Recognition
Tarleton State University supports the educational experience by providing programs, services, and activities that enhance student learning, growth and development. We encourage students to actively participate in the educational experience through involvement in a student organization. There are more than 120 recognized student organizations on the Tarleton campus. If you are unable to find an opportunity for involvement, we will assist you in starting a new organization. There is a recognition process that new student organizations must complete to be recognized by the university. This process is designed to give the student organization support while giving the University an opportunity to interact with both officers and the advisor to the organization.

Why is it important to be recognized? There are several resources and privileges associated with official university recognition.
1. Use of Tarleton State University in the name to identify institutional affiliation
2. Access to campus for meetings, fundraising, publicity and events
3. Using (at a reduced cost or free) university meeting rooms and facilities
4. Publicity through university publications (i.e. Student Activities Web Site, University Web Calendar, et al.)
5. Free organizational email address and web site
6. Eligible to use certain equipment owned by the Office of Student Activities
7. Representation in the Student Government Association through the House of Representatives
8. Applying for funds through the House of Representatives
9. Eligible for awards at the Leadership and Service Awards Ceremony held each spring

Establishing an Organization
Before you begin the process of starting a new organization, review the recognized student organizations list on the Student Activities website www.orgsync.com. Just log into the site with your NTNET and password and search for Organizations located on the purple toolbar on the top of the page. Also, please think about the following:

Does a recognized organization already exist that addresses your interests? If so, contact the organization by writing them a message on OrgSync or contact the Office of Student Activities.

How will you define your organization’s purpose? What’s unique about your group? What are your organizational goals and how will you accomplish them? Are there at least four other students who share your interest? Would other students be interested in joining your group? Do you know of a full time faculty/staff employee who would advise your group? What type of activities would your group sponsor?

Student Organizations may be officially recognized when formed for purposes that are consistent with the philosophy and goals of Tarleton State University. New organizations are granted recognition by the Director of Student Activities. In order to achieve recognition, organizations must meet the following criteria:

The organization’s purpose must be unique in scope and not duplicate existing organizations. A minimum of 5 members are required to begin a new organization. Membership is limited to full time Tarleton students. Tarleton faculty and staff members may participate but not as official members.

Undergraduate members must maintain a 2.00 GPA. Organizational officers should maintain a 2.25 GPA. Organizations are responsible for enforcing the GPA requirements. The Office of Student Activities can assist in verifying member GPA’s.

A constitution must be filed with the Office of Student Activities and reviewed every 5 years. Any changes must be filed with the Office of Student Activities immediately.
The primary advisor must be a full time faculty or staff member who is willing to ensure the organization is complying with university rules and regulations.
An update of the groups OrgSync profile must be updated at the beginning of every fall and spring semester. If you do not have access to the group's profile, please contact our office and we will set you up with access and answer any questions you may have. If your organization is new, go to the Organizations section on the purple tool bar in OrgSync and select "Register A New Organization." If you're updating an existing organization, go to the group’s profile and select "Edit’ and complete the profile even if there are no changes.

The organization is not required to file for a Tax I.D. but the group will need it if they request funds from the university or want to open a bank account. This number does not grant tax exemption status it is only an identification number. The Office of Student Activities can assist with this process.

The organization must agree to conduct its affairs in accordance with University rules and regulations as well as federal and Texas state law.

Tarleton has more than 120 recognized student organizations. Each organization is categorized into one of the following areas:

- Club Sports Organizations affiliated with Recreational Sports that promote particular athletic interests.
- Departmental Organizations related to a particular academic area or field of study.
- Greek Fraternities and Sororities Nationally affiliated societies and organizations for men and women.
- Honorary Organizations that represent students with high academic standards either by classification or by special areas of study. Some groups are nationally based while others are based locally.
- Music Organizations dedicated to the encouragement of the performing arts, particularly music.
- Professional Organizations formed to promote a particular interest in a student's professional future career. Most of the professional organizations are nationally based.
- Religious Organizations that exist to provide religious and social outlets for students.
- Service/Social Organizations or groups organized (either locally or nationally) to render service to the campus and the Stephenville community and who promote social activities for interested students.
- Special Interest Organizations created to support special areas not associated with any academic department.
- Spirit Organizations dedicated to the encouragement of spirit and support of Tarleton Athletics.
- Student Life Organizations that operate under the umbrella of the Division of Student Life with programs benefiting the entire campus.

Through this variety of organizations, most students find an opportunity to become involved and contribute to campus life at Tarleton State University. However, if you have a special interest and an existing organization doesn’t meet your needs, you may apply to start your own recognized student organization.

Risk Management Training

As outlined in House Bill 2639, institutions of higher education are required to provide a risk management program for members and advisors of student organizations registered at the institutions.

