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What is a Student Organization and Student Club?

Student organizations and clubs at Menlo College serve a valuable educational function, offering students the opportunity to join together around social, cultural, political and special interest issues and to adopt leadership roles through programs and activities. These groups provide opportunities for leadership involvement and contribute to the total educational experience of students while promoting student development and enriching the campus community.

Definitions:

1. **Student Organizations** - A student organization is defined as any group or program at Menlo that exists primarily for students and is formally recognized by the College. Student Organizations are funded partially or totally by the College and individuals involved in student Organizations are responsible to policies and guidelines established by the College, as well as external agencies, as appropriate and in some cases, required. Student organizations are eligible to request funding from the Student Programming Board (SPB). Students and advisors involved in student Organizations must adhere to all institutional policies and regulations and go through expectation training.
   a. Examples of Student Organizations: Student Government Association, Resident Assistants, Peer Mentors, Ambassadors, etc.

2. **Student Clubs** - A student club is defined as any student-driven group at Menlo that is formally recognized by the College. Student clubs are funded partially by Student Fees through the Student Programming Board (SPB) and are monitored by the Student Government Association (MCSGA). Examples of student clubs include the American Red Cross Club, BLOC, Latino and Hispanic Society, and Pioneer Club. Student clubs must be open for membership to all Menlo students. Students and advisors involved in student clubs must adhere to all institutional policies and regulations.

**Most student groups on campus are CLUBS**

Membership and Benefits

Menlo College students are free to organize and join associations to promote their common interests, subject to the following: Registered clubs, like registered students, are to be respectful of the standards and norms of conduct and civility. At the time of a student club’s registration with the college, it agrees to comply with Menlo policies and procedures relating to their activities and conduct on campus.

Why Become a Registered Club?

- Recognition on Menlo College website and in co-curricular transcripts
- Use of Menlo facilities and equipment
- Recognition in official Menlo College publications
- Assistance with program development, membership recruitment, retention, and advertising
- Advice, consultation, and resources
- Leadership training and development opportunities
- Access to Student Programming Board funding

Support from the Office of Student Affairs & Student Government Association (MCSGA):

- Training on club operations such as how to run effective meetings, recruit and retain members, host elections, resolve conflicts, and develop leadership skills
- Mentorship
- Financial support
● Assistance navigating campus resources and paperwork
● Writing, negotiating and signing contracts for entertainers, services, speakers, off-campus facilities, etc.
● Help coordinating fundraisers, off-campus vendors
● Approval of ALL publicity materials (banners, posters, flyers, etc.)

Menlo College SGA will NOT approve a student club whose purpose or activities:
A. Present a clear danger of inciting violence or unlawful behavior
B. Are not open to all members of the campus community
C. Advocate the physical harm, coercion, intimidation, or other invasions of personal rights of individual Menlo College students, faculty, staff, administrators, or guests
D. Violate the College’s policy on sexual and other unlawful harassment and the standards of non-academic conduct
E. Advocate willful damage, destruction, or seizure of College buildings or other property
F. Interfere with classes or unlawfully interfere with campus events or activities

Membership Eligibility
Active membership in student clubs is limited to registered students, faculty and staff. Students must constitute a majority of the membership of recognized clubs. Faculty and staff who are not students shall not be eligible to hold any office other than that of advisor.

Officer Structure
Officers
Each club must elect a group of members responsible for the group’s operations, known as officers. These individuals develop and execute the club’s vision. They plan the behind-the-scenes logistics that make the club and its events successful. Each club may outline the necessary positions and corresponding responsibilities in their club constitution. Sample officer position descriptions can be found in our Club Resources Shared Drive.

Required Positions:
- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Advisor

Suggested Positions:
- Secretary/Historian/Internal Affairs Coordinator
- Publicity Coordinator/Public Relations
- Event Coordinator

Officers should be determined by an election process. This is up to the individual club to determine, but election procedures should be outlined in the club constitution. A suggested timeline is for officers to hold their position for the duration of the academic year, with elections being held in the spring for the upcoming academic year.

All members holding a required officer position must have and maintain a GPA of 2.0.

Club Advisor

Why do you need an advisor?
Advisors encourage students to think creatively and resourcefully, act as the group’s primary contact for College policy and procedure questions, and to motivate students to be thoughtful and inclusive when planning programs or events. An advisor is a person who gives advice or makes recommendations as to a decision or a course of action brought forth by a club. Each recognized student group is required to have a staff or faculty advisor because their contributions are valuable.

An advisor serves many functions for a Club. Some of these include:
- Overseeing and advising in all activities
- Attending the club’s meetings and events
● Supporting the mission and focus, which helps the club achieve longevity and success by seeing progression from year to year.

