

# UAF Student Organization Advisor Handbook

UAF LIVE Leadership Involvement and Volunteer Experience



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Student Organizations  
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# Table of Contents

Letter from Director Hollingsworth.....	3
It's the Process, not the Product.....	4
Responsibilities.....	5
Expectations.....	6
Advice for the Advisor.....	7
LIVE Program Overview.....	8-9
Resources.....	10



Dear UAF Student Organization Advisors,

On behalf of the UAF LIVE program, thank you for all of the time and energy you spend advising, coaching, mentoring and educating the students who participate in our 129 recognized student organizations.

This handbook is designed to be a helpful guide and resource to you in working with your student organization(s). University faculty and staff are an integral part of encouraging students' participation in activities and organizations. Research suggests that student involvement has a positive correlation with persistence, achievement, satisfaction, career advancement and educational development. Co-curricular learning experiences have also been shown to greatly enhance learning, advance critical thinking skills, foster a greater interest in the well-being of others, boost self confidence, build the ability to relate to and communicate with others, increase decision making abilities, provide preparation for the "real world" and lead to higher graduation rates.

Curricular and co-curricular learning experiences are complementary in creating a 360-degree learning environment for UAF student leaders. With your help, the LIVE program and all UAF recognized student organizations support the UAF mission by emphasizing the values of collaboration, leadership, diversity and civic engagement.

Thank you for your help in creating a dynamic learning environment! Please feel free to contact anyone in the LIVE program if you have questions or need additional support.

Sincerely,

Cara Hollingsworth

Director of Student Leadership Development

University of Alaska Fairbanks

## **It's the Process, Not the Product**

True co-curricular success is linked to student learning and growth (Kuh, 2007). The ways in which students work through failure may be their greatest learning moments. As educators, we can guide and support students through the learning process.

We encourage you to remember that students are our product—not programs. Programs and student groups serve as vehicles in which students hone and enhance their learning.

**There are 3 roles one can take on when supporting student organizations: Advisor, Coach and Educator.**

**Advisor**— As an advisor, you work to maintain the organization and delegate tasks with the executive board members.

**Coach**— As a coach, you can work to improve the effectiveness of an organization and assist them in reaching organizational goals. In this role you will spend more time sharing a vision for the organization rather than maintaining the organization.

**Educator**— As an educator, you will spend more time as a —sounding board|| with students. This role serves to provide students with an educational experience that will complement or supplement their education. Our hope is that you will reach a place where you are not giving students too many answers, but asking them questions that will teach them how to think through situations, therefore supporting them in their creation of the bigger picture for the organization.

Adapted from Bloland, P.A. (1967). Student group advising in higher education (Student Personnel Series No. 8). Washington, DC: American Personnel and Guidance Association.

## **Advisor Responsibilities**

It is important to realize that your first responsibility is to the health and wellbeing of the students and to uphold campus and community policies and regulations.

### **Responsibility to the Organization**

- Be well informed about all plans and activities of the group.
- Help develop long-term plans for the future of the organization and communicate these plans to succeeding generations of members.
- Periodically review the organization's Website (if any) for appropriateness of content, professionalism and accuracy of information.
- Relay information concerning UAF policies and regulations.
- Discourage domination of the group by an individual or subgroup.
- Assist in the orientation of new officers.
- Attend the events sponsored by the group.
- Provide direct assistance in the planning and evaluation of programs.
- Remember the organization is STUDENT run and must therefore be administered and governed by student decisions.

### **Responsibility to UAF**

- Attend the organization's meeting when deemed necessary or desirable by either the advisor or the organization's members.
- Supervise the financial procedures followed by the organization in handling its funds.
- Be aware of the organization's financial status and encourage the maintenance of efficient financial records.
- Assist the LIVE Program Office in implementing the policies for student organizations.
- Attend Advisor Refreshers and Trainings.

### **Responsibility to the Individual Members**

- Encourage each individual to participate and plan group events.
- Assist students in maintaining a balance between the academic and co-curricular aspects of student life.
- Encourage students to accept responsibility for specific parts of the program, helping them recognize the importance of their role.

## **Advisor Expectations**

### **Why should I advise a student organization?**

Advising provides you with an opportunity to help facilitate the growth and development of student leaders. It's a fun way to get to know students outside of your classroom or office. You will be able to see the students you work with become successful in their organization's work, and see knowledge from class used in their everyday lives.

