

2024-2025

Clubs and Organizations Handbook



Starting a New Club in FIVE Steps:

1. 5 Students

Find five current students interested in forming the club.

2. Faculty/Staff Advisor

Find a staff or faculty member at RTC willing to be your club's official Advisor.

3. Club Chartering Packet

Completely fill out and submit the Club Chartering Packet by constructing your Club Constitution, listing your founding membership/Advisor, describing your club's Purpose and Mission and attaching the student schedules of your initiating members. When you're ready, turn it in to the Office of Student Leadership and Programs (OSLP) by submitting it in person (J-216) or emailing it to the Director of Student Life and/or Club Coordinator (*see OSLP Staff contact information on pg. 14/15*)

4. Officer and Advisor Training

Have at least two (2) members designated as Club Officers attend Officer Training, as well as have your Advisor attend Advisor Training. These will be conducted by Mica (the Director) and/or Mary McGhee (Administrative Specialist). In the beginnings of quarters there will be scheduled trainings that multiple clubs can attend at once; but if it's later in the quarter or the scheduled trainings don't work for you, feel free to contact Mica Hunter and set up an alternate time.

5. Recognition

When you have completed all of the above steps your Chartering Packet will be submitted to the AS Senate and you will be invited to attend a meeting of the Senate Assembly, where your club's official recognition will be discussed. Attend that meeting to speak for your club and cheer when it's officially recognized!

What is a club?

A club at Renton Technical College is an **organization** of students centered around a shared interest, passion, background, academic path, or life experience. This organization brings together students with this shared commonality; creating events and activities that support the group while developing a sense of community, shared learning and engagement, as well as contributing to and improving the RTC Community as a whole.

A club at Renton Technical College has a **mission**. Whether it is as simple as providing a place and equipment to play a group's favorite video game; or as complex as projects such as building an AI computer, a club has a purpose. For many clubs, the purpose is simply to create a social space for students to gather and discuss their common interest. For others, their mission may include: working in the community, creating art, providing education opportunities, or practicing skills. A club's mission may change over time as the group identifies other goals they'd like to pursue; or new interests to be folded into their activities and events.

A club at Renton Technical College is **organized**, with students serving as officers to lead the club in decision making. These officers have specified duties and responsibilities that they carry out in order to keep the club running, growing and fulfilling its mission. This could be in the form of a Club President, assisted by a Vice President and/or Secretary and/or Treasurer. But it could also be in the form of a small group of equally empowered officers serving as a council who make club leadership decisions together. Your club's organizational structure should be tailored to what will make your club most successful.

A club at Renton Technical College can have a wide variety of **activities and events**. The most common are weekly or monthly meetings, where students can gather, talk, plan, play and create. But clubs can also create special events with specific focuses or activities. These events can be for the club's membership or might be geared toward drawing in and entertaining/educating/inspiring members of the RTC community or the public. However, any event hosted by clubs must be open to the entire student body on campus. A club may also travel to events, conferences or meetings organized by other groups. Conferences may invite an academically based club to speak on a given subject or to participate in educational sessions.

Responsibilities

Above all else, Renton Technical College clubs are open to all students, committed to non-discrimination, accessibility and the building of inclusive community.

Beyond that prime directive for all clubs, in order to remain active and recognized; your club is responsible for the following:

- **Maintaining regular and consistent communication with the Office of Student Life**

This includes ensuring that the Office of Student Life (OSL) staff have the most current and correct contact information for your Club Officers; and that those Officers respond promptly to communication and questions from the Office of Student Life. Your club must notify the Director of Student Life about significant changes in the club, from leadership to meeting times. The OSL should always be up to date on where and when the club is meeting and holding events.

- **Lead as part of the Associated Students Senate**

As will be described in greater detail later in this handbook; the Senate is the highest governing body of the Associated Students and is chaired by the Executive Board President. It is a powerful force for student leadership, capable of influencing and helping to shape policy here at RTC; as well as being responsible for approving the use of the majority of the Associated Students Budget. Your clubs participation in this council is essential to its function and to your maintaining status as an active and recognized organization. The Senate meets every two weeks, and each club must be represented at as many meetings as possible (*at minimum 2 per quarter*); preferably by one of the Club Officers but the club may select any student member of the club to be their representative.

