



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Office of Student Engagement

RSO Handbook

Western Michigan University
2023–2024 Edition

GENERAL DISCLAIMER:

Reasonable changes may be made to this document as needed, without notice.

Information about any changes will be made available to RSO Advisors.

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OFFICE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (OSE) INFORMATION

MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Student Engagement exists to engage campus, empower students and develop leaders.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Chris Sligh (he/him/his) Director of Student Engagement: chris.sligh@wmich.edu

Valerie Ott (she/her/hers) Associate Director Student Engagement: valerie.ott@wmich.edu

Wayne Bond (he/him/his) Assistant Director of Student Engagement: wayne.l.bond@wmich.edu

Eva Hughes (she/her/hers) Assistant Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life: eva.m.hughes@wmich.edu

Glen Dillon (he/him/his) Assistant Director of Student Media: glen.r.dillon@wmich.edu

Amy K Gulaszewski (she/her/hers) Program Manager: amy.gulaszewski@wmich.edu

Eron Lauchie (he/him/his) Navigation Specialist: Belonging & Engagement: eron.t.lauchie@wmich.edu

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Rodney Coleman-Robinson (he/him/his) G.A. for Fraternity & Sorority Life: ose-greekga@wmich.edu

Jocelyn Medina (she/her/hers) G.A. for Fraternity & Sorority Life: ose-greekga2@wmich.edu

AbbyLynne Baxter (she/her/hers) G.A. for RSO Development: ose-rsodevelopment@wmich.edu

Mili Menon-Perez (she/her/hers) G.A. for Leadership Development: ose-rsoleadership@wmich.edu

Mackenzie Meyer (she/her/hers) G.A. for Campus Programming: ose-campusengage@wmich.edu

OFFICE SPACES

Office of Student Engagement (OSE) Main Office

WMU Student Center

1070 Arcadia Loop

Kalamazoo, MI 49006

Phone: 269-387-2115

Fax: 269-387-2185

Website: wmich.edu/studentengagement

Student Organization Center (SOC)

WMU Student Center

Division of Student Affairs (DOSA)

Envelops all areas of student services (residential life, student conduct, student activities, recreational sports, wellness, career development, counseling and testing services, multicultural affairs, campus police, Student Center, etc.) Website: wmich.edu/studentaffairs

Faith and Spiritual Development

Kanley Memorial Chapel

Phone: 269-387-2506

Website: wmich.edu/studentengagement/kanley/about

Student Center

A vibrant community center for campus life. Students and community members can visit the Student Center to eat, buy textbooks, attend RSO meetings, and more.

Phone: 269-387-4860

Website: wmich.edu/studentcenter

CAMPUS RESOURCES

COUNSELING, HEALTH, AND SAFETY

Sindecuse Health Center Counseling Services – Professional counseling services for Western Michigan University students. wmich.edu/healthcenter/counseling

Counseling and Testing Center – Professionals are available for students to speak with confidentially about various personal issues such as substance abuse, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, stress, burnout, etc. wmich.edu/healthcenter/counseling

YOU at Western – Personalized web portal connecting students to online tools and campus resources to help support their personal goals. Promotes self-reflection, allowing students to be more proactive with their health and well-being in order to make the most of their college experience. wmich.edu/you

WellTrack Self-help App – Free online self-help resource available to all WMU students, faculty and staff. WellTrack users are able to assess their personal well-being and access resources tailored to address symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression. wmich.edu/healthcenter/counseling/useful-apps/welltrack

Invisible Need Project – Working to serve WMU students with unmet needs including food, menstrual products, and emergency funds. wmich.edu/invisibleneed

WMU Department of Public Safety (DPS) – Focuses on four main areas: police, parking services, environmental health and safety, and security administration. wmudps.wmich.edu

ACADEMICS AND CAREER

Academic Resource Center – Enhances teaching and learning by enabling a diverse student population to maximize their potential for academic success and excel throughout their experiences at Western Michigan University and beyond. wmich.edu/tutoring

Career and Student Employment Services – Students' home base for exploring career options, building a standout resume, job searching, interviewing, negotiating, and finding internships. wmich.edu/career

Registrar's Office– This department manages the process for and maintenance of official student transcripts. wmich.edu/registrar

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND MULTICULTURALISM

Office of Diversity and Inclusion – “Provides leadership in creating systemic change at Western Michigan University to ensure equitable access, resources and success of all members of the campus community.” wmich.edu/diversity

Multicultural Center – Provides the WMU student population with spaces for study, meetings, projects, and conversation. Also provides information on diversity, ethnic and cultural issues through speakers, events, exhibits, and displays scheduled by University groups and organizations. wmich.edu/diversity/center

Multicultural Affairs for Students – Helps students identify their unique purpose and potential by providing opportunities to discover and develop their talents and interests. Fosters community

involvement and promotes a campus climate that respects and appreciates the history, culture, and traditions of all students. wmich.edu/multicultural

Disability Services for Students (DSS) – The mission of DSS at WMU is to make education accessible. DSS advocates for every student to be provided with the appropriate tools to allow them the opportunity to reach their goals. wmich.edu/disabilityservices

LGBT Student Services – Ensures equitable access for all at Western Michigan University and promotes a campus climate that affirms and supports the academic and personal development of all students regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. wmich.edu/lgbt

International Admissions and Services – This office provides informational, academic, and other resources to Western Michigan University’s international students. wmich.edu/internationaladmissions

RSO REGISTRATION

OVERVIEW

The Office of Student Engagement recognizes hundreds of registered student organizations (RSOs) at Western Michigan University. Currently enrolled WMU students come together to form RSOs around common interests and communities. An **RSO must include a minimum of four (4) students**, but some consist of hundreds. Office of Student Engagement staff members engage students in learning and personal development by advising—not supervising—student organizations.

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION BY THE UNIVERSITY

The purpose of registering student organizations is to give them access to university facilities, funding, and opportunities for leadership development.

The university will officially recognize student organizations and agencies that meet the criteria below. However, such recognition **does not imply that Western Michigan University is liable for the actions of an organization because of its association with the university**. Furthermore, the student organization agrees to assume responsibility and indemnify and hold harmless Western Michigan University, its trustees, employees, and agents for any and all liability which may result from actions conducted on or off campus, including, but not limited to judgment costs, attorney’s fees, discovery costs, or other expenditures.

In the event that an RSO engages in behavior or sponsors an event or an activity, which, in the judgment of the university, is adverse to the best interests of the university, the university may intervene and take appropriate corrective action. In such an event, the university will, to the extent practicable, work with the RSO to minimize disruption and to provide guidance on appropriate RSO behaviors and activities.

Organizations that promote and/or involve drugs, alcohol, and/or intentional discrimination of any group will not be approved or recognized by the Office of Student Engagement. Additionally, any organization with goals or objectives that do not support the mission of the Office of Student Engagement and the University will not be approved.

RSO GOOD AND PROPER CONDUCT PROCEDURES

Registered Student Organizations are expected to abide by all Office of Student Engagement and University guidelines and procedures as well as federal, state, and local laws. A statement of compliance must be included in each organization's constitution or charter.

Further, all RSOs approved by or recognized through the Office of Student Engagement acknowledge and agree to uphold the organization's commitment to **good and proper conduct**.

Poor conduct includes but is not limited to financial debt, use or possession of alcohol or drugs, dishonesty (furnishing false information, forgery, acting as an agent of the university without authorization), unauthorized posting, and violations of the law and/or university procedures and guidelines.

RSO CLASSIFICATIONS

Academic
Cultural-International
Faith/Spiritual
Fine & Performing Arts
Fraternity
Honorary
Media
None
Political & Social Action
Service-based
Sorority
Special Interest
Sports & Recreation
Student Government

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

To become a Registered Student Organization recognized by Western Michigan University, all student groups must complete the following steps:

- 1) **Register (or re-register) on the [ExperienceWMU website](#).** A minimum of 4 members with wmich.edu email addresses must be listed before the organization can be approved. Students who are listed as members or officers of an organization must be currently enrolled WMU students, should be in good academic and disciplinary standing with the University, and should meet the criteria stated in the organization's charter or constitution.
- 2) **Create or update a current constitution** that includes:
 - The organization's name
 - The organization's purpose
 - Finances section
 - i. This exact Statement: "{Name of RSO} will follow and be subject to all University policies, procedures, and practices regarding student organization accounts and finances."
 - ii. Statement of disposition of funds if organization ceases to exist. Usually, this statement says funds will be given to a nonprofit, WMU Department, another

RSO, or a Headquarters Organization. Funds cannot be left in an account for any period of time or given to members. This statement must be present regardless of the organization's plans to acquire/not acquire funds.

