



MEMORANDUM

To: Working Group on Voluntary Student Organizations
From: Susie Brubaker-Cole, Vice Provost for Student Affairs
Cc: Office of Student Engagement
Date: January 21, 2021
Re: Response to Working Group Report

Dear Working Group on Voluntary Student Organizations,

I want to thank you for your patience and commitment during this process of reviewing student organizations at Stanford. As you know, many aspects of campus life have changed since this working group was first assembled. I am deeply appreciative of the thoughtfulness each of you have brought to this work across the many twists and turns of this challenging period.

I have had the opportunity to review the committee's recommendations as well as those of the chair, Associate Vice Provost for Inclusion, Community and Integrative Learning Emelyn dela Peña. I've also been able to hear from our new Senior Director for the Office of Student Engagement, Snehal Naik.

After reviewing the recommendations and supporting documents provided to me I have determined to move forward with the following recommendations. These decisions are informed by the recommendations submitted by the committee and discussions with students and our professional staff.

I accept the committee's recommendation to redesign how we define student organizations and to set forth training, advising, and behavioral expectations that match the level of responsibility each organization is granted. I am charging the Office of Student Engagement to be the implementation team that works with relevant stakeholders and to chart a path forward to redesign our student organization classification, advising model and recognition process.

I am asking the Office of Student Engagement to clarify the role of non-students in the following ways for all student organizations:

1. Limit formal membership in student organizations to students, [as defined by the registrar](#).

2. Create parameters for postdocs and spouses to be engaged in campus life, including student organizations, that comport with our shared community values and responsibilities and define a funding structure that supports this endeavor.
3. Create guidelines for participation by alumni and staff as student organization advisors, coaches and instructors.
4. Create guidelines for community-member participation in VSO public events (including a clear definition of what constitutes public events).
5. Clarify functional and behavioral expectations and responsibilities for student group advisors, coaches, and instructors. This includes defining parameters to determine when these roles are necessary for an organization.
6. Implement training and accountability practices that produce clear and consistent guidelines for student organization operations, advisors, coaches, and instructors that align with the educational mission of the institution.

At this time, I am not endorsing any changes to the fundraising processes outlined for our student organizations. Fundraising is most effective in a structured, centralized arrangement, and we are currently well supported through the Office of Development. The Office of Student Engagement will continue to work with our partners in Development to assess how the funds already allocated to student organizations can best be used to meet the needs of our students.

I am asking the Office of Student Engagement work in partnership with ASSU and SSE to review the student organization funding and banking policies and expectations to ensure they support any redesigned student organization classification system.

It's my hope that these combined adjustments to systems will create an excellent platform for our student organizations to flourish in healthy, educationally aligned ways for years to come. Again, I want to thank you for your time, patience and thoughtfulness in this process.

If you would like to be involved in the work of the Office of Student Engagement moving forward please reach out to Snehal Naik, directly.

Warm Regards,

Susie Brubaker-Cole
Vice Provost for Student Affairs