



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA  
STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

**RSO HANDBOOK**



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Greetings,

It is our honor and privilege to support, guide, and empower the myriad of student organizations that add so much vitality and diversity to our campus community.

Our university is a tapestry of talents, interests, and cultures, and it is through your engagement and leadership within student organizations that this tapestry continues to grow richer and more colorful. Whether you are already leading an organization, actively participating in one, or contemplating starting a new group, we want you to know that our office is here to provide the resources, support, and guidance you need to succeed and make the most of your collegiate experience.

Student Involvement at South is more than just a resource; we are a community. Stay connected with us through our social media channels, and don't hesitate to reach out via email or stop by our office. Your feedback, ideas, and participation are what shape the future of student involvement on our campus.

In closing, we want to express our sincere gratitude for your contributions to making the University of South Alabama (USA) a dynamic and welcoming community. Your energy, creativity, and leadership are what make this university truly special. Remember, we are here to support you every step of the way.

J's Up,

Office of Student Involvement

[studentinvolvement@southalabama.edu](mailto:studentinvolvement@southalabama.edu)



## I. Relationship Statement

The relationship between USA and the student organization community is one of mutual respect, cooperation, understanding, and trust. The university and organizational membership have responsibilities and expectations to strengthen and develop the community.

The Office of Student Involvement supports student organizations by:

- Providing staff, training, programming, and advisement necessary for development.
- Advocating for student organizations and serving as a liaison between internal and external constituencies.
- Promoting opportunities for participation in academic, recreational, social, and other group events.
- Allowing for university privileges such as access to campus facilities, equipment, and services (mass marketing, catering, printing, and technology) and the usage of the University of South Alabama name and logo according to university policy.
- Continuing its commitment to foster the growth of student organizations and the right of assembly.
- Providing a common calendar with all organization activities listed and sending out monthly newsletters to the presidents of all student organizations.

Student organizations are expected to:

- Maintain a minimal membership roster of ten (10) actively enrolled students at the University of South Alabama.
- Re-register the student organization at the beginning of the academic year with the Office of Student Involvement.
- Comply with the Code of Student Conduct and any policies or expectations that govern the University of South Alabama and each organization as outlined within *The Lowdown*.
- Practice risk management to minimize liability to individuals, property, and maintain accountability for actions of the organizations.
- Engaging in an active relationship with their faculty/staff advisor.
- Submit requested and/or required paperwork or documentation in a timely manner.



- Respect the rights of the university and Mobile community.

Based on these expectations, organizations that do not demonstrate a commitment to these obligations may jeopardize their recognition status. The relationship between USA and each student organization requires honest communication bound by a spirit of goodwill.



## II. Recognition

Student organizations at the university exist as an integral part of the total educational experience. Their general purpose is to contribute to the development and welfare of the students and to benefit the entire community. Student organizations are established, managed, governed by students and are subject to the regulations of the university. Student organization responsibilities include adherence to the organization's announced purpose and sound business management. Basic democratic operational procedures are expected of all student organizations and are subject to the constitution that governs the organization.

Membership in University of South Alabama student organizations is open to all regularly enrolled students. Accordingly, no person may be excluded from membership or leadership in a registered student organization due to race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender (unless exempt under Title IX), sexual orientation, disability or veteran status; provided, however, that registered student organizations may limit their membership to students who, upon individual inquiry, affirm that they support the organization's religious, political, or other legally protected views consistent with the First Amendment.

Student organizations must have a faculty/staff advisor and be approved by the university's Student Organization Committee (SOC) before they can function as recognized organizations of the university. The Office of Student Involvement and the organization advisor are available to advise and assist organizations, but the final responsibility for performance rests with the members themselves.

The Office of Student Involvement is responsible for the overall facilitation of student organization policy and registration.

Please feel free to contact us at:

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Student Center- Suite 101

Mobile, AL 36688

251-460-7003

[studentinvolvement@southalabama.edu](mailto:studentinvolvement@southalabama.edu)



### III. Organizational Classifications

Every student organization will be classified into one of nine classifications that most closely relates to their mission and purpose. Student organizations may have multiple secondary classifications based on the mission and purpose of the organization. The following definitions will be used in determining classification(s) by the Student Organization Committee:

#### 1. Academic Society

An academic organization will be classified as a student organization whose primary mission is to assist students with their academic and professional endeavors based on the member's academic major, department, or college. The organization's meetings, events, programs, and activities are representative of academic focus and development.

#### 2. Civic Society

A civic student organization is a group that engages in activities and initiatives aimed at promoting social responsibility, community engagement, and positive change within their school, local community, or society at large. These organizations often focus on addressing issues such as social justice, environmental sustainability, human rights, and civic/political engagement through various projects, events, and advocacy efforts.

#### 3. Club Sport

A club sport is an organization that provides opportunities for students to participate in competitive, recreational, or instructional athletic activities. Unlike varsity sports, which are governed by national collegiate athletic associations and offer athletic scholarships, club sports operate with less formal structures, are partially student-funded, and cater to a broader range of skill levels.

#### 4. Cultural Society

An organization based on culture or nationality is a group formed that focuses on celebrating, promoting, and educating others about the diverse cultures, traditions, and identities that these students represent. These organizations aim to provide supportive communities for students from various backgrounds and nationalities.



## 5. Departmental

A departmental organization will be classified as a student organization whose primary mission is to assist offices, departments, and divisions funded by the university. The organization's meetings, events, programs, and activities are representative of supporting the mission and events of the university unit they are affiliated with.

## 6. Faith & Religious

A faith and religious organization is a group that gathers students together based on shared religious beliefs or interests in exploring faith-related topics. These organizations aim to provide spiritual support, foster religious education, and create a community for prayer, worship, and discussion about faith and theology. They often organize activities such as services, study groups, charitable work, and interfaith dialogues to promote understanding and respect among different religious traditions.

