



Congress of **Student Organizations**

A Handbook for Students and Advisors

2026 – 2027

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Student Organizations General

Student Organization Obligations

This handbook outlines general guidelines for student organizations to keep and maintain recognition. These are additional to the operational procedure regarding the establishment of student organizations.

- Each organization must turn in a recognition form each semester.
 - Fall form is due on September 22, 2026
 - Spring form is due on January 26, 2027.
- Each organization must turn in a reviewed constitution & bylaws once an academic year.
 - The date on when it was last reviewed is to be included in the document.
- Each organization must hold at least one meeting per month during the fall and spring semesters (4 total per semester)
 - A club may choose not to meet in either Aug. or Dec. for Fall, and Jan. or May for Spring.
 - Notify the CSO Advisor if your club does not meet during one of these months.
- Meeting minutes must be taken for each meeting and turned into the CSO Advisor by the 5th of the following month.
 - See the guide on the website for what is required for meeting minutes.
- Each organization must elect a representative to sit on the Congress of Student Organizations.
- An organization may NOT miss a CSO meeting.
- Each organization must operate in cooperation with all BSC policies and procedures.

CSO Representative

- A CSO representative must be available for all designated CSO meetings.
- A CSO representative may represent only one club at a time.
- If the representative is not available, another must represent the club. Only another officer listed on the club's recognition form, or the club's advisor, may fill in.
 - The CSO rep reports on activities happening with their club and reports back to their club regarding information dispersed at CSO meetings.
 - The CSO rep should be checking their BSC email frequently.
 - The CSO rep is responsible for ensuring all documents are turned into the CSO Advisor.

CSO Meetings Guide

A general guide for what a CSO meeting looks like:

1. Roll is taken.
 - a. Attendance will only be accepted following the conditions outlined in the section above.
2. Each CSO rep will report club activities to the Congress.
3. The CSO Advisor will discuss opportunities or general reminders for the clubs.
4. Any other agenda items, such as grant applications or meeting minutes will be discussed.

Student Organization Recognition

Recognition Benefits

Recognized organizations are granted several benefits from the college, which include:

- One Voting Representative at CSO meetings.
- Free use of college facilities and equipment.
- Support from an approved faculty or staff member (at least one full-time member).
- Banking and bookkeeping services.
- Listing in official College publications and websites.
- Ability to advertise and promote events on campus in accordance with college policies.

A club that does not gain recognition will not be able to make use of these benefits.

Recognition Process

- The Recognition form can be found on the CSO webpage of the [BSC website](#).
 - The Fall recognition form should be turned in by September 22, 2026.
 - The Spring recognition form should be turned in by January 26, 2027.
- The recognition form must be completed with **all** officer information for the current semester. This includes:
 - Officer titles
 - Student names
 - Student ID numbers
 - BSC email addresses
- A student may only hold 2 officer positions per club, and a total of 3 positions across all clubs.
 - The CSO rep is considered an officer position.
 - The CSO rep position may not be held by the same student across multiple clubs.
- A BSC staff or faculty member may only be the primary advisor for one club at a time.
- ❖ The club advisor must sign the recognition form and return the form to the CSO Advisor along with a reviewed copy of the constitution and bylaws.
- ❖ When the CSO Advisor determines the submission is complete and accepted, the CSO Advisor will issue a certificate of recognition to the club advisor.
 - SGA will be provided with a copy of all active clubs after each recognition deadline.
- ❖ If the submission is not accepted, the CSO Advisor will notify the club advisor as to why recognition was refused.
- ❖ Recognized organizations are responsible for remaining in good standing by adhering to the requirements of Bismarck State College, and CSO's policies & procedures.

