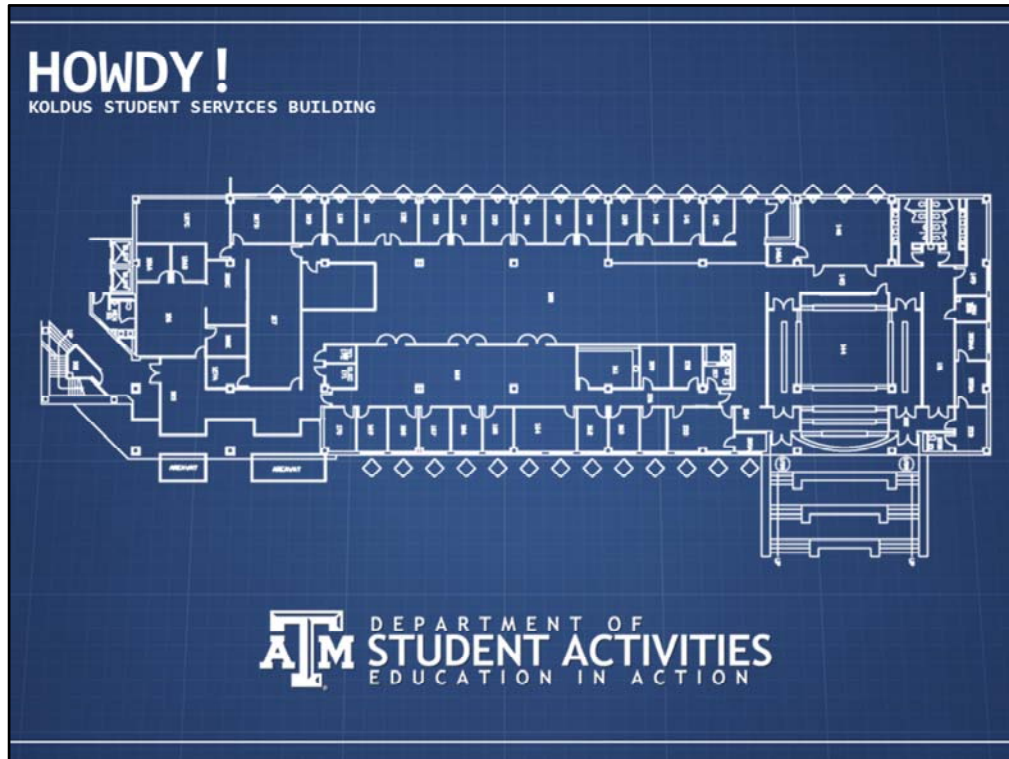


Thank you for tuning in to the Officer Essentials training module – BUILT especially for student leaders at Texas A&M. On behalf of the Department of Student Activities, we'd like to say, "Howdy!"



In the Department of Student Activities, we are committed to developing leaders of character dedicated to serving the greater good. We accomplish this by role modeling the Texas A&M core values of Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Integrity, Loyalty, and Selfless Service. While we are coming to you virtually, please know that there is always an open invitation to visit us in person in the Koldus Student Services Building, Suite 125.

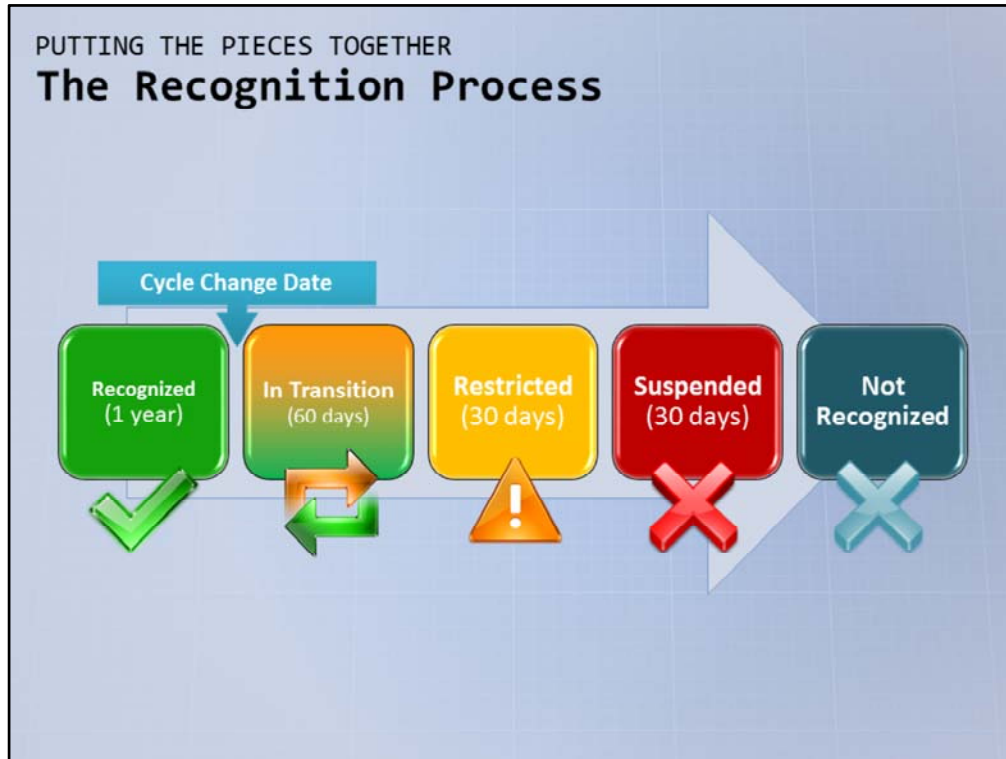
PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

## **This online training will...**



- ...prepare you to effectively lead...
- ...provide you with information, tools, and resources...
- ...encourage the creation of a safe and productive environment...

As leaders of character it is important that you are prepared to effectively lead your student organization. Our hope is that this training will provide you with information, tools, and resources that encourage you to create a safe and productive environment for your members and participants.



Additionally, this training is just one step in the recognition process that must be completed annually by your student organization. Upon completion of the recognition process, your organization will be afforded benefits and resources that will help your organization operate more successfully.

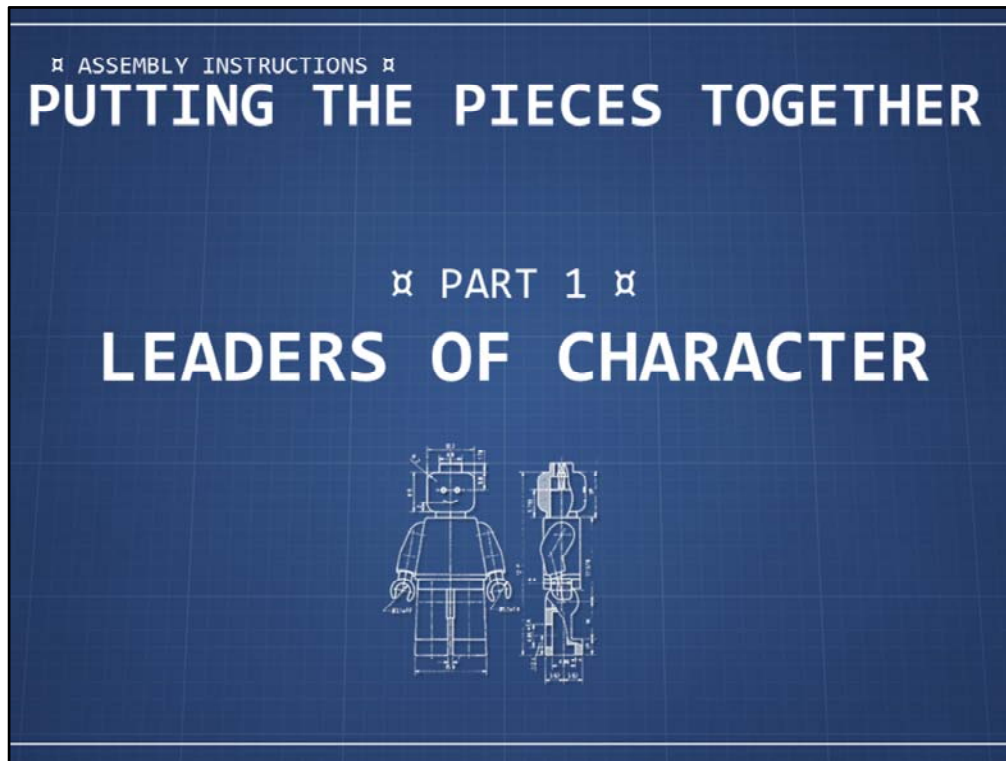
PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

