STUDENT ORGANIZATION APPROVAL AND REVISION MANUAL

APPROVAL AUTHORITY: Student Involvement Board
REQUIRED VOTE: Simple Majority
SECONDARY APPROVAL AUTHORITY: Senate
REQUIRED VOTE: Simple Majority

CHANGES TAKE EFFECT: Upon adjournment of the meeting

The Student Involvement Board (hereinafter referred to as “the Board”) represents the interests of the Northeastern student organization community and serves as the Student Government Association’s official liaison to student organizations. The Board advises the Director of the Center for Student Involvement or designee in all matters pertaining to student organizations.

The Board works in consultation with the Director of the Center for Student Involvement or designee to approve changes in student organization constitutions, grant final recognition to new student organizations, foster communication and collaboration among student organizations, serve as a student-to-student organizational resource, and resolve disputes that arise within or between organizations.

The Board also performs student organization office space allocations and provides oversight of the Finance Board regarding student organization budget allocations.

The Student Involvement Board is chaired by the SGA Vice President for Student Involvement.

1. Student Organization Recognition
1.1. Student Organization Recognition Stipulation
1.1.1. All current student organizations must be recognized by the Center for Student Involvement.
1.1.2. Each officially recognized student organization, except those enumerated in Article 1.8, must have been recommended recognition by the Board.

1.2. Student Involvement Board Liaisons for Preliminary Student Organizations
1.2.1. Upon receiving preliminary recognition from the Center for Student Involvement, prospective organizations will be assigned no fewer than two (2) Board representatives (liaisons) to prepare them for their Constitution presentation.
1.2.1.1. The Vice President for Student Involvement may not be assigned as a liaison to a preliminary student organization without a simple majority vote of the Board.
1.2.2. Each Board representative assigned to a preliminary organization will communicate with the assigned organization as needed.
1.2.3. Each Board representative assigned to a preliminary organization will analyze the purpose and function of the preliminary organization in question and thoroughly review their governing documents for their Constitution hearing. There must be at least one in-person meeting between Board liaison(s) and organizations prior to meeting with the Board.
1.2.4 The Board liaisons will also assist preliminary groups in creating a list of goals for the trial period and will check in on goal progress approximately halfway through the trial period.
1.2.5. When the prospective leadership of the preliminary organization and the Board’s representatives have agreed the organization’s Constitution is ready, a date for the Constitutional approval meeting will be scheduled.

1.3. Constitutional Approval meeting

1.3.1. Quorum shall be greater than 50% of the Board’s current membership and must include no fewer than two (2) student at large members present.

1.3.2. The following procedures will be followed when the Board is hearing the presentation of a preliminary student organization for Constitutional Approval:

1.3.2.1. Preliminary organizations are allowed not more than fifteen (15) minutes of audience with the Board.

1.3.2.2. The Board will first review the Constitution and then ask the preliminary organization questions.

1.3.2.3. Once question time concludes with the departure of the preliminary organization, the Board will enter debate in executive session.

1.3.2.3.1. If further questions arise during the debate, the preliminary organization may be contacted and/or asked to return to address the questions (also known as “tabling”).

1.3.2.4. After debate concludes, the Chair will hear a motion for approval, conditional approval, or denial of the Constitution.

1.3.2.4.1. Upon approval of the Constitution, the preliminary group will gain tentative status.

1.3.2.5. All Board decisions regarding student organization constitutions require a simple majority vote by the Board.

1.4. Guidelines for Student Organization Constitution Approval

1.4.1. Reasons for non-approval or conditional approval of a student organization Constitution include, but are not limited to:

1.4.1.1. Non-compliance with University guidelines and standards

1.4.1.2. Non-cooperation with or failure to meet with Student Involvement Board liaison(s)

1.4.1.3. Provided constitution contains conflicting items

1.4.1.4. Provided constitution contains substantive omissions

1.4.1.5. Organization possesses unwieldy officer/executive structure

1.4.1.6. Organization possesses excessive limitations to student participation in its general membership

1.4.1.7. Improper executive board succession

1.4.1.8. Improper election procedures

1.4.1.9. Organization’s purpose or goals, as outlined in the presentation or constitution, are too narrow in scope, vague or infeasible

1.4.2. The Student Involvement Board reserves the right to refuse tentative recognition of organizations not in line with the educational mission and goals of Northeastern University.

1.4.3. Decisions made by the Student Involvement Board will not have precedent on future decisions regarding recognition, and all prospective organizations will be considered independently.

1.5. Final Recognition Hearing

1.5.1. Quorum shall be greater than 50% of the Board’s current membership and must include no fewer than two (2) student at large members present.

1.5.2. The following procedures will be followed when the Board is hearing the presentation of a tentative student organization for full recognition:

1.5.2.1. Tentative organizations are allowed not more than thirty (30) minutes of audience with the Board.

1.5.2.2. Tentative Organizations will be asked to prepare a visual media presentation and a fact sheet.
1.5.2.3. The leadership of the prospective organization will present to the Board. During this period, the prospective leadership will present information concerning their group’s mission and purpose, future plans, and other pertinent information.

