

WCSU Club and Organization Advisors Handbook

A Guide for all Club & Organization Advisors



Thank you!!



The Center for Student Involvement would like to extend our greatest appreciation to you for your willingness to advise a student club or organization!

By working with students in their co-curricular endeavors, you are helping to make WCSU a place where learning happens both inside and outside the classroom.

Your commitment to students is duly recognized and is beneficial to the entire campus community.

If you have any questions, or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the [Center for Student Involvement](#). CSI is located in the Midtown Student Center, suite 227, open 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday.

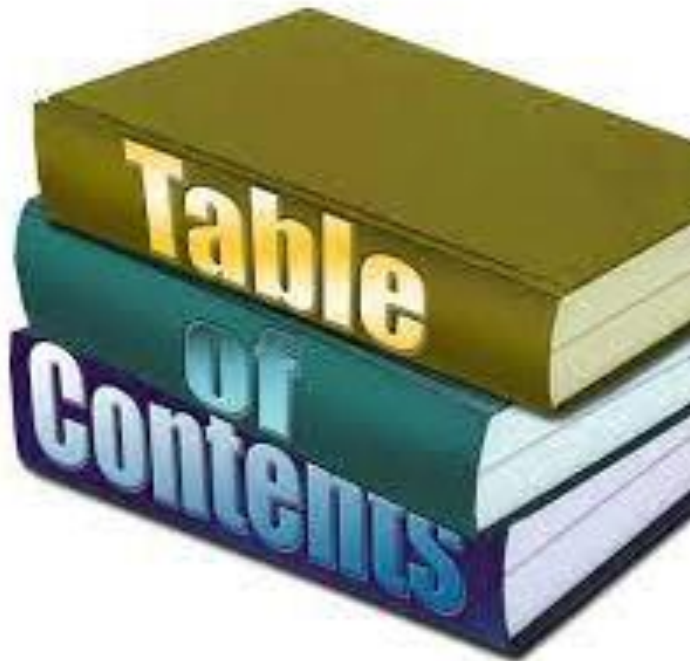
Introduction

Western Connecticut State University is home to approximately sixty student clubs and organizations which are governed by the Student Government Association (SGA). Feel free to view the club listing in our campus involvement platform, [Wolves Connect](#).

Each club and organization is dedicated to meeting the needs of their members and provide quality programming to the campus community. Students give selflessly to their organizations and aim to build and maintain success.

While students contribute a great deal to these clubs and organizations, they cannot do it alone.

This is where the role of the advisor comes into play. Whether you can afford to give ten minutes or an hour a week, your investment in a student club/organization is greatly appreciated!



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What is an advisor?



The University recognizes that co-curricular activities are vital to academic excellence and personal development.



The University requires each club/organization to have at least one advisor.



An advisor must be faculty or staff employed at Western Connecticut State University.



Advising a student club/organization is personally and professionally rewarding.



Advisors impact the direction a group takes, the goals it achieves, and the leadership qualities it nurtures in its members.



When a club/organization cannot locate a permanent advisor, the Director of the Center for Student Involvement will arrange for a temporary advisor for a maximum period of one semester.



Student clubs/organizations must keep the Center for Student Involvement and the SGA aware of any impending changes in advisors.

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updated 10/1/24

Functions of and Advisor

- ***An advisor's role is "passive" in that they should not control the group's activities or finances. Your role is to give guidance and direction only.***
- Familiarize yourself with the [Center for Student Involvements website](#), the club's constitution, [WCSU Student Handbook](#), and other procedural matters concerning WCSU's guidelines for clubs/organizations.
- Ensure the club/organization fulfills the goals of its constitution and bylaws.
- Assist the members with the planning of all proposed projects.
- Assist with goal setting.
- Observe the "group process," such as how the meetings work as well as how the group members interact with each other. Ensure fair, supportive meetings.
- Function as liaison between the organization and the Center for Student Involvement.
- Attend club/organization functions. This is especially important if alcohol is being served or if outside guests are allowed to the event. Having the advisor present at events reduces the liability of the University. Refer to the [WCSU Student Handbook](#) for Western's policies regarding such events.
- Follow up with the group after a program to evaluate its effectiveness.
- Be present at all large events (including bonfire events) and trips (overnights and day trips outside of CT).
- [The Center for Student Involvement](#) can assist advisors with many resources, e.g., risk management, leadership resources, team building activities, locating talent agencies, providing information on bus companies, ordering tickets, printing promotional flyers, etc.