## 7. Fraternity & Sorority Life

Fraternity & Sorority Life refers to the system of social fraternities and sororities, often characterized by a set of Greek letters. In order to be classified as a "FSL" organization at South Alabama, the Chapter/Colony must belong to a national organization recognized by the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC).

## 8. Honor Society

An honor society is an organization that recognizes and celebrates students who achieve excellence in academic performance, leadership, character, and in some cases specific areas of study or co-curricular activities. Membership is often based on stringent criteria such as grade point averages, class rank, or other notable achievements and it provides opportunities for personal growth, networking, scholarships, and career advancement.

## 9. Special Interest

A special interest organization is a group formed around non-academic passions, shared hobbies, or specific interests. These organizations provide students with opportunities to engage in activities they are passionate about, connect with peers who have similar interests, and develop skills related to their hobbies. Ranging from creative arts and technology to leisure activities like gaming or film, these clubs offer a wide array of experiences.





## IV. New Organizations

USA is committed to the development of student organizations, including organizational leaders and members. The addition of new student organizations enhances the campus community and provides more opportunities for students to become involved and participate in activities that support their interests. The process for becoming a new student organization is consistent among all organizations. In order to establish such an organization, students are permitted a grace period in which they have access to facilities and services to recruit members and secure an advisor.

When the organization has met the criteria for recognition they must turn in required paperwork and meet with the Student Organization Committee as needed to become formally recognized.

Required documents include:

- A. Application Packet
- B. Mission and Purpose Statement
- C. Constitution & Bylaws
- D. Membership Roster with officer board included
- E. Organization logo or coat of arms
- F. Completed Advisor Agreement Form

### **Student Organization Committee**

The Student Organization Committee (SOC) is composed of faculty, staff, and students who meet as needed to review the organization's constitution to ensure compliance with requirements and format. This open meeting is also a time for the student organization representatives to ask additional questions before recognition is formalized. The SOC will be chaired by the Associate Director of Student Organizations & Leadership Development as a non-voting member with representatives from the Student Government Association, Risk Management, Campus Recreation, Student Center, and Faculty Senate serving on the committee.

To be recognized as an active organization in good standing with the university, all student organizations must:

- A. Demonstrate that the group does not duplicate an existing organization.
- B. Maintain a membership roster with a minimum of ten (10) student members who are enrolled at the university. The only exception to this policy is for Honor

Societies. Up to 10% of the membership may include honorary members such as faculty, staff, and community members.

- C. Have at least one active faculty or full-time staff advisor.
- D. Submit the following information to the Office of Student Involvement by the designated deadline:
  - Annual Registration/Application
  - Advisor Agreement Form
  - Constitution and Bylaws (see requirements on page 154)
  - Provide organizational logo, crest, or coat of arms.
- E. Consult with the Office of Student Involvement and follow the procedures outlined to become formally recognized.

## Appeals

If the application from a student interest group is not approved by the Student Organization Committee to become a Registered Student Organization, the student interest group may appeal the decision for reconsideration through the following steps. An appeal can only be made on one or more of the following grounds:

1. **Violation of Procedural Rights:** If the student interest group believes that the SOC did not follow the established policy and procedures in considering their application.
2. **Possible Biases of the SOC:** If there is a belief that the decision was influenced by biases or conflicts of interest within the SOC.
3. **Additional Information:** If new information has come to light that was not available at the time of the SOC meeting and could potentially alter their decision.

### Appeal Submission Process:

1. **Written Appeal:** The student interest group must submit a written appeal within five (5) business days of receiving the SOC decision. The appeal must be addressed to the Attorney General ([sga.attorneygeneral@southalabama.edu](mailto:sga.attorneygeneral@southalabama.edu)) of the Student Government Association.
2. **Contents of the Appeal:** The written appeal must include:
  - The name of the student interest group.
  - The date of the SOC decision.
  - A detailed explanation of the grounds for the appeal (violation of procedural rights, possible biases, or additional information).
  - Any supporting documents or evidence relevant to the appeal.
  - Contact information for the primary representative of the student interest group.



### **Review Process:**

1. **Submission to Student Government Association:** The Attorney General of the SGA will review the appeal to ensure it meets the criteria outlined above.
2. **Referral to the Director of Student Involvement:** If the appeal is validated by the SGA Attorney General, it will be forwarded to the Director of Student Involvement for final review and decision.

### **Final Decision:**

1. **Director's Review:** The Director of Student Involvement will thoroughly review the appeal, including any new evidence, claims of procedural violations, or biases. The Director of Student Involvement may request a meeting with the interest group to discuss the request for an appeal.
2. **Outcome:** The Director of Student Involvement will make the final decision regarding the appeal. The decision may:
  - a. Uphold the original decision of the SOC.
  - b. Overturn the SOC decision and approve the application for RSO status.
  - c. Remand the application back to the SOC for reconsideration with specific instructions.
3. **Notification:** The student interest group will be notified in writing of the final decision made by the Director of Student Involvement. This decision is final and cannot be appealed further.

