

# S.O.A.P.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISING PUBLICATION



**GREAT FALLS  
COLLEGE**

---

MONTANA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

**Associated Students of Great Falls College MSU**

**This publication is to assist Student Clubs and Organizations on the Great Falls College MSU campus to be effective entities in fulfilling the educational mission of the College. The topics discussed are institutional policies or Associated Students of Great Falls College Montana State University (hereinafter referred to as ASGFC MSU) procedures except those that are labeled \*. This publication may be revised/updated as needed by the ASGFC MSU.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Student Club & Organization Policy.....	4
II. Receiving ASGFC MSU Recognition.....	4
III. Programs of Study.....	5
IV. Benefits of Being a Recognized Group.....	5
A. Meeting Space.....	5
B. Internal Advertising and Postings.....	5
1. GFC MSU Logo Use.....	6
2. Bulletin Boards.....	6
3. Posting on the ASGFC MSU Bulletin Board.....	6
4. Display Cases.....	6
5. Kiosks.....	7
C. Great Falls College MSU Website.....	7
D. Event Requests.....	7
E. Acknowledgment of Risk.....	7
F. Use of State Vehicles.....	8
V. Finances.....	8
A. Dues.....	8
B. Fundraising.....	8
C. Commercial Activities/Fundraising.....	8
D. Monetary Requests.....	8
E. Accounts and Purchasing.....	9
VI. Officers.....	9
A. Role*.....	9
B. Academic Integrity.....	9
VII. Advisor’s Role.....	9
VIII. Associate Dean for Student Services’ Role.....	10
IX. Losing ASGFC MSU Recognition.....	10
X. Final Comments.....	11

Blank copies of requests and forms are provided at

<http://www.gfcmsu.edu/campuslife/StudentGovernment/index.html>

## **I. Student Organization Policy (Policy 307.1, Effective 02/07)**

The College recognizes the value of student organizations in campus life and, consequently, provides the opportunity for groups to be formed and to meet on campus. However, because their memberships are comprised of students at Great Falls College Montana State University, student organizations should have some relationship to the main educational mission of the College. It is neither the College's intention nor responsibility to sponsor, endorse, or otherwise support particular student organizations. The fact that a student organization has access to College facilities should not be construed, nor may a particular student organization represent, that Great Falls College Montana State University sponsors, endorses, or otherwise supports the organization or any of its views, philosophies, or activities.

## **II. Receiving ASGFC MSU Recognition**

A Student Organization seeking official recognition from Associated Students of Great Falls College Montana State University, hereinafter referred to as ASGFC MSU, for the first time must meet the following criteria:

1. Have a Constitution
  - a. The Constitution and/or Bylaws will be reviewed by both the ASGFC MSU Executive Officers and Associate Dean for Student Services prior to being brought before the ASGFC MSU Senate for approval.
2. Have a Mission/Purpose for their group. This is stated in the group's Constitution.
3. Have an advisor.
4. Have a membership composed of at least 85% enrolled students.

A student is an individual who is enrolled in one or more credits per semester from ASGFC MSU. An officer of a Student Organization must be enrolled in six or more credits per semester excluding the summer semester.

Any changes to the Student Organization's Constitution after they have been recognized must be immediately submitted to ASGFC MSU and the Associate Dean for Student Services. Once the Student Organization has been introduced to the campus for the first time, the organization must submit an annual recognition application to ASGFC MSU by the end of September.

The Recognition Application will include:

1. A current Constitution
  - a. The Constitution and/or Bylaws will be reviewed by both the ASGFC MSU Executive Officers and the Associate Dean for Student Services prior to being brought before the Senate for approval;
2. A Mission/Purpose for their group. This is stated in the group's Constitution;
3. The Advisor(s) Agreement;
4. President's/Spokesperson's Agreement;
5. Current membership list showing that 85% of the membership is current, enrolled students;
6. Completed Event Request for a meeting room.

The officers of the Student Organization must understand that their name and contact information may be used in the group's marketing as part of the benefit of being a recognized group.

After the Recognition Application is received, it will be reviewed by both the ASGFC MSU Executive Officers and the Associate Dean for Student Services prior to being brought before the Senate for approval.

