# Law Student Organization Handbook

Welcome to the University of South Carolina Joseph F. Rice School of Law ("law school") Student Organization Handbook ("Handbook"). In addition to educating students who are ready and able to practice law, the law school a goal of developing lawyer-leaders who can use their educational and extracurricular experiences to help their communities as well as prepare them for a fulfilling legal career.

Student organizations are a vibrant and vital part of the student life experience at the law school. The law school is home to over 35 student organizations representing a broad range of interests and purposes. Participation in extracurricular activities supports leadership skills, potential networking opportunities, and multiple opportunities to give back to both the legal and local communities in a variety of ways.

The Handbook gives an overview of the resources and services the law school offers and policies and procedures for all student organizations. While this Handbook is not an exhaustive source of law school or institutional policy or procedure, it is the primary resource for student organizations. The Office of Student Affairs ("OSA") works closely with student organizations to assist with their needs. Academic competition teams will work with both OSA and the Office of Academic Administration ("OAA").

The law school reserves the right to amend or modify this Handbook at any time without notice. The Handbook will be placed on the law school student organization resources TWEN site and the law school Student Affairs webpage. All student organization members, but especially the leaders, must read and refer to this Handbook to be familiar with its terms and provisions.

# STUDENT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Student organizations must meet the following requirements to be considered active with OSA:

- **Student Organization Name**: Maintain a student organization name which does not include the University of South Carolina's name (or any variation) in any form. The University of South Carolina does not allow student organizations to represent the university or act on behalf of the university.
- **Membership Roster**: Must have a minimum of 7 members in good standing at the law school and at least two members in leadership positions (see the "officers" section below).
- **Advisor**: Must have a faculty or staff advisor.
- **Governing Document:** Must have a governing document (see the "governing documents" section below).
- **Annual Plan**: Must complete an annual plan each academic year.
- **Training/Meetings**: Must attend mandatory officer or organization training or meetings provided by OSA, law school and/or university administration.

If a student organization does not meet the above requirements, the organization will be considered inactive until those requirements are met. Please review the Renewal Process below.

## Officers/ Leadership Positions

Student organizations must elect at least two officers to govern the activities of the organization and act as liaison with OSA and law school administration. While the titles may differ, organization officers should at least have a president or chair who coordinates and manages the organization's activities and a treasurer or financial officer who manages the organization's finances. It is also recommended that a secretary or operations manager is elected so that records are retained for future members of the organization. Organizations may also include other officers as needed. Elections for new officers should be held in the spring (preferably before exams/commencement), and new officers should be reported to OSA through the Renewal Process.

Student organization officers must be in good academic standing, and periodic GPA checks may occur. Good academic standing means student organization officers must not be on academic probation. For more information, please consult section V of the Student Handbook linked here. Student organization leaders are strongly encouraged not to hold more than two major leadership roles in student organizations in one academic year.

## Governing Documents

All student organizations must have a constitution to serve as a governing document for the organization. Each student organization must provide its constitution to OSA. The constitution should include the following:

- The organization's purpose, mission, and values;
- Provisions on membership, any membership dues and purpose of dues;
- Officers and elections;
- Financial and recordkeeping provisions;
- Any other terms and provisions the organization deems necessary or useful for its activities.

Student organizations should clearly set forth in their constitutions how it will function and be run. Student organizations should keep careful and complete records of activities and finances. Financial records should be maintained to demonstrate adherence to the organization's budget.

## Annual Plan

Student organizations must complete annual goals and plans each academic year. This plan should include the following:

- Student organization goals for the academic year;
- Tentative plans for conference travel, competitions, or programming (meetings & events);
- Proposed budget outlining funding sources and how the funds will be used (support plans for programming, etc.)

OSA will provide a template for student organizations to build their annual plan.

## RENEWAL PROCESS

Student organizations must participate in the renewal process beginning each spring to maintain an active status with the law school. Student organizations will be required to submit the following updated information for renewal:

- Membership Roster
- Officer Information
- Advisor Information
- Governing Documents
- Annual Plan

Additionally, student organization officers, in-coming and out-going, must participate in the Student Organization Leadership Transition Meeting held in the spring semester. This meeting is scheduled by the OSA to provide guidance on the renewal process.