## **Benefits of Recognition**

- Association with Texas A&M
- Use of university logos and trademarks
- Participation in MSC Open House
- Ability to reserve space on campus
- Ability to conduct sales on campus
- Free website and e-mail accounts
- Free banking through the SOFC
- Access to special funding

These benefits include the ability to: associate with Texas A&M and use university logos and trademarks, participate in MSC Open House, reserve space and conduct sales on campus, utilize free websites, emails, and student organization banking, and access special funding.

We hope that the following information will be helpful as you prepare to lead your student organization!



Texas A&M believes in developing leaders of character who are dedicated to serving the greater good. This statement carries with it the responsibility, the traditions and the forward thinking of Texas A&M University exemplified by all who are associated with the university — including its current and former students, and its faculty and staff.

LEADERS OF CHARACTER

**Your involvement will help you to...**

- Master the depth of knowledge required for your degree
- Demonstrate critical thinking
- Communicate effectively
- Practice personal and social responsibility
- Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence
- Prepare to engage in lifelong learning
- Work collaboratively

As a department and as an institution, we expect leaders of character to demonstrate certain competencies upon graduation, and we are certain that your involvement as a student leader at Texas A&M will help you develop and achieve these competencies which include:

- Mastering the depth of knowledge required for your degree
- Demonstrating critical thinking
- Communicating effectively
- Practicing personal and social responsibility
- Demonstrating social, cultural, and global competence
- Preparing to engage in lifelong learning
- Working collaboratively

We believe that faculty and staff who serve as student organization advisors can help you achieve these competencies, in addition to playing a critical role in the success of the organization.



Similar to the relationship that Luke Skywalker had with Yoda, or Harry Potter had with Dumbledore, we believe that when student leaders work in partnership with their faculty/staff advisors the results are student organization experiences and activities that are developmental, educational, safe, and successful...oh, and don't forget fun!



#### LEADERS OF CHARACTER

### **Advisor Expectations**

- Facilitate intelligent, fair, and reasonable decision-making
- Advise organizations about potential and perceived risks
- Assist in the planning and coordination of events
- Attend events and meetings
- Be available for advice and consultation
- Be aware of and understand rules and policies
- Report violations to rules and policies
- Be aware of the organization's financial status
- Approve organizational expenditures

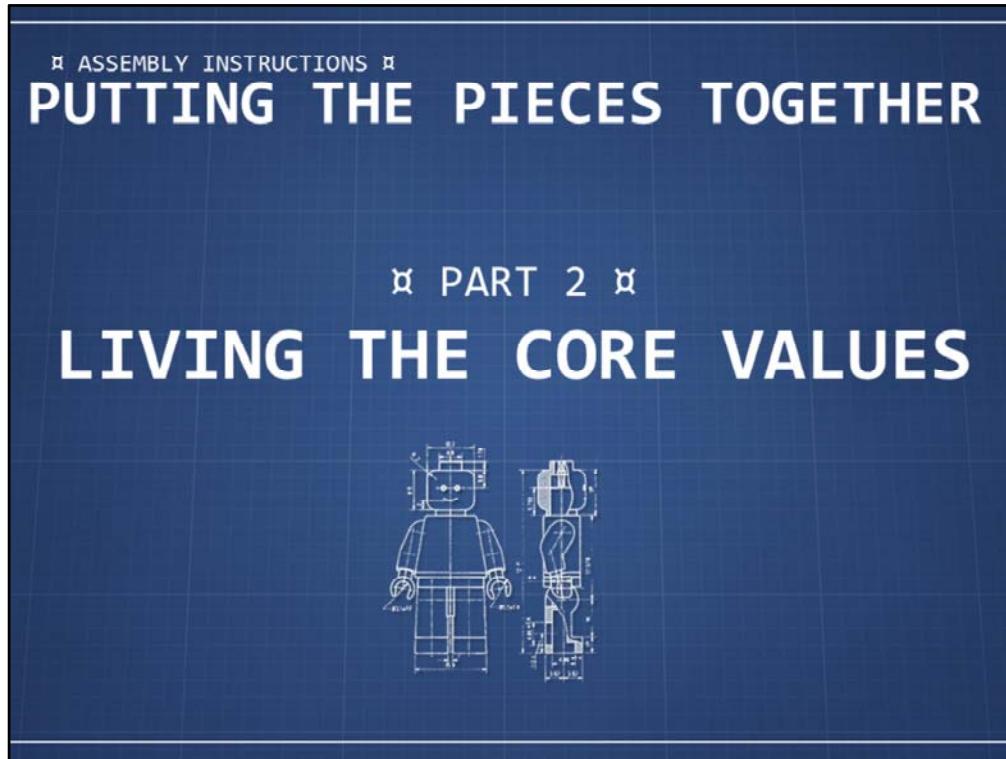
We expect our student organization members and leaders to work with their advisors and other campus administrators to make intelligent, fair and reasonable choices within the boundaries established by state, federal, and local laws, university rules, and the educational mission of the institution. As facilitators, advisors should seek to balance the rights and responsibilities of students and the university.

As a university, our goal is to ensure that our student organizations are being advised about the potential and perceived risks involved in their activities. Advisors should assist in the planning and coordination of organization events and help student leaders take corrective actions and proactive steps to minimize accidental injury and/or loss.

Advisors are also expected to attend events and meetings and be available outside of those activities for advice and consultation. They should be involved in event planning, decision making, goal setting, and accountability of members and leaders. Your advisor should be aware of, and understand, university rules and policies, and they should help to educate you on the consequences for choosing to operate outside of those parameters, which includes reporting any violations of those policies. Finally, your advisor should be aware of your organization's financial status, and they will be expected to review and approve all financial expenditures

relating to the organization.

Again, advisors play a critical role in the success of an organization, and it is never too late to strengthen your relationship with your advisor.



The core values of Leadership, Respect, Integrity, Excellence, Loyalty, and Selfless Service are guiding ideals which make the Aggie education and experience extraordinary and unique. These core values are, naturally and by design, at the core of Aggies and Texas A&M.

From selecting leadership, to holding events on campus, to creating a vision for your organization, your role as a student leader is essential in helping Texas A&M fulfill its mission and exemplify these core values. In the next few sections, we want to highlight ways that you and your organization can role model and live these values through your operations as a recognized student organization.

