

# **COMMITTEE ON STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS HANDBOOK**



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## Student Organization Guidelines

The guidelines included in this document are meant to give new and existing undergraduate student organizations a clear understanding of COSO's processes, requirements, and expectations. These guidelines are meant to serve as a framework for student organizations seeking to become COSO-approved and existing student organizations.

To be considered an organization in good standing and registered with COSO, student organizations must adhere to all University of Miami policies and regulations, as well as meet the requirements established by COSO and SAFAC guidelines. Failure to follow any of the guidelines, requirements, or other information outlined in this document could result in an organization's deactivation at the discretion of COSO. All financial questions should be referred to the Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee (SAFAC) at [safac@miami.edu](mailto:safac@miami.edu).

Please note that this is a living document and can be modified or changed at the discretion of The Committee on Student Organizations.

## Background

### Committee on Student Organizations (COSO)

The Committee on Student Organizations (COSO) is dedicated to advocating for student organizations and their members. The students on this selective committee are responsible for approving new student organizations; registering existing student organizations on a yearly basis; providing, developing, and improving services and resources for student organizations; enforcing policies and procedures related to student organizations; coordinating Canefest and the Spring Involvement Fair; and coordinating the end of the year Student Organization Achievement and Recognition (SOAR) Awards Ceremony.

### Student Organizations and Categories

A student organization is defined as a group of currently enrolled University of Miami undergraduate students who unite to promote a common interest. Only currently enrolled undergraduate students may serve as officers or vote on organizational matters. The University of Miami recognizes the vital contributions that student organizations make to the quality of life on a university campus; however, recognition as a University of Miami student organization is not to be interpreted as an endorsement or approval of the purpose and/or activities of any organization by the University of Miami

Student organizations are placed into one of the following categories based upon their members' interests and goals. Organizations are able to identify with multiple categories in order to foster communication between organizations that may share similar philosophical underpinnings and to assist interested students in locating and finding a suitable student organization for their needs. However, one will serve as the primary category for administrative purposes. An organization has the ability to change their primary category by submitting an Engage form to be approved by COSO. The categories include:

**Academic/Honorary/Professional:** A student organization with the stated objective of providing an opportunity for individuals to discuss and share information related to a specific academic discipline, topic or interest. These student organizations must mandate a GPA requirement for their members and provide opportunities to get to know other students in one's academic discipline as well as faculty members inside and outside of the classroom. Members will be exposed to opportunities for networking and leadership development.

**Club Sports:** Competitive sports clubs are generally characterized by their participation in a league or conference and their affiliation with a regional or national governing body. Non-competitive sports clubs also exist, which provide members with a chance to engage in a favorite athletic activity with peers. Club Sport categorization requires that the organization be a part of the Federation of Club Sports, which has a separate approval process. *For more information regarding Sports Clubs and the Federation of Club Sports, please visit Campus Recreation's website.*

**Communities:** Social organizations are organizations with the purpose of uniting students to foster a community of individuals with common interests or hobbies.

**Community Outreach and Social Change:** A student organization registered under this category places special emphasis on benefiting the community through education and awareness of social issues, as well as stewardship, service learning, and/or active community service. In addition, these student organizations place emphasis on personal growth, leadership, and building lifelong friendships.

**Fraternity & Sorority Life:** Sororities and fraternities are formed with a commitment to leadership, diversity, community, and service. These organizations design and implement programs, events, and activities which support and enrich the goals of UM's educational mission. Social Sororities and Fraternities are registered through the Dean of Students Office and are not COSO groups.

**Health & Wellness:** Wellness organizations serve to connect students with similar interests embodying wellness. Many of these organizations assist with bettering the student body through programming, advocacy, and opportunities for educating others around health issues.

**Media & Publications:** These organizations work to produce media and publications for their fellow students at UM.

**Multicultural and Identity-Based:** A student organization that is culturally based seeks to fulfill UM's mission to promote all forms of diversity and understanding. As with all campus student organizations, cultural organizations do not limit membership to any cultural group, and welcome all to learn in a safe and encouraging multicultural environment. These clubs typically hold regular events displaying culture and serve as a point of information for others who seek to understand different cultures.

**Performing Arts:** Registered student organizations that serve to create a space for creative expression and promote expression through the arts including but not limited to theatrical, visual, and vocal.

**Programming Boards:** Programming Boards are large student organizations that organize programming and entertainment for on-campus students. These include COSO, SAFAC and the Homecoming Executive Committee.

**Religious & Spiritual:** A registered faith-based organization serves as a haven for students who share similar worldviews and ideologies, or who are exploring new facets of faith and spirituality. Activities typical of faith-based student organizations include fellowship, spreading awareness of their worldview, and acting as a point of reference for students interested in learning more about their faith. Faith based organizations do not limit their membership to any particular faith or ideological belief and welcome all students.