- **Maintaining Core Membership**

Clubs must maintain the minimum number of five (5) currently enrolled students to be considered an active club. Furthermore, while alumni, community members and other non-students are welcome at clubs who wish to include them; the overall membership of a club must always be made up of 2/3rds current student members, with a maximum of 1/3rd outside individuals.

- **Tracking the Club's Budget**

As part of your Clubs organizational structure, at least one member of your club should be designated as in charge of tracking your club's budget. Your club is required to independently notate the funds obtained by the club, whether through

donation, fundraising, sales or allocation from the Senate. Expenditures must be tracked and subtracted from the club's available budget. At the end of each quarter, you will be required to submit your estimate of the club's remaining funds. At the end of an academic year, this budget tracking becomes even more essential, as funds allocated from the State are tied to the fiscal year and will not "roll-over" between academic years. Each club will receive a base budget of \$1000 for the year.

Failure to meet any of the above responsibilities will result in the club being designated as **Inactive**. It will no longer be considered a recognized club at RTC until such time as it has been reinstated by the Office of Student Life. Any remaining funds will be frozen, clubs will be unable to access club materials, request space on campus or funding from the Senate. The club's leadership will need to contact the Office of Student Life to arrange a **Reinstatement Review**.

Club Operational Schedule

RTC Clubs have a large foundation of resources and support to call upon during the Academic Year. But in order to ensure that all students participating in club activities are safe and supported, there are some times of the year where clubs do not operate:

- **Clubs are active between September 1st through June 30th of each year.** The Associated Students as a whole is not in operation over the Summer, so access to club resources is limited and funding and approval are shut down for the quarter. If a club has an activity or event they would like to pursue during Summer Quarter, a plan must be made *before June 1st* and approved by the Director of Student Life. Any funding would need to be approved by the Associated Students Senate and purchasing would need to be completed before *June 10th*.
- **Clubs are primarily active during RTC College Business Hours.** Activities planned to take place outside RTC's standard **8am to 5pm** service hours must have an Advisor present, and OSL staff must be notified in advance.
- **Clubs are Chartered for the Academic Year.** Clubs that plan to continue into the next Academic Year must either submit the **Club Renewal Packet** at the end of Spring Quarter or re-charter in the Fall.

Planning and Creating Events

Creating regular events that suit the needs of your club and its members is one of the most fundamental roles of a club leader. Listening to and engaging with your membership to determine the events and activities that are right for the club and its mission is the key to success.

Reserving Space on Campus

Nearly all space reservation on campus begin by filling out the Club Space Request Form which can also be found on the Club Webpage. This form will collect all the necessary details for the Office of Student Life to make a request for space on your behalf. Please note that a request made to facilities is just that: *a request* and you are not authorized to use a campus space until your request has been approved.

All space requests must be made a minimum of 72 hours (3 Business Days) in advance. Requests made less than 72 hours in advance may be declined by the Office of Student Life or the Facilities Department that manages that space.

If any special room setup is needed beyond what is normally present in the space (extra chairs, special table set up, additional technology), your request will need to be made *5 business days in advance* so that facilities can plan and accommodate additional room set up.

As part of the Associated Students of Renton Technical College, all of your activities need to be conducted with respect toward the departments, staff members and student resources that support your club. You should leave any space you utilize for club activities in as good a condition as you found it. Leaving trash, breaking equipment or otherwise disrespecting the resources you have been granted can result in your club being restricted in the spaces it will be allowed to request in future.

Accessibility

A large component of welcoming and including all students who are drawn to your club is planning for accessibility. Build your meetings and events with accessibility in mind, from spaces to activities. Ensure that meeting spaces are set up with enough room between tables and chairs to facilitate anyone who needs to move between them. Consider the types of events and activities you are planning; will someone who is visually impaired be able to enjoy this activity? Will someone utilizing a wheelchair be able to participate?