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## PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

## LIVING THE CORE VALUES

## LEADERSHIP

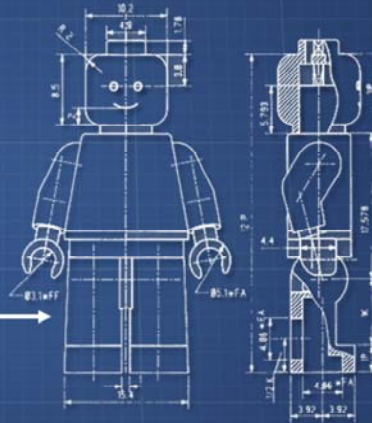
RESPECT

# EXCELLENCE

## INTEGRITY

LOYALTY

## SELFLESS SERVICE



Let us first talk about the core value of leadership. Leadership means different things to different people, but one way that we feel all organizations can role model leadership is by living up to the expectations that are set forth for student organizations at Texas A&M. Being a leader in this area means that, as an organization, you understand your role as a community member, you are accountable for your actions, you honor and uphold the guiding boundaries that are set forth in university and student rules, and you help others to do the same.

## **Student Organization Expectations**

- Adhere to all laws and rules
- Follow your governing documents and report updates in a timely manner
- Demonstrate respect for the university community and other student organizations
- Ensure continuity in leadership by transitioning new officers
- Establish and communicate appropriate advisor expectations
- Consult with the appropriate university departments, offices, or representatives when planning large, unusual, or potentially complex events

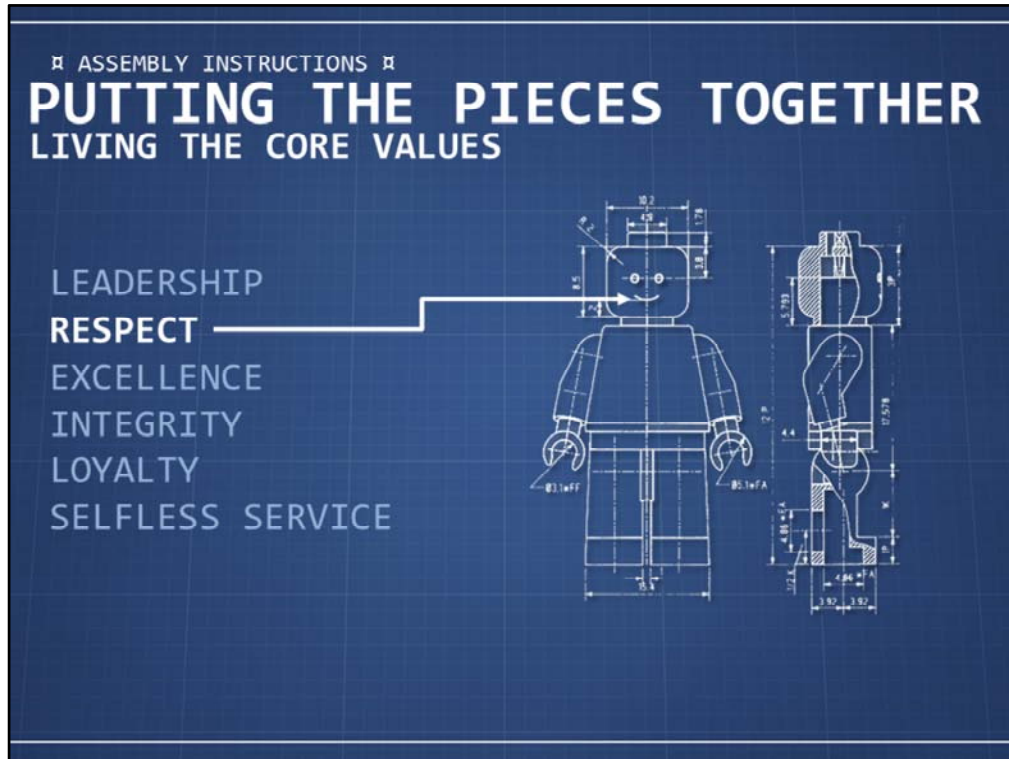
Student organization expectations are defined in student and university rules, the university's mission, vision, and values statements, and in the student organization manual. These expectations include the following:

- The first responsibility of a student organization includes knowing how university rules and policies, as well as local, state, and federal laws, affect your organization and its activities. In the following section on Respect, we will cover several important student and university rules that you will want to be familiar with, but know that there will be other rules that apply to your organization based on your events or activities.
- Next, we expect you to follow your Constitution or other governing documents. Your organization's constitution is an agreement between the organization, members, leaders, and advisors on how the organization will operate. Because of this, and the fact that student organizations are self-governing, the responsibility is on you as student leaders to ensure that your organization is following its constitution. It is also an expectation that your constitution, as well as any changes to your organization leadership, be updated annually or as changes take place, and submitted to the Department of Student Activities for review.
- We also feel that all student organizations should strive to model Texas A&M's value of respect by offering a welcoming environment for all who come in

contact with your organization, including members, participants, partners, and other student organizations. All student organizations exist because we feel like they reflect and contribute to the values of the university, so do your part to appropriately represent your organization and the university through everything you do.

- One of the most important expectations that we have for student leaders is to facilitate officer transitions. In order for the organization to succeed and maintain momentum from year to year, it is important that the outgoing officer have a conversation with, and pass on important information to, incoming officers. As a student leader, it is your responsibility to make sure this transition happens.
- As mentioned before, we feel like your advisor plays a critical role in the success of the organization. As student leaders, we expect that you will establish and communicate appropriate expectations for your advisor, and be prepared for your advisor to communicate their expectations for you as well.
- Finally, we expect student organizations to consult with the appropriate individuals, departments, offices, or representatives (including your advisor) when planning events that are large, unusual, or complex. We will spend more time taking about event planning in our section on Excellence.

Again, student organizations and student leaders can role model the value of leadership by living up to the expectations that are set forth for student organizations at Texas A&M.



As mentioned in the previous expectations, student organizations should demonstrate respect for those in the university community. In this next section we are going to address several university and student rules that offer opportunities for your student organization to role model respect.



Texas A&M is comprised of individuals who bring a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. In fact, Texas A&M encourages an environment that values and nurtures the diversity and uniqueness of all individuals within our state, nation and world. Respect for the unique individuals on our campus not only includes respect for individual opinions and freedom of speech and expression, but it also includes respect for their personal safety, physical well-being, and emotional well-being. In this section, we will discuss some important policies as they relate to expressive activities, hazing, student travel, and camps and enrichment programs. In addition, we will highlight some of the important organizational topics covered in Student Rules 41 and 42.



LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ RESPECT  
**Expressive Activity**



In fulfilling its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, Texas A&M encourages the free exchange of ideas. The university will protect the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution. However, Texas A&M University also maintains its right to regulate reasonable time, place and manner restrictions concerning acts of expression and dissent.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ RESPECT

### **Student Rule: Expressive Activity (Appendix XI)**

- **Distribution of Materials**
  - Distribution of printed materials *does not* need a permit.
  - Reserving space for distribution is through the building proctor.
- **Sales and Other Transactions**
  - Any sales or other transactions on campus require a Concessions Permit.
  - The sale or distribution of food may require a Health Permit or a Food Distribution Form.
- **Know Your Rights!**
  - Expressive activities should not interfere with normal university operations, impede traffic, infringe on the rights of others, or violate applicable laws or university rules.

Expressive activity may occur in various forms. Some of you may express yourself symbolically, others verbally, and still others choose to do so in writing through pamphlets, signs, and flyers. If your organization chooses to distribute literature or information as part of your expressive activity, please note that the distribution of printed materials on campus does not require a permit. However, if your organization is interested in reserving space to distribute your printed material, you will need to work through the appropriate building proctor to do so.