## Student Organization Benefits

Student organizations registered with COSO are permitted to:

- Promote themselves at COSO events such as Canefest, the Spring Involvement Fair, and other leadership programs and initiatives;
- Apply for annual awards through the Student Organization Awards and Recognition (SOAR) Awards Ceremony;
- Reserve meeting/event space in the Student Center Complex (Whitten University Center and Shalala Student Center) and use designated equipment (A/V, tables, etc.) at no charge;
- Access Engage and maintain an organization portal;
- Apply for office and/or storage space in the Student Center Complex through the Student Center Complex Advisory Council's application process;
- Request SAFAC funding in accordance with stated SAFAC policies and procedures;
- Utilize University accounts to manage organization finances;
- Advertise programs and events on the digital signage located throughout the Shalala Student Center Complex;
- Gain access to resources and workshops provided by COSO and the Department of Student Activities and Student Organization (SASO);
- Receive advertising discounts in The Miami Hurricane newspaper;
- Use the Student Organization ListServ to promote events;
- Access co-sponsorship funding from SASO, SG, and other organizations and departments on campus;
- Attend leadership development workshops to enhance leadership skills

## Canefest & Spring Involvement Fair

The Committee on Student Organizations sponsors an involvement fair at the beginning of both the fall and spring semesters. The involvement fairs are a great opportunity to recruit new members, and all student organizations are encouraged to sign up for a table at which they can promote their programs. Information on Canefest registration is sent to organization presidents in the middle of summer, and space is limited. Information about Spring Involvement Fair is sent to organization presidents towards the end of the fall semester. For more information on the involvement fairs, please contact the COSO Chair at [COSO\\_chair@miami.edu](mailto:COSO_chair@miami.edu).

## Other Student Organization Leadership Opportunities

COSO makes an effort to program myriad leadership opportunities and resources for student leaders throughout the academic year. These events include leadership workshops, student organization mixers, leadership library, and general student organization events that aid organizations in general operations. Students can also take advantage of COSO consulting which is a resource geared towards students and student organizations about consultations with COSO about student organizations an individual might fit with or any resources student organization may need. For more information, please contact [COSO\\_Chair@miami.edu](mailto:COSO_Chair@miami.edu).

## Student Organization Achievement & Recognition Awards

The Student Organization Achievement & Recognition Awards (SOAR) provides an opportunity for student organizations to present their achievements to the rest of the university community and be recognized for their accomplishments. Awards include “Student Leader of the Year” and “Organization of the Year,” among many others. SOAR serves as a showcase of the talent and ingenuity among University of Miami student leaders. Nomination forms are released every spring semester on COSO’s Engage Portal.

## Creating a New Student Organization

### Eligibility

In order to create a new student organization, the following criteria must be met:

- Students who are interested in starting a new student organization should review the New Student Organization Interest packet on COSO's Engage portal.
- A roster of 25 prospective undergraduate members with full names, C numbers, emails, and signatures must be uploaded to the New Student Organization Interest Packet on Engage. Advisors, faculty and staff members, graduate students, COSO delegates, and SAFAC delegates will not count towards the 25 undergraduate member requirement. The roster template can be found in the New Student Organization Interest packet.
- New organizations must not duplicate the guiding principles/purpose of an existing organization and must fill a need on campus not already met by an existing organization.
- New organizations must have a plan for sustainability and longevity including long term goals beyond the timeline of founding or existing members at the University. Organizations may not be formed around issues that are inherently short-term; for example, organizations to support a specific political candidate in an election or a one-time event.
- Adhere to the University of Miami's policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Student Organization Handbook and the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.
- New organizations must remain active on campus throughout the academic year. Active status includes but is not limited to: holding meetings, tabling and promoting the organization, recruiting and electing members, and executing programs and events in addition to following the organization's objectives and guiding principles as listed in the organization's constitution
- All organizations are required to have a full-time faculty or staff member as an advisor. Graduate students are not eligible to become advisors to an organization, and the advisor cannot be on a leave of absence or sabbatical from the university.
- Membership shall be open to all University of Miami students in good academic standing, who have paid their Student Activity Fee. Organizations shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, physical abilities, marital status, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, political affiliation, religious affiliation or any other discriminatory factor, real or perceived, in any of its policies, procedures, or practices.

- Organizations must not infringe on the safety, health, and welfare of the University community and the order of campus operations, must be compliant with stated policies, procedures, and laws as well as the University of Miami Student Organization Handbook and the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.
- Student organizations must be comprised of at least 75% undergraduate members.
- Graduate Students are ineligible to start any organizations or to be on the executive boards of COSO registered organizations. If graduate students are seeking to start organizations, they may contact the GSA.
- Student organizations that are affiliated with national organizations or on-campus departments/organizations must upload a letter from the national/on-campus organization dictating the approved affiliation between the two parties upon the submission of the New Student Organization Interest Packet.

The Senior Vice President for Students Affairs, or their designee, reserves the right to use their sole discretion to refuse to register any student organization or proposed student organization if the values, missions, goals, objectives, affiliations, purposes, activities, or conduct of the student organization or proposed student organization are inconsistent with the values and missions of the University and/or may cause a disruption, or cause danger to the health and safety of others, or cause violence.

