The Role of the Advisor

Every campus club must have a relationship with a faculty or staff member who has agreed to serve as the club’s advisor. The advisor’s job is to ensure that the college fulfills its obligations to its students and that club activities conform to the California Education Code, the policies of the Citrus Community College District and the constitutions of the Inter-Club Council and the Associated Students of Citrus College.

There are a number of things that an effective club advisor can and should be prepared to do. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- To be present at all meetings whether or not official business is being discussed and/or voted upon, and to provide guidance as to policies and procedures.
- To serve as the official representative of the college to the club.
- To work closely with the club to ensure a cooperative relationship between the advisor and the club members.
- To help the club officers understand their roles and duties.
- To help students understand and apply democratic principles within their own organizations and in working with others.
- To read and understand the policies and regulations of the college and Associated Students as they pertain to student organizations.
- To represent the club’s interests to various campus groups or individuals.
- To be present at all activities after 5pm, off-campus and weekends.
- To give particular attention to the financial activities of the club. Specifically to prevent it from incurring debts that it is unable to pay and will become the responsibility of subsequent members. *Note: Advisors must sign all check requests and club minutes.*
- Facilitate leadership transition within the club. Since dynamics change with the coming and going of student leaders, you help maintain the continuity.
- Assume the roles of motivator, mentor, planner, counselor and a support
- **ENJOY YOURSELF AND GROW FROM YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE STUDENTS!!!**
There are also a number of things that an advisor should not do in advising a club. These include, but are not limited to:

- Run the club for an extended period of time.
- Allow the club and its activities to keep you from your assigned job duties.
- Do the major share of the work in getting activities going. This is not to say that you shouldn’t do any work.
- Hesitate to provide constructive criticism when it is deemed necessary, nor should you withhold praise and acknowledgment for accomplishments.
- Finance the club. Advancing money is OK, but make sure you will be reimbursed soon.
- Be a “buddy” to the students. It is important to maintain some distance from students. Professionalism first.
- Do everything yourself or try to navigate your way through uncharted waters alone. The Office of Student Life staff is here to help you whenever and however needed.

Some Other Basic Guidelines

- Advisors should realize that interest, creativity and enthusiasm are contagious and attempt to infect everyone.
- An individual assumes the advisor’s role voluntarily; however, even though serving as a volunteer, they are expected to uphold the best interests of the college.
- The voluntary association between advisors and their respective organizations should continue as long as both parties believe the relationship is productive and mutually satisfactory. When such a relationship no longer exists, the advisor should resign.
- Advisors should realize that students often may not accept their advice and challenge it; this should not be interpreted as an indication that their services are no longer needed.
- Advisors should expect to be asked to serve as a counselor for individuals with personal problems unrelated to their organizational affiliation. However, there are limits as to how much you should do before referring the student to a professional counselor.
How Can the Advisor Help The Club Leaders?

- Sit Down in an informal conference where you will not be interrupted and talk over their plans. Explain your role and responsibility while demonstrating yourself as a resource for the club activities. In order to avoid possible difficulties, ask that you be sought for opinion before important decisions are made for the club. Explain that talking things over before a meeting will enable the advisor to stay out of the discussions during the meeting.

- Bring awareness to the student leader about certain factors within the group:
  - The varying needs, interests, attitudes and sensitivities
  - The sub-groups, loyalties, antagonisms and relationships between members
  - The social, ethical and religious backgrounds of the group members
  - Established customs
  - Help them know what to do when certain group responses occur, such as lapse of interest, griping, antagonism and selfish minority demands

- Help them to develop certain traits:
  - Objectivity
  - Impartiality
  - Diplomacy
  - Open-mindedness
  - Restraint
  - Sense of humor
  - Friendliness and warmth towards others
  - Sensitivity to needs of the group and individual members
  - Freedom from desire to dominate
  - Imagination resourcefulness
  - Enthusiasm
• Teach the theory of leadership and authority:
  a.) The individual decides obeisance, acceptance and authority.
  b.) Decision for authority rests with those who receive it.
    ❖ Communication must be understood
    ❖ Must be compatible with personal interests
    ❖ Must show full knowledge
    ❖ Receiver must be able to comply physically and mentally
    ❖ Receiver must believe in its worth and its consistency with the purposes of the organization.
  ❖ Teach them certain techniques and skills in working with groups:
    o Getting the group to make decisions, based on all factors and considering all viewpoints
    o Maintaining friendly relationships in spite of disagreement
    o Showing appreciation for contributions
    o Being aware of individual motives as well as group needs
    o “Listening” well
    o Helping members become free from idea-possessiveness
    o Meeting opposition carefully and intelligently
    o Using all the channels of communication