Dear Emerging Student Organization:

Congratulations on starting a new Student Organization! The Campus Activities Office is excited about your decision to partner with us in order to enhance the quality of student life at the University. Starting a new student organization is no small task, but an endeavor we believe you will find both challenging and rewarding.

“How to Start an OLLU Student Organization” was created by the Campus Activities Office to provide students seeking official University recognition for new student organizations with a resource. This publication compiles policies, procedures, and guidelines for student organizations and serves as a general guide for planning meetings, events, and programs.

The Campus Activities Office has designed this guidebook to be the most comprehensive resource your Emerging Student Organization will need for success. We encourage you to make full use of it by circulating it among your officers and members when applicable.

Participation in student organizations is an integral part of the University’s commitment to educating the total person. Student Organization’s offer participants the opportunity to meet new people, explore special interests, develop leadership skills, translate classroom knowledge and theories to practical application, and positively enhance the University community.

Each academic year, the University’s SO’s sponsor seminars, lectures, performances, service projects, and cultural, social, and artistic events that allow students, faculty, staff members, and community leaders to interact and learn from one another. In so doing, they provide the University with a valuable service by enhancing leadership development, promoting community spirit, and ultimately aiding in recruitment and retention efforts.

On behalf of the Campus Activities Office, thank you for the time and energy you are devoting to starting a new SO. Good luck as you participate in the University’s student organization recognition process.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Scotka
Director of Campus Activities and University Center

Catherine Fragoso
Assistant Director of Campus Activities for Leadership Programs and Operations

Diana Gutierrez
Student Organizations Program Assistant
The mission of Our Lady of the Lake University, an independent, Catholic institution sponsored by the Congregation of Divine Providence, is to provide excellent teaching through traditional and innovative educational programs; to develop its diverse, intercultural student bodies in Christian, person-centered learning communities; and to graduate individuals who are competent and committed to service.

Participation in student organizations is an integral part of the University’s commitment to educating the total person. The University's student organizations offer participants the opportunity to meet new people, explore special interests, develop leadership skills, translate classroom knowledge and theories to practical application, and positively enhance the University community.

Chartered Student Organizations
Chartered Student Organizations are groups sponsored under the umbrella of a University department and are directly funded by University funds. As of fall 2008, the following organizations were chartered by the University. Listed in parenthesis are the organizations’ departmental sponsors.

- Club Sports (Recreational Sports)
- Active Minds (Counseling Services)
- Lake Ambassadors (Campus Activities)
- LakeSTARS (Admissions)
- Leadership Institute for Freshman Excellence (Campus Activities)
- Peer Advisors at the Lake (Academic Achievement)
- Pursuing Student Excellence (Project Student Excellence)
- Speech and Debate Team (Student Life)
- Student Alumni Organization (Alumni Office)
- Student Government Association (Campus Activities)
- Student Orientation Leaders (Campus Activities)
- Student Mom’s Organization (Center for Women)
- University Programming Council (Campus Activities)
- vOLLUniteer Unity Council (Service-Learning and Volunteerism)
Recognized Student Organizations

Recognized Student Organizations (SO's) are groups operating on a voluntary and self-governing basis. These groups are funded through membership dues, fundraising projects, and budget allocations from the Campus Activities Office. The University's RSO's offer students the opportunity to develop and explore special interests while working collaboratively with others. The University recognizes academic groups, honor societies, and special interest groups, including cultural, recreational, religious, and service organizations. Through participation in the Student Government Association and initiatives such as the “Student Organization Handbook,” the Student Organization Officer-Advisor Workshop, Club Rush (both fall and spring semesters), and various speakers on leadership, the Campus Activities Office works to increase the leadership development of Student Organization officers and members. For a complete listing of Student Organization’s, contact the Campus Activities Office.

Emerging Student Organizations

Emerging Student Organizations are groups that are actively pursuing official University recognition through the Campus Activities Office. Groups are classified as emerging upon submission of completed “Emerging Student Organization Interest Forms” to the Campus Activities Office.

Unrecognized Student Organizations

Unrecognized Student Organizations are groups that (1) do not seek official University recognition or (2) seek such recognition but are denied, and still operate on the University’s campus in violation of the “Policy for Recognition of Student Organizations.”

All members of the University community must be free to associate with any organization of their choosing, whether on campus or in the community. However, Our Lady of the Lake University will consider for official recognition only those organizations that support the mission and tradition of the University and whose practices are consistent with University goals, values, and policies.

A student organization shall be defined as “a group of Our Lady of the Lake students joined together in the pursuit of a common purpose.” A student organization seeking official University recognition should have a goal, purpose, and identity that is both unique and singular. Any group whose purpose duplicates that of an existing organization will not be recognized. The limited number of potential members, dictated by the University’s enrollment, will not support an infinite number of student organizations.

University recognition is offered to organizations as a privilege, with the expectation that organizations will demand, and their members will maintain, the highest standards of conduct. Recognition of a student organization may be withdrawn or suspended at any time, and any organization and its members may be subject to University disciplinary action.

In regard to fraternities and sororities, those groups that are nationally affiliated, through either the National Interfraternity Council or National Panhellenic Conference, and whose primary focus is service to others are eligible to seek official University recognition. Groups whose primary focus is of a social nature will not be eligible for official recognition.
The University does not endorse a social Greek system. As a person-centered community inspired by the Catholic faith of the sponsoring religious order, Our Lady of the Lake University creates academic and co-curricular learning opportunities that further the communal values of respect, caring, and honesty and that promote personal responsibility, an appreciation of differences, and an atmosphere of inclusion. Groups which promote exclusivity challenge these values and damage the integrity of the community.

Groups that either do not seek University recognition or that seek recognition and are denied present a unique challenge to the University community. Their members individually maintain those rights extended to all University students, although collectively as an organization, those rights are denied. Such unrecognized organizations are extended none of the privileges extended to recognized groups, which include advertising and posting, using University facilities and services, fundraising and solicitation, seeking University funding, and participating in any manner at on- or off-campus University-related events. Other rights of recognized organizations are outlined in the University’s “Student Handbook.” Additionally, members of unrecognized groups may not promote the goals, purposes, identity, or activities of those groups.

Student Organization representatives appointed by the Student Government Association will review all applications from groups seeking recognition and will forward recommendations to the Director of Campus Activities/University Center and to the Vice President and Dean of Student Life.