If you are choosing to sell an item or conduct any other type of transaction on campus as part of your expressive activity, a Concessions permit will be required and may be obtained on the Student Activities website. Please make sure these permit requests are turned in at least 48 hours in advance of your sale or transaction. If your sale is involving food items, you may need to obtain a health permit and/or a food distribution form. Please see the Student Organization Manual for additional guidelines regarding Food at Events.

When engaging in expressive activity, it is important that you understand your rights and the rights of others. Expressive activities should not interfere with normal university operations, impede traffic, infringe on the rights of others, or violate applicable laws or university rules. Those who choose to observe, participate in, or listen to expressive activity bear the responsibility of recognizing and honoring the

rights of free speech.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ RESPECT

## Student Rule: Hazing (24.3.3)

- **Hazing is:**
  - a violation of Texas A&M University policy and Texas State Law
  - typically in the form of physical risk or mental distress
  - harmful to individuals, groups, and the university
  - found in all types of student organizations
- **Hazing as defined per Student Rules:**
  - “prohibited acts committed for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition of continued membership in a group or organization.”
- **Hazing includes:**
  - any act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student
  - destruction or removal of public or private property
  - assisting, directing, or causing others to participate

Texas A&M University believes that the core value of RESPECT includes concern for the personal safety, and physical & emotional well-being of our community members.

While being part of a student organization can be one of the most meaningful aspects of student life, hazing is a hidden and serious problem that undermines the value of these experiences for many individuals. We know that Texas A&M is not immune to hazing, and we strongly believe that it is important to examine hazing practices in an effort to overcome the ideals that perpetuate them.

For starters, here is some important information to consider about hazing:

- Hazing is a violation of Texas A&M University policy and Texas State law.
- Hazing takes on various forms, but typically involves physical risks or mental distress through humiliating, intimidating, demeaning or other activities.
- Hazing can cause significant harm to individuals, groups and the University.
- Hazing occurs in all types of student organizations.
- Groups that haze often view it as positive and necessary. On the contrary, groups that haze can almost always achieve the positive outcomes they seek through non-hazing means.

Student Rule 24.3.3 defines hazing as “Prohibited acts committed for the purpose

of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization.” Prohibited behavior includes any act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or that destroys or removes public or private property.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ RESPECT

## Reporting Hazing Incidents


If you ...

- Have first hand knowledge...
- Contribute to the planning...
- Fail to report it...

.... it is also a violation of the Rule.

*To report hazing, contact the University Police Department, the Dean of Student Life, or visit one of the following websites:*

- **[tellsomebody.tamu.edu](http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu)**
- **[stophazing.tamu.edu](http://stophazing.tamu.edu)**



Assisting, directing, or in any way causing others to participate in this behavior or in behavior that causes ridicule, humiliation, or embarrassment to the individual is considered hazing. Having firsthand knowledge of the planning of such activities or firsthand knowledge that an incident of this type has occurred AND failing to report it to appropriate university officials is also a violation of this rule.

REMEMBER: Claiming that an activity is part of a “tradition” or that it has been done in the past is NOT a legitimate excuse for hazing! Likewise...no one can “agree” to be hazed.

To report hazing, please contact the University Police Department, the Dean of Student Life, or visit the Tell Somebody or Stop Hazing websites. More information on this important topic can also be found on the Stop Hazing Website.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ RESPECT

## University Rule: Travel (13.04.99.M1)

**When traveling 25 miles or more from campus, student organizations should...**

- **Complete** participant waivers and bring copies of them on the trip
- **Register** the trip with the University by completing a *Travel Information Form*
- **Work** with the Study Abroad Programs Office if traveling internationally



Respect for personal safety also includes taking appropriate measures when deciding to travel as a student organization. Whether for retreats, mission trips, conferences, performances, competitions, or just plain fun, many of our students travel as part of student organization activities. When a student travels with or on behalf of a student organization, the Student Travel Rule should be observed.

The Student Travel Rule applies when student organization travel occurs 25 miles or more from campus. Student organizations will be expected to complete two necessary steps prior to their travel:

- All travel participants should complete a waiver and release form which verifies that they understand and accept the risks involved in the travel activity, as well as assume responsibility for their behavior. This waiver also collects important information about your participants such as medical conditions, insurance information, and emergency contact information. A waiver template can be found and downloaded from the Student Activities website, and copies of the completed waivers should be carried with student leaders for the duration of the trip. We recommend that your organization keep these waivers on file for three years per the university's records retention schedule.
- Written notification should also be provided to the university prior to your travel departure. The travel information form can be found under your Resources tab

in StuAct Online. This form collects important information about your travel plans such as dates of travel, travel route, and emergency contact information for travel participants. This information will be used by the university in the event that a critical incident occurs during your trip.

Additionally, leaders from student organizations that are sponsoring organized travel outside the United States are required to work through the Study Abroad Program Office to complete a pre-departure briefing which includes important information and training on safety, emergency procedures, crisis management, and resources available to your group while overseas. International travel safety guidelines and health insurance can also be obtained through this office. Please note: student organizations will not be permitted to travel to countries that have been issued a travel warning by the US Department of State, and student organizations should always consult their faculty/staff advisor before travel takes place, regardless of the destination.



LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ RESPECT

**University Rule:**

**Camps and Enrichment Programs (11.99.99.M1.01)**

- **This rule applies when student organization activities:**
  - Have a participant group that includes individuals under the age of 18
  - Uses the name, staff, affiliation, facilities, or other resources of Texas A&M University
- **The Camps and Enrichment Process:**
  - Requires an application that should be submitted NO LESS than eight weeks prior to the event
  - Ensures preparations for working with minors
  - Includes background screenings and procurement of insurance

In addition to respecting the personal safety and physical & emotional well-being of those in the Texas A&M community, we also want to make sure that, as student organizations, you are affording that same respect to visitors of our community. The Camps and Enrichment Programs rule applies to student organization activities that have participant groups that include any individuals that are under the age of eighteen, and who use the name, staff, affiliation, facilities, or other resources of Texas A&M University.



All student organizations hosting a camp or enrichment program are required to submit an application for their event NO LESS than eight weeks prior to the start date of the camp or program. Applications submitted less than eight weeks prior the start of their program will not be reviewed and/or approved.

