

FAQ for Student Organizations

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

As of 7/28/20

The Division of Student Affairs and the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement remain committed to students' development and safety as we continue to combat COVID-19. This pandemic has completely altered our normal way of life and how we like to engage with our students. It's up to us to figure out healthy ways to overcome the challenges that COVID-19 provides and discover new alternatives and creative solutions. Please note that this document is fluid and could be changed at any time based on updated information from WCU, the state or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Check the [Office of Student Leadership and Involvement webpage](#) frequently as you begin your fall planning.

Should student clubs and organization meet virtually or in person in the fall semester?

Per the [Student Community Agreement](#), groups should continue to host *remote* group events, gatherings, or meetings to the extent possible to minimize risk of exposure to your members. The [guidelines set forth by the Governor and WCU](#) will dictate what can and what cannot occur. Some of our smaller clubs might have an opportunity to host a socially distanced meeting, in select campus buildings, but meeting room availability and capacity will be limited to ensure safety. We will inform you of these options once they are finalized.

Will there be an Involvement Fair this fall semester?

Yes. However, because of the current COVID-19 situation and our inability to protect students at this traditionally crowded event, we are going to host a virtual Student Involvement Fair this fall semester. Your club or organization leaders have already received notification on what steps they will need to take to ensure that your organization participates. We will be using RamConnect as our fair site. Please make sure you connect with the leadership of your organization to make sure your organization is participating. It's a different way to welcome our new students, but let's work extra hard to welcome them this year. The virtual fair will take place on **Wednesday, August 26, 2020 from 11:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Can my organization conduct new member education this fall semester?

The quick answer is yes. However, if you have not created a virtual new member education process for the fall, you will need to do so using zoom or other platforms. Please complete as much of your new member program online as possible to lessen the risk to you or your new members. Reach out to Patricia Riley, the Assistant Director of Student Leadership and Involvement at priley2@wcupa.edu for icebreakers and team builders that can be done on-line. If your organization is conducting new member education this fall, Patricia will reach out to you with directions.

Can student organizations travel?

For now, the University has prohibited all non-essential travel. Thus, any travel by student organizations, is not possible.

Can my student organization sponsor or co-sponsor on-campus based programs?

Yes, with some limitations. As a result of CDC guidelines, in-person programming will be minimal; therefore, greater emphasis is placed on virtual engagement opportunities for all of our students. However, co-curricular student activities will follow social distancing measures and guidelines. Resources and guidelines will be provided for students to utilize spaces on campus that follow CDC considerations, according to the phases of opening from the state at that time. Facilities like Sykes Student Union, Student Recreation Center, and Lawrence Hall will be operating at lower capacities to comply with state and local health guidelines. Large gatherings and events will continue to be significantly curtailed through the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Where can I find training about maintaining my club's virtual operations?

- [WCU Student Leadership and Involvement YouTube Channel](#)
- [RamConnect Event Slider](#) Log in to ramconnect.wcupa.edu and scroll through the event slider on the home page
- [Student Leadership and Involvement webpage](#)

Will the Ram Roundup still be published on a weekly basis for us to advertise what programs we are doing?

Yes, it will continue to be published. [RamRoundup submission form website](#) is the link to send your programming and club news to for publication campus wide.

Is the Council of Orgs happening and am I required to participate?

Yes, the Council of Organizations will continue to meet this fall semester. Your President will be notified of the dates and times for these virtual meetings that usually occur once a month. Remember, attendance at these meetings is mandatory. It is more important now than ever, because of the impact of COVID-19, that a representative of your organization attend these meetings to get updates and ask questions of your elected leaders.

How can my organization support efforts to track and stop the spread of COVID-19?

Only meet in person when absolutely necessary, always wear a face mask and practice social distancing. For in-person activities, maintain an attendance log of members or other students present. You can use the check-in and attendance tracking features on RamConnect for in-person activities as a tool. Restrict members who are not feeling well or experiencing symptoms from attending any in-person activities. If a student is symptomatic, encourage them to call Student Health Services for guidance and/or an appointment with a provider. If a student is symptomatic and is tested for COVID-19, the student should self-report by completing the [designated University form](#).

