

# **STARTING A NEW ORGANIZATION AT DARTMOUTH**



## **APPLYING TO COSO FOR RECOGNITION**

*Updated September 2017*  
*Student Involvement*

## INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to COSO! Please read through this packet carefully to make sure you are following the proper steps for applying to COSO for recognition. Starting a new organization is both exciting and challenging. The Center for Student Involvement is here to support you – stop by and ask questions! This guide is only the beginning of your adventure.

## APPLYING FOR COSO RECOGNITION: STEP-BY-STEP

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- Step 1:** Read the “Applying to COSO for Recognition” packet and the “Prerequisites and Procedures for Recognition and Withdrawal of Recognition.”
- Step 2:** Determine interest for the proposed new student organization on campus. Hold recruitment and organizational development meetings. This might also include holding elections, organizing a retreat, and developing your organization’s mission.
- Step 3:** Find a current faculty or staff member willing to advise your student organization. The role of an advisor is to provide stability, continuity, and guidance and to assist in fostering the prudent management of organizational funds. The advisor must sign the “Petition for Recognition” form.
- Step 4:** Develop and write student organization governing documents. This would include a constitution, bylaws, and a “Statement of Purpose.”
- Step 5:** Complete the “Petition for Recognition” form.
- Step 6:** Meet with the COSO Advisor and Director of Student Involvement, Anna Hall, to discuss your organization and review all documents.
- Step 7:** Submit all forms (Petition for Recognition, Constitution, Bylaws, and Statement of Purpose) to COSO via OrgSync by Monday at noon while classes are in session. For specific directions for this part of the process, please see the page on “Creating a New Organization” on the COSO website or on the last page of this packet. Forms will be reviewed by COSO and your organization will be invited to attend a COSO meeting. Please note: COSO does not hear recognition proposals in the summer term.
- Step 8:** Present the proposed organization to COSO at a “Recognition Hearing.” The advisor and seven members of your organization are expected to attend. At this meeting, you will explain the mission of your organization and answer any questions COSO may have.
- Step 9:** After the meeting, you will be notified of COSO’s decision about recognition. If recognized, you will receive a “new organization” packet from the Student Involvement Office. This packet includes a welcome letter, information about creating a blitz/dnd account, link to treasurer form and financial procedures guide, and information about your account number and startup funds.
- Step 10:** As a recognized COSO organization, you are now eligible to apply for funding, start planning events, and becoming active on campus!

# **THE PREREQUISITES AND PROCEDURES FOR RECOGNITION**

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*The Council on Student Organizations (COSO) is a representative body charged by the Trustees of Dartmouth College, through the office of the President and the Dean of the College, with the authority to recognize and oversee all student initiated groups with the exception of those organizations affiliated with the DCAD, Hopkins Center, Dean of the College, Dickey Center, WDCR/WFRD and The Dartmouth.*

## **What Recognition Means**

1. The right to use the name of Dartmouth College in the activities and publications of the organization and to be the recognized representative of the College at all functions in which the organization participates.
2. The right to utilize the facilities, property, and services of Dartmouth College.
3. The right to use the facilities of COSO, including the provision of office space, when available; the preparation (and distribution) of communications of the organization at minimal cost; the provision of accounting services including monthly reports of income and expenditures; and administrative support from the Collis Center for Student Involvement.
4. The right to request financial assistance from COSO to further the activities of the organization. Recognition does not guarantee financial support. Each request will be judged on its merit and will be evaluated in terms of criteria such as the organization's ability to supplement classroom education and extra-curricular activities, the nature of the proposed activity, the financial support (if any) received from the membership, attendance at previously held activities, the extent to which the College community may participate in some of its programs, and the amount of COSO funds available for distribution at any given time.
5. The responsibility to respond promptly to COSO requests for budgets or other information concerning the status of the organization, and the responsibility to inform COSO of changes in the officers or advisors, or any other development that might affect the status of the group as a recognized student organization.
6. The responsibility to comply with the requirements of the organization's constitution and by-laws, all applicable rules and policies of Dartmouth College, and all applicable local, state, and federal laws.
7. The responsibility to use College funds and facilities responsibly and in the manner for which their use is authorized.
8. The responsibility to comply with College policies on fundraising, accounting, and solicitations for funds.