### General Timeline for the New Student Organization Process:

The steps outlined below provide the projected timeline for each new student organization step in the process. While this is the projected timeline, it is not a guarantee that there will be a specific timeframe, as the process can become lengthier if there are any denials/appeals at any stage of the process. A student organization is not officially approved and active until they receive an approval letter from their assigned COSO delegate acknowledging the completion of the New Student Organization process in its entirety. The process outlined below is that of an organization approved at all stages of the process. For information on appeals and denials, please see the designated sections.

- The New Student Organization Interest Packet, found on COSO's Engage portal, under the Forms section, must be reviewed and submitted prior to the deadline listed on the form. This form will be made available for submission on the first day of each semester.
- The COSO committee will review the interest packet to consider whether the organization is eligible to come in for a Pitch Presentation.
- If the Interest Packet is approved, the COSO Secretary will contact the organization with two available dates of which to schedule a Pitch Presentation.
- After being contacted by the Secretary, the organization will have **72 hours (or 3 days)** from when the email was sent to respond with a preferred pitch time and date. If the organization does not respond by the 72-hour deadline, their opportunity to pitch will be at the discretion of COSO.
- Once the organization has pitched and it is approved, the organization will be assigned a delegate. The New Student Organization will have until the **following Sunday at 11:59pm** to submit their COSO Constitution draft to their assigned COSO Delegate.

- Once the Constitution is approved, the organization will have **no more than one** week to complete the New Student Organization Orientations. Prospective student organizations must complete the SAFAC and advisor orientation prior to meeting with their COSO delegate to complete the COSO orientation and set up their organization's Engage portal. All orientations should be finished at most two weeks from the constitution approval email date. The SAFAC, Advisor, and COSO orientation must be completed by the treasurer, advisor, and president, respectively.
- COSO recommends there to be no changes to the organization's executive board after the pitch presentation. However, if there are any changes relating to the organization's guiding principles, objectives, or executive board, then the organization will be reconsidered as per the COSO committee's discretion.
- The treasurer must meet with a SAFAC liaison to complete treasurer training and to review SAFAC policies and resources. This time will be set directly with a SAFAC liaison based upon their office hours. Treasurers can reach out directly to [safac@miami.edu](mailto:safac@miami.edu).
- The advisor will complete an Engage form on the Student Activities and Student Organizations (SASO) Engage page. This will include reviewing advisor roles and responsibilities including Workday management and signing documents to begin the process of creating financial accounts. Advisors can reach out directly to [m.lavado@miami.edu](mailto:m.lavado@miami.edu) or [saso@miami.edu](mailto:saso@miami.edu).
- After the SAFAC and advisor orientations are completed, the president must meet with the COSO delegate to review overall COSO policies and resources. This time will be set directly with the COSO delegate based upon their office hours.
- The COSO delegate will also review the Engage platform and create a new portal for the organization. It is the president's duty to fully update the portal to reflect the organization's mission, contact information, and positions.

Once all the previous stages have been completed, the student organization will receive an approval letter. Only once they've received the approval letter will the student organization be formally recognized by COSO. This will enable them to access resources available to registered student organizations.

If a student organization is denied twice at any stage during the process or fails to meet a deadline, they will be subsequently denied for the academic year and will not be able to pitch and/or appeal until the **two semesters**.

- For example, if you apply in the fall and are denied twice, your organization will need to wait until the next fall semester to reapply. If you apply in the spring semester and are denied twice, your organization will need to wait until the next spring semester to reapply.

## New Student Organization Interest Packet

Students interested in creating a new student organization are required to complete the New Student Organization Interest Packet located on COSO's Engage portal. Students who have completed at least one semester at UM are eligible to submit the new student organization interest packet. First semester students, including transfer students, and students that are in their final semester are ineligible to submit a new student organization interest packet. The packet must include information about the prospective undergraduate president, treasurer, a third executive board position of their choosing, and full-time advisor. Neither the president, treasurer, nor third executive board position of the prospective organization may be graduating within the academic semester or first semester students at the time of which the application is submitted.

The packet includes the New Student Organization Member Roster Form, Calendar, Advisor Agreement, and COSO Constitution Template, which must be filled out and uploaded upon submission. Failure to submit all listed documents will result in denial of submission. The organization will also need to select an organization category but will have the opportunity to change their category if they choose to identify differently in the future. The packet includes questions about the student organization's mission, purpose, proposed calendar of events, and how they will serve a specific need on campus that is not being already met. If there are multiple submissions for organizations which cater to the same niche the first approved submission of interest will be given priority.

Once submitted, the packet will be reviewed by both the COSO Executive Board and Committee and a decision will be emailed to the proposed officers. If approved to move forward in the process, the organization will have the opportunity to pitch to the entire committee. Organizations that are not approved to move forward shall have the right to appeal the decision. All information regarding the process and appeals are listed below.