## V. Existing Organizations

- A. All registered student organizations are required to re-register with the Office of Student Involvement at the beginning of each academic year.
  - a. In the fall of an even numbered year (2024, 2026, 2028, etc.), each organization must submit a full re-registration packet to the Office of Student Involvement for approval.
    - i. The full re-registration packet must include the following:
      - 1. Complete description of the organization’s mission and purpose.
      - 2. Organization’s Constitution and Bylaws
        - a. The Constitution and Bylaws must meet the standards of the University of South Alabama as determined by this Handbook and The Lowdown.
      - 3. Complete roster with officers and faculty/staff advisor(s).
      - 4. Approved logo, crest, coat of arms, etc.
  - b. In the fall of an odd numbered year (2025, 2027, 2029, etc.), each organization must submit a basic re-registration packet.
    - i. The basic re-registration packet must include the following:
      - 1. Complete membership roster with officers and faculty/staff advisor
      - 2. Organization’s Constitution and Bylaws if changes were made during the previous academic year.
      - 3. Complete description of the organization’s mission and purpose if changed during the previous academic year.
- B. All registered student organizations must maintain the standards set within the relationship statement between the university and student organizations. This includes but is not limited to maintaining at least ten (10) active members, at least one faculty/staff advisor, and registration with the Office of Student Involvement.
- C. If a student organization does not re-register with the Office of Student Involvement by the last day of class of the fall semester, the organization will be considered “inactive”.
- D. If an organization remains inactive for a total of four (4) consecutive academic semesters, the Office of Student Involvement may declare the organization as dissolved.
  - a. The Office of Student Involvement will make every effort to connect students who are interested in reactivating the organization before being declared dissolved.
  - b. If an organization is declared dissolved, the “Dissolution Clause” of the organization’s Constitution will be enacted by the Office of Student Involvement.

## VI. Advisor Roles and Responsibilities

The Advisor of an organization serves as a point of contact that assists with consultation, leadership development, financial direction, and continuity of the organization. Each academic year, the advisor must submit an Advisor Agreement Form to remain active as the advisor and complete duties as a Campus Security Authority as prescribed by the Clery Act. The advisor roles may vary depending on the nature of the organization; however all share these basic characteristics.

### A. Consultation

- Attend regular meetings as often as possible.
- Meet with officers to discuss goals, activities, and financial status.
- Interpret university policy, guidelines, and procedures.
- Be familiar with the organization's history and Constitution and bylaws and assist with interpretation as needed.
- Utilize relationships and resources within the university to help the organization succeed.
- Attend events or meetings as directed by the university.

### B. Leadership Development

- Encourage communication within the organization and among its officers and members.
- Assist members to strengthen planning and organizational skills.
- Promote a positive environment and encourage a balance between academics and the organization.

### C. Financial Direction

- Work with the Treasurer to monitor the organization's budget.
- Assist with implementation of account reconciliation and balancing procedures.
- Refer to section VIII for further guidelines.

### D. Continuity

- Familiarize new officers with duties, responsibilities, protocols, and history to keep the organization on track.
- Help the organization set short and long term goals and encourage generation of new ideas.
- Ensure that the organization annually files re-registration paperwork with the Office of Student Involvement.
- Advise group to file change of officers information immediately with the Office of Student Involvement.



## VII. Content of RSOs Constitution

The process of writing a constitution will serve to clarify your purpose, provide a basis for building an effective group, and set forth the basic structure of the organization. The function of a constitution is to set forth ground rules for the conduct of the business of an organization. As it constitutes a fixed reference on the permanent file of these rules, it should be so explicit in those areas which it seeks to govern as to leave no doubt as to its meaning. The Office of Student Involvement and Student Organization Committee will advise and recommend changes to the organization's constitution when appropriate. A sample constitution can be found on the Office of Student Involvement's website.

All student organizations must have a local/chapter constitution if they are affiliated with a national and/or international organization. The constitution of the national organization can not be used as the constitution of the local chapter at the University of South Alabama. In order to ensure compliance with both University of South Alabama and the National Organization's policies, special clauses or articles may be included. See the RSO sample constitution for details or contact the Office of Student Involvement.

It is strongly recommended that the constitution be framed in the following manner:

### **A. Article I - Name of organization and affiliation(s)**

This is the first article in the constitution, which should clearly state the full name of the organization and any affiliations it may have with on or off campus organizations, departments, and/or businesses. This article should also include any acronyms or shortened versions of the organization's name.

### **B. Article II - Purpose**

State the purpose, aims, and functions of the organization. What is the main purpose of the organization? What are the core values of the organization? What does the organization desire to accomplish? Through what actions will the organization achieve its goals?

### **C. Article III - Membership**

State the membership requirements and limitations here. Remember 100% of the organization's membership must be currently enrolled students at the University of South Alabama. State what constitutes a majority (50% + 1,  $\frac{2}{3}$ , etc.) of the membership for voting purposes. **The constitution must also include a non-discrimination clause that is provided by the university; this clause cannot be edited.**



## **D. Article IV - Officers**

State the titles, term of office, and how and when elected. This should also include definitions and enumerations of authority of each role. The election of officers must be free, open, democratic, and periodic. In addition, there must be a provision for filling interim vacancies of officers and how to remove individuals from office should that become necessary. Every organization must have at least the following: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Examples of their duties are as follows:

President - The chief executive officer and primary contact person for the organization with the university. They are the director/planner and chief coordinator of all activities for the organization. These two functional responsibilities expand to include communications within the organization and with the advisor, involving the membership by delegating specific tasks, and assessing the overall success of the organization. The President or appointed delegate must attend the annual SOLD event at the beginning of the academic year.

Vice President - The second most important leader of the organization. Actual duties and responsibilities will vary depending on the organization; however it is extremely important to take advantage of this person's talent and skills. If there is more than one "Vice President" then there needs to be a clear definition of which Vice President is second in command of the organization and be clearly classified as such with the university.

Secretary - Responsible for correspondence, recording minutes of meetings, and maintaining a historical record of the organization. The secretary is responsible for ensuring that the official membership roster is updated regularly with the university. This role is vital to involving the membership within the organization. It is the nature of historical records that builds pride in the traditions of the organization.

Treasurer - Responsible for the collection and wise expenditures of the organization's money. The treasurer is responsible to the entire membership to ensure that a sound budget plan is prepared for term and to provide the leadership for the budget's execution. It is important that the chief financial officer is a person of integrity who will respect the best interest of the organization at all times. The Treasurer must attend the annual SOLD event at the beginning of the academic year.

