Kennesaw State University Registered Student Organizations Policy

A. Registered Student Organization ("RSO") Purpose and Overview

Registered Student Organizations at Kennesaw State University ("KSU") provide a forum for the educational, intellectual, and social benefit of KSU students. By registering as an RSO, student organizations are able to receive the support of the Department of Student Activities and access to certain resources available to RSOs, but those organizations are also bound by expectations and requirements set forth in applicable law, Board of Regents' polices, and KSU policies and procedures.

Not all student organizations are or will become RSOs. In order to be considered an RSO, a student organization must be able to meet the requirements to register as an RSO, as outlined in this document, and must choose to register with KSU's Department of Student Activities. Social Greek Organizations, who are supported and organized through the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Club Sports, who are supported and organized through the Department of Sports and Recreation, cannot become RSOs.

Each RSO at KSU will have one or more category designations, the definitions of which are set forth below. Each RSO must initially register as an RSO pursuant to the instructions set forth below and must renew its registration with the KSU Department of Student Activities on an annual basis. KSU's review of a student organization's initial registration and registration renewal is conducted on a content-neutral basis and KSU's approval or denial is not based on the mission, goals, or beliefs of the student organization. KSU's decision on whether to approve a student organization's application as an RSO is based solely on the organization's submission of a properly completed registration application, as set forth below, and its demonstration of a bona fide intent to sponsor programs, activities, or events for KSU students. Registration of a student organization does not constitute endorsement by KSU or approval of the student organization's policies and activities.

****NOTE:** This policy and processes contained herein are for RSOs **ONLY**. Organizations that are considered Club Sports or Social Greek organizations must use the process outlined by the

Department of Sports and Recreation and the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life, respectively.**

B. RSO Categories

Organization categories describe the common purposes that exist among organizations with a similar primary mission. All RSOs fall into at least one category and some RSOs may fall into multiple categories based on their operations.

The categories of RSOs at KSU are as follows:

- Academic and Professional - Organizations that promote academic or professional growth by focusing on a particular major or academic program.
- Applied Academic Competition Teams - Organizations that compete on a local, state, or national level in primarily applied academic competitions.
- Community Service - Organizations that provide volunteer and community service opportunities including, but not limited to, philanthropy activities, advocacy work, and hands-on service opportunities.
- Cultural-Based and International - Organizations that act as a means for students of a particular culture or nationality to interact with others of the same affiliation or to share their respective culture with the broader campus community.
- Faith-Based and Spiritual - Organizations that act as a means for students of a particular denomination or religious affiliation to interact with others of the same affiliation or to explore ideas and topics related to faith and spirituality.
- Graduate - Organizations that exist to provide benefits, support, and services primarily to graduate students.
- Honor Society - Organizations that recognize students and select membership based on academic and personal achievement.
- Military - Organizations that support and advocate for military veterans and military members.
- Performance and Fine Arts - Organizations that promote the enjoyment of or performance of the arts and music.

- Political - Organizations that relate to, or deal with, the structure and affairs of government, politics, or the state, whether partisan or non-partisan.
- Publications and Media - Organizations that exist in order to provide information related to their purpose through means of mass communication, such as newspapers, magazines, radio, or television.
- Social Action - Organizations that discuss, encourage, or engage in reform work related to a particular cause or movement for social change.
- Special Interest - Organizations that focus on a specific set of interests or topics and work to advance members' understanding in that specific area or engage in a particular past time or leisure pursuit.

C. Requirements for RSOs

Any student organization interested in becoming an RSO must meet the following requirements in order to initially register or renew its registration as an RSO and to maintain its status as an RSO:

(1) *Student Membership*: All RSOs must have at least six KSU student members joined together for a common purpose (general membership may be comprised of both full-time and part-time KSU students) and the KSU email address for each student member must be provided to KSU as part of the organization's RSO registration application;

(2) *Governance Structure*: One distinct student member of the student organization, who is also a KSU student in good standing enrolled on at least a half-time basis, must be designated for each of the following officers – President, Treasurer, and Reservation Delegate (student organizations may call these officers by a different name within the organization, but for the purposes of Student Activities, the President is the chief executive officer, the Treasurer is the person who handles finances, and the Reservation Delegate is the person who will have access to the reservation system to make reservations on behalf of the organization in addition to the President); other officers are encouraged but not required;

