ADVISOR TIPS

Saying Hello!
At the beginning of each new year and semester, as an advisor you should reach out to the student leadership to introduce yourself and reaffirm your role in the organization. Let them know your office hours, your availability, how best to get in contact with you, and that you’re there to assist them whenever possible. Advisors should be setting up a first meeting at this point with the new leadership (Even if you have returning members!) to go over expectations and goals for the year. Not only should the advisor be clear with the students about their advising style and what the students can expect from them, but the students should be given an opportunity to voice their needs as well. There are worksheets within the Club Center that provide a framework for these conversations, just email clubs@rit.edu to receive a copy!

Knowing Your Organization
Anyone can be an advisor in title – but to advise in practice you’ll need to know the framework and structure of your organization. Simply saying you advise a group does not mean you understand their purpose, their needs, or the type of students involved. Not only is a first meeting helpful for this, but also is visiting the club’s social media, their website, and their Link profile. Knowing the group and their needs will help you better understand how to advise them.

Knowledge of RIT Policy
In addition to understanding the organization, an advisor should understand the basic guidelines and procedures RIT declares for the organization. Reading through the Club Handbook will be helpful in understanding policies surrounding Student Government Club Recognition. However a basic understanding of RIT overall will also be helpful so that if a student comes with a question about whether or not something is allowed or capable of being organized, you have a basic understanding of how to respond. In cases that you don’t you can always reach out to the Club Center!

Communicating with the Club Center
Anytime there are questions about your role, the structure of your organization, or basic questions you should always reach out to Sarah Griffith in the Club Center. Sarah can be reached the fastest by emailing her at sbgccl@rit.edu. If there is a change to your advising role, some club practice you’re not sure is allowed, or any other general questions you should always communicate with the Center to make sure you’re on the right track!

Attending Meetings and Events
In an ideal world an advisor would be able to attend every meeting and event the club plans – but of course that is not realistic, nor is it expected. Many advisors become “burnt out” because they over-commit and try to be as involved as possible. While presence is a good practice it is not required of any advisor that they be involved at every gathering or even the club sponsors. Instead, an advisor should aim to discuss with the students a number of meetings they will make in the semester if possible, and a number of events. Having an upfront conversation about what the students can expect of you will help them better understand their relationship going forward. Even if it’s only one meeting a month, or a semester, that is better than nothing!

Advising Style
There are many worksheets and activities that will show you what your style is, and how best to adapt for it. No style is wrong – there is no right or wrong way to advise. Everyone has a different technique, and often times advising is dependent on the type of group involved. While no advisor should consider themselves a supervisor or completely in control, there are times that an advisor may need to play a more active role than secondary. In those moments though it’s still important to incorporate the student involvement and feedback as it is a student run club!
ADVISOR TIPS

Using the Link
The Link@RIT is the portal in which all club information, profiles, documents, etc. are kept. Through the Link groups have club profiles, they can register events, advertise events, maintain rosters, and house documents. As an advisor, your club will have a profile on the Link and you’ll want to familiarize yourself with that mainframe. By logging in to the Link with your username and password you can go to your organization’s profile, and see who is listed on the roster. You yourself as an advisor should be listed there as well – if for some reason you’re not please contact clubs@rit.edu. Through visiting your club’s profile you can learn more about their profile and mission and at the beginning of the year you can see who the new leaders are so you can reach out and make that first point of contact!

Member Conflict
From time to time there may be strife within the organization – in those cases the students should both have an opportunity to speak with you to discuss their concerns. Communicating with the Club Center as well, or reaching out for advice on how to conduct these conversations, is encouraged as well.

Advisor Travel
Club advisors can request funding for travel. In the Club Advisor Handbook the policy is outlined for advisor travel, which will allow advisors in their role to travel with groups to events, competitions, tournaments, and more. Please visit the handbook for more information on how to request this funding.

Advisor 101
Throughout the academic year, Advisor101 sessions are offered. They are a chance for advisors to come together to learn more from one another, to complete case studies, and to work toward better ways of understanding their role on campus. Please refer to the Advisor Date Sheet for these session times and locations.

Mandatory Meetings
Each year clubs are required to attend 3 mandatory meetings, which are outlined on the Club Important Date Sheet. These meetings are required for the students only, but advisors are encouraged to attend if able.

Important Date Sheets
Please refer to the Club Important Dates Sheet for all information related to clubs for the academic year. Events, gatherings, informational sessions, and more are listed.

Why Advise
Many take on the role of advising only to find it may not fit the idea they had in mind – but advising is a rewarding experience; not only are you obtaining more information to work closely with students but you’re helping to produce leaders and to challenge them to grow to become engaged citizens. While there is always paperwork to be done and policies to be considered, advising should always be about bonding with students, challenging them to become engaged leaders, and building connections.