Committee Chairs & Other Officers - Additional officers/committee chairs may exist in addition to the mandatory positions. Regardless of title, each person must be organized, be able to plan, work, commit time, and know how to effectively delegate



work to others. It is important to clearly define the election and/or appointment process of additional officers or committee chairs.

### **E. Article V - Advisor**

State the provision for choosing an advisor and if there are any specific requirements, ideals, or qualifications the advisor should have. All advisors **MUST** be a member of the university faculty or a full-time staff member. Any additional individuals who are not a part of the university community and wish to volunteer with the organization must be approved by the advisor and university. This includes, but is not limited to Fraternity and Sorority Life chapter advisors, campus ministers, and club sport coaches.

### **F. Article VI - Meetings**

The constitution must provide for a minimum number of meetings semesterly for the membership. The constitution must provide suitable guarantees that the members will be given advance notice as to the time and place for conducting general meetings. This section must also provide a means for calling special meetings when the situation arises and who may call a special meeting. Beyond this, what other special requirements are there for planning or attending a meeting? What is quorum? What is defined as a majority to conduct business? (recommended to be the same as in Article III)

### **G. Article VII - Finances**

In addition to following the university rules and guidelines as set forth in section IX of this handbook, this portion of the constitution must be specific to your organization. The constitution must provide for a clear and distinct delegation of financial responsibility to stipulated officers of the organization. When dues are to be assessed, the constitution must provide for the manner of assessment. All accounts, financial records and transactions must be readily available to share with the members, advisor(s) executive board, and university. The constitution must include in the financial transparency statement, that all accounts, financial statements/records and transactions of the organization are subject to audit or review by the University of South Alabama at its discretion.

### **H. Article VIII - Amendments and Bylaws**

Once the constitution has been written and agreed upon by the founding or re-establishing members, it will be the foundation and basis for all business decisions. Changes to the constitution represent a change in the direction, operation and function of the organization. Amending this document should be harder to amend than the bylaws





and should require a supermajority vote. Should there be any changes to the constitution, **the new constitution must be submitted to the Office of Student Involvement immediately.** Such amendments are subject to review and re-approval by the Student Organization Committee.

The Office of Student Involvement and the Associate Director of Student Organizations and Leadership Development have RSO constitution guides available to assist in the creation of a new constitution. The constitution guide is also available through the Office of Student Involvement website.



## IX. Organizational Finances

Sound fiscal management procedures must be in place for all student organizations. These procedures must be provided for within the organization's constitution. With the assistance of the advisor, student organization leaders should strive to conduct all financial business of the organization in a responsible and ethical manner. All accounts are subject to audit and review by the University of South Alabama. According to the SGA Constitution and Code-of-Laws, student organizations must be active for **THREE CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS** in order to be eligible for Appropriations. The SGA may confirm this status with the Office of Student Involvement.

### **On-Campus Accounts**

Every student organization may open an on-campus account for managing funds. Please visit the Office of Student Involvement or Office of Student Affairs for more information to open an on-campus account. Advantages to using an on-campus account include;

- Support from university staff in regulating the use of funds.
- Limiting the risk of misuse.
- No annual fees or other materials cost.
- Easy to maintain when organizational leadership changes.
- Tax exempt status.

### **Off-Campus Accounts**

Every student organization has the right to open an off-campus account at the bank, credit union, or financial institution of their choosing. The Office of Student Involvement would recommend that the student organization either use Hancock Whitney Bank (the official bank of the University of South Alabama) or the USA Federal Credit Union (an affiliate of the University of South Alabama). In the event that a student organization elects to open an off-campus account, the following requirements apply:

- The account must have at least two signatories, one of which must be the organization advisor.
- The account name cannot include "USA" or "University of South Alabama".
- Use of the University's TAX ID number is strictly prohibited.
- Remove outgoing and add incoming signatories promptly.
- Use of an ATM/credit card is not recommended without strict bylaws to govern usage.
- Bank statements should be sent to and received at either the advisor's on-campus office or USA PO Box within the Mail Hub.



## X. SGA Funding

After student organizations have been active and recognized for three consecutive semesters, they qualify for funding from the Student Government Association (SGA). In accordance with the SGA Constitution and Code-of-Laws, funding for student organizations are classified into three categories: Appropriations, Co-Sponsorships, and Supplemental Travel Grants. Funding is approved on a first come, first serve basis.

**What are Appropriations?** When SGA drafts its budget each semester, the Treasurer designates a portion to be distributed to student organizations. The SGA Appropriations Committee and Comptroller are responsible for approving or denying requests based on university rules and regulations. When you apply for Appropriations, you are applying to be *reimbursed* for your organization's expenses.

**Who can receive funds?** All registered student organizations are eligible to receive funds from SGA. If you don't know if your organization is registered with the university, contact [studentinvolvement@southalabama.edu](mailto:studentinvolvement@southalabama.edu)

### **What can I receive funding for? How much?**

<b>Appropriations</b>	Appropriations typically cover costs such as club t-shirts and other items associated with club operations.	Each organization is eligible for \$3000 per year, starting with summer and ending with spring.
<b>Supplemental Travel Grants</b>	Travel Grants can cover conference registration fees, airfare, gas or mileage, Uber/Lyft, and meals per the <a href="#">University's Travel Policy</a> .	Each organization is eligible for \$2500 per year, starting with summer and ending with spring.
<b>Co-Sponsorships</b>	SGA will co-sponsor your event as long as it is open to the entire student body and meets the full list of requirements found in <i>The Lowdown</i> .	You can receive up to 65% of the event's total cost.

## **Appropriations Rules**

Here are a few of the rules and regulations all students must adhere to when requesting Appropriations:

- An organization can request funds for uniforms, which are defined as torso or leg garments.
- SGA cannot pay for equipment, such as media equipment, audio equipment, digital cameras, computers, printers, videos, books, hardware, tools, recreational equipment, individual sports safety equipment, or intramural equipment.
  - The only exception to this rule is if the equipment is not reasonably available on campus and that is vital for the organization to function.
- SGA cannot pay for an organization's fees, such as, but not limited to, website fees, chapter fees, membership fees, and intramural fees.
- SGA cannot pay for food or drink requests.
- All purchases must be accompanied by receipts.

