Core Principles for Elon University Student Organizations and Clubs

The process and requirements for student organizations to form and to continue to be recognized by Elon University is stated on the Student Involvement website and in the Recognized Student Organization handbook. In addition, student organizations and clubs must adhere to the following core principles:

1. Student organizations and clubs must be formed and administered by Elon students.

   Student leadership and the opportunity for student organizations/clubs to be self-governing within the policies and expectations of the university are key aspects of the learning and leadership opportunities student organizations and clubs should provide. Elon recognizes and supports student organizations and clubs as part of its educational mission. Elon faculty and staff (and in some cases approved, non-Elon personnel) are welcomed and expected to serve as advisors, but may not vote or lead the club or organization. Unless specifically approved by the Student Life Committee, non-students may not be members of student organizations and clubs, though Elon faculty and staff may be approved to participate in some of their activities, depending on the nature and mission of the student organization/club.

2. Student organizations and clubs must comply fully with the university’s non-discrimination policy:

   “The university does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, creed, sex, national or ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran’s status in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, or the operation of any of its programs.” 2015-2016 Faculty Handbook and Student Handbook

3. Student organizations and clubs must welcome as members any full-time Elon student in good academic and social standing.

   The rationale is, again, that student organizations and clubs are part of the educational enterprise of the university so that any full time student (or part-time student approved by the Director of Student Involvement), who is seriously interested in learning about and participating in a club or student organization, must be welcomed.

   There are a few exceptions to all members participating in all activities. Student organizations and clubs such as a cappella groups, dance groups, etc. may hold auditions, honor societies may set GPA requirements, and some clubs/org may set selection criteria, such as the business fraternities. In addition, some may develop and use criteria to select a smaller set of the members to represent them on certain occasions, but to the greatest extent feasible, the full membership should be included in all activities. For example, competitive groups, such as club sports, may develop and use criteria for selecting a team to travel to and participate in competitions at other schools if funds are insufficient or it is otherwise not feasible for the entire team to travel. All of these exceptions must be specified in the student organizations/clubs by-laws which must be approved by the Student Life Committee.
4. The leadership of student organizations and clubs must be elected by all members by a democratic process specified in their by-laws.

The Student Life Committee believes that as part of the educational process student organizations and clubs should engage in respectful dialogue over differences in opinions and views, and allow its members to elect the persons they deem best for leadership positions.

5. Accountability for members and officers of student organizations and clubs must be objective, and behaviorally based.

Sanctions against, or dismissal of members/officers, must be based on clearly established, written criteria in student organization/club by-laws, or manuals approved by the full membership (with the quorum and method of affirmative votes to carry business motions stated in the by-laws). Reasons for holding a student accountable may not be subjective. In addition, any conduct process must adhere to basic due process principles, including: written notice to the student that states the incorrect behavior for which the student is being charged; the opportunity for the student to prepare for and respond to the charges; and, the opportunity for the student to face the person(s) charging the student.

Student organizations/clubs which wish to request exceptions to these requirements should contact the Chair of the Student Life Committee.

_Last revised by the Student Life Committee on March 30, 2016._