Advisor Requirements

- A group must have at least one, full-time BSC staff or faculty member as an advisor.
- An advisor has the primary responsibility to ensure their club/organization is adhering to CSO procedures and BSC policies.
- An advisor is a Campus Security Authority (CSA). They are people designated by BSC to whom students and employees should report crimes, or who have responsibility for campus security.
- An advisor is to aid, review, and assess the planning and execution of programs/events/and funding proposals.
- Advisors must submit proper documentation to the CSO Advisor prior to an off-campus event that falls under the "[Off-Campus Travel of Student Groups: Policy](#)."

Student Organization Funds

Accounts

All organization accounts are opened upon the approval of the CSO Advisor.

All organization money (dues, sales, fund raising, raffle sales, etc.) must be deposited through the BSC Student Finance Office located on the first floor of Schafer Hall.

All finance questions should be directed to BSC's accounting department.

Income

Under no circumstances is a club to pay for any expenses with cash collected. **All** income must be properly deposited through the BSC Student Finance Office.

Under no circumstances may organizational money be used for the purchase of alcoholic beverages or other items that are contrary to the State Board of Higher Education or Bismarck State College policies.

Deposits

Deposits are required to be submitted to the Student Finance Office on a weekly basis. If at any time the club has in its possession \$300 or more a deposit should be made prior to the weekly deposit.

Checks collected must have the club's name or club fund number written in the upper left-hand corner of the check.

Complete and submit a Department Deposit Receipt with all income collected for each deposit.

The Department Deposit Receipt can be located on the CORE portal.

Fundraising

If collecting funds for a scholarship, criteria and process must be first created. All scholarships must go through the Financial Aid Office process for proper recording.

If your organization is hosting a fundraising event and it requires seed money, contact the Office of Student Finance 48hrs in advance for further assistance.

CSO Grants

Purpose:

The CSO Grant Proposal is an opportunity for recognized organizations to be awarded funds for activities that will benefit the students at Bismarck State College during the Fall and Spring semesters.

Overview:

Grants for organization activities are distributed from student fees. The total amount of student fees that CSO receives varies and depends on the number of students enrolled at Bismarck State College as well as the number of credit hours for which they are registered. Due to this variability, the amount available for each club may be adjusted at the discretion of the CSO Advisor.

Grant requests made during the Fall or Spring semesters for an event occurring during the summer semester will only be put forth to the congress for voting upon the CSO Advisor's approval.

Grants - New organizations:

Newly recognized organizations, or organizations that have regained recognition after it was rescinded, are placed on a one-year probationary period beginning on the date of recognition.

During the probationary period, the organization

- Will not be awarded an amount greater than \$300.
- May not seek grant money for any activity that occurs outside of the state of North Dakota.

What they can be used for:

- Registration fees.
- Traveling expenses for events.
- Lodging expenses for events.
- Purchasing start-up equipment (ex. chess boards for a chess club).

Procedure to Apply:

1. Obtain a CSO Grant Proposal Application from the CSO webpage on the [BSC website](#).
2. Complete the application and submit it to the CSO Advisor via the CSO email, along with an itemized budget list.
 - a) This must be sent in at least one week prior to the next CSO meeting and before the agenda is sent out.
 - b) This must be applied for at least one week **prior** to the date of the event.
 - c) The date of the event must be on or after the CSO meeting.
 - 1) Ex: If the next CSO meeting is Oct. 20th, the grant must be turned in by Oct. 13th.
Additionally, the event must occur on or after Oct. 20th.
3. The CSO Advisor will review the application and place it on the agenda of the next CSO meeting.
 - a) The CSO representative of the group applying for the grant must be present at the meeting.
4. At the CSO meeting, discussion will occur and the CSO representatives will vote on the proposal.
 - a) A 2/3 majority of the active, recognized organizations is required to vote on a grant proposal. Voting will not take place if a simple majority is not met.
 - b) Email votes will not be accepted.
6. The CSO Advisor will work with the club/organization advisor(s) to get the funds transferred if the grant is approved by the Congress.