The Camps and Enrichment process helps to ensure that your student organization is prepared to take on the responsibility of working with minors. The process includes background screenings on all directors, staff, counselors, volunteers, and other adults who will work with your program. Your program budget and a complete description of your program activities should accompany the application form. Finally, all student organization camps or enrichment programs will be required to secure general liability and accident medical insurance coverage through the Department of Student Activities.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ RESPECT

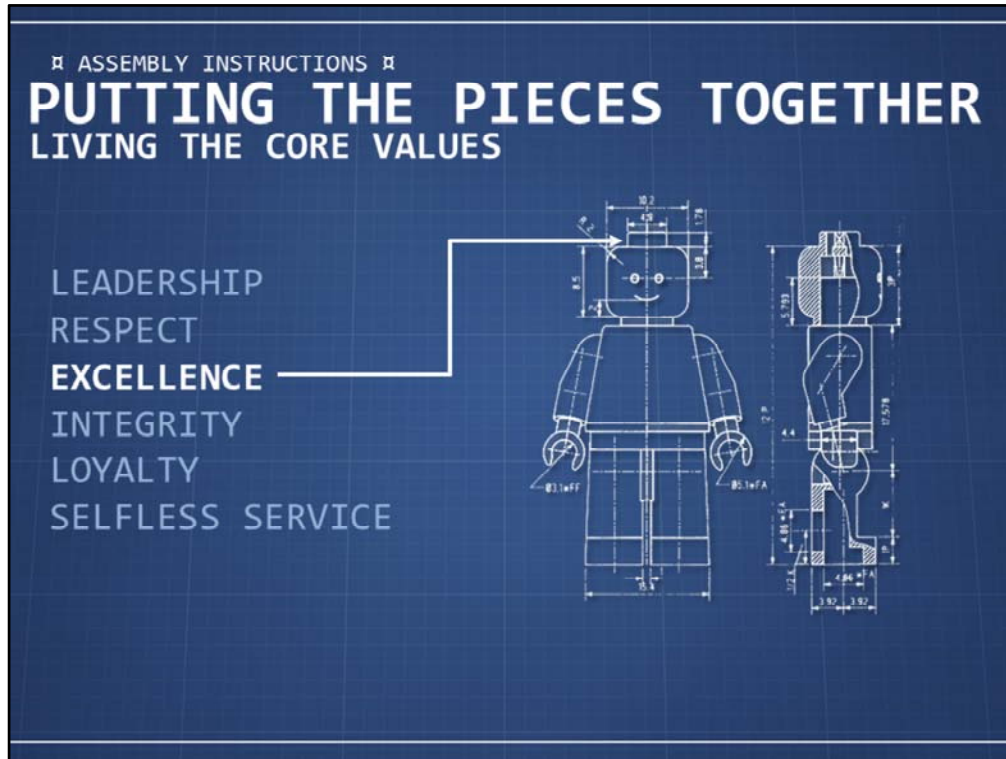
## Student Rules 41 & 42

- **Student Rule 41**
  - Operating as a recognized organization
  - Student leader eligibility requirements
  - Advisor and membership requirements
- **Student Rule 42**
  - Use of university logos and trademarks
  - Event planning guidelines
  - Approval process for StuOrg contracts



Finally, please be aware of Student Rules 41 and 42 as they pertain to student organization operations and activities. Student Rule 41 addresses important topics such as existing as a recognized student organization, the recognition process, student leader eligibility requirements, and advisor and membership requirements. It is important to know that student organization membership should be open to all students unless otherwise permitted under applicable federal law. Texas A&M University, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Student Rule 42 addresses the use of the university's name, logos and trademarks, as well as event planning expectations and student organization contracts. Per this rule, it is expected that all student organizations will have their events, whether on or off campus, reviewed by their university advisor. Additionally, if a recognized student organization is entering into a contract on behalf of their organization, the organization is expected to provide their university advisor an opportunity to review the contract prior to execution. If the contract is for an all-university audience, then the contract needs to be submitted to the Department of Student Activities for review and approval. This should be done NO LESS than 6-8 weeks in advance of your program.



LEADERSHIP  
RESPECT  
**EXCELLENCE** —  
INTEGRITY  
LOYALTY  
SELFLESS SERVICE

The Department of Student Activities believes that we have the best student leaders and student organizations on the planet! With that great reputation comes a responsibility for doing your best, upholding the values of Texas A&M University and your student organization, and making good decisions. It is the value of Excellence that we feel most appropriately defines this expectation that we have for you. We want our student organizations to be excellent in all that they do, and we are committed to providing you with the support and resources necessary to do that.

## Event Planning

- **Proactive Planning**
  - Ask yourself three questions:
    - Furthering mission/purpose?
    - Guiding boundaries?
    - Ability to plan and execute?
  - Identify risks
  - Utilize the Maroon Link Event Submission Form
- **Implementation**
  - Establish communication channels
  - Use your plan
- **Assessment**
  - Reflect on the event
  - Share the information with incoming officers

The goal of proactive event planning is to ensure that student organizations plan and host events where everyone involved has a safe and fun experience. With that said, it is up to student leaders to ensure that every organizational activity is planned thoroughly. When developing any event, think of it in three simple stages: proactive planning, implementation and assessment.

### Proactive Planning

The proactive planning stage begins when leaders start to outline and develop their event. During this stage, it is important to ask yourself three questions: 1) How does this event further the mission or purpose of the organization? 2) What guiding boundaries, including specific organizational protocols or University rules apply to my event? And 3) Do we have the ability, financial resources, and human resources necessary to plan and execute this event?

Thinking proactively also involves the identification of potential risks. Risks are commonly divided into five categories: Physical, Reputational, Emotional, Financial and Facilities (also known as PREFF). Once these potential risks have been identified, their likelihood and potential consequence will determine how the leadership should proceed with the event planning. Leaders can choose to accept, modify, transfer or eliminate these risks.

To assist in your efforts, the Division of Student Affairs has developed a formal online event submission form through Maroon Link that helps you identify risks that may prevent you from achieving your goals, as well as provides you with resources to help your event be more successful. The online event planning tool gives your advisor and other campus entities an opportunity to review your event so that you may ensure the best event possible. The online tool will also archive your event planning information so that it can be accessed as a resource for future event planning.

### Implementation

During the implementation of your event, you will need to be ready to make decisions on a moment's notice. Therefore, make sure that you have established communication channels that enable everyone to get correct and updated information. Also, having a plan developed prior to the event, and using that plan during the event, will allow you to more effectively address issues that can easily be anticipated such as weather emergencies, illness/injury, equipment malfunction, etc.

### Assessment

Finally, the process of evaluation or assessment completes the Event Planning Process because it allows for thorough reflection of the event itself. Asking yourself questions like "What went well? What should we do differently? What resources should we consult?" and then documenting this information can be a determining factor in the success of future events. Remember to share this information with incoming officers during their transition process!



Identifying risks as part of your event planning process can seem like a daunting task, so Student Activities has developed a systematic framework for you to use! This is particularly helpful for event planning, but can also be used to proactively plan for the overall health of the organization. Just imagine...you could prevent communication issues or member motivation issues from ever arising by planning proactively for them!

When outlining and developing events, it is important to identify potential risks before they occur. The following are five areas of risk that you should consider when planning your event.

Physical risks typically include bodily harm or injury that may occur as a result of:

- Weather conditions
- Crowd control
- Equipment/materials
- Food
- Alcohol
- Transportation

- Physical activity
- Medical emergencies

Reputational risks affect how others perceive you and can reflect negatively on:

- Individual students
- Organization
- University

Emotional risks include those that affect the emotions of organizational members, program participants, or anyone coming in contact with the organization. Emotional risks can often be identified when activities involve:

- The acceptance and orientation of new members
- Accessibility concerns
- Discrimination
- Controversy or campus disruption
- Stressful conditions or situations relating to event itself

Financial risks are those that affect the financial well-being of your organization. Areas to consider include:

- Budgets for events or sale items
- The overall financial health of organization
- Cash handling and inventory control

Finally,

Facilities risks are those relating to the use of a particular space, and may include both indoor and outdoor space. When assessing facilities risks, it is important to consider a facility's:

- Maintenance and cleaning
- Safety and security
- Location and condition
- Availability
- Appropriateness for the planned activities



LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✕ EXCELLENCE

## Risk Assessment

- **Accept**
  - Willing to endure consequences of risk
- **Modify**
  - Who can help you do this?
- **Transfer**
  - Insurance is available through Student Activities
- **Eliminate**
  - How else can you accomplish your goals?

