



# Student Organization

ADVISOR GUIDE

Office of Student Activities  
2018-2019



Middlebury  
College



## ROLE OF THE ADVISOR

Every student organization at Middlebury is required to have a current full-time faculty or staff member serve as the advisor of the organization. Advisors are expected to be actively involved in the affairs of their organizations and should be willing to share ideas and insights, counsel students, and facilitate learning. An advisor provides continuity and keeps new members and officers informed of the history of the organization. Advisors should also be familiar with navigating college processes. The advisor does not control the organization nor make all the decisions for the group but provides a balanced perspective so students can make the most informed decisions for their organization. Here are some characteristics of a successful advisor:

### Advisors are...

- **Motivators:** Advisors should encourage and aid students in imagining, planning, and carrying out their goals. Advisors should also encourage all members to participate and feel invested in the org.
- **Interpreters of Policy:** Advisors often act as a guide to college policy and procedures, informing the org of any policies that might affect event or activity plans.
- **Educators:** Advisors give students the opportunity to learn and develop through experiential learning inside and outside the classroom.
- **Conflict Mediators:** When leaders or members of the student org have a difference of opinion, advisors may offer an unbiased resolution to the problem.
- **Team Builders:** Advisors help foster positive relationships and cohesion within the student organization, thereby creating a positive and inclusive environment.
- **Mentors:** Advisors are sought out not only for advice regarding organizational practices but also for assistance with personal matters.

### Advisors are not...

- **Uninvolved:** Advisors should work with student leaders to determine the best level of involvement. Advisors are encouraged to attend as many meetings and events that are expected of them. Advisors should also be familiar with the org's history and constitution.
- **Controlling:** Advisors are not the leaders of the student orgs; they are more like coaches. Encourage students to stand up and take ownership of their organization.
- **Omnipotent:** Even though students may come to advisors with all their questions, advisors cannot be expected to know everything. Advisors should be aware of important college resources and contacts and direct students appropriately.
- **Just a signature:** Advisors should always know what paper they are signing; they shouldn't sign any org documents or requests without understanding the purpose. Advisors should know the inner workings, past initiatives and future goals of the organization.

The above descriptions were adapted from *Rochester Institute of Technology Club Advisor Guide* (RIT Center for Campus Life, 2012).



## RISK MANAGEMENT

The type of liability or risk for the advisor varies greatly depending upon the type of organization. All advisors should try to anticipate any foreseeable harm that might arise out of a student org decision or situation and then discuss it with the student org leaders to minimize risks. Your presence at meetings and awareness of student org plans are essential to successful risk management. Insist that all plans consider college policies and procedures, including but not limited to travel, alcohol, hazing, open membership, and contracts. Descriptions of such college policy can be found in the Student Org Handbook and the Student Handbook. If you have any concerns regarding an org's event or activity, please contact your cluster manager to discuss next steps and possible risks.

### Antidiscrimination Policy

Middlebury College complies with applicable provisions of state and federal law which prohibit discrimination in any form, including in access to its extracurricular programs and activities, including student organizations. All members of Middlebury's community, including student org advisors are expected to promote an environment free from prohibited discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and related retaliation. Any faculty or staff member who learns of an incident of discrimination, harassment, or related retaliation involving a student must report this information to a Middlebury Human Relations Officer (see [Appendix A](#) for contact information), or the appropriate dean.

## SKILLS OF AN ADVISOR

**Institutional and organizational knowledge:**  
Be able to interpret the student org's constitution and navigate college policy.

**Risk management:**  
Be aware of any possible risks that might arise from a decision or at an event and work with students to minimize

**Active involvement:**  
Be keen on fostering leadership, ethics, teamwork, and self-discovery in the students.

## ADVISING DO'S

- Develop clear expectations of your role and relationship with the group
- Help interpret and clarify all applicable laws, ordinances, and college policies
- Empower students to make educated decisions
- Form genuine and open professional relationships with both the student org leaders and members
- Provide historical continuity for the org
- Share creative suggestions with the group and provide feedback
- Attend org events and executive board meetings
- Help members balance their academic responsibilities and activities
- Be available through office hours and appointments

## ADVISING DON'TS

- Take ownership of the student org
- Refer too hastily, but also don't attempt to handle a situation for which you don't feel prepared or informed
- Wait for students to come to you
- Make decisions for the students; instead, help them make their own choices
- Hold veto power over all decisions
- Sign any documents without reading through them or receiving context
- Let students feel afraid of failure



## WHAT YOU NEED TO BE A SUCCESSFUL ADVISOR

- Roster of student org president, treasurer, and current members
- History and understanding of the student org, its constitution and goals
- Agreement with the student org leaders on their expectations of an advisor (i.e., how many meetings and events should and can you attend)
- Student Org Handbook: This handbook, which is sent to all student org leaders, explains everything one needs to know about running a student org, including various college policies. Familiarity with this handbook is a must. It can be found at [go/studentorghandbook](http://go/studentorghandbook).
- List of important dates to remember (*available at the end of this guide*)
- Calendar of student org events and activities
- Updated profile on MiddLink (*See below for more information*)
- Contact information for your org's cluster manager and Student Activities (*See below for more information*)