## **Prerequisites for Recognition**

An application consisting of:

1. A Statement of Aims and Objectives, for which the organization is to be organized, which shall be consistent with the liberal arts objectives of Dartmouth College.
2. An acknowledgement that no purpose or objective of the organization shall be in conflict with applicable state or federal laws.
3. The organization will not advocate, incite, or participate in any physical disruption of the educational process (See Withdrawal of Recognition).
4. A statement that membership in the organization shall be open to all members of the Dartmouth community (students, faculty, staff, and their spouses) without regard to race, color, creed, sex, national origin, handicap, or sexual orientation.
5. Membership is limited to members of the Dartmouth community.

6. The organization must have at least ten (10) students. Seventy-five (75) percent of the organization must be Dartmouth undergraduate students. All officers must be Dartmouth undergraduates.

Furthermore, all applicants must fulfill the following additional prerequisites for recognition: a. The organization shall have:

- I. A member of the Dartmouth faculty or administration as its advisor. The advisor shall be made aware of the organization's proposed programming and shall meet with the group at least once per term; and
  - II. A constitution in the form of the attached model constitution. All changes or amendments to the constitution or by-laws of the organization shall be submitted to the Collis Center for Student Involvement within two (2) weeks of such change or other modification.
- b. The organization shall notify COSO of officers immediately following election.
  - c. Organizations that have non-College affiliation(s) must supply a statement describing the nature of such affiliation(s), including a complete and accurate description of the existing relationship(s).
  - d. The organization shall adhere to the publications code for student organizations.
  - e. The organization shall not participate in hazing activities.
  - f. The officers of the organization shall review the statement of Aims and Objectives and the responsibilities and privileges granted by recognition, and shall submit a yearly report of the activities, officers, membership programs, and the name of the advisor to the organization to COSO during the Fall term budget procedures.
  - g. The officers of the organization shall accept responsibility for College accounts and shall maintain no outside bank accounts.
  - h. The officers of the organization may enter into no contractual obligations in the name of the organization or the College. COSO may deny or withdraw recognition on the basis of affiliations with outside groups where such affiliations are found to be inappropriate.
  - i. The organization may neither directly nor indirectly utilize College resources in support of any candidate for public office except as permitted by College policy.
  - j. The organization may not utilize the resources of the College for the intended benefit of any external affiliate(s) of the organization through the exercise of the right to request the use of College space for programs sponsored by student organizations.
  - k. The organization may not: (1) utilize the organization for the financial enrichment of any officer, member or affiliate; (2) solicit funds outside the College without the express approval of the Development Office at Dartmouth College; (3) lend or give College funds to any individual, group, or other organization. Organizations may sponsor fundraising activities for charity or organizational support upon approval by the Collis Center for Student Involvement.
  - l. The Collis Center for Student Involvement must approve any program to be co-sponsored by an external affiliate(s). COSO may deny or withdraw recognition on the basis of affiliations with outside groups where such affiliations are found to be inappropriate.

## Withdrawal of Recognition

*The Council on Student Organizations reserves the right to withdraw recognition from any organization at any time, provided:*

1. The organization shall be notified of the intent to withdraw recognition and the reason(s) for which recognition is to be withdrawn. Furthermore, the officers of the organization shall be given the opportunity to appear before the Council before any motion for withdrawal of recognition shall be brought to vote.
2. A majority vote of the members of COSO shall be required for the withdrawal of recognition from a student organization.
3. Withdrawal of recognition of an organization shall not prevent such organization from re-applying for recognition at the end of either two (2) full College terms, or at the end of six (6) months, whichever comes first.
4. Withdrawal of recognition from an organization may be in response to any violations of the above-described prerequisites for recognition. Furthermore, such action may be taken at the discretion of COSO if the members of COSO shall determine that the organization is no longer functioning in a manner consistent with its stated Aims and Objectives.
5. Any COSO member may bring before COSO at any time a motion for the withdrawal of recognition of a recognized organization.

## The Role of the Advisor

*In order to clarify the role of the Student Organization Advisor, the Council on Student Organizations has adopted the following policy:*

- A. The role of an Advisor is to provide **stability** and **continuity** to student organizations.
- B. The Advisor is to provide **guidance** to student organizations through advice and suggestions.
- C. The Advisor is to **assist** in fostering the **prudent management** of organizational funds.

