

April 27, 2022

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.  
President

**FROM:** BG Joe E. Robinson, Jr.  
Working Group Chair

**SUBJECT:** Implementation Memo – Working Group # 21

**Recommendation to be Implemented:** Align student organization management practices to ensure transparency and accountability.

**Strategic Considerations:**

Following the Bonfire collapse in 1999, student organization processes, procedures, and risk management practices were reviewed and changed. This included a three tier student organization recognition system as well as expectations for risk management practices. While these processes have been effective, due to the growth in number and scope of student organizations, it was time to review the many rules, processes, procedures, and risk management practice expectations for student organizations. The working group was able to review all rules, policies, and procedures for student organizations and make recommendations for change. These were reviewed by the committee and recommended to move forward. The Department of Student Activities will be responsible for implementing these changes as they are responsible for the recognition of student organizations as well as all policies and procedures associated with student organizations.

**Logistical Issues Addressed:**

**Restructuring of the Student Organization Recognition Process**

- Timeline for completion: Spring 2023
- Restructure the Student Organization Category tiered system to a four quadrant system with outlined expectations and benefits (See attached handout)
  - a. Require specific student leader training based on the organization quadrant/identifiers
  - b. Require specific advisor training based on the organization quadrant/identifiers
- Require all student organizations in Quadrant 2, 3, and 4 to maintain updated leadership, membership, and advisor rosters.
- Require student organizations in Quadrant 1 to maintain an updated leadership and advisor roster and provide an accurate number of members.
- New Student Organizations – prior to applying to create a new student organization, interested students must meet with student activities to review for “similar” mission/purpose student organizations. If there is similarity found, the students must first reach out to that student organization to inquire about working together prior to creating a new student organization.

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- As part of the annual recognition cycle for student organizations, each outgoing Chief Student Leader shall provide a report of the events of the previous year (with date, location, and name of event), as well as significant organization changes or decisions in the past year which will be helpful for historical context, to be submitted with the annual recognition process. This report must be reviewed and approved by the student organization advisor. This process, coupled with the mission of the organization will be reviewed each year for quadrant assignment in the four quadrant system, which will outline the benefits and expectations of the student organization.

### **Policies/Rules to Change**

- Change student rule 41.1.5/41.6 to require that student organization membership is limited to Texas A&M University students as defined by the university.
  - a. Timeline for completion: Summer 2022
- Review the current student rules which requires the use of the Student Organization Finance Center (SOFC) in Rule 41.1.3. The committee recommends reconsidering the requirement that all student organizations use the SOFC for student organization finances (unless an exception is on file), however, further exploration is needed regarding the student rules and whether this change would be detrimental to the accountability of student organizations or the impact of financial operations of the university. This review should be done in consultation with the division in which the SOFC will report on September 1, 2022 and also review the policies and procedures of the SOFC for better user friendly services. Provide further training for students regarding SOFC processes.
  - a. Timeline for completion: Summer/Fall 2022

### **Resources Needed for Changes**

- Expedite the Get Involved platform to support student organizations and their processes in to one system (current completion date is 2024/2025 with Department of IT). (See attachment)
  - a. Expedite to complete in 6 months (Approximately \$2 million in contracted staff)
  - b. Expedite to complete in 12 months (Approximately \$1.5 million in contracted staff)
- Merge the Student Organization Development Administration (SODA) and Leadership and Service Center (LSC) within the Department of Student Activities to facilitate a move to Student Organization Leadership Development instead of a compliance only model for student organizations. Additionally, move the student organization conduct processes out of Student Activities to the Student Conduct Office.
  - a. The Student Organization Conduct position has been proposed to move to the Student Conduct Office in previous Student Affairs Fee Advisory Board (SAFAB) requests with a new Student Development Specialist II. The salary and benefits for this position is \$55,000.
  - b. Timeline for the merger of SODA and LSC is Summer 2022.
- Implement an Advisor Incentive Program (financial support or professional development/tenure track/service component for advising)
  - a. Research options and submit proposal by the end of Fall 2022

### **Risk Management Practices**

- Create a tiered approach to student organization events. Change risk management review processes to be clear in the expectations of student organizations. In other words, be specific about event planning and travel requirements.
  - a. Low risk events reviewed by advisor
  - b. Higher risk go through full event review process
  - c. Timeline for completion: Fall 2022
- Require that all contracts are reviewed by the advisor. For student organizations in Quadrant 4, all contracts shall be routed through Student Activities/university processes. Create a specific training for advisors about the contract process.
  - a. Timeline for completion: Fall 2022

### **Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:**

- All recommendations were reviewed by the Office of General Council for adherence to the First Amendment as it relates to the right to associate for student organizations.
- Transitioning 1,100+ student organizations to the new organizational categorization process through data collection and a review of events for appropriate designation of the student organizations. The Department of Student Activities will lead this process and work with the student organizations.
- While there is a proposal for speeding up the new Get Involved platform, due to the nature of the project, it is unclear if the project could be expedited with more resources. Therefore, this transition process will take about 2 years to be fully complete.

### **Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline:**

- Upon approval of these plans, the Department of Student Activities has the ability to communicate updates to student organization leadership as every student organization is required to have a Chief Student Leader, Treasurer, and Advisor on file. The plans will also be shared via social media platforms and MSC Open House beginning in the Fall 2022. The Department of Student Activities will also host opportunities for student organizations to meet in person with open forums to answer questions and assist student organizations in moving forward.