Functions of an Advisor (continued)

- Maintain an open dialogue with the officers and members concerning the progress, plans, and problems of the club/organization.
- Informing your club/organization of the services and resources provided in the [Center for Student Involvement](#). CSI can provide clubs with storage lockers for supplies.
 - CSI is the hub for all Student Activity Fee expenditures and will assist students in handling these forms and procedures.
- Encourage the club equally delegates work to all members. Removing the “few do it all” syndrome and encouraging newer members to become involved.
- It is helpful to have knowledge of the organization’s finances, in collaboration with the club/organization’s treasurer and president. **Advisors also approve all official expenditure forms.** The advisor’s approval does not imply personal or fiscal responsibility.
- All financial forms are found in the Finance Section of [Wolves Connect](#). If you need assistance with accessing Wolves Connect, please contact CSI at csi@wcsu.edu
- Dennis Leszko, Director of the Center for Student Involvement, is happy to provide consultation regarding contract negotiations, leszkod@wcsu.edu.
- Stress the importance of students participating in leadership training programs sponsored by Student Affairs.

Do not hesitate to reach out! CSI is here to support and assist you in any way possible!

Contacts

Center for Student Involvement

Dennis Leszko	<i>Director</i>	leszkod@wcsu.edu	MTSC 227	837-8214
Carly Mengler	<i>Assistant Director</i>	menglerc@wcsu.edu	MTSC 227	837-8415
Lia Reynolds	<i>Graduate Intern</i>	reynoldsl@wcsu.edu	MTSC 227	837-3240
Evan Walker	<i>Graduate Intern</i>	walkere@wcsu.edu	MTSC 227	837-3950
Michael Azzi	<i>Graduate Intern</i>	azzim@wcsu.edu	MTSC 227	837-8922
Sorreea Gagnebin	<i>Office Assistant</i>	csi@wcsu.edu	MTSC 227	837-3954

Event Conference Management

John Murphy	<i>Director</i>	murphyj@wcsu.edu	WH 003	837-8343
Mark Gegeny	<i>Associate Director</i>	gegenym@wcsu.edu	WH 003	837-8211
Christine Laedke	<i>Associate Director</i>	laedkec@wcsu.edu	WH 003	837-9010
Cory Silver	<i>Assistant Director</i>	silverc@wcsu.edu	ONC 203	837-8347
Christine Hagan	<i>Secretary</i>	haganc@wcsu.edu	WH 003	837-8348

Sodexo – Food Service

Darnell Randall	<i>Events Coordinator</i>	Randalld@wcsu.edu	Berkshire Hall	837-8755
Diana Hiltz	<i>Catering Director</i>	Diana.hiltz@sodexo.com		837-3936



Legal Liabilities of Advisors

- If you have specific concerns about personal liability or coverage for activities or events, please contact the [Center for Student involvement](#).
- The Center for Student Involvement staff will research your questions and get back to you with the answers you seek.
- Please feel free to contact us with any other areas of concern. We understand advising a student organization may be unfamiliar territory to you as an advisor.

Advisor's Responsibilities to the University

Although the advisor's role is not regulatory or disciplinary, the advisor has an obligation to the University and the club/organization to keep both of their best interests in mind.

At times, the advisor may need to remind the club/organization of University's policies so that violations do not occur. The advisor may also work with the club/organization's leaders to establish and maintain internal group standards and regulations for conduct.

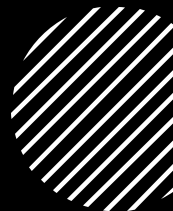
There may be times when an advisor can lend assistance in crisis or other problematic situations facing the club/organization. Although this is not often called for, the advisor's good judgment can be the redeeming quality in the event of mishaps, internal conflict, or personal crisis.

Alcohol

- If an organization wishes to have alcohol at any event, before speaking with Sodexo, appropriate [forms](#) MUST be filed.
- Advisors must be present when alcoholic beverages are served.
- The University encourages students to plan events that **do not** involve alcohol.
- Special attention must be given to Campus Police and other security protection at all events where alcoholic beverages are served. Student clubs/organizations planning to serve alcoholic beverages at an event held either on or off campus must meet with the Director of the Center for Student Involvement to discuss the event.
- If the event is to be held on campus, final approval rests with the Director of the Center for Student Involvement. Dining Services has the exclusive license to dispense/sell alcoholic beverages on university property. Campus Police will be present at all student club/organization-sponsored events where alcoholic beverages will be served.
- If the event is held off campus, the student organization and the establishment must complete paperwork noting event details. Final approval rests with the Director of the Center for Student Involvement. “Open bars” are prohibited at functions where students will be in attendance. Drinks must be purchased separately by the individuals in attendance and cannot be included in the cost of admission to any event.
- Alcoholic beverages are **prohibited** on buses, vans, limos, or other forms of transportation used for student field trips, fan buses, team buses, club buses, or student organization-sponsored trips.
- The full University-wide Alcohol Policy can be found here: [University Policies](#)



Meeting Minutes



Student organizations are required to keep minutes of their meetings.