Ultimately, the decisions about what activities you plan will be up to you, but you are

encouraged to communicate with and listen to your membership to ensure that your club is meeting their needs. Plan ahead and have solutions in mind should a new member wish to attend who accesses the space differently from your existing club membership.

In addition to the basics provided at Club Officer Training, further training and assistance on building accessible events and activities is always available from the **Events and Engagement Coordinator**; feel free to reach out.

Regular Meetings

The backbone of most student clubs is regular weekly or bi-monthly meetings. A regular time and place that club members can depend on for inspiration, community, entertainment and relaxation. Creating a regular and dependable schedule for your meetings is the key to retaining your members. Constantly changing meeting times and locations can confuse your members and lead to students not attending.

Consider scheduling your regular club meetings for the same time and same place each week (*example. Tuesdays from 4-6 in B 111*). This makes it easy for new and recurring students to always know when and where a meeting is happening, which makes them much more likely to attend.

Club Events

Events and activities are some of the most impactful ways to engage the Renton Technical College and local community. Movie nights, clean up events, scavenger hunts, presentations, distinguished guests from around the globe; these and so many more can be captivating and shape the experience of students on campus! Your club is encouraged to think big and outside the box to maximize the mark you make on our community.

To be successful and (positively) memorable, events need to be well detailed and planned in advance. Much of the detail about common components for events can be found in the *Purchasing* section (*see pg. 11*); but in brief, the larger and more complex your event, the more time in advance you want to set aside to get the necessary approvals and paperwork complete. Contracts (which are used to bring outside speakers and vendors to campus), permission forms (for events involving physical activities), catering or food handler's procedures (for food presented at events) can all take time to get squared away.

If you're thinking about putting an event together and would like some insight into what you might need to make it a success; the Office of Student Life is full of event planning professionals who can help you with an event checklist. Reach out to the

Events and Engagement Coordinator for assistance and advice. All events must be open to the entire RTC student body.

Promotion and Recruitment

One of the greatest roadblocks on the path toward a thriving club is lack of recognition. Clubs are always needing to promote their club and their mission; as new students come to campus who won't have seen previous Club Fairs, posters or events that featured your club.

But you don't have to be doing all of your promotion and marketing alone. The Office of Student Life and your Executive Board can assist with everything from help designing posters and logos to sharing your events on social media.

Requesting Design Work from the Media and Promotion Coordinator

Our Media and Promotion Coordinator is a super talented student leader with extensive experience in graphic design and promotion. They create digital graphics, posters, pamphlets, brochures and much more for offices and programs across campus. And they are happy to help design amazing promotional material to get your club and its events out there!

To submit a request to the Media and Promotion Coordinator, email ASGLeaders@rtc.edu with the details of the design you are looking for, when your club would need it by, and any other relevant information.

Design requests need to be submitted three (3) weeks in advance of the event or activity you wish to promote. This not only gives the Media and Promotion Coordinator two weeks to design the promotional material to your specifications, but also two weeks for that promotional material to be out and advertising your event to the RTC community.

Requirements for all Club Promotion and Advertising

Whether a poster or promotional design is digital or physical, you are required to *always* include the following information:

- **Date, Time, and Location** for the event(s) or meeting(s) you are advertising.
- **Contact information** for the club, ideally an Officer in your club who handles promotion within your club.
- **Disability Access information** for students who wish to attend your event(s) or meeting(s) and may need or want to request accommodations. The following information must be included in your design:

“It is the policy and practice of Renton Technical College to create inclusive and accessible experiences for students consistent with federal and state law. If you are a student with a temporary health condition or permanent disability (conditions include, but are not limited to: mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts) that requires accommodations for this event, please contact the Director of Disability Resource Services at (425) 235-6618 or jswanke@rtc.edu to submit a request at least 2 weeks before the event.”

If your design is produced by the Media and Promotion Coordinator, these will automatically be integrated into your graphic design requests.

Any club promotions that do not include the above will be removed (or requested to be taken down) by the Office of Student Life.