## **Supplemental Travel Grants**

Here are a few of the rules and regulations all students must adhere to when requesting Supplemental Travel Grants:

- SGA cannot provide funding to an organization unless the organization can demonstrate with documentation the educational/academic benefit of the event and the necessity of their attendance.
- SGA can reimburse for gas or mileage for one vehicle for every four students, and the estimated mileage must be calculated using the main campus as the starting point.
- All purchases must be accompanied by receipts.

## **Co-Sponsorships**

Here are a few of the rules and regulations all students must adhere to when requesting Co-Sponsorships:

- Organizations are allowed to request financial support for food and drink.
- The organization must entail additional support through funding, advertising, physical presence at the event, and/or by any other means deemed appropriate.
- The organization must provide the Appropriations Committee with the following:
  - Information about the project's full scope.



- Information about additional sponsors, their support, or additional funding methods.
- A full copy of all receipts for services, materials, or items used in the project, not just receipts that may be reimbursed by SGA.
- An after-event report of the co-sponsorship goals, accomplishments, and results to be presented to the Appropriations Committee.
- Co-Sponsorships whose purpose may be deemed philanthropic may charge a maximum of \$10.00 per student.

### **Rules and Regulations**

All Rules and Regulations regarding Appropriations can be found in *The Lowdown*. Digital copies of *The Lowdown* can be found on the university's website by typing "*The Lowdown*" in the search bar.

## How Appropriations Works

Appropriations is a 4 step process. Please review the following timeline:

### Timeline

(You) Submit a Budget Request	(SGA) Approves Your Budget Request	(You) Submit a Purchase Request	(SGA) Provides Reimbursement
<p>A budget request is a basic outline of what your organization anticipates to spend. SGA recommends submitting a budget request before you spend any money.</p>	<p>The Appropriations Committee will review your budget request to ensure all rules and regulations are being followed. The Committee will approve/deny your request within a couple weeks.</p>	<p>After your budget request is approved, you can spend your money.</p> <p>Make sure to provide all your receipts and the SGA reimbursement form when you submit your purchase request.</p>	<p>The SGA Treasurer will review your purchase request and work to provide your reimbursement.</p> <p>The Treasurer will approve/deny your purchase request within a couple weeks.</p>

### **Budget Request** How to submit a budget request:

Login to InvolveSouth > click the "three horizontal lines" icon in the top left of the home screen > click on the settings icon next to your organization's logo (not SGA) > click "finance" > click "create request" in the top right of the screen > select "create budget request" > select Appropriations, Travel Grant, or Co-Sponsorship. From here, you will be asked to provide some information about your request, then you should be able to submit the request.

### **Purchase Request** How to submit a purchase request:



Login to InvolveSouth > click the "three horizontal lines" icon in the top left of the home screen > click on the settings icon next to your organization's logo (not SGA) > click "finance" > click "create request" in the top right of the screen > select "create purchase request" > select Appropriations, Travel Grants, or Co-Sponsorships. From here, you will be asked to provide some information about your request, all relevant receipts, and the SGA Reimbursement Form.

### **SGA Reimbursement Form**

The SGA Reimbursement Form can be found on the university's website, under the Appropriations tab of the SGA page. Here are a few things to note when filling out the SGA Reimbursement Form:

- Provide the J Number of the student or organization that will be reimbursed.
  - If the organization spends money and wants to be reimbursed, you must provide the J Number for the organization. If you don't know your organization's J Number, please email SGA Assistant Director Heather Sprinkle at [hsprinkle@southalabama.edu](mailto:hsprinkle@southalabama.edu).
- When selecting an account, please reach out to your advisor. Your advisor should know whether to use a FOAPAL account or a different off-campus account.
- Make sure your receipts and SGA Reimbursement Form are attached to the same document.
- InvolveSouth will only let you attach one document.

## XI. Event Planning and Student Center Reservations

### **Event Planning**

Event planning is the process of meticulously coordinating and organizing all aspects of an event, from concept to execution, to ensure its success. This involves tasks such as selecting a venue, managing budgets, arranging logistics, coordinating vendors, and overseeing all details to create a seamless and memorable experience for attendees.

#### **Step 1. Determine Program Type (Repeat or First Time)**

- If this is a repeat event, review the evaluations of the last event.
- If first-time event(s) start by determining:
  - Program/artist availability
  - Venue capability/availability
  - What population does the event target (is it worth your time and money)
  - What approvals do you need
  - Labor required
  - Financial costs associated with event
  - Determine planning(do you have enough time?)
- Once you are satisfied:
  - The event is available and appropriate
  - An appropriate venue has been reserved
  - The program is financially feasible
  - You have the time to produce the event



## Step 2. Schedule the Event

Before the Event	Day of Event	After the Event
<p><u>Promotion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 weeks for small events</li> <li>• 3 to 6 weeks for medium events</li> <li>• at least 6 weeks for large events</li> <li>• CAUTION: Once you have advertised the program, do not change details frivolously.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Items Needed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule of events</li> <li>• Program file with all documentation, confirmations, checks, etc.</li> <li>• Toolbox with supplies (pens, highlighters, tape, scissors, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Evaluate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program</li> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> </ul>
<p><u>Volunteers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure enough for the number of assignments</li> <li>• Make sure you have people for clean-up</li> <li>• Create <i>NEED</i> in SouthServes</li> </ul>	<p><u>Plan Ahead</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be prepared for the unexpected</li> <li>• Have contingency plans if conditions change during the event.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Thank those who played a role</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations</li> <li>• Campus Departments</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Speakers, facilitators</li> <li>• Co-sponsors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Create a checklist of items needed for the day of the event.</b></p>	<p><b>Enjoy!</b></p>	<p><b>Suggest improvements for next time</b></p>

