

ADVISOR – STUDENT LEADER ROLES

Although the roles of the advisor and student leader may be arbitrarily decided upon, each has certain responsibilities that are expected. Depending on the type of involvement and nature of the student organization, the roles may differ to fit a specific situation. Listed below are several of the most common roles that each advisor and student leader take on from time to time.

Advisor Roles

Teacher/Coach

In this role, advisor serves foremost as a resource person. Additionally, the advisor may offer new perspectives and directions to the group, coach individuals in their duties and insists on high standards. This is a highly active role.

Consultant

In this role, the advisor serves primarily as a gatherer of information pertaining to the organization. Suggestions for improvements should be offered but not dominate the planning. This is a moderately active role.

Counselor

In this role, the advisor works with individuals to identify problems in their role within the organization or in their personal life. If necessary, the advisor should refer students to appropriate resources. This is an active role when needed by the students.

Supervisor

In this role, the advisor has a responsibility to the organization and the University to keep their best interests in mind. The role includes interpreting and discussing university policies and expectations. In a well-run student organization, the supervisory role may be minimal, but it should always be on mind of the advisor. This is a passive to active role depending on the effectiveness of the organization.

Financial Supervisor

In this role, the advisor works with the organizational financial officer to ensure that bookkeeping is accurate and up-to-date. Additionally, the advisor will probably need to spend some time assisting with accounts receivable and prompt payment of bills. This is an active role.

Supporter

In this role, the advisor attempts to maintain a balance between attending events, programs, meetings and social gatherings when appropriate. The level of activity required by this role is different for each organization.

Student Roles

Team Player

In this role, the student leader attempts to serve his/her group with a wholistic attitude. The leader must participate in meetings, programs and projects that affect the most vital to any student organization.

Information Giver

In this role, the student leader strives to reach a balance of providing the organization and advisor with the information necessary to maintain clear objectives and expectations. This is a highly active role.

Ally

In this role, the student leader attempts to work with his/her peers and advisor to achieve cooperation and comradeship. Additionally, it is in this role that the leader seeks out the advisor as counselor. This is an active role for the student leader.

Follower-Delegater

In this role, the student leader listens to the needs of the organization and develops projects and programs that fit those needs. The effective student leader views his/her role as a servant to others and will try to empower his/her peers to take action themselves through delegation. This is a highly active and important role for the student leader.

Problem Solver

In this role, the student leader must work towards developing strategies for overcoming conflicts within the group and overcoming problems with the production of successful programs and projects. She/he should look to group members and the advisor for assistance and ideas. This is an active role of the student leader.

Role Model

Like it or not, student leaders are instant role models within their organization. Everything they do should reflect the purpose and goals of the organization. This is often a passive role for the successful student leader.