## MIDDLINK

[MiddLink](#) is a valuable resource for connecting students and student organizations. An updated profile on MiddLink helps you keep track of your group's active members and provides a platform for students to find and join organizations. Groups who wish to collaborate can use MiddLink to determine current leadership and contact information. MiddLink also provides a host of other tools and resources. With MiddLink, student organizations can:

- Hold leader elections
- Customize organization banner
- Create events and sign-up forms and invite people to activities
- Post news stories about org achievements
- Share group photos and documents (e.g. budgets, inventories, constitutions, etc.)
- Create news feeds to attract prospective members
- Track attendance at your org meetings and events
- Interface with your social media accounts
- Send messages to current members in your group



To create a profile on MiddLink, visit [go/middlink](https://middlebury.collegiatelink.net/support) and click on the “Log In” button at the top right corner. Once you fill in the necessary information, you should receive an invitation to become the advisor of your org. Please remind student org leaders to check and approve the prospective students tab by clicking “Manage Roster” under “Roster” on a regular basis because first-year and current students are advised to sign up for student orgs through MiddLink. For help using MiddLink, visit our support site at: <https://middlebury.collegiatelink.net/support>.

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

### **Cluster Managers**

Each category of student organizations has been assigned a cluster manager. This person is a knowledgeable member of the student life team who will be able to answer questions about finances, policies, and procedures. Current cluster managers include:

Kristy Carpenter, *Brainerd Commons Residence Director*

Cluster: Social Houses

Doug Connelly, *Director of Outdoor Programs and Club Sports*

Cluster: Club Sports and Outdoor Pursuits

Derek Doucet, *Associate Dean of Students for Student Activities and Orientation*

Clusters: Debate and The Campus

Sophie Esser Calvi, *Associate Director of Global Food and Farm Programs*

Cluster: Food organizations

Maria Farnsworth, *Student Activities Office and Budget Manager*

Cluster: Special Interest organizations

Jennifer Herrera, *Associate Director for the Anderson Freeman Resource Center*

Cluster: Middlebury Intercultural Leaders Coalition (MILC) organizations

Sam Hurlburt, *Student Activities Technical Coordinator*

Cluster: Performing Arts organizations & WRMC

Andrea Kane, *Outdoor Programs & MiddView Trips Specialist*

Clusters: Recreation organizations

Kevin Kareckas, *Ross Commons Residence Director*

Cluster: Intercommons Council

David Kloepfer, *Assistant Director of Student Activities for Programming & Events*

Clusters: A Capella groups and MCAB

Ashley Laux, *Associate Director of the Center for Community Engagement*

Cluster: Service Cluster Board organizations

Amy McGlashan, *Director of Academic Outreach and Special Projects*

Cluster: Academic organizations

Ellen McKay, *Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life Administrative Program Coordinator*



Cluster: Religious Life Council (RLC) organizations  
Amanda Reinhardt, *Assistant Director of Orientation*

Cluster: Publications and Visual Arts organizations  
Ian Sutherland, *Dean of Cook Commons*

Cluster: Activist and Political Organizations  
Charlotte Tate, *Associate Director of the Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs*  
Cluster: Model United Nations

## Student Activities

The Student Activities team is here to support you. Appointments can also be scheduled by phone at (802) 443-3628 or email ([student\\_activities@middlebury.edu](mailto:student_activities@middlebury.edu)). Check out our website at [go/studentactivities](http://go/studentactivities) for additional resources and information.

## Important Dates

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- July 1** ○ Beginning of the new fiscal year
  - Mid-August** ○ Student Activities sends registration instructions to all orgs' primary contacts (listed in MiddLink) and org email accounts
  - August 31** ○ Mandatory student org re-registration meetings begin
  - September 14** ○ Fall Activities Fair from 4:30-6:00pm on McCullough Lawn
  - October 1** ○ SGA Student Organization Oversight Committee will begin accepting proposals for new student organizations
    - Deadline for existing student orgs to re-register through MiddLink or else be considered inactive and have budgets frozen
  - November 15** ○ Deadline for budget requests from the SGA Finance Committee
  - December 6** ○ Deadline for orgs under review by the SGA Student Organization Oversight Committee to submit materials
  - December 13** ○ Deadline to submit all vouchers and receipts for the fall semester
  - Winter Term** ○ Annual review of student orgs by the SGA Student Organization Oversight Committee
  - February 22** ○ Spring Activities Fair from 4:30-6:00pm in McCullough
  - April** ○ Budget presentations to the SGA Finance Committee begin
  - April 1** ○ Deadline for new student org applications
    - Deadline to submit new money requests to the SGA Finance Committee
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- May 6** ○ Deadline for ticketed student org performances
  - May 10** ○ Last day for all student org spending
  - May 13** ○ Deadline for distribution of spring publications
  - May 16** ○ Deadline to submit all vouchers and receipts for the spring semester
  - June 30** ○ End of the fiscal year
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