When evaluating the risks involved, you can choose to accept, modify, transfer, or eliminate the risks.

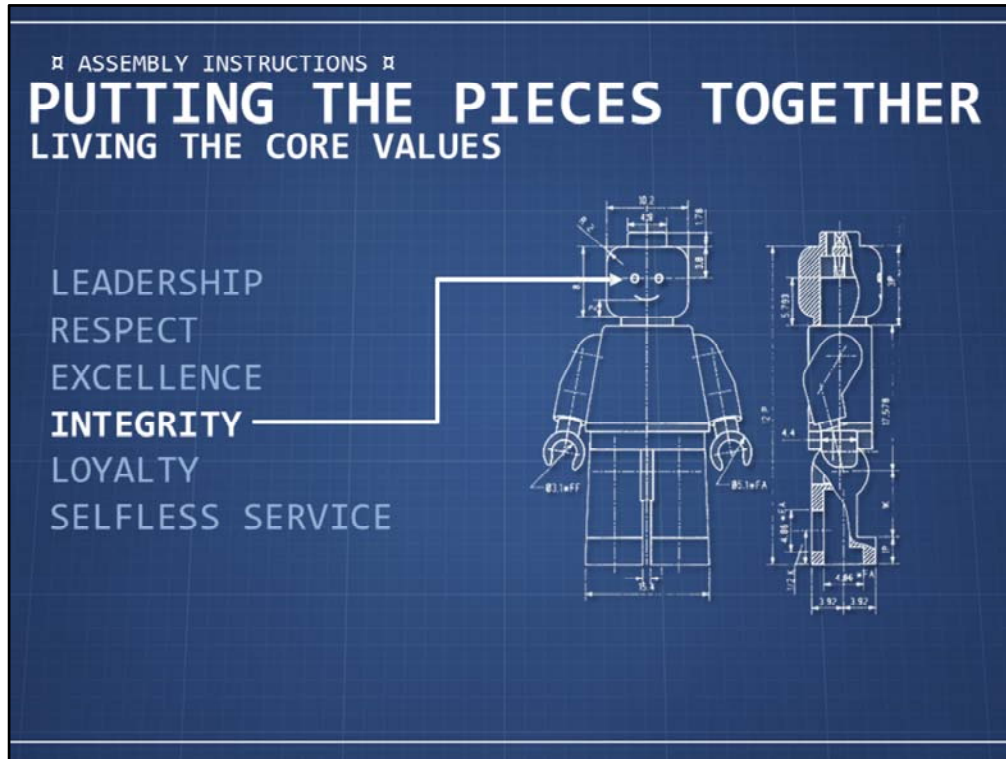
If you accept the risk, know that you are willing to endure the consequences of that risk in order to conduct the activity. It is always important to have a response plan in place when choosing to accept risk of any level.

If you choose to modify the activity in an effort to minimize the impact of a risk, you may want to ask yourself, “Who else can help us do this?” At Texas A&M, we are privileged to have many experts that are available to help students with their event planning and decision making, and we encourage you to seek out their assistance.

Transferring risk can be an appropriate option, and we encourage you to work with your advisor and the Student Organization Development and Administration (SODA) team in the Department of Student Activities in order to determine the most effective way to do this. One common way to transfer risks includes securing insurance to cover your event. Student Activities can assist you in this process, but please know that extra time may be needed in order to secure affordable insurance quotes for your organization. The completion of a pre-event planning form will be required in the insurance process.



Finally, you may decide that the risks of an activity outweigh the benefits. In this case, eliminating or avoiding the risk altogether may be appropriate. It is important to note, however, that eliminating a risk does not necessarily mean eliminating the overall program, activity or event. You will want to ask yourself, "How else can we accomplish our goals?" because there is likely a less risky alternative. For example, if you wanted to eliminate the number of cars being driven to an out of town retreat, an alternative may be to use buses or vans. While the risk of traveling in individual vehicles is eliminated, the overall activity is still able to be conducted.



As leaders of character, operating with integrity is going to be crucial to your success and reputation, both as a student leader and as a student organization. Integrity can be defined as acting consistently through your actions and values. One important way that we feel student leaders can exhibit integrity is by holding themselves and others accountable. While this may be hard sometimes, it is important that you and others are doing what you say you are going to do. Accountability is a way to model the behaviors and values that are important to you as an individual and an organization.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES ✦ INTEGRITY

## Accountability

***Accountability takes place when leaders  
INSPECT what they EXPECT.***



Expectations are fulfilled when there is...

1. A clear understanding of responsibilities
2. The authority to fulfill these responsibilities
3. Accountability for the outcomes

A wise man once said, “Accountability takes place when leaders INSPECT what they EXPECT.” Therefore, as student leaders it is incredibly important to lay out clear expectations for those who are representing your organization. Appropriate expectations are going to clearly define responsibility, give others the authority to fulfill that responsibility, and outline what accountability will look like on the back end. As leaders who are holding others accountable, it will be crucial to provide direct and regular feedback, be supportive, and provide a safe space for constructive conversations. When mistakes or problems do occur, focus on the future, and seek assistance from advisors or other resources.

## **Tools for Establishing Expectations**

- Organization's constitution
- Advisor Acknowledgement of Expectations
- Organization's vision/mission/values
- Discipline and removal procedures
- Follow-up conversations

Your organization should already have tools in place to help establish appropriate expectations. For example, officer responsibilities and member expectations should be outlined in the organization's constitution. In fact, many organizations have officers, advisors, and/or members sign a copy of the organization's constitution to document their understanding of those expectations. Your advisor also signs an acknowledgement of expectations each year as part of his/her annual training through Student Activities. Additionally, your organization's vision, mission, and values should serve as guidelines for fulfilling responsibilities and expectations.

Some accountability measures can also be found in your discipline or removal procedures for members and/or officers, and these often address misrepresenting the organization or failure to complete duties. However, accountability does not have to only come in the form of discipline or removal. Sometimes it may be a matter of having a tough conversation with someone (perhaps a friend), or following up with others when tasks have been delegated to them. Remember that delegation is not effective unless accompanied by appropriate follow-up regarding the delegated responsibilities. Those carrying out delegated responsibilities should also understand the consequences that may occur if the responsibilities are not fulfilled.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES & INTEGRITY