- This exact statement of compliance: "{Name of RSO} will comply with all Office of Student Engagement and University policies, procedures, and practices and all local, state, and federal laws."
- This exact nondiscrimination statement: "{Name of RSO} will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, height, weight, or marital status."
 - Nondiscrimination statement modeled on the University's nondiscrimination policy. Full policy details can be found at: wmich.edu/policies/non-discrimination.

A link to a sample RSO constitution template is available at the end of this handbook.

- 3) Identify an RSO Advisor.** All RSOs must have an advisor (a Western Michigan University faculty member, staff member, graduate assistant, or qualified community member) to register or re-register. The advisor must be faculty, staff, or a graduate student of WMU, or a community member with vested interest and skills relevant to advising the RSO. You will need to work with them to complete two required forms: the RSO Advisor Expectations form and the RSO Advisor Letter of Intent. [\[OO\]](#)
- 4) Optional: RSO Orientation.** RSOs who wish to receive University funding must have their treasurer complete the online RSO Orientation. It is also strongly encouraged that the president of the RSO complete the modules as well. You can access the RSO orientation here: experiencewmu.wmich.edu/forms.

REGISTRATION/RE-REGISTRATION PROCESS

Each academic year, RSOs must complete this process to officially register with the University. A club or organization will not be officially recognized as an RSO and cannot receive University funding unless they are registered. Best practice is to re-register existing organizations between Spring Break and finals, but new organizations can begin the registration process at any time. ExperienceWMU will save your information from the previous year, so you do not need to start from scratch.

To begin, go to: experiencewmu.wmich.edu/register. Type in the name of your existing RSO and click "Re-register," or if you are starting a new RSO scroll down to "Register a New Organization." The portal will guide you through the process step by step. You will be prompted to upload your required documents including the updated RSO Constitution, RSO Advisor Letter of Intent and RSO Advisor Expectations form, so be sure you have those ready when you go to register. If you have any questions or need help registering your organization, contact the RSO Development Graduate Assistant: ose-rsodevelopment@wmich.edu or the Office of Student Engagement: wmich.edu/studentengagement/contact.

RSO OFFICERS

In order for an RSO to remain a registered and recognized student organization, the president of the organization and the financial officer of the organization must be current Western Michigan University students. A current student is defined as an undergraduate or graduate student taking at least 3 credits. The names of the president and financial officer must be provided each year during the re-registration process or if they change at any point throughout the academic or calendar year.

RSO PRIVILEGES

Once your organization meets the basic registration requirements (including good standing with the University) and attends an Orientation meeting (if required), it will be granted active status. Active status will allow your organization to take advantage of the privileges granted to Registered Student Organizations.

EXPERIENCEWMU DATABASE

[ExperienceWMU](#) also has a database that allows students to explore other registered organizations and learn how to connect with them. ExperienceWMU can also be used as a way to create surveys, other forms, and election ballots for organizations, while also providing the opportunity to create and advertise campus events.

MAILBOXES

RSOs will receive a mail receptacle in their SOC space until the move to the new Student Center. If the Office of Student Engagement happens to receive mail on behalf of an RSO, we will work to distribute it to the receptacles provided on an as-needed basis. For questions about mail, please email the RSO Development Graduate Assistant: ose-rsodevelopment@wmich.edu or call the Office of Student Engagement at 269-387-2115.

DISPLAY CASES

RSOs can reserve display cases in the Bernhard Center to promote their RSO. Guidelines and procedures for reserving display cases can be found at: wmich.edu/studentengagement/display-cases. If you have questions, please contact the Bernhard Center.

SOLICITATION TABLES

RSOs can use solicitation tables in the Bronco Mall area of the Bernhard Center to promote their RSO. Guidelines and procedures for reserving solicitation tables can be found at: wmich.edu/studentengagement/tables.

WMU EMAIL

RSOs can request a WMU email address. Policies and rules governing the use of WMU email accounts can be found at wmich.edu/it/rules/emailaddress. To request a WMU email account, contact the RSO Development Graduate Assistant (ose-rsodevelopment@wmich.edu) with the following information: RSO name, requestor name, and requestor email.

REPRESENTATION IN WESTERN STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Every organization has the option to participate in campus issues via the Western Student Association (WSA). All organizations are granted one representative position in the WSA Senate. See the WSA website for more information: wmuwsa.org.

MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICES

Periodically, RSOs may have an internal issue that requires mediation from an unbiased, outside entity. The Office of Student Engagement has trained professionals who can assist an organization in achieving a resolution diplomatically. However, the Office of Student Engagement will not intervene unless asked by all parties to enter as a mediator. To set up a meeting please contact the Director of Student Engagement: chris.sligh@wmich.edu.

ROOM RESERVATIONS

ACCESSIBILITY

For questions about building accessibility, please contact the appropriate Building Coordinator by navigating to this website and selecting the name of the building in question: fm.wmich.edu/ap/bldg/buildingList.php?sort=code

ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

Academic buildings may be available for use by organizations on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservation guidelines and procedures may vary depending on the individual building. For more

information on how to reserve space in academic buildings, please go to wmich.edu/registrar/students-reservationform.

BERNHARD CENTER

There are several meeting rooms available for conferences, banquets, and meetings for all Registered Student Organizations (RSOs), University departments, professional organizations and the community. The Bernhard Center is wheelchair accessible and has an elevator. Specific guidelines and procedures on how to reserve a room in the Bernhard Center can be found here: wmich.edu/studentcenter/reservation.

MULTICULTURAL CENTER

The Multicultural Center (MCC) at Western Michigan University provides the University student population with spaces for study, meetings, projects, and conversation. The MCC is located in the Adrian Trimpe Building on campus. For reservations, see the Office of Diversity Inclusion website at wmich.edu/diversity/center.

RESIDENCE HALLS

Residence hall spaces are not open to the public. Lounge and meeting room space is intended for use by the residents of the hall. As such, outside groups and individuals are not able to use the space for meetings and other purposes. Resident requests for space are fielded by Hall Directors.

- Residents can host a group/organizational meeting in the halls, but not on a regular basis. The residence halls are not intended to be a regular meeting place for RSOs, mentoring or informal groups. RSOs need to make arrangements via the Bernhard Center or academic buildings (Registrar's office).
- Internal (created by residence hall students) faith-based study groups that meet on a weekly basis can be approved. It is recommended that a suitable space be found for them to meet that balances their needs while leaving large programming/academic space open and available.
- Dance groups should not meet or practice in the residence halls.

For questions about these procedures, please contact Laura Darrah, Assistant Director of Engagement and Assessment, Housing and Residence Life: laura.darrah@wmich.edu or 269-387-4463.

RESERVING OUTDOOR SPACE

Reserving outdoor space is done through the Bernhard Center main office and procedures to reserve outdoor space can be found at: wmich.edu/studentcenter/outdoor-reservation.

OUTDOOR SPACE LOCATIONS

- Goldsworth Valley Pond
- The Fountain Plaza (Approval from Miller, Dalton, and Shaw staff may be required.)
- The Pavilion
- Sun-Dial Area
- The Promenade (Flag poles)
- Amphitheater
- Grass Area in front of the Bernhard Center (Approval from Bernhard Center staff may be required.)
- Faunce Student Services Building Courtyard
- Outdoor Field Areas: A field permit is required for use of outdoor University Recreation grass spaces. For more information about obtaining a field permit, contact Chris Voss, Senior Associate Director of Business Operations, University Recreation: christopher.e.voss@wmich.edu or 269-387-3772.

