

Governors State University

Center for Student Engagement & Intercultural Programs

Virtual Student Club/Org Manual

As the University moves to virtual operations, the CSEIP staff created the following guide to assist your Club/Organization in continuing its operations through the last few months of the semester and beyond. As you browse the guide, please keep in mind that you can email Christopher McBride, Coordinator of Student Clubs/Orgs at cmcbride@govst.edu with any questions.

Meetings/Tips

We strongly encourage you to think through ways that your organization can continue to hold meetings, either for your general body, your exec board, or committees. Below are some tips for continuing meetings in a virtual format:

Don't over invite. Remote meetings plummet in quality as size increases; they can be recorded and heard at twice the speed. Let non-essential members off the hook, and share the recording. BUT... avoid making them feel excluded; give them the option to attend future meetings.

Sharpen the agenda. Organize the agenda as a set of questions. It creates focus, provides a better sense of who really needs to be there as well as the meeting's success.

Active facilitation is key. Meeting leaders must draw virtual attendees in and keep a tally to be sure all are contributing. Avoid asking, "Any comments?" Instead, call on people individually.

Silence does not equal understanding or agreement. There are some great apps available that allow participants to vote in real time to help facilitators gauge consensus. While it may seem unorthodox, don't encourage participants to mute their phones. Have all users minimize distractions in their physical space and become active participants to increase engagement.

If possible, use video. Video helps create a feeling of "presence" so attendees are actively engaged.

Have everyone identify themselves prior to speaking. Again, this creates presence.

Establish some norms about what makes a good remote meeting. Get expectations out there, such as, keep contributions to no more than 60 seconds so everyone has a chance to speak.

Have instant messenger or chat room technology in place. This way folks can notify you during the meeting if they need to speak or ask for something to be repeated.

End meetings well. Leave a few minutes to spare to clarify takeaways. Identify the directly responsible person for each action item, so no one leaves wondering what was accomplished.

Ask people how the meetings are going. Send a quick survey periodically; ask what is going well, not so well and ideas for improvement. Take the challenge to make your remote meetings different and worth the time invested.

Meeting Platforms: Here are some suggested free conferencing platforms you can use for your meetings: Zoom, Google Hangout, Skype, Etc.

Team Building, Bonding and Engagement

Think creatively about ways to connect and have fun with one another from afar. It's important to keep morale high within the organization and keep members engaged and feeling connected.

- **Instagram Takeovers** - Assign an officer or member a day of the week to take over the org's account and re-cap "a day in the life of ____"
- **Tik Tok** - Make a fun video and challenge other orgs to do the same.
- **General Q&A** - Use social media to allow others to learn more about your organization and how to get/stay involved.
- **Story Telling** - Share pictures and videos letting others know what you did and accomplished this past year. Share stories of your officers, members, and advisor(s).

Elections

Set up a virtual election using [Jaguar Connection](#)

Tips:

- Do a test run first to be sure you are familiar with the process and how results are shared.

- Make sure you are following your constitution's nominations and elections procedures as accurately as possible.
- Update your roster on Jaguar Connection to reflect your current membership. This will determine who has the ability to vote within your organization's election.
- Share elections results with your group virtually using email, social media, etc.

Officer Transition

If your Club/Organization transitions to new officers before the fall semester, think about how the organization can facilitate a successful transition virtually. Below are some tips and resources for making that transition:

- Refer to your Club/Org constitution and adapt any conversations/activities to online communication.
- Outgoing and new officers meet from afar with web-based video conferencing and online chat platforms such as Zoom, Google Hangouts, Google Chats, and more.
- Share transition materials and documents through Google Drive or etc.
- Remind the new officer of any planning that typically happens during the summer.
- Share a list of important dates with the new officer including: Student Organizations Showcase, funding timelines, and more.

Support and Advising Meetings

Request a virtual one-on-one meeting with the Coordinator of Student Clubs/Organizations-
[Virtual Meeting Request Form](#)

Please feel free to contact our department with any questions or concerns you may have.