(3) *Student Run/Democratic*: Student self-governance is the central tenet of the RSO model, and all RSOs must function through KSU student governance and leadership;

a. Faculty, staff, non-student community members, and any non-student entities may participate in RSO activities and act in an advisory role to the RSO but cannot serve as leaders or voting members of the RSO, engage in decision making on behalf of the group, or represent the group or the University. RSOs operating on the Marietta campus may elect to allow Marietta Georgia Highlands College students to be voting members in their organization if that is permitted by the RSO's Constitution.
b. Non-student affiliated entities can require that the RSO maintain certain policies or protocols to continue their affiliation (e.g., dues, annual reports) as long as the policies or procedures do not interfere with student autonomy or require the RSO to violate the law or Board of Regents or KSU policy or procedure.
c. All RSOs must engage in democratic style governance as evidenced in their governing documents (e.g., regular elections, checks and balances for leadership). No RSO is allowed to give its student leaders unilateral control over organization decisions.
d. All RSOs must include a leadership elections process in their constitution. Elections must be held regularly and RSOs are encouraged to hold elections at least annually; a constitutional provision for holding a regular vote on whether to open elections meets this requirement. Voting in elections and votes to open elections cannot be limited to a smaller number of members than the number of members who would be able to vote on normal organizational business. Elections of a single slate of officers are allowed, so long as the proposed slate of officers is confirmed by a vote of the members eligible to vote.

(4) *Advisors*: All RSOs must have at least one full-time KSU faculty or staff member who will serve as the organization's advisor but will not make executive decisions for the organization or dictate organizational programs or services and whose KSU email address must be provided to KSU as part of the student organization's RSO registration application (in addition to the KSU advisor, organizations may also have an off-campus advisor who is not affiliated with KSU, but that individual may only advise the organization and may not make executive decisions for the organization or dictate organizational programs or services). In the event that an RSO is unable to find a faculty

or staff member to act as the organization's advisor, an official from the Division of Student Affairs will be assigned as the RSO's advisor;

(5) *Organization Constitution*: All RSOs must have a Constitution that is approved by KSU's Department of Student Activities. First-year RSOs will have their Constitution approved as part of the registration process; RSOs who make subsequent changes to their Constitution must submit them to the Department of Student Activities for approval. Approval or denial of an RSO's Constitution will not be based on the mission, goals, or beliefs of the RSO or any other content- or viewpoint-based determination but rather will only be based on the RSO including the information below in the Constitution. If an RSO's Constitution is denied for failing to include one or more of the following pieces of information, the RSO will be notified in writing of the specific reason for the denial:

   a. Name of the RSO (RSO names may include "KSU," "Kennesaw State," or "Kennesaw State University," but only as "[Organization Name] at KSU"; Listing the name as "KSU [Organization Name]" or "[Organization Name] of KSU" is not allowed;
   b. Purpose/Mission Statement;
   c. The following KSU Affiliation Clause:
      i. This organization is a Registered Student Organization (RSO) at Kennesaw State University, but is not part of the University itself.
      ii. In all correspondence and publications, it may refer to itself as an organization at Kennesaw State University, but not as part of Kennesaw State University itself.
      iii. [Name of RSO] accepts full financial and production responsibility for all activities it sponsors.
      iv. [Name of RSO] agrees to abide by all pertinent Kennesaw State University policies and regulations, including the most current RSO Manual and Student Codes of Conduct. Where Kennesaw State University policies and regulations and those of RSO differ, the policies and regulations of Kennesaw State University will take precedence.
      v. [Name of RSO] recognizes and understands that the University assumes no legal liability for the actions of the organization.

d. Identification of any affiliations with local, regional, national, or international entities or organizations;
e. Membership Eligibility and Requirements (including a membership removal process);
f. Officers and Officer Responsibilities (including an officer removal and succession process);
g. Elections Process and Information;
h. Advisor Responsibilities;
i. Process for Amendments to the Constitution; and,
j. The following KSU RSO Non-Discrimination Policy:
    i. "Kennesaw State University student organizations' 'Non-Discrimination Policy': Membership and all privileges, including voting and officer positions, must be extended to all students without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Membership and all privileges, including voting and officer positions, must be extended to all students as stated in the Kennesaw State University Non-Discrimination Statement. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on race, color or national origin in programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."
    ii. However, religious student organizations will not be denied registration solely because they limit leadership positions to students who share the same religious beliefs.
    iii. Additionally, any group that is formally affiliated with a national entity that has Title IX exemption status based on sex may be restricted based on sex alone.