RSO FINANCIAL SUPPORT

STUDENT ASSESSMENT FEE ALLOCATION BODIES:

Western Student Association Allocation Committee (WSAAC) is a standing committee of the Western Student Association (WSA), with the primary function of allocating a portion of the funds collected through the Student Assessment Fee. During the fall and spring semesters, WSAAC distributes guidelines and procedures about applying for available funds.

In order to be eligible for WSAAC funding, each organization must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be registered and in good standing with the Office of Student Engagement.
- Be active at least eight weeks prior to submitting a budget request.
- Be debt free with the University.
- Have your Treasurer complete the online [RSO Orientation](#).
 - It is strongly encouraged that the President completes these modules as well.

For more information on WSAAC, visit: wmuwsa.org/funding. Contact WSAAC at wsaac-chair@wmich.edu or 269-387-2125.

Graduate Student Association (GSA/GFAC) is a committee of and for graduate students at WMU. GFAC is the Graduate Financial Allocation Committee, a standing subcommittee of GSA. GFAC is charged with the allocation of Student Activity Fee funds to primarily graduate-level RSOs.

In order to be eligible for GFAC funding, each organization must meet the following minimal requirements:

- Be registered and in good standing with the Office Student Engagement.
- Have at least one RSO representative attend the GFAC meeting to present their request and answer any questions from GFAC.
- Have your Treasurer complete the online [RSO Orientation](#).
 - It is strongly encouraged that the President completes these modules as well.

Contact GSA at 269-387-8207 or visit their website for complete funding rules and responsibilities: wmich.edu/gsa.

Sports Club Council (SCC) is committed to promoting sport clubs at Western Michigan University by providing resources and support to help ensure the growth of club teams. For complete funding rules and responsibilities, contact SCC at 269-387-3772 or visit: wmich.edu/rec/sportsclubs/sportsclubcouncil.

STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY FEE FUNDING:

Student Sustainability Grant Allocations Committee (SSG-AC)

The Student Sustainability Grant Allocations Committee (SSG-AC) is an all-student grant review committee for the Student Sustainability Grant (SSG). SSG-AC supports sustainability initiatives of individuals and RSOs. The SSG-AC holds deliberations once per semester (fall and spring).

All applications and more details for SSG-AC funding can be found here: wmich.edu/sustainability.

In order to be eligible for SSG-AC funding, each RSO must meet the following minimal requirements:

- Be registered and in good standing with Student Engagement.
- Be debt free with the University.
- Be the primary author on each proposal.
- Have your Treasurer complete the online [RSO Orientation](#).
 - It is strongly encouraged that the President completes these modules as well.

For more information on SSG-AC, visit: wmich.edu/sustainability/grants/ssg-allocations-committee.

Contact SSG-AC at wsa-sustainability@wmich.edu or 269-387-0941.

RSO RECOGNITION

GOLDEN BRONCOS

Golden Bronco awards are a way to recognize your RSO or specific student leaders for a year of outstanding accomplishment and achievement. Nominations can be submitted through ExperienceWMU during the spring semester. You will receive an email notification when the form becomes available. Some examples of past Golden Bronco Awards include:

- RSO of the Year
- Most Improved RSO of the Year

For questions regarding Golden Bronco awards, please contact the Campus Programming Graduate Assistant: ose-campusengage@wmich.edu.

RSO ADVISORS

RSO advisors are important because they are role models for students and their involvement in the organization provides learning experiences that are transferable to situations beyond college. In order to assist the RSO and the advisor, the Office of Student Engagement offers the following list of responsibilities:

ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE RSO:

1. Serve at the discretion of the organization.
2. Assist officers in understanding their duties, administering programs and plans, organizing projects, and making appropriate transitions.
3. Preserve the continuity of the organization through the constitution, traditions, files, and minutes.
4. Encourage the use of procedures to ensure that the meetings run in an efficient, orderly and consistent manner.
5. Encourage students to understand and apply democratic principles, including the recognition of diverse opinions and rights.
6. Attend as many organization meetings and events as possible.

7. Articulate campus policies and procedures and help cut through “red-tape” when necessary.
8. Support officers and be available for evaluation of ideas.
9. Facilitate discussions among officers and between officers and members.
10. Be familiar with national structure and services if relevant.
11. Assist with specific University services, for example, obtaining an organization account or obtaining facilities.
12. Consult on programs.
13. Advise individual students when necessary.
14. Assist the organization as needed.
15. Provide historical context of RSO to new leadership/information necessary for leadership transitions

RSO RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE ADVISOR:

1. Notify the advisor of all meetings and events.
2. Confer with the advisor on plans, projects and events.
3. Consult with the advisor before making structure or policy changes.
4. Understand that although the advisor has no vote, they should have speaking privileges.
5. Remember the responsibility for the success or failure of group projects rests ultimately with the group, not the advisor.
6. Acknowledge the advisor’s time and energy and express appropriate appreciation.
7. State clearly and openly the expectations of the advisor.
8. Evaluate the advisor and periodically give appropriate feedback.

Source: Reinhardy, G. Training organization advisors. Student Activities Programming, 1981, 14(1), 39-41. Appendix A.

GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

Any student who chooses to enroll at Western Michigan University assumes the obligation for conduct that is compatible with the University’s mission as an educational institution. While students have the privilege to enroll at the institution of their choice, choosing to enroll at Western Michigan University requires a student to become aware of, and abide by, the behavior standards of the University. Ignorance of acceptable boundaries of student behavior as contained in the RSO Handbook and/or the [Student Code of Conduct](#) is not a basis for excusing inappropriate behavior.

The Office of Student Engagement has the official role of recognizing student organizations at WMU. Members of RSOs must adhere to all current University and Office of Student Engagement guidelines and procedures and all those developed in the future.

ROCK PAINTING GUIDELINES

The rocks between Goldsworth Valley Pond and Gilkison Avenue have been designated for painting by Registered Student Organizations on campus. No other painting of any sort is permitted on any other University property. Violators will be subject to full restitution in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Guidelines for painting the rocks:

1. Painting the rocks is on a first-come, first-use basis. All organizations have equal access to the rocks.
2. Clubs and organizations may not cover or “guard” the rocks after painting them and thus may not prevent other organizations from painting over their work.

FLYER/POSTER GUIDELINES

For updated flyer/poster guidelines, please visit: wmich.edu/policies/posting.

For rules relating to specific communication types–

Electronic Distribution: wmich.edu/policies/mass-email.

Social Media Posting: wmich.edu/policies/social-media.

RELATED PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Bernhard Center Posting Guidelines available at: wmich.edu/studentcenter/policies/flyer.

Residence Life Posting Guidelines available at: wmich.edu/housing/postingpolicy.

Student Recreation Center Posting Guidelines available at: wmich.edu/rec/about/policies#posting.

Academic Buildings – Contact the Building Coordinator about the requested building.

fm.wmich.edu/ap/bldg/buildingList.php?sort=code.

RELATED POLICIES

[Public Events Policy](#)

[Political Activities Policy](#)

[Social Media Policy](#)

PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES

RSO PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES

RSOs interested in organizing philanthropic donations (food drives, clothing collections, Toys for Tots, etc.) must work directly with the coordinator(s) of the building(s) in which donation bins will be placed. RSOs must comply with all guidelines and procedures set forth by the building(s)' coordinator(s). Contact information can be found by clicking on the building name at fm.wmich.edu/ap/bldg/buildingList.php?sort=code.

SCREENING OF COPYRIGHTED MOVIES ON CAMPUS

The Federal Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code) governs how copyrighted materials, such as movies, may be used. Neither the rental nor the purchase of a videotape or DVD carries with it the right to show the movie outside the home. The **only** exception to this law is when the movie is shown for educational/instructional purposes, typically in a classroom setting. Non-classroom use of the film (i.e., entertainment) at schools and universities requires a public performance license. This legal requirement applies regardless of whether an admission fee is charged. Permission must be obtained from the film's distributor, who holds the rights to the film.

Securing permission for showing a film is relatively easy. Most mainstream films that are distributed for non-commercial use come from one of two main distributors:

SWANK Motion Pictures, Inc

www.swank.com

1-800-876-5577

Criterion

www.criterionpic.com

1-800-890-9494

All questions for film screenings on campus can be directed to the Office of Student Engagement at 269-387-2115 (wmich.edu/studentengagement/contact), or the Office of Marketing and Strategic Communication at 269-387-8400 (wmich.edu/marcom/contact).

