

Student Organization Handbook



University of Houston-Downtown®

**Student Leadership
& Involvement**

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Letter from Director of Student Leadership and Involvement

Dear Gators:

Student Leadership and Involvement is excited about your interest in Student Organizations! We recognize that student organizations provide a valuable service to the University of Houston-Downtown community by encouraging community, engagement, involvement, and global citizenship. Every Gator has the opportunity to get involved and find their sense of belonging at UHD. As a student at UHD, you have the opportunity to participate in an assortment of activities, programs, and organizations. The mission of Student Leadership and Involvement is to help students and student organizations get involved with the UHD community through campus-wide events, traditions, workshops, training, and development opportunities to prepare for future success.

As a student involved on campus, you are a leader. Your success as a student leader is why we are here and do what we do as Student Leadership and Involvement. Involvement in student organizations and university activities is a great way to connect to the campus, your peers, faculty, staff, and the Houston community. Your involvement in a student organization can enhance your leadership skills, interpersonal communication skills, and open up a network of possibilities. We know employers will look to these skills you develop when they make hiring decisions. We also want to support your education. Student Leadership and Involvement believes that involvement in student organizations and campus programs will enrich your UHD educational experience and development.

You represent your organization and the UHD community through your activities and events. Please ensure you review and use the information throughout this handbook; you are expected to understand and follow all the institutional guidelines and policies. Please do not hesitate to come by the office to consult with the Student Leadership and Involvement staff to have a better understanding of any policies or procedures outlined in this handbook.

Student Leadership and Involvement welcomes feedback on this handbook as well as any programs, events, and services we offer. Feedback can be shared in person or by emailing sli@uhd.edu.

Our vision in Student Leadership and Involvement is to foster a community where all students complete their education and develop into engaged global citizens through involvement in exceptional student experiences. Therefore, I encourage you to come by the Student Leadership and Involvement complex, get to know our staff, visit our student organization workspaces, and inquire about any events, programs, or activities we have going on!

Tremaine Kwasiokpui

Director, Student Leadership and Involvement

Purpose of Student Organizations

The purpose of student organizations is to provide students with opportunities to participate in activities that develop their intellectual, emotional, spiritual, physical, and professional abilities. These organizations are important components to the academic life of the University. To meet all the different developmental needs of students, University of Houston-Downtown offers a multitude of student groups covering the following areas: academic, professional, religious, political, Fraternities and Sororities, honor, military, service, cultural, and recreation. Every student is encouraged to become a member of those organizations that appeal to their interest.

Involvement in student organizations:

- Improve students' interpersonal skills.
- Give students greater satisfaction with their college experience.
- Provide useful experience in obtaining a job and providing job related skills.
- Develop lifelong values of volunteerism and service to others.
- Has a positive influence on skills in leadership, communication, teamwork, organizing, decision-making and planning

Student Leadership and Involvement

Student Leadership and Involvement enhances student learning through innovative initiatives focused on the tenets of involvement, leadership and service that enrich the University of Houston-Downtown experience. Whether streamlining your membership recruitment or developing your executive leadership to provide guidance throughout your event planning process, Student Leadership and Involvement is here to assist you and your student organization by providing intentional resources to foster your success.

Some of Student Leadership and Involvement's signature events include:

- Student Involvement Fairs
- One Main Event
- Homecoming
- Bayou Bash

Contact Us:

UHD Student Leadership and Involvement

One Main St., Suite S204

Houston TX, 77002-1001

(713) 221-8573

Website: [Student Leadership and Involvement Website](#)

Main Office E-mail: sli@uhd.edu

Registered Student Organizations (RSOs): The Basics

Definition of a Registered Student Organization

A registered student organization is an organization that has fulfilled all the requirements established by the University for official registration. In this document, when the term RSO is used, it is to be interpreted to mean officially registered student organizations.

Benefits of Registering with Student Leadership and Involvement

As an RSO, your group is entitled to certain rights and privileges if your organization stays in good standing (active status) with the university. These special benefits include but are not limited to the following:

- Be listed on the UHD Campus Groups website and in University publications and newsletters;
- Utilize Campus Groups to list and manage your events (invite-only, members-only, open to the campus community, events open to campus community and the public, and ticketed events)
- Post flyers for approved events and activities around UHD campus on Flyer boards;
- Utilize Campus Groups to: maintain your organization profile; manage your organization roster and officer roles; utilize Campus Groups communication tools; and, use the website builder to create a website that incorporates your events, membership roster, and other items listed in your Campus Groups group profile;
- Sponsor events and other activities on campus, often at free or discounted rates;
- Ability to reserve UHD facilities, grounds, and equipment for organizational use at free or discounted rates;
- Apply for and receive organizational event funding from Council of Finance;
- Apply for annual recognition for student organization achievement at the One Main Event Awards Ceremony;
- Participate in information fairs (including student involvement fairs).