1.5.2.3.1 Tentative Organizations will be asked to present specific metrics relating, but not limited, to Elections, Transitions, Membership, Collaborations, Budgeting, Long Term Plans, Initiatives, Recruitment, Events, and Weekly Meetings.

1.5.2.4. Members of the prospective organization will be questioned by members of the Board.

1.5.2.5. Once question time concludes with the departure of the tentative organization, the Board will enter debate in executive session.

1.5.2.5.1. If further questions arise during the debate, the tentative organization may be contacted and/or asked to return to address the questions (also known as “tabling”).

1.5.2.6. After debate concludes, the Chair will hear a motion for full recognition, conditional recognition, denial, or tabling of the prospective student organization.

1.5.2.7 All Board decisions regarding student organization recognition require a simple majority vote by the Board.

1.6. Guidelines for Student Organization Recognition

1.6.1. Reasons for non-recognition or conditional recognition of a student organization include, but are not limited to:

1.6.1.1. Inexperience of prospective organization leadership

1.6.1.2. Non-compliance with University guidelines and standards

1.6.1.3. Non-cooperation with or failure to meet with Student Involvement Board liaison(s)

1.6.1.4 Non-cooperation with or failure to meet with the Center for Student Involvement and/or the Student Activities Business Office

1.6.1.5. Provided constitution contains conflicting items

1.6.1.6. Provided constitution contains substantive omissions

1.6.1.7. Organization’s purpose or function is repetitive of previously existing student organization(s) or campus resource(s)

1.6.1.8. Organization possesses unwieldy officer/executive structure

1.6.1.9. Organization possesses excessive limitations to student participation in its general membership

1.6.1.10. Improper executive board succession

1.6.1.11 Improper Election Procedures

1.6.1.12. Longevity concerns

1.6.1.13 Organization’s purpose or goals, as outlined in the presentation or constitution, are too narrow in scope, vague, or infeasible

1.6.1.14 Lack of adequate concrete planning or initiative

1.6.1.15 Does not support the Northeastern Community

1.6.1.16 Does not add substantive value to the Northeastern community that justifies the requisite university resources

1.6.1.17 Organization has violated the Student Activity Fee Manual

1.6.1.18 Organization has not demonstrated ability to recruit and retain broad range of membership

1.6.1.19 Organization has not demonstrated adequate progress towards their outlined goals

1.6.2. The Student Involvement Board reserves the right to refuse recognition of organizations not in line with the educational mission and goals of Northeastern University.

1.6.3. Decisions made by the Student Involvement Board will not have precedent on future decisions regarding recognition, and all prospective organizations will be considered independently.
1.7. Expedited Review

1.7.1. If the Center for Student Involvement determines a group does not need a trial period due to their history on campus, the organization will give their presentation after they have been granted preliminary status and met with their liaisons and the Board will make a decision on the Constitution in the same meeting. This presentation will take place with the format outlined in Section 1.5 and the criteria used will be those in Section 1.6. The group will receive one decision from the board that encompasses their presentation and their constitution.

1.7.2 The Board will Approve, Conditionally Approve, Table, or Deny these organizations

1.7.3 All decisions made by the Board require a simple majority vote.

1.8. Exempted Organizations

1.8.1. Informal groups that exist under the scope of the Cultural and Spiritual Life Centers or as part of a Northeastern University college do not require the approval of the Student Involvement Board. These informal, non-Student Involvement Board recognized groups may not receive office space, book meeting space in the Curry Student Center, request funds from the Finance Board, maintain an account with SABO, or enjoy the other privileges of a fully recognized student organization.

1.8.2. New social Greek-letter organizations do not require the approval of the Student Involvement Board.

1.9. Decision Notification

1.9.1. All Board decisions will be conveyed in writing within five (5) business days to the President or contact person of the tentative organization and the Center for Student Involvement’s advisor to the Board.

2. Student Organization Constitutional Amendments

2.1. Student Organization Constitutional Amendment Stipulation

2.1.1. Any and all changes to the constitution of any recognized student organization, except those enumerated in Article 2.5, must be approved by the Student Involvement Board.

2.2. Scope of Amendment

2.2.1. A constitutional revision must be submitted to the Board for review and approval. Depending on the scope of the change, and the time elapsed between the last review and approval, the Board reserves the right to review the document in its entirety and suggest or require changes to bring the document to compliance with current standards.

2.3. Amendment Hearing

2.3.1. Quorum shall be greater than 50% of the Board’s current membership and must include no fewer than two (2) student at large members present. The following procedures will be followed when the Board is considering an amendment to the constitution of a student organization:

2.3.1.1. The executive board of the student organization in question will submit its constitution, along with proposed amendments, to the Student Involvement Board, as approved by that student organization.

2.3.1.1.1. The organization may choose to present amendments before the Board or submit to the Board a written rationale for each amendment. If the organization chooses to present, the standard order of business will be followed; that is, groups will receive a fifteen (15) minute time slot to present their amendments to the board and answer any questions that arise pertaining to the amendments.
2.3.1.2. Each presented amendment to an organization’s constitution will be considered on an individual basis. Each Board member will be supplied with a copy of the proposed amendments.