## Fostering Accountability

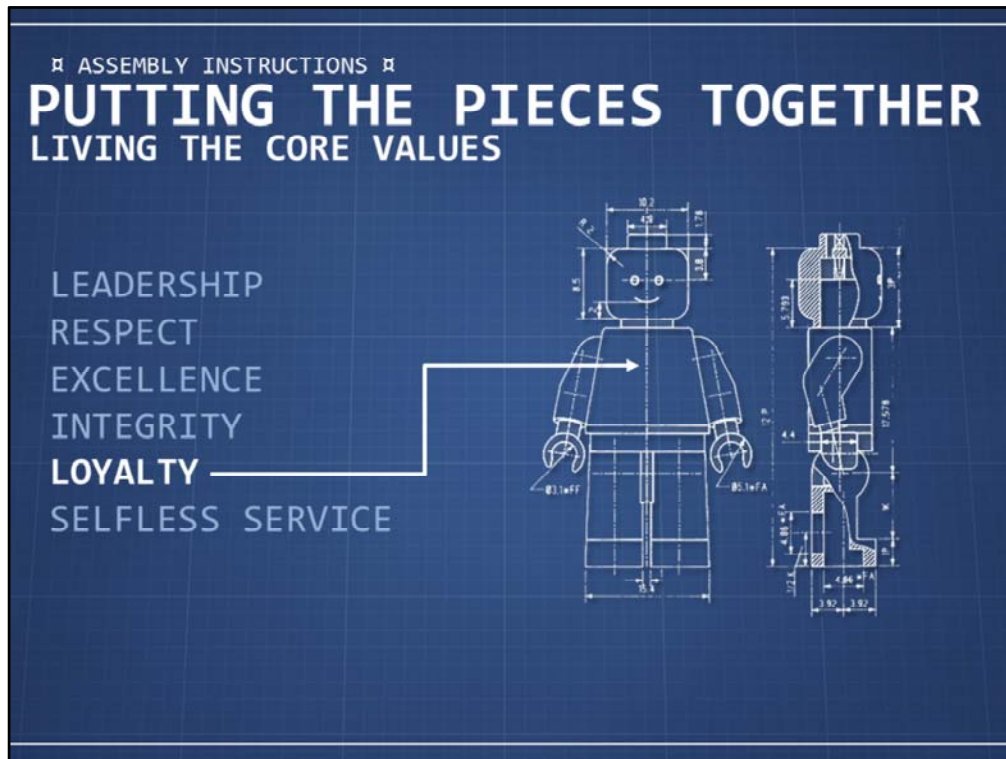
- **Walk the walk** – role model accountability
- **Communicate** – frequently and consistently
- **Delegate** – give control before expecting accountability
- **Provide feedback** – make it timely
- **Don't play the blame game** – create a safe space
- **Tools and resources** – where and how?

*"Hold yourself accountable and others won't have to."*

– Coach John Wooden

There are a number of things that can be done to foster accountability within your organization. These include:

- Walking the walk – as leaders, it is important to role model accountability, not only showing that you are willing to do what you say you are going to do, but helping others do the same.
- Communicate - Frequent and consistent communication, both verbally and in writing, is necessary. This helps to clarify expectations and reduce the "I didn't understand" excuse
- Delegate – Make sure you give control before expecting accountability
- Provide timely feedback – Help others understand how their actions are perceived and accepted by those around them. This will also allow you to acknowledge the progress they are making, or not making, toward their goals.
- Don't play the blame game – provide a safe venue to deal with difficult situations and discuss them without assigning blame. Focus on the problem and not the person!
- Finally, seek out and utilize the tools and resources that are available to you. Know where to find them and how to use them to your advantage, and empower others to do the same.



The concept of loyalty stems from the feeling of being completely devoted to something bigger than one's self. Loyalty is often associated with relationships, and we feel that the student leader/student organization relationship is an important one to foster. As a student leader, you were likely drawn to your student organization because it offered you an opportunity to fulfill a specific need or desire. For some, this is as simple as wanting to be a part of a community, for others, this need may be driven by a desire to serve. Whatever your reason, being a leader in a student organization requires an investment of time, energy, and (hopefully) passion. With that being said, being loyal to your student organization and helping to uphold its vision, mission, and values is an important role that you play, not only within the organization, but also within the Texas A&M community. As a university, we pride ourselves on the diversity of experiences that are offered to students through student organizations, and it is your loyalty and commitment to the unique vision, mission, and values of these organizations that make them so important to our campus.

LIVING THE CORE VALUES & LOYALTY  
**What's Your Vision?**



A **vision** is a shared image of success that is:

- Guided by your mission
- Supported by your values
- Accomplished through your goals

*A shared vision inspires, motivates, and guides people to work together.*

Why do you exist as an organization? Envisioning the future can be difficult and challenging work, but work that is critical if your organization is going to thrive. In fact, one of the most important accomplishments of an organization is to have a clear understanding of where the organization is going. An organization's vision should be seen as a shared image of success that inspires, motivates, and guides people to work together. Loyalty and commitment to this vision will be achieved when the vision is guided by your organization's mission, supported by the organization's values, and accomplished through the organization's goals.

Consider the following example as it relates to organizational vision:

A student organization that advocates for an end to homelessness posted a vision statement that read, "Our vision is to be the most effective advocates for ending homelessness." Does this vision statement reflect this organization's highest potential? Probably not. One may argue that this vision should not be that the members of the organization are incredible advocates, but that they no longer have a reason to advocate. The ultimate vision for this organization should be a community where there is no homelessness!



LIVING THE CORE VALUES & LOYALTY

## Reaching Your Highest Potential

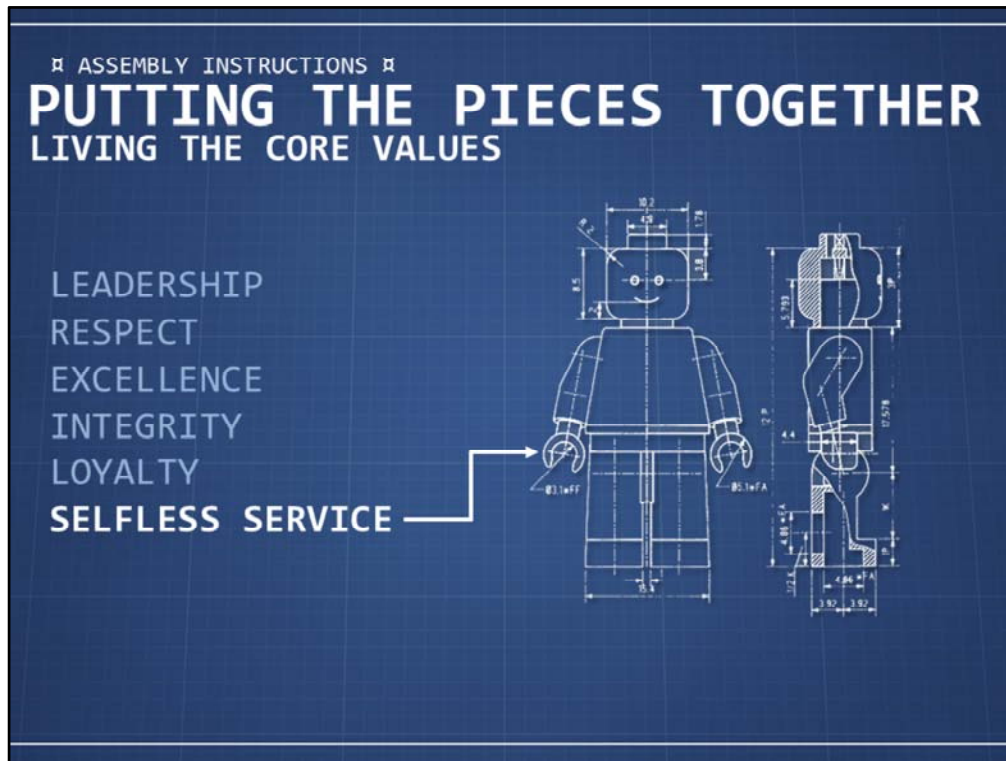
- **Vision**
  - Focuses on what you want to create in the world
  - Serves as an expression of your mission and values
- **Mission**
  - Your sense of purpose and direction
  - Provides meaning
- **Values**
  - Describes what is really important
  - Defines standards for evaluation and decision making

We can only create significant improvement if our vision is about exactly that - the difference we want to make and the dream of our organization's highest potential. Your vision should focus on what you want to create in the world, your desired realities. A vision serves as an expression of your mission and values in the world. Your mission is why you are here, your reason for being, your core, your sense of purpose and direction. Your mission provides meaning.

Finally, your values describe what is really important to your organization, what matters. Your values define the standards you should use to evaluate things and make choices.