## INACTIVE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student organizations may become inactive with the law school. Some reasons may include:

- **Membership:** Membership falls below the minimum seven members required or the minimum two leadership positions.
- **Transition:** Failure to attend the mandatory transition meeting at the end of the year or fails to follow the required protocols for officer transition.
- **Renewal:** Failure to complete the documentation required for annual renewal.
- **Misconduct:** If misconduct within a student organization occurs, the organization will be considered inactive until OSA and law school administration investigates the misconduct and confirms that the organization is eligible for reactivation.
- **Other:** The student organization decides to dissolve, disband, or deactivate. If this occurs, the President or designee should email the OSA stating that they would like to disband the organization and provide a short rationale (lack of interest, time, etc.). The OSA will save the email to the organization's file and then deactivate the organization.

OSA will ALWAYS notify the student organization if it is in danger of becoming inactive.

## Reactivating a Student Organization

To reactivate a student organization, student organization leadership must arrange a meeting with the OSA to discuss the student organization's inactive status and next steps to ensure reactivation is successful.

# STARTING A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Students interested in starting a new student organization must follow the guidelines below & review the "Student Organization Requirements" section of this handbook:

- Consult the law school website and check with OSA to be sure that a group supporting the proposed activity or purpose does not already exist (or is inactive) at the law school;
- Devise a clear purpose and objective for the organization and consider concrete ideas for how these purposes can be supported through meetings or events;
- Complete the New Student Organization Application linked here. The application is also available on the student organization resources TWEN site.
  - The application must include the following attachments:
    - Membership Roster, Officer Information, and Advisor Information spreadsheet
    - Governing Documents
    - Annual Plan

OSA will consider New Student Organization Applications as the applications are received. Submission of a New Student Organization Application does not guarantee approval or recognition of the organization. OSA

will notify the interested parties if the student organization has been approved, so it can begin activities in compliance with the provisions of this Handbook.

# STUDENT ORGANIZATION EVENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Student organizations must complete the [Student Organization Planning & Room Reservation Request Form](#) for any meetings or events at the law school. Student organizations are strongly encouraged to complete this form for meetings or events off-campus. In addition to completing the request form to reserve space in the law school, the form will also collect general information about the meeting or event. This information will help OSA or OAA support student organizations in the planning process and promotion of all meetings and events. Student organization officers are also encouraged to set up a planning meeting with OSA or OAA to coordinate logistics and review the financial plan, if needed.

Student organizations should use this **Event Checklist ([linked here](#))** to make sure all logistics are covered. This checklist is also available on the student organization resources TWEN site. Student organizations should keep a copy of this checklist for each event planned.

When using law school space (i.e. classroom, courtroom, etc.) for a meeting or event, Student organizations should never move furniture or A/V equipment. In rare cases, Student Organizations can coordinate with Academic Technology or OSA for specific meetings or event set-ups that may involve moving furniture. However, those instances must be pre-approved and coordinated by Academic Technology and/or Student Affairs. Student Organizations who do not adhere to this process may forfeit their privileges to reserve space in the law school or maintain their active status.

## Event Planning Considerations

Student organizations planning meetings or events should consider the following:

• **Annual Plan**: Student organizations should use the plan created for the academic year to guide planning to ensure programming meets the organization's mission and goals.

• **Blackout Dates**: There are specific days and times each semester when student organizations are not permitted to hold meetings or events. These are referred to as blackout dates. OSA will provide a list of these dates to student organization officers for planning purposes each semester.

• **Catering**: Student organizations must follow all law school and University rules related to catering. Please see policy BUSA 7.05 & BUSA 1.03 [here](#).

• **Lunch Hour**: No classes meet Monday – Friday from 12:20p.m.- 1:20p.m. during the academic year. Many student organizations and law school offices plan meetings or events during this time.

• **Speaker Fees/Travel**: Student organizations should not offer to pay any speaker fees or speaker travel without consulting OSA and/or OAA.

• **Sponsorships**: If an organization is looking to identify sponsorships for events, they must follow the External Fundraising guidelines outlined in the Student Organization Expenses & Travel Procedures Addendum linked here.

• **Student Organization Planning Calendar:** This calendar is available for student organization officers to use when planning meetings or events. Please click here to access it.

• **Alcohol**: Student organizations must follow all law school and University rules related to the provision of alcoholic beverages, including the University's Alcohol Policy and Guidelines for the University Community https://sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf302.pdf. Student organizations cannot use law school funds for alcoholic beverages. Any expenses related to alcoholic beverages, or the provision or consumption of alcoholic beverages, will not be reimbursed.