Types of Student Organization Statuses

Student Leadership and Involvement uses different terms to describe the status of student organizations. Student organizations at UHD fall into one of the following status categories:

- Active - Active status is granted when an organization has completed all requirements to start a new organization or maintain active status. Student organizations on active status are listed on Campus Groups and may take advantage of the benefits offered to RSOs at UHD.
- Inactive - an organization that has not completed annual requirements to maintain active status. Student organizations on inactive status are removed from all RSO lists and are not permitted to utilize any of the benefits of being an active student organization. Inactive organizations can become active again by contacting Student Leadership and Involvement and fulfilling any outstanding responsibilities.
- Probation - Probation status is defined as the status of an organization that has been removed from active status for violations of the UHD Code of Student Conduct, University policies, and/or local, state, and federal laws. The length and terms of probation vary. RSOs on probation may be required to complete certain requirements before being allowed to re-register with Student Leadership and Involvement.

Officer and Member Requirements

Officer Requirements

Each RSO President serves as the primary liaison to the University. Additional position required for each group include a Vice President.

Officers must be listed on the organization's roster through Campus Groups. Only officers listed on the roster can make reservations, register events, and conduct other business on behalf of the RSO.

To serve as an officer, students must meet the following criteria:

- Undergraduate and Graduate students must be enrolled at UHD.
- Undergraduate students must have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA; other graduate and professional students must have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA and be in good standing with the University.
- Students must meet all other academic standards established by the RSO that are included in the organization's constitution and/or bylaws.

Eligibility requirements will be verified by Student Leadership and Involvement. If a student is ineligible to serve, Student Leadership and Involvement will contact the individual in question and the organization advisor. In the event of a change in leadership, RSO officers and the advisor must contact Student Leadership and Involvement to run an eligibility check on the new officers.

Member Requirements

Membership is restricted to University of Houston-Downtown students. Active membership is restricted to UHD students.

UHD Faculty and Staff Advisors

Advisors

Student Leadership and Involvement requires all RSOs to secure and maintain an advisor who is a current employee (faculty or administrative, full- or part-time staff) at University of Houston-Downtown. Student Leadership and Involvement believes RSO advisors are integral to the success of the organization and its student leaders' development.

Advisors and student leaders can request training sessions by emailing sli@uhd.edu.

Expectations for Advisors:

- Help students develop meaningful programs consistent with the organization's purpose and goals that support the mission of the University of Houston-Downtown.
- Encourage students to develop initiative, responsibility, and positive group interactions.
- Be aware and knowledgeable of the organization's programs, activities, and events.
- Assist student leaders in completing necessary campus forms and maintenance of the organization's record.
- Inform Student Leadership and Involvement when there is a change in advisor's status such as resignation, sabbatical, etc.

List of Trainings available:

- [Linkedin Learning](#)
 - Will be updated monthly with new recommendations.
- Campus Groups 101 can be scheduled with SLI Staff.
- Specific Trainings Available upon request.

Advisor Changes

A change of advisor or changes in the advisor's contact information requires the notification of Student Leadership and Involvement. As soon as an advisor resigns, it is the organization's responsibility to inform Student Leadership and Involvement of this change and to find a new advisor for the organization.

[Greek Life Advisor Policy](#)

RSO Requirements to Remain in Good Standing (Active Status)

To keep an organization's registration current and in good standing (active status), organizations must:

1. Ensure the organization has the following up to date on Campus Groups:
 - A list of three current officers or representatives, named in the system as the President, Vice-President, and third Officer. RSOs do not have to adopt those three titles in their Constitution/Bylaws but should have 3 officers listed on Campus Groups and the active advisor as an officer.
 - An updated Constitution that is uploaded on Campus Groups under Files.
 - An active RSO must maintain 3 active students on their roster at all times.
2. Attend 75% of Council or Organizations Meetings
 - The organization President (or designee) is required to attend the monthly COO meetings (Schedules will be available at the beginning of each semester).
3. Ensure all events are held by RSO are on Campus Groups and have attendance tracked.
 - Any questions about Campus Groups can be directed to Student Leadership and Involvement Staff.
4. Trainings
 - [Linkedin Learning](#)
 - Will be updated monthly with new recommendations.
 - Campus Groups 101 can be scheduled with SLI Staff.
 - Specific Trainings Available upon request.
5. Active Advisor
 - See page 8 for advisor expectations.

If you are an active Registered Student Organization in good standing (with 2 semesters completed), you will be eligible to apply for University funding each semester. Information on funding will be on page 13 (Council of Finance).