**How to Find an Advisor?**

Ask a faculty or staff member who you think shares the interest of the club to act as your advisor. If you are unsure of who or how to ask, please visit the Office of Student Affairs and we can help you identify someone who might be a good fit. Make sure you present them with the Advisor Handbook so they understand what being an advisor entails.

*Your advisor MUST sign the advisor contract and read the Advisor Handbook in order to be considered a registered club*

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Approval is granted at the time a club registers with the Office of Student Affairs and MCSGA. Registration is defined as the process whereby a student club acquires eligibility to receive college support and services. All criteria must be met before a club will be approved. Approval and/or continued approval is subject to continuous review.

The relationship between the College and recognized student clubs generates neither a contractual relationship between Menlo and the Club, nor a property right or expectancy in the Club of any sort. Duties performed and activities undertaken by recognized student Clubs are not Menlo duties or activities.

**The following are criteria for registration of a student Club:**

1. The registration process for continuing clubs must be renewed on an annual basis. This involves the submission of any and all documents necessary for the approval process to be considered. This process is currently maintained in Menlo Roots. **All clubs must apply for registration on an annual basis regardless of their status in previous years.**

2. New Clubs must register by the first Student Programming Board meeting of a given semester to be eligible for club funding. Clubs that form after these deadlines may be recognized provisionally, which may restrict funding or activities until the following semester.

3. Student(s) must provide a statement of purpose that includes the club’s name and objectives. Objectives must be detailed and aligned with the educational mission and goals of the College. (These are usually outlined in the Club’s constitution.)

4. Student(s) must provide a list of positions that will govern the Club (e.g., President, Vice President, Treasurer) and a process for how officers will be selected to govern the Club.
   a. **Officers must attend all mandatory club trainings and advisor(s) must sign the advisor contract before a club is considered approved.**

5. The club has an advisor who is a current Menlo faculty or staff member.

6. The club agrees to adhere to all policies and regulations of Menlo College, MCSGA, and all local, state and federal laws.*

7. The club is open to all Menlo students. **
*Registered student clubs may have an affiliation with national and/or regional organizations, outside the college and be subject to policies and requirement of a parent organization, provided that this relationship entails no conflict with Menlo College objectives, policies, and activities.

**The exception to this rule is club sports, who are subject to a tryout process. Anyone is welcome to try out for a club sport, but membership is ultimately at the discretion of the coach/club.

Steps for Club Registration (New Clubs ONLY)

1. Within Menlo Roots, under the ‘Forms’ tab, complete the New Organization Registration form.
   a. For a step-by-step guide through the registration form, please check out our Organization Registration Guide in the Club Resources shared drive.

2. Attend club training session, hosted by the MCSGA Director of Student Programming. The dates of these trainings will be announced during the registration process. If you are unable to attend, you should contact the MCSGA Director of Student Programming directly to schedule a make-up training session.

3. Give the advisor an Advisor Handbook and contract (both found in the Club Resources shared drive)

4. Turn the signed Advisor Contract into the MCSGA Director of Programming at prior to the first Student Programming Board meeting.

Club Expectations

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<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Hold Club meetings (ideally, meetings are held on a weekly or bi-weekly basis)</th>
<th>Attend Student Programming Board meetings, typically held the first Wednesday of every month</th>
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<td>Each Semester</td>
<td>Attend all Club-related meetings and workshops organized by MCSGA, the Director of Student Engagement or the Office of Student Affairs</td>
<td>Host event(s) or programs for the benefit of the Menlo College student body at large</td>
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<td>Annually</td>
<td>Elect or re-elect club leadership positions</td>
<td>Confirm faculty/staff advisor</td>
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<td>Register your club and submit all required documents by the deadline</td>
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Inactive Status

Failure to meet the steps outlined in the above approval process and expectations may result in your club being deemed “Inactive”. This means you will not be able to host events on campus, gain approval for publicity/marketing, and you will not be able to request funds from Student Programming Board.

Under no circumstances may student clubs sponsor Menlo College events, or use Menlo facilities or services, unless the club is either formally recognized or has the written approval of the Dean of Student Affairs.
Student Programming Board (SPB) is the governing body that determines club funding throughout the academic year. It consists of the Club Judiciary Board, who are executive officers within MCSGA and is led by the MCSGA Director of Programming, in addition to a representative from each club on campus. The representative is typically a club officer such as President or Treasurer, but they can send a proxy in their place if necessary.

SPB meetings are held once a month, typically on the first Wednesday in Brawner Pit (room 40) at 9 PM. Time and location are subject to change each semester based on campus availability, and all club officers will be notified of the exact date and times at the start of each semester and will receive reminders the week of the meeting each time. SPB meetings are MANDATORY and if a club misses more than one during the academic year they will be subject to disciplinary action or be put on “Inactive” status.

