

Appendix B: Standard Guidelines for Establishing Representative Student Organizations & Community Senators

RIT Student Government is committed to being an inclusive governance body that is representative of the entire RIT student community. In order to ensure this, the RIT Student Government has established policies and procedures to guide how student subpopulations can seek out representation within the RIT student community.

Students can seek out representation by establishing a student club through the Center for Campus Life. More info on the Campus Life Recognition and Affiliation Procedures can be found online via the following [LINK](#). Once established, student clubs may find that they share common identifiers with other clubs and organizations across the university. These clubs may choose to join together to establish an official advisory council which broadens their collective representation and can increase support for their subpopulation. Leaders from the various student clubs must work together with the Center for Campus Life to formally establish their advisory council. Further instructions on this process can be found via the following [LINK](#).

Once an advisory council is recognized by CCL and has been functional for a full academic year cycle, that group can seek to become a Representative Student Organization (RSO) and part of Student Government.

Definition of a Representative Student Organization

Student Government defines an Representative Student Organization or RSO as a student organization which operates in a governance or representative capacity or provides a significant service to the student body. An RSO should promote the representation of students by supporting collaboration and coordination of related clubs or organizations serving a sub-group of RIT students that share a common identity.

Establishment of an RSO:

Before coming before the Student Government Senate, a proposed RSO must fulfill all of the following characteristics:

- A. Have received and maintained CCL recognition as an official Advisory Council with designated officers and 7 or more confirmed affiliate associations for the period of at least one year.

- a. The future of the RSO must be considered to be sustainable and successful as deemed by the Student Government President and Vice President.
- B. Own a Constitution and/or Bylaws which have been reviewed by the Student Government President and Vice President.
 - a. Constitution and bylaws of an applying organization should be in keeping with Student Governments guidelines and procedures, prior to petitioning.
- C. A demonstrated history of successful budgeting along with a proposed budget plan must be in place and reviewed by the SG Director of Finance, SG Financial Advisor, and the Director for the Center for Campus Life, or their designee.
 - a. Only RSOs approved during Fall Semester will be eligible to apply for expanded finances for the following academic year.
- D. An administrative advisor must be in place.
 - a. This advisor must be a full time faculty or staff member representing a shared identity or a strong experiential knowledge base that aligns with the premise of the RSO and the subpopulations they are representing.
 - b. The advisor cannot be advising another existing RSO.
- E. Must provide a presentation to Senate including needs and action plan if RSO is awarded
- F. In the event that a Community Senator is petitioning to become an RSO, upon approval of RSO status, said Community Senator position must be eliminated

Upon approval, the Representative Student Organization will have a 1 year trial period, after which the Senate will approve or deny full Representative Student Organization status. Under this 1 year trial period the organization will be ineligible for an operating budget, but will have access to additional funds through the EAF process.

Definition of a Community Senator

There are some instances where the design of an RSO does not align with the structure of a major subpopulation on campus. Some student identities do not lend themselves to fitting into a student club model, but are still shared by enough students to justify representation on Student Government. In this case, the subpopulation would want to seek involvement with Student Government through the path of Community Senator.

Student Government defines a Community Senator as a person, elected by their community, to represent the unique needs and interests of that community as part of the Student Government Senate. Unlike an RSO, they are not representing a subset of student organizations sharing a common affinity.

Establishment of a Community Senator

Before coming before the Student Government Senate, a proposed Community Senator must fulfill all of the following characteristics:

- A. Represent a student community that is identifiable by RIT administration through student collected data
- B. Demonstrate alignment and support from at least one professionally staffed office, department, or division recognized by RIT
 - a. Recognized clubs and organizations do not count towards this support option
- C. Must provide a presentation to Senate including needs and action plan if Community Senator is awarded
- D. Designate an inaugural candidate who would sit in a non-voting seat on Senate until a new candidate can be elected into the position during the annual Student Government Elections.
 - a. Inaugural candidate must meet all eligibility criteria for membership in Student Government.

Transitioning an Existing Community Senator to a RSO

In the event that a current Community Senator is deemed more appropriate to become an RSO, they must follow all steps outlined above for establishing an RSO. The current Community Senator should not lose their voting seat on the current Senate during the transition period. The petitioning Community Senator should be in alignment with the current administration of Student Government.

Revisions

Any modifications to these guidelines must be reviewed by the Center for Campus Life and Student Government before being proposed to the Student Government Governance Committee.