How to Register a New Student Organization

If you would like to start a new Registered Student Organization. We accept applications on a rolling basis. Please follow the steps below:

- 1- Email slu@uhd.edu to begin the process of creating your student group, include the following information.
 - a. Names and Student ID Numbers of 3 members currently enrolled in UHD,
 - b. Minimum GPA requirement of 2.0 for active members and 2.5 for Officers. Must include a President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer.
 - c. Must have a constitution, sample can be provided.
 - d. Must have a full-time UHD faculty or staff member as advisory.
- 2- Once you have met the minimum requirements and have been added to Campus Groups, you must attend an Org Training with the SLI Staff.
 - a. If group is started after April 1, will attend the Fall training.
 - b. If group is started after November 1, will attend Spring Training.
 - c. If group is created during other windows, we can provide a meeting with SLI Staff.

New Student Organizations will not be eligible for University funding until they have been in good standing for two semesters at UHD. They will be eligible for seed funding through Student Leadership and Involvement, please speak with the staff upon registration for full details.

How to Reregister a Student Organization

This process will be used if you RSO has gone inactive on Campus Group for any reason.

- 1- You will be required to meet all minimum requirements for active groups.
 - a. Minimum of 3 members currently enrolled in UHD,
 - b. Minimum GPA requirement of 2.0 for active members and 2.5 for Officers. Must include a President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer.
 - i. Note: This does not apply to Organizations with national standards
 - c. Must have a constitution, sample can be provided.
 - d. Must have a full-time UHD faculty or staff member as advisory.
- 2- You will be required to meet with Student Leadership and Involvement Staff to go over any issues/concerns from being on inactive status.
- 3- Will not be able to apply for funding until you have been in good standing for two semesters.
 - a. Will be required to attend all Council of Organizations Meetings for the two semesters.
 - b. May be eligible for seed funding through Student Leadership and Involvement, please meet with staff upon reregistration.
- 4- Once you are made active, you will be required to participate in Org Training.
 - a. If group is started after April 1, will attend the Fall training.
 - b. If group is started after November 1, will attend Spring Training.
 - c. If group is created during other windows, we can provide a meeting with SLI Staff.

Banking and Financial Information for RSOs

RSOs who collect member dues, host events, or travel may need to acquire a checking account. The process for applying for a checking account is listed below.

Checking Accounts

Student organizations in need of a checking account must first apply for a tax identification number through the Internal Revenue Service. Organizations apply online through the [IRS website](#). Once the tax identification number has been assigned, groups must fill out the appropriate forms with a local bank to receive the checking account. RSOs at UHD are encouraged to hold officer transition meetings from year to year. Funds in a bank account can become unavailable to the organization if student officers leave and do not introduce the new student officers to the bank as signatory authorities for their account.

The following Banking Institutions are currently being used by our groups and organizations.

- TDECU
- Regions
- First Service Credit Union
- PNC

Please note, we do not endorse any financial institution, this is to give you an example of who current organization are using. It is best practice to consider an institution that is federally insured through FDIC.

Funding through the Council of Finance

Each semester Student Leadership and Involvement will provide an opportunity to request funding through our Council of Finance. Each semesters funding availability will be dependent upon many factors, so be sure to check your gator emails from SLI to get full information each semester.

Typical Schedule for Council of Finance

- The application period will typically happen in the first two weeks of September in Fall and first two weeks of February in Spring, decisions will be finalized by end of those months.
- Funding will be for any events after October 1 in Fall and March 1 in Spring.
 - Any events happening before those dates will need to be self-funded by each student organization

Application Process

Each application process will be similar, you will be allowed one application per student group each semester. You will be required to submit all information needed in the application at the time of submission. Any information missing may lead to rejection of application. If you have questions during open application window, please reach out to Student Leadership and Involvement Staff.

The application will be sent through Campus Groups to the Gator Emails of Officers in each organization with a link to a survey to be completed on Campus Groups. If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please email sli@uhd.edu.

Student Government Association

The Student Government Association (SGA) is the fee-funded, representative body for all UHD students. The organization split into two components Undergraduate Student Government (USG) and Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA).

The USG represents undergraduate students in voicing concerns, promoting interests, and advocating for student life and academic concerns at the University of Houston-Downtown.

The purpose of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) is to: develop, sustain, and expand a member network that connects graduate and professional students across the University of Houston-Downtown to facilitate the sharing of information, resources, and best practices, empower our members to successfully serve their constituents, and amplify graduate students' voices.

Student Government Association

Suite N310

(713) 221-8570

www.uhd.edu/sga

UHDSGA@uhd.edu

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Campus Activities Board (CAB)

Campus Activities Board (CAB) at the University of Houston-Downtown is a student fee-funded, student run organization that provides a valuable service to all students. The mission of CAB is to meet the diverse needs of the student body by creating, planning, and producing a variety of educational, cultural, and entertaining programs. CAB provides an opportunity for all students to develop leadership skills and create long lasting friendships.