*The following is an attempt to expound upon each of the above aspects of the Advisor's role.*

- A. To provide stability and continuity to a student organization, the Advisor must assume an active role in the affairs of the student group. One of the most common reasons for the failure of a club or organization is internal strife among club members. Maintaining stability and promoting close cooperation among club members frequently requires that the Advisor act as an arbiter and mediate disputes. Ideally, the energy behind intra-group conflicts should be channeled through constructive outlets. It is important to avoid the breakdown of a student group into non-functioning factions.
- B. The Advisor is to provide guidance to student organizations. This guidance may assume a variety of forms. One aspect would be specialty advice, such as suggestions that an Advisor might make to an organization concerning the selection of material for a student publication. The Advisor is not the director of a club's activities. Providing guidance through advice and suggestions, the Advisor assists students in making their own decisions.
- C. The prudent management of funds necessitates close cooperation between club officers and club advisors. In order that COSO policy be in line with that of the general college, the signature of the Collis Center staff member must appear on all purchasing forms.

*The Council's experiences with student groups have proven the importance of the Advisor to the success of a club's endeavors. The Council has learned that the activity of a student group is often proportional to the Advisor's involvement. Those student organizations that are most successful have active Advisors. COSO encourages the full participation of the Advisor in the affairs of student organizations.*

# WRITING A CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

## Why is a Constitution Important?

A constitution is the founding document of your organization and provides a basic governing structure. It outlines your mission, goals, officer responsibilities, meeting rules, and membership requirements. A constitution is also important to provide consistent leadership, as it will be passed on to future officers.

## Constitution Writing Tips

- Bring all stakeholders together, including your advisor and founding members, to write the Constitution.
- Start by writing your mission, which is a statement that explains your group's purpose.
- Write your constitution in a broad manner, so that future leaders can use it.
- Write your constitution with the future in mind. Do not use proper names, dates, locations, and exact meeting times.
- Keep your constitution in an editable digital format (Microsoft Word document), a permanent digital format (pdf) for web use, and a hard copy in print.
- Make sure you have uploaded your constitution to OrgSync so that all members can access it.

## Sample Constitution

**NOTE:** According to the needs of each organization constitutions will vary. The sample below is to help you think about your organization and its needs. Certain items, in italics, are required.

### **Article 1: Name of Organization**

1.01. The name of the organization shall be \_\_\_\_\_. (The "Organization").

### **Article 2: Objectives and Purposes**

2.01. The purposes for which the Organization is to be organized shall be consistent with the aims and objectives of a liberal arts education as pursued by Dartmouth College. No purpose or objective of the Organization shall be in conflict with applicable state or federal laws presently in force or hereafter enacted.

2.02. The specific purposes and objectives which the Organization shall be organized to pursue include (insert statement of aims and objectives).

2.03. Hazing is strictly prohibited at Dartmouth College, by both College policy and New Hampshire law. Dartmouth College is first and foremost an educational institution. College hazing prevention policies and response procedures for hazing incidents are based on that educational mission.

Hazing practices within the organization are prohibited pursuant to New Hampshire State and Dartmouth College Policy presented herein:

*Dartmouth's definition of hazing includes, but is not limited to activities that would fall within the New Hampshire statutory definition of hazing (RSA 631:7). Under New Hampshire law and College policy, hazing is defined as "any act directed toward a student, or any coercion or intimidation of a student to act or to participate in an act when*

- (1) Such act is likely or would be perceived by a reasonable person as likely to cause physical or psychological injury to any person; and*
- (2) Such act is a condition of initiation into, admission into, continued membership in or association with any organization."*

*Dartmouth's definition of hazing also includes the following activities if they occur as part of initiation or admission into an organization, group, or team, or are required for continued membership in an organization, group, or team:*

- The consumption of alcohol, drugs, or other substances*
- Removing, damaging, or destroying property*
- Behavior that disrupts College or community activities*

- Violating any Standard of Conduct or College policy

*The definition of hazing applies whether or not the participants or others perceive the behavior as "voluntary." The implied or expressed consent of any person toward whom an act of hazing is directed is not a defense. Assertions that the conduct or activity was not part of an official organizational event or was not officially sanctioned or approved by the organization are also not a defense. This definition applies to behavior on or off College property or organization premises.*

### **Article 3: Membership & Withdrawal**

3.01. Membership in the Organization shall be open to all members of the Dartmouth Community. Dartmouth prohibits any form of discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, age, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, national origin, citizenship, disability, genetic information, military or veteran status, or any other legally protected status in the administration of and access to the College's programs and activities. The organization must have at least ten (10) undergraduate members. In no event shall more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the Members be non-Dartmouth students. All officers must be Dartmouth undergraduates.

