

Student Organization Advising Statement

Approved by the Student Life Committee on April 9, 2020

In addition to teaching and professional activity, Elon's teaching faculty are expected to make meaningful, high-quality contributions to the life of the university and, as stated in the Faculty Handbook, "are an integral part of the University through their commitment to the institution and its mission, their presence and involvement, and their responsibility for the life of the university." "Mentoring and leadership provided to student organizations" is highlighted as one of the activities teaching faculty may assume critical to maintaining the life of the university.

Effective student organization advising, however, extends beyond ensuring the organization is operating according to its bylaws; it also involves helping students grow their interpersonal, leadership, and organizational skills. Organization advisors often have extensive contact with student leaders and are in a unique position of influence to shape the way students engage in their organization's activities. An effective advisor uses this opportunity to model professional habits, practices, and behaviors relevant to the organization's curricular or extracurricular area of interest.

"[A]dvising, supervising, and mentoring of students; the sharing of personal and professional growth with others; and the presentation of intellectual and moral concerns within the University community" are all included in Elon's broad definition of teaching (S32D, Faculty Handbook). The advisor-qua-model or mentor role also reflects the values embedded in the Elon Teacher-Scholar Statement that states "scholar-mentor activities combine traditional teaching, experiential education, and professional expertise to mold graduates ready to take their place as working members of their profession or to continue their academic training in graduate or professional school." Furthermore, the broadly defined advisor role, one that embraces all that student organization advising can and should involve, also reflects the central value placed on mentoring in Boldly Elon.

Faculty advisors of student organizations who embrace the full potential of their roles can find indicators in the Faculty Handbook and Teacher-Scholar statement that illustrate and validate the value of this work within the expectations of teaching faculty. Additionally, they can use these indicators for effective goal-setting in their advisor work. The following reflect indicators central to teaching as defined in the Faculty Handbook:

- Facilitating intellectual opportunities for students
- Extending learning beyond the classroom
- Encouraging translation of knowledge into practice and service
- Being concerned for the wholeness and wellbeing of students
- Fostering respect for diversity
- Facilitating intellectual opportunities for students
- Encouraging translation of knowledge into practice and service
- Demonstrating an ability to communicate effectively with students
- Being available to students

Additional goal-setting indicators can be found in Elon's Teacher- Scholar Statement:

- Instilling in students a commitment to intellectual endeavors and a life-long devotion to learning and the ideals of citizenship.
- Cultivating informed critical thinking, creative expression, and a desire to serve the common good.
- Guiding students to become informed and caring citizens of the global community.

The previous teaching and mentoring focused indicators extend foundational indicators of effective student organization advising, including the following:

- Attending the meetings regularly, as appropriate, to show full support for the vision of the organization.
- Assisting with the organization programming, including but not limited to helping student leaders organize events, secure speakers, and develop experiential learning or service-learning opportunities.
- Serving as a liaison with the larger community – such as other universities, community organizations, non-profit agencies, firms, etc. – to champion the needs of the organization.
- Meeting on a regular basis with organization officers to discuss the organization's mission and goals and to support student leadership development.
- Overseeing succession of the executive board to ensure the long-term goals of the organization are met.
- Serving as a liaison between student members and faculty, staff, or alumni for mentorship.

Additional Resources for Student Organization Advisors

For additional information please refer to the Organization Leader Responsibilities in the Student Organization Handbook. <https://www.elon.edu/u/student-involvement/organization-leader-responsibilities/>