The only Constitution that will be recognized is the one posted on the RSO's Owl Life page in the "Documents" section. In addition to a Constitution, some RSOs may elect to include by-laws, protocol manuals, membership agreements, or other documents that govern the operations of the RSO. KSU's Department of Student Activities does not routinely review those additional documents, but will do so if requested. KSU's Department of Student Activities may review any such document and take action if the document violates any applicable law or Board of Regents' or KSU policy or procedure; any action by KSU's Department of Student Activities will not be based on the mission, goals, viewpoints, or beliefs of the RSO, but rather will be based on the violation of the applicable law or policy. If KSU's Department of Student Activities reviews any document and decides to take action, the Department will notify the RSO in writing of the specific law or Board of Regents' or KSU policy or procedure that the document violates and the reason for the violation.

(6) *Profile Picture (Optional)*: During the registration phase, groups may submit an image for their organization that will be displayed on their Owl Life page; pictures that contain any KSU trademarks are subject to approval by the University (information on the use of logos may be found at http://styleguide.kennesaw.edu/logo-policy/use.php);

(7) *Online Registration Process*: Student organizations shall submit all required information and materials to KSU's Department of Student Activities (on the owllife.kennesaw.edu website under the "Organizations" tab, you will see a button to "Register a New Organization" on the left hand side of the window below "Categories," which will walk organizations through uploading all of required information and documents);

(8) *Contact from KSU Department of Student Activities*: Within ten business days after the student organization submits all required information and materials, a member of KSU's Department of Student Activities will advise the student organization President whether there are issues with the submission or whether the RSO application has been granted;

(9) *Officer Training*: The President and the Reservation Delegate must complete officer training on the KSU Reservations System (found at campustraining.kennesaw.edu under "Student Life") for making reservations for on-campus events; and,

(10) *Officer Agreements and Advisor Agreements*: The President, Treasurer, Reservation Delegate, and Advisor must complete the applicable Officer Agreement or Advisor Agreement that covers applicable University policy (found at studentactivities.kennesaw.edu under the "Forms and Resources" section).

For Initial RSO Registrations Only: Newly-approved RSOs will receive information from KSU's Department of Student Activities about the "Getting Started" meeting that must be scheduled between the student organization's President and Advisor and a member of KSU's Department of Student Activities. Other officers are encouraged to attend, but their attendance is not required. During the meeting, the organization's registration materials, including the constitution, are reviewed and organizations are advised about the rights and responsibilities of being an RSO at KSU.

Once the student organization complies with all of the requirements above and applies for registration as an RSO, the organization will be listed as an RSO and should receive access to the KSU Reservations website and other systems within three to five business days. Once registered, the RSO will be bound by all applicable policies for all RSOs.

Initial RSO registration may only be started during the months of September through April. All RSOs are required to renew their registration on an annual basis; the registration renewal period generally opens late spring semester and closes at the beginning of fall semester of each year (specific dates are determined annually by KSU's Department of Student Activities). The only step that does not have to be completed on an annual basis is the "Getting Started" Meeting; this meeting is only required for initial RSO registrations.

D. Funding Requests Processes and Procedures

Registered Student Organizations requesting financial support from KSU are required to complete and submit a Budget Request form to the Student Activities Budget Advisory Committee ("SABAC"). All decisions made by SABAC are advisory recommendations to KSU's Vice President for Student

Affairs ("VPSA"). SABAC and the VPSA are both bound by the funding decision-making criteria set forth below.

First-Year RSOs

KSU will allocate a minimum starter amount of one hundred dollars ($100.00) to each RSO for its first year of operations as long as the RSO submits a request for the starter kit amount with its RSO application along with a brief written outline of its anticipated activities for the year. A first-year RSO may obtain additional funding beyond the starter kit amount by submitting requests for either an Annual Budget or Supplemental Funding using the processes and complying with the deadlines set forth below.

Annual Budget Requests by RSOs

Any RSO that seeks an Annual Budget from SABAC must provide the following information to SABAC concurrently with its Annual Budget request by 12:00 P.M. on the last Friday in March of the academic year prior to when the funds are sought:

- a detailed written description or descriptions of the specific programs, activities, or events the RSO intends to sponsor;
- accurate written cost estimates of any required supplies or services that correlate to the programmatic needs (or logistical requirements) of the programs, activities, or events;
- a written estimate of the revenue expected to be generated in the coming year through dues, ticket sales, fundraisers, donations, or other means; and,
- a written account of revenue received during the prior year through dues, ticket sales, fundraisers, donations, or other means.
- Additionally, an RSO that received SABAC funds in the prior year must submit a written statement demonstrating that the RSO effectively utilized the funds that were allocated to it in the prior year to accomplish the goals for which those funds were awarded.

