

University of Maine
Division of Student Life

Relationship Agreement Between the University of Maine and Student Organizations

Introduction

Student organizations at the University of Maine (UMaine) are a vital and integral part of student life and students' UMaine experience. These organizations augment the quality of student life, contribute to educational and personal development, and provide outstanding co-curricular and extra-curricular activities for the student body. The overall goals of student organizations are many and include providing structured opportunities for improving scholarship and academic performance, exercising leadership, creating a sense of community, developing character, and providing excellent service and social interaction experiences.

Recognition of Student Organizations

This agreement represents the intent and scope of the relationship between UMaine and Student Government, Inc. of the University of Maine (hereafter referred to as UMSG), as well as student organizations recognized through this document. It is effective from the date signed and is continuous until or unless both parties agree to modifications.

It is the intent of UMaine and UMSG to create a collaborative student organization recognition process. It will be the responsibility of UMaine, specifically the Division of Student Life (hereafter referred to as SL) and UMSG to approve groups seeking recognition. Groups will submit their application online, where it will be received by both the Coordinator for Student Organizations (or appropriate SL staff) and the Vice President of Student Organizations from UMSG. Approval is then considered by SL and, if additionally seeking recognition from UMSG, approval is also considered by the Student Organizations Committee, subject to the oversight of the General Student Senate.

The specific criteria for groups to become recognized UMaine student organizations will continue to be outlined in the [Student Handbook](#), generated by SL, and additionally in the Student Organizations Recognition Policies (SORP) generated by UMSG. The criteria and forms are those in effect at the time the student group requests approval. A copy of the current relevant sections is attached by way of reference. UMaine and UMSG shall streamline the paperwork and process for the ease of students, however it is understood separate forms may be required to address the individual legal responsibilities of each respective entity.

Liability Protections of Student Organizations

An approved and recognized UMaine student organization is provided the general liability protections of UMaine; however, the organization or its members must be participating in an approved activity or event, and the organization and its members must be acting in good faith with reasonable belief that

the action was in the best interest of UMaine and was not knowingly unlawful or against promulgated or published UMaine or University of Maine System (hereafter referred to as UMS) policy for these protections to be applied. Nevertheless, the UMaine protections do not extend to separately incorporated legal entities, including but not limited to UMSG, sororities or fraternities, and their respective members while acting within the scope or on behalf of that organization. Such entities are responsible for their own liability and are required to have appropriate liability protections in place to cover the entity and the entity's members.

UMaine does not provide liability insurance coverage or physical damage insurance coverage (collision or comprehensive) for non-UMaine vehicles, including personal vehicles or vehicles rented by a student organization. If an organization member uses a personal vehicle for a student organization activity or event, that person's own vehicle insurance will be responsible for any insurance claims. For rental vehicles, the student organization should purchase insurance through the rental car company. UMaine cannot reimburse an employee, student, another private owner, or their insurer for any deductible or liability claim paid by their auto insurance, or for any damage to a personally owned vehicle or vehicle rented by the student organization.

UMaine does not provide accident, health or life insurance for student organization members hurt or injured in connection with the organization's activities or damage coverage to individual property.

Scope and Relationship to Parent Organizations

It is the intention of both UMSG and UMaine that this agreement and recognition process cover all student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, with exceptions noted herein. Some student organizations are related to state, regional, national or other parent organizations. In addition, some of these have alumni/alumnae relationships and groups. UMaine and UMSG expect that the interaction between these parent organizations or related groups support and assist UMaine student organizations in maintaining productive and positive relationships in the educational community at UMaine by reinforcing and upholding the expectations and standards expressed by UMaine and UMSG. Whenever a parent organization's policies or guidelines conflict with the UMaine's policies and guidelines, the UMaine policies and guidelines take precedence.

Governing Responsibilities

Once recognized, student organizations will be administered and organized by SL and by UMSG, if also UMSG recognized, according to its Constitution and Bylaws. Each organization must designate an advisor(s). The advisor(s) must be a current UMaine employee (faculty or staff). If an organization cannot identify an advisor, it should contact the Coordinator for Student Organizations or the appropriate SL staff member for assistance. It is recommended that the organization and advisor create a written agreement that outlines the expectations of both parties.

Expectations of advisors include but are not limited to the following:

- Meet at least once per semester with the executive board or officer group and keep them updated on institutional matters/issues;
- Attend full organization meetings periodically but not less than once per semester;
- Advise the executive board or officer group regarding trips and travel, business meetings, inform organizations about the Student Travel Policy, and respond to concerns from members about officer elections, transition, and the group's development;
- Provide continuity, perspective, background, and institutional insight as appropriate;
- Inform organization of UMaine policies, guidelines, liability issues, rules, regulations, and procedures to ensure the organization's success;
- Hold at least one goal-setting or assessment meeting annually for the executive board, officer group, or entire membership;
- Monitor and advise the group regarding risk management decisions and practices, issues regarding the Student Conduct Code and University of Maine policies, procedures and practices; and
- Report crime(s) of which they become aware to UMPD and SL.

Should an organization fail to have an advisor or cooperate with that advisor in meeting these expectations, in the determination of UMaine, then its recognition may be revoked. Each organization must maintain current rosters of active members and contact information for members and advisors. The Organization Update Form must be submitted to UMSG and SL annually **and** when a change in any officer or advisor occurs. The Organization Update Form is available to organizations on both the UMSG and SL websites.

As with all UMaine students, the Student Conduct Code applies to recognized student organizations and their members. All policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of UMS, UMaine and of UMSG apply. Violation of the Student Conduct Code, UMS, UMaine and/or UMSG policies, procedures, rules, and regulations, including the SORP document and Student Handbook, will be handled and addressed as outlined in those documents.

If UMSG removes recognition (de-recognizes), or fails to recognize or re-recognize a student organization, that student organization is no longer deemed a recognized UMaine student organization, unless UMaine should decide to grant separate affiliation, to be managed by SL at their discretion. Student organizations can appeal the decision to de-recognize them, and/or failure to recognize or re-recognize them using the process outlined in the particular document (i.e., Student Handbook, SORP document, Student Conduct Code) that was used to de-recognize, and/or not recognize/re-recognize them. Appeals of corrective action decisions will be governed by the procedures outlined in the appropriate documents under which authority to take the action was taken.

Social Functioning and Programming

The Campus Activities office has tremendous experience and expertise in planning events (e.g., workshops, conferences, dances, speakers, socials, etc.). In order to avoid complications with liability insurance and coverage, student organizations must register their events with Campus Activities prior to the event. A link to the event management process and policy can be found on the Campus Activities and the UMaine website. If assistance is needed for the event management process or form, consult with Campus Activities staff.

Travel

If groups are traveling in-state, out-of-state or internationally, please refer to the Student Handbook to follow the travel policy. Additionally, in certain civic emergencies, travel may be restricted and/or additional guidelines implemented (ex., COVID-19). Recognized groups must adhere to these additional state, federal and/or UMS policies.

Agreement, Support and Signatures

We agree to abide by all provisions of this Relationship Agreement Between UMaine and UMSG.

President of Organization (printed)	Signature of President of Organization	Date
-------------------------------------	--	------

Vice President of Organization (printed)	Signature of Vice President of Organization	Date
--	---	------

Treasurer of Organization (printed)	Signature of Treasurer of Organization	Date
-------------------------------------	--	------

Vice President of Student Organizations for UMSG (printed)	Signature of VPSO	Date
--	-------------------	------

Coordinator for Student Organizations (printed)	Signature of the CSO	Date
---	----------------------	------

Advisor of Organization (printed)	Signature of Advisor of Organization	Date
-----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------