

Working with Your Advisor

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"The Role of the Advisor" viewed by:

The Advisor

- Resource person
- Assist in planning
- Play devil's advocate
- Facilitator for group process
- Help maintain direction & provide community
- Stimulate creativity & motivation
- Serve as a sounding board for students
- Friend/Counselor
- Pick up the pieces when necessary
- Help set goals
- Be accessible

Student Leaders

- Resource person
- Constructive criticism
- Be available
- Brainstorm
- Support events by attending
- Play devil's advocate when needed
- Advise on specific University procedures
- Serve as a liaison between organization and university
- Positive reinforcement & support
- Attend committee meetings
- Discuss ideas, don't dictate
- Realize leaders as volunteers

Advisee/Advisor Relationships

1. The responsibility for building a relationship must be shared between advisor and student. Simply, it is a partnership.
2. The relationship must be based upon open, direct communication.
Share needs, responsibilities, and expectations with each other
Be prepared to negotiate
3. Both must recognize the other's various roles and responsibilities in/outside of their organizations.
Know each other's commitments and let each other know their impact
4. Both advisor/student are human beings who make mistakes, follow their own value systems, and work in individual, professional, personality styles.
Accept, discuss, and learn from mistakes—then move on
5. Both advisor/student are continually growing, changing, and learning; each within their own unique stages of development.
Challenge and support each other

* Adapted from: Effective student and advisor relationships. M. A. Gwost.

Working with Your Advisor (Pg. 2)

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The Role of Your Organization's Faculty Advisor

What is an advisor supposed to do? Advisors are valuable resources to student organizations because of their wisdom, experience, guidance, and consistency. Below is a list of roles that your advisor may take in working with your organization:

1. *Problem Solving Agent*: Your advisor may be the impartial third party that helps you work through problems and conflict
2. *Counselor*: You may find that your advisor is the type of person you can go to with your personal concerns
3. *Information Resource*: Hopefully, your advisor has been around long enough to know some of the ins and outs of getting things done at ODU. Use their experience and expertise
4. *Idea Resource Person*: Use your advisor to help discover new ideas when your creative juices dry up
5. *Sounding board*: If you want to try out a new idea on an impartial party before proposing it to the entire group, try it out on your advisor
6. *Administration Liaison*: Rely on your advisor for advice on who in the administration can help you with your projects
7. *Organization's Representative*: Your advisor will represent your concerns in administrative capacities
8. *Interpreter of University Policies and Procedures*: Rely on your advisor's expertise on the university
9. *Analyzer of the Group Process*: Use your advisor as an observer if things in your organization seem to get stuck. Their "birds eye view" can help with group dynamic issues.
10. *Role Model*: A positive one, of course!
11. *Attendee/Participant at Events*: Be sure to keep your advisor informed so that he or she can at least put in an appearance to show support
12. *Continuity Provider*: Since the advisor is there from year to year as the student leaders change, he or she can provide a sense of the group's history
13. *Educator Regarding Organizational Philosophy*: Your advisor can help you plan the training that your group needs to successfully accomplish its mission.
14. *Educator/Trainer of Student Members*: Your advisor can help you plan the training for your general body
15. *Maintainer of Records*: Use your advisor's role at the university to keep records consistent (since they will be the bridge from year to year)
16. *Conflict Resolution Assistant*: Use your advisor as an impartial mediator
17. *Financial Supervisor*: Use your advisor's experience with University procedures to help you sustain organization and financial security
18. *Meeting Attender*: Be sure to inform your advisor of all meetings so that they can attend
19. *Assistant in Evaluating the Organization*: Use your advisor as a resource to determine what you should be evaluating and when
20. *Empowerer of Students*: Your advisor should be a valuable resource who helps your organization reach good decisions.