I. Policy

The University of South Carolina recognizes both the right to exist and the mutual benefit of existence of co-curricular activities. The university, in the registration process set forth, seeks the freedom of existence for student organizations and ensures that designated privileges and support are available equally to all organizations that uphold the registration requirements. The university does not, however, automatically endorse the mission, goals or purpose of any organization.

A. Definitions

1. Student Organization – a student organization shall be defined as any group, consisting of at least 70% University of South Carolina - Columbia students (the remaining 30% of membership must be faculty or staff) who desire to come together to support a particular view, explore common interests or accomplish identified tasks, which do not:

   a. have illegal goals and objectives;

   b. advocate or support the overthrow of the United States Government;

   c. propose or participate in activities which would violate regulations of the Board of Trustees, the university, or federal, state, or local laws and regulations, or materially disrupt activities and discipline of the university;

   d. advocate incitement of imminent lawlessness which may produce such action referred to in (c) above; or
e. discriminate in educational or employment opportunities or decisions for qualified persons on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or veteran status.

Any groups existing on campus that wish to use university facilities and/or services and that fulfill the above description must be registered. Only groups that are registered will have access to campus facilities and/or services.

2. Registration - Registration shall be defined as the collection and recording of specific information required of qualified student organizations as defined in section I. The registration, in turn, affords those organizations certain privileges.

The university views student organizations as private affiliations and does not endorse the mission, goals, or purpose of the organization. The University of South Carolina does not allow its name to be used in the organization's name in any form or allow the organization to represent the university on behalf of the university. Registered organizations exist only on the University of South Carolina campus. Registered student organizations shall be referred to as "__________, a registered organization at the University of South Carolina."

a. Denial of Registration - organizations which are not in compliance with criteria in Section I-A-1, a-e, or who do not appropriately complete the registration procedures will be denied registration. Student Organizations may not be denied registration based on similarity of purpose to previously registered organizations. The names of such organizations must be different.

b. Loss of Registration Status - a registered student organization may lose its status of registration and all privileges associated with the registration status if any of the following occur:

i. a student organization submits a written notification of its disestablishment,

ii. a constitutional provision deactivates an organization as of a certain date,

iii. a student organization fails to re-register by the second Friday in September of each year.

iv. a student organization fails to fill responsibilities of a registered student organization per section 1.B.2 of this policy.

3. Privileges and Responsibilities- To function as a part of the university rather than as an outside organization of citizens, a student organization must be registered to obtain the following privileges:
a. Reserve campus facilities
b. Conduct meetings on campus
c. Solicit funds/request funds (if eligible)
d. Use university services and resources
e. Use of a USC campus address and email account

When an organization becomes registered it accepts the responsibility of adhering not only to federal and state law but university regulations as well.

B. Grant of Registration

1. Acceptance of a Registration – Acceptance of a registration by a student organization shall constitute an agreement by the organization to observe and obey all federal, state and university laws and policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.

2. Responsibilities of a Registered Organization

a. The organization will seek approval from the Leadership and Service Center for changes made in its constitution.

b. The organization will register all changes that occur within the organization. The names, addresses and phone numbers of officers as well as the name of the advisor must be kept up-to-date in the Leadership and Service Center, 227 Russell House.

c. Fraternal Organizations - Prior to a registered organization being classified as a fraternal organization and exempt from Title IX requirements, official endorsement must occur from the appropriate Greek governing body. For more information contact Greek Life, 115 Russell House.

d. Sports Clubs – Prior to a registered organization being classified as a sport club, documentation must be completed according to university policy STAF 3.24 Sport Club Program with the Office of Campus Recreation.

C. Membership

Membership in registered student organizations shall be limited to persons officially connected with the University of South Carolina - Columbia as faculty, staff, or students. Students enrolled in the spring semester under the above conditions and indicating intent
to continue (students who have preregistered) in the fall semester as well as students enrolled in summer school are eligible for summer membership. Any persons not meeting the above requirements shall not be eligible for membership in registered student organizations.

