Student Clubs & Organizations

Student Clubs and Organizations Manual

2026-2027

Vanguard University of Southern California

Table of Contents

Policy 2
Traditional Undergraduate Student Handbook 2026-2027 Edition 3
Student Clubs and Organizations (SCO) Classifications 5
Advisors 5
Student Handbook 6
Liability and Release Forms 6
Funding 6
Additional SCOs Policies and Procedures: 7
Vanguard University Department Guide: 11
Student Club and Organizations Forms: 11
SCO Space Request Form 12

Policy

Vanguard University reserves the right to change these policies, procedures, rules, and regulations at any time. Changes will become effective at the time of approval and will apply to both established and prospective SCOs.

Traditional Undergraduate Student Handbook 2026-2027 Edition

Student Clubs and Organizations (SCOs):

Vanguard University encourages the formation and sponsorship of student organized and managed SCOs to advance our mission to pursue knowledge, cultivate character, deepen faith, and equip each student for a Spirit-empowered life of Christ-centered leadership and service. SCOs enhance the diversity of activities on campus and play a crucial role in community life. All SCOs must be registered with the Student Government Association (SGA).

Formation of SCOs:

Students who wish to form a club or organization consistent with the established classifications must complete an application and establish a Charter. Once completed, the application and charter will be reviewed and either approved or denied by the SGA and the SGA Appointed Staff Advisor(s). SCOs a) not in alignment with Vanguard's mission, b) organized around religiously, politically, or ideologically driven issues, c) driven by endorsement or activism, or d) with a similar purpose to an existing SCO, will not be approved.

Expectations of SCOs:

1. The following are expectations that SCOs must meet and maintain to remain in good standing:
    a. Possess an approved and working charter that describes the purpose, membership, eligibility, officers, officer selection process, dues, and amendment protocol.
    b. Must have an advisor who is a member of the Vanguard University full-time faculty or staff. Each SCO is responsible for finding their own advisor and replacing them within one month of a vacancy. Advisors must adhere to the following:
        1. Advisors are required to serve as a mentor to the group, participate in advisor and training opportunities, be involved in activities as appropriate, and assist in holding their SCO accountable to Vanguard University and the Student Clubs and Organizations policies.
        2. Advisor and SCO officer(s) must sign an agreement concerning compliance with all relevant University policies and procedures.
        3. Live out Vanguard University's mission and be congruent with the values of the Christian faith both in purpose and practice.
2. Maintain a long-term succession plan to ensure sustainability of the SCO.
3. Abide by Vanguard University policies found in the Traditional Undergraduate Student Handbook, Student Clubs and Organizations Manual, and other relevant training materials. This also applies to off-campus events. Vanguard University reserves the right to change these policies, procedures, rules, and regulations at any time.
4. Should an external speaker or vendor be involved, they must complete the External Speaker or Vendor Request Form. External speakers or vendors are subject to screening and permitted to work with Vanguard students on an "at will" basis; therefore, termination of their involvement is permissible at any point.
5. Vanguard University reserves the right to modify, restrict, or cancel the charters of SCOs.

Membership and Eligibility for Participation in SCOs:

1. Membership in SCOs must be open to all students without regard to ethnicity, gender, age, ability, or social status. Regulations for SCOs are as follows:
    a. Only students enrolled at Vanguard University may participate in club and organization activities unless the SGA and appointed SGA Advisor(s) grant special permission.
    b. Where funds are handled, procedures prescribed by the Office of Accounting Operations should be followed and run through the SGA Chief Operations Officer.
2. Leadership positions within clubs and organizations require a cumulative GPA of 2.0. Students on academic probation are ineligible to hold a leadership position within clubs or organizations.

Personal Liability in SCOs: Participation in activities related to any SCO is entirely voluntary, and certain risks are inherent. SCO participants assume all risks mentioned herein in connection with participation in or membership with any club or organization. These risks include, but are not limited to, the following: travel to any off-campus event or location; physical activities or exertion; consumption of food and/or beverage; potential bodily injury and/or death; exposure to theft or other criminal activity; adverse weather conditions; physical, mental, and emotional injury; and other risks and dangers, whether known or unknown nor reasonably foreseeable.

Establishment of Student Clubs and Organizations (SCOs)

Vanguard University Traditional Undergraduate Student Handbook and the SCO Manual.