3.02. Membership in the Organization shall be determined by attendance at two consecutive meetings of the Organization. All Members (herein so-called) shall have equal rights and privileges with respect to the election of the Officers of the Organization (defined below).

3.03 Any disputes that arise shall be mediated by the President of the organization. After this process, any disputes unable to be resolved, shall be resolved by a majority affirmative vote of members not involved in the dispute.

3.04 Voluntary Members Withdrawal: Any member of our organization, at any time, can voluntarily withdraw membership from the organization.

3.05 Non-Voluntary Members Withdrawal: After bringing an issue with a member to the COSO Board and COSO advisor, a member may be removed from the group under specific circumstances that are at the discretion of the COSO Board or COSO Advisor.

### **Article 4: Officers and Duties**

4.01. The Officers of the Organization shall consist of a President, one or more Vice Presidents, a Secretary, and a Treasurer who, with the Advisor to the Organization, shall constitute the Executive or Steering Committee (herein so-called) of the Organization.

4.02. No non-Dartmouth undergraduate student shall be eligible to be an Officer of the Organization.

4.03. Any Dartmouth undergraduate eligible to be an Officer of the Organization shall not be permitted to hold more than one office in that organization at any one time.

4.04. The Officers of the Organization shall be elected by majority vote of the Members present during a meeting to be called in the third week of the spring term for the express purpose of electing the officers. Any Officer of the Organization shall be required to be in residence at Dartmouth for two (2) of the four (4) academic terms for which elected to be eligible to serve in such office. A list of the Officers and their respective classes will be provided by the President to the Council on Student Organizations ("COSO") within three days of the election thereof.

4.05. The President shall call all meetings of the Membership, regular or otherwise, and shall serve as the chairman of such meetings. In addition, the President shall, with the advice of the Executive Committee, plan and coordinate the events to be sponsored by the Organization in forthcoming terms; with the Treasurer, prepare and present an annual budget request to COSO, and shall in all events serve as a liaison with COSO.

4.06. In the absence of the President, or should the President prove unable or unwilling to perform the duties described in Section 4.05 above, the Vice President shall assume the responsibilities of the President. In addition, the Vice President

shall preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee called pursuant to Section 5.06 below and shall also perform other duties as the President may assign from time to time.

4.07. The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining accurate financial records of the Organization and shall be allowed to request checks or purchase orders on behalf of the Organization. The Treasurer, with the President, shall prepare and present any budget requests to COSO. *The officers shall insure that all funds are properly kept within the College accounting system. No outside accounts are permitted.*

4.08. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording accurate minutes of any Meeting, regular or otherwise, of the Membership or the Executive Committee. The Secretary shall also record all votes of the Membership or Executive Committee. The Secretary shall be responsible for the writing and distribution of a newsletter or other notice to the Membership informing them of any Meeting or other gathering of the Organization, and furthermore shall at all times maintain an accurate and complete list of the Membership of the Organization.

4.09. *The Advisor to the Organization must be either a faculty member or administrator of the College.* The Advisor shall attend all meetings of the Executive Committee as a non-voting member thereof and shall provide guidance and administrative assistance in the preparation of a program of events to be pursued by the Organization in forthcoming terms.

4.10. The Executive Committee shall prepare a program of events to be sponsored by the Organization in forthcoming terms. The program so prepared shall be presented to the Membership for their approval at the Meeting of the Members of the Organization next scheduled after the program has been developed.

4.11. Any Officer of the Organization may resign at any time by delivering a written notice of such resignation to the President, or in the case of the resignation of the President, to the Vice President.

4.12. At the next regular meeting of the Membership of the Organization, an election shall be held to elect an Officer to fill the position made vacant by such resignation.

4.13. If any Officer of the Organization is absent from the Dartmouth campus for any leave or off-campus term, an election shall be held at the first Meeting of such term to elect an individual to serve as such Officer until the regularly elected Officer shall return to campus.

4.14. Any Officer of the Organization may be removed from such office by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Members.

