

Information Packet

For student organizations seeking recognized status at Penn State New Kensington

Introduction

Welcome! This packet will guide you through the process of forming a new student organization at the Pennsylvania State University, New Kensington campus. Forming a group can be a challenging, but very rewarding process. To ensure success, the Student Life Office has designed a process that will help your group form a solid foundation so that your organization can succeed and provide valuable experiences for your fellow students.

There are many positive benefits associated with being a recognized group on campus, including use of the Penn State name, ability to reserve space, and take advantage of the services offered through the Student Life Office. There are also several responsibilities associated with being a recognized group, including abiding by Policies & Rules for Student Organizations (complete document available at <http://www.sa.psu.edu/engage>), updating officer information whenever there is a change, and renewing your recognition status at the beginning of every Fall semester.

When starting a new student organization there are several questions to consider:

1. First, is there another group on campus that exists that meets the interests you're looking for in a student organization?
2. Would you be able to recruit a minimum of seven members for the group?
3. Do you have the time to work on all of the requirements and/or are others helping you?

The staff in the Student Life Office are available to help you answer these questions and provide you with assistance in forming your group.

There are necessary requirements to become a recognized student organization at Penn State University. They are as follows:

- Complete "Intent to Organize"
 - Once this form is completed, the group will be issued temporary recognition that will last 60 academic days from the date the form is returned. During this time, the group *must* complete the following to receive recognition status:
- Create a constitution (see sample constitution in this packet)
- Recruit a minimum of seven members (50%+1 of the membership must be registered Penn State New Kensington Students)
- Secure a University faculty or staff advisor
- Complete an Officer Report Form (included in the packet)

Once the group returns these materials, they will be reviewed by the Student Government Association and the group will be notified of the decision. A student organization wishing to form can be denied recognition status for the following reasons:

- The purpose, mission, and/or activities violate federal, state, and/or local laws
- The purpose, mission, and/or activities violate the *Penn State Code of Conduct, University Policies and Rules, Policies and Procedures for Student Organizations*, or other University policies and procedures
- The criteria to establish a group are not completed and sustained as above
- The group duplicates the purpose of an existing recognized group, except in the case of a religious or political organization

Should you have any questions or need any assistance throughout this process, please contact our office.

Best wishes,

Dan Amerman, Director, Student Life Office

Penn State New Kensington 2007-2008 Club / Organization Registration Form

Part 1

Club/Organization Name: _____

OFFICER INFORMATION

All information must be completed. The information provided should be reflective of student's contact information during the 2007-2008 academic year.

President _____
Name Phone #

Address City State ZIP

Email address

Vice President _____
Name Phone #

Address City State ZIP

Email address

Treasurer _____
Name Phone #

Address City State ZIP

Email address

Secretary _____
Name Phone #

Address City State ZIP

Email address

Other _____
Name Phone #

Address City State ZIP

Email address

Part 2

ADVISOR INFORMATION

Please complete one line for each advisor to your club/organization.

1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Name	Extension	Building Location	e-mail address
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Name	Extension	Building Location	e-mail address
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Name	Extension	Building Location	e-mail address

Part 3

MEETING TIMES / LOCATIONS

Day of the week: _____
(i.e. – every Tuesday, every other Monday, every Monday and Wednesday, 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month)

Time: _____

Location: _____

Part 4

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Write a brief description of the goals, purposes, and objectives of your club/organization.

Part 5

CATEGORY OF ORGANIZATION

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Awareness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honorary | <input type="checkbox"/> Social | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | <input type="checkbox"/> Athletic | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Professional | |

Part 6

WEB PAGES

Clubs and Organizations may be able to have their web site linked to the Student Life home page if the contents of their web site meets the standards set forth by the Penn State University, and those established by the Student Life Office.

- Yes, the _____ would like to have their web site linked to the Student Life home page. We agree to keep the site up-to-date (updated at least every 6 months) and will only present accurate information. Our site will be tasteful and free from libel. Also, our web page will only display pictures of Penn State students exhibiting acceptable behavior; there will be no pictures or references to alcoholic beverages, or any illegal substances. Our website address is: _____
- No, the _____ would not like their web site linked to the Student Life home page, but we do have a web page at the following web address: _____.
- No, we do not have a web page for our organization.

