

Georgia Highlands College  
Office of Student Life

# **RSO Advisors Resource Manual**

Updated August 2009

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## **Contact Information**

### **Locations:**

The Office of Student Life – Floyd Campus  
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706-295-6363  
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The Office of Student Life – Cartersville Campus  
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### **Mission Statement:**

The Office of Student Life seeks to develop the Georgia Highlands College student body through a series of co-curricular activities that promote experiential learning, leadership, wellness, volunteerism, and an appreciation of the arts. The OSL encourages and provides student involvement opportunities to complement the academic programs of study and to enhance the overall college experience for all GHC students.

### **Responsibilities of the Office of Student Life:**

The Office of Student Life (OSL) coordinates the establishment of registered student organizations (RSOs) by students and provides resources for those groups as they sponsor a wide variety of programs and events. The OSL also handles the student judicial process, schedules general entertainment events, offers leadership programs and oversees the reservation and use of the Student Center and Solarium

(Floyd Campus) facilities. Additionally, the Floyd Campus Office of Student Life houses the offices for student publications, governance, and the service learning and volunteer center.

## **Registered Student Organization General Policies**

### **What is a Registered Student Organization?**

A registered student organization (RSO) is a group of students who, with the assistance of a fulltime faculty or staff volunteer, have petitioned the student government, faculty and administration to be registered as an official student organization.

### **Creating a New Student Organization:**

The establishment of a RSO is processed through the Office of Student Life. Registered student organizations cannot discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, or other protected classes. A New Organization Packet is available in the Office of Student Life and the Director and Assistant Director of Student Life can address any questions you may have. The following information must be submitted to the Office of Student Life before the registration process can take place:

- Application for Recognition
- Proposed Constitution
- Membership List of interested students/officers

Once application materials have been submitted to the OSL, the pending RSO may receive provisional approval from the Director of Student Life to host member recruitment events. This provisional approval will also allow the pending RSO to post flyers in accordance with the OSL Posting Policy and promote recruitment events on the materials distributed by the OSL at the discretion of the Director of Student Life. RSO application forms are provided in Appendix A & Appendix B.

### **New Student Organization Approval Process**

In order to gain official registered status, RSO applications must pass through the following approval sequence: Student Engagement Council, Student Affairs Committee, entire faculty, Vice President of Student Affairs and the President of the College.

Upon completing the formal registration process and gaining approval by the college President, new organizations will be eligible to use the phrase “Georgia Highlands College” when referring to the organization. Additionally, RSOs have access to facilities and certain equipment maintained by the OSL.

### **Recruitment**

The OSL hosts two major RSO recruiting events each year. Club Roundup, GHC’s activity fair, is typically planned for the second week of classes during the fall and spring semesters on the Floyd and Cartersville Campuses. Each RSO is encouraged to have a tabletop display with promotional information and a sign-up sheet.

**Annual Report**

All RSOs are required to submit annual reports detailing the organization's activities during the academic year. Although not required, RSOs are encouraged to compile reports at the end of each semester to ease the burden of documenting all of the organization's activities once a year. The Semester Report of Organization Activities and Accomplishments form is provided in Appendix H.

**Dissolution Policy**

RSOs which fail to submit annual reports risk dissolution. RSOs which desire to formally dissolve may contact the Director of Student Life for information regarding this process.

## **Event Planning and Promotion**

### **Planning an Event**

RSOs should submit event forms at least four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled date of the event. Doing so allows ample time to coordinate room reservations, secure needed tables, chairs and/or AV equipment, acquire approval for food purchases and adequately promote the event. The event form is provided in Appendix C.

The OSL will assist in the coordination of space, equipment and promotion; however, the RSO is responsible for setting up and returning equipment following the event.

RSOs are not required to submit event forms for meetings; however, event details should be shared with the OSL in order to promote the event via mass emails and the Flush Flash.

### **Food at Events**

Food for RSO events may be paid for with RSO funding from student activity fees only if the event is open to all GHC students. Other events may receive food approval depending on special circumstances surrounding the event. All food requests must be documented on the required OSL event form.

### **Alcohol Policy**

Alcohol is not allowed at student events hosted by RSOs. Additionally, the consumption of alcoholic beverages at events where students are attending as a representative of a RSO or the college is prohibited.