Creating a Constitution and Bylaws

Your constitution/bylaws are the governing documents for your organization and contain the procedures for elections, meetings, and recalls. Additionally, they establish the structure of your organization, state the purpose, and outline basic policies for membership.

These documents need to be reviewed every year, and the reviewal date listed in the document

Please see the guide provided on the CSO webpage under the informative section for assistance.

Room and Table Requests

To reserve a room or foyer a request form must be filled out for the specified time and date. A variety of meeting times and locations are available as building hours allow/ are available.

To book one of these room/foyers with the CSO Advisor's help:

- The club advisor or club president must fill out the "Student Clubs Room & Foyer Request" form found on the [CSO webpage](#) with the appropriate information.
 - This should be done at least two weeks before the event.
- After the form is filled out, it will be sent off to the CSO Advisor. If approved, the CSO Advisor will complete the necessary paperwork to secure the requested space.
- Any questions should be directed to the CSO email: bsc.csorgs@bismarckstate.edu

BSC Policies

CSO follows all Bismarck State College Policies and the Student Code of Conduct.

A full list of policies can be found on the BSC website

[Establishment and Operation of Student Clubs and Organizations](#)

[Off-Campus Travel of Student Groups: Procedure](#)

[Food and Beverage Operational Procedure](#)

[Alcohol and Illegal Drugs Policy](#)

[Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation Policy](#)

[Hazing Policy](#)

[Sexual Harassment and Title IX Compliance](#)

[Criminal History Background Checks Procedure](#)

[Use of Computer and Network Facilities](#)

Status Guidelines

Active Organization:

A recognized student organization that has completed biannual recognition requirements, maintains an approved advisor, remains in good standing, and is actively pursuing its stated mission. Good standing entails above-mentioned information and compliance with college policies and the CSO handbook. Clubs awarded recognition will be presented with a certificate

Inactive Organization:

A club will automatically be declared inactive if it does not gain recognition for the new semester by the deadline. An advisor can also request that the club be placed on inactive status if club membership is not sustainable. Upon the CSO Advisor's approval of this request, the organization will be placed on inactive status for the rest of the current academic year. If the organization fails to turn in a recognition form, and therefore not gain recognition, by the following Fall Recognition deadline, then the CSO Advisor will automatically declare the club suspended.

During inactive status a club will:

- Still receive generic emails from the CSO Advisor.
- Remain on college listings.
- Still be able to hold member drives to try and get the group going again.

- Be able to book a room/foyer for the purpose of a membership drive.
- Not expected to be at CSO meetings (though highly encouraged) or to hold a monthly meeting.

During inactive status a club cannot:

- Host regular events.
- Host a major event (such as a fundraiser, dance, excursions, etc....).
- Apply for grants.

Loss of Recognition:

An organization's recognition may be rescinded for any of the following reasons:

- The organization is found guilty of local, state, or federal crimes in a court of law.
- The organization did not complete biannual recognition by the deadline.
- The organization did not maintain an approved advisor.
- The organization is not in good standing as defined in the [operational procedure](#).
- The organization violated a College policy or the CSO Handbook.

Suspended Organization:

An organization is considered suspended if the organization has remained inactive for the remainder of the previous academic school year and missed the following Fall recognition deadline, has had its rights revoked through the Not in Good Standing process which is outlined on pg. 9, or has been placed on suspended status by the Community Standards Coordinator due to a hazing investigation (see [Hazing Procedure](#)) or other conduct investigation. An organization that is suspended will have its rights that are granted upon recognition revoked but will have until the next recognition deadline to regain recognition. An extension may be granted by the CSO Advisor if contacted before the deadline with an outlined plan – approval is at the CSO Advisor's discretion.

For example: If the club is declared suspended in October, then the club will have until the Spring recognition deadline to regain recognition. If recognition at the next recognition deadline after notice of suspension, then the club shall be disbanded by the authority of the CSO Advisor.