### Pitches

If the New Student Organization interest packet is approved by COSO, the student organization will have the opportunity to come in for a Pitch Presentation. This will allow the New Student Organization an opportunity to describe to the committee the student organization they wish to create and answer any of the committee's questions.

- Only the three undergraduate students listed as the proposed officers may present to COSO during the Pitch Presentation. The group's advisor is not permitted to be present in neither in-person nor online pitches. Pitches will be held in person in the Iron Arrow Room unless otherwise communicated. For in-person pitches, the student(s) may bring presentation materials, included but not limited to a handout to pass out to the committee or a PowerPoint presentation. Student organizations will have five (5) minutes to pitch to the committee followed by five (5) minutes of questions presented by the committee.

- Student organizations are encouraged to discuss, but not limited to, the following topics:
  - Description and purpose of the organization;
  - How the organization differs from existing organizations on campus;
  - How the organization plans to engage and recruit members;
  - If affiliated, how they plan to collaborate with the national office;
  - Brief synopsis of sections of the sample Constitution;
  - How the organization would benefit from being recognized as an official COSO organization;
  - Events, activities, and meetings the organization plans on hosting; and
  - Any other relevant information they would like to share with the committee.
- The New Student Organization is only able to pitch twice throughout the entire new student organization process, given that they do not meet the 2 denial limit.
- If pitch is approved:
  - The New Student Organization will be assigned a COSO delegate.
  - The New Student Organization will use their sample Constitution as a basis for developing their Constitution draft. A representative of the New Student Organization will have until the following **Sunday at 11:59pm** following the pitch approval email to discuss any Constitution recommendations with their COSO Delegate.
  - Failure to submit the constitution to the assigned COSO delegate by the one week deadline will result in the organization forfeiting their ability to become an organization. The organization must wait two semesters to submit a New Student Organization Interest packet and restart the process, including pitching again.
  - Student organizations may only pursue Federation of Club Sports affiliation only after they are approved as a registered student organization. If your organization seeks to be affiliated with the Federation of Club Sports:
    - Please reach out to [fcschair@gmail.com](mailto:fcschair@gmail.com) to pursue active status and recognition as part of the Federation of Club Sports council.
    - The FCS Council determines whether the new student organization will be approved or denied for affiliation.
    - If the new student organization is approved, the new student organization must forward the approval email to COSO to continue the new student organization process and move on to the next step of reviewing the constitution.
    - If the new student organization is denied, they could file an appeal with FCS. Please contact [fcschair@gmail.com](mailto:fcschair@gmail.com) for more details regarding the appeals process. If the organization is denied by FCS, they would forgo approval from COSO and would cease progression through the NSO process. The organization may choose to submit a new student organization packet in two semesters.
- If pitch is denied:
  - See appeals section.

## Constitution

The student organization constitution is meant to be each organization's own set of guidelines where they specify what their guiding principles and objectives are, which aids in a student organization's longevity and organization.

- A New Student Organization will be required to submit a draft of the proposed Constitution for their organization, should the pitch be approved. Using the sample Constitution as the foundation, The New Student Organization will have until the **following Sunday at 11:59pm** to submit their COSO Constitution draft to their assigned COSO Delegate. The assigned delegate may provide feedback in the form of comments, concerns or suggested changes – please be advised.
- The drafted constitution will then be presented by the new student organization COSO delegate to the committee for discussion and feedback. Once the review is finalized, the committee will vote on the constitution.
- The delegate will then convey comments, suggestions, or questions to the organization in the email with their constitution decision.
- If constitution is approved:
  - The new student organization's treasurer must also meet with a SAFAC liaison. The advisor must complete the advisor orientation form found on Student Activities & Student Organizations on the Engage page. The organization's president must meet with the assigned COSO delegate to complete the student organization orientation which will review policies, procedures, and benefits, and create the Engage portal. This must be completed within two weeks of the constitution approval.
  - If the proposed officers fail to meet with their assigned COSO delegate within one week, this will result in the organization's termination of the new student organization process. The organization must wait until the following academic semester to submit a New Student Organization Interest packet and restart the process, including pitching again
- If the constitution draft is denied:
  - A constitution may be denied if the committee deems the information included as insufficient, unclear, or not representative of the organization that was pitched.
  - The student organization must address committee concerns and feedback, update their constitution, and submit a revised constitution to their COSO delegate within one week after the constitution decision has been sent out. The constitution will then be reviewed and voted upon by COSO.
  - If the president, treasurer, and third executive board position fail to submit their revised constitution to their assigned COSO delegate **within one week** or the constitution is denied for a second time, this will result in the organization's termination of the new student organization process.
  - If this process is terminated, the organization must wait 2 semesters until to submit a New Student Organization Interest packet and restart the process, including pitching again. This decision cannot be appealed.

## Orientation Process

Following the constitution approval, the president, treasurer, and advisor are required to attend their respective New Student Organization Orientation sessions before becoming recognized officially by COSO.

