

**STUDENT VETERANS OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW MEXICO**

OFFICER HANDBOOK



4/9/2009

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Purposes :

TO ORGANIZE initiatives that promote and assist Veterans within the UNM community.

TO COORDINATE with federal, state, and local agencies, state and national Veterans Service Organizations, ASUNM, GPSA, and other Chartered Student Organizations.

TO CREATE and foster an environment of mutual benefit between Veterans, the SVUNM, and the University of New Mexico.

TO PROMOTE universal respect and appreciation of the sacrifices our Veterans have given.

TO TAKE an active interest in the civic, cultural, social, and moral welfare of the Veterans of the UNM community.

TO UNITE any and all other organizations who share our vision and mission of Veteran Support.

TO PROVIDE a voice for the Veterans of the University of New Mexico through advocacy, awareness, and initiatives.

TO CAMPAIGN, through non partisan means, for legislation that benefit Veterans at both the State and Federal level.

MISSION STATEMENT

To serve as the official nonpartisan organization for the student Veterans of UNM, to create a supportive community for UNM's student Veterans and help them succeed in both school and life, and to aid anyone in the transition from military to student life

Officer Code of Ethics

TO SHOW my faith in the worthiness of my office by industrious application to the end that I may merit a reputation for quality of service.

TO SEEK success, but to accept no profit or success at the price of my own self-respect lost because of unfair advantage taken or because of questionable acts on my part.

TO REMEMBER that in building up my reputation, it is not necessary to tear down another's; to be loyal to my fellow Veterans and true to myself.

WHENEVER a doubt arises as to the right or ethics of my position or action towards others, to resolve such doubt against myself.

TO HOLD friendship as an end not a means. To hold that true friendship exists not on account of the service performed by one to another, but that true friendship demands nothing but accepts service in the spirit in which it is given.

TO AID Veterans by giving my sympathy to those in distress, my aid to the weak, and my substance to the needy.

TO BE CAREFUL with my criticism and liberal with my praise; to build up and not to destroy.

Introduction

This manual contains helpful information to guide you through your year as a Student Veterans of the University of New Mexico (SVUNM) officer and manager. The SVUNM recognizes that each member is unique, and people have different management styles. To accommodate these facts, there is a great deal of latitude in how you choose to manage your position—as long as you follow the basic SVUNM requirements set forth in the SVUNM Constitution and By-Laws, the Student Activities Center (SAC) Student Organization Handbook, and this handbook.

Serving as a SVUNM officer is a privilege and honor bestowed upon you by the SVUNM members. Through your election, your peers have recognized your leadership skills and potential to manage the organization effectively. Your term in office will offer many opportunities to learn new skills, improve others, and grow as a leader through experience. By taking advantage of the many opportunities to learn and grow, your term can have personal and professional development benefits that will last a lifetime.

All members of the SVUNM are part of your team, and it is the responsibility of the SVUNM Officers to guide members toward reaching organizational goals. Every member has his/her important role to fill, and by working together, our organization will be able to meet its full potential and serve a vital role helping Veterans in both the UNM and Albuquerque communities.

I. ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

A. Resources

There is an abundance of information, materials and people ready to assist you as you serve your term in office. You may take advantage of these resources as needed.

1. Student Activities Center (SAC): Familiarizing yourself with SAC structure can help you use this important resource more effectively. Visit the SAC website, sac.unm.edu, or visit the office in room 1018 on the first floor of the Student Union Building (SUB). The SAC has many resources accessible to you and the staff is ready to assist you in any way possible.

2. SAC Website: The SAC's official Web site located at [http://sac.unm.edu/](http://sac.unm.edu) is an essential tool for organization officers. There are multitudes of information on the site. The "Student Organization List" includes a login page that will garner access to the SVUNM account where you can:

- Make changes to the SVUNM charter
- Make changes to Officers
- Make Changes to SVUNM members authorized to reserve rooms in the SUB

The “Student Organization List” also has the most current information for all organizations chartered through the SAC. SVUNM Presidents and Vice Presidents will annually be issued passwords to access this information. For more information regarding SVUNM account passwords, contact Information Technology Support (ITS) at either (505) 277-4848, or visit their website at <http://its.unm.edu/support/index.html>

3. SVUNM Constitution and By-Laws: This publication, available on both the Wiggio and SAC web sites, is another important item for Officers. The Constitution and By-Laws outline the structure, duties and responsibilities of both the SVUNM and its Officers, and is the guide for our organization management. Although SVUNM has its own constitution and by-laws, it must conform to the Student Organization Handbook published by the SAC.

4. Emails: Each SVUNM member receives official SVUNM emails. These emails keep members throughout the organization informed of important events as well as SVUNM policy changes and news of current SVUNM events and activities.