Financial forms cannot be processed without the official expense vote and approval from the club/organization noted in their meeting minutes. This reinforces a democratic process of fund usage (not just one individual making decisions for the group).



If the club/organization needs help in writing minutes, they should contact the Center for Student Involvement, or reference the meeting minutes outline located on the [Center for Student Involvement website](#).

Responsibilities of Student Officers

President:

- Foster an atmosphere of caring, inclusivity, and positive relationships among the members
- Be knowledgeable and follow SGA, CSI and university policies
- Meet with CSI staff each fall to discuss organizational goals and leadership efforts
- Call, create agendas for and preside over all student organization meetings
- Work with the advisor to advance the mission of the student organization
- Oversee the process of student organization event planning by supporting the Vice President as needed
- Work with the student organization's Treasurer to prepare and manage the annual budget as well as prepare and submit funding requests to SGA's Finance Committee
- Submit and regularly maintain the club's portal in Wolves Connect including the membership roster, club documents and contact information.
- Submit an annual report of the student organization's activities and information at the end of the year
- Submit all required "paperwork" for student organization transition in Wolves Connect

Vice President:

- Call and preside over meetings in the absence of the President.
- Supervise all student event planning, fundraising, or other activities.
- Direct constitutional updating and revisions.
- Recruit new members (in absence of recruitment and retention director)
- Assist all executive officers
- Serve as an ex-officio member of standing committees
- Provide follow-up for organizational tasks
- Organize executive board retreats and end-of-year events.
- Coordinate executive board officer transition meetings.
- Responsible for all social media and advertising (in absence of social/marketing director)

Responsibilities of Student Officers

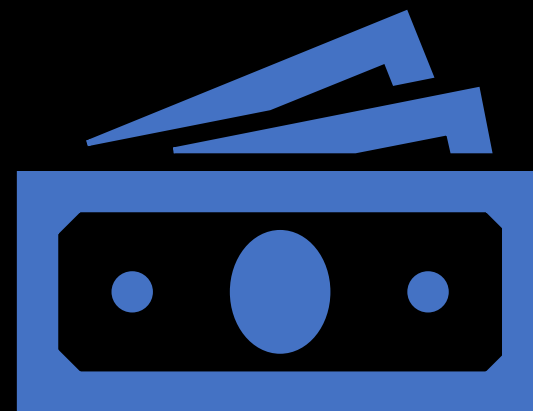
Treasurer:

- Prepare the annual student organization budget
- Monitor the student organization's budget in Wolves Connect portal
- Maintain a current accounting of the student organization's financial status including income and expenses which entails keeping a record of all transactions, i.e. deposits and adjusting entries
- Prepare and submit funding requests to SGA's Finance Committee
- Work with the CSI Assistant Director to complete purchases and/or tending to the status of all purchase requests in Wolves Connect
- Collect funds and deposit to the student organization's account
- Prepare monthly financial reports and documents to keep the student organization's membership informed about the student organization's financial situation
- Contribute to the annual report

Secretary:

- Schedule location for meetings and events
- Prepare and distribute agenda with the President
- Take minutes at every student organization meeting and distributes copies to members prior to the next meeting
- Maintain student organization history for that academic year
- Maintain a current list of members emails and phone numbers and a list of potential members information
- Assist with student organization events and projects, as needed
- Notify all members of upcoming meetings (in absence of social/marketing director)

A word on finances



Financial Policies

Student Activity Fee



The Student Activity Fee (SAF) is paid by the students and is to be used ***only*** for the students!



The Student Activity Fee is distributed to the following organizations: Student Government Association (SGA), WXCI (Radio Station), Program Activities Council (PAC), Recreation, Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL) Council, and the CSI.



The SGA also allocates funds to the student clubs/organizations that sponsor student-run programs/travel. Individual students (not a part of a club/organization) may also be funded.



The (SAF) operates under provisions of the General State Statutes to account for all funds related to Student Activities. Western Connecticut State University has established additional rules and regulations designed to protect the student clubs/organizations and their officers.



The Center for Student Involvement handles the financial aspects of the Student Activity Fee. The staff is required to follow State procedures issued by the Office of Policy and Management.



The Student Activities Fee Manager is responsible for the financial administration of the student clubs/organizations. It is the SAF Manager's responsibility to make sure all financial policies are properly followed as set forth in the handbook.