Part 7

NUMBER OF MEMBERS/ROSTER

Please report the number of members in your club/organization for the 2007-2008 academic year. If unsure please provide an approximate number.

Number: _____

CLUB/ORGANIZATION ROSTER

Please list the names of all members of your club/organization for the 2007-2008 academic year.

1. _____

24. _____

2. _____

25. _____

3. _____

26. _____

4. _____

27. _____

5. _____

28. _____

6. _____

29. _____

7. _____

30. _____

8. _____

31. _____

9. _____

32. _____

10. _____

33. _____

11. _____

34. _____

12. _____

35. _____

13. _____

36. _____

14. _____

37. _____

15. _____

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16. _____

39. _____

17. _____

40. _____

18. _____

41. _____

19. _____

42. _____

20. _____

43. _____

21. _____

44. _____

22. _____

45. _____

23. _____

46. _____

Part 8

CONTRACT

Club Presidents and all Advisors must sign below to ensure that clubs/organizations are aware of and will abide by the standards set forth by the Penn State Policies and Rules for Student Organizations (available at www.sa.psu.edu/usa/studentactivities/pdf/PoliciesRules0405.pdf).

In addition to all information presented in the Policies for Rules and Student Organizations, the following policies pertaining to Penn State New Kensington shall also apply:

Room Reservations

Room reservations by student clubs/organizations are done through the Student Life Office. Upon completing the room reservation form (available in the Club Suite or the Business Office), the can be turned into the Student Life Office for approval.

For all student clubs/organizations the Club Suite will be the primary room for meetings. If the Club Suite is available, organizations will automatically be placed in that room, unless otherwise determined by the Student Life Office.

Contact Information

Contact information for all officers of the organization shall be updated at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters of each academic year; or, if there is a change in officers. Additionally, a roster for the organization should also be submitted as part of this packet.

This packet shall serve as the required update when completed and submitted it to the Student Life Office.

We certify that we have read all of these policies and that the information provided is accurate

_____ President's Signature	_____ Date
_____ Advisor's Signature (1)	_____ Date
_____ Advisor's Signature (2)	_____ Date
_____ Advisor's Signature (3)	_____ Date



**This packet must be COMPLETELY filled in and returned.
Only when all paper work is completed will your
club/organization be registered.**



Constitution

The constitution is the heart of your organization. It provides the structure by which your group will function, and it secures a professional operating environment that Penn State prides itself upon. The basic requirements of a constitution are listed below.

A sample constitution including the required articles, and the most common way of organizing them, is attached to this packet in order to aid you in the application process.

Required Constitutional Elements

Heading

1. All information must be centered.
2. State the full name of the organization, and its acronym, if applicable.
3. Under the name, state the original date that the organization first met on the confines of the University Park Campus at the Pennsylvania State University.

Body

Any statements that must be included in the constitution in some fashion will be prefaced by the word “**state**” in boldface or text will be in **boldface**.

Article I: Purpose

- Clearly **state** the purpose of the organization. This is the singular most significant part of the document, as it is the mission statement of the organization. No organizations with duplicate or highly similar purposes of those existing organizations will be considered for registration.
- **State** the purpose in sentences, or by using numbers or bullets.

Article II: Membership

- If your organization is an undergraduate student organization, **state** that the majority (50% + 1 of the active membership) must be undergraduate students.
- There are only two categories of membership: Active and Associate.
- **State** that only currently employed faculty, staff, and currently registered students are eligible for active membership.
- **State** that there must be at least 7 active student members for undergraduate groups.
- **State** that only active members may vote, preside, officiate, or solicit funding on the organization’s behalf.
- **Student Life Office rules require that : State** that “No organization may restrict membership based on characteristics of a student, which are intrinsic to the identity of that student, and are not essential to the potential value of that student as a member of that organization and the Penn State University Community at large. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University.”
- **New Membership and Recruitment**
 - Any and all new members will be given full disclosure during recruitment, including but not limited to the disclosure of:
 - New Membership Manual
 - A list of responsibilities
 - All members, including but not limited to new members and recruits, reserve the right to refrain from participating in any activities without consequence, based upon personal/religious beliefs, personal values, or moral reserve as defined by the member.
 - Any and all interaction/activity between members and/or new members will be limited to guidelines stated by university policy, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

- **Membership Removal**

- Please draft a "Membership Removal Policy" subsection within the Membership Section that you feel is appropriate for expelling members from your organization. Please be sure to include reasonable guidelines for what is a condition for expulsion.
- Example: The club reserves the right to expel a member who is not following the policies of the organization with a super majority vote of attending members---quorum is 75% of active members.

