

## Student Group Landscape

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In the spring semester of 2013, the Wagner Student Association (WSA) and the NYU Wagner Administration commissioned a committee composed of eight students and two staff members to strengthen the presence and operations of NYU Wagner student groups. The committee discussed the following issues:

*Supporting the Four Pillars*

*General Structure of Student Groups*

*New WSA Board Roles*

*Board Composition*

*Election Process*

*Contents of Student Group Charters*

*Requests for Funding and/or Space*

*Volunteerism*

*Events*

*Proposal Process*

*Student Group Advisement*

*Creating a New Student Group*

*Transition, Review & Renewal Reports*

*Accountability*

### **Supporting the Four Pillars:**

Student groups will be responsible for articulating, through submission of their transition, review, and renewal documentation, the ways in which the group's mission and activities build upon the Four Pillars that define the purpose of all student groups at NYU Wagner:

#### **Community Building**

- How are we enhancing the Wagner student experience?
- How are we supporting Wagner's efforts to promote diversity and inclusion among the student body, prospective students, and the broader community?

#### **Academic Enhancement**

- How are we supplementing learning opportunities outside of the classroom?
- How are we providing feedback on academics?

#### **Professional Development**

- How are we equipping students with professional skills?
- How are we creating professional networking opportunities?

#### **Visibility**

- How are we promoting the positive image and reputation of NYU Wagner?
- How are we using web and social media to increase visibility?

### **General Structure of Student Groups :**

#### **Program / Specialization Groups**

- International Public Service Association (IPSA)
- Urban Planning Student Association (UPSA)
- Wagner Economic and Finance Association (WEFA)
- Wagner Health Network (WHN)
- Wagner Management and Leadership Organization (WMLO)
- Wagner Policy Alliance (WPA)

#### **Identity & Diversity in Public Service (IDPS) Groups**

- Association of Latin@s and Allies in Public Service (ALAS)
- Asian Pacific American Student Alliance (APASA)
- Black Student Association (BSA)
- Jewish Policy Alliance (JEWPA)
- Stonewall Policy Alliance (SPA)
- Wagner International Student Society (WISS)

- Wagner Women's Caucus (WWC)

### **Professional Interest Groups**

- Bridge: Students for Innovation
- Students for Criminal Justice Reform (SCJR)
- Student Network Exploring Arts and Culture (SNEAC)
- Wagner+
- Wagner Philanthropy
- Wagner Review
- Wagner Consulting Group (WCG)
- Wagner Environmental Policy Alliance (WEPA)
- Wagner Education Policy Studies Association (WEPSA)
- Wagner Food Policy Alliance (WFPA)

### **NEW WSA Board Roles:**

#### **Vice President of Student Groups, Program/Specialization**

The Vice President of Student Groups, Program/Specialization will be the primary liaison between the Wagner Student Association Executive Board and the Program/Specialization student groups. The Vice President of Student Groups, Program/Specialization will support their respective student groups/leaders. The Vice President of Student Groups, Program/Specialization will advocate for student groups/leaders with the Wagner Student Association and Wagner Administration. The officer will ensure that their respective student groups are meeting all requirements and are in good standing. S/he will serve on the Appropriations Committee. This individual may NOT serve as a board member of an individual student group.

#### **Vice President of Student Groups, Identity and Diversity in Public Service (IDPS)**

*Note: This position is appointed, through application, by the outgoing IDPS chairs. Interested candidates should follow the elections process but will not appear on the ballot with the other positions.*

The Vice President of Student Groups, Identity and Diversity in Public Service (IDPS) will be appointed, through application, by the outgoing Chairs of all Identity and Diversity in Public Service student groups. The Vice President of Student Groups, IDPS will serve as the liaison between the Wagner Student Association and IDPS student groups. The officer will support student groups/leaders, as needed. He or she will advocate for student groups/leaders with the Wagner Student Association and Wagner Administration. The Vice President of Student Groups, IDPS will ensure that student groups are meeting all requirements and are in good standing. S/he will serve on the Appropriations Committee. This individual may NOT serve as a board member of an individual student group.