BALLS AND DANCES

Any RSO or university affiliate interested in sponsoring and organizing a ball or dance should contact the Assistant Director of Campus Engagement to set up a meeting at least one month in advance. All event and security procedures apply.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES POLICY

Guidelines and information regarding Political Activities can be found at: wmich.edu/policies/political-activities

FREE SPEECH

As an open community, WMU protects freedom of expression and powerfully affirms civility. As such, all members of the University community and all those who visit our community are expected to respect the rights and dignity of others. All event and outdoor space guidelines apply.

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

OUTDOOR SPACE

Guidelines and information for utilization of outdoor spaces are available on the "Public Events Policy" webpage: wmich.edu/policies/public-events

FUNDRAISING AND NON-PROFIT SOLICITATION IN RESIDENCE HALLS

All fundraising activities taking place in a residence hall must be approved by the Office of Housing and Residence Life. No fundraising or solicitation by student organizations may take place in the residence halls or cafeteria foyers without explicit permission. Sales of food by non-residence hall groups is not permitted in the halls.

Leafleting, distribution, and solicitation by university organizations for non-revenue producing purposes must be approved by the Office of Residence Life. At no time may postings be slid under residence hall room doors, except for those authorized by Residence Life. The following conditions will need to be met in residence hall lobbies and cafeteria foyers (not in the cafeterias):

- Approval has been obtained from the Office of Residence Life.
- The time and duration are established and approved prior to the activity.
- There is no interference with the normal operation of the residence hall.
- The area is restored to its original condition.

For more information, contact the Office of Housing and Residence Life at 269-387-4735 or wmich.edu/housing/contact.

ACADEMIC STANDARD FOR RSO OFFICERS

This guideline is intended to closely align RSOs with the mission and academic goals of Western Michigan University, and to ensure that all student leaders appreciate and uphold the value of scholarship while being actively involved in the campus community.

The Office of Student Engagement recommends that all RSO executive board members adopt a minimum 2.3 GPA standard for elected or appointed positions. Organizations with a pre-existing academic standard above 2.3 are encouraged to maintain their own higher standard. OSE can check grades for RSOs with an official request by the president or advisor of the organization. (Requests will take approximately 10 business days to complete, so please plan accordingly.)

EVENT PLANNING

For detailed event safety and security measures, please review Western Michigan University's [Public Events Policy](#).

EVENT CHECKLIST

- ❑ **FUNDING AND PAYMENT**
 - Make a budget
 - Identify potential funding sources/allocating bodies
 - Contact RSO Financial Advisor for assistance with paperwork, including contracts
 - Determine paperwork deadlines in advance and plan accordingly
- ❑ **TRANSPORTATION AND LODGING**
 - Connect with agent/artist/for arrival/transportation information
 - Transportation rental
 - Hotel confirmation
- ❑ **PROMOTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**
 - Complete marketing plan
 - Get advertising materials approved and distributed
 - Use campus media and advertising sources: WIDR 89.1 FM, EduCABLE, MTV U, Western Herald, Student Events Calendar
- ❑ **VENUE/EVENT SPACE**
 - Check with venue about reservation/set up/catering (if needed)
 - Reserve all for outdoor space reservations
 - Check on any special requirements (security, stage, room set-up, etc.)
 - Technical issues
 - Notify Student Engagement if attendance will be larger than 100
- ❑ **VOLUNTEERS**
 - Setup/Tear Down/Clean Up
 - Greeters/Tickets/Counters
 - On-Stage/Sound Help/Announcements

CAMPUS MEDIA & INFORMATION SOURCES

89.1 WIDR FM

89.1 WIDR FM is Western Michigan University's student-operated radio station and an excellent avenue for marketing an event and organization. WIDR is located at 1501 Faunce and staff can be reached at 269-387-6301 or at widr.gm@gmail.com. Press releases can also be sent to widr.gm@gmail.com.

WESTERN HERALD

The Western Herald is Western Michigan University's student-operated newspaper. Student organizations can purchase ads and sometimes gain free coverage or publicity of an event by notifying the Herald staff in advance. The Western Herald is located at 1517 Faunce and staff can be reached at 269-387-2092. Please visit westernherald.com/site/contact.html for more contact information.

WMU NEWS

Western Michigan University's faculty and staff newspaper is available to publicize campus-wide events. WMU News is located in Walwood Hall and can be reached at 269-387-8400 or at wmich.edu/news/contact.

STATEMENT ON DATE AUCTIONS

The purpose of this statement is to briefly discuss three aspects of date auctions that make them inappropriate (in the opinion of the Office of Student Engagement). It is not our intent to propose that the organizations that have sponsored date auctions in the past had any intentions of promoting or endorsing these issues. Rather, it is our intent to promote awareness of these concerns and point out potential problems and liabilities for future consideration.

RACIAL INSENSITIVITY

Date auctions tend to have the appearance of and the “trappings” of slave auctions. Slave auctions were a very real and tragic part of the history of this country. Regardless of the intent of a date auction, it still involves one person “bidding” for the services of another person. Whether the services consist of work or time or something else, an auction of this type consists of one person paying a second person (or organization) for the services of a third person. The bidding process invariably involves a comparison of the relative “value” of each person being auctioned. On a campus where equality, openness, and sensitivity are valued, any activity that suggests the auctioning of one human being’s services to another is inappropriate.

PERCEIVED ENTITLEMENT

An extension of the issues above is the need for us all to respect the rights of others and to know that a person cannot be bought. One of the dangerous attitudes that continue to exist between people is the concept of “whoever pays is entitled.” Many date rapes result from the assumption on the part of the individuals whoever pays for the “date” is entitled to more than what the other person wanted. Date auctions can tend to create an environment where those expectations may be used to the disadvantage to one or the other participants.

GENDER DYNAMICS AND SEXUALITY

It is important to consider societal presumptions regarding gender dynamics when thinking about date auctions. Generally speaking, heterosexual cisgender men often feel entitled to the time and attention of women, which can lead to unsafe situations for women being auctioned as dates. Furthermore, date auctions can lead to normative assumptions about the gender identity and/or sexuality of the person being auctioned. The date would go to the highest bidder, regardless of the sexual and gender identity of either party. Therefore, there is always the potential for discriminatory and exclusive practices regarding gender identity and sexuality in date auctions.

PERSONAL SAFETY

A date auction often involves a “well known” person spending time with a stranger on a “date” that an individual otherwise might not have chosen to spend time with at all. The organization sponsoring the auction has no way of knowing the motivations of the persons doing the bidding. A “fatal attraction” circumstance is possible, where the date auction becomes a very convenient means by which a person has the opportunity to “buy” some time with the person to whom the individual is attracted. Although the possibility of this scenario may seem extremely remote, it has considerable liability implications for the organization sponsoring the event. Date auctions are usually held to raise money for good causes. The organizations have very good intentions in sponsoring the activity. Given the above concerns, which expose the potential for persons and/or groups to be offended or hurt, date auctions may be perceived to be an ill-conceived way to raise money.

If an organization should want to hold an auction, we would encourage the auctioning of items, such as tickets to an event or dinners at a particular restaurant, rather than auctioning individuals.

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RISK MANAGEMENT

Due to the nature of RSO activities, certain types of risk are more prevalent than others. It is important for you to be aware of risk management and consider potential risks.

Any possibility of loss, harm or damage to individuals, property or organizations associated with an activity or event would be considered to be a risk.

The goal of risk management is to identify, control, and minimize the negative impacts to your organization. It is expected that RSOs take the steps necessary to manage the risks associated.

Please note that the students within your RSO (and *not* Western Michigan University) would be held liable for any incident since Registered Student Organizations are not affiliated with the institution.

You do not need to have every risk management policy memorized. However, it may be helpful to refer back to this information (or to have this information on hand) while planning an event/activity.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK FORM

In current legal tradition, waivers of personal rights have generally been ineffective in protecting an organization from harm or damage sustained by an individual during a sponsored event or activity. A better method of protecting your organization from personal injury and damage claims is the "Assumption of Risk" form.