D. Annual Renewal

1. All registered student organizations must renew their registration annually.

2. Organizations must renew their registration by the second Friday in September of each year.

3. The Leadership and Service Center shall be responsible for the annual re-registration process.

4. Re-registration Procedures are as follows:
   a. An informational email shall be sent to all registered organizations 15 calendar days prior to the deadline. This email shall notify the organizations of the re-registration process, required meetings, and direct them to the registration form online.
   b. Advertisements shall be placed in the student newspaper publicizing the re-registration meeting times and place. Advertisements will be placed to allow for appropriate notification of the re-registration period. Such advertisements shall constitute official notification.
   c. There shall be at least three re-registration workshops during the ten (10) working days immediately preceding the re-registration deadline. A representative from each registered organization must attend and submit a completed registration packet, including the advisor's signature on the advisor’s confirmation form. The advisor must be a permanent full-time faculty or administrative staff member (band 4 or above with exempt status). Registered religious workers and military personnel may serve as an advisor with the approval of the Department of Student Life. Graduate students are not eligible to advise student organizations.

5. Failure to Re-register- Failure by an organization to renew its registration by the second Friday in September shall terminate its privileges to operate on the University campus, utilize University facilities, or receive monies from the Student Activity Fee or any other student generated revenue.

E. Summer Procedures

1. Each organization shall designate an individual to conduct the affairs of the organization during the summer and interim periods.
2. The name, address, and telephone number of this individual shall be filed with the Leadership and Service Center, 227 Russell House.

F. Disciplinary Procedures

See University Policy STAF 6.26 Student Code of Conduct (http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf626.pdf) for information regarding disciplinary procedures for violations of university policies, procedures, rules, and regulations by registered organizations.

G. Advisors

To encourage positive interaction between both teaching and administrative staff and students involved in student organizations, every student organization is required to have an advisor. The advisor must be selected from permanent full-time faculty or administrative staff members (band 4 or above with exempt status) at the University of South Carolina - Columbia or the USC School of Medicine. Registered religious workers and approved military personnel may also advise organizations. Graduate students are not eligible to fulfill this requirement. The Leadership and Service Center will assist advisors with questions concerning their organizations. Please see university policy STAF 3.01 Advisors for Student Organizations (http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf301.pdf) for more information.

H. Leadership

1. GPA Regulations

a. Any student member of a registered student organization who has been elected, selected or appointed an officer, as defined by his/her organizational constitution, must maintain the cumulative GPA requirement for graduation, maintain full time student status and remain in good standing in their respective college before he/she is eligible to assume that role.

b. Students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirements or are not full time students at the time of elections may not serve in a leadership capacity. In the event a student is elected to office without the minimum GPA requirements or full time status, the organization must hold a re-election and notify the Leadership and Service Center with the officer changes within two weeks.

c. Organizations must have at least two officers and information concerning these officers must be on file with the Leadership and Service Center.
d. Organizations not meeting the above requirements will be placed on probation and may have their registered status revoked.

2. Faculty/Staff/Spouses as Officers

Faculty and staff, nor their spouses, shall be eligible to hold elected or appointed office in a student organization, unless they are full-time students.

I. Registration Procedure

1. Students wishing to form a new student organization should contact the Leadership and Service Center located in 227 Russell House.

a. Representative(s) of the proposed organization must meet with the Leadership and Service Center staff. The student(s) will receive:

i. an Outline of Student Organization Responsibilities and Privileges granted to student organizations and orientation to services, resources, policies and procedures.

ii. a consultation on starting a student organization and a copy of constitution guidelines,

iii. a tutorial on how to use the online student organization system

iv. the link to the student organization application form,

v. the advisor confirmation form.

b. A constitution (including required membership clause), the Application Form, and the Advisor Confirmation Form must be submitted and reviewed by the Leadership and Service Center.