### **Vice President of Student Groups, Professional and Interest Based Groups**

The Vice President of Student Groups, Professional and Interest Based Groups will serve as the liaison between the Wagner Student Association and Professional/Interest Based student groups. The Vice President of Student Groups, Professional and Interest Based Groups will support student groups/leaders, as needed. S/he will advocate for student groups/leaders with the Wagner Student Association and Wagner Administration. The officer will ensure that student groups are meeting all requirements and are in good standing. He or she will serve on the Appropriations Committee. This individual may NOT serve as board member of an individual student group.

All three of these WSA Chairs will be responsible for meeting with and advising their respective student groups in several key areas:

- Transition
- Event/Resource Allocation Proposal Periods
- Interim Review
- Election Cycle
- Annual Review and Renewal

### **Board Composition:**

#### **Program / Specialization and Professional Interest Groups**

Each group must have, at minimum, the following roles represented on their board, and will typically be required to fulfill the indicated sub-bullets. However, precise responsibilities for each role within each specific student group must be delineated in each Student Group's Charter.

- Chair
  - Management of internal group meetings and processes
  - WSA liaison
- Vice-Chair
  - Student group collaboration
  - External relations
  - Volunteer program
- Financial Manager
  - Budgeting - general management
  - Budgeting - supporting event leads
  - Events invoices and reimbursements
- Communications Manager
  - Communication

- Social media
- Marketing

### **Identity & Diversity in Public Service Groups (IDPS Groups)**

Each member group must have, at minimum, the following roles leading their group:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair

Each IDPS Student Group must assign the same responsibilities as other student groups (as outlined above) among either their Chair and Vice-Chair, or among other optional board positions that the group opts to create. The group's charter must outline all board positions and responsibilities.

### **Election Process:**

The WSA board is identified through elections with the exception of the Student Groups VP for IDPS, which will be determined through the application process outlined above.

All student group board positions are filled through an application process. The general application form for student group leadership will be created and maintained by WSA. Individual student groups may enhance the application for their group's leadership with additional questions specific to the interest area of the group. Applicants do not apply for a specific board role but instead are asked to indicate their preferred role. The current board, when reviewing applications, will determine which applicant will fill each role to ensure all positions are filled and to best match skills and interests to positions.

The application process may include input of the faculty/staff advisor, but final selection is at the discretion of current board members. In case of indecision or tied votes, however, the faculty advisor may serve as a deciding vote, if needed. The respective WSA Student Groups VP will also help facilitate the discussion and vote on applications to ensure a fair and equitable process.

In the event that the faculty/staff advisor is unable to participate in the application process discussions, the student group MUST include the appropriate WSA Student Group VP in the discussions. In the event that an applicant appeals the decision, the appeal will be made to the appropriate WSA Student Group VP for review. Students are allowed to serve on more than one student group board at the same time.

### **Contents of Student Group Charters:**

At a minimum, Student Group Charters must include:

- Mission statement/purpose
- Full Board composition (if there are seats beyond the required board members) and definition of responsibilities of each board member's role
- Duties to be assigned among board members, and to be delineated in the group's charter, include, at minimum, the following responsibilities:
  - Communication / Collaboration: Internal communication to student constituents, including listservs, social media, internal announcements, etc.
  - External Relations (outside Wagner): The point of contact with external organizations or parties, including, but not limited to professional associations, nonprofit organizations, other NYU schools, research centers, administrative units, alumni, etc.
  - Budgeting: Responsible for attending student group fiscal operations training and is the point of contact for reimbursements with Wagner and the Office of External Affairs (OEA).
  - Internal Group Meetings: Responsible for internal management of student group, including organizing and running board meetings.
  - Student Group Liaison: Responsible for coordinating between other Wagner Student Groups.
  - WSA Liaison: Point of contact for the WSA Board.
  - Volunteer Promotion: Responsible for promoting volunteer activities for the student group.
  - Events: Main point of contact for any events the group hosts or co-sponsors.
- Process for Removal / Replacement of Officers
- Process for Filling Vacant Seats
- Internal Decision Process

### **Requests for Funding and/or Space**

**University funding** is derived from a universal student fee. It is divided based on enrollment and awarded to each individual school's student association (i.e. WSA). In recent years, this allocation across all NYU Wagner student groups has been approximately \$12,000 - \$13,000. Alcohol cannot be purchased with these funds.

**NYU Wagner funding** is derived from the Student Affairs fee that all Wagner students pay. A portion of the fee is earmarked for student group funding. In recent years, this allocation across

all NYU Wagner student groups has been approximately \$27,000 - \$28,000.