If you enjoy interacting with people and would like to have a hand in planning events at UHD, then CAB is the place for you. For more information, please email CAB@uhd.edu

Campus Activities Board

OMB S204

713-221-8573

[CAB Website](#)

Council of Organizations

The Council of Organizations (COO) is the representative body of student leaders from all student organizations represented at UHD. Attendance of at least one representative per organization is required for the Council of Organizations. The COO meets once a month during the academic year. For more information, please visit [COO Website](#)

These meetings will give you valuable information on important updates for Organizations, relating to raising funds, upcoming events, and much more.

Elections for the following years COO officers begin in April, nominations will be accepted at that time, communication about timeline and expectations will come from Student Leadership and Involvement before elections begin.

Council of Organizations

OMB S204

713-221-8573

Campus Event Space Reservations

Campus Event Space Reservations is the University of University of Houston-Downtown's reservations hub. The Events and Conferences Department serves as the main point of contact for the effective implementation of university and external events.

- For **internal/university** requests, please see our [Internal Event Space Request Form](#).
- For **virtual events**, please see our [Virtual Event Request Form](#).
- For **classroom requests**, please see our [Classroom & Computer Lab Request Form](#).
- Please see below for all event request timeline guidelines:
- Reservations need to be made no later than 10 days in advance.
- Details of your event (layout, linens, etc.) needs to be relayed to the Events Department no later than 10 days prior to the event.
- Please note that while reservations will accept event requests up to 10 days prior to your event date, the Multimedia department requires at least 3 weeks notice to support your event. Anything under this timeframe could result in no Multimedia support.
- All events held on the UHD campus by a registered UHD student organization must be attended by the faculty/staff advisor at all times.
- Should your event be an approved “gun-free area” by the Office of the Provost, it is the responsibility of the requesting party to make arrangements for securing and posting mobile/temporary signage. The requesting party must follow the UHD Police Department procedure authorized in section 4.4.2 of [the Campus Carry policy](#).
- Keys and fobs to all locked campus areas will only be issued to UHD faculty and staff between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- For **external** groups or individuals interested in renting campus space for non-University functions, a general inquiry may be sent to reservations@uhd.edu for more information. **Please be aware we require an 8-week minimum to process external requests.**

Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Contact Information

Phone: 713-221-8580

UHD Police: 713-221-8065

Email: reservations@uhd.edu

Mailing Address

University of Houston-Downtown

Attn: Events and Conferences

One Main Street, Suite S600

Houston, TX 77002

Student Group Resources and Benefits

Registered Student Organizations can get an Organization Locker in our Student Organizations Room (S270).

To get a locker please come to the lounge in S204 and talk with the workers at the desk.

In this room there is also a copier and printer for you to use free of charge. You may hold meetings in this room, but there are no reservations.

There is a conference room in S204 that you may reserve, please contact sli@uhd.edu for availability.

If you need to reserve a meeting space elsewhere on campus, please visit page 18 for detailed information on that process.

RSO's are also able to check out items from our storage space for events, which may include:

- Popcorn Machine
- Cotton Candy Machine
- Snow cone Machine
- Coolers (Ice Machine is also in Storage)
- Various Decorations
- Cornhole
- Board Games
- Giant Connect 4
- Giant Jenga
- Axe Throwing

** This list is not inclusive and subject to availability, please visit the front desk in S204 to learn more.

There will be a process to apply for Travel Funds for Conferences and Events important to your RSO. These details will be added at a later date. Please contact Student Leadership and Involvement for the most up to date information.

Hazing (Zero Tolerance)

The University of Houston-Downtown (“University”) is committed to maintaining an atmosphere of social and ethical responsibility. The University views responsible preinitiation activity as a positive educational approach to preparation for student organization membership. This policy addresses hazing activity, which is antithetical to the University’s commitment to a positive educational environment.

Participation in hazing activities is against the law. Violation of the University’s hazing policy, whether on or off campus, may subject participants, including students and organizations, to arrest, prosecution and/or disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion of students and the revocation of an organization’s registration and/or recognition at the University. Consent to or acquiescence in hazing activity is not a defense.

The University strictly prohibits participation in hazing activities by any party, regardless of the existence of consent. Hazing activities do not contribute to the positive development or welfare of students. The University of Houston-Downtown recognizes the act of hazing as illegal, irresponsible, intolerable and inconsistent with the principles of higher education and basic human development.

Accordingly, this policy strictly prohibits participation in hazing activities by all parties. This policy includes a summary of the provisions of the law as it relates to hazing.

Full Policy can be found: [PS-04.A.07 - Hazing \(uhd.edu\)](#)

Contact Us (Student Leadership and Involvement Full Time Staff)



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