House Bill 2639 states every university must:

1. Provide the risk management program at least once each academic year for registered student organizations
2. Identify which organizations/advisors should be required to attend the program and develop an institutional rule that reflects these requirements
3. Develop an online version of the program for off-campus advisors
4. Designate which officer positions (president, membership chair, risk management chair, social chair, etc) will be required to attend
5. Require the officer/advisor who attends the program to report the contents of the program to the full membership of the organization
6. Require the program to address: possession and use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs, including penalties; hazing; sexual abuse and harassment; fire and other safety issues including firearms; other weapons or explosive devices; travel to a destination outside the area in which institution is located; behavior at parties and other events held by student organizations; adoption by a student organization of a risk management policy

7. Require the institution to take attendance, keep record of attendance and impose reasonable sanctions for those persons who do not comply

Tarleton's policy requires at least one officer of the recognized student organization to attend the training. The officer that took the training must be the risk management officer. Every organization must have a risk management officer. This duty could be assigned to an existing office or a new officer position could be developed. Once trained, the officers must train the entire organizational membership. Organizational officers will attend this training annually.

All organizational advisors are required to attend the training as well. This is a one-time training for advisors unless changes in laws or training warrant additional training. You do not have to attend the same training as your advisor but it is recommended.

Once trained, the officers/advisors must communicate the information with the entire organizational membership.

For more information about risk management training visit www.tarleton.edu/studentactivities and select the risk management tab.

**Staying Recognized**

At the beginning of each fall and spring semester, an update form must be filed with the Office of Student Activities for an organization to keep recognition status. The update form is available online at www.tarleton.edu/studentactivities.

Updated Constitutions and bylaws should be re-filed with the Office of Student Activities immediately.

Attend required training's as directed by the Office of Student Activities.

Note: When a conflict between university policy and a student organization's constitution and bylaws arises, university policy and procedures will supersede the respective organizations constitution and bylaws to alleviate and/or resolve any discrepancies and/or conflict.

**Advisors**

University regulation requires each student organization have a faculty/staff member (full time employee of Tarleton State University) as the primary advisor for the organization. It is in the organization's best interest to have a secondary advisor in case the primary advisor is unavailable.

An advisor can provide the following support to an organization. This person plays an important role in the success of the group.

- Provide the organization with historical information about the group
- Enforce university policies and procedures as they relate to student organizations
- Advise the group on liability issues (i.e. alcohol, hazing, etc.)
- Encourage members to make reasonable and prudent decisions when planning activities
- Attend organizational meetings whenever possible
- Provide information about the responsibilities associated with good leadership and fellowship
- Introduce new ideas
- Attend activities, sponsored by the group, classified as "open" or involving alcohol from beginning to end

**Recruiting an Advisor**

Find someone who has time to devote to the organization and who will take the role willingly and seriously.

Make sure the potential advisor has a clear understanding of the organization's purpose. It is important to outline his/her duties and the time the position would require. If possible choose someone who shares the same interests of your organization.
Allow the person time to consider the offer. This person will be very important to your organization and he/she should not be pressured into taking the position.

Organizational Finances
Student organizations are responsible for their own finances. The university is not responsible for any debt incurred by your organization. Since banking services are not available on campus, your organization is responsible for selecting a bank. We recommend the following:

- Consider banking at a local institution, it is more accessible for conducting transactions
- File for a Tax I.D. Number through the Office of Student Activities
- Have two (2) people on the account signature card as well as the Director of Student Activities. This will help prevent misappropriation of funds (consider your advisor as one of the signatories).
- Have financial statements sent to an address that will be used semester to semester and one that is checked frequently. You will be able to detect problems much quicker especially when officers change or when members are gone for the summer.
- Be responsible in your spending habits. Poor financial management could affect your organization for years to come.

Tarleton State University assumes no responsibility for debt incurred by student organizations.

SGA Organizational Representatives
As a recognized student organization you have the opportunity to provide two (2) representatives to the Student Government Association House of Representatives. Representatives are internally elected by the organization and serve the fall and spring semesters in the Student Government Association. The House is responsible for initiating, reviewing and adopting new legislation as well as allocating funds for student organizations. For more information about the House of Representatives, call the Student Government Association at 968-9082 or email sga@tarleton.edu.

House of Representatives Funding
The House of Representatives is a legislative body composed of internally selected representative from each of the recognized student organizations on campus.

Representation is optional for the organizations; however, in order to be eligible for funding, a representative must regularly attend meetings. All recognized organizations have equal representation however, not all organizations are eligible for funding. The House of Representatives will provide a list of organizations that are eligible for funding at the beginning of each semester.

The purpose of the House is to:

- Initiate, review and adopt legislation
- Allocate funds to organizations
- Encourage and promote student participation in activities of the University
- Promote growth and development of student organizations

Promote community service

If your organization is interested in joining the House of Representatives, please contact the Student Government Association at 968-9082.