

Washington State University
GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

Washington State University has always emphasized the importance of individual responsibility and accountability in the lives of its students. Additionally, the rights and duties of recognized student organizations also carry with them an obligation on the part of their members, collectively, to uphold the Washington State University Standards of Conduct for Students.

This statement of group accountability acknowledges that unacceptable behaviors by individuals functioning as members or officers of a student organization may have consequences for those individuals as well as for the organization. Also, the privilege of being an officer of a student organization carries with it particular responsibility for the reasonable anticipation and prevention of foreseeable violations of University policies, resulting from either deliberate or negligent behavior of the organization's members or guests.

In general, a recognized student organization may be held accountable for the behavior of its members and guests on its premises, at events sponsored (or co-sponsored) by the organization, or when a group including significant numbers of members or guests violates University policies. Organizations that violate University policies and Standards of Conduct are subject to sanctions. It is the responsibility of organizational officers or those in charge of an event to identify foreseeable problems that may arise and to take timely corrective action. Sometimes it is appropriate for an organization's officers or members to ask for assistance from University offices (WSU Police, Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life, Office of Student Conduct, Student Involvement, and Leadership Development) or outside agencies (police, fire department, ambulance).

The conditions under which an organization maintains responsibility for violations of University policies and standards include (but are not limited to):

- the actions constituting the violation were tacitly or overtly condoned by the organization or its officers;
- the organization or its officers should have foreseen yet failed to take reasonable precautions against such actions;
- a policy or practice of the organization was responsible for a violation; or
- the behavior in question was committed by, condoned by or involved organization officers or a significant number of organization members or guests.

In determining whether an organization or its officers failed to take reasonable precautions, the University may take into account the repeated occurrence of relevant other incidents involving the organization.

In general, reported organizational violations of Departmental policies and standards should be addressed, and appropriate sanctions imposed, by the University office with administrative oversight of the organization. Possible violations of University Standards of Conduct should be reported to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.