### **What will the group I'm working with expect from me?**

When establishing your relationship with the student leaders, it may be helpful to have a conversation about the level of involvement you expect from one another. You have the opportunity to create the relationship you want with the student organization in which you're working.

### **Other potential expectations:**

- Assistance with financial decision-making
- To learn about the constitution and organization's culture
- Attendance at programs and events
- Communication via email and in person

### **What can I expect from the group I advise?**

In general, you can expect the organization to report to you with:

- Regular financial reports
- Communicate meeting agendas, programs, and event updates
- Maintain the Student Organization Accounts records and keep them up to date
- Attend planned meetings
- Keep in communication with you (weekly meetings, emails, etc.)

### **How do we determine my level of involvement?**

The level of involvement is dependent upon you and the student leaders' needs, wants, and expectations. If you want to attend events, your role should be one of support and encouragement, not supervision.

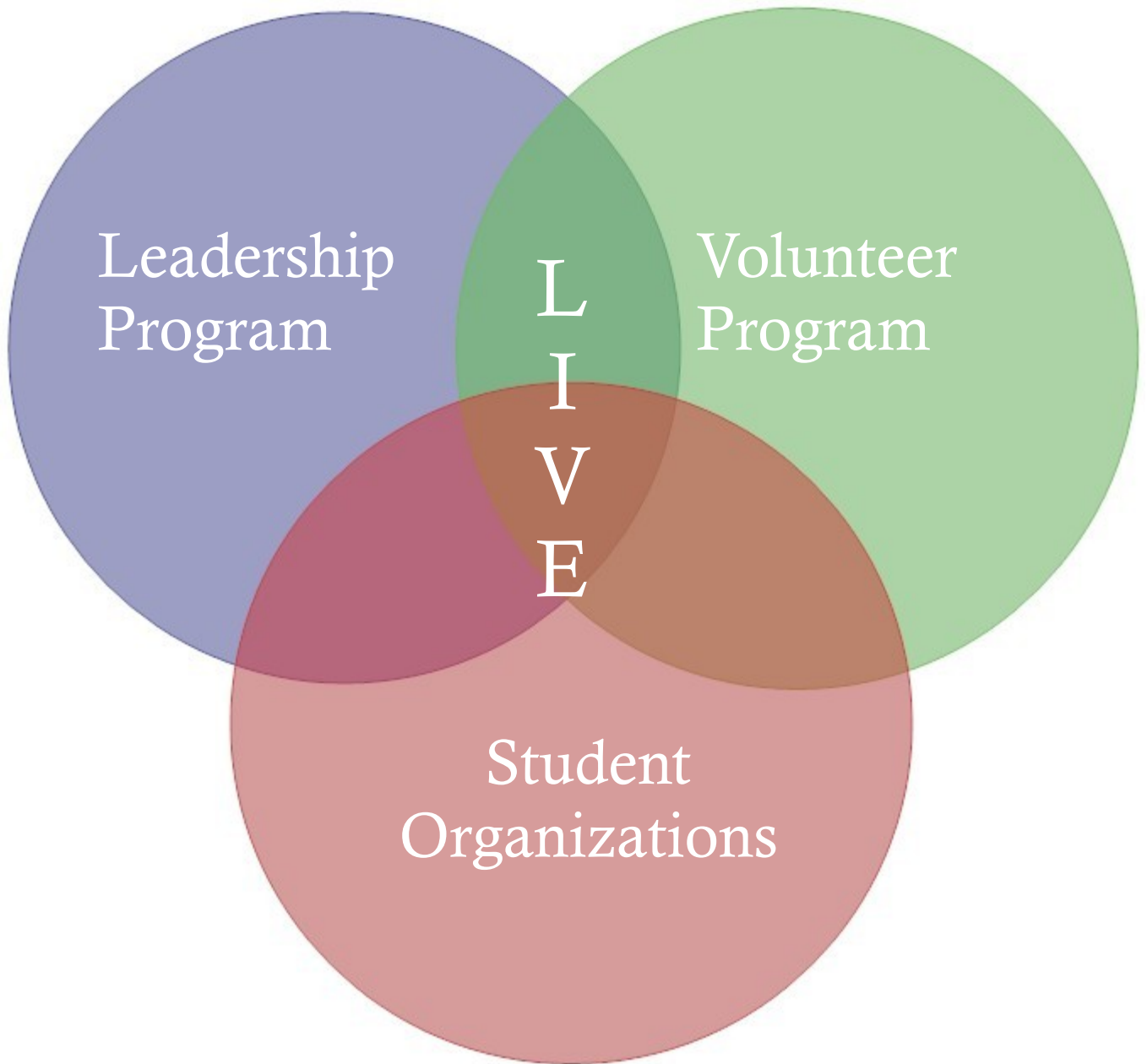
It is up to the student leaders in the organization to run the meeting. As an advisor, you should not be expected to run the meeting or the organization.