Individuals participating in an activity or event should sign this form. The form acknowledges that the individual is aware of the potential risk involved in the specific activity. Under common law tradition, the individual's assumption of known risk is a more successful defense against damage claims.

*For signing and filing official forms with The Office of Student Engagement, the RSO advisor is **not** the primary contact. The primary contact must be a registered WMU student. Any official requests and forms must be signed by the student listed as the Primary Contact on the RSO's roster in ExperienceWMU.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Does a contract need to be signed for anything associated with this event?
- If this event is held in the community, how will the activity affect the neighborhood?
- What liability does the organization run the risk of incurring?
- What state laws or city ordinances have the potential of being violated?
- What safeguards will be used to keep these laws from being violated?
- List possible problem situations that could present themselves at your activity.
- List how you will resolve each of the situations listed above.
- Do you have an established procedure to follow in case of emergencies?
- Could you convince a reasonably prudent person that your event is not dangerous?
- Is the potential liability for the organization worth the potential benefits to the organization?

AREAS OF RISK MANAGEMENT

- I. Financial: Contracts, verbal agreements, budget and spending
- II. Personal: Travel, events
- III. Physical and Emotional: Hazing, Title IX

FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT

Financial risk management includes contracts, verbal agreements and spending and varying from high to low risk. For example, bringing a speaker to campus for \$250 is relatively low risk. Bringing a large act or musician for

\$1,000 is generally going to be a higher risk financial commitment. However, put this broad spectrum into the context of your RSO. If your RSO's annual budget is \$2,000, a fee of \$500 is 25% of the budget.

VERBAL AGREEMENTS

In terms of verbal agreements, ensure that you use language with contractors, agents or acts that are noncommittal, such as, "I'm looking for a quote" as opposed to, "I'm looking to bring you to campus."

CONTRACTS

Contracts are a binding agreement between two parties in which each gives something in return for something else. Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) routinely use contracts for various means such as bringing speakers or performers to campus. In contract law, it is extremely important to have your agreement in writing and signed by all parties involved. Courts will generally look at a written contract signed by both parties treating it as a final written expression of the involved parties. **Contracts must be notarized.**

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY

As an RSO, your student group is recognized by Western Michigan University but is not a designated representative to enter into binding agreements on behalf of the University. Although RSOs cannot act as University representatives, your conduct and decisions reflect on the University, so it is important that you conduct yourselves and your affairs in an appropriate manner. When working with third parties and vendors while identifying yourself as a RSO at WMU, the recommendation to avoid the possible misperception as to your group's authority to act in a contract setting (either with direct or apparent authority) is to say:

"_____ organization is a recognized student organization of the University and does not represent the University. The organization cannot contractually obligate the University. As a (member/officer) of _____ organization, I enter into this (contract/agreement) on behalf of the organization in my role as President/Treasurer/etc."

Including language like this, both orally and in writing, helps avoid any possible links between your activity and the University. Given the autonomy of student leadership, you must be willing to take responsibility for your decisions as they apply to yourself and your group. By signing contracts, you and/or your RSO, not the University, will be held accountable.

STANDARD SECTIONS OF CONTRACTS

RSOs are encouraged to work through contracts with their advisor and the Office of Student Engagement prior to entering into a contractual agreement. **It is important to seek help before signing the contract.** If you wait until after the contract is signed, it may create problems for the organization. You are always welcome to contact the Office of Student Engagement for assistance (particularly the RSO Development Graduate Assistant: ose-rsodevelopment@wmich.edu).

Description: Indicates what the contract covers, such as "Contract for T-Shirts".

Caption: Indicates who the contracting parties are and when the contract was made.

Background: Indicates what each party's business or purpose is, like "Rick's T-Shirts located at 101 Main St. is in the retail business of selling t-shirts"

Duration: Indicates how long a contract is valid (often found early in document)

Definitions: Indicates what the meaning of commonly used words in the contract are like "they" means "Y Club" or "late" means "any promise fulfilled after the expiration of the time limit agreed to by both parties." It is important to define terms that have subtle differences in their meaning like "must" (absolute), "shall" (contingent upon), and "may" (permissive).

Obligations: Indicates what each party is responsible for in the contract like "Rick's T-Shirts shall supply Y Club with 500 t-shirts on September 30 at \$5.00 a shirt. Y Club must pay Rick's T-Shirts \$2,500 on the date of delivery."

Operative Provisions: Indicates what other provisions are included in the contract such as any warranties or exclusions that may apply. Often, this is the section of the contract where a disclaimer and limiting language is used to give the party who wrote the contract advantage over the party that signs the contract.

Enforcement Provisions: Indicates the part of the contract that deals with “What happens if...” (someone does not fulfill their end of the agreement, something not in the contract is causing problems, where to go if there is a dispute, what happens if the other party said we agreed verbally but it is not in the written contract).

Closing: Indicates that both parties agree to the contract upon signing the binding document.

ENTERTAINMENT/SPEAKER CONTRACTS

Student Engagement staff members can provide assistance with University entertainment contracts to organizations sponsoring an act. All entertainment contracts funded through the Student Assessment Fee (i.e., GFAC funded, WSAAC funded, etc.) must be reviewed by the Office of Student Engagement. Some contracts may need further authorization from other University entities. Please allow 7–10 business days for review and authorization. The University policy is to not provide checks any earlier than the day of the event.

The [Contract Agreement Form](#) is available through the Office of Student Engagement.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

Student organizations must adhere to all University and Student Engagement accounting policies, guidelines and procedures. Organizations that violate University and/or Student Engagement financial guidelines, policies and procedures are subject to disciplinary procedures.

ON-CAMPUS ACCOUNTS

On-campus financial accounts are utilized for Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) that receive Student Assessment Fee (SAF) allocations from Graduate Student Allocations Committee (GSAC/GFAC), or Western Student Association Allocations Committee (WSAAC). After an RSO secures funding from one of the above sources, an account is established through the Office of Student Engagement. Money in these accounts can only be spent on items for which SAF funds were allocated. SAF money remaining in these accounts following events will be returned (aka: swept) to the allocating body from which it was given. It is possible for RSOs to have two on-campus accounts based upon the source of funding:

WSAAC SAF ACCOUNT:

52 627 _____
fund cost center number

GFAC SAF ACCOUNT:

52 624 _____
fund cost center number

NON-WMU BANK ACCOUNTS

If your RSO collects and/or manages self-generated funds such as membership fees or donations, RSOs can open a non-WMU bank account. Most organizations choose to open a bank account through PNC located in the Student Center. PNC encourages anyone who is interested in opening an account to stop by their branch in the Student Center to receive all the necessary paperwork prior to setting up an appointment.

Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN) to use on the bank account rather than an individual student’s Social Security Number (SSN). You can apply for an EIN from the IRS (www.irs.gov) by completing Form SS-4. It is recommended that at least two students have signature authority for the bank account.

You will also need to request a verification letter from the RSO Development GA: ose-rsodevelopment@wmich.edu or the Office of Student Engagement: <https://wmich.edu/studentengagement/contact>.

Bring two valid forms of identification (drivers license, state ID, passport, etc.) with you when you go to PNC. They will give you a copy of their Student Organization Certification Form for you to fill out and return. You will need a deposit of at least \$100 to open an account. Please note: PNC is a separate entity from Western Michigan University, and their policies and procedures are subject to change based on their own discretion.

Non-WMU bank account names cannot have reference to Western Michigan University.

RSOs are solely responsible for their non-WMU bank account matters. Western Michigan University is not responsible in any way for such transactions unless an authorized university official has developed a contractual relationship with the RSO. In addition, WMU will not provide vendors and/or creditors with any information beyond that which is considered public information.

Similarly as with on-campus accounts; outstanding invoices or balances with businesses are unacceptable and are the responsibility of the RSO and/or students involved, not the university. Students and RSOs may be held accountable through the WMU Student Code. Additionally, legal action may be taken by businesses to resolve outstanding balances.

STUDENT FINANCIAL MANAGERS

Organizations who receive SAF funding must appoint at least one member, and may have up to two members, who will be designated as Student Financial Manager(s) for the organization. Student Financial Managers must also hold an officer position in their RSO. Student Financial Managers will be the only members authorized to sign for and spend funds from the RSO accounts. They will be held responsible for the financial activities of their organization.