Article III: Officers

- **State** that only full-time, officially registered active student members shall be eligible to serve as appointed or elected officers in your organization. Student organizations may establish and apply additional eligibility criteria for appointed or elected leaders/officers. Such criteria, such as semester standing, must be approved by the Student Life Office.
- **State** all officers, elected or appointed, and their appropriate duties and powers. If officers form the executive committees, an odd number of officers is recommended. Avoid shared offices.
- **State** the procedures that will be followed to fill unexpired vacancies. These include the meeting at which nominations and elections will take place (if applicable), the process by which a candidate will be nominated, etc.

Article IV: Meetings

- **State** the frequency of meetings. At least two meetings per semester are required in order to maintain active status with the University.
- **State** how, and by what body, the frequency of meetings may be decided or changed.
- **State** under what circumstances, and by whom, a special meeting may be called.
- **State** how, when, and by whom members would be notified of regular and special meetings. **State** that adequate advanced notice must be given to all members.

Article V: Voting

- **State** what will constitute quorum. Different quorums may be used for voting, elections, amendments, and other items. If you wish to require different quorums for different voting events, they must be specified.
- **State** what shall constitute a majority; likewise if different types of majorities will be required for different voting events, they must be specified.

Article VI: Finances

- **State** that all organizational funds are to be handled exclusively through the Student Government Association (SGA).
- **State** that the organization will not have an off-campus account.
- **State** whether or not the payment of dues is a necessary condition for membership.
 - If it is **state** how they will be determined. Do not specify a specific amount, and it is recommended that the amount is kept reasonable.
 - **State** how often dues are to be collected.
- A dollar amount that officers may spend without approval of the membership may be specified. It is recommended that this amount is kept small. If you wish to allow for this kind of executive function **state** the dollar amount, and the specific officers that it pertains to.

Article VII: Elections

- **State** the meeting at which nominations and elections will take place. **State** how and when these meetings will be publicized.
- **State** that no one involved in conducting the elections may be an official candidate.
- **State** the procedure for nominations and elections, along with how ties will be handled.
- **State** when new officers begin their terms of office. A transition period is recommended so that the

new officers may learn their responsibilities, along with the organization's business and University regulations.

Article VIII: Amendments to the Constitution

- **State** the procedure for the introduction and passage of amendments.
- **State** who may propose amendments.
- **State** that all amendments are subject to approval by the Student Government Association. State when the approved amendments are to take effect.

Article IX: Parliamentary Authority

- **State** the parliamentary authority used to cover cases not specifically covered by the constitution. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* by Sarah Corbin Roberts is highly recommended.

Article X: Accessibility of this Constitution

- **State** that a copy of the constitution will be available to anyone upon request.

Article XI: Advisor

- **State** that the advisor must be a full-time faculty or staff member at The Pennsylvania State University, and that he/she should be chosen by the organization. Do not mention a specific name.
- **State** the method by which your organization will select an advisor.

Sample Constitution

THE PENN STATE NEW KENSINGTON SAMPLE ORGANIZATION

Date of origin: September, 2006

I. **Purpose**

- A. The purpose of the Penn State New Kensington Sample Organization is to provide a guide to what student organization constitutions should look like.

II. **Membership**

- A. At all times, the majority (50%+1) of all active members shall be full-time, officially registered students at University Park.
- B. The membership shall be divided into active and associate members.
 - 1. Only currently employed faculty, staff, and currently registered students are eligible for active membership.
 - 2. All others interested in furthering the purpose of the Penn State New Kensington Sample Organization shall be associate members. Only active members may hold office, vote, preside, officiate, or solicit funds on behalf of the organization.
- C. At all times there shall be at least 7 active student members.
- D. The club reserves the right to expel a member who is not following the policies of the organization with a super majority vote of attending members - quorum is 75% of active members.
- E. No organization may restrict membership based on characteristics of a student, which are intrinsic to the identity of that student, and are not essential to the potential value of that student as a member of that organization and the Penn State University Community at large. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University.

