: August 10, 2020

Purpose

Buffalo State College 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.

We also are aware the importance for providing a plan for a safe restart of on-campus operations when the fall semester begins on August 31, 2020. This list of protocols is meant to provide guidance to Buffalo State College’s student organizations as we work to limit population density and promote social distancing measures for the health and safety of our Bengal community.

For more information regarding Buffalo State College’s Plan for Restarting Campus Operations issued by the President’s Office: https://coronavirus.buffalostate.edu/restart

General Safety Protocols

Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Use of face coverings will be an integral part of the re-opening of campus operations. Per Buffalo State College’s Plan for Restarting Operations, all students will be provided a PPE kit – including two reusable and washable face coverings, hand sanitizer, a sanitary key (to open and touch surfaces safely), disinfecting surface wipes, a hand sanitation card, and information about COVID-19 health resources, upon arrival to campus. Facial coverings will be used in classrooms, residence hall common areas, event and public spaces. They will be required for visitors and vendors, in spaces where 6 feet of physical distance is unavoidable, and inside the Campbell Student Union.

Appropriate Social Distancing will be Enforced: According to CDC guidelines, limiting face-to-face contact with others is the best way to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home and place of residence. To practice social or physical distancing we ask in the Campbell Student Union students, faculty, and staff stay at least 6 feet apart from other people. Signage will be posted with these expectations throughout the Campbell Student Union.
**Vulnerable Populations:** We are cognizant that we have students, faculty, and staff members with underlying health conditions that puts them at risk or those who are uncomfortable with face-to-face interaction during this pandemic. Therefore, we encourage student organizations to be flexible and enable the ability for members to have the option to participate remotely and/or hold the activity entirely online.

**Student Organization Management**

**Extracurricular Activities Including Intramurals and Student Performances:** Per Buffalo State College’s *Plan for Restarting Campus Operations*, activities reserved through Events Management, Athletics, and Student Leadership and Engagement in performance spaces and the Campbell Student Union will be conducted using density reduction – based on the capacity of the room – of no more than 50 percent of the original capacity.

Student groups that reserve space for an event will review a document regarding policies pertaining to social distancing, mask wearing and relevant health and safety practices. **Student groups will be encouraged to host virtual events.**

Any event that cannot be replicated virtually (indoor or outdoor) will be considered and reviewed under current COVID protocols per local, state, and federal guidelines. This includes, but not limited to, capacity, face coverings, physical distancing, etc. Decisions on events are subject to change pending updates to guidelines and protocols. **Written approval must be provided by Student Leadership and Engagement in order for a student organization to host an in-person event.**

If an in-campus event is approved by a venue manager, the student organization advisor must be present for the entirety of the event.

**Bengal Pause:** To comply with COVID-19 guidance, the tabling aspect of Bengal Pause will be suspended for Fall 2020. To accommodate queuing and physical distancing, the physical layout of the Campbell Student Union lobby will no longer be available for tabling. As such, this is an opportunity to develop new and innovative ways to reach audiences.

**Student Organization Meetings:** We anticipate that nearly all student organizations will need to conduct their recurring club meetings virtually. Given space availability and capacity restrictions for social distancing, there will not be sufficient venues to accommodate in person meetings. Furthermore, hosting meetings virtually will permit those students completing their studies online the opportunity to connect with your group.

**Bengal Connect Requirement:** All Buffalo State recognized student organizations are required to have an updated and active Bengal Connect page by **September 18, 2020.** Bengal Connect is provided by the United Students Government (USG) to connect students with organizations and extra-curricular activities that enrich the campus community.
**Performance and Dance:** Recreational activities such as in-person dance and performance that are conducted indoors will not be allowed for the Fall 2020 semester. It is recommended that these activities be conducted virtually and, weather permitting, outdoors. Student Leadership and Engagement will revisit the suspension of dance and performance activities for the Spring 2021 semester.

**Campbell Student Union Availability and Capacities:** Conference style meeting rooms will remain offline for the Fall 2020 semester (Campbell Student Union 412, 416). The Assembly Hall and Social Hall may become available for programming. Use of the space is dependent on the event details, availability, and staffing.

**Student Organization Offices and Storage:** Student organization offices in the Campbell Student Union will be offline for the Fall 2020 semester. Students that need to access their offices to retrieve personal belongings or physical property for student organization operations can contact studentunion@buffalostate.edu.

**Fraternities and Sororities:** All fraternity and sorority recruitment activities must be conducted virtually with the exception of the event management process outlined above. All new member education and initiation programs must be conducted virtually, preferably under the direction of your regional/(inter)national office. Your new member education plan shall be submitted to Student Leadership and Engagement for review and approval by September 16, 2020.

All student Greek organizations will be required to have an updated and active page on Bengal Connect. Furthermore, all “official” events sponsored by fraternities and sororities must be submitted as an event through Bengal Connect. No “unofficial” activities shall be permitted. A modified window for new member education will be established to align with the updated academic calendar. Look for more detailed information soon.

**In Closing**

We understand and acknowledge that the provisions outlined above are not the campus life experience we were all hoping for. We also hope that you recognize the necessity to implement these protocols for the upcoming semester. It is our hope that we will return to a more “normal” college experience in the near future. Conducted activities in a modified or virtual way will require all of us to think differently and creatively. In challenging times like these, we have the opportunity to tap into new mechanisms and ways of doing things that can be revolutionary and stand the test of time. Please continue to join us in creating the vibrant college experience we all need and want, especially for those new students that are joining our community.