



## Establishing and Maintaining a Registered Student Organization (RSO)

### No. 8013

**Policy Effective Date:**  
8/12/1992

**Last Revision Date:**  
9/27/2024

**Policy Owner:**  
Frances Keene

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**Affected Parties:**  
Undergraduate  
Graduate

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### 1.0 Purpose

This policy exists to provide students on the Virginia Tech campus with a consistent and manageable process to establish organizations and to provide the university community with accurate information about the various organizations affiliated at Virginia Tech.

### 2.0 Policy

A Registered Student Organization (RSO) is a voluntary association of Virginia Tech students that has no direct relationship to the university but upon completion of registration documents is entitled to certain privileges to include operating, meeting, advertising, and participating in activities on the Virginia Tech campus in accordance with Policy 5000, "University Real Property (Building, Grounds, Infrastructure) Usage and Events." These organizations would be affiliated "at" Virginia Tech, such as ABC Club at Virginia Tech.

### 2.1 Documentation

Associations of Virginia Tech students shall be required to file appropriate documents and agree to abide by all procedures and policies that are established by the university regarding Registered Student Organizations (RSOs).

### 2.2 Approval

1. RSOs of Virginia Tech students must annually file registration documents and agree to abide by the standards of registration that are established by the university.
2. The Student Engagement and Campus Life (SECL) Department, on behalf of the university, shall grant registration to any association that meets the standards of registration.

### 2.3 Constitution

1. The RSO shall not be required to maintain a constitution.
2. If a RSO maintains a constitution, the university shall not require knowledge or approval of amendment procedures.
3. The SECL Department will maintain copies of constitutions on file at the request of the RSO.



## 2.4 Applicability of University Purchasing Policies

1. The university shall not enter into contracts on behalf of a RSO and shall not allow RSOs to represent themselves as agents of the university.
2. University purchasing policies shall not apply to the contracts or purchases of RSOs.

## 2.5 Sources of Funding and Location of Accounts

The RSO shall maintain all financial accounts at a financial institution of its choice and shall not maintain accounts with Student Organization Accounting unless otherwise approved by the director of SECL. RSOs are eligible to apply for funding from the student organization funding boards.

## 2.6 Tax Identification and Status

1. The RSO shall not use the university tax identification number at any time. Should the RSO need a tax identification number and classification, it must establish its own tax identification number and classification with the Internal Revenue Service.
2. The university does not require filing for tax status or classification with the IRS but will assist organization by providing forms and information.

## 2.7 Use of University Name

The RSO shall not represent itself as an agent of the university or use names, logos, symbols or seals of the university without the express written consent of the university official responsible for Policy 12000, Policy on the Usage of the University Name (<http://www.policies.vt.edu/12000.pdf>).

## 2.8 Adviser

1. The RSO shall not be required to maintain a faculty/staff adviser or faculty/staff coach.
2. Should a faculty/staff member agree to serve as an adviser/coach to a student organization, that person is protected by the university liability coverage only if the appointment is assigned as a part of their duties and responsibilities as an employee of the university by the adviser's department head or senior manager and is verified on the registration form.
3. RSO advisers who are not employees of Virginia Tech do not have university liability coverage.

## 3.0 Procedures

The RSO is required to annually submit registration forms to Student Engagement and Campus Life no later than the date established by that department. The SECL Department will review and record all completed registrations for inclusion in the student organizations database.

RSOs that need to update or change registration information should do so in the student organization database.



## 4.0 Definitions

## 5.0 References

Policy 5000, University Real Property (Building, Grounds, Infrastructure) Usage and Events  
<http://www.policies.vt.edu/5000.pdf>

Policy 8010, Classification of Student Organizations  
<http://www.policies.vt.edu/8010.pdf>

Policy 12000, Policy on the Usage of the University Name  
<http://www.policies.vt.edu/12000.pdf>

## 6.0 Approval and Revisions

Approved August 12, 1992, by the Vice President for Student Affairs, Thomas G. Goodale.

- Revision 1  
Changed name from "Office of Student Organizations" to "office of Leadership and Student Organization Programs (LSOP)."
- Revision 2
  - Added Section 2.10, Judicial Policy.
  - Revised Section 2.3 regarding organization classification.
  - Changed name from "Leadership and Student Organization Programs (LSOP)" to "Student Activities."
  - Changed name from "Central Accounting" to "Student Organization Accounting."

Approved February 26, 1999, by Vice President for Student Affairs, Landrum L. Cross.

- Revision 3  
Changed "Office of Student Activities" to "Student Activities Office."  
Approved April 23, 2002 by Vice President for Student Affairs, Landrum L. Cross.
- Revision 4  
Section 2.10 Student Conduct Policy – Revised to clarify process a student organization which loses university recognition through student conduct action must complete before recognition can be restored by the university.  
Approved November 28, 2011 by Vice President for Student Affairs, Edward F. D. Spencer.
- Revision 5  
Changed name from "University Unions and Student Activities" to "Student Centers and Activities."  
Approved July 27, 2013, by Vice President for Student Affairs, Patricia A. Perillo.
- Revision 6  
General clarification and usage of the term Registered Student Organization or RSO, and the process for becoming such.  
Approved February 11, 2015 by Vice President for Student Affairs, Patricia A. Perillo.



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- Revision 7
  - Revised Section 2.8 to clarify university liability coverage for RSO advisers and added “senior manager” for those who might be advisers and are not in the academic domain.
  - Changed name from “Student Centers and Activities Office” to “Student Engagement and Campus Life Department.”

Approved December 11, 2015 by Vice President for Student Affairs, Patricia A. Perillo.

- Revision 8  
Revised Section 3 to reflect current procedures.

Approved January 25, 2018 by Vice President for Student Affairs, Patricia A. Perillo.

- Revision 9
  - Reference to the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA) in Section 2.4 was changed to university purchasing procedures, because VPPA is no longer applicable due to the Restructuring Act.
  - Technical changes to update organization titles.

Approved September 27, 2024 by Vice President for Student Affairs, Frances Keene.