

TIPS & TRICKS OF RSO ADVISING

ABC'S OF ADVISING

Consider the following tips to help make advising more efficient for you and allow you to be more helpful to students.

- Attend meetings and events regularly
- Be open to communicating with members and officers
- Promote Cooperation rather than competition
- Assist in Developing long term goals
- Encourage discussion of relevant issues
- Foster a relationship of trust with students
- Be a Good listener
- Help officers improve leadership skills
- Discourage Inappropriate ideas
- Don't Judge students
- Kick-start enthusiasm
- Let members know expectations and roles
- Meet regularly with organization leaders
- Notice organization and member accomplishments
- Keep your sense of humor
- Praise publicly, criticize privately
- Be accessible and available for any Questions
- Request all agendas and minutes
- Strict – No, laissez-faire – No, middle ground – Yes
- Avoid Taking sides and remain objective
- Understand the goals of the organization
- Be a Valuable resource
- Turn “What should we do?” into “what are you going to do?”
- Develop and use constitutional expertise
- Provide reasons for Your suggestions
- Go to your organization for help. It builds confidence and team spirit

*Adapted from Advisor's Handbook 2008-2009 "A Guide to Advising Student Organizations"
from the University of South Carolina.*

DOs AND DON'Ts OF ADVISING

DO...

- Provide assistance regarding questions when members are not available
- Make suggestions when the group is about to go off the deep end
- Work closely with the President to give insight and feedback

- Stand up for the ideas of the organization even if you don't agree with them
- Do attend events (for at least part of the time) of the organization to show your support
- Do spend extra time with members when you know the organization needs you—specifically when they are putting on a major program
- Let people know when you will be out and when you will be back in the office
- Ask to be kept informed of what is taking place
- Ask to be able to review correspondence for grammar
- Do know, understand, and inform on University policies
- Allow the organization to make financial decisions
- Meet with specific officers on a regular basis
- Be flexible (students don't have their own office and also have busy schedules)
- Hold members accountable for their own goals
- Make a decision if officers are not available to make the decision
- Ask for input from students
- Keep key students informed about decisions of the administration
- Remember students have classes and studying to do

DON'T...

- Be the first person people go to for questions/decisions
- Keep the group from making mistakes (this is how they learn)
- Tell the President what to do (the President is the leader, not you)
- Represent your personal views as those of the organization
- Plan the events and run them
- Stay late just because members failed to get their own work done
- Tell people all of your business if you don't want them to know (it is not their business)
- Demand that everything needs to be "approved" if it doesn't
- Censor correspondence (there are few exceptions)
- Be a stickler for rules (find loopholes when appropriate)
- Let the organization blow their money away
- Always expect a meeting every week at the same time
- Fail to hold members responsible (they can at least call if they can't make a meeting)
- Make goals on members' behalf
- Make a decision without contacting or trying to contact the appropriate officers.
- Think that students' "wants" always need to be met
- Think that everyone needs to know the details of administrative decisions
- Let students use school as a "regular" excuse for not getting work done (if they don't have time, don't be in the organization)

Adapted from the ACPA Commission for Student Involvement (2005). [Advisor Manual](#).

REFLECTIONS FROM CURRENT UH ADVISORS

In a 2013 survey conducted by the Center for Student Involvement, RSO Advisors offered the following observations and reflections from their personal experience as advisors.

“Being involved with students beyond academics and having the opportunity to set an example for them and in turn learn from them and grow with them is what makes being an advisor a vitally fulfilling experience.”

“For me it is personally rewarding to see their professional growth through the organizations they are a part of. As an advisor, I try to make sure the college benefits by being nationally recognized within certain trades based on students' performance and scholarship.”

“I enjoy being an advisor because I get to work closely with the students on a daily basis and am able to see their professional goals realized through the benefits of these professional associations. Seeing students succeed makes the experience as advisor more and more rewarding year after year.”

“My experience has also enhanced my teaching and mentoring as a professor because I have been able to stay in closer touch with upcoming generations of students and alter my style and academic content based on the current norms, knowledge and expectations.”

“Advising a student organization can really help students have a great experience at UH.”