At the beginning of each year or when the leadership in the organization changes, you will want to revisit the level of involvement and expectations between you and the organization's executive board members. Be available and on hand to participate in times of transition and celebration.

**To help maintain a consistent relationship, here are some suggestions:**

1. Encourage attendance at leadership training. Provide students with resources for the training, such as ice breakers, important topics of discussion like values and ethics, ideas for downtime, etc.
2. Allow the group to succeed, and allow the group to fail. Offer support when necessary, but also allow them to make mistakes and learn from them.
3. At the beginning, as well as periodically, develop clear expectations about the role of the advisor and your relationship to the organization.
4. Keep your sense of humor and enthusiasm. Share creative and alternative suggestions and provide feedback for activities planned by students.
5. Learn what the students want to get out of the organization. Support them in their journey in doing so.
6. Ask officers to assist with procedural matters. Be knowledgeable of the organization's purpose and constitution, upcoming deadlines, ongoing goals, national, state, or regional expectations or bylaws, and help give feedback.
7. Represent the group and its interests in staff and faculty meetings. Reach out to other advisors or departments for assistance.
8. Ask the executive board to orient new officers and members to the history and purpose of the group and help them to build upon it. Help members look toward the future by developing long-term goals and communicating those plans to future members.

# Introduction to LIVE



## **About The Program**

### **HISTORY**

The Leadership Program was initiated by a volunteer group of staff, faculty, and students. This grassroots committee started with a Student Leadership Conference in 2000 and continued to develop student leadership programming for the next three years. Thanks to funding from the Chancellor's Office and strategic planning on the part of the volunteer group, the Leadership Program became a full-time university program in 2003.

### **PROGRAM VISION**

We provide tools, training and support to UAF students, to assist them in becoming agents of positive change in their communities. Through leadership, volunteer experience and student involvement opportunities, the LIVE program at UAF seeks to develop leadership in individuals, groups and communities in order to foster a lifelong commitment to socially responsible leadership. Utilizing co-curricular and curricular settings, we promote student leadership identity development and encourage students to conceptualize their understanding of leadership beyond the traditional leadership model. We are a resource and clearinghouse for campus and community collaboration.

### **PROGRAM VALUES**

The UAF LIVE program promotes leadership, student involvement and volunteer experience as integral components of each student's University experience and education. We facilitate leadership, learning and community service across the curriculum to enhance development. We promote socially responsible leadership and citizenship within individuals, groups and systems for the advancement of a socially responsible community. We believe each individual has the capacity to develop and practice leadership in multiple contexts. We facilitate leadership development opportunities in and out of the classroom for lifelong learning.

### **PROGRAM MISSION**

The mission of the UAF Leadership Program is to cultivate effective leaders for Alaska by creating and supporting a rich variety of student leadership development opportunities, partnering with academic departments and the community, and recognizing successful student leadership.

## Resource Center

### **What is the Student Organizations Resource Center?**

The *Student Organizations Resource Center* exists within the **LIVE Office** (Leadership, Involvement, Volunteer Experience) to support and equip the student organizations of UAF. Our staff can provide assistance in leadership development, special event planning, creating promotional strategies, team building, starting new organizations, navigating the UAF system, and more!

### **Where is the SO Resource Center located?**

We are located in Wood Center Room 101 I

### **What are our hours?**

Our offices are open from 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.

But our events keep us out and about at all hours of the day and night, including weekends. If your organization would like to schedule an event, meeting, training, or workshop with us, we will do whatever it takes to meet your needs.

### **What costs are associated with using our resources?**

None--it's a trick question.

Each registered student organization has access to the following **FREE** resources:

- One regular booth space in Wood Center per week
- One regular meeting space in Wood Center per week
- One Wood Center Ballroom reservation per semester
- One UAF funds account
- One Wood Center Mailbox #
- Publicity in the SO newsletter, master calendar, bulletin boards, website, and plasma screens!!!
- Two banners and one poster per semester printed by the Wood Center Graphics Dept.
- One booth at the Student Organizations Fair per semester