c. Once it has been determined that:

i. no violation of federal, state, or local law or university policy exist in the proposed constitution and all necessary clauses are included (membership, non-discrimination, GPA requirements for student leaders, and faculty/staff advisor); and

ii. the application form has been completed and correctly filled out;

iii. the organization has certified that membership requirements are non-discriminatory (except where exempt by Title IX); and
iv. a full-time faculty or administrative staff member has agreed to serve as the advisor to the organization; through the completion of the Advisor Confirmation Form. The Leadership and Service Center will recommend to the Associate Vice President for Student Life that the organization be registered.

d. Upon final approval by the Associate Vice President for Student Life, and when the application form is completed and returned to the Leadership and Service Center, the organization will be considered a registered organization and notification of the organization's registration status will be sent to the organization as well as specified departments/service areas on campus.

e. Upon submission of the online application packet and signed advisor confirmation form and all questions or problems resolved, the registration process will take approximately five working days.

f. Should an organization be denied registration the representatives will be notified in writing no more than two days after all criteria has been turned in and reviewed. The organization may appeal to the Associate Vice President for Student Life.

2. Organizations Pending Approval

Once a prospective student organization has submitted the online application form, signed advisor confirmation form, and the constitution to the Leadership and Service Center and before the organization is registered, the organization must follow the guidelines below:

a. It may meet on campus no more than three times in the Russell House University Union.

b. These meetings shall be for the sole purpose of organizing. The organization shall not sponsor speakers, fund-raising efforts or any program or event.

c. The organization may publicize meetings and invite membership but is not eligible to use the name University of South Carolina (USC) in association with the organization. It must be specified that the meetings are for organizational purposes only.

d. Failure to follow these guidelines could impact the approval/disapproval of the organization's registration.

J. Miscellaneous
1. Organizations wishing to change their constitution or affect changes in affiliation must submit these changes to the Leadership and Service Center.

2. In addition to these regulations, student publications and the student radio station are subject to regulations by the Board of Student Publications and Communications.

3. Any organization wishing to sponsor a regional or intercollegiate meeting must have such sponsorship approved by the Associate Vice President for Student Life or designee before the meeting can be held on this campus.

4. Sports clubs and Greek letter social fraternities and sororities are registered student organizations at the University. However, additional recognition criteria may be established for these organizations due to their unique relationship with the institution. For more information, contact Campus Recreation or Fraternity and Sorority Life.

II. Requests for Student Activity Funds Allocation

All registered student organizations that have been registered for 180 days are eligible to apply for student activity funds with the exception of residence hall governments. Allocations are made based on the current student government finance codes.

Organizations wishing to request funds for the upcoming fiscal year should submit their applications to the Student Government Office within the deadlines established by the Senate Finance Committee as advertised in The Daily Gamecock. Allocations are made by the Senate Finance Committee, subject to review by the student senate and the president of the university. Application forms and other eligibility information may be obtained from the Student Government Office.

The following criteria are used by the Finance Committee for allocating the student activity fees include:

A. Impact on the University Community

1. The number of students being served by the group's activities to estimate costs and expenses.

2. The number of students participating in the organization itself to estimate costs and expenses.

B. Activities

1. The number and scope of services provided in order to estimate costs and expenses.
2. The estimated costs and expenses of the service provided or the event to be held. Participation must be open to all students.

The event must not duplicate events/programs provided by other university departments or programs.

C. Other

Student organizations must not be denied funding nor given preferential treatment in funding based upon the viewpoint of the student organization requesting the funds, as outlined in University Policy and Federal, State or local law.

III. Related Policies

STAF 6.26 Student Code of Conduct  
http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf626.pdf

STAF 3.01 Advisors for Student Organizations  
http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf301.pdf

STAF 3.02 Alcohol Policy and Guidelines for the University Community  
http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf302.pdf

STAF 3.22 Fund Raising by Student Organizations  
http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf322.pdf

STAF 3.24 Sports Club Program  
http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf324.pdf

IV. Reason for Revision

Policy revised to reflect definitions and oversight of student organizations including role of Leadership and Service Center and eligibility requirements for advisors.