These monthly meetings are where all club funding requests over $400 will be voted on by the various club representatives. For requests $400 and under, MCSGA will vote during their meetings to approve or deny the funding. In order to vote on club funding requests, Student Programming Board must meet quorum during the monthly meetings, which constitutes three-fourths of all clubs on campus having a representative present. If SPB does not meet quorum at any given monthly meeting, those funding requests will be tabled to the next monthly meeting, which will result in a significant delay in approval and receipt of funding. Thus, it is imperative that your club send a representative to each monthly meeting, to support your fellow student clubs. While a club can send multiple representatives if they wish, no one student may represent more than one club at each SPB meeting. Each club will only get one vote at meetings, regardless of how many representatives they have present.

If you wish to request funds for your club, you will need to complete a Funding Request in Roots. Following approval for your funding request, you will need to work with the MCSGA Director of Finance to determine the best route for receiving your club funds. For a more detailed explanation of these forms and the procedure for receiving funds from Student Programming Board, please refer to the Funding Request guide found in the Club Resources 19-20 shared drive.
Hazing

Menlo College prohibits any form of hazing. Hazing is defined as any action taken or situation created intentionally by an individual, Club, or Organization, whether on or off campus, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule; and the act was committed in connection with an initiation into, an affiliation with or the maintenance of membership in an Organization. Such activities may include but are not limited to the following: use of alcohol, paddling in any form, creation of excessive fatigue, physical or psychological shocks, quests, treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, road trips or any other such activities carried out on or off campus, wearing of public apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste, engaging in public stunts or buffoonery, morally degrading or humiliating games or activities, and any other activities which are not consistent with academic achievement, college policy, local, state or federal law.

Examples of hazing include, but are not limited to the following:
- Paddling
- Forced indulgence of alcohol or food
- Forced excessive exercise
- Indecent stunts or dress
- Deprivation of sleep, normal sleep patterns or adequate study time
- Physical harassment such as pushing, shoving, tickling, yelling, etc.
- Deprivation of normal amounts of food and water
- Individual or group interrogations such as line-ups
- Personal servitude
- Assigning pranks
- Forced or coerced trips i.e. “kidnaps”, displacement, and "pledge" dumps

The willingness of an individual to participate in any such activity or the degree of affiliation within an Organization notwithstanding, any and all such activities or similar in deed or purpose may be considered an act of hazing. Any suspicions of the above mentioned activities or any other activities, which may be construed as hazing, should be reported to the Director of Student Engagement and the Dean of Student Affairs immediately.

Enforcement

It is the responsibility of all club officers, advisors, and Student Affairs professionals to inform members, associates, and alumni of the hazing policy and to ensure that all Menlo College Organizations will adhere to this policy. Further, any student found to be involved in any hazing activity will face disciplinary action and is subject to a maximum sanction of dismissal from the College. Students and their Organizations are also subject to criminal and civil action as it relates to California state law.

Informed Consent

This policy explains the procedure required before students engage in any high risk activity, service project or conference travel. If your club participates in activities where there is a high risk for injury or if you are hosting a program or event that requires travel or has the potential for injury, you will be asked to have any and all participants sign a waiver. This will be provided for you from the Office of Student Affairs should it be deemed necessary. Sample waiver forms can be found in the Club Resources 19-20 shared drive.
Finances

Student Organizations may not solicit Organizations, individuals, or College departments without prior approval from MCSGA and the Office of Alumni Engagement and Development. If you would like to fundraise please contact the MCSGA Director of Programming to set up a meeting and get more information.

No student club may open a banking account with an external agency. All finance and accounting processes must be handled through the College. Clubs are eligible for a campus club account which you can deposit donations or other club income.

Disciplinary Actions for Clubs

The Club Judiciary Board within the MCSGA is responsible for creating and monitoring all policies related to Clubs. The Judiciary Board is the final arbiter of these policies and their decisions are final. Clubs and officers that disregard these regulations will be subject to collective or individual sanctions through the Office of Student Affairs and/or the College’s judicial process. If not specified within the regulations themselves, violation of any of these policies may result in one or more of the following sanctions:

1. Cancellation of the event or activity
2. Cancellation of events or activities for the semester or academic year
3. Suspension of all Club account activity
4. Fines for repair, replacement or cleaning
5. Revocation of the Organization’s registration for a specified period
Additional guides and resources are located in the Club Resources 19-20 shared drive and club officers will be added to that drive upon attending a club training session. There you’ll find “how-to” guides for Menlo Roots, as well as blank documents to aid in event planning, contracts, etc. Below are some examples of additional information covered. As always, if you have any questions, please see us in the Office of Student Affairs!

Advisors
Alcohol Policy
Catering
Constitution
Elections
Event Planning (both on and off campus)
Advertising
Decorations
Dances & Other Large Events
Parking Policy
Policy on Screening Films & TV Shows
Safety
Security/Chaperone Guidelines
Fundraising and Donations
Officers
Vendors on Campus
Waivers