• **Travel**: Some student organizations, particularly competition teams, travel regularly. If a student organization plans to travel and use allocated University funds, they must follow the procedures outlined in the School of Law Student Organization Expenses and Travel Procedures Addendum linked here.

# STUDENT ORGANIZATION FUNDING

When planning any student organization meetings or events that will have expenses, organization officers must first ensure that the organization has the funds to support the meeting or event. Most student organizations use member dues, fundraise, and/or seek sponsorships to help support organization activities. Student organizations are responsible for managing their organization's funds, typically through a private bank account. Student organizations who need guidance on opening a private bank account should contact OSA.

Student organizations can also review the School of Law Student Organization Expenses and Travel Procedures Addendum linked here. Student organizations should contact OSA or OAA for any questions regarding funding or allowable expenses. Competition teams who receive academic credit should contact OAA for guidance on funding, allowable expenses, and the procedures for coordinating travel.

## Student Activity Funding

Student organizations can apply for limited funding from OSA to support organization events that are open to the law school student community. For more information on this process, please click here.

# STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECRUITMENT, PROMOTION, AND PUBLICITY

Being conscious about recruiting, promotion, and publicity is the most natural way to convey to the law school community, especially new students, the culture and values of the student organization. Below are a few ways the law school helps support student organizations in recruitment, promotion, and publicity, and a few resources recommended for student organizations to use. Additionally, student organization leaders should review the Marketing & Communications policies to ensure compliance. This policy is an addendum to this Handbook.

• **Student Organization & Resource Fair** – Every Fall and Spring, a Student Organization & Resource Fair will be held. This is a great way for student organizations to start engaging with fellow students.

• **Student Events Weekly Email** – Student organization meetings and events can be included on the Student Events Weekly email sent by OSA. When completing the Student Organization Planning & Room Reservation Form student organizations can request their meeting or event be included.

• **My Law School Student Event Calendar** – Student organizations are encouraged to post all meetings and events, on or off-campus, to the Student Event Calendar on the law school website. When completing the Student Organization Planning & Room Reservation Form, student organizations can request their meeting or event be added. To view the calendar, click here.

• **Canva** – Canva is a free-to-use online graphic design tool. Use it to create social media posts, presentations, posters, videos, logos and more. Visit canva.com to get started.

• **Flyers** – Student organizations routinely post flyers around the law building. Organizations need to monitor the flyer postings to ensure they are timely and to take them down after the event has occurred. Student organizations may ONLY post flyers on the red glass walls in the building. Signs found elsewhere will be removed. The student organization is responsible for removing out-of-date flyers.

• **Mailboxes** – Each student organization has access to a mailbox in the Office of Student Affairs suite in room 129.

## Marketing and Communications Policies

The mission of the Office of Communications is to promote the School of Law through strategic communication. We are available to assist student organizations in promoting and creating promotional material on an as-requested basis, depending on the scope of the event, advance notice, and the department's resources and ability.

For guidance on the University of South Carolina brand, please reference the [university's communications and marketing brand toolbox.](#) We also encourage you to review and adhere to the university's guidelines regarding the [Carolinian Creed](#) and the [ABA Model Rules of Professionalism](#).

Familiarize yourself with this policy to ensure your content and materials align with the law school's guidelines for communicating about and on behalf of your student organization and the law school. Deviation from this policy may result in disciplinary review or other appropriate action.

For further questions or assistance, email COLAWS-COMMS.

**Digital Screens:** This refers to the TV monitors throughout the building that announce important reminders, upcoming events, and the accomplishments of faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Students are welcome to design digital screens to share announcements and promote upcoming events. Digital screens should be submitted as .jpg files, and their dimensions should be 1920x1080 pixels. Digital screens will run for no more than 2 weeks leading up to the event. Event digital screen uploads are subject to the C Web & Digital Marketing Communications Manager approval and discretion.

Pending availability, the Office of Communications is available to assist with design with a minimum of three weeks' notice before the event.

**Logos:** Canva is an excellent free resource for any student organization interested in designing a logo. Logos that incorporate any element of the University of South Carolina and/or School of Law brands MUST be submitted to the Office of Communications for approval.

**Photography:** Requests may be made for photography. Please keep in mind the Office of Communications prioritizes Signature Events but may be available for other large impact events on an as-requested basis, taking availability into consideration. Coverage is not guaranteed, nor should it be assumed.