### **Freedom of Speech**

Georgia Highlands College values and encourages the right of all members of our community to exercise free speech. The College maintains a position of neutrality as to the content of any written material or presentation displayed on its campuses under this policy.

In accordance with this right, and in order to responsibly protect the rights of all citizens, the College reserves the right to administer the time, place, and manner of certain free speech activities. Anyone wishing to hold a march, rally, make a speech, or conduct any other similar expressive activity on Georgia Highlands College's property that is not otherwise connected with the academic work or other activities authorized by the College shall contact the Director of Student Life. Requests will be reviewed on the basis of assuring equal opportunity for all persons; preserving order within the College's property; and providing a secure environment to the individuals exercising freedom of expression.

### **Promoting an Event**

As previously stated, the OSL will assist in RSO event promotions based on the information provided via the event form. Additionally, RSOs are encouraged to promote events with flyers. Please note that flyers must be approved by the OSL and adhere to the posting policies provided in this manual.

## **Student Life Calendar and Flush Flash**

All RSOs are eligible to have their events included in the Campus Life Calendar and on the bi-weekly Flush Flash. Details must be submitted to the OSL at least four (4) weeks before the event for inclusion in these advertisement media.

## **Posting Policy**

The following guidelines were developed to assist organizations and individuals posting flyers, banners and other types of materials on the Georgia Highlands College campuses. In order to ensure your items are posted in the correct location, please adhere to the information listed below. Items found in the wrong locations will be removed and destroyed.

All signs, flyers and other paper announcements not produced and identified by a college department or division must be submitted to the Director or Assistant Director of Student Life to be approved and stamped prior to posting. All unstamped materials will be removed and destroyed. Have the template or original copy stamped prior to making copies. There are a number of bulletin boards placed around each campus that may be used for posting signs and notices pertaining to club/organization news. Please see the OSL for a list of acceptable public bulletin boards for posting. Each club is responsible for the posting and the removal of its signs. Organizations are required to have signs removed within 24 hours after an advertised event. Please be certain to assign the removal of outdated notices! Organizations and individuals should note that some area bulletin boards are for the specific use of a particular department, division, or organization. Please respect this and place flyers and posters only on those for public or your organization's use.

NO postings are permitted on glass entrance and exit doors or windows. NO postings are permitted in any manner (tape or tack) on interior sheet-rock walls on any campus location. Special permission must be granted by the OSL to hang posters on in bathrooms. All postings must be hung on brick walls using masking tape. Please do not use scotch tape, duct tape or other tapes. Doing so damages the surfaces and will result in the group no longer being allowed to post signs. Do not staple, tape, or post items on trees, light poles, telephone poles, trashcans, benches or exterior walls of buildings.

## **Printing with Organization Funds**

RSO advisors may secure a data card for printing purposes from the Data Card Office. For more information, contact Lisa Holder at [lholder@highlands.edu](mailto:lholder@highlands.edu). This card will allow you to print from copiers on campus with RSO funds.

Professional print jobs may also be competed in-house. Contact Ken Davis for more information at [kdavis@highlands.edu](mailto:kdavis@highlands.edu). The Required Work Order Form for these print jobs is provided in Appendix I.

## **Logo Usage and Guidelines**

Use of the Georgia Highlands College logo and wordmark is overseen by the college relations office in accordance with the College's graphics standards manual and must be approved before publication.

**Storage**

Floyd Campus – Limited storage space is available for RSO supplies on the on Floyd Campus and may be reserved by contacting the OSL.

Other Campuses – Storage space for RSOs is only available on the Floyd Campus. Due to minimal office space, or the complete lack thereof, on other campuses, the OSL cannot provide storage space at the Cartersville Campus, SPSU Site, Paulding Site or Douglasville Site at this time.



## **Financial Resources and Policies**

### **RSO Funding**

RSOs that wish to request funding from student activities fees may do so each spring. Award amounts are determined by the Student Engagement Council based on the request of the RSO, previous RSO campus involvement and proposed RSO campus involvement. Once a recommendation has been made by the SEC, the final approval comes from the President of the College. The forms required for this process are provided to advisors by the OSL each spring.

RSOs also have the option of collecting membership dues and fundraising to financially support their activities.