Poster Distribution

Posters are a great way to attract attention to your club around campus. Whether designed by our Media and Promotion Coordinator or by members of your own club, all posters need to be approved and posted by the Office of Student Life.

Approved posters will be stamped with a date two weeks from the posting date. This is the approved window for that poster to remain on campus posting boards and it will be posted and removed at the end of it's posting window by the Executive Board.

Tabling

One of the simplest and most effective forms of promotion is just to set up a table in a visible area of campus and talk to students as they come by. You can request to do this emailing ASGLeaders@rtc.edu

A tabling request will need to be made **7 business days in advance** so that facilities can plan and accommodate table set up.

Be aware that while tabling is designed to attract attention to your club, *you are required to be mindful of nearby classes and work going on around you*. Playing loud music or otherwise making too much noise in or near areas where students are trying to concentrate is not allowed and you may be directed to move if you are disrupting classes or other college activities.

You are also to leave any areas you've been tabling in clean and organized. Failure to abide by these guidelines may result in your club not being allowed to table in the future.

Funding

While much of the activities and meetings held by clubs can utilize pre-existing college resources; funding provides clubs the opportunity to create large events, travel, expand the scope and scale of activities, and much more.

Clubs at Renton Technical College are given a base budget of \$1000 per year. Once you have maxed out your \$1000, you must present to the Senate for extra funding. There is no guarantee your club will receive more funding. At present, the only source of additional funds is our **Senate**, but in future years, fundraising opportunities may be developed.

Presentation Requirements: To present before the Senate, every club must provide a PowerPoint explaining the need for funding:

- **Purpose of Funding:** Clearly state why you are requesting funds and how they will be used.
- **Itemized List:** Provide a detailed, itemized list of expenses. Include costs for materials, events, travel, etc.
- **Justification:** Explain why each item is necessary and how it will benefit the club or college.
- **Vendor information:** Restaurants, speakers, off campus vendors, custom t-shirt vendors, etc... Provide more than one estimate (research more vendors for costs estimates)
- **Member Benefits:** Describe how the funding will benefit your members and enhance students' experience.
- **Campus and Community Impact:** Highlight how the funding will positively impact the campus community.
- **Past Events and Successes:** Showcase successful past events or initiatives funded by Service & Activities Fees (ASG Funding).
- **Testimonials and Feedback:** Include quotes or feedback from members or participants to demonstrate the value of your activities.

Reporting Back to Senate Requirements:

- If you receive funding, you must provide the Senate with an update on your last event, project, or conference turnout (before requesting more funding). Refer to the presentation requirements above.
- Collect data on event turnout using a sign-in sheet and student feedback (create an event survey or request to have a survey created for your event through the Office of Student Life,). **Must be a least 2 weeks before your event.**

S&A Fees and State Funds

The Senate is funded by the **S&A Fee**, a special portion of your tuition set aside for Services and Activities. It has specific guidelines around how it can be used. In relation

to club activities, these funds are to be used to enhance a club's activities and events, improve accessibility for all students and provide resources/materials for the club. S&A Fee funds *are not* to be used to purchase items that will be given to individuals with the rare exceptions of prizes for large events or competitions. For specific use questions, reach out to the **Office of Student Life** (*see OSL Staff contact information on pg. 14/15*) or for more information on S&A Guidelines for use of these funds, see the **Killian Outline**.

S&A Fees (and all other monies used by the college) are also considered **State Funds**, which have an overlapping set of requirements about how they are used. The most common that your club could run into will be addressed as we discuss requests and purchasing.

Senate

As mentioned previously in this handbook: the Associated Students Senate is a governing body made up of student representatives from across campus. This includes the Executive Board, student staff who work in Student Services, at-large students and representatives from each club. As stewards of the Associated Students budget, this council is charged with responsibly and ethically disbursing their funds to the departments and clubs building programming, events, activities, and opportunities that will most benefit the students of Renton Technical College. The Senate, and therefore each one of the Club Representatives is trained extensively on their responsibility as a council, the ethical use of S&A Fees; as well as how these funds should be used to best enhance and grow the club system and Renton Technical College community.