ORGANIZATION PURCHASE/TRANSACTION APPROVAL PROCEDURE

To spend funds from an on-campus account, any necessary financial forms must be submitted to the RSO Treasurer/Financial Officer for approval.

FINANCIAL DEBTS

RSOs are not permitted to have a deficit (negative) in on-campus account balances. This situation can occur if an organization spends more than the SAF funds they were allocated. In this instance, RSOs will be required to make a deposit to the on-campus account to pay for the deficit. RSO accounts that show a deficit at any time may be subject to any or all of the following:

1. A freeze will be placed on the RSO account(s). No transactions will be permitted until the account deficit is resolved.
2. RSO Financial Manager(s) will need to meet with Student Engagement Administrators to discuss the deficit situation.
3. RSOs privileges (i.e., use of SOC office space, phone lines, ability to use campus facilities for meetings, etc.) will be revoked.
4. RSO may not apply for on-campus funding through GFAC or WSAAC.
5. RSO will lose its recognition status with WMU until the debt is paid.
6. The student who signs a requisition, voucher or other transaction form causing a deficit account balance may be held accountable through the WMU Student Code.

RSOs are similarly responsible to appropriately manage their off-campus financial accounts. Outstanding invoices or balances with businesses are unacceptable and are the responsibility of the RSO and/or students involved, not the university. Students and RSOs may be held accountable through the WMU Student Code. Additionally, legal action may be taken by businesses to resolve the outstanding balance.

DEPOSITS

No deposits should be made into RSO on-campus financial accounts, unless an RSO is resolving a deficit. SAF funds are the only monies permitted in RSO on-campus accounts. An authorized deposit form from Student Engagement is required to make a deposit.

FALSIFICATION OF INFORMATION

Providing false information in the process of seeking reimbursement is a violation of law and University policies. Any student who submits documentation that is false will be referred to WMU Public Safety and the Office of Student Conduct to face formal charges.

PERSONAL RISK MANAGEMENT

Personal risk management includes travel and events. Both areas cover a broad spectrum of high and low risk activities. Students hosting and/or attending off-campus events will be subject to the same rules and regulations as if they were on campus. Consider factors such as travel distance, event venue rules, local laws/restrictions, event security, and proximity to urgent care. Please view the [Clery Information and Links](#) available on the WMU Public Safety website for more information about off-campus travel.

Events can be high risk or low risk. A high risk event could be a controversial musician or a large-scale event with inflatables. A low risk event could be simply bringing a noncontroversial speaker to campus. Consider factors such as projected attendance, cost, food, venue, security needs, contracts, activities, and attractions to evaluate the degree of risk to the event.

As set forth in the WMU Student Code: All social events sponsored by organizations or University affiliated groups, on or off campus, must comply with University alcohol regulations. In addition, the Student Assessment Fee may not be used in whole or part for the purchase of alcoholic beverages for any purpose.

The possession, use or storage of weapons is prohibited on University owned or controlled premises and at University sponsored events without authorization from an appropriate University official. Using or possessing a weapon, even with proper authorization, in a manner that harms, threatens or causes fear in others, is also prohibited.

Please review Western Michigan University's [Public Events Policy](#).

PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT

This includes hazing and Title IX. Copies of the policies related are below and more information can be found at the links provided.

WMU HAZING POLICY

Hazing is in direct opposition to the educational mission of the institution. Hazing is a broad term encompassing any action or activity which does not contribute to the positive development of a person. No RSO shall conduct hazing activities. Hazing activities are defined as: any action taken or situation created, whether on or off campus, for the purpose of initiation or affiliation with any University organization or team which jeopardizes the physical and/or mental well-being of an individual; embarrasses, frightens, degrades an individual; or is illegal.

As per the [WMU Student Code of Conduct](#), Article IV, B. 10, hazing is defined as any act which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person, embarrasses, frightens, or degrades a person or which destroys or removes public/private property, for the purpose of initiation, admission into, or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership, in a group, organization or team. The expressed or implied consent of the alleged person against whom the actions have been taken will not be a defense. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of hazing are not neutral acts—they are violation of this rule. In addition, according to the state of Michigan's "Garret's Law," senate bill #783, hazing may result in criminal prosecution resulting in fines and imprisonment.

Hazing can also be defined as any action or situation which intentionally or unintentionally endangers a student seeking admission into or affiliation with any student organization. In addition, any other activities which are not consistent with policy, law or the regulations and policies of the educational institution will constitute hazing. Hazing is in direct opposition to the educational mission of the institution.

Information used by permission from the Texas education code and Texas Tech University student affairs handbook.

UNIVERSITY SEXUAL ASSAULT AND MISCONDUCT POLICY

Western Michigan University encourages all members of our community to participate in the process of creating a safe, welcoming and respectful environment on campus. With the Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, and Stalking Policy and Procedures, we affirm the commitment of the University and our community to the values of transparency and timely communication, and accountable and responsible behavior within an ethical, compassionate, diverse and respectful environment.

For complete policies, please visit: wmich.edu/policies/sexual-misconduct and wmich.edu/equity/sexualmisconduct. There is also a [resource guide](#) available via the Office of Institutional Equity.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

PROPER USE OF THE UNIVERSITY NAME

Use of the University's name in the identification of the organization and in the sponsorship of activities and events requires that the organization list its name first and the University's name or abbreviation second. For example, **"The Student Club at Western Michigan University" is acceptable, but neither "Western Michigan University Student Club" nor "WMU Student Club" are allowed.**

UNIVERSITY LICENSING POLICIES

PURPOSE OF THE LICENSING PROGRAM

Western Michigan's marks are used to identify the University, its athletic programs, services, documents, publications, and products. The main purpose of the Trademark Licensing Program is to ensure that the marks of the University are used appropriately, in good taste, and with quality reproduction. Likewise, the licensing program seeks to avoid misrepresentations of the University to the public. WMU's marks should not be used in ways that imply the University's endorsement of commercial products or services, or endorsement of causes or organizations not a part of the University.

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY'S TRADEMARKS

A WMU trademark is any mark, logo, symbol, nickname, letter(s), word or derivative that can be associated with Western Michigan University and can be distinguished from other institutions or entities. Some examples of WMU trademarks are:

- Western Michigan University
- Western Michigan University Broncos
- Western Michigan
- Western Michigan Broncos
- WMU Broncos
- WMU

STUDENT ORGANIZATION USE

RSOs that have items produced bearing WMU marks are required to buy them from licensed vendors and have the design artwork approved by the WMU Licensing Office (licensed vendors will submit the artwork for you). A list of licensed vendors can be obtained through the University Licensing Department or the Purchasing Department. If the items are for sale to the public, then the licensee or organization will also be required to pay royalties. The trademarks may not be altered. Alteration of the trademarks may dilute them and weaken their protection. Accordingly, marks used for Intercollegiate Athletics may not be utilized by WMU club sports.

WMU marks may not be utilized in any fund-raising, advertising, marketing, promotional activity or other venture by any student organization, entity, or individual without prior written approval from authorized University representatives. Vendors not licensed with the University are unauthorized to reproduce marks registered to WMU. Non-licensed vendors reproducing University marks may also be subject to legal action.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dan Bartholomae
219 Read Fieldhouse
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5406
Phone: 269-387-3120
Fax: 269-387-3668

Licensing Resource Group, Inc. (LRG)
426 Century Lane, Suite 100
Holland, MI 49423
Phone: 616-395-0676
Fax: 616-395-2517

ALCOHOL ON CAMPUS

The purpose of WMU's [Alcohol on Campus](#) policy is to ensure the safety of the University community and compliance with State law and University Policy when serving or consuming alcohol on the campus of Western Michigan University, and to limit the liability of the University due to the consumption and serving of alcohol on WMU's campus.

SOCIAL EVENTS

As set forth in the WMU Student Code: All social events sponsored by organizations or University-affiliated groups, on or off campus, must comply with University alcohol regulations. In addition, the Student Assessment Fee may not be used in whole or part for the purchase of alcoholic beverages for any purpose.