### **Fundraising**

Organizations may fundraise to pay for supplies and travel. All fundraising activities conducted by organizations must be cleared through the Director or Assistant Director of Student Life. RSOs are encouraged to fundraise on campus through the sale of goods and services. RSOs may fund raise on campus following these guidelines:

Contact the OSL well in advance to reserve space and time in order to avoid conflicting fundraisers on the same date;

No two organizations on the same campus will be allowed to conduct fundraisers on the same day without prior approval from the organization that first was approved to fundraise on that date;

The organization must provide information upon request or at the fundraiser as to how the proceeds will be used;

The organization must return the area to its normal state following completion of the fundraiser;

Materials sold must be approved by the OSL prior to the fundraiser.

The fundraising policy may change without notice to individual students. Advisors to organizations will be notified of any policy changes.

### **Special Funding**

In certain situations, RSOs may qualify for funding from the GHC Foundation and the OSL Special Activity Fund. Funding from these accounts is typically granted for a special situation, such as travel to a conference to receive an award on behalf of an RSO. If you think that your request may qualify for special funding, feel free to contact the OSL with questions. The forms required for special finding are provided in Appendix E and Appendix F.

### **Agency Accounts**

RSOs that collect funds via membership dues and/or fundraising are required by USG policy to have an agency account on campus. Agency account spending is not as strictly regulated as student activity fee funding awarded by the Student Engagement Council. To establish an

agency account, RSO advisors must submit the form provided in Appendix G to the Business Office.

### **Reimbursement**

**ORIGINAL RECEIPTS ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL REIMBURSEMENTS.**

RSO expenses under \$50 may be reimbursed via petty cash through the Business Office. Such reimbursements are limited to one \$50 or less purchase per day. Please note that purchases may not be split in order to fall below the \$50 limit. Please see the Business Office for petty cash reimbursement information.

Approved expenses above \$50 will be reimbursed via check and may take up to 2-3 weeks for processing by the Business Office. The reimbursement form for expenses above \$50 is provided in Appendix J.

**ALL FOOD PURCHASES REQUIRING REIMBURSEMENT MUST BE PREAPPROVED.**  
The event form has a section specifically for food purchase requests.

### **Prepayment**

Some expenses related to food and travel may qualify for prepayment in which the college issues a check to qualified vendors totaling the expected expense amount. Contact the OSL for more information regarding this option.

### **Purchasing Guidelines**

The University System of Georgia and Georgia Highlands College have numerous policies regulating purchases with institutional funding. Advisors are encouraged to process their own purchasing for RSOs, versus relying on the OSL, but may contact the OSL with specific questions regarding purchasing policies. Please keep in mind that the OSL staff is first and foremost responsible for the business activities and transactions of the office and not those of RSOs. While the OSL staff will be available to assist advisors with purchase requests and reimbursement information, keep in mind that these requests do not take precedence over the staff member's immediate tasks.

If you would like to receive one-on-one training for purchasing, please contact the OSL and our staff will gladly assist you in scheduling the training.

### **Contracts**

Only the Vice President of Finance and Administration has the authority to enter the College or a RSO into a legally binding contract. If a contract for food services, entertainment, etc. is required for a RSO event, the advisor must submit it to the OSL for initial approval and submission to the VP of Finance and Administration.

## **Traveling with Students**

### **Behavior**

Both students and advisors are expected to behave in accordance with the College's Code of Conduct while on campus as well as when attending off campus events as a representative of the College. Such events include but are not limited to retreats, conferences, off campus fundraisers, etc.

### **Waivers**

Any student traveling on behalf of the college or as a representative on a RSO must submit waivers prior to traveling. RSO advisors are required to maintain copies of all travel waivers and to forward copies to the OSL. The waivers required by the OSL are provided in Appendix D.

### **College Vehicles**

RSO advisors are allowed to reserve the college vehicles for travel related to their volunteer position as a RSO advisor and may transports RSO members for organization related activities. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO OPERATE COLLEGE VEHICLES AT ANY TIME!** Mileage will be paid out from the RSO's account in accordance with current travel policies and amounts.

NOTE: Advisors are encouraged the use college vehicles when possible. If a college vehicle is unavailable, contact the Business Office for a copy of the institutional automobile insurance card should you need roadside assistance while traveling on behalf of the college.