The annual allocated WSA budget will initially be divided into four pieces:

- Individual Group Allocations
- Fall Events Budget
- Spring Events Budget
- Contingency Funds

### **Appropriations Committee**

The Appropriations Committee will be managed by the WSA Treasurer, but all Committee members will have an equal vote. See the “Proposal Review Process” below for more details.

The Committee will include the following members:

- Three WSA Student Group VPs
- WSA Events VP
- WSA Treasurer
- Two Students at Large
  - Cannot be student group board members
  - Will be appointed at the same time as student group leaders
- Administrative Student Group Liaison (Jamie O’Regan)

It is recommended to always try to add a first-year student to the Committee in the Fall, if possible, so there is continuity in following years.

### **Allocations Criteria**

The Appropriations Committee will make decisions about events based on the following values:

- Furthering the mission - mission of each collaborator and Wagner
- Community building
- Professional development
- Education
- Networking
- Celebration
- Hearing from diverse perspectives
- Expected attendance (in relation to resources needed)
  - If past and projected attendance is significantly different, why is it more or less? If it is a new event, how many do you expect to attend and how did you determine that number?
  - Intersection: how does this align/complement class work, projects, Wagner initiatives, and curriculum?
- Collaboration
  - Internal collaboration with Wagner administration, units, research centers, and faculty.
  - External collaboration with organizations, nonprofits, companies, etc.
  - Other student groups

- Degree of appeal to the general student body

### **Proposal Review Process**

The WSA Treasurer will input basic information from all proposals (Events Description, Sponsoring Groups, Date, and Budget) into a spreadsheet, check for red flags and potential collaboration opportunities, and give the Allocations Committee a sense of what problems might arise (e.g., how much over budget the requests are). The proposals will be assigned out to the Committee; two people will read each proposal. The Committee members will follow up with Event Leads as needed if there are any questions.

After reviewing the proposals, the two reviewers will independently make a preliminary decision (approve, approve with changes, or decline). The two Committee members reading the same proposal do not need to agree on their decision.

The Committee will look at the aggregate landscape of events so that the Committee can consider proposals from different group types and events of different sizes. Generally, the Committee will use consensus decision making but if there is contention on a particular event, the WSA Treasurer may initiate a majority rule vote. The Committee will then vote on the final overall budget to bring to the WSA general meeting. The Committee will communicate decisions to the WSA, who will release them to the Event Leads.

An appeals period will follow. Event Leads whose event was not approved may confer with their WSA Student Group VP for clarification on why their event was not funded. The Event Lead may resubmit an events proposal that includes additional information pertinent to the concerns expressed by the Committee. The Committee will convene to make a final decision.

For the first year, The Appropriations Committee determines student groups' budgets based on past spending and expectations, which can be evaluated each year. (The current appropriations committee should be involved in this process for the first year.) These numbers should be public to the student body for transparency.

### **Space Requests**

If, after the proposal period, groups want to plan an event that only requires space at Puck, they will communicate directly with OEA to find space.

### **Individual Group Allocation:**

Each student group receives an automatic budget allocation (\$150/year) to cover general expenses. Groups can spend the automatic allocation on anything except alcohol.

### **Academic Year/Summer**

The automatic allocation is for a full school year (September - May). After May, leftover funds can be used over the summer with special permission, but automatic allocations expected in the upcoming academic year may not be used before that academic year begins.

### **Provisional Groups**

If provisional student groups are elevated to student group status mid-year, they will be given \$75 to be used for the remainder of the academic year.

### **Contingency Funding**

If, after the proposal period, groups want to plan an event that requires funding, or if they need more money than expected for an already-approved event, groups will submit proposals to the Appropriations Committee on a rolling basis. The resulting allocations will come from the contingency fund.

- How will the committee convene outside of the regular proposal review process?
  - For small increases to the budget, the Committee can communicate via email (similar to current alcohol approvals).
  - For larger new event proposals, the Committee might need to convene and discuss. In this case, the Committee will review the proposal using the same guidelines for all proposals, but will also take into account why the event was not submitted during the proposal review process and what contingency funds are available.
- If an event proposal is submitted after the proposal period, it must provide justification for why the event was not submitted during the designated Spring or Fall approval periods. For example:
  - An unanticipated policy or news event happened and a group wants to do an event around it.
  - A high-profile speaker has suddenly become available.