### **III. Programs of Study**

According to ASGFC MSU governing documents, programs of study are deemed recognized. The following forms will need to be updated and returned to ASWGFC MSU at the beginning of every fall semester:

1. Advisor Agreement;
2. President/Spokesperson's Agreement;
3. Additional Information.

### **IV. Benefits of Being a Recognized Group**

#### **A. Meeting Space**

Benefits include use of meeting room space on campus for meetings or activities and use of College equipment for those events. Consumption of food and/or beverages is not permitted in computer equipped classrooms and other posted areas. The GFC MSU Event Coordinator must be notified a week in advance of the room set up. Then, any minor adjustments can be made no later than 224 hours in advance (see Event Request). Food can be purchased from the cafeteria, but must be arranged no later than a week in advance prior to the event. Any food items in need of storage must be arranged no later than 24 hours in advance with the Cafeteria Manager.

#### **B. Internal Advertising and Postings**

The GFC MSU Campus recognizes the value of providing students, faculty and staff the opportunity to distribute promotional material and to publicize College/community events on campus. However, the College reserves the right to place restrictions on the time, place and manner of the use of campus facilities and equipment, consistent with laws, statutes, policies, and contractual provisions affecting university system employees and students. All postings must be approved by the Information Desk. Bulletin board postings, index cards, posters and table tents are allowed after approval. Approved postings will be designated by an official stamp indicating the date of approval and the date of removal. Postings without official stamps, as well as material that remains posted beyond the removal date will be removed. When possible, the Information Desk will post printed materials in locations requested. Postings are allowed in pre-approved areas only. For questions, please contact the Information Desk.

The following are guidelines for approval:

- Requests for approval to distribute printed or electronic informational materials must be obtained from the Information Desk.

- Small posters and index cards advertising items for sale, rentals, etc., are allowed only on the Commons/Cafeteria bulletin boards.
  - Cards must be approved and stamped by the Information Desk.
  - The College assumes no liability for any situation which arises from arrangements made through information provided by private postings.
- The Information Desk staff will post, remove and dispose of posters in a timely manner.
- Job postings will be forwarded to the Advising and Career Center to verify and post the position on JobWire.

The full version of the policy is available at:

[http://www.gfcmsu.edu/about/PoliciesProcedures/600/602\\_1\\_INTERNAL\\_ADVERTISING\\_AND\\_POSTINGS\\_-\\_Dec\\_09.pdf](http://www.gfcmsu.edu/about/PoliciesProcedures/600/602_1_INTERNAL_ADVERTISING_AND_POSTINGS_-_Dec_09.pdf)

### 1. GFC MSU Logo Use

The Great Falls College MSU logo may only be used with permission from the Marketing Director or the Executive Director of Marketing & Communications. It may not be modified in any way, including color, dimensions or additions to the logo. The logo is owned and licensed by the College.

### 2. Bulletin Boards

When submitting posters and flyers for posting, you may request specific posting areas, for example:

- Cafeteria Commons Area
- Second floor at the top of the ramp
- Easels at main entrances
- Bulletin boards in classrooms
- Enclosed bulletin boards near the library, near B116 and near the Bookstore.
- Bulletin boards outside the Chemistry Lab
- Bookstore
- Digital signage

### 3. Posting on the ASGFC MSU Bulletin Board

Information that would impact the general student body must have stamped approval from an ASGFC MSU Executive Cabinet member before posting it on the ASGFC MSU Bulletin Board.

### 4. Display Cases

Display cases are available for the use of internal and external groups. They can be used to highlight program or student achievement. They should contain information relating to academic or campus community life important to significant positions of the faculty, staff, administration and students. Reserve space in display cases through the Information Desk. Reservations are first-come, first-served. Displays are generally changed monthly.

## 5. Kiosks

Kiosks are available for the use of internal and external groups. They can be used to highlight program or student achievement and advertise for events. Information should relate to the academic or campus community and be important to significant portions of the faculty, staff, administration and students. Submit requests for announcements or news posting to the College's Communications & Marketing Department.

### C. Great Falls College MSU Website

If the group desires to create a website affiliated with the College's site, they must contact the Executive Director of Communications & Marketing for consideration.

The use of the World Wide Web provides the College with a powerful tool to convey information quickly and efficiently on a broad range of topics. Submit requests for announcements or news page postings to [lklasner@gfcmsu.edu](mailto:lklasner@gfcmsu.edu). Our goal is to keep information on our website up to date and accurate. To achieve that goal, the College's Webmaster will provide training and access to staff to enable departments to update their own pages.