- The President must attend the New Student Organization Orientation with the assigned COSO Delegate. This orientation will focus on the benefits of COSO recognition, the basics of Engage, and the requirements to remain an active organization.
  - During this meeting, the COSO delegate will create an Engage portal for new student organizations and will give the President, Treasurer, third Executive Board member, and advisor access.
- The Treasurer must attend the mandatory SAFAC Orientation with a SAFAC delegate to review policies, procedures, and resources.
- The advisor will complete the advisor orientation form found on the Student Activities & Student Organizations Engage page. Advisor roles and responsibilities will be reviewed along with Workday management. Advisors will be send electronic paper work to sign in order to create student organization financial accounts. It is the Advisors responsibility to schedule a meeting with SASO for their orientation.
- All NSO orientations, including the SAFAC, Advisor, and COSO orientation, must occur within two weeks of the constitution approval date. The COSO orientation can only be completed after the organization's treasurer and advisor have completed the SAFAC and advisor orientations, respectively.

The Engage portal must be filled out and fully completed within the two weeks allotted for the Orientation. This includes updating the profile section in its entirety, including contact information for the president, treasurer, and advisor, uploading an approved constitution, and updating the “People” section.

- Only after the SAFAC orientation, advisor orientation, COSO Orientation, and Engage portal are completed, the president, treasurer, and third executive board position will receive an Approval Letter for the new student organization, which certifies that they are an official COSO approved organization.

## Affiliations & Umbrella Organizations

- Student organizations may affiliate with outside organizations. Student organizations that are affiliated with established, national organizations must present a letter from the national organization dictating the approved affiliation between the two parties. This letter must be uploaded upon submission. Failure to do so will result in an automatic denial. This letter can be found on COSO's Engage portal under "Documents".
- Organizations may affiliate themselves with umbrella organizations at the University of Miami. Examples of such umbrella organizations include Council of International Students and Organizations and Federation of Club Sports, and the Butler Center for Service and Leadership. New Student Organizations must present a letter from the umbrella organization dictating the approved affiliation between the two parties. This letter can be found on COSO's Engage portal under "Documents".
- To start an umbrella organization, an organization must have a minimum of (5) affiliating COSO recognized organizations underneath them. If at any point the umbrella organization has fewer than five (5) affiliated COSO recognized organizations, the umbrella organization will be automatically deactivated.
- To register to become an umbrella organization, please contact the COSO chair at [coso\\_chair@miami.edu](mailto:coso_chair@miami.edu).

### Maintaining Umbrella Organizations:

- Organizations under an umbrella organization should meet with the umbrella organization at least once each semester.
- Umbrella organizations may place requirements upon their affiliated organizations.
- Student organizations that wish to affiliate with an umbrella organization must provide meeting minutes reflecting unanimous consent from the organization's executive board; the president, treasurer, and advisor must sign a copy of the minutes, which must then be submitted to COSO.
- New organizations that fit under an umbrella organization can meet with the umbrella organization before or after becoming a new organization. The affiliation process is separate from COSO's new student organization process.
- Organizations may disaffiliate themselves at any time throughout the year. The student organization must provide meeting minutes reflecting unanimous consent from the organization's executive board; the president, treasurer, and advisor must sign a copy of the minutes, which must then be submitted to COSO.

## Appeals

If a student organization is denied at any of the following stages, they may have the opportunity to complete an appeal.

### Two-semester rule

The two-semester rule is applicable at any of the following stages. This rule holds that two denials by COSO through any part of the NSO process (ex: pitch and pitch appeal) will result in nullification of the organization's progress in the NSO process and COSO placing a two-semester hold on the organization from being involved with the NSO process, the hold will be in place from the semester they pitched and the subsequent semester. If the organization chooses to participate in the NSO process again, they will have to start from the beginning, requiring resubmission of entirely new documentation (ex: roster, interest packet)

- **Interest Packet:**
  - If a new student organization interest packet that has been reviewed by COSO is denied, then the new student organization may submit an appeal form. This appeal form can only be submitted once per academic year, within 48 hours of being notified.
  - The COSO Executive Board will review the appeal and determine whether the new student organization may be granted the opportunity to pitch to the committee.
- **Pitch Denied:**
  - If a new student organization's first pitch is denied, the new student organization may submit a pitch appeal form once per academic year within 48 hours of being notified.
  - If the pitch appeal form is approved, the organization will be granted their second and final pitch for the academic year.
- **Constitution Denied:**
  - Constitutions may be denied if they do not match with what the organization originally pitched to COSO and what was originally pitched in the New Student Organization Interest Packet.
  - If the new student organization constitution is denied, the assigned delegate will email the organization's president, who will be given the option to either change the constitution or terminate the new student organization process.
  - If the new student organization's constitution is denied twice, the COSO Executive Board has the right to either continue or terminate the New Student Org Process. If the process is terminated, then the new student organization will have to wait two semesters to resubmit an Interest Packet and restart the process.
- Organizations that wish to appeal the New Student Organization Interest Packet or the Pitch Presentation must submit the "Student Organization Appeal Form" on Engage no later than 48 hours following their denial.