Again, loyalty to the organization is about living your vision, mission, and values and helping to pass that commitment along from year to year. Let your vision, mission, and values be your guide.





In our previous section, we talked about why you may have been drawn or attracted to your student organization. For many students, involvement in an organization is driven by a desire to serve – service to the university community, service to the Bryan/College Station community, even service to the global community. Likewise, many of our students choose to pursue leadership positions within their organizations because of their desire to serve or give back to the organization itself. As our final value, we would like to explore one of the most important ways that you can selflessly serve your student organization, and that is through officer transitions.

## Why Transition?

- Organizational knowledge is transferred
- Minimizes confusion and loss of momentum
- Gives a sense of closure
- Begins officer term on a positive note



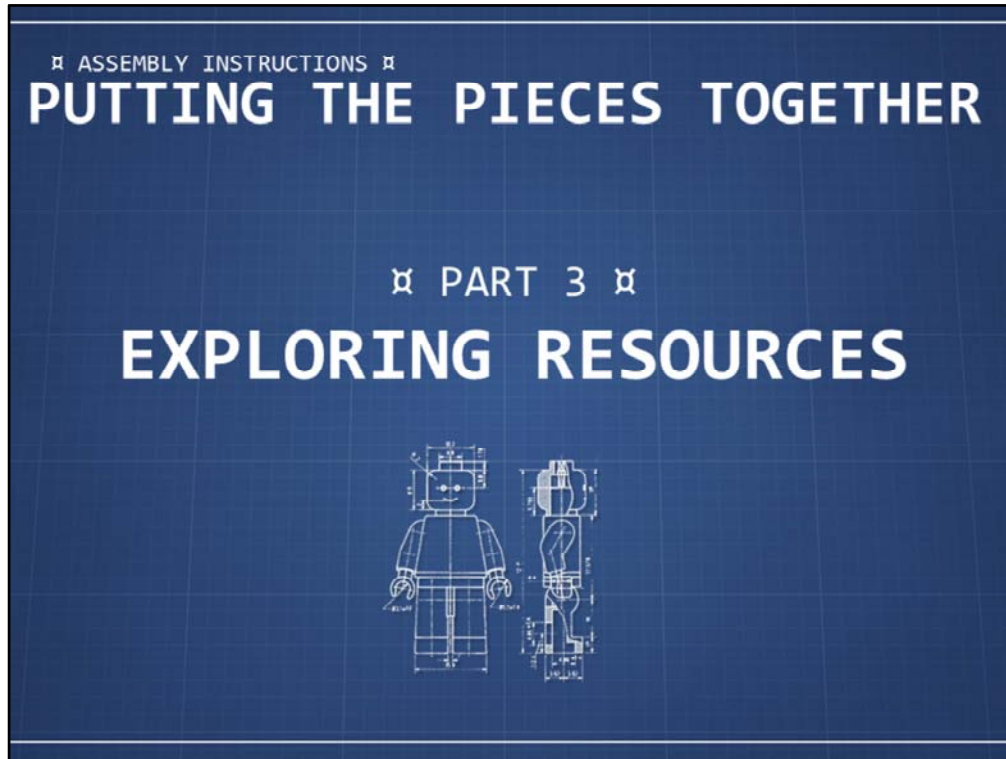
Officer transitions help to prepare new officers for their positions so that organizational knowledge and momentum is not lost. With a thorough officer transition process, significant organizational knowledge can be transferred which ultimately helps the incoming leadership absorb the special expertise of the outgoing leadership. Adequate transitions will also help minimize confusion and the loss of momentum during a leadership changeover. Finally, this process will give outgoing leaders a sense of closure and will allow the incoming officers to begin their experience on a positive note. The practice of having an officer transition is a positive tradition that will likely be repeated if done well.

## Successful Officer Transitions

- **Start Early!**
  - Transitioning is important and is a year-long process.
- **Ask Yourself:**
  - What information is important for new officers to know?
  - What is the most effective way to share this information?
- **Transition Topics**
  - Programs and Activities
  - Membership Recruitment and Retention
  - Officers and Org Structure
  - Organization Operations
  - Advisor Involvement
  - Public Image
  - Past, Present, and Future Goals

When it comes to transitioning officers, the most important thing to remember is to start early! The process of transitioning actually takes the entire year. Not only is it every executive member's responsibility to plan and take charge of certain areas within the organization, but it is also his/her job to document and prepare information including, but not limited to, contact lists, financial records, resources used, relevant rules, and processes and guidelines that each position would need to be aware of or use. There are 7 general areas that we recommend focusing on during officer transitions. These include: 1) Programs and Activities, 2) Membership Recruitment and Retention, 3) Officers and Organizational Structures, 4) Organizational Operations, 5) Advisor Involvement, 6) Public Image and 7) Past, Present, and Future Goals for the organization.



As mentioned before, we expect outgoing student leaders to make sure that an appropriate transition takes place for incoming officers.




We hope that the information shared in this training module has been helpful as you prepare for your role as a student leader in a recognized student organization. We encourage you to explore the other resources that are made available to you through the Department of Student Activities and Texas A&M University, including:

EXPLORING RESOURCES  
**We are here to help!**


**Department of Student Activities**  
Student Organization Development and Administration

 **979.845.1133**     **recognition@stuact.tamu.edu**

**StuAct Online**  
The online resource center for the  
Department of Student Activities

 **stuact.tamu.edu**

**Student Org Manual**  
Tools and guidelines for student  
organizations

 **orgmanual.tamu.edu**



StuAct Online – the online resource center for Student Activities, and the Student Organization Manual which provides comprehensive tools and guidelines for student organizations.

EXPLORING RESOURCES

## Department Areas

### Information Technology


Provides free web & e-mail hosting to all recognized organizations

 **979.862.7990**  **help@doit.tamu.edu**

### SOFC

Student Organization  
Finance Center


The on-campus bank for  
recognized student organizations

 **sofc.tamu.edu**

### LSC

Leadership &  
Service Center

Personal and organizational  
development opportunities

 **leadandserve.tamu.edu**


Information Technology, the Student Organization Finance Center, and the Leadership and Service Center – areas within the Department of Student Activities that provide valuable services and resources to student organizations such as free web and email hosting, free on-campus banking, and personal or organizational development opportunities for student leaders.

EXPLORING RESOURCES

## Rules & Regulation Resources


### Student Rules

- Student Rule 24:  
Student Conduct Code
- Student Rule 41:  
Recognition of Student Organizations
- Student Rule 42:  
Activities of Student Organizations
- Appendix XI:  
Expressive Activity

 [student-rules.tamu.edu](http://student-rules.tamu.edu)


### CEP Camps & Enrichment Programs

Complete the online CEP application, explore forms and resources relating to CEP, and find contact information

 [camps.tamu.edu](http://camps.tamu.edu)

### SAPs Standard Administrative Procedures

- Camps & Enrichment Programs
- Student Travel Rule

 [rules-saps.tamu.edu](http://rules-saps.tamu.edu)

And finally, Texas A&M's rules and regulations websites which will help you learn more about student and university rules that apply to your student organization and its activities.



The Department of Student Activities' is committed to developing leaders of character dedicated to serving the greater good. We accomplish this by role modeling the Texas A&M core values of Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Integrity, Loyalty, and Selfless Service.

Our ultimate goal is to help you and your organization put the pieces together as you plan for a successful year, so remember that our staff is always available for questions or assistance.

We hope that this information has been beneficial as you prepare to take on your leadership role. Best of luck to you and your student organization!