The steps to establish a student club or organization:

1. The potential SCO president will fill out an online application form that will be submitted and reviewed by the SGA and their Appointed SGA Advisor(s). The application is reviewed to ensure the club or organization's purpose aligns with Vanguard University's mission and vision, values, objectives, and policy. A complete application includes: the name of the club or organization and the club or organization president, 10 potential club or organization members (must be Vanguard students), a full-time Vanguard University faculty or staff advisor, completed essay questions pertaining to the purpose and need for the proposed club or organization. Once the online application is submitted to the SGA Chief Operations Officer (COO), a charter template will be provided via email.
2. The proposed SCO will utilize the template to create their own charter, including the necessary information pertaining to the SCO, and return it to the SGA COO.
3. Upon completion of 1. and 2., the proposed club or organization president will be invited to present the purpose and vision of the SCO at an SGA meeting for approval.
4. A. If approved, the SGA COO will contact the proposed club or organization president to finalize the charter and outline next steps for establishment.
   B. If not approved, the SGA COO will contact the proposed club or organization president to explain why the SCO was denied and potential steps to restructure the SCO to an approved format.

To maintain SCO status:

1. The SCO president must attend required meetings. The SCO president may send another officer within their SCO in their place if they are not available. If they miss more than one meeting or if they fail to send an officer in their place, they may be placed on probationary status.
2. Participate in the Student Club and Organization Fall and Spring Club Rush.
3. Submit an "End of Semester Report".
4. Demonstrate progress towards SCO goals.

5. Demonstrate responsible stewardship of SCO funding.
6. SCO Presidents must provide all new contact information for their successor by filling out the "Re-register a Student Club or Organization" form by the end of April.
7. Abide by all Vanguard University policies governing Student Clubs and Organizations.

SCO Benefits Include:

1. Permission to advertise on campus with SGA approval
2. Access to Student Engagement and other University supplies (i.e., the Bridge closet, tape for signs, etc.)
3. Access to Vanguard University facilities for the use of meetings and/or events
4. Opportunity to recruit members through the Fall and Spring Club Rush
5. Direct contact and guidance from the SGA
6. Opportunity to request and receive funding from the SGA
7. Personal and professional growth through SCO meetings and trainings

Student Clubs and Organizations (SCO) Classifications

All SCOs are student led and managed with the support of an approved advisor who is a full-time faculty or staff member. The following outlines the various types of SCOs on campus and the rights and privileges thereof.

Social or Recreational:
Social or Recreational SCOs have a designated purpose but are not specifically affiliated with a Vanguard University department.

Academic Social:
Academic Social SCOs are affiliated with a Vanguard University academic department or major and host meetings and events focused on, but not limited to, a specific group of students within said department or major.

Department:
University sponsored SCOs are affiliated with a university or academic department. The functioning and governance of these SCOs is up to the discretion of the university or academic department. Pre-professional SCOs hold SCO status through their academic department affiliation.

Advisors

The following expectations of advisors should be discussed between the advisors and the leadership of the SCO. A clear understanding of the expectations of all parties will be instrumental for current and future success.

The Role of the Advisor is to:

1. Provide guidance for understanding and adhering to university policies.
2. Adise SCOs specific to goal setting, problem-solving, policy making, and upholding guidelines and purposes. This includes attendance at SCO meetings as deemed necessary.
3. Remain informed of the activities of the SCO.
4. Notify the SGA if the SCO fails to assume any of the responsibilities as outlined in this Student Clubs and Organizations Manual.

Removal of an Advisor: The SGA reserves the right to remove an advisor should circumstances require such action. Grounds for removal of an advisor include but are not limited to:

1. Failure to provide meaningful SCO advisement
2. Inappropriate behavior and/or language
3. Behavior that violates University policy and/or procedure
4. Failure to report known hazing incidents, knowledge of or advocacy for participation in illegal activities
5. Placement of students in unreasonable and/or unnecessary risk

Student Handbook

All SCOs must abide by the student conduct guidelines that can be found in the Student Handbook.