Do we need to report if someone in our organization has tested positive for COVID-19?

If a student is symptomatic and is tested for COVID-19, encourage the student to self-report by completing the [designated University form](#). Students should not attend any in-person organization activities if they are pending results or if they have not been cleared by their health care provider after testing positive.

Is our club allowed to hang flyers around campus advertising programs and events?

Yes. We would recommend that your flyer reinforces the CDC guidelines for social distancing and the wearing of masks. Post your events on RamConnect so you can monitor and regulate attendance at the event. Adhering to stated [university and CDC guidelines](#) for attendance is important.

Can I order catering for my student organization event?

Catering availability for the fall is yet to be determined. Please contact 610-436-3130 for additional information.

What if my organization chooses to go inactive while we are taking remote classes? Who do I inform?

If you have exhausted our resources and your members just can't see the possibility of functioning in a virtual world, then please inform Jennifer Yost at jyost@wcupa.edu and she will record the inactive status. We will check back with the organization leadership on record in the early part of the next semester to see if they wish to be taken off of inactive status. Additionally, we will inform Student Government Association of the change of status.

Sykes Student Union Questions

How do I reserve a room in Sykes Union for meetings?

Please refer to the Sykes Union [COVID-19 Update website](#) for updated meeting room capacities. You will still need to place reservations for space through [25Live](#). For questions regarding student organization reservations, please contact [Jordan Maxwell](#) at 610-436-1014. Please note that facemasks will be required in Sykes Union.

Will the Center for Student Involvement be open and available?

Yes, but it will look a little different. Furniture has been removed and spaced according to regulations. This space is a first come, first served space and we ask that you do not move any of the tables or chairs from their location as they are set specifically for the recommended 6 ft. distance. Please note that facemasks are required in Sykes Union.

Will the Sykes Copy Center be open and available?

Yes. If your student organization has a charge account with the Sykes Copy Center, please make sure to update the names of authorized members who can charge to the account. Be prepared for additional precautions:

- One customer in the center at a given time.
- There will be plexi-glass around the desk, as well as floor decals and signage.
- First preference for files is to send them digitally via copycenter@wcupa.edu, if the file is too big, thumb drives will be accepted.

Will Rams After Hours continue in the Fall semester?

We are looking to do a combination of in-person and virtual options to engage our community. More information to come! You can follow [Rams After Hours](#) and [Sykes Student Union](#) on social media for updates.

Are student groups allowed to use their office space/access their club locker/mail?

Student groups are able to use their office space while adhering to CDC and West Chester University guidelines. It is recommended that all meetings be done virtually in order to limit in-person contact. If the space must be used, it must be done so with proper social distancing efforts and it is encouraged that groups wipe down their space before and after each use. For organization office hours, we recommend a rotation schedule to minimize the number of students in the space at any given time.

If our organization has an office or locker in Sykes, are you required to clean and wipe down your office space, including the keypads and handles?

Organizations should take proper action with their spaces and property. This includes wiping down items before and after use. There will be stations throughout the building with some sanitation products and it is encouraged that organizations invest in their own products for this purpose.

Is our student organization allowed to use outside vendors for food and what are the guidelines for using outside vendors for catering? Should all food be pre-wrapped?

Organizations can use outside vendors but must also align with the usual Aramark policy for use of outside food vendors. They should inquire to those caterers on what practices they are following to ensure high standards from a safety perspective. Visit the CDC for additional guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/food-and-COVID-19.html>

My club receives its mail and packages at Sykes. Will there be a change in process?

No change as of right now. Fraternity and Sorority mail will be available by contacting the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life at fsl@wcupa.edu. Mailboxes are still in use in the Center for Student Involvement (CSI).

Student Services, Inc.

Has the process changed as to how I get a printout of my club or organization's SSI budget?