WEAPONS ON CAMPUS

Firearms and other dangerous weapons are not permitted on WMU property. Please review Western Michigan University's full [Weapons on Campus](#) policy.

Western Michigan University is a weapon free school. By order of the Board of Trustees: "no person shall possess on university property any firearms or other dangerous weapons with the exception of police officers, transfer agents licensed to carry weapons and persons using any such weapons for class instruction when authorized by the dean of the appropriate college." Any student, faculty member or other university employee violating this rule shall be subject to suspension or dismissal. Any person violating this rule may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Article IV: Proscribed Conduct, number 24 of the WMU Student Code also prohibits weapons on campus. Following is a list of weapons prohibited by either WMU, state law, or both and it is not exhaustive:

- Any firearm either long gun or handgun, or any device which fires any type of projectile utilizing gunpowder as a propellant.
- Any bb or pellet gun, or device that fires a projectile using compressed air, co2, or other gas as a propellant. This includes airsoft and paintball guns.
- No edged weapons. This includes any folding or fixed blade knives, daggers, dirks, swords, axes, machetes, bow and arrow or any other sharp object fashioned or used as such objects. Kitchen knives are allowed as long as they are used for the intended culinary purpose.
- Pepper Spray or any chemical irritant that contains 10% or less of oleoresin capsicum is permitted on campus property.
- Martial arts devices such as: nunchucks, boken, throwing stars, throwing knives, bow staffs, Sai, tonfas, or any other device considered a dangerous weapon.
- Stun gun or taser, or any device that produces electrical current intended to disable or injure a person either permanently or temporarily.
- Any device made specific, crafted, or used with the intended purpose of causing harm to a person is prohibited.

PROCEDURES FOR REVOCABLE LIMITED EXEMPTIONS OF THE WEAPONS POSSESSION USE POLICY

In order for a limited exemption request to be considered, a student or student organization (the applicant) must submit a written application to the Dean of Students via the office of Office of Student Engagement. Upon receipt of the request, the dean of students will convene a review committee to discuss the request. The committee will include staff from Office of Student Engagement, student conduct, WMU Department of Public Safety and others as designated by the Dean of Students, based on

the specifics of the request. Before the review committee will consider a request, the applicant must provide documentation of the following:

- Verification of its status or application to obtain status as a currently registered student organization or as an enrolled student. The process for attaining organization recognition is outlined in the "RSO Handbook," the guide for student organizations and agencies at WMU.
- Articulation of the educational benefits to be gained from participating in said activity. Examples include: The activity or exercise encourages teamwork, the activity or exercise promotes health and fitness, the activity or exercise increases self-respect, the activity or exercise encourages discussion and exploration, or any other potential benefits which may result from this out-of-the classroom experience should be included.
- Verification that the activity or exercise is performed and administered in a way that demonstrates effective citizenship. Applicants are expected to responsibly participate in the event or activity and to adhere to the rules, regulations, and policies of WMU.
- Documentation that the applicant(s) obtained insurance (if applicable) in keeping with the national standards of any relevant professional associations as well as any insurance requirements of the University.
- Participation in a comprehensive training session in regard to the student code. The means through which this training session will be administered will be approved by the director of student conduct and must be attended by the individual applicant and at least 80% of the active members of the club or organization, if the applicant is an organization.
- Written acknowledgement that, excluding certified professionals and teachers, only currently enrolled WMU students will participate in the exercise or activity that takes place on WMU property or in connection with any university facility.
- Agree to comply with all local, state and federal laws as well as all WMU procedures.
- Updated copy of any national standards on file associated with said activity in the Office of Student Engagement. Participation of said activity or exercise on WMU property does not excuse the applicant from adhering to any and all recognized national standards.
- Arrangement for objects* and/or structure to be stored in a location acceptable to the review committee. There will be zero tolerance policy for any objects* and/or structure being stored in any residence halls or automobiles parked in university facilities. The applicant is responsible for all costs and fees incurred in the storing of equipment. *Note: *Objects are those items identified by the review committee.*
 - Objects and/or a structure with accompanying accessories will be moved or transferred in a way that promotes safety for the applicants and the WMU community members not involved in the activity or exercise.
- Agree to adhere to the requirements of the designated WMU facility/space. Written authorization from the facility manager is required (if applicable).
- Each applicant will submit the assumption of risk form/waiver of liability, as well as appropriate releases for individual assumptions of risk as requested by WMU.
- The review committee retains the discretion to deny a request under this procedure for any reason it deems appropriate. Nothing in this procedure creates entitlement for any applicant to utilize weapons on campus. The committee may consider any factor it deems relevant in determining whether the request is appropriate, so long as such factors do not violate university policy, state or federal law.

In addition:

- The review committee has the freedom to accept or deny requests after this discussion and ruling. A written record of the review committee's decision will be presented to the applicant of the club organization's president within one week of its decision. Any appeals to the review committee's decision must be sought through the dean of students or their designee.
- If the requested event includes sparring or contact, the following additional criteria apply: 1) Appropriate protective gear for the exercise or activity must be worn at all times. 2) Appropriate levels of physical skill must be demonstrated before new members may participate in the said activity or exercise. 3) The sparring or contact must be conducted in a manner that adheres to any and all nationally required standards. (Note: each applicant is responsible for developing a mechanism that will demonstrate the completion of these requirements.)
- Each applicant must agree to adhere to any other requirements (additionally) added by the dean of students.
- Each applicant must recognize that failure to comply with the instruction of the dean of students and the review committee will result in immediate suspension of privileges and may result in conduct action through the WMU student code.
- The review committee has the right to revoke, suspend, limit, and alter any previously approved exemption. This list is not exhaustive.
- The review committee reserves the right to alter or amend these requirements.

Note: Applicants seeking restricted use of weapons for academic presentations need to obtain permission from the appropriate college dean. Applicants seeking restricted use of weapons for entertainment purposes must obtain permission from the dean of students. In all instances, WMU's department of public safety will be consulted prior to a final decision being made.

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During the event, it is required that the applicant provide the following (when applicable):

- 1) Arrangements for the exercise or activity to be conducted in an area designated and set aside by the review committee and recognized by the WMU for such use;
- 2) A WMU facility manager to be present for the duration of the activity (if applicable). The facilities manager is responsible for the facility and is in no part responsible for the activity;
- 3) Arrangements for an on-site, certified supervisor present during the duration of the activity or exercise that is responsible for the activity or exercise;
- 4) Arrangements to have a WMU police officer and/or an emergency medical technician present as deemed appropriate for the duration of the activity. (Note: the applicant is responsible for all costs, licenses, and fees that are incurred from the provision of these safeguards).

RSO CONDUCT PROCESS

RSO CONDUCT PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF ALLEGATIONS

Members of an organization shall be accorded fair proceedings for a review of the information brought forward regarding alleged violations of the RSO Handbook/Student Code. During the RSO Hearing, members of the RSO will be given an opportunity to respond to the alleged violation(s). The RSO Hearing will be initiated and coordinated by the Assistant Director of Office of Student Engagement or their designee. The administrator coordinating the hearing may expand the review panel to up to three people at their discretion. The Assistant

Director or their designee has the responsibility to make decisions and interpret the procedures pertaining to guidelines in the RSO Handbook regarding alleged violations.

RSO RESPONSIBILITY

Members of an RSO could be charged with an alleged violation of University and/or Student Engagement procedures when one or more of the following apply:

- One or more members of an RSO or its officers permit, encourage, aid or assist in committing the violation
- One or more members of the organization fail to report to appropriate University authorities knowledge or information about a violation
- One or more officers or authorized representatives of the RSO, acting in the scope of their organizational capacities, commit the violation
- One or more of the RSO's members are found responsible/admit responsibility for the violation after the activity was approved by a vote of the organization or was part of a committee assignment of the organization
- The violation is committed at an event funded by the organization
- The violation occurs as a result of an event sponsored by the organization
- One or more members of an RSO or its officers permit, encourage, aid or assist in committing the violation
- One or more members of the organization fail to report to appropriate University authorities knowledge or information about a violation
- When one or more members of an organization fail to satisfactorily complete sanctions given by the Office of Student Engagement Assistant Director/designee or hearing body
- Student Engagement staff determines an activity or circumstance relating to an organization appears to be a violation of University or Student Engagement policies, guidelines and procedures.