Liability and Release Forms

SCO participation is entirely voluntary and includes certain risks that are inherent. These risks include but are not limited to: travel to any off-campus event or location; physical activities or exertion; consumption of food and/or beverage; potential bodily injury and/or death; exposure to theft or other criminal activity; adverse weather conditions; physical, mental, and emotional injury; and other risks and dangers, whether known or unknown, nor reasonably foreseeable. SCO participants personally assume all risks mentioned herein and any other potential risk, whether known or unknown, in connection with participation in or membership of any SCO.

In the planning and implementation of SCO activities, SCO officers agree to avoid undue liability or risk for members or Vanguard University.

Funding

SCOs that request SGA funding receive an allotment each semester.

All SCOs have an opportunity to request additional funding from the SGA as the overseers of the Student Club and Organization budget. Requests for additional funds should be made to the SGA COO, which will be reviewed by the SGA Executive Board.

Funding Guidelines:

1. SGA funds cannot be used for travel (gas, hotel, airfare, etc.), purchasing gift cards, or prize money (no exceptions).
2. If an officer purchases items with their own money, an electronic SCO Reimbursement form must be completed; if given money by Accounts Payable, an SCO Reimbursement form must be completed electronically, printed out, and turned in with all leftover money and receipts to the COO.
3. Funds are the officers' responsibility-no exceptions. If the officer misplaces funds, they are responsible for paying it back. If money or receipts are not turned in, the officer's student account will be charged.
4. All funds, receipts, and reconciliation forms need to be turned in within a week of the event, or the total amount will be charged to the requesting members' student account.
5. ALWAYS acquire itemized receipts from vendor(s).
6. Do not purchase personal items on the same receipt as club or organization items.

Fundraising

A Fundraising Approval form must be completed and submitted to the SGA COO prior to engaging in any club or organization fundraising or donation acquisition. No homemade baked goods or food can be

sold; all food must be prepackaged. An SCO may not charge for raffle tickets, as it is considered gambling per the Student Handbook. Raffle tickets can be given away for free. Donations may be accepted.

Additional SCOs Policies and Procedures:

SCOs should be aware that Vanguard University policies supersede sponsoring entities/affiliates. An exception may be made in circumstances in which the national or sponsoring entity/affiliate policies are more stringent than, but do not conflict with, Vanguard University policies.

As previously stated, SCOs a) not in alignment with Vanguard's mission, b) organized around religiously, politically, or ideologically driven issues, c) driven by endorsement or activism, or d) with a similar purpose to an existing SCO, will not be approved. Political advocacy is defined as organized activity intended primarily to promote, oppose, endorse, or advance a particular political candidate, political party, political movement, or politically driven social cause.

In determining whether an SCO qualifies for recognition, the SGA Executive Board will consider the SCO's stated purpose, activities, affiliations, and organizational structure. SCOs that are affiliated with outside political advocacy groups or primarily created for political advocacy or activism will not be approved. This standard is intended to maintain a campus environment that prioritizes respectful dialogue and shared Christian identity over political affiliation. This policy does not prohibit students from discussing political or social issues, participating in civil dialogue, or attending university-sponsored debates, forums, and other events that encourage respectful engagement across differing viewpoints.

Conduct

All SCO Presidents are expected to uphold the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Clubs and Organizations Manual, as well as demonstrate integrity, leadership, and a commitment to the mission and values of Vanguard University. SCO Presidents hold a position of leadership and are therefore held to a higher standard of conduct.

Should a SCO or SCO President be found in violation of this Student Clubs and Organizations manual, student conduct policies, or university expectations, they are subject to the following multi-step conduct process:

Failure to meet/uphold SCO requirements:

If a SCO and/or SCO President fails to meet the established requirements, the following process will apply:

Written Warning:

A written warning will be issued by the SGA and the Appointed Advisor(s). This written warning will outline the specific violation(s) committed and be kept on file. Following this, the SCO President is required to attend at least two check-in meetings with the COO during the existing or subsequent semester depending on the timeframe of the warning.

1. Initial Meeting: This meeting is to be scheduled as soon as possible following the written warning. Within the meeting the SCO President must provide a written improvement plan that:
    a. Clearly identifies the violation(s)
    b. Detailed improvement plan with corrective steps

The improvement plan is subject to approval or denial with suggested edits by the COO.