### **Travel Forms**

Any student or advisor traveling off campus as part of an approved RSO activity must submit an Authority to Travel form. These are available in the OSL of may be accessed by college employees via the Intranet. These forms should be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to traveling.

### **Food Per Diems**

The Board of Regents regulates employees' and students' allowances and per diem amounts for food purchases for both events and when traveling more than 30 miles away from their home campus. Optional meals purchased when conference or meeting registration fees cover included meals are not reimbursable. Similarly, breakfast is not a reimbursable meal when continental breakfast is provided by the hotel at which you are staying.

Note that you may spend more than the maximum allowable reimbursement amount, but you will incur an out of pocket expense. The amounts listed in the table below are maximum reimbursable food expenditures for students and employees.

Examples of Meal Per Diem Eligibility for Day of Departure:

- A RSO advisor or member who departs for overnight travel **prior to 6:30 a.m.** is eligible for per diem for **breakfast** on the day of departure.
- A RSO advisor or member who departs for overnight travel **prior to 11:00 a.m.** is eligible for per diem for **lunch** on the day of departure.
- A RSO advisor or member who departs for overnight travel **prior to 5:30 p.m.** is eligible for per diem for **dinner** on the day of departure.

Examples of Meal Per Diem Eligibility for Day of Return:

- A RSO advisor or member who returns from overnight travel **after 6:30 a.m.** is eligible for per diem for **breakfast** on the day of return.
- A RSO advisor or member who returns from overnight travel **after 1:30 p.m.** is eligible for per diem for **lunch** on the day of return.
- A RSO advisor or member who returns from overnight travel **after 7:30 p.m.** is eligible for per diem for **dinner** on the day of return.

**Meal Expense Grid**

<b>Number of Meals Allowed</b>	<b>Meals Allowed</b>	<b>Daily Maximum Expense</b>
3 Meals Per Day	Breakfast/Lunch Dinner	\$28.00
2 Meals Per Day	Breakfast/Lunch	\$13.00
	Lunch/Dinner	\$21.00
1 Meal Per Day	Breakfast	\$6.00
	Lunch	\$7.00
	Dinner	\$15.00

## **Additional Information**

### **SEC**

The Student Engagement Counsel (SEC) is Georgia Highlands College's model of student government. It is composed of student representatives and faculty/staff representatives who work together for the betterment of the student body and its interests. The student representatives of the SEC make up the Presidents' Leadership Council, which are the student presidents from all the student clubs and organizations at all campuses; plus a limited number of non-president representative slots called "student-at-large positions. Students interested in serving the "at-large" position should contact the Office of Student Life for an application. Although the SEC includes representatives from faculty and staff, a student representative serves as chair of the SEC, and is selected by the other Council members. The primary purpose of the SEC is to serve as the voice of the Student Body and act as a liaison between students and college administration in order to help formulate just and proper regulations pertaining to student government and to assist those persons designated to enforce those regulations. The SEC and PLC operate under the Constitution of the Student Body of Georgia Highlands College. The SEC also assists the Office of Student Life with its activities and events in a manner that strives to result in the greatest possible advantage and satisfaction of all students, both as individuals and as part of the Student Body as a whole.

Contact: [sec@highlands.edu](mailto:sec@highlands.edu)

### **Feedback**

RSO advisors and members are encouraged to provide feedback to the OSL. If at any point you would like to schedule a private meeting with the Director or Assistant Director of Student Life, please let us know.

### **Updates and Policy Changes**

Policies affecting RSOs often change and sometimes do so with little notice. The OSL staff will inform RSO advisors of changes as soon as possible and will provide amended copies of such policies for inclusion in your Resource Manual.

Special thanks for all that you do in serving GHC and our student body!

## Appendix Index

Appendix A.....New Organization Application/Renewal Form (2 pages)

Appendix B.....Fill-in-the-Blank Constitution (3 pages)

Appendix C.....GHC Student Life Event Form

Appendix D.....Student Travel Waivers (2 pages)

Appendix E.....OSL Special Activity Proposal/Funding Request Form (2 pages)

Appendix F.....GHC Foundation Funding Request Form (2 pages)

Appendix G.....Agency Account Set-up Form

Appendix H.....Semester Report of Organization Activities and Accomplishments Form

Appendix I.....Publications & Printing Work Order Form

Appendix J.....Reimbursement/Pre-payment Form