Dos and Don’ts of Advising
Student Clubs & Organizations

Do

• **Assist** officers with procedural matters. Be knowledgable of the group’s purpose and constitution and help the general membership adhere to them.
• **Be knowledgable** about, and comply with federal, California, and local laws and ordinances, and well as campus policies.
• **Empower students** to take action and to take satisfaction in seeing the student organization succeed.
• **Allow the students make the decisions** while you provide guidance and advice.
• **Reach out** to the Center for Student Leadership, Involvement and Service (CSLIS) or other advisors for guidance and feedback.
• **Develop clear expectations** about the role of the advisor and your relationship to the organization.
• **Get to know all of the members** on an individual level. What do they want to get out of the organization?
• **Meet with the group to help establish goals.**
• **Orient new officers and members to the history and purpose of the group** and help them to build upon it
• **Help resolve intragroup conflict.**
• **Enjoy the impact you can have on students’ development.** Help to develop the leadership potential within the group.
• **Be visible** and choose to attend group meetings and events. At the same time, know your limits. Establish an attendance schedule at group meetings, which is mutually agreed upon by the advisor and the group members.
• **Know your group’s limits.** Help students find a balance between involvement and their academic responsibilities.
• **Serve as a resource.** The advisor does not set the policy of the group, but should take an active part in its formulation through interaction with the group members. Since members and officers in any club or organization are ordinarily active only as long as they are students, the advisor can serve as a continuity factor for the group.
• **Be consistent with your actions.** Model good listening and communication skills. Develop good rapport.
• **Be available in emergency situations.**
• **Familiarize yourself with the group’s financial structure,** from where the treasury is derived (dues, fundraising), for what the money is used, how money is allocated, and how the money is budgeted; assist in budget development and execution.
• **Encourage feedback and the evaluation process.**
• **Do things right and do the right things.** Guide and assist students in becoming responsible leaders.
• **Provide support.** Give the group autonomy, but offer feedback, even when it is not solicited. Let the group work out its problems, but be prepared to step in when called upon to assist.

Don’t

• **Know it all.**
• **Be the leader or “run” the meeting.**
• **Say I told you so.**
• **Impose your own bias.**
• **Manipulate** the group, impose, or force your opinions.
• **Close off** lines of communication.
• **Tell the group what to do,** or do the work of the president or other members of the officer team.
• **Take ownership** for the group, be the “parent,” or the smothering administrator.
• **Miss group meetings** or functions.
• **Be afraid** to let the group try new ideas.
• **Become such an advocate that you lose an objective viewpoint.**
• **Allow the organization to become a one-person organization.**
• **Assume** the group handles everything okay and doesn’t need you.
• **Assume the organization’s attitudes, needs and personalities** will remain the same year to year.