RECOGNITION AND APPROVAL OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

A. Purpose

1. The University of Texas-Pan American recognizes student organizations as an integral part of University life.

2. Student organizations offer an opportunity for personal growth and development of special talents and interests.

3. The interaction of students, faculty and staff in student organizations creates meaningful learning experiences and fosters long-lasting friendships.

B. General Provisions

The Office of the Dean of Students has the responsibility for the registration and official University recognition of student organizations.

1. Definitions:

   In this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning,

   a. "Student" means a person who is currently enrolled in residence at the University, or who is accepted for admission or readmission to the University, or who has been enrolled at the University in a prior semester or summer session and is eligible to continue enrollment in the semester or summer session that immediately follows.

   b. "Authorized representative" means a person designated to represent an organization as required in Subsection B.3.c.;

   c. "Dean of students" means the dean of students or any delegate or representative of the dean of students;

   d. "Organization" means a student group holding a valid registration under this chapter;

   e. "University" means The University of Texas-Pan American;

   f. "Weekday" means Monday through Friday except for official University holidays; "day" means calendar day.

2. Registration

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a. Registration Required:

Any group of students wanting to exercise any of the rights and privileges listed in Subsection B.3.a shall apply to the dean of students to be registered as an organization.

b. Eligibility

An organization is eligible for registration if:

1) three or more students sign its application for registration;

2) it limits membership to students, faculty, and staff of the University;

3) a majority of the membership of the student organization must be students;

4) only students may vote and hold office;

5) it does not deny membership on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation (but an organization created primarily for religious purposes may restrict the right to vote or hold office to persons who subscribe to the organization's statement of faith);

6) there are no financial holds against the organization with the University;

7) it is not under disciplinary penalty prohibiting registration; and

8) it conducts its affairs in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, The University of Texas System Board of Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, the *Handbook of Operating Procedures*, and published administrative rules.

c. Application

A group of students wanting to become a registered student organization shall apply on a form prescribed by the dean of students. The form shall include:

1) the name of the proposed organization;

2) the names of at least three students, their student identification numbers, and any signatures required by the dean of students;

3) the name of at least one advisor who shall be a full-time faculty member, full-time administrator, or full-time staff member of the organization; and

4) the organization's proposed constitution.

d. Action on Application

1) In considering a completed application, the dean of students shall not pass on the merits of the proposed organization's purpose, but shall register the applicant unless it is ineligible under Subsection B.2.b.

2) The dean approves the registration of an organization by signing the application form and placing it on file.

3) If an organization is refused registration, the dean shall provide the applicant with a copy of a written statement of the reasons for refusal, and the applicant may appeal in accordance with Subsection B.5.

3. Rights and Duties

a. Recognition and Activities

An organization is entitled to all rights under section 5.6.2 of the Handbook of Operating Procedures and to be listed as a registered student organization.

b. Membership

1) An organization must restrict its membership to students, faculty, and staff of the University, but it may not deny membership on any basis that violates Subsection B.2.b.

2) A majority of the total active membership of the student organization must be students.

3) Only students may vote and hold office.

c. Obligations

1) Every registered student organization shall furnish to the dean of students at the beginning of each semester a list of at least three officers or other members of the organization who are authorized to speak for or represent the organization in its relations with the University and who are authorized

to receive for the organization official notices, directives, or information from the University. Each list shall be kept current and accurate throughout the semester by the organization, and it shall be conclusively presumed that the officers or members whose names are on the list most recently filed by the organization are authorized to speak for and represent the organization in its relations with the University and are authorized to receive for the organization official notices, directives, or information from the University.

2) At the beginning of the fall and spring semester, each registered student organization must file with the dean of students a written statement that the organization does not, and will not during the semester

   a) have as a member any person who is neither a student nor a member of the faculty or staff of the University;

   b) deny membership on any basis prohibited by Subsection B.2.b, or

   c) engage in activities that involve the subjection of a probationary member of the group to dangerous, harmful, or degrading acts. Regents' *Rules* Series 50101, Section 2.8 states that such acts are a violation with or without the consent of the probationary member, commonly referred to as hazing.

   If an organization fails or refuses to file the required statement, or if the Dean determines that the statement is or has become false, disciplinary proceedings shall be initiated by the dean, after providing notice.