### D. Event Requests

Student Organizations must fill out an Event Request form from Great Falls College MSU to hold fundraisers or activities on or off campus. This is designed to prevent student events from conflicting with each other. If the event is off campus, the Student Organization may need to return completed Acknowledgment of Risk forms to the Business Office depending on the activity. Event Requests must be turned in prior to ASGFC MSU's Executive Cabinet meeting. The officers of ASGFC MSU will review the information and contact the Event Coordinator to arrange the set-up if the event is on campus or check for any other off-campus scheduled Student Organization events. Each Student Organization utilizing GFC MSU rooms, equipment, and ground must use them properly in order to avoid damage and/or unnecessary abuse. The organization is responsible for replacing or paying for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

### E. Acknowledgment of Risk

ASGFC MSU considers students and those who participate in activities sponsored by Student Organizations and/or Programs of Study to be adults who understand the nature and risk of such activities; therefore, these individuals accept personal responsibility for their conduct without the need of supervision. This includes bodily injury or personal property damage/loss during activities. Members and students of Student Organizations or Programs of Study are advised to have appropriate medical insurance, skill training, and protective equipment where applicable. Each Student Organization or Program of Study utilizing Great Falls College MSU rooms, equipment, and ground must use them properly in order to avoid damage and/or unnecessary abuse. The group is responsible for replacing or paying for any lost, stolen, or damaged items. They must realize that the collective group or its individual members are viewed as representatives of Great Falls College MSU by the outside community. A blank, sample Event Request form is provided at the end of this publication, as well as a copy of the Acknowledgment of Risk.

#### F. Use of State Vehicles

To travel to functions in a state vehicle, a driver from the Student Organization must read and complete the GFC MSU Vehicle User Agreement located at <http://intranet.gfcmsu.edu/Forms/VehicleUseAgreement.pdf>. After completing the form, it must be returned to the Business Office for approval. Once approved, the driver can schedule the use of a vehicle in advance of the travel date with the Maintenance Department.

### V. Finances

#### A. Dues

Student Organizations may charge dues to their membership as long as those dues are outlined in their Constitution and/or Bylaws.

#### B. Fundraising

Student Organizations are encouraged to fundraise. Student Organizations can fill out an Event Request from ASGFC MSU to hold fundraisers on or off campus. The ASGFC MSU Executive Cabinet will review the information and contact the Event Coordinator to arrange the set-up if the event is on campus, or check for any other off-campus scheduled Student Organization events. The campus will only host sales activities directly related to students (e.g. bakes sales for the benefit of a recognized student organization). In the event that a policy regarding the solicitation of funds, goods, and/or services from area businesses is implemented, all groups should include those items in the Event Request or contact the College's Event Coordinator.

#### C. Commercial Activities/Fundraising

The sale of goods or services and solicitation of funds from any source not affiliated with the College is prohibited in the building, on campus grounds, and at all campus-sponsored activities. Exceptions to this policy must be granted in writing by the CEO/Dean or CEO/Dean's designee.

#### D. Monetary Requests

To receive financial assistance from ASGFC MSU funds, a Student Organization must complete and return a Monetary Request prior to an ASGFC MSU Executive Cabinet meeting. The officers of ASGFC MSU will review and schedule the request as an action item during the next ASGFC MSU Senate meeting to be voted on. The Senate may deny, approve, or return the request to the Student Organization asking for more information. A member of the Executive Cabinet of ASGFC MSU will contact the individuals listed on the Monetary Request. Questions that may be asked include:

1. Have other options for fundraising been researched?
2. What other plans does the Student Organization have for fundraising if the ASGFC MSU Senate denies or reduces the request?

A copy of the Monetary Request form is included at the end of this publication. Program requirements will not be funded per Great Falls College MSU.



### E. Accounts and Purchasing

Student Organizations are encouraged to open an account with the Great Falls College MSU Business Office in order to maintain good financial standing for continued recognition. The process for purchasing supplies, printing, and food on campus would be more fluid for day-to-day operations and/or special activities. The Business Office will provide instructions on the policies and procedures for expending funds.

## VI. Officers

### A. Role\*

The role of a Student Organization officer is a very unique position. Officers should understand that they are students first and be able to adequately balance their studies with the activities of their organization. As they lead their group, they should understand the responsibility of adhering to College policies, academic integrity, and FERPA. In order for the organization to continue its presence on the campus, the officers are encouraged to be active within the group and support it by having monthly activities.