Requests for funding beyond groups' automatic allocation **and/or** requests for space at Puck must be reviewed by the Appropriations Committee.

### **Volunteerism**

Obligations and expectations for volunteerism will likely shift in accordance with the development and expansion of WagnerCares, but at a minimum, shall include:

#### **Established Groups**

- Compliance with WagnerCares Day of Service requirements for the year
- Representation at/participation in school-wide "Core Events" (i.e. Admitted Students Day, Orientation, Student Group Info Fair, etc.)
- Submission of mission-related projects to Wagner Cares database (ongoing throughout year)
- Participation in at least one posted service project (ongoing throughout year)

#### **Provisional Groups**

- Participation in/assistance with partner group's Day of Service project

## **Events**

Though the hosting or co-sponsorship of events is not a requirement for student groups, those groups wishing to do so must adhere to the following protocol, documented through semi-annual report.

### **Event Leads**

Groups and their collaborators will select one person, called an Event Lead, to serve as the main liaison with WSA about the event. The Event Lead does not have to be a board member or designated events chair; different events under the same student group may have different Event Leads. Though one Event Lead per event is required, for larger events it is recommended to create a committee of event planners. However, only the Event Lead will be in direct communication with WSA.

- The Event Lead is accountable for submitting the event budget and proposal.
- The Event Lead is required to attend one OEA events training each year.
- For events that have a larger expected attendance, or a larger budget, the Event Lead must have a sit-down meeting with OEA staff.
- The Event Lead is responsible for managing the budget for the event (or appointing someone to do so). Note that only the group's Treasurer can submit reimbursement requests to OEA, so the Events Lead must work with their group's Treasurer to coordinate reimbursements.

### **Step-By-Step**

Proposal submission will occur two times per year: after elections in the Spring (for approval of upcoming Fall events) and in the Fall (for approval of upcoming Spring events).

Below is the process for submitting event proposals:

1. Groups determine their own agendas and approach potential collaborators.
2. "Calendar Day" at WSA general meeting: groups will form partnerships on events and share their project ideas and preferences for the date and space
  - Products of Calendar Day will include a preliminary, non-binding list of potential events (erring on the side of more events).
  - Groups will share the following:
    - Event
    - Preferred date or time period
  - NOT required, but recommended for planning:
    - Preferred space
    - Ballpark budget
  - At the end of Calendar Day groups are allowed, but not required, to put holds on space. Holds at this stage do not guarantee the space.
3. Finalizing dates.
  - a. Groups continue to prioritize internally and approach collaborators as they

- clarify which events they want to submit proposals for.
- b. Appropriations Committee reviews products of Calendar Day and notes any major event/space conflicts or budget concerns
  4. Groups submit event proposals.
  5. Appropriations Committee reviews proposals, circles back with Events Leads if additional clarification is needed, and makes decisions. (See decision values and decision making process, below.)
  6. WSA President reviews, groups are informed of decisions, and calendar holds are approved with the proposals.
  7. WSA general meeting votes on budget.

### **Cancellations**

If groups cancel an event after they have received a budget allocation, the budgeted money rolls into the contingency fund. Groups cannot use the money for a different event without approval from the Appropriations Committee. Requests should be directed to the WSA Treasurer.

### **WSA Events**

WSA Event Chairs will submit budgets for WSA events alongside the group proposals so that the entire budget can be considered holistically and funds can be used to their best purpose.

### **Alcohol**

Requests for alcohol will be included in the proposal, but the budget form must explicitly separate out alcohol expenses from other expenses. Purchasing of alcohol (through OEA) will remain the same as current practice.

### **Proposal Process**

#### **Proposal Form**

1-2 pages (pre-designed form) and will include the following information:

- Event title
- Event description, including how/why it will appeal to the Wagner community
- Event Lead (one person)
- Expected attendance
- If event has been held before, past attendance
- Co-Sponsoring groups, including which group will:
  - Provide the lead/project manager for the event
  - Provide volunteers the day of the event
  - Recruit the speaker(s)
  - Coordinate the space
  - Manage the budget
  - Market and promote the event\* (sending the event out over listserv).

Note that providing marketing support alone is not sufficient for co-sponsorship.