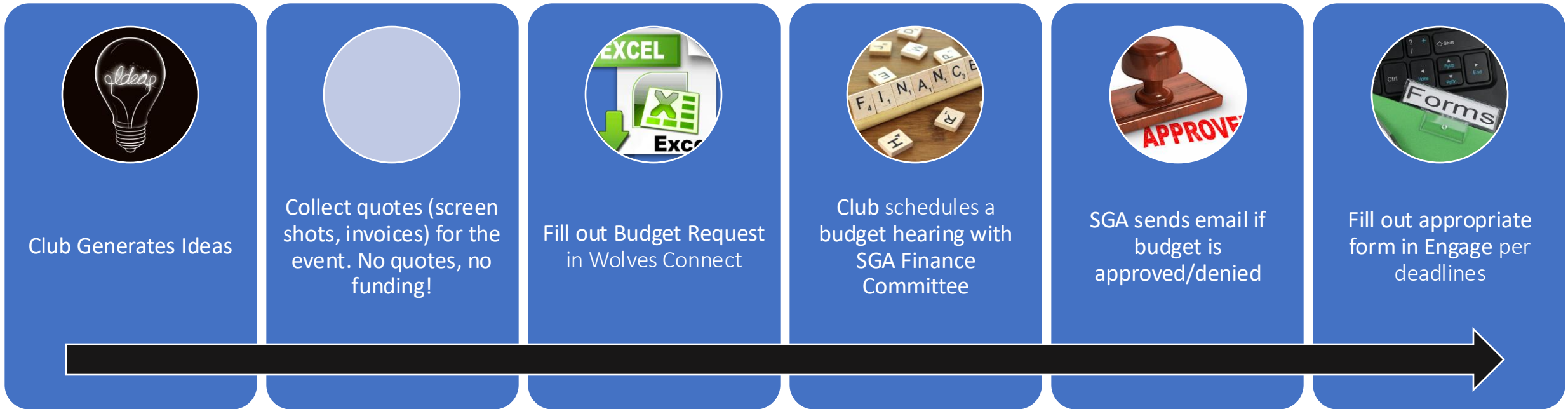
2 Types of Accounts

Fundraising Account: Student clubs/organizations have fundraising accounts. Funds come primarily from donations and fundraising projects. These accounts must follow the same procedures as the SGA accounts. However, the SGA does not have control over these funds. Money in these accounts rolls over year to year.

SGA Account: This account consists of any funds allocated to a student organization by the Student Government Association. To receive funds from the Student Activities Fee, student clubs/organizations must submit a budget request to the SGA Finance Committee. A budget must first be approved by the Student Senate before any disbursement may be made. Unused money rolls into a surplus account at the end of the fiscal year. Clubs/organizations need to request SGA funding annually.

SGA Budget Process

How clubs obtain funds from the SGA



In the Spring semester, clubs fill out their annual budget (all events for the next fiscal year). Clubs can come back to finance to amend a budget or add/drop events from their budget.

Have questions? Reach out to:

- SGA Finance Officer: sgafinance@wcsu.edu
- Carly Mengler: menglerc@wcsu.edu

Expenditures/Forms

All financial forms are located in [Wolves Connect](#)



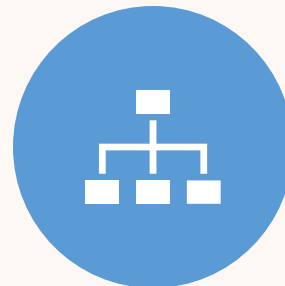
Payment Voucher Form: Deadline varies depending on the expenditure. This form is used to process reimbursements, payment by check, fund transfers between departments, and to issue a purchase order (any goods that are over \$2500).



Purchase Card (P-Card) Form: This form is used to request the use of the University Purchase Card or have CSI place an online order. Deadline is 10 business days for this form. Any purchases made by club must include tax exemption.



Food Service Form: This form is used if the club/organization is going to have food at an event catered by Sodexo. This form is due **3 weeks before event and must include the Sodexo catering invoice.**



Personal Service Agreement Form: This form is used if the club/organization plans to have a DJ/lecturer/performer. This form is due **four (4) weeks before event.**

A Note on Personal Service Agreements

A written agreement is mandatory for all speakers and/or persons performing any type of service for a student club/organization. The State of Connecticut requires Western Connecticut State University to issue a Personal Services Agreement (PSA) to all individuals/companies paid from Student Activities Funds. Student clubs/organizations that book artists such as lecturers, bands, DJ's and entertainers must follow this policy.

