



Student Organization Transition Guide

Dean of Students Office
Wayne State University

Student Organization Leaders

It is important to have ample time spent making sure the incoming student organization leadership have the opportunity to be trained by outgoing leadership. Without taking the time to effectively transition incoming officers, organizations lose the opportunity to continue momentum gained in the previous year. The National Association of Campus Activities (NACA) defines effective transition as:

...[T]he process by which past and future student leaders in an organization work together to review and learn from previous events and programs and prepare for the upcoming year. This process can occur in one or several days and may be accomplished in a formal or informal setting. The transition process[es] an organization chooses to use during this time period truly depends on the needs and resources available to the group.
(2009)

This transition guide is designed to help all officers and student organization leaders have the tools to successfully transition outgoing and incoming officers. The forms in this packet are meant to empower students to have intentional conversations with one another to minimize the effects of turnover within student organizations, increase organizations' success, and continue momentum accomplished by groups during the previous year.

Please contact the Dean of Students Office (313-577-1010 or getinvolved@wayne.edu) for any further questions or help.

With Warrior Pride,
The Dean of Students Office

From year to year, student organizations have the opportunity to build upon their accumulated success. Below is a checklist in order to help your organization initiate newly elected officers into your organization's leadership team. These are merely suggestions, so feel free to choose pieces that work best for your organization.

The basics

- 1) A year in review:** Organizations are constantly evolving, so it is important to look back at your goals and figure out what worked, what did not, and how it could be better
 - a) Organizational structure:** By distributing a survey to your current officers, it is possible to assess individual experiences and suggest changes for the next officers to make. Are responsibilities distributed evenly? Should positions be added, taken away, etc.?
 - b) Evaluate goals:** By looking back at what you were and were not able to accomplish, it becomes possible to offer your wisdom to the next group of officers. Did you outline specific goals? If not, what were you able to accomplish and how could the next group learn from it?
 - c) Operations:** Use this time to evaluate the programs that you are using and make decisions about how operations can be improved. Wayne State University offers many different platforms that your organization can benefit from. Look at where you are storing your files, how your organization is communicating, what you are using to host events, and how you are keeping records. Are there inefficiencies? Below is a list of platforms offered by Wayne State University and their capabilities:
 - i) Using Get Involved**
 - (1)** Ensure rosters are up to date
 - (2)** Hosting events
 - (3)** File storage
 - ii) Using Microsoft Office**
 - (1)** Utilizing and sharing OneDrive access
 - (2)** Transferring Group ID email information over (if applicable)
 - d) Finances:** Discuss your organization's financial status.
 - i)** Finalize any outstanding bills
 - ii)** Transfer spreadsheet of expenses to new leadership

Suggested Checklist for Outgoing Officers

- Compile all documents to your organizations chosen platform
- Ensure that the incoming officer has access to all of the files
- Create/update a list of responsibilities for the incoming officer
- Keep track of any important contacts and resources that you may have used
 - Make introductions if possible
- Complete all necessary correspondence

- Schedule time with the incoming officer in your position to review materials and responsibilities
- Answer any questions that the new officer may have and make yourself available for future questions, or direct them to someone who can help

Outgoing Officer Worksheet

To be completed by the outgoing officer before transition meetings and training sessions

Position title: _____

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Please think through and respond to the following questions regarding your responsibilities; this information will be helpful to your successor. Lessons learned from this reflection can be shared with incoming officers verbally or in written format.

The responsibilities of my position included:

List other officers with whom you worked and the projects involved:

List what you enjoyed most and least regarding your position:

Who was the most helpful in getting things done? Who were good resources? List other aids that helped complete your job:

Things you wish you had known before you took the job include:

List specific accomplishments realized during your term in office and the reasons for their success. What did you try that worked well and would suggest doing again? Why?

List any problems or disappointments you encountered as a part of your position and suggest ways of avoiding or correcting them. What did you try that did not work? Why did it not work? What problems or areas will require attention within the next year?

What could you have done to make this a better experience?

List supplemental materials and sources of information you found most helpful. Include specific alumni or faculty contacts, university / college officers, community resources, etc.

Create a timetable/list important dates related to your position. Provide suggestions for increasing efficiency and effectiveness.

What should be done immediately during the summer? In the fall?

List any other suggestions you feel would be helpful to your successor in carrying out the responsibilities of this office.

Source: NIC Retreat Workbook (pg. 47)

Incoming Officer's Transition Worksheet

The new officer can ask these questions to the outgoing officer to gain a solid understanding of the position.

Things specific to the position I want to know about (forms, duties, etc.).

Things I should do over the summer.

People (positions) that I should get to know.

Services that I need to know about.

Things I need to know about working with my advisor.

Other questions I want answered.

What do you consider to be the responsibilities of your position?

What expectations do you have of the executive council/board?

What expectations do you believe your members have of you?

What problems or areas will require attention within the next year?

What should be done immediately in the fall?

Goal Setting

Considerations: Are my goals consistent with my understanding of the purpose of the group? Will the members of my organization agree with my goals? Check with them. Am I being realistic? Can I accomplish my goals during my tenure as organization leader?

Goals I want to accomplish:

1. Projects
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. Process or manner in which we go about projects (i.e., involving people in decisions, having more members participate in meetings, having more interesting meetings, etc.)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Where can I begin?

1. What goal seems most important to me?
2. Do I have the skills necessary to accomplish my goal? Who else in my organization can help me? Are there outside resources and people who might help?
3. Is there anything I can do before tomorrow to help me reach my goal?
4. What can I accomplish next week?
5. What specifically can I do within one month to reach all my goals?