

# *ADVISOR'S HANDBOOK*



KIRBY  
STUDENT  
CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH  
OFFICE OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

2007 – 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	Page 2
Responsibility of Student Organizations Policy	Page 3
Advisor's Role	Page 4
Advising Styles	Page 6
The Expectations of an Advisor	Page 8
Tips for Effective Advising	Page 10
Leadership Transition	Page 12
Recruitment of New Members	Page 14
Frequently Asked Questions	Page 15
Kirby Student Center Staff	Page 19

Dear Advisor,

Congratulations on becoming a campus organization advisor! The health of any student organization relies on you, the advisor, working closely with the officers, staying well informed, and supplying structure and guidance.

This handbook is meant to clarify your role, give tips for effective advising, answer the most often asked questions and list the resource people available to you in the Kirby Student Center. In addition, this handbook helps to clarify your role in leadership transition and in recruiting and retaining new members.

We encourage you to share your thoughts and concerns on advising your student organization. We welcome any questions you may have regarding organization or leadership development. Furthermore, the Kirby Leadership Institute offers a variety of leadership seminars, workshops, symposia, and community learning partnerships designed to help students develop strategies and skills for success. Please encourage your students to take advantage of these leadership opportunities. If we can help you or your organization in any way, please do not hesitate to call us.

We would like to extend our thanks to you for accepting this important position as an advisor to a campus organization.

Sincerely,  
The Kirby Student Activities Staff

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS POLICY**

The policy on the Responsibility of Student Organizations states that each student organization shall be responsible for the individual and collective conduct of its members and guests in all of its group's sponsored activities and functions. This responsibility shall be exercised on behalf of the organization by the appropriate elected officers/designated representatives of each group.

This policy applies to both on-campus and off-campus events, and participants are expected to act in accordance with applicable University policies, municipal, and state laws.

The following specific regulations and responsibilities of student organizations for social events follow naturally, in the opinion of the Student Affairs and Student Behavior Committees, from the general policy on student organization responsibility.

### **1. Conduct Unbecoming a Student**

This is a general description covering a wide variety of inappropriate behaviors. There need be no cause for concern about vagueness in this instance. It clearly embraces drunkenness and abusive behavior that infringes upon the rights of others as conduct unbecoming to a student.

### **2. Sponsoring Student Organization Responsibilities**

It is expected that the organization officers/designated representatives will impress upon all members prior to the event that the organization will be responsible.

If there is drinking, disruptive/disorderly behavior, etc. during the function and no evidence that the sponsoring organization attempted any restraining action through officers or other members, the organization will be held responsible by the Student Affairs Committee and disciplinary action may be taken.

### **3. Actions Appropriate for Sponsoring Student Organizations**

It is not the intent of this statement to cause student organizations to assume a police role in the extreme sense. It does, however, expect the sponsoring organization to recognize problem situations and to deal with them in appropriate ways.

All possible situations or actions cannot be encompassed in any policy. It is hoped that this rather detailed statement will, however, clarify the expectations of the University with respect to student organization responsibility.

## **ADVISOR'S ROLE**

## TEACHING AND COACHING

As an advisor, teaching and coaching are activities that should be within your professional capabilities. You can serve as a resource to introduce new program ideas, help members apply principles and skills learned in the classroom, and point out new perspectives and directions to the group. You may also aid members in the development of insight into their problems, point out other resources within and outside the college community, and coach individuals in their duties as officers.

Throughout your relationship with the organization, you should be alert to opportunities to create or capitalize upon experiences and situations that will tend to increase the learning potential of the activity. To teach effectively in your role as advisor, you must participate actively by making a contribution when you feel circumstances call for it.

## CONSULTATION

In your role as advisor, you should expect to be consulted regularly by the officers, chairpersons, or lead members about their plans for activities or programs. You should know what projects or events are being planned and offer ideas or suggestions. You must be cautious, however, not to control the program planning process.

## PROVIDE CONTINUITY

Providing continuity is an important and essential component of being a good advisor. The transition of officers and members in an organization is continual and, often, the advisor is the only link with the immediate past. You can orientate new officers and members to the history of the group and help them build on it. Continuity implies a link with the future, and you will play an important role in helping to develop long-term plans for the future of the organization and in communicating these plans to succeeding generations of members during their training period.