RSO CONDUCT PROCEDURES

The RSO conduct procedures are not analogous to, equivalent to, or conforming to criminal law processes. When members of an RSO have allegedly violated University and/or Student Engagement procedures, the University will provide members of the RSO with fundamental fairness by adhering to the following procedure:

1. The appropriate staff in the Office of Student Engagement may conduct an investigation to determine if the information has merit and/or if the situation can be resolved administratively by mutual consent of the parties involved on a basis acceptable to the appropriate staff in Student Engagement. The nature and size of student organizations and the alleged violation(s) affect the length of the investigative process. Such resolution shall be final and there shall be no subsequent proceedings. If the situation cannot be resolved by mutual consent, the appropriate staff in Student Engagement may later serve as the conduct body or a member thereof for the same matter. If the student admits responsibility for violating University policies but sanctions are not agreed upon, subsequent processes, including a hearing if necessary, shall be limited to determining the appropriate sanctions.
2. The RSO will be notified in writing of the charge(s). It is the responsibility of the RSO president or another officer of the RSO to schedule a pre-hearing meeting with the appropriate Student Engagement staff by the deadline stated in the notification letter.
3. At this initial meeting between the RSO president or RSO officer and the Student Engagement staff member, the RSO member will be informed of (1) the charges against the members of the organization with sufficient details to enable the members to prepare their case, including a review of the file of information regarding the alleged violation; (2) a notice of possible sanctions; (3) the RSO Conduct Process proceedings. The RSO officer will complete the Fundamental Fairness Form, acknowledging that they understand the proceedings.
4. The administrator coordinating the RSO Hearing may expand the review body up to three people at their discretion.
5. An RSO may have one support person present during the RSO conduct hearing to observe and advise the organization. Members of the RSO are responsible for presenting their own case, and therefore, support persons may not actively participate in the RSO hearing. Once the RSO hearing is called to order, the support person may not speak on behalf of the RSO charged with a violation(s), but may

consult solely with their advisee. Student Engagement staff must be notified in writing not less than 24 hours before the RSO hearing with the name and position of a support person, as well as the names of witnesses who will appear on behalf of the organization's members. University legal counsel may also be present at the RSO hearing to advise the RSO conduct proceedings coordinator but may not actively participate.

6. RSO conduct proceedings shall be closed.
7. The RSO charged with an alleged violation and the person(s) bringing the information involving the RSO forward, may call witnesses and/or present information in support of their position; however, admission of any person to the conduct proceedings shall be at the discretion of the RSO conduct proceedings chair.
8. The RSO hearing body is not bound by statutory definitions of offenses or court rules of evidence in conducting the RSO hearing or determining responsibility or whether evidence should be admitted. Information having reasonable value shall be admitted. The chair of the RSO hearing body shall have the sole authority to determine what information may or may not be admitted.
9. Members of the RSO will have an opportunity to review the file for the case between the prehearing and hearing by making an appointment with the Assistant Director.
10. If the RSO fails to send a representative to the RSO conduct hearing, the hearing will proceed. A conclusion will be reached, and, if found responsible, sanctions assigned based on the information presented during the RSO conduct hearing and the original previous violations (if any).
11. All parties involved will be notified in writing of the results and findings of the RSO hearing and any assigned sanctions.

PREPONDERANCE OF EVIDENCE

RSO hearings are based on a preponderance of evidence standard. That is, the RSO conduct hearing body's determination shall be made on the basis of whether a reasonable person would conclude that it is more likely than not that the accused RSO/members violated University policy/procedure from a hearing, the hearing panel will determine:

- Not Responsible—A preponderance of evidence does not exist to prove a violation of a policy, guideline or procedure.
- Responsible—A preponderance of evidence does exist to prove a violation of a policy, guideline or procedure.

SANCTIONS

Sanctions may be imposed upon any RSO or individual student found to have violated University and/or Student Engagement policies, guidelines or procedures. Determination of sanctions shall be based on the severity of the current offense, and/or previous offenses. The following sanctions may be used independently or in combination, depending on the circumstances of the violation:

1. **Warning:** verbal or written notice that specific inappropriate conduct is unacceptable. An official written censure containing three components: A reprimand for inappropriate behavior; notice that the conduct associated with the violation must stop immediately and permanently; and notice that additional violations shall result in more severe sanctions.
2. **Discretionary Sanctions:** Service to the University, attendance at educational seminars, classes, or workshops, written assignments, or other activities deemed appropriate by the hearing body.
3. **Restitution:** Compensation for loss, damage or injury. This may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement.
4. **Loss of RSO Privileges:** Denial of specified privileges for a designated period of time.
5. **Probation:** Probation requires that an RSO's activities be monitored for a designated period of time. If during this period, the RSO is found to be in violation of any Student Engagement and/or University policy or procedures, additional, and more severe sanctions shall be applied.
6. **Suspension:** Loss of recognition by Student Engagement for a defined period of time, after which the RSO is again eligible for recognition. Conditions for regaining recognition may be specified.
7. **Expulsion:** Permanent loss of recognition for the RSO.
8. **Other:** Additional sanctions may be used at the discretion of the RSO conduct proceedings chair or RSO hearing body.

When an RSO is sanctioned, the organization will receive a notice, a copy will be on file in the Office of Student Engagement, and copies will be sent to appropriate University offices.

ARCHIVE POLICY

All RSO conduct files are kept for a 10-year period. Past records of an RSO may be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine reinstatement and, when appropriate, to formulate a response for current offenses. Pertinent factors include, but are not limited to a) previous violations; b) the length of time that has passed since the previous violation(s); and c) current violations recorded by the Office of Student Engagement.

APPEALS

The RSO has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing body for the following reasons:

- a. New information that would redirect the outcome of the case has been identified.
- b. The finding of the conduct proceedings chair/hearing body was inconsistent with the information.
- c. The proceedings were conducted unfairly.
- d. The sanction imposed was unhealthy or unreasonable.
- e. The findings of the conduct proceedings chair/hearing body were based on a misinterpretation or misapplication of the University and/or Student Engagement rules and regulations.

APPEAL PROCESS:

1. The appeal must be submitted to the Vice President of Student Affairs or designee within five University business days of the decision or an organization's members' rights to appeal shall be waived. The appeal must include, in writing, the reason(s) and supporting documentation for the appeal.
2. The Vice President of Student Affairs or designee will review the appeal statement and all information upon which the decision was made.
3. The Vice President of Student Affairs or designee may decide that on the basis of appeal there is not sufficient reason to review the case. The decision of the administrator or RSO hearing body shall then be final.
4. The Vice President of Student Affairs or designee may decide that on the basis of appeal there is sufficient reason to review the case. The Vice President of Student Affairs or designee may then:
 - a. modify (increase or lessen) the previous outcome.
 - b. uphold the previous outcome.
 - c. reverse the previous outcome.
 - d. direct that a new conduct hearing be conducted.
5. All decisions of the Vice President of Student Affairs or designee shall be final.

Unless otherwise noted and at the discretion of the conduct hearing administrator/RSO hearing body, sanctions are not imposed until the appeal is exhausted.

INTERIM SUSPENSION

At the discretion of the designated OSE staff, an organization may be suspended for an interim period pending a conduct hearing for review of allegations when there is reasonable cause to believe that continued activities of the organization and its members may cause an immediate threat and/or excessive concern within the University community. Upon notification of interim suspension, the RSO is required to cease all organizational activities immediately.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE A SANCTION

If the members of an RSO fail to complete a sanction(s) in the designated time period, the president or another officer of the organization will be notified. Members of the RSO may then be subject to a new conduct hearing to review the alleged failure to complete sanctions. If there is a finding of "responsible," additional sanctions may be assigned. [08]

LINKS TO RSO FORMS:

[Sample RSO Constitution](#)

[RSO Liability Waiver \(Assumption of Risk\)](#)

[RSO Grade Waiver Form](#)

[RSO Advisor Expectations Form](#)

[RSO Advisor Letter of Intent](#)

[RSO Advisor Evaluation](#)

[RSO Advisor Complaint Form](#)