2.3.1.2.1. If the organization has chosen to submit amendments electronically, the Board has the option to request the organization present before the Board with a simple majority vote.

2.3.1.3. Question time, if applicable.

2.3.1.4. The Board will enter executive session.

2.3.1.5. The Board will enter debate. If further questions arise during the debate, the organization may be contacted and/or asked to return to address the questions (also known as “tabling”).

2.3.1.6. Debate concludes, the Chair will hear a motion for full approval, conditional approval, denial, or tabling of the prospective amendment(s) to the constitution of the student organization.

2.3.2. All Board decisions regarding student organization constitutional amendments require a simple majority vote by the Board.

2.3.3. All Board decisions will be conveyed in writing within five (5) business days to the President or contact person of the organization and the Center for Student Involvement’s advisor to the Board.

2.4. Decisions made by the Student Involvement Board will not have precedent on future decisions regarding constitutional amendments, and all prospective amendments will be considered independently.

2.5. Exempted Organizations

2.5.1. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of social Greek-letter organizations will be approved by the respective governing council.

2.5.2. The constitution of the Student Government Association is not subject to oversight or approval by the Student Involvement Board.

3. Appealing a Decision

3.1. An appeal may only be based upon at least one of the following criteria:

3.1.1. Established policies and procedures were not followed,

3.1.2. The recognition decision was arbitrary and capricious.

3.1.2.1. The standard of “arbitrary and capricious” shall be obtained from the United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit, revised May 2012.

3.1.2.1.1. The decision “may reverse under the arbitrary and capricious standard only if the agency (Board) has… entirely failed to consider an important aspect of the problem, offered an explanation for its decision that runs counter to the evidence before the agency, or is so implausible that it could not be ascribed to a difference in view or the product of agency expertise.”

3.2. An organization must submit a written appeal request to the Student Government Association Parliamentarian within five (5) business days of recognition decision notification including the following, when applicable:

3.2.1. All supporting materials presented or provided to the Board,

3.2.2. The decision letter submitted to the organization on behalf of the Student Involvement Board,

3.2.3. The criteria on which the appeal is based.

3.3. The Parliamentarian will receive the appeal and determine if the appeal has merit based on criteria established in this Manual. An appeal that has been found to have merit will be considered by the Appeals Board within five
(5) business days of receipt (however, this has no impact on when the Appeals Board will convene and reach a decision).

3.4. The Appeals Board will consist of the following members, as outlined in the Student Government Association Constitution:
   3.4.1. Vice President for Student Involvement;
   3.4.2. A justice from the general membership of the Operational Appeals Board;
   3.4.3. The Director of the Center for Student Involvement, or designee;
   3.4.4. Student Body President, as, non-voting member; and
   3.4.5. Parliamentarian, as, non-voting member.

3.5. The Appeals Board will consider all aspects of an appeal, including but not limited to:
   3.5.1. Criteria on which the appeal is based;
   3.5.2. Student Organizational Revision and Approval Manual policies that were or were not followed; and
   3.5.3. Rationale used by the Student Involvement Board for their decision.

3.6. The Appeals Board may make one of the following decisions:
   3.6.1. Uphold the original decision of the Board.
   3.6.2. Amend the decision to grant full or conditional recognition.
   3.6.3. Allow the organization to restart the full recognition process as if they had just been granted tentative recognition from the Center for Student Involvement.

3.7. Once a decision has been made, the Parliamentarian must provide the rationale of the Appeals Board’s decision within three (3) business days in a memorandum to the student organization, the organization’s advisor, and the Student Involvement Board.

3.8. Decisions made by the Appeals Board will not have precedent on future appeals, and all appeals will be considered independently.

3.9. The decision of the Appeals Board is final.

4. **Advising Student Organization Resource Guide Revisions**
   4.1. Each academic year, the Vice President for Student Involvement, or a designee on their behalf, will advise the Center for Student Involvement on proposed changes to the Student Organization Resource Guide.
      4.1.1. The Vice President for Student Involvement, or their designee, will meet with the Center for Student Involvement as needed.
      4.1.2. Both parties shall create a list of major, non-editorial, changes to the Student Organization Resource Guide.
   4.2. The Vice President for Student Involvement shall provide the Board with a list of changes discussed with the Center for Student Involvement from Section 4.1.2.
      4.2.1. All proposed revisions shall be reviewed by the Board either in person or electronically.
   4.3. The Vice President for Student Involvement, or their designee, shall return to the Center for Student Involvement with feedback from the Board’s review.
4.3.1. Discussions pertaining to the Student Organization Resource Guide revisions between the Vice President for Student Involvement, or their designee, and the Center for Student Involvement will proceed as needed.

5. **Overriding the Manual**

   While it is important to note that this Manual holds true for the majority of cases, it is also important to recognize that exceptions may be needed on occasion.

   5.1. The Board may override any portion of this Manual on a case-by-case basis with a 2/3 majority vote.
   5.2. Any override of the Manual should be specifically documented in the decision letter.
   5.3. Overrides are considered on a case-by-case basis and do not set precedent for future decisions.

6. **References**