

STUDENT ORGANIZATION EXPLORE HANDBOOK

How to Establish a Student Organization at CCCC



STUDENT LIFE MISSION

The Office of Student Life at Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) facilitates student learning and development by providing activities and services that enhance positive relationships among students, the College and the community. These relationships are created and nurtured through accessible programs and services, connections to campus and community resources, and co-curricular opportunities that focus on diversity, leadership, service, and personal well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on taking the first step toward making your college experience even more rewarding by initiating a new student organization at CPCC. The Office of Student Life is here to help you navigate the process for establishing a new organization and to support you in becoming a successful organization on campus.

This handbook outlines procedures that students must follow in order to establish a new student organization. Before you begin your exploration process, you will need to ask yourself:

- Why are you looking to start a student organization?
- What do you want to accomplish with your student organization?
- Is there a similar organization already in place?

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STUDENT LIFE CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like to establish a new student organization at CPCC, we encourage you to first speak with the Student Life Coordinator on your campus for some helpful insights and to learn more about the proper procedures outlined in this handbook.

STUDENT LIFE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR CLUBS

Office of Student Life		Phone Number: 704-330-6584 Fax Number: 704-330-6442
Central Campus	Location: Overcash, 241	Phone Number:
Jennifer Conway	Student Life Coordinator-Clubs & leadership	704-330-6743
Jamar Whitfield	Student Life Coordinator-Programming	704-330-6665
Justin Knoll	Student Life Coordinator-Recreation	704-330-2722 x3243
Demika Wallace	Administrative Assistant II	704-330-6584
Amanda Capobianchi	Associate Dean of Student Life	704-330-6374
Cato Campus	Location: Cato III bldg., Room 021	Phone Number:
David Mahatha	Student Life Coordinator	704-330-4822
Harper Campus	Location: Room 342	Phone Number:
Anita McGill	Student Life Coordinator	704-330-4422
Harris Campus	Location: Harris I bldg., Room 1232	Phone Number:
John Gomez	Student Life Coordinator	704-330-4622
Levine Campus	Location: Room 1401	Phone Number:
Nakeshia Staley	Student Life Coordinator	704-330-4226
Merancas Campus	Location: Transport Systems, 231	Phone Number:
Jesse Bennett	Student Life Coordinator	704-330-4174

***All CPCC employees may be reached via email at their [first name] dot [last name] @cpcc.edu for example: Jennifer.conway@cpcc.edu

BENEFITS OF GETTING INVOLVED IN STUDENT LIFE

Students should make the most of their college experience and maximize what is learned in the classroom by becoming engaged outside the classroom. By branching out and getting involved in student organizations, students will develop stronger relationships with other students, faculty and staff.

Benefits to CPCC Students

- Meet new people
- Learn more about yourself and others
- Interact and build relationships with staff and faculty members
- Gain practical experience
- Network with local community members
- Serve their community
- Learn time management skills
- Pursue special interests, hobbies, and issues
- Explore career opportunities and goals
- Develop leadership skills
- Apply what is being taught in the classroom
- Work with individuals from diverse backgrounds

Benefits to CPCC Student Organizations

- Participate in festivals and other events sponsored by the Student Life Office in order to educate the College and community about the purpose of your organization, gain exposure, and recruit new members.
- Gain access to free leadership workshops and consultation through the Student Life Office.
- Have the opportunity to travel or attend conferences (if student organization funding is available).
- Reserve campus facilities, at no charge, for meetings and events.
- Promote events through CPCC social networking sites, the [Student Life Google Calendar](#), and physical advertising space on campus (i.e. bulletin boards).
- Build connections to employees of CPCC and gain the privileges of being a student leader affiliated with the College.

Benefits to CPCC Faculty

- See students apply learning between student organizations and the classroom
- Understand students' comprehensive student engagement experience better
- Gain further motivation to challenge students outside the classroom
- Meet other staff and faculty involved in supporting student organizations
- Have fun and connect with students on a different level

TYPES OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Academic or Vocational

Student organizations with an academic or vocational focus tend to revolve their organization around a particular area of study. This allows student organization members to gain additional experience outside the classroom in their specific field.

Examples of Academic or Vocational organizations at CPCC include: American Institute of Architectural Students, Early Childhood Education Club, and Horticulture Club.

Competitive Curricular

Student organizations with a competitive focus tend to focus on competing in different events with other student organizations, both locally and nationally. Often times, these organizations have academic or vocational focus, working on skills and talents outside the classroom.

Many student organizations with a competitive purpose generally have more of a financial need to compete in competitions. Student organizations should plan ahead and make sure to read the “Fundraising Guidelines” section in the [Student Organization EQUIP Handbook](#). Also, if you are requesting funds from SGA, please see the “Requesting Funds from SGA” section of the Student Organization EQUIP Handbook.