Requests must be submitted to the Office of Communications a minimum of 4-6 weeks in advance to determine alignment with the department's strategic goals and ensure availability. Photos remain the property of the law school and are typically available within a week of the event. Photos taken during a previous event do not guarantee future availability.

**Print Services:** The university has the capability to print a variety of materials, as well as coordinating mailings for marketing purposes. Most requests take a minimum of 10 business days to fulfill. For a complete list of services, visit the [printing services webpage](#). Contact the Office of Student Affairs for guidance on what information must be provided, and which sections need to be completed on the Print Services request forms.

**Flyers and Posters:** You may ONLY post flyers on the red glass walls in the building. Signs found elsewhere will be removed. Your student organization is responsible for removing out-of-date flyers.

**Promotional Items:** Any materials that incorporate the University of South Carolina or School of Law brands, including logos and colors, MUST be approved before dissemination. Please allow a minimum of five business days for the Office of Communications to approve.

**Social Media:** When publishing content to a student organization account you are acting as a representative of the School of Law. Do not post offensive or discriminatory content that negatively impacts the SOL or endorses any political party or candidate.

Content posted by student organizations may be reposted or reshared by SOL accounts; we refer to this as amplification. This applies primarily to signature events, large impact events, and accolades for student organizations as a whole as well as individual members. For content to be considered for amplification, you must tag SOL accounts (@uofsclaw).

The School of Law's social media profiles are curated to maximize visibility and promote authentic engagement. Not every event can be included on the SOL feed. The Office of Communications reserves the right to determine what content is shared to SOL accounts.

**Website:** All website requests must be submitted to Students Affairs for review before the Office of Communications. Once Student Affairs reviews your request and sends it to the Office of Communications, the Web & Digital Marketing Communications Manager may reach out to you with questions, recommendations, and project status updates. For ongoing website updates (i.e. journal issue uploads, etc.), student organizations should designate one member to be the point of contact. Student organizations should also expect to provide all materials for upload and respond to emails from the Web & Digital Marketing Communications Manager in a timely manner.

**Writing and Public Relations:** Press releases are a great option to inform media of upcoming events. They should include details such as where and why the event is taking place, who is involved or impacted, and the facilitator or speaker's availability for interviews. Press releases must be edited and reviewed by the Office of Communications and/or the Office of Student Affairs prior to distribution; submit content 4-6 weeks prior to the event.

Student organization members may submit stories for consideration on the School of Law's newsfeed. Contact the Office of Communications to discuss written pieces at least one week before the event to ensure it meets our strategic goals and is not already being covered. Once approved, aim for between 300-600 words detailing what happened, its importance, and include up to three quotes from the featured or honored individual(s), facilitator(s), and/or an attendee. These pieces must be submitted within three days of the event's conclusion.

# STUDENT ORGANIZATION PARTNERS & RESOURCES

## ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY

Academic Technology is a helpful resource for student organizations. Whether a student organization needs AV assistance for a meeting or has questions about their student organization's printing account, Academic Technology is a wealth of information. Please review the following topics:

**Audio/Visual Needs** – If student organizations know they need to use AV for a meeting or event (for example: Teams/Zoom videoconferencing or have PowerPoint slides) and require assistance, please open a help desk ticket to schedule time with Academic Technology in advance of the meeting or event by using this link. Please be sure to select "Joseph F. Rice School of Law" in the field "From whom are you seeking assistance?" Please ask for assistance before moving any furniture.  Lecterns and many tables have AV cabling attached that are susceptible to damage, so please do not move furniture.  We are here to help.

Each law student has a Zoom enterprise license account as well as Microsoft Teams access via their Office 365 enterprise software student license.   When student organizations request assistance via the help desk ticket, we can show them how to access their Zoom student account or how to access Microsoft Teams.  There is also a double-sided laminated sheet at each classroom podium on how to set up the AV for Zoom and Teams meetings.

**Student Organization Email Account** – Many student organizations have a Student Org email account. If a student organization is unsure if they do or do not have an account, they can check in with OSA. If a student organization does not have an account, Student Affairs can assist the student organization in the process of setting one up through Academic Technology.

**Student Organization Printing Accounts & Guidelines** – Law School Student Organizations have limited funding for printing available. Law School Student Organizations must abide by the guidelines below in order to access funding for printing. Printing will be monitored monthly by the Office of Student Affairs.
- Law School Student Organization printing is only available at the Print Kiosks in the law school.