### **Article 5: Quorum and Meetings**

5.01. *A quorum shall exist at any Meeting of the Membership where at least fifty percent (50%) of the Members then in residence at Dartmouth are in attendance.*

5.02. Actions requiring a majority vote at any Meeting at which a quorum is not present may be submitted to the Members for a mail vote.

5.03. Regular Meetings (herein so-called) of the Organization shall be held at least twice per term at such time and place to be determined by the President.

5.04. A Special Meeting (herein so-called) of the Membership shall be called upon written request to the President of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the Members then in residence at Dartmouth.

5.05. All Members shall be notified of any Meeting and the nature of the business to be transacted thereat at least one day before such Meeting. No Meeting shall be called with the intent to exclude any one Member or any portion of the Membership.

5.06. The Executive Committee of the Organization shall meet at least once before any Meeting of the Membership at such time and place to be determined by the President. At such Meetings of the Executive Committee a quorum shall be deemed to be the attendance of any three (3) members of the Executive Committee.

### **Article 6: Voting**

6.01. *Each Member shall have one (1) vote.*



6.02. There shall be no absentee or proxy voting with respect to any matter other than the nomination and election of the Officers.

6.03. All motions except those described in Section 7.02 below require an affirmative vote of a simple majority of the Membership to be effective.

6.04. All votes of the Executive Committee shall require an affirmative vote of three (3) of the Officers to be effective.

#### **Article 7: Miscellaneous**

*7.01. This Constitution shall have been presented to the Membership of the Organization and shall be ratified by a majority vote thereof.*

7.02. This Constitution may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Members of the Organization then in residence at Dartmouth.

7.03. Any amendment to this Constitution shall be attached hereto and made a part hereof for all purposes.

*7.04. This Constitution and any amendments and changes hereto shall be kept on record with the Student Involvement Office and shall be available to any Member of the Organization for inspection during reasonable office hours.*

# PETITION FOR RECOGNITION

## COUNCIL ON STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Contact Person for Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Open Membership:      \_\_\_\_\_YES                      \_\_\_\_\_NO

**Membership Information:** Names and signatures of 10 undergraduate students interested in forming the proposed organization.

NAME	SIGNATURE
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS:	

Faculty Advisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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## COSO RECOGNITION CHECKLIST

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*The following items must be completed in order to be eligible for COSO review.*

- ☐ We have read and reviewed the “Applying to COSO for Recognition” packet.
- ☐ We have read and reviewed the “Prerequisites and Procedures for Recognition and Withdrawal of Recognition” document.
- ☐ We have held recruitment and organizational development meetings.
- ☐ We have found a faculty/staff advisor. They have signed the “Petition for Recognition” form.
- ☐ We have written a constitution and bylaws for our organization.
- ☐ We have written a “statement of purpose” for our organization.
- ☐ We have completed the “Petition for Recognition” form.
- ☐ We have met with COSO advisor and Director of Student Involvement, Anna Hall.
- ☐ We have created a profile and submitted all forms to COSO via OrgSync.

*Questions about the recognition process, stop by Collis 303 or blitz [COSO@Dartmouth.edu](mailto:COSO@Dartmouth.edu)*

## Creating an Organization in OrgSync

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1) Go to: OrgSync.com and log-in using your Dartmouth ID and password.

2) At the top, click “Browse Organizations”

3) Click “Register a New Organization”

4) Choose “Council on Student Organizations” when asked, “Where do you want to create this organization?”

5) Complete Basic Organization Information

### Register New Organization [- Back](#)

#### Basic Organization Information

Full Organization Name \*

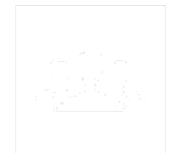
Abbreviated Organization Name \*

Category \*

Select a Category

Description

#### Profile Picture



Upload

You can use .JPG, .GIF or .PNG format (10MB size limit)  
Recommended size: 150x150

6) Click “No” to the question: “Are you a recognized COSO group?”

7) Complete the “Applying to COSO for Recognition” form. Upload your constitution, the “Petition for Recognition” form and any additional information.

### Register New Organization [- Back](#)

#### Applying to COSO for Recognition

Welcome to COSO! Please complete this form as part of the recognition process.

Open Group \*

☐ Yes  
☐ No

Reasons for Desiring Recognition \*

8) If approved for recognition by COSO, you will be given access to an organization portal in OrgSync.