## COUNSELING

As an advisor, counseling students is necessary because you know how the members of the group interact in informal settings. You have a unique opportunity to identify students having problems in their personal lives that appear to affect their work or effectiveness within the group. It is up to you to find an opportunity to speak privately with the student to see if a problem really exists and ask what you can do about it. When the problem is serious, you may want to consider referring the student for professional aid at the Student Health and Counseling Center (8155).

## INTERPRETATION OF POLICY

As a representative of the University administration to the organization, you will be in a constant position of interpreting the institution's policies and regulations about student organizations. You should see that the group and its officers know what the policies are, why they exist, and the channels to follow to obtain exceptions or revisions of these policies.

## SUPERVISION

Although your major responsibility is not regulatory or disciplinary, as a member of the

University staff, you have a responsibility to keep both the institution and the organization's best interests in mind. In a well-run organization, an advisor's supervisory role may be small, but you may need to remind the group of University regulations and/or intervene to prevent the organization from violating public or institutional policies.

Whenever possible, you should work collaboratively with the officers of the organization to maintain standards that are consistent with those of the institution.

### ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

Although it is not required, you should try to attend all regular and special meetings of the organization to keep informed about organizational efforts. You should also meet periodically with the officers to assistance in long-range planning and leadership development. This is often a good time to address problems or concerns in a small group.

### FINANCIAL SUPERVISION

Each organization will elect its own treasurer. You will need to spend some time supervising the financial records and the treasurer's work. This may include teaching the treasurer the elements of simple bookkeeping or the intricacies of the organization's record system. An advisor should be aware of the nature, extent, and pattern of the group's expenses and income and introduce corrective measures when necessary. You should pay particular attention to accounts receivable, the current balance, and the prompt payment of bills. The Office of Student Activities staff (7169) is available to help any organization establish a bookkeeping system.

### ORGANIZATIONAL RECORDS

The committee reports and group records are an important part of the organization's history on campus. These records contain valuable information for future officers. An advisor should see that the officers maintain adequate records and minutes of the group's activities. The group should keep a copy of these records in a permanent file in the advisor's office and in the organization's office.

You should work with officers and committee chairs to establish a system of recording the planning and evaluation of events. These records will help in future event production.

Taken in part from:

Dr. C.J. Baaken's *Legal Aspects of Student Personnel Services*

Dr. Paul C. Bloland's *Student Advising in Higher Education*

### **ADVISING STYLES**

An advisor is a valuable resource person to the organization. As an advisor, you need to establish an open, honest relationship with the student leadership and members. You can share new ideas, give and receive feedback, and build trust. It requires time, energy, and patience to build this type of relationship. When this type of relationship emerges, the skill to provide consistent and progressive leadership is enhanced.

Throughout your relationship with an organization, you should pay close attention to the advising style chosen to work with your group. There are several factors that influence this choice:

*Factors Influencing Advising Style:*

- **Institutional expectation of advisor**

Are programs expected?

Who's ultimately responsible, the students or the advisor?

- **Student expectation of advisor**

Who makes the decisions?

Who does the work?

Who is in control?

(See next section for a more detailed student/advisor expectation worksheet)

- **Level of student's development**

How advanced are students' skills?

What commitment level do students have to the group?

After you have answered the above questions, it is proper to match your leadership style with that of the group's development.

Matching the most effective advising style to the students becomes a matter of deductive reasoning. When the group is in its infancy and the members are unsure of themselves, you must take a more directive and active approach in dealing with the group. As the group ages and members become more self-assured, an advisor can function as a consultant and assume a more passive role.

Developing a relationship of open and honest communication, sincerity, and approachability provides both the advisor and the student with a chance to grow and succeed. The effect this has on

the leadership skills of the student can be very positive. Throughout this process, you will become more skilled and consistent. This, in turn, will allow you to become more effective and the group will achieve greater success.

*Suggested Advising Styles for Perceived Student Level of Development*

PERCEIVED STUDENT LEVEL

SUGGESTED ADVISING STYLE

Low levels of commitment to the organization, programming skills, personal responsibility for actions.

**Advisor/Teacher** - low concern for product; high concern for process.

Increasing levels of programming skills, interest, commitment, and responsibility.