New Membership and Recruitment

- A. Any and all new members will be given full disclosure during recruitment, including but not limited to the disclosure of:
 - a. New Membership Manual
 - b. Schedule of New Member Events and Activities
 - c. A list of responsibilities
 - d. A definition of personal rights and a copy of the University Hazing policy, prescribed by Policies and Rules for Student Organizations (These documents will be available upon request by the Student Life Office).
- B. All members, including but not limited to new members and recruits, reserve the right to refrain from participating in any activities without consequence, based upon personal/religious beliefs, personal values, or moral reserve as defined by the member.
- C. Any and all interaction/activity between members and/or new members will be limited to guidelines stated by university policy, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

III. **Officers**

- A. Only full-time, officially registered active student members shall be eligible to serve as appointed or elected officers. Student organizations may establish and apply additional eligibility criteria for appointed or elected leaders/officers. Such limitations are subject to Student Life Office approval.
- B. Offices

1. The President is the spokesperson for the organization. The President presides at all meetings.
2. The Vice-President shall serve as President when the President is unable to do so.
3. The Treasurer shall be charged with handling all organizational finances.

C. Filling unexpired vacancies:

1. Nominations are taken at the meeting following the vacancy. Elections also occur at this meeting.
2. If a majority (50%+1) is not obtained by any of the candidates, the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes is eliminated, and the active members shall vote again.
3. When nominations are being taken to fill unexpired terms, any member of the organization may nominate another member of the organization by simply raising his/her hand and indicating such when recognized.

IV. **Meeting**

- A. The Penn State Sample Organization will meet at least two times per semester.
- B. Adequate advance notice must be given to all active members.
- C. The President with the consent of the Vice President may change meeting frequency.
- D. Members shall be notified of all meetings by e-mail.
- E. The President may call special meetings should he/she see fit.

V. **Voting**

- A. Only active members may vote.
- B. Quorum for all voting shall be thirty-three percent (33%) of the active membership.
- C. A simple majority (50% +1) shall be necessary for all voting. This majority shall be derived from the active members present.

VI. **Finances**

- A. All organizational funds are to be deposited and handled exclusively through the Associated Student Activities (ASA) in 240 HUB.
- B. This organization will not have an off-campus account(s)
- C. This organization shall collect dues that will not be excessive.
- D. The Treasurer, with the consent of the President will determine dues.
- E. Dues shall be collected semi-annually

VII. **Elections**

- A. Nominations and elections shall take place during the third meeting of the spring semester.
- B. This meeting shall be publicized in the meetings preceding it.
- C. Elections codes:
 1. Any member may nominate an active member for any office by raising his/her hand at the appropriate time and being recognized by the presiding official. Next, the active members shall cast secret, written ballots for the candidate of their choice. Each active member shall have one vote per office.

2. If 50%+1 cannot be obtained, the candidate with the lowest number of votes shall be dropped from consideration, and the active members shall vote again.
 3. In the event of a tie, the ballot will be recast.
- D. All officers serve for a term of one year, beginning in the month following elections and ending the month of elections.
- E. No one involved in conducting the elections may be an official candidate

VIII. Amendments to the Constitution

- A. Amendments to this constitution may be introduced at the conclusion of any meeting. Voting shall occur at the meeting following its introduction, with the amendment taking effect following Student Life Office approval.
- B. Any member may introduce a constitutional amendment at the conclusion of any meeting. At the following meeting, the active members shall vote on the amendment, as outlined in the article on voting. If the amendment passes, it shall be sent to the Student Life Office for approval.
- C. All amendments are subject to the approval of the Student Life Office.

IX. Parliamentary Authority

- A. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, by Sarah Corbin Roberts shall be used in all cases not covered by this constitution.

X. Accessibility of this Constitution

- A. Copies of this constitution shall be made available to anyone upon request.

XI. Advisor

- A. This organization must retain an advisor at all times. The advisor will be a full-time Faculty or Staff member of The Pennsylvania State University, University Park campus and will be chosen by the organization.
- B. This organization will choose an advisor through a majority vote.