Supplemental Funding Requests by RSOs

An RSO that would like to request funding for a specific event or activity after the Annual Budget deadline must submit the following information no later than one month prior to the regularly-scheduled SABAC meeting at which the RSO desires the Supplemental Funding Request to be considered:

- a detailed written description or descriptions of the specific programs, activities, or events the RSO intends to sponsor; and
- accurate written cost estimates of any required supplies or services that correlate to the programmatic needs (or logistical requirements) of the programs, activities, or events.
- Additionally, an RSO that received SABAC funds in the prior year must submit a written statement demonstrating that the RSO effectively utilized the funds that were allocated to it in the prior year to accomplish the goals for which those funds were awarded.

Funding Decision-Making Criteria

The amount of funding an RSO may receive (outside of starter kits for first-year RSOs) is determined by the RSO's stated programmatic needs and is dependent upon submission of accurate documentation supporting the request.

SABAC's funding allocation recommendations and the VPSA's funding allocation decisions will be based solely on whether the requesting RSO has met the following viewpoint-neutral requirements, unless the RSO requests funding for the prohibited items listed later in this policy:

- The officers and members of the RSO must be currently enrolled students of KSU.
- The RSO's funding application must be submitted by the applicable application deadline.
- The RSO's funding application must be complete.
- If an RSO has undertaken events and activities in the prior year, it must demonstrate that the events or activities met the objectives and budget that the RSO presented in the prior year's budget request.

- Events and activities funded through student activity fees must be open to all KSU students.
- The RSO's request must accurately estimate the likely cost of the event, including by taking into consideration of the number of students likely to attend; however, this criterion shall not be used to consider the content or viewpoint of an RSO's speech, including the presumed popularity or controversial nature of an RSO's speech.
- If an RSO requests funding for one or more events, it must demonstrate a direct connection between the amount of funds requested for the event and the proposed event.
- If an RSO requests funding for one or more events, it must demonstrate that students will be involved in the planning and implementation of the event.
- The proposed facility must suitable for the proposed events and activities based on the estimated size of attendance, technical and logistical requirements for the event or activity, and accommodation of expected security needs.
- Any honoraria requested must be in the range of honoraria for similar speakers or performers; however, this criterion shall not be used to consider the content or viewpoint of an RSO's speech, including the presumed popularity or controversial nature of an RSO's speech.
- Any travel expense estimates must be objectively reasonable for the type of event or activity proposed.
- Any other viewpoint-neutral criteria that are determined by university legal counsel's written opinion. Any written opinion that contains additional viewpoint-neutral criteria will be published on SABAC's website.

SABAC will not use the following criteria when making funding decisions for RSOs:

- The presumed popularity of an RSO's viewpoint, including the existence among the student body of opposition to, or support for, the group. However, SABAC may consider the number of students expected to be involved in specific activities or events as necessary to estimate variable expenses of the activity or event
- The length of time the RSO has been in existence
- The amount of SABAC funding the RSO has received in the past.

SABAC cannot fund the following items:

- Alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or any other related illegal or restricted items
- Actual or in-kind contributions to campaigns, candidates, or political parties
- Off-campus organizations or agencies and their related activities and membership fees for civic organizations
- Fundraisers, donations, or gratuities (certain programmatic expenses are excluded provided that no entry fee is required to gain access to the fundraising event and no SABAC funds are used to purchase items sold to raise funds)
- Scholarships or individual membership fees
- Prizes or promotional items exceeding state value limits
- Gifts and other items intended primarily for personal use
- Services for individual benefit or of a personal, individual nature
- Items of direct benefit to non-students (including employees)
- Salaries or instructional costs for faculty, including payments for advising
- Employee recognition and meals (including student employees)
- Sales tax
- Events that are not open to all KSU students
- Expenditures that violate applicable law, Board of Regents' policy, and KSU policies and procedures.

<u>SABAC and VPSA Deadlines:</u>

- SABAC will review all timely submitted Annual Budget Requests and will provide an advisory opinion to the VPSA in sufficient time for the VPSA to issue all RSO Annual Budgets by the second Friday in May of the academic year prior to when the funds are sought.
- SABAC will consider at each of its regularly-scheduled meetings all Supplemental Funding Requests that were submitted at least one month prior to the meeting and will provide an advisory opinion to the VPSA in sufficient time for the VPSA to issue Supplemental Funding Decisions within two weeks after the respective SABAC meeting.