## Maintaining an Existing Student Organization

To be considered an organization in good standing and registered with COSO, student organizations must adhere to all University of Miami policies and regulations, as well as meet the requirements established by Student Activities and Student Organizations (SASO), COSO and Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee (SAFAC) guidelines. Failure to follow any of the guidelines, requirements, or other information outlined in this document could result in an organization's deactivation at the discretion of COSO. All financial questions should be referred to SAFAC at [safac@miami.edu](mailto:safac@miami.edu).

## Student Organization Leadership Development Summit (SOLD)

The Student Organization Leadership Development Summit (SOLD) is a one-day mandatory leadership conference for presidents. This leadership experience focuses on providing space for student leaders, both new and experienced alike, to gain the tools and knowledge needed to successfully lead others, connect and collaborate with peers, and maximize their leadership impact on campus.

- For an organization to stay in good standing, the president are required to attend SOLD at the beginning of the fall semester. This event may be held online as well. In the case that the student organization president cannot attend, they must email the COSO Chair ([coso\\_chair@miami.edu](mailto:coso_chair@miami.edu)) with the name of the executive board member that can attend in their place prior to the start of the event.
- All absences will be reviewed by COSO on a case by case basis. Excusing the absence is up to COSO's discretion.
- An organization that fails to attend the Student Organization Leadership Development Summit without having notified COSO before the event, does not provide sufficient proof of an emergency, or fails to check in at all designated sessions, will be deactivated as an organization for the remainder of the semester until re-registration period opens the following semester. Organizations will be placed on limited status and will be unable to submit budgets or room reservation requests. See Deactivations.

## Re-Registration

Every active student organization must re-register during the spring semester, at a date decided and communicated by COSO, in order to be recognized by COSO for the following academic year. To re-register, organizations must sign in and go to their portal page. They must then click on "Manage Organization". This will lead them to the "Action Center" where a blue RE-REGISTER THIS ORGANIZATION button must be clicked to complete the process.

### Re-Registration Process:

- Anything marked with a red asterisk is required and must be filled out with the appropriate information.
- To re-register, student organizations must complete the following:
  - During re-registration, student organizations will be expected to have an updated roster, constitution, and organization category.
  - An organization's category chosen during re-registration will remain consistent for the upcoming year until the next re-registration period.
- Verify that their constitution has been updated within the last three (3) years. Constitutions that were last revised over three (3) years ago will not be accepted and will cause the organization's re-registration request to be denied.
- Failure to re-register during the spring designated period will render the organization as deactivated. For more information on what deactivation entails and what privileges student organizations forfeit please see section on Deactivations.
- If a new executive board has not been elected prior to or during the active re-registration period, an organization can submit their current executive board information by the re-registration deadline. Once the new executive board has been elected, they must submit the updated information on Engage.
- Student organizations that fail to re-register during the spring will not be permitted to participate in Canefest and must wait until fall reactivation to become active for the following spring semester.

### Constitution

Student organizations must have a constitution that has been updated within the last three (3) years and must abide by its regulations and requirements. To make any constitutional changes, student organizations must fill out the Organization Constitution Change Form on the COSO Engage Portal, found under the forms tab. Before constitutional changes can be in effect the new constitution signed by the Chair, Treasurer, Third Executive Board Member and all Advisors must be submitted to COSO for approval. As a reminder, signatures on the constitutions cannot be typed and need to be signed either electronically through a secure signing service or by using handwritten signatures

- Constitutions will be checked during the annual re-registration process in the spring. Any changes from the subsequent year must be highlighted and the constitution must be dated for the upcoming academic year.
- Student organizations may not make drastic changes to an organization's guiding principles, which deviate from the organization's original mission and purpose. The approval or denial of these changes will be made at the discretion of COSO. See guiding principles section.
- It is the student organization's responsibility to update its constitution with any changes made to the organization, its functionalities, and activities.

## Engage

The Department of Student Activities & Student Organizations maintains an online database of active student organizations on campus. Throughout the academic year, student leaders are required to use the database to complete a number of required processes. To log onto Engage, visit <http://engage.miami.edu> and enter your Cane ID and password. Once logged in, the information visible to the user is determined by their memberships and administrative rights. The database allows student leaders to store files, post photos, and share news articles with members and the greater University of Miami community. Organization email addresses, listservs, text message lists, and surveys can also be created. For more information on how to navigate Engage, contact a COSO delegate or the Department of Student Activities & Student Organizations.