3) Any amendments to a statement of purpose or amendments to the constitution of a student organization are subject to review and approval by the Office of the Dean of Students.

4) Organizations are responsible for all information contained within the Student Organization Handbook published by the Office of the Dean of Students each fall semester.

5) At least one officer from each student organization must attend an alcohol awareness workshop each fall semester. Dates and times of these annual workshops will be announced each fall through the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in suspension for the student organization for the remainder of the semester.

6) At least one member from each student organization must attend a food safety workshop before any food products may be sold during a fundraiser.

7) No organization may re-register or use the facilities of the University as long as it owes a monetary debt to the University and the debt is considered delinquent by the crediting University agency.

8) Disputes within organizations shall be resolved by the members of the organization in accordance with their constitution and bylaws. The University will act only in an advisory capacity unless the situation involves a violation of policy.

d. Use of University Name or Sponsorship

1) A student organization shall not use the name of the University or the name of The University of Texas System as a part of the name of the organization, and it shall neither display the seal of either the University or the U. T. System in connection with any activity of the organization nor use such seal or seals as a part of any letterhead, sign banner, pamphlet, or other printed material that bears the name of the organization.

2) No student, faculty, staff member, or unregistered group, or registered student organization may advertise or promote events or activities or solicit funds in a manner that falsely suggests that the event or activity is sponsored by the University.

4. Fiscal and Accounting Procedures

a. Accounting Procedure

Within thirty days after the beginning of each long semester, the organization shall file with the dean of students a final report, signed by an authorized representative of the organization, fully disclosing the sources and amounts of money obtained from solicitations during the preceding semester or summer session, the purposes and amounts of the expenditures made during the preceding semester or summer session, and any other information required by the dean about solicitation activities during the preceding semester.

5. Appeals

a. An organization aggrieved by a decision under this policy is entitled to submit a written appeal to dean of students. The notice may be informal but shall contain the organization's name and mailing address, a contact person, a concise description of the decision being challenged, the organization's reasons for disagreeing with the decision, the date the decision was announced, and who made the decision.

b. The organization may petition in writing to the Committee of Student Organizations to review the decision being appealed once the Dean of Students has made a ruling.

C. <u>Participation in Student Government</u>

1. The Student Government Association currently authorized at The University of Texas-Pan American is hereby approved. It shall have such jurisdictions and shall exercise such powers as the U.T. System Board of Regents may now or hereafter delegate to it.

   a. Approval of Changes.--An amendment to the constitution or bylaws of the Student Government Association may be adopted by the Association, in accordance with its constitution and bylaws, but the change shall not become effective until transmitted to and approved by the Vice President of Student Affairs, the President, and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

   c. Amendment or Repeal by the Vice President for Student Affairs.--The Vice President of Student Affairs shall have the power, when in his or her judgment the interests of the University require it, to amend or repeal any provision in the constitution or bylaws of the Student Government Association, but such action shall not be effective until approved by the President and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

   d. Salaried Employees.--All persons officially employed on salary by or under the direct supervision of the Student Government Association shall be subject to approval by the Vice President of Student Affairs and the President.

   e. Annual Financial Reports.--The Student Government Association shall make annually a complete financial report to the Vice President for Business Affairs, and shall make such special reports as may be called for by him or her. A duplicate copy of each report shall be filed with the Vice President of Student Affairs. Committees and administrative units of the Student Government

Association shall make such interim reports of financial condition as may be required by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

2. The Student Government Association shall be a recognized forum of student opinion.

   a. When the Student Government Association takes a position with reference to issues directly related to the University and its operations, its recommendations shall go through the dean of students, the Vice President of Student Affairs, the President, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Chancellor.

   b. When the Student Government Association takes a position on non-University issues, it shall make clear the fact that it does not speak for the University.

   c. The Student Government Association may conduct polls, initiate petitions, and/or establish forums for debate or discussion under conditions approved by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

   d. Officers of the Student Government Association may so identify themselves when they express their personal views, but they shall then make it clear that they are not speaking for the University, or for the student body, and they shall make it clear they are not speaking for the Student Government Association unless the legislative body of that association has authorized the statement in advance.

D. <u>Review</u>

This policy shall be reviewed by the dean of students every five years.