### Reservation of On-Campus Spacing

Reserving space on campus is one of the many privileges and benefits of being a recognized student organization. Below is a list of basic rules and policies for making reservations within the Student Center and on campus:

- All events that fall within regular building hours are free of charge.
- Room capacities must be followed.
- Reservations can be made online with the Event Management System (EMS). Reservations made via email will not be processed.
- Reservation requests must be received at least four business days in advance, at minimum. Requests made less than four business days in advance will not be processed.
- Events that fall outside of regular building hours will be assessed a \$25/hour fee. These events must be received two weeks in advance, at minimum.
- Need help with the online reservation system? Email [scs@southalabama.edu](mailto:scs@southalabama.edu) for more information.



- Student Organizations must be registered with the Office of Student Involvement in order to use the facility free of charge.
- Additional charges may apply for outsourced items such as, dance floor, lighting, etc.
- Late night events may require security. Student organizations will be responsible for paying additional costs. Weekend or late night events require 2 weeks notice.
- Any damages that occur during the event will be charged to the student organization.
- If attendees that are not affiliated with the university are present at your event, the student organization will be required to furnish the university with specific provisions of insurance coverage for: general and personal liability, property insurance or bond, workers compensation, and indemnification of the university from all lien bills. A quote can be obtained from <http://tulip.ajgrms.com>.



## XII. University Resources

### **University Mass Email (Daily Digest)**

University of South Alabama faculty, staff, and students may use the university-wide mass email system to communicate official university business with the campus community. The Office of Marketing and Communications reviews and distributes all mass emails submitted during regular business hours.

University Mass Email messages are distributed Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday through the Daily Digest. Employees and students who prefer to receive individual email messages which will arrive at varying times of the day may change their settings at <https://www.southalabama.edu/services/jagnet/digest.html>. Opting out of emails altogether is not allowed. Emails addressing issues of safety and other high priority items will still be sent individually regardless of your Daily Digest setting.

Emails to the Mass Email system generally will appear in the Daily Digest the following morning if received by 3 p.m., with the exception of Monday (messages must be received by Friday at 3pm). There is no Daily Digest on Wednesdays. Messages received Tuesday and Wednesday will appear in Thursday's Daily Digest.

### **Important Daily Digest Topics:**

- Choose the group/recipients for your particular message carefully.
- Type a brief, meaningful subject in the block provided. (Text only)
- Type your message in the block provided exactly as you want it to appear.
- There is a two message limit for all programs and events.
- Ensure that all pertinent information is included in your message: who, what, where, when (specific date, not "today," "tomorrow," or "yesterday"), email, etc.
- Messages may not be used to promote non-USA affiliated events or non-Registered Student Organizations.
- Emails that include surveys must first be sent for review to:  
<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/institutionaleffectiveness/survey-policy.html>.  
You will be notified when a survey has been approved. Approvals must be emailed to [marcomm@southalabama.edu](mailto:marcomm@southalabama.edu) prior to message submission.
- Please include all information in the body of the email, or a link (URL) to a University of South Alabama web page only. If you need assistance with a Web page, contact Web Services at (251) 460-6161. In general, links to external sites are not allowed.



## **Rules for Posting On-Campus Flyers**

This policy applies to materials hung or affixed to university buildings or bulletin boards. It applies to the entire campus except when superseded by written policies of Housing, the Athletic Department, and the Student Center. Individuals authorized by the university to do so may remove materials posted that are not in accordance with this policy. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Director of the Student Center.

### **A. Reservation Process**

Reservations for all flyers, posters, and banners (with the above exceptions) should be made in the Student Center office located on the first floor. Groups or departments that have their own bulletin board do not need to make reservations for postings on their own board. All reserved flyers, posters, and banners must bear the stamped reservation date of the Student Center office except those utilized in spaces designated for a specific organization or department.

### **B. Criteria**

Posters that announce meetings, programs, and special events sponsored by registered student organizations or academic departments will be permitted in all university buildings. All material must include: the name of the sponsoring group, individual or department and, if necessary, an English translation accompanying the material. Materials may not contain obscene language, drawings, or illustrations. Materials may not make any reference in print or graphics to alcohol. For fundraisers, all beneficiaries of the fundraising effort must be specified in the promotional material.

### **C. Guidelines**

Flyers: any paper not exceeding the size 8.5 by 11 inches. Poster: any paper not exceeding the size 24 x 17 inches.

- All flyers/posters must be approved and stamped by the Student Center office.
- Up to 50 flyers/posters allowed for USA student organizations.
- Up to 15 flyers/posters allowed for individuals or non-USA groups.
- Not more than 1 flyer/poster per bulletin board.
- Flyers and posters may be posted in the following building and locations:
  - Administration bldg: Bulletin board in basement. No flyers/posters on the first floor.
  - Classroom bldgs: Approved bulletin boards.
  - MCOB: Approved bulletin boards.
  - HPELS: Approved bulletin boards.
  - College of Medicine: Student lounge bulletin board.
  - Library: Bulletin board in front lobby.



- Life Sciences: Approved boards on each floor.
- Humanities: In hallway joining two wings.
- USA Mail Hub: Approved bulletin boards.
- Shelby Hall: Approved bulletin boards.
- Student Recreation Center: Must be approved by the Director of Campus Recreation.
- Student Center: Approved bulletin boards.
- Student Center Mall: Between two front doors.
- No flyers/posters are allowed on painted surfaces, outside of any building, doors, windows, or trees.
- All sheet signs must be approved by the Student Government Association.
- NO flyers/posters are permitted on vehicles.

