

Frequently Asked Questions about SGSOs and Indiana University's Non-Discrimination Policy:

[prepared by Indiana University administration, August 2015, available at <http://policies.iu.edu/docs/academic-policy-docs/student-orgs-faqs.pdf>]

1. What are the benefits of registering with the University as a Self-Governed Student Organization (SGSO)?

The benefits of registering an organization as an SGSO include:

- being able to reserve space on campus and often for free;
- applying for a Student Organization Account;
- applying for funding;
- applying for office space in the IMU;
- using the “SGSO at IU” trademark;
- reserving a table for the Student Involvement Fair.

2. Can student groups who elect not to register as SGSOs still meet on campus?

Yes, but they will not receive the benefits of being an SGSO. Non-registered groups of students are welcome to assemble and associate in areas of the campus that are open to them as students of Indiana University. Furthermore, they are welcome to reserve campus space for their events under the same terms and conditions as other third-party groups.

3. What non-discrimination requirements does the University have in place for SGSOs?

The University requires all SGSOs to accept “all comers.” SGSOs cannot reject students seeking to participate in, become members of, or serve as leaders of the organization because of their age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status. The University requires each SGSO to include the University’s non-discrimination statement in its SGSO constitution.

4. May an SGSO establish eligibility requirements for membership or leadership positions that are not tied to an individual being a member of a protected class?

Yes. SGSOs may impose eligibility requirements for membership and service in leadership positions as long as the requirements are not based on a student belonging to any of the protected classes listed above. Examples of acceptable requirements include:

- requiring members to pay dues;
- requiring members to attend group meetings consistently;
- establishing that leadership positions within the group are open only to those members who have been in good standing with the group for a certain period of time;
- honor societies establishing a minimum GPA threshold.

5. Are single-sex fraternities and sororities allowed under the University's non-discrimination statement?

Yes. The University abides by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, which recognizes that differentiated treatment based on sex for purposes of membership in a social fraternity or sorority is not unlawful. An organization in this category may remove “gender” from the non-discrimination statement in its SGSO constitution.

6. May SGSOs require students seeking to serve in leadership positions to be members of a particular religion?

No. As mentioned above, eligibility for leadership in the SGSO cannot be based on any categories that are included in the University’s non-discrimination statement. The requirement is that all students be eligible to join the SGSO and seek leadership positions within it. However, the SGSO is not required to elect or appoint any particular leadership candidate and may establish a process for electing or appointing leaders that does not exclude candidates based on their membership in a protected class. **For example, a chapter of a religious student alliance would not be permitted to forbid someone of a different religion, or someone non-religious, from running for a leadership position within the SGSO.**

7. What are the consequences of an SGSO failing to comply with the University's non-discrimination statement?

If, after registering, an SGSO fails to comply with the statement by excluding a student due to his or her membership in one of the protected classes listed above, a complaint may be made under the IU Student Code of Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct and the campus judicial process for student organizations. If sanctions result from that process, they may include the SGSO losing SGSO status.