**Consultant** - low concern for product and process.

Moderate levels of competency in programming, strong commitment to group, willingness to take personal responsibility.

**Directive** - high concern for product; low concern for process.

High level of commitment to group, programming skills, and personal responsibility for action.

**Teacher/Director** - high concern for product; high concern for process.

## THE EXPECTATIONS OF AN ADVISOR

Listed below are some common expectations that student leaders have of their advisors. We designed this worksheet to help advisors and student officers arrive at a clear and mutually agreed upon role of the advisor, and to have a clear understanding of what their relationship will be like. You should fill out this copy of the form with how you think you should interact with the group. The officers of your organization will collectively fill out the copy of this form located in their *Officer's Handbook*. The officers should then establish a time so that you can work through the respective expectations and insure that they are consistent with one another.

### Advisor Expectation Worksheet

For each of the following statements, respond on a scale of 1-4 on the importance of each function:

- 1 – Essential for the advisor to do
- 2 – Helpful for the advisor to do
- 3 – Nice, but they don't have to
- 4 – Absolutely not an advisor's function

*The advisor is expected to:*

- 1. Attend all general meeting.
- 2. Attend all executive committee meetings.
- 3. Call meetings of the executive committee when he/she believes it is necessary.
- 4. Explain University policy when suitable to the discussion.
- 5. Explain University policy to the executive officers and depend upon them to carry them out through their leadership.
- 6. Explain University policy to the entire membership.
- 7. Reserve an appointment with the officers before each meeting.
- 8. Help the officers prepare the agenda before each meeting.
- 9. Speak up during discussion when he/she has relevant information.
- 10. Speak up during discussion when he/she believes the group is likely to make a poor decision.
- 11. Remain quiet during general meetings unless called upon.
- 12. Exert his/her influence with officers between meetings.
- 13. Take an active part in formulating the goals of the group.
- 14. Initiate ideas for discussion when he/she believes they will help the group.
- 15. Be one of the group except for voting and holding office.
- 16. Attend all group activities.

- \_\_\_17. Require the officers to clear all expenses with him/her before the group makes financial commitments.
- \_\_\_18. Request to see the treasurer's books at the end of the semester.
- \_\_\_19. Check the minutes before typing.
- \_\_\_20. Check all official correspondence before mailing.
- \_\_\_21. Get a copy of all official correspondence.
- \_\_\_22. Be custodian of all group paraphernalia and records during breaks.
- \_\_\_23. Keep the official files in his/her office.
- \_\_\_24. Inform the group of infractions of their by-laws and rules.
- \_\_\_25. Keep the group aware of its stated goals when planning events.
- \_\_\_26. Veto a decision when it violates a stated objective, by-law, or UMD policy.
- \_\_\_27. Mediate interpersonal conflicts that arise.
- \_\_\_28. Plan leadership skills workshops.
- \_\_\_29. Announce any leadership skills workshops and conferences and strongly encourage members and officers to attend.
- \_\_\_30. State advisor's responsibilities during the first meeting of the board.
- \_\_\_31. Let the group work out its problems, including making mistakes and "doing it the hard way".
- \_\_\_32. Insist on an evaluation of each activity by those students responsible for planning it.
- \_\_\_33. Take the initiative in creating teamwork and cooperation among the group.
- \_\_\_34. Let the group thrive or decline on its own merits.
- \_\_\_35. Represent the group in any conflicts with members of the UMD staff.
- \_\_\_36. Remain familiar with UMD facilities, services, and procedures that affect group activities.
- \_\_\_37. Recommend programs, speakers, and campus activities.
- \_\_\_38. Take an active part in the orderly transition of responsibilities between old and new board members.
- \_\_\_39. Approve all candidates for office.
- \_\_\_40. Cancel any activities when he/she believes they have been inadequately planned.

Please add any other ideas you have on the advisor's role:

Adapted from: *Organization & Advisor Manual*. California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo.)

## **TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVISING**

### **MOST GROUPS PREFER AN ACTIVE ADVISOR**

Being active does not mean serving as the leader. It does mean getting involved with the group. Such involvement usually includes attending meetings and activities, assessing the group's progress, and being available to discuss ideas and problems. An advisor may also establish personal time with individual officers and members to discuss organizational and personal concerns.