2. Secondary Meeting: The SCO President will have a second meeting with the COO to evaluate progression on the approved improvement plan

If progress is sufficient, the written warning will be removed, and the SCO will return to normal standing. If progress is insufficient, the SCO will be placed on probation.

Probation:
If progress is insufficient or a subsequent violation occurs, the SCO will be placed on probation. When a SCO and/or SCO President is placed on probation, the SGA will issue a formal letter to the SCO acknowledging the following:

1. SCO loses benefits outlined during the existing or subsequent semester depending on the timeframe of the warning, or until reinstated by the SGA.

Following the timeframe in question, if the SCO wishes to return to recognized status, they must request a final review with the SGA. At this meeting, the SCO must submit a written document that:

a. Clearly identifies the violation(s)
b. How the detailed improvement plan with corrective steps was met

This final review will be subject to approval or denial through an SGA vote, requiring a simple majority (½ vote). If the plan is approved, the SCO may begin the process to be reinstated. If denied, the SCO will lose recognition as an official Vanguard University SCO.

The SGA and their Appointed Advisors reserve the right to accelerate the conduct process depending on the severity of the offense. All decisions will be made with fairness, due process, and the mission of the university in mind.

Removal from Office
Club or organization officers may be removed from office by the Appointed SGA Advisor(s) and/or the Office of Student Engagement under the following circumstances:

1. Violation of Vanguard University behavioral standards results in placing the student on disciplinary probation.
2. Failure to disclose necessary information on matters of SCO funds when requested by the Office of Student Engagement or the SGA.
3. Under investigation and/or convicted of illegal activity.

Statement on Hazing:
Vanguard University has elected to adopt the standards set forth in the California Education Penal Code 245.6 that prohibits hazing at an educational institution and as such will apply these standards to students in attendance at the University. The penal code states:

“245.6. (a) It shall be unlawful to engage in hazing, as defined in this section.

(b) “Hazing” means any method of initiation or preinitiation into a student organization or student body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury to any former, current, or prospective student of any school, community college, college, university, or other educational institution in this state. The term “hazing” does not include customary athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

(c) A violation of this section that does not result in serious bodily injury is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars ($100), nor more than five thousand dollars ($5,000), or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or both.

(d) Any person who personally engages in hazing that results in death or serious bodily injury as defined in paragraph (4) of subdivision (f) of Section 243 of the Penal Code, is guilty of either a misdemeanor or a felony, and shall be punished by imprisonment in county jail not exceeding one year, or by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170.

(e) The person against whom the hazing is directed may commence a civil action for injury or damages. The action may be brought against any participants in the hazing, or any organization to which the student is seeking membership whose agents, directors, trustees, managers, or officers authorized, requested, commanded, participated in, or ratified the hazing.

(f) Prosecution under this section shall not prohibit prosecution under any other provision of law."

Please see the Vanguard University Campus Hazing Act for more details.

Off Campus Event Approval and Requirements:

1. Advisors must actively participate in the planning of all off campus activities and provide oversight to ensure that the event falls within Vanguard University policy. Advisor attendance at off campus events is not mandated.
2. Advisors are encouraged but not required to attend off-campus events.
3. A completed SCO Off Campus Event Form must be submitted to the SGA at least 3 weeks prior to the desired dates of travel.
4. Any student drivers must submit a VU Driving Form, if they have not done so already.
5. Approval may or may not be granted for the trip, according to the discretion of Student Engagement or the appointed SGA Advisor(s). Clubs or organizations must wait for approval to be granted before advertising or promoting the trip.
6. All students are expected to adhere to all Vanguard and Student Life policies while traveling.

Overnight Trip Approval and Requirements:

1. A completed SCO Overnight Trip Form must be submitted to the SGA at least 3 weeks prior to the desired dates of travel.
2. Any student drivers must submit a VU Driving Form, if they have not done so already.
3. Approval may or may not be granted for the trip, according to the discretion of Student Engagement or the appointed SGA Advisor(s). SCOs must wait for approval to be granted before advertising or promoting the trip.
4. At least one advisor must attend all overnight trips. If the advisor is unavailable to attend the overnight trip, another full-time faculty or staff may attend in the advisor's place, with the approval of the SGA or the appointed SGA Advisor(s).
5. Men and women are prohibited from cohabitating during overnight events and activities.
6. All students are expected to adhere to all Vanguard and Student Life policies while traveling.

