

Leadersheet

Finding the Right Group for You

Being a member of a student organization enriches your years at Southern Oregon University in many ways. The good friends and good times help transform what is sometimes a large overwhelming institution into a place you can call "home." Student organizations also give you opportunities to explore new interests, develop skills, enhance your academic program and have an impact on the University community. You may want to get involved, but with so many organizations on campus, you may wonder how to find the best group for you.

You've made a good start by beginning the investigation process here. The Student Activities and Leadership Office has helpful staff and lots of information to start you on your way. Our advice is to first consider:

What's Important To Me?

Ask yourself some of these questions:

- What am I looking for in an organization?
- Do I primarily want to make new friends?
- Do I want to work on something I believe in?
- Do I want to explore something new?
- Should I be in a group that relates to my major or career choice?
- Do I want a real break from my academics?
- Shall I continue an interest from high school?
- Do I want to be of real service to the campus or community?
- Do I want to help make things happen?
- How much time do I have for an organization?

What Kinds Of Groups Are There?

SOU is a melting pot of people, ideas and concerns. There are clubs, groups, and organizations in many categories:

- Departmental and Academic
- Governmental
- Honorary
- International and Multicultural
- Political
- Public Service
- Religious
- Residence Halls
- Social
- Social Issues
- Sports and Recreation

How Do I Get More Information?

A few times per year, the Student Activities and Leadership Office and the Student Activities Program Board will host club and organization fairs. The first is usually the first week of fall term. In addition, the SAL web site (<http://www.sou.edu/su/sal>) has a listing of all registered student groups, with their contact information, information about them, and their upcoming events.

Other sources of information include:

- The Siskiyou newspaper, published weekly
- Your instructors, or department's chairperson
- Residence hall RAs
- Classmates
- Bulletin Boards
- Information Tables in the SU
- Members of Organizations
- The James K. Sours Student Leadership Center (upstairs in the SU)
- The Inter-Club Council (<http://www.sou.edu/su/icc>)

How Do I Take The Plunge?

First, remember that most organizations are far more nervous about recruiting you, than you may be about joining them. They really do want new members and are very eager to answer your questions and explain their activities and purposes.

Most groups have general interest meetings at the beginning of each term. These are open to any student, and you're under no obligation to join the group if you attend - it's simply a chance for you to get more information and for the group to learn of your interest. If you miss a meeting or find out about a group during the year, call a contact person and ask when the next meeting is. If meeting times and programs are posted, you can always assume you're welcome.

Once you've joined an organization, don't just sit back waiting for something to happen. Introduce yourself to people, ask questions, express ideas and be sure to volunteer your time and energy. You won't feel like a real member of a group until you're a contributing member.