The process hasn't changed too much. We ask that you send an email to Laura Sheehan at lsheehan@wcupa.edu and she will send you a copy of your budget virtually. You can also come personally to the SSI Office, but you might have to wait due to social distancing guidelines and staff coverage of office spaces.

How does my organization access the SSI credit card to purchase items?

Please contact Laura Sheehan at lsheehan@wcupa.edu and she will schedule you to gain access to the SSI Office and the ability to use the credit card.

If I am uncomfortable in coming to campus, how do I go about purchasing items for my organization using the credit card?

The credit card cannot be used outside of the Student Services, Inc. office here in Sykes Union. If you would like to use the SSI Credit Card to make purchases, we are asking all student groups to follow the procedure listed below:

1. Please fill out the [SSI Payment Voucher](#) with advisor's approval emailed to ssi@wcupa.edu (Advisors may send their approval via email)
2. Within the email please provide the following information:
 - a. Website in which the purchase(s) is to be made;
 - b. List of item(s) with the quantity to be purchased;
 - c. Address where the items should be shipped.
3. Once all appropriate information is provided, an SSI Employee will make the purchase for the student organization, provided it meets the requirements.
4. If an employee runs into a problem, prior or while making the purchase, they will notify the individual who sent the request.

How do I go about gaining permission from my organization to be able to use the credit card in person? What proof is needed for me to get access to it for club business?

In order to utilize the SSI Credit Card, the process is still the same. We ask all student organizations to fill out the [SSI Credit Card Request Form](#) prior to coming to the Business Office when making a purchase. The form must be signed by the faculty advisor prior to making any purchases so they're aware and approve of the purchase(s) being made. (Advisors may send their approval via email to ssi@wcupa.edu). We also ask that the person requesting to use the credit card is the organizational treasurer or president. Once the form is filled out and approved by the organization's board members, the purchaser may place the order the day it is brought into office. It's best to discuss the option of using the SSI Credit Card during organizational weekly meetings.

Will we get the full budget that was approved by SGA last spring?

No, you will not. Funding will be allocated for the term start in August 2020 at 25% of last year's budget total. This is due to the prorated Student Activity Fee that has been assessed for fall. (spring funding will be allocated in January 2021). Please be very careful with your expenditures and ensure that you are being conscientious regarding the most important things your organization needs to function. All budgets for the 2020-21 academic year will be available at the start of the fall semester. Questions about your allocation can be emailed to ssi@wcupa.edu.

If I used my own money for my club's activity, what is the procedure for reimbursement if my club has an account with Student Services, Inc.?

If students would like to place the order themselves instead of using the SSI Credit Card, they may, in order to get reimbursed we ask student organizations to fill out the [SSI Payment Voucher](#) and email it directly to ssi@wcupa.edu with the appropriate receipts/invoices attached. **We now offer Venmo as a form of reimbursement as long as the transaction is under \$50.** The updated SSI Payment Voucher now has an option for Venmo reimbursement; we ask that students please include their **Venmo Account Name**, as well as, their **Full Name** so we know we're providing the reimbursement to the correct individual. Please allow the normal 2-3 business days for processing.

If I use my own money to cover the costs for my student organization, can I still use the SSI Tax Exemption?

Yes, you can. Therefore, all student groups should be utilizing the tax exemption form when making purchases for their organization, as SSI will not reimburse for tax, unless it is a state that we are required to pay tax in. Please visit our website: www.wcstudentservices.com to utilize the different state tax exemption forms when making purchases.

Community Service & Service Learning

Our student organization would like to do in-person, face-to-face service. Can we?

Due to the spread of COVID-19, until further notice, OSLVP strongly discourages direct (i.e., in-person, face-to-face) community service and engagement. However, the staff in the Office of Service-Learning & Volunteer Programs is actively identifying meaningful ways for WCU students, faculty, and staff to address community needs through indirect modalities. Click the link below to discover how you can help while social distancing!

<https://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.slv/socialDistance.aspx>

Where can I find additional information about the Office of Service-Learning & Volunteer programs?

<https://www.wcupa.edu/services/stu.slv/>

Rams Up!!