Requesting Written Decisions on RSOs' Approved Budgets

After the budgeting process is complete, if any RSO's approved budget is less than the total amount sought in its requested budget, the RSO can request a written decision setting forth the basis for the VPSA's decision to award the RSO the reduced amount within ten business days after the RSO receives its approved budget. Within 20 business days of receiving such a request, the VPSA will provide the RSO with a written decision detailing the reasons that its approved budget was less than the total amount requested.

Funding Appeal Process

In the event that an RSO's approved Annual Budget or Supplemental Funding Request is less than the total amount that the RSO requested, the RSO may appeal the VPSA's written decision setting forth the basis for the award of the reduced amount. An RSO may also appeal the VPSA's determination if the VPSA failed to issue a timely written decision after the RSO properly requested one. All appeals will be heard by the President or his or her designee.

Appeals must be in writing and must be submitted to the President or designee within ten business days after the RSO receives the VPSA's written decision or, if the VPSA failed to issue a timely written decision after the RSO properly requested one, within ten business days after the time for the VPSA to issue the decision has expired.

An RSO's appeal must be based on one of the following grounds:

- SABAC's recommended disapproval of the Annual Budget Request, Supplemental Funding Request, or its determination of any allocation for an item therein was arbitrary or capricious and such recommendation was not remedied by the VPSA's actions;
- The VPSA's disapproval of the Annual Budget Request, Supplemental Funding Request, or his or her determination of any allocation for an item therein was arbitrary or capricious;
- SABAC engaged in viewpoint discrimination or another legal violation, which was not remedied by the VPSA's actions;
- The VPSA engaged in viewpoint discrimination or another legal violation; or,

- The VPSA or SABAC failed to follow the Funding Request Processes and Procedures outlined above.

Within 20 business days of submitting the appeal, the President or his or her designee will provide the RSO with a written decision granting or denying the appeal and detailing the reasons for that determination. If the President or his or her designee grants the appeal and approves a new final budget, the new budget will be included in the written decision.

Funding Transparency

Beginning with the 2018–19 academic year, SABAC will use the following procedures for all meetings at which it considers RSO funding requests: The minutes of SABAC meetings that consider funding requests from RSOs will include the amount each RSO originally requested, the purpose for which the RSO requested those funds, how much of each request SABAC recommended be approved by the VPSA, and SABAC's reasons for recommending rejecting or reducing a request. SABAC will make the minutes of its meetings available on its website for at least three years. In the event that the VPSA makes a determination different from SABAC's recommendation, the VPSA will provide similar documentation and will likewise make this documentation available on SABAC's website for at least three years.

E. Restarting an Inactive RSO

RSOs that do not annually renew their registration will be marked as inactive. RSOs that have been inactive for less than two years need only renew the RSO Application. RSOs that have been inactive for two academic calendar years or more must complete an initial RSO Registration; those RSOs are eligible for first-year funding as set forth above.

Students interested in restarting an inactive RSO should contact KSU's Department of Student Activities at rsosupport@kennesaw.edu to begin the process and determine if there are any past documents from the RSO to which KSU's Department of Student Activities has access. Any old documents will be provided for reference purposes only; the organization may create new

governing documents if so desired. Once the registration process outlined above is completed, the RSO's information will be uploaded into the previously existing Owl Life page of the RSO, rather than a new Owl Life page being created.

F. Denial or Revocation of Registration as an RSO

KSU will refuse to register an RSO (either upon the RSO's initial registration or the renewal registration) or deny or revoke a student organization's RSO designation at any time if KSU determines that the student organization:

- Seeks to accomplish its objectives, goals, purposes, or activities through the use or promotion of violence;
- Engages in activities that materially or substantially interfere with the discipline and normal activities of KSU or with the rights of others, including activities that present a danger to property, individuals, or the orderly functioning of the University;
- Seeks personal gain;
- Falsifies or forges an official University record or document;
- Refuses to comply with federal or state laws, Board of Regents' policy, and KSU policies and procedures, including KSU's Code of Conduct, or states an intention to do so;
- Fails to provide all necessary registration information to KSU; or,
- Fails to meet financial obligations to the University.

If KSU denies or revokes an RSO's registration or designation, the student organization may appeal the decision in writing to KSU's Assistant Dean for Student Life within five business days of notification of the decision, unless the denial or revocation was initiated under KSU's Code of Conduct, in which case appeals are handled in accordance with KSU's Code of Conduct. Appeals of decisions by the Assistant Dean of Students may be further appealed to the Dean of Students in writing via email to deanofstudents@kennesaw.edu within five business days of the notification of the decision of the Assistant Dean. The decision of the Dean of Students is final and no further appeal is available.