



Becoming a Registered Student Organization

What is an RSO?

Registration Requirements

How to Register/Re-activate an RSO

Suspension of RSO Status/Appeals

Greek Letter Organizations & RSO Status

What is an RSO?

A registered student organization (RSO) is a volunteer group of students organized to obtain certain goals and objectives through various educational, social, cultural, spiritual, or philanthropic activities. These activities should enhance and support MSU students, the University and the community. Membership in a RSO benefits students' growth and education while attending the University.

The University recognizes the importance RSOs have on campus. RSOs are authorized to use University facilities and services to assist them in meeting their group goals and objectives.

It is the responsibility of each RSO to adhere to the mission of the University and its' supporting bylaws and statutes. An RSO's goals, objectives, and activities are not to deviate from established University policies or regulations.

Due to the cyclical nature in the goals and objectives of these RSOs, the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services, or designee, and designated student groups shall review this document every five (5) years (starting in 1991) with Associated Student of Michigan State University (ASMSU), College of Graduate Students (COGS), and other appropriate student groups.

No RSO may have its registration denied or suspended on the grounds of its beliefs and attitudes. However, a RSO's goals, objectives, and activities should not be in conflict with established University policies or regulations.

Registration Requirements

<http://studentlife.msu.edu/student-organizations-activities>

Registration is valid from the date of registration until the end of the second week of the succeeding fall semester. **RSOs must register each year and use the online website Community (<https://michiganstate-community.symplcity.com>) to do so.**

Registration for an academic year can begin as early as August 1 of the previous academic year.

When registering a RSO on Community, you will need to provide:

- The name of the RSO.
- The positions and contact information of at least four (4) members, listed in Community.
- The purpose of the RSO.
- The name(s) and contact information of the advisor(s).
- If applicable, RSOs may also submit information about national affiliations.

Advisor Policies

- RSOs open only to undergraduate students may have an advisor who is a MSU faculty member, staff member, or graduate student. RSOs open to graduate students must have an advisor who is a MSU faculty or staff member.
- Advisors must sign an agreement form acknowledging their understanding of advisor responsibilities.
- RSOs may have multiple advisors if desired.

All RSOs must have a written Constitution including:

- The purpose of the RSO.
- **A statement that only registered Michigan State University students are eligible to be officers and/or voting members.**
- **The full anti-discrimination clause and a statement that the RSO will abide by the policies outlined by the clause; there are exceptions to single sex organizations.**

The organization will not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight. Also, only MSU students may be officers and/or voting members.

(If you are a single-sex social fraternity or sorority, see the section related to “Single-Sex Membership”.)

- Information regarding necessary operating procedures such as rules of order, officer positions, and committees.
- Procedures for amending the Constitution.
- Procedure for disbanding the RSO.

See Appendix 1 for a full sample Constitution.

How to Register/Re-activate an RSO

Step-by-Step Instructions: How to Re-activate an RSO on Community

1. RSO president must request administrative rights through the Office of Student Life by contacting Adam Winans at winansa@msu.edu.
2. An invitation will be sent via email (MSU email only).
3. Use the username, URL, and temporary password information provided in the body of the email.
4. The password link expires 24 hours after the time the email is sent.
5. Click “Forgot Password” if requestor has not logged in within the 24-hour window, and a new link will be created.
6. Do NOT change the username. Doing so will create a duplicate record and make future logins impossible.
7. Instructions on how to change the password are within the email.
8. Registration requirements are within both the email and the attached document- please have all registration information ready before registering or reactivating.
9. Log in and click on Student Group.
10. Click on “Reactivate a Group”.
11. Locate your RSO, and click “Apply to Reactivate the Group”.

12. Edit/add any necessary RSO information (general, advisor, etc.).
13. Add the RSO constitution if one is not already uploaded (a sample can be provided upon request). Make sure the University non-discriminatory clause is included verbatim in the constitution (required of all RSOs):
The organization will not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight. Also, only MSU students may be officers and/or voting members. (If you are a single-sex social fraternity or sorority, see the section related to "Single-Sex Membership".)
14. The RSO president and three (3) additional Executive Board members are required.
NOTE: Three (3) "Members" are required in the system. The Office of Student Life can change titles, but the system will add fields if the one (1) president and three (3) "members" fields are not met.
15. Agree to the FERPA warning, as well as the President/Chairperson Agreement.
16. Submit registration.
17. After submitting, the requestor may receive an email from Student Life staff requesting more information. Note registration is put on hold until the request is completed.
18. Allow 2-3 weeks for registration review and approval. An email confirmation will be sent when the RSO is registered/reactivated.

How to Register a New RSO in Community

Email Adam Winans at winansa@msu.edu for a link to register. Nearly all steps are the same, but the RSO administrator must log in, click "New Group Registrations", and click "Register a New Group" to begin registration. An email confirmation will be sent when the RSO is registered.

Suspension of RSO Status/Appeals

An RSO may have its registration suspended if:

- The RSO is found to be in violation of submitting falsified required information to Division of Student Affairs and Services.
- The RSO is found to be in violation of a University ordinance, policy, or regulation.

A decision by Student Affairs and Services personnel to suspend the registration of an RSO may be appealed pursuant to [MSU Student Rights and Responsibilities, Article 5](#), Section II, Adjudication of Non-Academic Student Grievances. The RSO can continue to operate within University guidelines, procedures, and regulations until the appeals process is exhausted, or a temporary restraining action is granted.

Greek Letter Organizations & RSO Status

Single-Sex Membership

In accordance with Title IX, the University does not allow affiliated organizations to discriminate based on sex. Title IX allows certain single-sex social sororities and fraternities an exemption from such requirements. To qualify, the sorority/fraternity must meet the following criterion: (1) The organization must have tax-exempt status under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) members must be limited to students, staff, or faculty at MSU, and (3) the organization must be a “social fraternity/sorority” as defined by the Department of Education.

The Department of Education defines a “social fraternity/sorority” as a group that can answer “no” to all the following questions:

- Is the organization’s membership limited to persons pursuing or having interest in a particular field of study, profession or academic discipline?
- Is the membership limited to individuals who have a high level of achievement in scholarship or any other endeavor?
- Are the members permitted to hold membership in other fraternities or sororities at the university?

If a group answers “yes” to any of the questions, it is not a “social fraternity/sorority” and is not exempt from the requirements of Title IX, and therefore, is not eligible to register as an RSO.

If the sorority or fraternity meets the above exemption criterion, it may register as an RSO even if the sex-discrimination-related clause is not included within its existing constitution. To do so, the registrant must submit a signed statement with the group’s bylaws certifying the group “...is a tax-exempt organization under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code, with membership limited to students, faculty, or staff of Michigan State University, and is a social fraternity or social sorority as defined by the Department of Education.”

Greeks Take the Lead

To maintain status as registered RSOs, full membership of all sororities and fraternities are required to participate in annual MSU “Greeks Take the Lead” sexual harassment and assault prevention training. Failure to participate in annual training will result in inability to register as an RSO and/or revocation of RSO status. For information regarding “Greeks Take the Lead” programming and to schedule a training session, contact the MSU Prevention Outreach & Education Coordinator at (517) 355-3865.