Examples of Competitive Curricular organizations include: Skills USA and Model United Nations.

Special Interests

Special interest student organizations tend to come together to share a common interest. Often times, the advisor has the same interest.

Examples of Special Interests organizations include: Pride Alliance, Girls in Games, EARTH.

Sports/Recreation

Student Life supports many fun, recreation activities on several campuses as a great opportunity to bring students together in the name of community building, fellowship and sport, and leadership skill building.

Examples of Sports/Recreation organizations include: Soccer Club and Volleyball Club.

At Central Campus, we rotate recreational offerings in the Worrell gym most afternoons around scheduled classes and outside events.

As one might imagine, supporting college athletic programs is an ever-increasing, expensive effort with a number of liabilities and risks involved. For this primary reason, CPCC and the Office of Student Life do not hold formal sports programs in its priorities or mission. For this reason, the College is not able to accommodate students interested in formal competitive or travel teams.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ESTABLISHING A STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Checklist for Establishing a Student Organization

Step 1. Submit a CPCC New Student Organization application online.

- In order to start a student organization at CPCC, a student group must initially complete an [Application for New Student Organization Recognition](#), explaining the purpose and mission of the proposed organization. **Student Life does not accept applications for new student organizations after CPCC spring break.**
- The application will be submitted to Jennifer Conway, Student Life Coordinator on Central Campus (Overcash, Room 241). Student Life will then identify if there are any similar student organizations already in existence or in the process of being established.
- A follow-up e-mail will be sent informing the student whether or not he/she can proceed with establishing the organization.

Step 2. Upon approval of the New Student Organization application, the club will need to secure ten (10) members and at least one (1) advisor (full-time faculty member).

- Recruiting ten committed members for your organization is something that is very important to do *before* writing a constitution or securing an advisor. Without ten individuals who are committed to the purpose of your organization, your organization will not be able to sustain over time.
- Student organizations are supported through student activity fees paid by curriculum students. For this reason, all members of a student organization must be currently enrolled curriculum students at CPCC. No CPCC student organizations may discriminate in its membership on any basis.
- Securing a full-time CPCC faculty or staff advisor can be challenging, but it is vital for your organization to find a faculty or staff member who has a vested interest and the time commitment to make to your club. It is also important your advisor know and understand the purpose and goals of your student organization so they can advise your club properly. Advisors must also complete a mandatory training once they have made the commitment to serve as an advisor.

Step 3. Write a constitution and by-Laws. Please refer to the example constitution in this handbook.

- Each constitution should state:
 - Name and purpose of organization
 - Membership requirements and non-discrimination statement
 - Officers and duties of officers
 - Election process for officers
 - Termination process for officers
 - Details of how decisions are made and how financial matters are managed
 - Meeting requirements
 - Methods to amend constitution
- The constitution and by-laws must also include a non-discriminatory clause and college policy clause, as seen below.
 - *Non Discriminatory Clause:* All members of a student organization must be currently enrolled curriculum students at CPCC. No CPCC student may discriminate in its membership on any basis.
 - *College Policy Clause:* All members of a student organization must adhere to College policies, specifically those referred to in the [Student Organization EQUIP Handbook](#) and those referred to in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Step 4. Submit the following Student Organization documents to Student Life.

- You must submit the following items to [Jennifer Conway](#), Student Life Coordinator.
 - [Advisor Agreement](#)
 - [Student Organization Membership Roster](#)
 - Prepared constitution/by-laws (See Appendix for a sample)
- Student Life will pass all submitted documents to the Student Government Association for approval and official recognition. The new student organization will then be eligible for support, financial and otherwise, that comes with such recognition.
- The constitution will be placed on file in Student Life and a copy will be filed with SGA. Any amendment through your organization must be channeled through the process outlined in your constitution, and copies must be sent to Student Life.
- Once Student Life has received, reviewed, and approved the above-mentioned documents, your organization will be accepted as an “officially recognized” student organization at CPCC. However, you will remain “inactive” (unable to engage in any organization activities or fundraising) until completion of Step 5.

Step 5. Sign up for new student organization and advisor training.

- Your last and final step is securing a date and time for a mandatory new student organization and advisor training with a Student Life Coordinator. This training will review the guidelines for student organizations, and give you the preparation and foundation to help ensure your organization’s success now and in the future.
- At the training, you will register your organization by completing a [Student Organization Registration Form \(SORF\)](#), which identifies the current officers, advisor(s), SGA representatives, and goals for the upcoming academic year.
- Student organizations and advisors may be required to attend ongoing training as needed.

ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Responsibilities

Student organizations at CPCC are established for the purpose of providing opportunities for students to enrich their co-curricular experience and to engage in organizational and leadership development, while also producing a diverse array of student activities that benefit and enlighten the CPCC community.

Student organizations must create an inclusive environment that allows all students to participate, and contributes to the learning process in a positive manner. In addition, student organizations are responsible for complying with all policies and procedures outlined in the Student Organization EQUIP Handbook.

Expectations

A Strong Purpose

Student organizations tend to function best when there is a strong purpose to bring members together. This may be a common interest or goal, hobby or recreational activity, or involvement in a particular program of study. Without a strong purpose, student organizations struggle to maintain active membership and momentum over time.

Goal Setting

In order for a student organization to achieve its purpose, the student organization must know where it is going. In order to figure out where to go, it is often helpful to set goals for the year in order to stay on track and to gauge certain achievements. Each year, student organizations are required to document their goals for the upcoming academic year in the SORF.

Active Membership Participation

Student organizations go through cycles of activity and inactivity as interested students come and go. A student organization with a large, active membership base is more likely to continue through the years. Likewise, a student organization that has many students taking leadership roles tends to be more successful because there are more than just a few people doing the work. Members should be encouraged to participate in decision making processes as well as events and activities.

Leadership Development

It is important to distribute work between officers and members, and it is never too early to recruit the incoming group of leaders who will become officers for your organization. It is important for current officers of your organization to train incoming officers in order to sustain your organization over time. Look to Student Life for available leadership development opportunities for your members.

Capitalize on Talents

Each student should look to its membership, and other student organization leaders, for helpful resources. For example, a graphic design student could make great flyers, a talented cook could help make bake sale items for a fundraiser, and/or a student might work at a company that would let you borrow equipment for an event. In addition, there are resources at CPCC that you may be able to use by asking your advisor or the Student Life Coordinator on your campus. These resources are often less expensive and easier to acquire, helping your organization be more successful in meeting their goals.

Partnership with Student Life

It is important to maintain a positive and collaborating relationship with Student Life, and keep open communication with the Student Life Coordinator on your campus about organization activities. Student Life staff are here to assist you and help you succeed.

Student Life is your source for the following:

- Assisting with fundraising activities.
- Reserving campus facilities and renting equipment.
- Assistance with travel and reservation of transportation.
- Support with spending student organization funds.
- Requesting SGA funds.

SGA Representation and Involvement in Campus Events

- Student organizations are required to choose a representative to be a liaison for the Student Government Association (SGA). The SGA representative is expected to attend two [General Assembly](#) meetings each fall and spring semester, as well as complete a [General Assembly Report Form](#).
- Each student organization is encouraged to participate in fall or spring festivals to showcase their student organization. Organizations are also expected to keep SGA and Student Life informed about the activities of their organization. Please refer to the "Organization Sponsored Activities" section of the [Student Organization EQUIP Handbook](#).

OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Responsibilities

The following are common descriptions for officer responsibilities. Each student organization should outline the roles of each office in its constitution. These roles may vary from organization to organization, but below is a list of general responsibilities.

In addition, all officers have the responsibility of communicating student organization guidelines and policies, as outlined in the Student Organization EQUIP Handbook, to their organization members on an annual basis.

President/Vice President

To represent the student organization and/or the College; preside over the organization's meetings; assure that all requirements for the organization are met; and facilitate, coordinate and lead the organization in its business and activities.

Treasurer

To ensure financial accountability for the student organization by tracking club fundraising and spending, ensuring timely and accurate deposits into on-campus club accounts, and fiscally responsible spending to meet club goals.

Secretary

To keep minutes of all meetings, record attendance, prepare agendas, and handle correspondence to members.

SGA/General Assembly Representative

To serve as a representative of your student organization at General Assembly meetings and any other mandatory trainings required by Student Life for student organizations. This officer must complete the [General Assembly Report Form](#) prior to each General Assembly meeting and must be willing to report back to their organization members with new updates discussed at the meeting.

Expectations

Academic Standing

Officers of student organizations must be currently registered CPEC curriculum students and are expected to maintain acceptable standards of academic progress. Each organization may establish its own GPA requirements for officers and members so as long as the requirements are clearly explained in the constitution. No student may hold membership in an organization while under suspension from the College. All Student Organizations must adhere to college policies and the student code of conduct.

Adherence to College Policies and Procedures

Student organizations not adhering to policies and procedures established by the College risk the loss of recognition and funding opportunities. Any incident by a student organization may warrant disciplinary action by the Dean and/or Associate Dean of Student Life and, if necessary, the Associate Vice President for Student Services. Please refer to the Student Organization EQUIP Handbook for complete information about College policies and procedures.

ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Student Life maintains a collection of resources for advisors' use that can often be helpful for ideas on teambuilding, information on student development, and best practices for when organizational problems or issues arise. Please feel free to consult Student Life about this collection.

Student Organization advisors have the following responsibilities:

- To serve as the College's liaison with the student organization.
- To serve as financial account manager and approve and sign all requests submitted by the organization to Student Life or the SGA, including funds requests, travel requests, petty cash, requests for payment, etc.
- To have advance knowledge of all meetings and activities of the organization. Although attendance at all meetings is not mandatory, advisors should attend as many meetings as possible.
- To attend all off-campus activities or travel sponsored by the organization or require the organization to make arrangements for another faculty or staff member to attend, in which case the Associate Dean of Student Life should be informed of changes.
- To be aware of the College drug-free policy and ensure that student leaders understand the implications of the policy as they plan both on-campus and off-campus activities for the organization.
- To remain aware of the goals and purposes of the organization, and to see that these goals and purposes are followed by the group.
- To offer guidance without domination, reminding the organization of the College's rules and enforcing them when necessary.
- To notify Student Life when a student organization's actions are contrary to its general purposes, or when an action is planned without the advisor's approval.
- To see that the organization's activities, including travel, are coordinated in advance through Student Life and using the processes outlined in the [Student Organization EQUIP Handbook](#).
- To ensure that the organization adheres to all College rules and regulations regarding off-campus activities, student travel, the Drug-Free Campus policy, and the Student Code of Conduct as outlined in the CCCC Catalog and Student Handbook.
- To attend meetings scheduled by Student Life for the advisors of student organizations.
- To communicate with the organization regarding all College meetings and announcements affecting the group.
- To encourage students to participate in CCCC activities, including festivals, service projects, leadership opportunities, etc.

LIABILITY ISSUES FOR ADVISORS

As an advisor, be aware of the scope of your authority. Advisors have the authority to make decisions or take actions within the stated responsibilities outlined in this handbook, particularly if a student organization deviates from College policies and procedures. Student organizations must have advisor consent and approval for all activities. Don't be afraid to say no!

Appointment of Advisors

Advisors register annually by signing the Advisor Agreement at the beginning of the fall semester and submitting it to Student Life. This agreement serves as official recognition by the College to act in the capacity of an advisor to the organization.

College Policies and Procedures

CPCC's Policies and Procedures manual, the College Catalog, the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Handbook, this handbook and the Student Organization EQUIP Handbook are sources for College policies and procedures related to student organizations. Student Life Coordinators and the Associate Dean for Student Life may also serve as a resource if you have questions or concerns.

Scope of Duty

An advisor is an agent of the College acting within the course and scope of employment. Advisors are cautioned to act pragmatically, avoid negligence, display reasonable prudence, fairness, and plain common sense. Maintaining a sense of what is fair and reasonable and using your best professional judgment will reduce incentives for the filing of lawsuits against you or the College.

Duty to Warn

Students should be clearly warned by the advisor if there are any inherent risks involved in participating in a program or traveling out of town to a conference or meeting. Anticipate risks which may arise out of any decision or situation and apply reasonable precautions to minimize such risks. Any questions about liability issues can be discussed with the Office of Student Life or the College's Risk Management Specialist.

GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Thank you for referencing the Explore Handbook. Please refer to the [Student Organization EQUIP Handbook](#) about the following topics and for any questions you may have regarding specific guidelines for your official student organization.

Bank Accounts

All student organizations have access to an on-campus bank account through which Student Life/SGA funds are disbursed. Students will work together with their advisor and Student Life staff to manage and access these funds. For further details, please see the [Student Organization EQUIP Handbook](#).

Community Service Projects

Service is a great opportunity to build a team with new student organization members. Student organizations are encouraged to conduct community service projects. For assistance in finding projects or to join already existing projects, please contact [Jenn Marts](#) via email or at 704-330-6824.

APPENDIX

Sample of Constitution

Article I Name

Article II Purpose

Article III. Membership

Section 1 Composition

Section 2 Qualifications

Article IV Officers

Section 1 Elections

Section 2 Eligibility

Section 3 Term of office

Section 4 Responsibilities or duties

Section 5 Impeachment

Section 6 Which officers shall comprise the executive board

Section 7 Vacancies

Article V. Meetings

Section 1 When to be conducted

Section 2 Number per term

Section 3 Method of calling a special meeting

Section 4 Quorums

Article VI Committees

Section 1 Names and Purposes

Section 2 Manner of comprising such committees

Article VII. Voting

Section 1 Proportion of voters required for legislation

Section 2 Who votes

Section 3 Officers

Article VIII Method of Amending Constitution

Section 1 Time for notice

Section 2 Proportion of members necessary to pass

**By-laws usually contain the specifics of conducting the affairs of the group.