- Submit reimbursements
- Each group should indicate the priority of this event in comparison to other co-sponsored events.
- Top three date choices and explanation for preference
- Space preferences and explanation for preference
- Budget
  - Standardized budget form
  - Separate lines for alcohol
  - Based on projected attendance
- Post Event Analysis
  - Attendance
  - Actual budget and variance analysis
  - Collaborators and roles played
  - General feedback/problems

### **Established Groups**

Phase 1 [Pre-Resource Allocation]

- Submission of event ideas and priorities **[prior to start of semester]**
- Attendance at Events Training

Phase 2 [Pre-Resource Allocation]

- Attendance at “Calendar Day” meeting
- Submission of official “Events Proposal” for semester (with collaborating partners)

Post-Resource Allocation [this phase is repeated for each event]

- “Event Lead” chosen
- Event Lead attends preliminary logistics meeting with OEA

Post-Event Analysis

Event lead completes and submits event analysis form to OEA

### **Provisional Groups**

- Submission of Intent Form to claim small budget allocation for independent events

### **Student Group Advisement (Faculty / Staff Advisor)**

Each student group will be required to formally identify an advisor (or more than one) each year who is a member of the NYU Wagner faculty or staff. The student group must actively seek

out and obtain the commitment of a faculty or staff member to serve as their advisor.

The leadership of the student group and the advisor(s) will meet at minimum once per semester to discuss the status of student group operations, programming, etc. The advisor may play an active role in the new board appointment process to help facilitate conversation and decision making. The final selection, however, is at the discretion of current board members. In case of indecision or tied votes, the advisor may support the final decision (serve as a deciding vote), if needed.

In the event that the advisor is unable to participate in this process, the group must involve the appropriate WSA Student Group VP in these discussions.

In the event that a student group is challenged in identifying an advisor or scheduling meetings with their advisor, they are expected to bring this to the attention of the appropriate WSA Student Group VP for guidance.

### **Creating a New Student Group**

“Aspiring” groups complete an application to become a Provisional Student Group to WSA. WSA reviews applications for Provisional Student Group status to determine if the request warrants creation of a new autonomous student group or is more aligned with interests of an existing student group. Provisional Student Groups will be overseen by their respective WSA Student Groups VP.

In the event that WSA determines that the new group overlaps with an existing student group, the application will be denied and the applicants will be directed to the overlapping current group to collaborate on future activities and events.

In the event that WSA determines that the new group does, in fact, represent a new interest that warrants representation as a NYU Wagner student group, the group will be established for one year as a provisional student group.

In order to become a fully-approved student group, after one year a provisional student group must collect a petition of at least 50 current NYU Wagner student signatures supporting their application.

- The Provisional Student Group will complete an application for Full Student Group Status, to be submitted to the WSA board together with the petition for review.

- The WSA board will review the application for full student group status to determine if appropriate support and rationale exists for elevation to full student group status.
- If the WSA board supports the application, final approval must be granted by a majority vote at a WSA general meeting during the same academic year as the filed petition and student group application.
- If final approval is granted, creating a new full student group, the new group will be responsible for meeting transition, review, and renewal requirements beginning with the first review document due after full group status is granted.

### **Transition, Review & Renewal Reports**

Groups will be responsible for submitting three review documents throughout the course of one school year: Transition Report, Annual Review, and Interim Review.

**Transition Report:** The outgoing and incoming Board Members (Presidents at minimum) will meet with their WSA liaisons (incoming/outgoing) before the end of the school year to review the transition process and to transfer information. This Report will include:

- Board roles fulfilled
- Minimum transition info requirements (login, passwords, annual event records, etc)
- How the group supports each section of the Four Pillars
  - Demonstration of “community building”
  - Demonstration of “academic enhancement”
  - Demonstration of “professional development”
  - Demonstration of “visibility”
- Demonstration of commitment to service
- Proper event planning, preparation, and tracking (if applicable)

### **Annual Review:**

- Upon WSA approval of documentation, groups receive automatic Renewal for the coming school year.
- Groups failing to successfully meet the transition and review requirements will be considered dormant for the coming school year. This means their events and activities will be contingency-based, they forego voting representation at general meetings, and they forego the annual budget allotment.

**Interim Review:** Group leaders must check in with their appropriate WSA liaison.

- Meetings will occur prior to Thanksgiving break.

- The WSA liaison will advise groups on their current standings and remaining obligations for the semester and year, and make recommendations for course-corrections, if necessary.