### B. Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated at Great Falls College MSU. The consequence for the first such violation is at the discretion of the instructor and may range from a failing grade for the particular assignment/test to an automatic failing grade in the course in which the act of academic dishonesty occurred. Students may be prevented from withdrawing from a course in a case of academic dishonesty. Faculty must report all violations of academic integrity to their respective Department Chair and the Associate Dean for Student Services. A student may not represent the College in any official manner and may not hold a student government office if he/she has violated this policy.

## VII. Advisor's Role

An advisor is a Great Falls College MSU contract professional or faculty member. Student Organization Advisors play a vital role in assuring that the organization's experiences are meaningful to students, as well as paying a crucial role in managing institutional risk and liability. The most successful Student Organizations are those in which the Advisor takes an active interest and plays an active role in the group.

It is therefore critical and essential that the Advisors are fully aware of their responsibilities, which include, but are not limited to:

1. Providing continuity within the organization and assisting in the training of new officers each year;
2. Encouraging opportunities within the organization that will contribute to the students' development and education;
3. Being well informed of all plans and activities of the group, and attending formal activities;
4. Providing direct assistance in the planning of the programs, and indirect help in preparing for formal events by advising of additional resources available;

5. Regularly attending meetings and frequently consulting with the organization officers;
6. Assisting the organization in keeping their financial and organizational records current, and being aware of the expenditure of student time, abilities, duties, and finances within the program;
7. Being open to calls for assistance from the organization, and advising on compliance with State and Great Falls College MSU policies; and
8. Reviewing, evaluating, and approving the annual Recognition Application, roster, Monetary Requests, and Event Request forms to be submitted to the ASGFC MSU Executive Cabinet.

### **VIII. Associate Dean for Student Services' Role**

The Associate Dean for Student Services is charged with support and oversight of student life at Great Falls College MSU. In that role, the Associate Dean should be informed of all groups recognized by the Associated Students of Great Falls College MSU. Documentation will include complete rosters of student members and officers, meeting times and places, and Advisors who have agreed to support each group.

The Associate Dean supports Student Organizations and their advisors through provision of advisor training, and being available for advice and assistance with questions from Student Organization leaders or advisors. Great Falls College MSU values student engagement in academic and co-curricular activities. Student Organizations provide opportunities for students to learn leadership, organizational and human relations skills, and because of these very real benefits to students, the Associate Dean's office stands ready to support the organizations students wish to be active in during their time with the College.

Students who are members, and especially students who are leaders of Student Organizations, are held to a high standard of behavior as representatives of Great Falls College MSU. Any violations of the Student Conduct Code by Student Organization members in their roles in the organization may jeopardize their continued involvement with the organization. The office of the Associate Dean for Student Services is responsible for enforcement of the Student Conduct Code.

### **IX. Losing ASGFC MSU Recognition**

Student Organizations recognition can be revoked or denied based on any of the following conditions:

1. Notice of dissolution from the Student Organization officers/advisors;
2. Failure to hold meetings or events over a 12-month period;
3. Failure to complete the annual Recognition Application;
4. Failure to comply with stated criteria and all responsibilities outlined in the ASGFC MSU Recognition Application;
5. Failure to conduct events in a responsible manner, such as causing disorderly diversion or disturbance that interferes with Great Falls College MSU's operations. (This section shall not be construed as denying the right to peaceful assembly);
6. Failure to follow through on risk management.

Prior to revocation, the Student Organization will be notified and be given the opportunity to take corrective measures. The Student Organization can also meet with the Associate Dean for Student Services to be given a hearing according to Complaint Procedures in Great Falls College MSU policy.

## **X. Final Comments**

It is important for both advisors and student members of the Student Organization to realize that their respective roles within the group represent only a small portion of their lives; the student member is, after all, first a student, while the Advisor is first a professional. Both have responsibilities that must come before their activities in the organization, and it is important that neither lose sight of that fact in their expectations of the other. For the student members and advisor(s) alike, membership with the Student Organization should be a pleasantly memorable experience. HAVE FUN!!!!

Blank copies of requests and forms are provided at

<http://www.gfcmsu.edu/campuslife/StudentGovernment/index.html>