Approved:



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M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.  
President

May 23, 2022

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Date

## Student Organization Quadrant Benefits/Expectations

HIGH AFFILIATION

Level of Affiliation

LOW AFFILIATION

<p><b>Q3: Partnered (high affiliation, low risk)</b>                      - Ex: Res Hall Councils, Liberal Arts Student Council, English GSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Benefits: (Q1 plus the following)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Priority space usage/reservations</li> <li>○ Partner area space and funding/support</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Expectations: (Q1 plus the following)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enhanced brand and marketing training</li> <li>○ Additional training (tags for affiliation)</li> <li>○ Primary advisor who is a full-time employee</li> <li>○ Designate a PR officer or student liason</li> <li>○ Maintain a full member and officer roster</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Q4: Sponsored (high risk, high affiliation)</b>                      - Ex: Corps Operations, Big Event, IFC, Hispanic Presidents Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Benefits: (Q1,2,3 plus the following)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specialized IT support/access (Get Involved, websites, etc.)</li> <li>○ University funding, fees, and/or fiscal accounts</li> <li>○ Priority engagement with TAMU programs and administration</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Expectations: (Q1,2,3 plus the following)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SOFC use required</li> <li>○ Primary advisor who is a full-time employee (recommend org advising in PD, assigned or supported by a department, or specialized KSA)</li> <li>○ Insurance policy (recommended)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Q1: Registered (low risk, low affiliation)</b>                      - Ex: Aggie Book Club, Aggie Optometry Assoc., Cupcake Club</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Benefits:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Campus space usage/reservation</li> <li>○ Use of TAMU brand and logo</li> <li>○ SOFC access, with account maintained</li> <li>○ Concessions (public, on-campus sales/donation drives)</li> <li>○ MaroonLink/Get Involved pages</li> <li>○ Student Activities/SODA Support</li> <li>○ Eligibility for MSC Open House</li> <li>○ Organization special funding access</li> <li>○ Special Event Insurance access</li> <li>○ Eligibility for Organization awards</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Expectations:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete annual recognition criteria</li> <li>○ Current constitution on file with Student Activities</li> <li>○ Adhere to TAMU nondiscrimination statement, unless otherwise permitted through applicable federal law</li> <li>○ Members must be TAMU students</li> <li>○ Primary advisor who is a TAMU employee (part-time or full-time)</li> <li>○ Advisor review/approval for all organization events, contractual agreements, and SOFC financial transactions (review only for off-campus expenditures)</li> <li>○ Comply with all TAMU rules/policies</li> <li>○ Complete annual training (State Req., finances, etc.)</li> <li>○ Maintain a current officer roster</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Q2: Associated (high risk, low affiliation)</b>                      - Ex: Fraternities/Sororities, One Army, Aggie Sweethearts, BUILD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Benefits: (Q1 plus the following)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Risk Initiative Funding access (exclusive)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Expectations: (Q1 plus the following)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enhanced risk management training</li> <li>○ Additional training (tags for risk)</li> <li>○ Operations manual with safety guidelines (comply with national best practice safety standards)</li> <li>○ Periodic operations audit</li> <li>○ Primary advisor who is a full-time employee (recommend experience in the org activity area)</li> <li>○ Designate a RM officer or student liason</li> <li>○ Maintain a full member and officer roster</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

LOW RISK

Level of Risk

HIGH RISK

# Resources Needed for Expediting Get Involved

The following is an estimate of cost to implement the initial objective of the Get Involved service in six months. This is not a recommendation to accelerate at this rate due to risks that could compromise the value of the service. Successful implementation is dependent on several factors other than finances, so even with full funding, it is uncertain that a six-month timeline could be achieved.

## Budget Summary

\$2,016,000 for 12 additional developers contracted for 6 months. This assumes a higher “urgent” rate.

—or—

\$1,555,200 for 6 additional developers contracted for 12 months.

## Assumptions

This estimate is for work required simply to replace the current MaroonLink service. It does not include subsequent work needed to exchange Get Involved to fully replace numerous legacy custom applications such as StuAct Online, Big Event resident signups and job matching, Yell Leader scheduling, or to implement elections for SGA and GPSG. Resources are also needed to continue support for the Get Involved service after development is completed.

At the current staffing level, replacement of MaroonLink is estimated at three years. The current two-year road map assumed additional developers (including a currently vacant position). To implement in six months would require a velocity six times greater than at present.

Resource needs are non-linear relative to implementation time. The shorter the planned time, the higher the overhead for work and resource coordination.

The six-month estimate is for actual product development time. It assumes developers are already identified, hired and onboarded.

The cost estimate is based on 12 developers working at 40 hours/week for 24 weeks at an “urgent” contracted rate of \$175/hour. The estimate for 12 months assumes a rate of \$135/hour. This rate is based on a 20% increase from similar work contracted in 2016.

## Risks

Other existing services would be greatly impacted by a six-month expedited development schedule. The Get Involved product design is significantly dependent on the broad organizational knowledge of the current development team that also supports other services. Work on Get Involved can't simply be outsourced to a third party since it is heavily dependent on the knowledge and experience gained from supporting these other applications. Current developers would also be necessary to onboard new developers which would reduce development velocity for a period of time.

Development of Get Involved is heavily dependent on the availability of a range of stakeholders outside IT including student affairs staff and student organization leaders. An expedited schedule would require non-IT staff to also reprioritize their work, and student leaders would be challenged to increase their availability while concurrently taking classes and providing leadership to the respective organizations or while absent during summer months. Frequent interactive involvement of these stakeholders is essential for adequate feedback in the design to ensure an appropriate product. If this level of engagement is not achieved, the Get Involved service risks not becoming a suitable service for student affairs.