

**To be successful in carrying out the myriad responsibilities of an advisor, here are a few suggestions:**

- ❑ Be familiar with and thoroughly understand the purpose of the organization and how it augments the educational process
- ❑ Be informed of college policies, regulations and procedures, and know how to effectively interpret them for the student organization
- ❑ Familiarize the officers and committee members with these policies, helping to make them aware of their responsibilities for adhering to them
- ❑ Make sure that all business proceedings are conducted promptly and properly
- ❑ See that activities are properly scheduled
- ❑ Get to know each member of the group, their needs and desires, and relate this knowledge to the student's activities within the group
- ❑ Work closely with the officers and committee members, helping each carry out his or her responsibilities efficiently, using this relationship as an extension of the educational process
- ❑ Encourage the officers and individual members to preserve the continuity of the group by keeping good records, writing reports, and making other appropriate efforts to document the group's history
- ❑ REMEMBER to enjoy the experience, because if the advisor does, so will the students

For further information on the role of an advisor, don't hesitate to contact the Office of Student Life at ext. 3266.

**Advisor's Resources**

**L**os Medanos College recognizes the commitment of time and effort made by faculty and staff who choose to serve as advisors and provides an assortment of resources for those advisors. The Office of Student Life and its staff are available for consultation. The staff has experience in organizational management, co-curricular activities, and club management. They are knowledgeable about current legal activity involving clubs and organizations and about other resources available to advisors and their organizations.

The staff routinely conduct workshops open to all students and advisors involved with clubs and organizations. Throughout the year, students are invited to participate in leadership retreats and conferences both on and off campus. In addition, the staff has access to many additional resources dealing with organizational development and interpersonal relations that students and advisors may use.

The Office also keeps an archives of past charters, presidents, and advisors, for each current organization, as well as those which have come and gone over the years.

**“To accomplish this essential mission (higher education), connections must be made. All parts of campus life must relate to another and contribute to a sense of wholeness.”**

—Ernest Boyer, Former President,  
The Carnegie Foundation for the  
Advancement of Teaching

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*A reference for Advisors  
of Student Clubs  
& Organizations*

## Background

**Los Medanos College** recognizes the significant learning that often takes place outside the formal classroom. In addition to the knowledge gained in class sessions, the ability to communicate well, to develop, promote, implement, and evaluate ideas and activities, and to initiate desirable change are necessities for each educated person. LMC students are expected to function effectively in teams, both as leaders and as members. Clubs and organizations offer valuable experiences to develop these skills.

The out-of-the-classroom experience can and does play a crucial part in students' development. There are many facets of education and development that come together within the co-curriculum helping students become competent, mature individuals, and fully responsible citizens. Through their involvement in clubs, students can gain skills in organizational development, interpersonal communication, problem solving, and event planning.

The research of leading scholars indicates that participation in student clubs and organizations can support the retention and graduation rates of the students involved. This is particularly the case for students who are first generation college students and students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Each year, many faculty and staff volunteer to serve as advisors for these clubs and organizations. Each is a valuable partner in the personal development of the students involved. While providing a formal link with College administration in interpreting State laws and College policy, their most important contribution is in advising about organizational effectiveness, finances, communication, interpersonal effectiveness, and personal growth. It is through the aid of the advisors that individual students develop the qualities of effective leadership.

This resource has been assembled by the Office of Student Life to answer the questions most commonly asked by faculty and staff when considering serving as an advisor.

*We hope this answers your questions, if not, please call the office at ext. 3266.*

## Responsibilities

**An advisor's primary responsibility** is to make a strong commitment to the group and to aid in the personal growth of the individuals in that group. Above all, advisors should be available to students on an individual and group basis, and maintain an open and honest relationship with members.

Advisors serve as the official representative of the College and liaison with the Office of Student Life for their club(s). In their role, the advisor bears responsibility for the group's activities as well as the group's liability.

Therefore, advisors are expected to interpret various LMC policies, rules, and regulations to assist the students in their interactions with LMC. However, the role of an advisor is not one of "police officer." An advisor should advocate on behalf of the student group, not regulate. As adults, club or organization officers are responsible for their own actions. If an advisor has advised club officers of appropriate guidelines and policies and the students choose to act contrary to that advice or contrary to what the advisor believes is the law, the advisor should promptly consult the Office of Student Life.

Throughout this process the advisor serves as an authorized signature for the appropriate financial expenditures of the club. A signature from both a student officer and the advisor for group expenses is always required for protection of a student organization. Finally, the annual rechartering packets for clubs and organizations are sent in care of the advisors, to be passed on to club officers.

Annually, each club advisor must sign the Advisor Agreement, which outlines the specific duties, responsibilities, and expectations of LMC club advisors.

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**The officers of the group should assist the advisor by providing:**

- names, addresses, phone numbers, and schedules of all officers
- meeting schedules (including agendas) in advance of the meetings
- help in finding a substitute advisor when the primary one is unavailable
- the courtesy of being asked well in advance of an activity at which the advisor is expected to participate.

## Eligibility

**Any full-time** employee of the College who is at least 21 years old and not on leave of absence during any part of the year is eligible.

Students select their own advisor and the Director of Student Life approves the advisors.

The advisor's term of office is one year, with options for unlimited renewal.

## Liability

**Entering** into an agreement to serve as an advisor should not be taken lightly, as advisors share liability for the actions and activities of the club as well as the club's fiscal liabilities. However, a well-informed advisor who is visibly involved with the group should have no undue concern for possible legal action.

By completing the advisor approval process, a faculty or staff member is provided a record that she or he is fulfilling a College-related duty.

Those advisors who fulfill that duty in a non-negligent manner are indemnified by the College for their actions.