

# **UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION POLICY**

## **I. PHILOSOPHY**

United States Merchant Marine Academy encourages its students to organize and participate in group activities in order to broaden their scope of general learning, knowledge in specialized areas, and furnish increased options for service and social activity. Student organizations are expected to function within the framework of and be consistent with the mission and values of the Academy, the policies stated in the Commandant's Instructions, and all relevant civil statutes. Student organizations are to contribute to the mental, physical, social, and spiritual well-being of all participants.

- A. Student groups and organizations exist within the total Academy community and contribute to, and are dependent upon the life, growth, and well-being of that community. Therefore they should not only be building their own identity, but should seek to contribute to a positive and wholesome community by:
  - a. Fostering within the student organization support for the policies and regulations of the Academy.
  - b. Insisting that students adhere to their primary commitment to the Academy by attending classes, forming good study habits, and fulfilling all other obligations and requirements.
  - c. Assuring responsible care and upkeep of the campus physical facilities entrusted to the organization (residential facility, offices, meeting space, etc.)
  - d. Encouraging a broader range of interests and social events for student involvement.
  - e. Attracting potential fellow students from their friendships, home communities, and acquaintances.
- B. With this in mind, United States Merchant Marine Academy commits itself to:
  - a. Build stronger campus student organizations.
  - b. Encourage a broader range of interests and social events for student involvement.
  - c. Assist in the promotion and publicity of organizations and their functions.
  - d. Foster a climate of fun, spirit, and pride in the Academy community.

## **II. POLICY ON THE RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

United States Merchant Marine Academy reserves the right to recognize groups of students who wish to create formal organizations. Recognition of a student organization by the Academy is an acknowledgment that the organization has complied with all relevant procedures, that the Academy approves the organization's constitution and bylaws, and will grant all rights and privileges accorded every registered organization. By following all applicable policies and procedures, recognized student organizations will be authorized to use Academy facilities and services, request funding, to conduct activities and hold meetings on campus, and be permitted to identify themselves directly or indirectly with the Academy. The Academy reserves the right to review the activities and recognition of all campus organizations and to monitor compliance with Academy policies.

**Official Recognition:** Obtaining official recognition by the Academy is required of all student groups in order to use Academy facilities, request Academy funding, use the United States Merchant Marine Academy name, and publicize events each year.

- A. In order to gain recognition, an organization must:
  - a. Submit the Student Organization Registration Form to the Director of Student Activities. Eight members are required to submit Registration.
  - b. Obtain an advisor from current faculty and staff.
  - c. Submit a constitution, which states the purpose and structure of the group.
  - d. Submit a current list of members
- B. Withdrawal of official recognition may occur when a student organization fails to abide by Academy policies or civil statutes, or is not perceived to be a positive influence in the Academy community.
  - a. Reinstatement of official recognition shall be determined by Director of Student Activities, in consultation with the Commandant of Midshipmen or designee.
- C. Recognized student organizations will be reviewed every year for compliance of their activities with their constitution and the consistency of their constitution with the mission and goals of the Academy.

### **III. RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

Student organizations complying with the responsibilities and obligations of a recognized group have the following rights and benefits:

- A. Use of the Academy name in association with the organization's activities, meetings, and programs.
- B. Access to the organization's financial resources and annual startup funding (as deemed available by the Director of Student Activities)
- C. Use of the Academy's facilities, at no charge or reduced charge, for meetings and activities. Facilities will be granted based on the consistency with the purpose of the organization as stated in its constitution.
- D. Solicitation for membership from the student population.
- E. Use of bulletin boards and other designated posting areas for information and announcements, within the guidelines of Academy policy.
- F. Request funding through Campus Activities Board.
- G. Access to campus services, leadership programs, the expertise of faculty and staff advisors, the advice and counsel of the Office of Student Activities, and the communication resources of the campus.
- H. Listing of the organization in official publications of the Academy.
- I. Access to campus services such as audio-visual equipment, inter-campus mail, photocopying machines, etc.
- J. Hold regular meetings, sponsor approved fundraising events, invite guest speakers, conduct campus activities, and other events.
- K. Promote the goals, purpose, identity, programs, and activities of the organization. Active promotion may include wearing organizational clothing or accessories, displaying organizational paraphernalia, distributing written publicity, promotional letters or flyers, or displaying letters or symbols that could be associated with the group.