- Encourage each member to visit the Wiggio site weekly at:
 - <http://wiggio.com/>

5. Staff/Faculty Advisor: SVUNM officers are encouraged to work with the SVUNM Staff/Faculty Advisor to achieve shared objectives. Your Staff/Faculty Advisor can help you with questions and problems that may arise during your year. Also, past officers can offer advice based on their experiences.

Essential Resources for Officers

- ***SVUNM Website:***
 - *<http://www.svunm.org/>*
- ***SVUNM – Wiggio Website:***
 - *<http://wiggio.com/>*
- ***SVUNM Constitution and By-Laws (via either the SAC or Wiggio Sites)***
- ***SAC Student Organization Handbook***
 - *<http://sac.unm.edu/orghandbk.html>*

B. Organization Structure

The SVUNM is composed of several leadership positions. Working together, the SVUNM officers manage organizational operations.

1. Officers' Duties:

President

- The lead executive officer and primary public figure of the SVUNM
- Presides at all meetings of the Executive Board and the general membership
- Issues the call for regular meetings and special meetings of the Executive Board and the general membership
- Approves the volunteer chairpersons of the standing and special committees of the organization
- Sees that officers are elected as provided for by the constitution and by-laws
- Cooperates directly with the Staff/Faculty Advisor
- Approves all official statements from the SVUNM to include news releases, emails, and letters of support or correspondence

Vice President

- If the President is unable to perform the duties of his/her office for any reason, the Vice President shall occupy his/her position and perform his/her duties with the same authority as the President
- The Vice President shall, under the direction of the President, have executive oversight of the functioning of all committees of the SVUNM.

Secretary

- Submits regular membership reports and other reports specified by the SAC
- Has custody of and maintains general records of the organization, including minutes of the Executive Board and general membership meetings; attendance; committee appointments; elections; and member information
- Arranges for management, in times of absence the Treasurer, of the SVUNM Student Government Accounting Office (SGAO) account
- Establishes secondary auditing of treasury activities
- Takes the minutes at all Executive Board and general membership meetings in accordance with the standards and outline set by precedent (**Attachment**)

- Establishes, as directed by the President, the agenda for all Executive Board and general membership meetings in accordance with the standards and outline set by precedent

(Attachment)

- Prepares and submits standard forms for Space Allocation through the Student Union Building (SUB) administrative offices annually

Treasurer

- Maintains executive control over the SVUNM finance account monitored by the SGAO
- Ensures proper and timely issuance of all standard forms to apply for checks for accounts payable on any debts incurred by the SVUNM. All checks and vouchers shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by one other officer, usually the Secretary, unless otherwise determined by the executive board **(Attachment)**
- Has custody of, and maintains general records on, organization receipts and disbursements
- Prepares and submits financial reports to the meetings of general membership and whenever called upon by the Executive Board **(Attachment)**
- Ensures attendance at annual budget workshops held by both the Associated Students of UNM (ASUNM) and the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) as well as preparing annual budgets of the SVUNM for submission to the above listed authorities.

(Attachment)

- Maintains proper training on the procedures for appropriations of funds from the ASUNM and the GPSA, attends all required financial committee meetings/hearings of above listed authorities, and ensures timely submission of standard forms to request special funds

(Attachment)
- Act as the primary liaison between the SVUNM and the UNM Foundations, Inc. ensuring gifts made to the SVUNM are properly received and recorded.

Executive Board

The members of the Executive Board are the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a member in good standing of the SVUNM as appointed by the Executive Board. This member shall retain full voting privileges. This appointment can be changed at any time with a simple majority decision from the Executive Board where the President shall maintain executive decision in case of a tie vote.

Given the nature of a student organization and its membership, the Executive Board has the authority to perform its duties via phone, email, online chat, or in-person meetings. The exception to this is when a majority vote of the executive board mandates a formal in-person meeting in lieu of the alternative means listed above.

The Executive Board shall have the following duties and powers:

- It is the executive power of the organization and is responsible for the execution, through the SVUNM officers, of the policies approved by the membership. All new business and policy of the SVUNM shall be considered and shaped, first, by the Executive Board for presentation to, and approval by, the SVUNM members at a regular or special meeting

- It has executive authority to disburse no more than \$75 for any reason without prior permission from the general membership established in the minutes of a regular or special meeting. All disbursements appointed by the Executive Board must have proper purpose and allocation within the SVUNM annual budget as prepared by the treasurer.
- It has the power to recommend a modification, override or rescind the action of any officer of the SVUNM to the President or general membership
- It ensures that the books, accounts, and operations of the organization are audited annually or, at its discretion, more frequently and may require an accounting or have an audit made of the handling of any organizational funds by any officer, committee, or member of the SVUNM. The auditing panel shall be a special panel appointed by the Executive Board consisting of three members in good standing within the SVUNM who are not members of the Executive Board. This panel shall be appointed on the day of annual elections and shall have 60 days to prepare and submit to the general membership the findings of their audit.
(Attachment) Any member of the SVUNM in good standing may inspect the audit or accounting upon request at a reasonable time and place.
- It appoints, on recommendation of the general membership, any special committees of the SVUNM. All standing committees of the SVUNM shall be approved annually by the Executive Board within 60 days of the annual elections.