### **BE A GOOD RESOURCE PERSON**

An effective advisor can convey his/her knowledge to the group. You will save the group a lot of time by being aware of the policies and procedures of the University.

### **BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Regardless of how worthy the program may be, it may not be successful if such details as room rental agreements, contracts, or police requests have not been completed. This information is available from the *Student Activities Guide*. The Student Activities Center staff will be happy to send your organization a guide if you do not have one. You should be familiar with the policies and procedures of the organization and the institution before trying to advise the group.

### **HELP THE GROUP SET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Although the group must determine its purposes and agree on organization, it is generally beneficial for you to make recommendations based upon the stated purposes of the group and past goals. The objectives should break each goal down into doable steps. A time line for completion should be created for each established goal.

### **HELP THE GROUP PREPARE THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET**

The group's budget should allow the treasurer to record the revenue and expenses in an easy and understandable method. The Office of Student Activities staff (7169) is available to help any organization establish their budget.

## SUPPORT THE GROUP ENTHUSIASTICALLY

It is essential that this enthusiasm result from a sincere belief in the group and its goals.

## NEVER FORGET THAT YOU ARE HUMAN AND WILL MAKE MISTAKES

When such a situation happens, it is best for the advisor to admit the error and make a sincere effort to ensure that it does not happen in the future. Usually, the group will accept such a response and even welcome it as a sign of the advisor's "humanness."

## DO NOT BE AFRAID TO ADMIT A LACK OF INFORMATION

It is far better to say "I do not know the answer to that, but I will find out and get back to you" than to give misinformation. The student will respect this answer and he/she will see you as human.

## THE ADVISOR SHOULD NOT "BAIL OUT" THE ORGANIZATION

A group that fails and learns from that failure acquires the potential to evolve into a stronger, more productive group than one that succeeds only to become dependent on the advisor. Once the advisor has examined the pros and cons of each solution to the problem, the group has a right to decide. Whatever solution the group picks, the advisor should support it.

## THE ADVISOR SHOULD NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE AND POWER OF POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

High and sincere praise of positive powers and outcomes can increase the likelihood that they will reoccur. Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool for the advisor.

(Revised and condensed from *A Handbook for Student Group Advisors*, by John H. Shuh)

## LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

As an advisor, it is often hard to see the leaders that you work with graduate or pursue other opportunities outside of the organization. It is a busy time of the year as students, staff, and faculty try to survive the last flurries before finals. As an advisor, part of your responsibilities includes setting up expectations for the group that some type of formalized leadership transition will take place. Some of the benefits to you and the group in establishing some type of program are as follows:

- Provides a scheduled time for the out-going and in-coming leaders to meet and share ideas for the future of the organization.
- Gives the out-going officers a chance to process how much they have learned over the year.
- Provides a sense of closure for the out-going officers.
- Provides the in-coming officers a chance to ask questions in a safe environment.
- Provides an opportunity for the out-going officers to pass down needed materials and traditions.
- Increases the confidence and knowledge of the in-coming officers.
- Increases the chances that the momentum of the group will continue.
- The in-coming officers start the year ready to go and you have to spend less time orienting them to their roles in the organization.

The program may be as elaborate or as simple as you and your group wants it to be. A very simple program provides a set time (perhaps an hour or two) for the out-going and in-coming officers to meet. At this time, the out-going and in-coming officers get together and go over the responsibilities of the positions. Some questions you may want to have the out-going and in-coming officers discuss are:

1. What are the major duties of the positions?
2. What goals were accomplished last year?
3. What projects were started this year and will continue over to the next school year?
4. What projects/goals were thought of for next year?
5. What are three things that the out-going officers wished they would

- have known before they took office?
6. What two things would the out-going officers change about the group?
  7. What are the three top concerns of the in-coming officers?

Some of the allotted time for the transition should also be devoted to going over the organization's constitution, minutes, and correspondence from last year. Another part of the transition process should include information on office procedures, organization forms and documents, the re-registration process, fund-raisers, and room reservations.