Disbanding of a student organization:

It shall be the responsibility of the advisor of a student organization to communicate plans to disband an organization to the CSO Advisor with a dated letter or email.

The CSO Advisor also has the authority to disband an organization following Suspension and/or Not in Good Standing steps as outlined on pg. 8-9.

Should an organization choose to reorganize after having been disbanded, the advisor must complete the recognition process as a new organization.

Regaining Recognition:

To regain recognition, an organization must submit a new recognition form to the CSO Advisor as per the biannual recognition process. Organizations seeking to regain lost recognition, dependent upon a reason such as a suspension, may be placed on probation for one year **if** recognition is granted.

This probationary period begins on the day that recognition is awarded by the CSO Advisor. Probation does not affect the privileges of the organization but only limits the grant amount that an organization may receive to the same limitations as new organizations.

Removal or Resignation of a Representative:

If an organization's CSO representative fails to meet the necessary responsibilities required of their position at any point in the semester, the CSO Advisor may choose to remove that representative. If a representative is removed from the Congress of Student Organizations, the CSO Advisor will immediately send a letter to the advisor and the president (if applicable and/or appropriate) of the organization to notify them of the situation. During the interim, while a new CSO rep is being selected, another club officer or the club's advisor should attend all CSO meetings.

Not in Good Standing System:

The Not in Good Standing system functions as a step system and serves as a means of communication to alert a student organization that it is not meeting its obligations.

1. Warning

A written warning could be sent from the CSO Advisor if a club or organization fails to:

- Turn in meeting minutes for the previous month (they serve as proof of meeting).
- Have representation at a CSO meeting.
- Turn in the recognition form by the deadline but hosts group activities past one start-up meeting.
- Turn in a reviewed copy of the governing documents by the deadline without sufficient explanation (only required once per academic year).

2. Account hold

If actions continue after being notified on 3 separate occasions, the account for the club/organization will be "frozen." The club/organization will not be allowed to apply for grants until the account is unfrozen, nor use the club's funds.

In addition, a meeting with the CSO Advisor must be held to go over the club/organization's actions and discuss what can be done to rectify the situation moving forward.

3. Loss of rights

If a club/organization does not show improvement to the CSO Advisor after the meeting or continues to not follow requirements after notice of the account being frozen and needing to meet with the CSO Advisor is given, then the organization will have its rights granted to it by BSC revoked and be declared suspended.

Appeals:

A student organization may appeal a decision to deny, suspend, or revoke recognition by submitting a written appeal to the Director of Student & Residence Life within ten (10) business days of receiving written notification of the decision. The appeal must state the basis for the request and include any supporting documentation. The Director will review the appeal and issue a written decision. If the

original decision was made by the Director, the appeal may be submitted to the Vice President for Student Affairs, whose decision shall be final.

Grounds for Appeals:

- 1) The Operational Procedure or CSO Handbook was not followed.
- 2) The decision was based on inaccurate or incomplete information.
- 3) New information is available that could reasonably affect the outcome.
- 4) The sanction or action was unreasonable or disproportionate.

The CSO Advisor reserves the right to make changes to the CSO handbook and will inform the club advisors of said changes, if any are to be made.

Date of last Reviewal: October 2026

List of CSO Meeting Dates

All CSO meetings are held at 3:00 PM in the Alumni Room of the Student Union

CSO meeting dates

09/22 - CSO meeting in Sept
10/13 - CSO meeting in Oct
11/10 CSO meeting in Nov
12/08 CSO meeting in Dec
01/26 CSO meeting in Jan
02/23 CSO meeting in Feb
03/23 CSO meeting in Mar
04/13 CSO meeting in Apr

Other Important Dates

08/19 @ 3pm - Advisor Open House (optional)
08/26 @ 10-2pm Club Fair (active participation)
10/23 @ 12-1:30 pm Explore BSC (active)
01/14 @ 10-2pm Club Crawl (passive event)
04/22 @ 10-2pm Spring Carnival (active)