- An organization must maintain an active portal on Engage. The profile must be kept up to date and maintained by the organization's leaders.
- The Engage portal and profile must include the organization's current executive board members, especially the president, treasurer, third executive board member, and advisor.
- The organization should make sure to remove all graduating students or students that are no longer part of the organization from the Engage portal and people section.
- Student organizations are required to include contact information, meeting times and locations, and a description of the organization in the Engage portal.
  - To update information on the portal, organizations must sign in and go to their portal page. They must then click on "Manage Organization". They will then submit the new leadership information and SASO will review the submission for approval.
  - **Any time the president, treasurer, third executive board member, or advisor is updated on the organization portal, you must complete the Executive Board/Advisor Update form available through COSO's Engage Portal**  
<https://miami.campuslabs.com/engage/submitter/form/start/543469>.  
 This ensures that COSO's internal database is up to date and will allow for the new members to be added to the respective student organization or advisor listserv to receive pertinent student organization communication.
- Organizations must maintain an updated membership roster on Engage in the people section. Graduate students, SAFAC delegates, and COSO delegates do not count towards the 25 member minimum requirement.

## Name Changes

Student organizations may request a name change if they want to change the name of their organization to better suit their mission, or if their respective national organization has changed their name.

- Student organizations must fill out the Organization Name Change Form on the COSO Engage Portal, found under the forms tab.
- Active members must be given at least a two-week notice prior to the vote of the name change. There must be a majority vote count (50% or higher) during the organization's general body meeting in which 2/3 of active members are present. Meeting minutes reflecting majority consent to change the name must be provided. The president, treasurer, third executive board member, and advisor must sign a copy of minutes, and upload them to the Organization Name Change Form on Engage.
- The name change must be approved by the COSO Executive Board. If approved, a revised constitution reflecting the change must be submitted to the Organization Constitution Change form on Engage and uploaded to the organization's portal within two (2) weeks of being approved.
- An organization cannot function with an unapproved name change. Groups operating under unofficial names may be deactivated at the discretion of COSO.

## Guiding Principles

Student organizations cannot change the guiding principles of their organization or in their constitutions to deviate from the original mission or purpose of the organization that was originally pitched to and approved by COSO. Student organizations must adhere to the guiding principles included in their constitutions

- To make any changes to the guiding principles on the student organization's constitution, student organizations must fill out the Organization Constitution Change Form on the COSO Engage Portal, found under the forms tab.

## Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is when an individual or student organization has personal, professional, or public interests that may inappropriately influence and affect their decisions, such as monetary incentives. Conflicts of interest should be avoided. COSO is fully committed to maintaining objectivity and upholding the highest ethical standards in a manner that assures the integrity of student organizations. Student Organizations should promote decision-making and behaviors that are appropriate and align with the functions of their organization. If avoiding the conflict is not possible, the organization must inform COSO. COSO will have final discretion after reviewing conflicts of interests on a case by case basis.

## Elections

- Student organizations are required to follow the election guidelines specified in their constitution. Student organizations may change their elections process at any point but must submit their constitutional changes on the Organization Constitution Change form on Engage for review and approval before facilitating the new elections process.
- Student organizations are required to keep proper records of their active memberships as outlined in their constitution in order to facilitate their election process.
- Student organizations must use ethical and appropriate procedures in electing executive boards. COSO can be present at any election, upon the request of any organization member.
- Any allegations against an organization concerning elections will be investigated by the COSO executive board and its advisor.
- If elections take place outside of the scheduled re-registration period, organizations must communicate such changes have occurred by notifying the COSO Chair and COSO Advisor, as well as updating the “ROSTER” tab on the organization’s Engage portal.
- COSO reserves the right to be present at any election of a student organization.

## Conflict Resolution

COSO as the governing arm of the student organization community may serve as a resource to those organizations that may require conflict resolution and mediation as it relates to student organization constitutions, elections, and COSO guidelines. Students may inform their COSO delegate or the COSO chair of any dispute which is unable to be settled in the organization.

## Leadership Changes

Student organizations may change their leadership throughout the year by updating their Engage portal and profile. Leadership changes not reflected on their portal will not be accepted. Student organizations must abide by their constitution and election process when replacing vacant leadership positions. COSO will investigate discrepancies with the election process. Any changes in leadership must be communicated to COSO chair at [coso\\_chair@miami.edu](mailto:coso_chair@miami.edu) and to the advisor, Mercy Lavado at [m.lavado@miami.edu](mailto:m.lavado@miami.edu). Student organization leaders are responsible for ensuring proper and successful leadership transitions between executive board positions and informing COSO of such changes. Incoming and outgoing boards are expected to review pertinent and relevant information including COSO’s policies that affect the operational success of the student organization.

## Executive Board

The Executive board must meet the requirements, expectations, and responsibilities set forth in the organization's constitution. Executive board and leadership positions may only be filled by undergraduate students. A student organization must have at least one president and one treasurer, and a third executive board member. These positions must be filled by different individuals.

## Student Organization Communication

All student organization communication from the Department of Student Activities and Student Organizations, COSO, and SAFAC are done through the student organization listserv. The student organization leaders are responsible for having their Engage portal updated and any changes communicated directly to SASO and COSO. It is your responsibility to check your email for all messages and notifications and to keep up on pertinent student organization information that is communicated through the listserv.