It is always desirable to hold one more meeting between the out-going and in-coming officers to make sure that the in-coming officers have no further questions of the out-going officers. Some groups actually hold a "changing of the guard" dinner where the out-going and the in-coming officers get together and the out-going officers provide the in-coming officers with one item that will help them next year. This does provide a nice sense of closure for the out-going officers and helps to build the confidence of the in-coming officers. Some groups will have the last meeting run by the in-coming officers. Both sets of officers arrive at the meeting. The out-going officers say whatever they want to as a form of good-bye and then they leave. This again provides a sense of closure and continuity for the group.

The leadership transition process usually starts as soon as the new officers are elected. If your group does this in the beginning of March, then you have plenty of time to get this process completed before finals.

The leadership transition process is an important part of the student organizational experience. It provides the out-going officers with closure as well as ensuring that the in-coming officers receive all of the necessary information for a successful term. Your role as an advisor is to encourage your students to set up a transitional leadership program and to provide them with advice on the format of such a program.

## **RECRUITMENT OF NEW MEMBERS**

As an advisor, the students often look to you for ideas on how to get more people involved in the organization. If you lead the students through the following questions and record the answers, they will come up with a number of ways to get the word out about the group.

1. How did you join the group?
2. How did you first hear about the group?
3. Why did you initially join the group?
4. What did you hope to gain from your involvement?

If your members are like most members, these questions will produce answers that are similar to the top six reasons listed in various studies on why people join groups. These six reasons are as follows:

1. People were interested in the goals of the group.
2. People already knew someone in the group.
3. People were interested in the group's activities.
4. People were interested in being involved with others who they perceived to have higher abilities.
5. People need to be affiliated.
6. People perceive opportunities to learn new skills.

After you have all the answers recorded, you and your group will be able to see your group's strengths. These strengths can be highlighted in a marketing campaign. Most marketing campaigns consist of flyers, announcements in pertinent classes, banners, articles or advertisements in The Statesman, and tables in Kirby Student Center.

Recruiting new members goes beyond getting people to the meeting. The new people must be treated as valuable additions to the organization. This means that the current members must tell the new people what the group currently does and what the group hopes to accomplish. New people also need to know how they can contribute to the organization and what skills they can acquire through participation.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**1. What precedence has been set regarding a student organization event receiving an alcohol-related violation?**

In the event of a student organization event receiving an alcohol-related violation, UMD has mandated members of that organization or team must attend an alcohol education class prior to consideration of any future activities.

**2. Can the officers and advisor of an organization be named in a lawsuit if something goes wrong at a student organization event?**

Yes, officers as well as the advisor can be sued in a lawsuit when something happens at a student organization event such as breach of contract, property damage, injury, or loss of life.

The lawsuit will be stronger if student organization funds were used for such things as buying alcohol for a party.

**3. How do I set up a fund-raiser?**

The first step in setting up a fund-raiser is to reserve table space for your day(s) with Laura Young in the Student Activities Office. Laura will also give you a fund-raiser request form. She will then either approve or deny your fund-raiser request. The main reason requests are denied is that another organization has already booked the same type of fund-raiser for that day. You may resubmit your fund-raiser for another day that is open on the Laura's master calendar of fund-raisers. Your organization must also meet with the Catering Office staff if food is involved for your fund-raiser.

After your fund-raiser is approved, you must complete a cashbox request form and return it to Laura Young. On the day of your event, pick up your cashbox at the Kirby Information Desk. Return the cashbox, with all of the money intact, to the Kirby Information Desk once your event is completed. Please pick up this money within three days of your event. Each group is allowed six fundraisers per year and no more than three per semester.

**4. What is the regulation of selling merchandise with logos and how can I obtain the official bulldog logo?**

Anything that is sold with a logo (i.e. T-shirts, mugs, ice scrapers, etc.) must be approved by Student Activities Staff. A sample of the logo must accompany your fund-raiser request form. To obtain an official version of the UMD Bulldog logo you contact John Brostrom (7175).

**5. How can we receive additional leadership training?**

The Kirby Leadership Institute at UMD offers a variety of leadership seminars, workshops, symposia, and community learning partnerships designed to help students develop strategies and skills for success. A certificate in leadership, called the UMD Leadership Certificate, can be earned by interested undergraduates. Three new academic courses are being developed, and will shortly be offered through the College of Liberal Arts for academic credit. The workshops are open to all students, staff and faculty at UMD.