- Law School Student Organizations are only permitted to print materials related to marketing meetings and events or items necessary for club activities (flyers, waivers, etc.).
    - o Student Affairs asks that Law School Student Organizations refrain from printing club documents such as constitutions, meeting minutes, etc. as these documents can be shared via email as needed or posted on the Law School Student Organization's TWEN page.
- When printing flyers or similar documents to promote club meetings, events, activities, Law School Student Organizations should be mindful of the amount being printed and how the information will be shared. For example, the Law School offers approximately 4 areas to post flyers (the garnet walls on the first floor, second floor, and third floor).
- Law School Student Organizations should never print personal items.

**How to Print:**

Law School Student Organizations must use a printing account. Many Law School Student Organizations have a printing account created by Academic Technology. If an organization is unsure if they do or do not have an account, they can check in with Student Affairs. If a student organization does not have an account, Student Affairs can assist the student organization in the process of setting one up through Academic Technology.

## Office of Career & Professional Development

The Office of Career & Professional Development (C&PD) is committed to supporting you as you chart a path toward a fulfilling and meaningful legal career. C&PD actively collaborates with student organizations to strengthen communication, build strategic partnerships, and expand access to professional development opportunities. Each year, designated C&PD representatives serve as liaisons to support these efforts and ensure consistent, meaningful engagement. To ensure a successful partnership, we encourage you to remain actively engaged with our office throughout your journey.

Our Commitment to You – We pledge to provide the following support and resources:
- Personalized Guidance: One-on-one advising on career development and job search strategies tailored to your goals.
- Career Education: Information on job search tools, legal career paths, and the key competencies needed for success in the legal profession.
- Opportunity Sharing: Regular communication about job openings, educational programs, professional development events, and networking opportunities.
- Responsive Support: Timely responses to your inquiries and requests for guidance.
- Recruitment Programs: Coordination of on- and off-campus interview programs and job postings.
- Employer Engagement: Ongoing collaboration with legal employers and industry leaders to stay informed about the job market and expand opportunities for South Carolina Law students and graduates.

Your Commitment to Us – To make the most of our partnership, we ask that you:

- Stay Connected: Read and respond to our communications in a timely manner.
- Keep Us Informed: Share updates about your summer and post-graduate employment.
- Honor Your Commitments:
  - Attend events and programs for which you register.
  - Participate in scheduled interviews, provided you remain available for employment.
  - By bidding for an in-person on-campus interview, you confirm your availability to attend in person on the scheduled date.
  - By bidding for a virtual on-campus interview, you confirm your availability to attend virtually on the scheduled date.
  - Once you accept a summer or post-graduate position, promptly withdraw any outstanding applications and cancel interviews for positions you are no longer available to pursue.
  - Maintain Integrity: Accurately represent your credentials and experiences in all application materials and during interviews.

## Student Organization Documents/ Forms

New Student Organization Application – [Linked Here](#)
Student Organization Annual Plan – [Linked Here](#)
Student Organization Constitution Example – [Linked Here](#)
Student Organization Membership Roster – [Linked Here](#)
Student Organization Event Checklist – Linked Here

## Tabling

Tabling is a great way to share information about a student organization or a student organization event. For student organizations interested in tabling, they should complete [this form](#). OSA tries to limit to no more than two organizations tabling per day.

## TWEN/Blackboard

Student organizations have the option of creating/maintaining a TWEN page. Many student organizations utilize TWEN to manage organization activities, hold elections, send organization-wide communications with their e-board, create an organization-specific calendar, and more. If a student organization wishes to create a TWEN page, they will need to contact the OSA.

Additionally, OSA maintains a TWEN page with valuable information and resources for Law Student organizations. The TWEN page is titled **Student Organization Resources**. Many of the links found in this document are also linked on the TWEN page.

Student organizations can also use Blackboard to create Blackboard organization sites for their organizations. Contact Assistant Dean for Academic Technology, Gary Moore, for more information (gmoore@law.sc.edu).

# IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Academic Technology | IT Service Desk Link

Whitney Bedard, Director of Student Affairs | wattsww@mailbox.sc.edu |Office: Room 129C

Office of Communications | COLAWS-COMMS

Jenny Lanford, Director of Academic Administration | vlanford@mailbox.sc.edu | Office: Room 127B

Chinell Singletary, Associate Director of Student Affairs | single63@email.sc.edu |Office: Room 129E