

SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVISING

SET EXPECTATIONS EARLY

As early as possible, it is critical to hold an open dialogue with your organization about what your expectations are for the organization, and what their expectations are for your role as the advisor. This should be done on an annual basis to avoid any confusion from one year to another.

AVAILABILITY

Being accessible to the leaders really increases your effectiveness. Make sure they can reach you through e-mail or your office number. Attending regular meetings or events also helps in showing that you are willing to contribute.

CHALLENGE THE ORGANIZATION

Encourage the organization to try new and creative programs. Challenge them to not be satisfied with what has been done in the past but to develop programs that enhance their experience at Clarke in new ways.

INFORMATION RESOURCE

The students will frequently call upon the advisor for information. Responding to students with comments that you will assist them in finding answers will go a long way to establish your credibility as a new advisor with the students. Advisers should expect to be consulted regularly by the officers concerning their plans for programs and activities. Additionally, advisers should know what events and projects are being planned and should offer their ideas and suggestions without dominating program planning.

MITIGATE RISK

As an advisor of a student organization, you are the university's representative regarding the organization's activities. As such, advisors are expected to give reasonable and sound advice about such things as programs, use of facilities and operational procedures. If advisors have reason to question an action taken by the organization, express concerns directly to the organization in person, and follow up in writing, including the date, a suggested alternative to the questionable action, a warning, etc.

FINANCIAL SUPERVISION

While each organization should elect its own treasurer, the advisor may need to spend some time in supervising the financial records. Advisers may find it necessary to teach the treasurer the elements of simple bookkeeping. The adviser should be aware of the organization's expenditures, income and the prompt payment of bills.

ORGANIZATIONAL RECORD KEEPING

The adviser should encourage that the treasurer and secretary maintain adequate records and minutes of the organization's activities. Because records are an important part of the organization's history as well as containing information of value to future officers, they should be protected from loss, and archived in the student organization room on an annual basis.

ORGANIZATION EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

Advisers need not attend all organization meetings and social functions but should attend whenever possible. By participating, the adviser can help set the social tone of the occasion, be available to deal with problems and demonstrate their continuing interest in the organization's activities.

OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS

It is important for the adviser to have a discussion with the executive officers soon following their election to the board about expectations. The adviser needs to address availability due to family or other personal and professional commitments. There may be activities that are very important to the organization due to tradition or participation by the advisor where the students will want their adviser to be present.

MOTIVATE AND ENCOURAGE

Understanding what motivates individual members and executive officers will assist you in knowing who to send a thank you note to, check in with, or just pat on the back. It is important to recognize not all students are motivated in the same manner. Utilize the students to provide peer recognition and motivation.

PROVIDE CONTINUITY

Providing continuity is a very important responsibility. The turnover of officers and members in a student organization is constant. The advisers orient new officers and members to this history and help them build on it. Continuity also implies a link with the future and the adviser can play an important role in helping to develop long-term plans for the future of the organization and communicate these plans to succeeding members.