The Student Center staff will remove posters on the last day of each month. All groups are encouraged to remove their own materials in a timely fashion and to remove other dated material when posting their own.

Multi-date events may be posted for an entire semester, however, such posters will be taken down at the conclusion of each semester. Exceptions to time limitations may be made for posters promoting on-going programs that are hosted on campus.

No posters are allowed on painted surfaces, the outside of any building, doors, glass, or trees. Exceptions may be made for the location of flyers within a building if the information pertains specifically to use of that building (e.g., No Smoking, Hours, etc.).

Failure to comply with the above rules may result in the suspension of poster privileges for offending organization(s) and/or individuals.

#### **D. Special Rules for Posting Banners in the Student Center**

These rules for posting in the Student Center apply to registered student organizations, academic, and administrative departments. Organizations and departments wishing to hang banners must reserve a location with the Director of the Student Center located on the first floor.

#### **E. Sheet Signs**

You must be given permission by SGA to put up a sheet sign. Sheet signs may be hung outdoors only and can only be utilized to announce upcoming events of approved and registered USA



student organizations, academic departments, and by SGA election candidates for campaign purposes. Sheet signs advertising an event may be hung seven days prior to the specified event and must be removed within three days following the event. All other sheet signs may be posted for a maximum of 30 days. Additional rules may apply, check with the SGA for full policies.

#### **F. Chalking**

Chalking is allowed only on natural gray concrete sidewalks and streets that are subject to being washed by the rain, and the chalk used must be washable. No chalking can occur on sidewalks or building entrances that are covered in any way, nor on any type of brick or concrete pavers. Chalking is not allowed on walls, doors, windows, trees, or any vertical surfaces. Organizations or persons who violate this policy may be charged for time and materials to remove the chalk.

#### **USA Catering (Aramark)**

There isn't a better way to celebrate than to enjoy a fresh meal full of flavor. We've made it easy to coordinate delicious catering for any occasion on campus. All you have to do is fill out our online form, give us a call, or send us an email to arrange for our freshly prepared cuisine to be delivered straight to your event.

USA Catering (Aramark) maintains the exclusive contract for food and beverage service for all on campus events. Although food service waivers are available by exception, we encourage your use of these services as they are affordable, convenient, and enjoyable.

All RSOs also receive a special discount rate for their catered events on campus. Student organizations will need to contact the USA Catering Office to confirm their status to receive their discount and all student organization discounted catering is pick-up only.

USA Catering can be contacted at 251-460-7948, [catering@southalabama.edu](mailto:catering@southalabama.edu), or at the Mitchell Center Monday-Friday 8am-5pm.

#### **Food Waivers**

All university departments, offices, and student organizations must complete a food waiver form if they wish to have food/drinks at an event that is not catered by USA Catering. This includes bake sales, socials, award banquets, and any event where food/drinks will be present. Food waivers must be submitted at least 14 days prior to the event to the Office of Student Affairs. The food waiver must include:

- Date and location of event.
- Student organization name and contact information.
- Where the food/drinks will be coming from.

- What food items will be provided: Must be itemized with cost of individual items.
- Special information that Student Affairs may need to know.

Food waivers are located on the Office of Student Affairs website or by scanning the QR Code below.



## **USA Mail Hub**

All registered student organizations may set up a PO Box at the USA Mail Hub located on the first floor of the Student Center (SC 169). The USA Mail Hub has their own rules and regulations for student organizations to establish their PO Box and who may access it throughout the academic year. Please see the following standards as defined by the USA Mail Hub.

- PO Box rental is \$50 per year and is active for twelve months from the activation date. The USA Mail Hub only accepts cash or credit card payments.
- Only one (1) student from the student organization will have access to the organization's PO Box and they must be the individual to open the mailbox. It is recommended that the student be the organization President or Secretary.
- The student organization will be held to the same standard of USA students with USA Mail Hub policy and procedures.

The USA Mail Hub may be reached at 251-414-8191 or by email at [mailhub@southalabama.edu](mailto:mailhub@southalabama.edu)



### **XIII. Solicitation Policy**

The university regulates the use of its facilities for solicitation of money by students, student organizations, employees, departments, other affiliates, and visitors. Solicitation by placing flyers on vehicles by USA or non-USA groups or individuals is strictly prohibited. Door-to-door solicitation is not allowed.

#### **USA-Affiliated Groups**

University of South Alabama student organizations, departments, or other affiliates of the university are permitted to engage in solicitation activities such as fundraisers on campus. Use of space for the selling of goods and/or services that is in close proximity to and in direct competition with exclusive university vendors such as the University Bookstore, Dining Services, Housing, Vending, or any other entities that have an exclusive contract with USA is prohibited.

Each event must follow the policies, rules, and regulations of the university and the laws of the State of Alabama or other governing body. Solicitation privileges may be revoked for violation of policies, rules, and/or regulations or for conduct that may be characterized as unlawful harassment or is otherwise in violation of university policy or applicable laws, rules, or regulations.

#### **Solicitation in the Student Center**

The USA Student Center requires any organization requesting space for solicitation in the Student Center to contact Student Center Services (460-6077) to make a reservation. Designated spaces are limited and restricted to the use of that space only. All organizations using designated solicitation space must adhere to all reservation policies of the Student Center.

#### **Non-USA Groups**

Non-university groups, individuals, or businesses are not permitted to solicit or distribute business-related materials in university buildings or on the grounds except at designated places during designated times. Please contact the Student Center at 460-6077 for more information about designated times. Any business, company, or service attempting to recruit for student employment must obtain approval from USA Career Services (460-6188) to reserve vendor space.





## XIV. Organizational Conduct

### **Organizational Prohibited Conduct**

Inherent in university recognition of student organizations is the obligation of each organization to conduct activities in accordance with university rules and policies and with applicable laws. Registered student organizations are required to comply with the written rules and policies of the university.