External Speakers & Vendors:

External speakers or vendors attending a Student Club and Organization meeting or event must complete this approval request form: SCO External Vendor and Speaker Request Form.

External speakers or vendors attending a Student Club and Organization meeting or event, must follow university policies for external solicitation of students and complete the approval request form from the university: Campus Solicitation and Publicity Request.

Advertising:
SCO officers must follow the university guidelines and be approved through the SCO Poster Approval Form when utilizing all means of advertising. Vanguard University reserves the right to deny advertising materials whose content is deemed inappropriate or offensive or remove unapproved materials in accordance with Vanguard University policy.

Use of Copyrighted Material:
Vanguard University will not allow members of Student Club and Organization to use copyrighted materials, trademarks, or parodies of copyrighted materials or trademarks without the expressed written permission of the company, agency, or organization that created and/or owns the intellectual property intended to be used.

Using music without the proper rights is not only theft to the artist, but an infringement on their Intellectual Property Rights. SCO social media account manager(s) must sign the Social Media Policy Agreement and ensure that any music used in videos, reels, stories, or other content is officially licensed for university use. Please see the Vanguard University Music On Social Media Guide for more details.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Disclaimer Policy:
Student clubs and organizations may use AI-assisted tools to support the creation of written or visual content. Groups are responsible for reviewing all AI-generated materials for accuracy, appropriateness, originality, copyright considerations, and alignment with university policies, values, and brand standards before publication or distribution. If AI generated content is used to support the creation of written or visual content, the creator must insert an AI content disclaimer.

Copyright laws for screening movies:
Showing a film publicly to any group on or off campus without first attaining public performance rights is a violation of the U.S. copyright law (Title 17, United States Code, Section 110). According to the law, a public performance is any screening of a movie that occurs outside of the home, or at any place where people who are not family members or within a normal circle of social acquaintances are gathered. Movies may not, therefore, be screened in any public setting or group gathering outside of individual dorm-room use, unless public performance rights are purchased from the copyright owner or a licensing vendor.
The only exception to this law is the face-to-face teaching exemption. This exemption allows instructors to screen movies without obtaining permission if the following conditions are met:

1. It is in a classroom setting
2. It is used for the purpose of enhancing the educational experience
3. Only students enrolled in that registered class attend.

Helpful Web Sites Explaining Public Performance Rights:
Enoch Pratt Free Library: http://www.prattlibrary.org/locations/sightsandsounds/?id=11096
Swank Motion Pictures: http://colleges.swankmp.com/Media/College/PDF/SwankCopyright.pdf
US Copyright Office (Title 17, United States Code): http://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.html
Williams College: http://library.williams.edu/guides/videos_copyright.php
Vendors that grant public performance rights for copyrighted movies:
Criterion Pictures USA, Inc. http://www.criterionpicusa.com

Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC) http://www.mplc.org
Swank Motion Pictures, Inc. http://www.swank.com
"Willful" infringement for commercial or financial gain is a federal crime punishable as a misdemeanor, carrying a maximum sentence of up to one year in jail and/or a $100,000 fine.

Vanguard University Department Guide:

Office of Student Engagement The Bridge First floor of Huntington Hall 714.662.5258	**Event Relations** Location: Layne Building – Upstairs 714.662.5290 campusoperations@vanguard.edu
Student Development First floor of Laguna Hall 714.662.5275	**Bon Appétit** Waugh Student Center – Bruce Lindsey Cafe 714.556.3610 x4700

Student Government Association Oversight

Liam Landes Chief Operations Officer - Student Government Association SGACOO@vanguard.edu
Ally Reed Assistant Director of Student Engagement & Appointed SGA Co-Advisor allyson.reed@vanguard.edu
Amanda Lebrecht Vice President for Student Development & Appointed SGA Co-Advisor amanda.lebrecht@vanguard.edu

Student Club and Organizations Forms:

SCO Space Request Form
Student Club and Organizations Application
SCO Reimbursement Request
SCO Poster Approval
SCO Fundraising Approval
SCO Overnight Trip Form
SCO Off Campus Event Form
SCO End of Semester Report
SCO Reregister a Club or Organization
SCO External Vendor and Speaker Request Form
VU Driving Form