- It appoints, subject to approval of the general membership, the delegates and alternates of the SVUNM to attend meetings, functions, conventions, and conferences of interest
- It appoints members of the SVUNM to serve as the public figure of the SVUNM in the absence of the President. These appointees shall be members in good standing and must be approved by a simple majority vote by the Executive Board
- It has final decisions of the conduct and performance of all officers and committee chairs of the SVUNM.
- This power does not supersede the power of impeachment initiated by the general membership as described in the organizational constitution and by-laws.

2. Committees

The standing committees of the SVUNM are:

Fundraising / Public Relations

Community Outreach

Website

Recruitment

The individual goals and strategies of the standing committees of the SVUNM are subject to the discretion of the individual committee chair. However, the Vice President retains oversight of all committee operations and is ultimately responsible for committee operations.

C. LIMITS ON AUTHORITY

- The President has no absolute authority. The President's authority to act must come first from the organization's constitution and by-laws, and also from directives established by the Executive Board and the general membership
- The Executive Board has no absolute authority. The Executive Board's authority must come first from the organization's constitution and by-laws, and also from the general membership
- Any of the rules, procedures, by-laws, or constitution of the SVUNM that are contrary to the rules and procedures set forth in the SAC Student Organization Handbook, are not valid

D. LEADERSHIP SKILLS

As an Officer, developing and nurturing leadership skills is very important. The SVUNM members will be looking to you for guidance, for motivation and to help solve problems, if necessary.

Together, your leadership team will help keep the organization moving towards its goals. The SAC provides several resources and workshops to assist you with developing critical leadership skills. It is encouraged that you visit the SAC offices for further information.

E. OFFICER ORIENTATION

Upon election to office, it is paramount that a proper turnover be executed by the preceding officer who held your new position. This responsibility is two-fold and should be taken seriously by both the new and old officers in order to create seamless continuity between elections. The experience of the past officers, as well as this handbook, shall serve as guidelines for this transition.

II. ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT

Teamwork and communication are keys to successful organization management. Officers can collectively shape the way in which they work together that will be best for all concerned. There are, however, specific responsibilities and areas of authority for each organization officer. Using these as a guide, your leadership team can determine the most effective way to manage your organization throughout the year.

A. Beginning the Year

1. Preparation: Many officers find it helpful to begin preparation for their year before taking office, using many available resources to learn more about the SVUNM and its associated network. The outgoing officers can be most helpful during this time; however, make sure that you do not interfere with their leadership until you officially take office.

2. Setting Goals: Setting goals and developing a plan to achieve those goals is one of the keys to success. Working with your leadership team, consider creating a strategic action plan outlining your organization's goals for the year and how you intend to reach them. **(ATTACHMENT)**

3. Making Committee Assignments: One of the most important responsibilities of the President is making committee chairperson assignments. Experience worldwide shows that a member who is actively engaged in organization activities will continue to be a member.

Presidents should confer with their Vice President before assigning chairpersons since the Vice President will work closely with committees throughout the year. Consider matching committee assignments to your members' skills and knowledge when choosing chairpersons. If the current President agrees, your chairperson appointments may be announced before you officially take office.

Throughout the year, the organization's leadership team should work closely with the committee chairpersons to keep them informed, encouraged and motivated.

5. Know Your Record Keeping Methods: There is a standard of precedent to keep records for the SVUNM. **(ATTACHMENT)** It is a good idea for officers to meet and familiarize themselves with how meeting minutes, and financial and membership records will be kept. At the end of the year, the Secretary shall turn over all records to the succeeding Secretary.

6. Know Your Forms: Take time to familiarize yourself with the various forms your organization will submit on a regular basis. Please note that most of these forms are under the responsibility of the Treasurer. However, all officers should be familiar with the correct procedures for submission of all forms. **(ATTACHMENTS)**

7. Fiscal Responsibilities: There are several important financial issues that should be addressed as you begin your year.

- **Reviewing the Budgets:** Reviewing the annual budgets from both ASUNM and the GPSA is one of the most important responsibilities of the Treasurer. He/she works with the Executive Board and the SGAO to ensure the organization stays within the guidelines of each respective budget. It is important to anticipate revenue and income carefully and prioritize spending needs at all times. Monitoring them throughout the year will help ensure the SVUNM remains solvent.