The leadership process begins by strengthening the leadership skills of the individual. We offer opportunities for students to learn the basic, fundamental skills that support successful personal relationships, contribute to campus organization leadership, and participation as citizens in the community and beyond.

**6. Do we have to re-register our organization every year with the Office of Student Activities?**

Yes, each organization has to re-register every year. All four officers of record must attend one of the scheduled one-hour registration meetings. Though the four officers may attend different registration meetings, the organization is not considered registered until all four have attended a session and provided a signature on the registration document.

**7. How can we get more involved with events such as the Student Activities Fair, Homecoming, and OutCold?**

Contact the Student Activities Office. Also, announcements for meeting times and places will be placed in the organization's mailbox and sent out via the President's Council alias.

**8. What happens if our group is carrying outstanding bills from last year?**

Your group is financially obligated for all debts incurred by your organization for past years' services and merchandise. Your officers will be notified of the overdue bills. The staff of the Office of Student Activities (7169) will be happy to help your organization work out a payment plan to your creditors.

**9. Can we seek out and advertise co-sponsorship of an event with an establishment or enterprise, which manufactures or sells alcohol?**

Registered student organizations and University students may not associate the name, logo, or any identifying symbol of the University of Minnesota Duluth with any enterprise or establishment engaged in the manufacture or sale of alcoholic beverages. This includes advertisements, announcements, meeting notices, or any other public media.

**10. What do we need to leave for next year's officers?**

- *The Officer's Handbook*
- Organization registration procedures
- The organization's current constitution
- Records of last year's activities
- Last year's goals and objectives
- A list of resource people
- Recommendations for next year

**11. What should I do if the officers do not fulfill their responsibilities?**

Please notify the Office of Student Activities at 726-7169 if you are having trouble with your officers. We will work with you to solve any problems that arise.

**12. Can a student organization receive a University of Minnesota proof of insurance form if they are holding a fund-raiser off-campus?**

No. A student organization will never be issued a University of Minnesota proof of insurance form. Student organizations are considered independent and autonomous from the University.

**13. Can I show video tapes from the local video stores at my table in Kirby or as a fund-raising event?**

No, you may not show local video stores' tapes in Kirby Student Center or as a fund-raising event. These titles are licensed to film distribution companies and they will sue your group should they find out about your event. There are lists of public domain films/videos at the public library and at the UMD library. These films/videos may be shown without a charge to your organization because the ownership license has expired. If you want to show a current film/video, please talk to one of the Student Activities Staff. They will assist you with the lawful rental of the title you are interested in showing.

**14. Do I need to obtain a liability insurance policy if I am sponsoring an event at UMD?**

As long as your event is held in either Kirby Student Center or the Recreational Sports facility your group does not need to purchase a liability insurance policy. If your event is held outside of Kirby or the Recreational Sports facility you will need to purchase a policy. Policies can be obtained through Kirby Student Center. Please talk to one of the Student Activities Staff if you need to obtain a policy.

**15. How can we receive additional funds from the Student Association Loans (S.A.) and Grants Committee?**

Each semester, the S.A. Loans and Grants committee gives monetary awards to registered student organizations that wish to participate in and/or organize programs and activities that promote the growth and development of their group and the UMD community. Announcements for the loans and grants application period will be put in your student organization mailboxes and announced over the President Council's alias. Your organization must sign up for an appointment at the time your application is turned in.

**16. What is the university's policy on hazing?**

Hazing is a fundamental violation of human dignity. Hazing is committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization. (Minnesota Statute 127.46). Hazing is not be tolerated at the University.

**17. As an advisor, should I have something in my personal file that states that advising the student group is part of my work duties?**

Yes. The Office of Risk Management and Liability has recommended that all advisors have their department heads write a letter stating that student organization advisement is part of the work duties. This letter should be placed in the advisor's personnel file. This will allow the University's legal counsel to represent the advisor should the advisor be sued.

**18. Can student organizations use the University's tax exempt number?**

No, student organizations may not use the University's tax exempt number. The group may apply for a tax exemption number by filling out exemption forms with the IRS.

## KIRBY STUDENT CENTER STAFF

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**Kirby Games Room**

726-7163, KSC 134B

**Late Night Kirby**

726-8742, KSC 11

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