## Deactivations

If it is alleged that a registered student organization or its members have failed to comply with university policies or procedures, the university may conduct an investigation and render sanctions as it deems necessary. Failure to comply with university policies and procedures may result in a variety of penalties, including but not limited to suspension or the revocation of recognition. A student organization that has been suspended loses all privileges and benefits granted to student organizations. Deactivated student organizations are organizations that are no longer COSO-approved or recognized. Deactivated organizations lose all the privileges afforded to COSO-approved student organizations, including but not limited to:

- Requesting or using SAFAC/non-SAFAC funds and accounts;
- Reserving meeting, event, and storage/office space in University classrooms and the Student Center Complex (Whitten University Center and Shalala Student Center) and use of designated equipment (A/V, tables, etc.) at no charge;
- Attending and participating in COSO events (such as Canefest and the SOAR Awards).
- Utilizing any of COSO's or Student Activities and Student Organizations' (SASO) advertising resources;
- Requesting or registering official University travel; and
- Accessing and owning an Engage portal and all other Engage resources.

### **Organizations may be deactivated for the following reasons:**

- Failure to comply with Student Activities and Student Organizations (SASO) and University policies and procedures;
- Failure to attend the Student Organization Leadership Development Summit (SOLD);
- Failure to complete re-registration during the Spring semester;
- Failure to meet established COSO guidelines;
- FCS Violations
  - Active FCS registered student organizations that are deemed high risk organizations by both FCS and COSO who are suspended for failing to abide by FCS regulations will be subsequently deactivated
  - Reactivation will require full **FCS and COSO** approvals via their respective reactivation processes; reactivation eligible organizations who finish the COSO reactivation process, but not the FCS process are not active.
  - The student organization is responsible to finalize the reactivation process once having completed the FCS process
- Failure to have a full-time advisor;
- Violations of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook;
- Violations of the Student Organization Handbook;
- Misuse of SAFAC or other organization funds;
- Misuse of university spaces;
- Umbrella organizations will be deactivated if they have fewer than five (5) separate student organizations that fall under them.
- And/or any other reasons at the discretion of COSO.

### **Choosing to Deactivate a Student Organization**

- Organizations may voluntarily deactivate an organization at any time. Active members must be given at least a two-week notice prior to the vote of the deactivation. There must be a majority vote count (50% or higher) during the organization's general body meeting in which 2/3 of active members are present. The president, treasurer, and the advisor must sign a copy of minutes, and email them to the COSO chair ([coso\\_chair@miami.edu](mailto:coso_chair@miami.edu)).

## Reactivations

Students are able to re-activate an organization that has been inactive for one year and has either failed to reregister in the Spring or attend SOLD. Student organizations that want to be reactivated must wait until the designated COSO Reactivation period scheduled at the start of each Fall and Spring semester.

- To reactivate, organizations must sign in and go to their portal page. They must then click on “Manage Organization”. This will lead them to the “Action Center” where a blue RE-REGISTER THIS ORGANIZATION button must be clicked to complete the process.
  - Anything marked with a red asterisk is required and must be filled out with the appropriate information.
- Student organizations must upload and verify that their constitution has been updated within the last three (3) years. Constitutions that were last revised over three (3) years ago will not be accepted and will cause the organization’s reactivation request to be denied.
- Student organizations may not make drastic changes to the organization’s guiding principles, which deviate from the organization’s original mission and purpose.
- The approval or denial of any changes will be made at the discretion of COSO.
- Student organizations cannot submit a reactivation request outside of the allotted reactivation period.
- Student organizations that have been inactive for two semesters must submit a New Student Organization Interest Packet, pitch to COSO, and be approved to be reactivated.
- If there is a new student organization packet submitted and approved that is similar to what had existed in a deactivated organization, the new student organization would take priority in recognition.

## Advisors

At the University of Miami, all student organizations are required to have a full-time faculty or staff member as an advisor.

- Graduate students are not eligible to become sole advisors to an organization, and the advisor cannot be on leave of absence or sabbatical from the university.
- Student organizations are permitted to have up two (2) advisors for each organization; However, one must be chosen as the main contact for SAFAC, Workday, and all financial purposes.
- It is suggested that an advisor has no more than five (5) organizations unless specifically required by their job description.

- Advisors must have access to the university-maintained financial records of their respective organizations. These records should be periodically reviewed with the organization treasurer, and potential problems should be identified as soon as possible. Advisors access the organization's financial records through Workday. Advisors are also able to add additional staff to financial accounts to assist with transactions. Please contact [saso@miami.edu](mailto:saso@miami.edu) for more information.
- Advisors should include their contact information as part of the organization's re-registration process each spring and should meet with the student leaders completing the forms to ensure accuracy and completion.
- Advisors are required to attend elections as either a moderator or witness to the proceedings as stated in the organization's constitution, and should help ensure that the group is following their established procedures outlined in the organization's constitution.
- Advisors wishing to terminate their role with a particular organization should contact the Department of Student Activities & Student Originations for assistance. If student organizations have issues or need assistance with their advisors, they are advised to contact COSO.