It is the responsibility of the officers of each organization to ensure that the organization complies with the Code of Student Conduct and to actively oppose and prevent any planned organizational activity that may violate the Code. It is also the obligation of the officers to advise and counsel individual members of their organization whose conduct could lead to misconduct charges against the organization.

The full policy of Organizational Prohibited Conduct as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct may be found within [The Lowdown](#).

### **RECORD KEEPING**

All student disciplinary records are confidential and subject to the privacy protection granted by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). FERPA gives certain rights to parents regarding these records. These rights are transferred to students who are enrolled in postsecondary education.

Generally, USA must have written permission from the eligible student before releasing any information from their conduct records. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to certain individuals or organizations, including but not limited to the following:

- University officials within the institution determined by the institution to have a legitimate educational interest in the information (e.g., it is necessary for that official to a) perform his/her job; b) perform a task related to the student's education; c) perform a task related to the discipline of the student; d) provide a service or benefit relating to a student or the student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement or financial aid).
- Certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions.



- Individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas, though the student must be given notice before such records are released.
- Accrediting organizations.
- Circumstances listed in Victim's Rights.

The complete written policy and procedures for compliance with FERPA are available from the Student Conduct Administrator. Student disciplinary records will be kept on file in the Office of the Dean of Students and the Student Conduct Administrator. When necessary, notices of decisions and sanctions will also be sent to University Police and the Director of Housing. Files will be kept for ten years from the student's last violation of the Code of Student Conduct. These records will then be shredded unless otherwise required by law or university policy. In cases involving suspension or expulsion or in which all sanctions have not been satisfactorily completed, files will be kept permanently.

### **Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. It reads:

"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."

--Legal Citation: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX)

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions that receive federal funding. Discrimination on the basis of sex can include sexual harassment or sexual violence, such as rape, sexual assault, sexual coercion, stalking, and domestic/intimate partner violence.

Sex discrimination includes sexual harassment and sexual violence.

A significant power differential exists between faculty and students. Therefore, faculty members are prohibited from participating in sexual and/or romantic relationships with students enrolled in their classes or with students whom they otherwise evaluate, grade, or supervise or avoid situations that would require them to evaluate, grade, or supervise students with whom they have or have had sexual and/or romantic relationships. If such a situation arises, a faculty member must



report the situation immediately to his/her immediate supervisor prior to taking any such evaluative actions.

The Title IX Office is dedicated to supporting the university's commitment to creating an environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. The Title IX Office takes all allegations of sexual misconduct seriously and will promptly respond and thoroughly investigate and resolve all complaints of sexual misconduct in accordance with the university's Sexual Misconduct Policy. We are committed to supporting all university community members by providing fair and equitable services and resources.

For questions or concerns about Title IX, please contact:

Deidra Byas, Title IX Coordinator

Athletic Annex Suite 50

6001USA South Drive

Mobile, AL 36688

(251)460-7280

[deidrabyas@southalabama.edu](mailto:deidrabyas@southalabama.edu)

To file a confidential Title IX incident report, please scan the QR code below or visit the Title IX webpage at:

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/studentaffairs/titlenine/>. The Sexual Misconduct Policy and Complaint Resolution Procedures can also be found on the Title IX webpage and in the University's Policy Library at:

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/compliance/policylibrary/policy.html?doc=4E370511-C617-4CB8-AD1A-70B1F9E4C094>.



## XV. Student Organization Awards

Each academic year, registered student organizations who have been active for at least one (1) full academic year (Fall, Spring and Summer Semesters) will be eligible to be recognized at our end of year awards celebration. The end of year celebration is the official awards and recognition ceremony for the student organizations of the University of South Alabama community. There are five categories for student organizations to apply for recognition. Each award will have its own unique requirements, documentation, and selection process.

### **Organizational Awards**

The "Organizational Awards" honor registered student organizations based on their specific classification, recognizing excellence, innovation, and impact within their particular domain or field of activity. These awards celebrate the achievements of organizations in categories such as academic, cultural, recreational, service, and special interest, highlighting their contributions to the campus community and beyond through their distinctive missions and activities.

### **Service Event of the Year**

The "Service Event of the Year" award recognizes a registered student organization that has hosted an exceptional service event, demonstrating significant impact on the community, innovation in service delivery, and exemplary teamwork. This event should stand out in terms of its planning, execution, and the positive changes it brought about, reflecting the organization's commitment to service and community engagement.

### **Individual Leadership Awards**

The "Individual Leadership Awards" celebrate individual leaders within student organizations at the University of South Alabama, recognizing those who have demonstrated exceptional personal leadership abilities, made significant contributions to their organization, and positively impacted the community. These awards highlight leaders who exemplify dedication, innovation, and influence, fostering growth and success within their organizations and making meaningful contributions to the campus and beyond. Recipients are distinguished by their ability to inspire others, their commitment to their organization's mission, and their role in driving positive change within the community.



### **Faculty/Staff Advisor of the Year**

The "Faculty/Staff Advisor of the Year" award honors a faculty or staff member who has exemplified outstanding dedication, guidance, and support to a student organization. This advisor has significantly contributed to the organization's growth, success, and development, providing invaluable mentorship, resources, and advocacy for its members. The award recognizes their commitment to fostering leadership, engagement, and a positive impact on the campus community through their advisory role.

### **Organization of the Year**

The "Organization of the Year" award is presented to a registered student organization at the University of South Alabama that exemplifies excellence in all aspects of being a student organization. This prestigious accolade recognizes the organization's outstanding achievements in leadership, community service, member engagement, event planning, and contribution to the university community. The recipient of this award demonstrates a remarkable commitment to its mission, active participation in campus life, and a significant positive impact on its members and the wider community, embodying the ideals and values of the University of South Alabama. The Organization of the Year is the highest honor bestowed upon a registered student organization at the University of South Alabama.