This process may take 4 weeks to complete. Therefore, PSA requests submitted within the 4-weeks of the event, may not be accepted.

The PSA Request Form IS NOT A BINDING DOCUMENT and is not considered an executed contract.

Checks are issued typically two weeks after Accounting receives payment authorization.

A Note on Food Service



Food and beverage service may be an integral part of the program. In order to provide quality food and beverages, the University has contracted with Sodexo Dining Services. Through this contract, Sodexo Dining Services reserves the exclusive rights to all food and beverage services on the campus.



Students should meet with the Sodexo Catering Manager as soon as possible to discuss menu options and planning for an event. The student clubs/organizations must confirm with Sodexo the menu for an event then submit a food service form for payment.



It is recognized that there are occasions when a particular menu will significantly enhance an event. In these instances, Sodexo may permit "outside food". If permitted, the student group must provide the following documents to ensure the vendor meets appropriate standards of health and quality: a copy of the Health Department Permit, a copy of the certificate of insurance, and a signed indemnification form.



When outside food is brought into a WCSU facility, please ensure that the vendor is providing everything that will be needed, including plates, utensils, napkins, chafing dishes, ice, etc.

Club Deposits



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Any funds collected by a student club/organization must be deposited within 24 hours to the Cashiers Office in Old Main 106.



Please fill out a [deposit form](#) summarizing funds collected and club information.

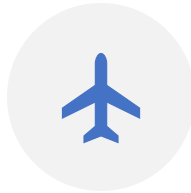


Hand the form and money over to the Cashiers Office. It is advisable to keep a copy or take a picture for your records.



Please contact csi@wcsu.edu with any questions.

Student Organization Travel



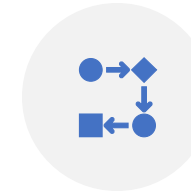
For any club travel, students must plan 3 months prior. For international trips, the deadline is 6 months.



The staff of the Center for Student Involvement is available to assist you with your planning.



Any organizations planning travel must meet with the Assistant Director or Director of the Center for Student Involvement.



Please click here to schedule a: [travel meeting](#).



Links for more information: [travel packet](#) and [WCSU travel site](#)

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Travel: Role of the Advisor

The student club/organization advisor or approved designee must accompany the students on all trips out of state or any overnight stay.

The Center for Student Involvement highly recommends if there is more than one bus for any trip, additional staff be responsible for the additional bus(es).

In case of an emergency, the advisor must contact Campus Police (203-837-9300) and explain the situation.

Campus police will advise on next steps

Travel: Role of the Advisor (cont)

Upon departure, be sure that all students are accounted for. If there are students not returning with the group and you must depart (after a reasonable time waiting for the students to return), please follow the emergency protocols previously mentioned.

In addition, a note must be taken after which the Advisor must email the Director of the Center for Student Involvement at the conclusion of the trip

In the event of a non-emergency, that occurs during the trip, please contact the Director of the Center for Student Involvement immediately via e-mail with exact details concerning the incident upon return to the University. Follow up meetings will then be scheduled to discuss the issues.

Advisors must be available for students that need assistance during the trip, which may include having a cell phone number made available to students and hotel room number (in the case of an overnight trip).

Students are expected to conduct themselves as representatives of the university. Students must sign an emergency waiver before departure. Students traveling need to know that the University's Code of Conduct follows them wherever they travel. A copy of the Code of Conduct can be found [here](#).

Students that are found violating the Code of Conduct while traveling on a University sponsored trip will be subject to the University's judicial process and may have to repay the University for the expenses of the trip.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can someone from the club/organization reserve a room/space on campus?

Please refer students to the [EMS WebApp](#). If there are issues, have them reach out to the Event Conference Management Team: eventconferencemanagement@wcsu.edu

Questions regarding SGA budget or money allocation?

Please reach out to the SGA Director of Finance (sgafinance@wcsu.edu).

Questions regarding fundraising money, contact the CSI office at csi@wcsu or stop in MTSC227.

What is [Wolves Connect](#)? Our campus engagement platform. You will find club events, rosters, forms there.

How do I approve club financial forms?

Advisors are the last step in financial forms in Wolves Connect. When your review is requested, you receive an email. Click the link then "move the stage" of the form to Assistant Director. Any assistance, please contact Carly Mengler (menglerc@wsu.edu).

What is the time commitment of being an advisor?

That is largely up to the individual and club. However, CSI encourages advisors to participate as much as possible to gain a most enriching experience.



On behalf of the Center for Student Involvement, we thank you for your time and dedication to supporting student life!

Do not hesitate to reach out to the CSI office with any questions: [CSI office](#)

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