- **Handling Banking Issues:** The Treasurer will work directly with the SGAO to ensure that the SVUNM account(s) are managed effectively.

- **Setting Membership Dues:** The SVUNM was founded with an absence of membership dues. If the Executive Board finds that membership dues will be required for successful organizational operations, there shall be a vote by the general membership that will require a two-thirds major majority. When determining the proposed amount of dues, consider how much money will be needed to maintain the financial health of the organization. It should be noted however, that self generated funding should always take direct precedence over the establishment of membership dues.

B. Throughout the Year

1. Running Meetings: The President presides at all meetings of the organization. Preparing and following an agenda as well as using a recognized system of parliamentary procedure (such as *Robert's Rules of Order*) will ensure the meetings run smoothly and productively. Parliamentary procedure will also help you assert yourself when necessary and handle disharmonious behavior. Handling problems that occur during meetings is not always easy. Your members expect, and have confidence in the President to lead during these times.

A typical meeting format:

- Call To Order By President
- Roll Call Of Officers And Committee Chairs By The Secretary
- Introduction Of Guests
- Program (Guest Speaker, Entertainment, Etc.) May Either Precede Or Follow The Business Portion
- Reading And Approval Of Minutes Of Previous Meeting
- Treasurer's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Schedule Next Meeting Date/Time
- Adjournment

The Secretary typically has numerous duties for these meetings:

- Creating An Agenda In Conjunction With The President
- Recording Minutes During The Meeting In Accordance With Standard Precedent (**ATTACHMENT**)
- Recording Attendance, Makeup Meetings And Awards Presented

2. Communicating Effectively: For an organization officer, it is vital that the lines of communication remain open among members of the leadership team as well as between the leadership team and the SVUNM members. Keeping members up to date on the SVUNM news, issues, etc. and helping them work through challenges will be an important part of your year. If disputes arise between any member or members, and the organization, it should always be handled immediately and professionally. If you are unsure of the proper procedures to follow for any dispute resolutions, you should immediately contact either your fellow officers or the Staff/Faculty Advisor.

3. Handling Correspondence: The President has the full responsibility of handling all correspondence. Correspondence should be answered promptly and professionally to ensure the efficient running of the organization.

4. Understanding Membership Topics: There are several membership topics of which organization officers should be aware.

- **Eligibility:** Any person of legal majority of good moral character and reputation in the community is eligible for membership in the SVUNM. While the SVUNM is a student organization, university guidelines permit up to 20% of membership to be comprised of non-students.

• **Recruitment and Retention:** Membership recruitment and retention are vital to the success of a student organization. Planning and implementing recruitment and retention strategies will be one of the essential challenges you will face as an officer

7. Promoting Your Organization: How the SVUNM is perceived in the community is essential to its success. Developing and implementing a comprehensive public relations program will help ensure that community members support your organization. This program will encompass both ongoing organization publicity, and promoting special events, such as fundraising and service activities. Equally important is internal communication. Many organizations worldwide find that maintaining a current organizational email list and publishing frequent emails help keep their members informed. Another communications tool that is essential is the SVUNM website. This site is intended for promoting the SVUNM to our outside affiliates, whereas the Wiggio site is used for internal communication and coordination

11. Attending Conventions: Attendance at conventions—including local, state, regional, and national levels—is a wonderful way to learn more about the issues facing Veterans, get motivated, promote your organization, and meet absolutely essential networking contacts.

C. Finishing the Year

1. Recognition: Recognizing both the SVUNM members and those who have been helpful to your organization is a wonderful way to end your year in office.

- **Recognizing the SVUNM Members:** Recognition is an excellent way to maintain morale in the SVUNM. Officers may determine guidelines for honoring the service of its members. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining accurate awards records and, in conjunction with the Executive Board, submitting awards requests to the Treasurer. Awards should be ordered as early as possible to ensure timely delivery. Many organizations choose to hold an appreciation dinner for all of the people/organizations who have helped their cause through the year. It is a good opportunity to say “thanks” to everyone.

2. Transitioning to the Next Leadership Team: Just as you may have looked to the sitting organization officers for advice before you took office, the incoming members of the leadership team may look to you for advice. If asked, brief them regarding the status of the SVUNM, and any other pertinent information. The transfer of the SVUNM records to the next leadership team is necessary and important.

Enjoy the opportunity to be one of the leaders of the SVUNM. You not only represent your organization, but also the Veteran population as you work with members and the community throughout the year. Your term as a SVUNM officer can be a rewarding experience, personally and professionally. Your efforts are highly valued and appreciated. Have fun and good luck!



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