#### IV. REGULATIONS GOVERNING STUDENT ORGANIZATION

All recognized student organizations will function within guidelines and mission of United States Merchant Marine Academy. The regulations governing student organizations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Each student organization should demonstrate how its purposes and goals directly contribute to the educational mission of the Academy.
- B. Campus organizations must not schedule activities which conflict with significant Academy events (i.e. Homecoming, inspections, finals, licensing etc.). Student groups are encouraged to schedule on- and off-campus events that can assist the Academy in building and maintaining of spirit and activities to serve the common good, but cooperation with the Academy calendar is imperative.
- C. Social functions held on campus must conform to existing policies relating to quiet/study hours, visitation, alcohol, and other related issues. Organization advisors and/or other faculty/staff may be requested to be present.
- D. Student organization wishing to sponsor activities in Land Hall must submit all space and funds requests to the Office of Student Activities at least one week prior to the event. The Office of Student Activities can provide guidance for planning, be in a position to answer questions from students, and assist with publicity.
- E. Student organizations wanting to use campus facilities or services for meetings or social functions must reserve space through the normal scheduling process.
- F. Posters, signs, announcements, and banners may be posted on campus in authorized places, but must conform to good taste.
- G. The student organization should agree that the exercises of freedom of expression be done in a peaceful, non-disruptive manner and with appropriate consideration of and respect for differing points of view. The organization, when involved in issues that may be controversial or provocative, should seek the advice of their advisor and the Director of Student Activities.
- H. The Academy has the right to regulate the time, place, and manner of all campus activities and expression, and to prohibit any activity, speech, or expression that is deemed by the administration to create a clear and present danger of:
  - a. Restricting or preventing physical access to campus buildings.
  - b. Blocking roadways, walkways, or common areas.
  - c. Generating excess noise.
  - d. Interfering with or disrupting classes or unlawfully interfering with other campus activities or events.
  - e. Inciting violence or unlawful behavior.
  - f. Advocating the physical harm, coercion, intimidation, or other invasion of the personal rights of individual students, faculty, staff, administrators, or friends.
  - g. Violating Academy policy against harassment or intimidation.
  - h. Violating Academy mission and values.
- I. United States Merchant Marine Academy reserves the right to:
  - a. Withhold funding or other forms of Academy support for particular events, which involve the organized advocacy of positions, or activities, which are deemed contrary to the Academy's mission and character.
  - b. The Academy has the right to impose discipline, as deemed appropriate, upon any student or student organization whose oral or written expression violated Academy

policy or codes of conduct or who goes beyond that which is protected by this particular policy.

- J. Any United States Merchant Marine Academy student organization that is using an Academy facility for an event is responsible for monitoring the event. Faculty advisors of student organizations may be required to be at these events. Furthermore, if something is damaged at an event, the person(s) responsible for the damage must be reported to the Academy. The Academy will then decide whether or not the person(s) need(s) to pay for the damage. However, if the student organization monitoring the event does not know the person(s) responsible for the damage, the student organization will be responsible for the damage. Therefore, the student organization will be responsible for the costs.

## **V. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- A. The Academy has the right to take disciplinary action against student organizations that:
  - a. are fiscally irresponsible,
  - b. violate Academy policies and civil statutes,
  - c. abuse Academy privileges,
  - d. damage Academy properties,
- B. If the above violations occur, the organization will be notified of the alleged violation(s).
- C. Depending upon the nature of the violation, a hearing may be scheduled.
- D. Disciplinary measures will be decided upon using the Midshipmen Regulations.
- E. If a disciplinary hearing is deemed necessary, the student organization will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations and/or correct the issue. If the organization is found to have violations, appropriate sanctions ranging from a warning to withdrawal of official recognition will be imposed.

## **VI. OFFICERS OF STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

- A. All officers of a student organization must be a student of the Academy in good social and academic standing.
- B. Officers are expected to participate in all conferences and meetings sponsored by the Office of Student Activities for the purpose of training student organization officers.

## **VI. MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Each recognized student organization shall determine its own membership, policies, and actions by vote of its members.
- B. Each recognized student organization will have a minimum of eight members.
- C. All members of a student organization must be students of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.
- D. No student shall be restricted from membership on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, or handicap.
- E. All forms of activities defined as hazing shall be banned. Hazing is defined as:
  - a. Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health and/or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission

into, or association with, any organization operating under registration with the Academy.

- b. Brutality of a physical nature such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substances; or other forced elements; or other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of the individual.
- c. Any activity that could subject the individual to mental or physical stress such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced contact which could result in embarrassment, or any other activity that could adversely affect the mental or physical health or dignity of the individual.
- d. Forcing or requiring the violation of Academy policies, federal, state, or local law.
- e. Any activity, as described above, upon which the initiation or admission into or association with an Academy organization may be directly or indirectly conditioned, shall be presumed to be a "forced" activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such an activity notwithstanding. This definition applies to acts conducted on or off campus whenever such acts are deemed to constitute hazing.
- f. Additional stipulations and Academy definitions take priority over the above Student Activities definition.

## **VII. ADVISORS**

- A. Each registered student organization will select an advisor chosen from the Academy's current non-student population (faculty and staff), in consultation with the Director of Student Activities.
- B. The advisor will work actively with the organization. Advisors must approve each organizational social event for the event to be held. And under special circumstances, the advisor may be required to attend an event (as determined by the Superintendent, Commandant of Midshipmen or the Director of Student Activities).
- C. Advisors understand that they are not members of the organization. The advisor's role is advisement and may not conduct business or expend resources on behalf of an organization. Advisors may not relieve any member of the organization from their officer role. An organization's success or failure will be the result of its midshipman leadership.
- D. Advisors may not receive any additional financial compensation for serving as an advisor.