The Senate typically meets every other week on a chosen day but the quarter's meeting schedule will be announced during Club Officer trainings.

Requests must be submitted by end of day three business days prior to the meeting in which you'd like your request to be discussed. Any requests submitted after this deadline will automatically be tabled and considered for the following meeting's agenda.

To request funds from the Senate:

- Your club must have already been established before submitting any funding request.
- You'll need to meet with your Advisor to discuss the request. You do not need their permission to make a request to the Senate, but they do need to be fully aware of any requests made; and they will be able to advise you on how best to make this request.
- An Officer in the club will fill out the Senate Request Form, in its entirety. They will submit the form by the three days prior to the Council meeting in which your Club would like the request to be considered.

- Your request (if it meets requirements and your club is considered active) will be added to the agenda, which is sent out before every meeting.
- At the Senate meeting, your item will be discussed when we reach its position in the agenda; at which time your Club Representative will present a presentation and answer questions from your colleagues on the Senate.
- The Senate will deliberate on your request; with individual members making proposed motions to be voted upon. As the requestor, *your Club Representative will abstain from proposing a motion and voting.*
- If approved, the funds approved by the Senate will be allocated to your Club and you will then work with the Administrative Specialist to use these funds for your events, activities and materials. *See Purchasing Section below.*

Purchasing

Items/Supplies

Most items and supplies are purchased by order of the Senate after a request to the Senate has been approved. These items are ordered and paid for by the Office of Student Life, with the cost being deducted from your Club Account. You will be sent a copy of the receipt for any items ordered on your behalf.

Items purchased with Senate funds; while used by the club that requested them, are ultimately the property of the college and the Associated Students, and subject to State Ethics rules in regards to their use. These items are to remain on campus at all times unless a special request to take them off campus has been made and approved by the Executive Board and Director of Student Life.

Items that *cannot* be purchasing using State Funds include:

- Materials related to or supporting a political campaign, party or organization.
- Materials related to or supporting a religion, religious organization or place of worship.*
- Tobacco or Alcohol.
- Firearms or explosives of any kind, including fireworks.
- Items intended to be given away as a scholarship/donation/gift.**

** Clubs of a political nature or founded around the education, appreciation, or practice of a religion can still have items purchased that support the club members and activities themselves. But state funds are not to be used to purchase merchandise from a specific campaign or in any way contribute funds toward a political campaign, party or organization. Likewise, state funds cannot be used to contribute funds toward a religious organization or place of worship.*

*** In rare instances, prizes are allowed to be earned or awarded to students participating in a club sponsored activity or event. These occurrences should not be frequent, and your club should consult with the Office of Student Life about any planned activity/event with a prize component.*

Food/Consumables

As a general principle, S&A Fees supporting clubs should be used to make as wide reaching an impact on the RTC community as possible. Reusable and sustainable resources or supplies that can improve an individual club and the club system as a whole are the preferred usage.

However, carefully considered and rare instances of purchasing/catering food for attendees of a club event, t-shirts for club members or other consumables can also be a welcome contribution to a club's community building efforts.

Renton Technical College has our own culinary program; and ordering catering from our on-campus service supports the students pursuing that program. If on-campus catering wouldn't be able to provide the style or individual dishes that your club is looking for; there are a variety of wonderful local restaurants and vendors that might be able to serve your needs.

As a state affiliated organization, RTC clubs are required to adhere to Department of Health standards in regards to serving food and beverages.

Pre-packaged and individually wrapped items (cookies, candy bars, sodas, Cup of Noodle, etc.) that have been purchased from a business can be served by club members at club functions without needing to obtain a Food Handler's Permit.

Any other type of food, hot or cold, must have been prepared in a Department of Health certified kitchen by individuals who possess a valid Food Handler's permit and be served by individuals who possess a valid Food Handler's permit.

Services/Contracts/Speakers and Presenters

Some of the most impactful and creative events or activities put on by clubs utilize outside resources to enrich our community. Whether that is contracting with an entertainment company to bring arcades onto campus, or inviting an author, professor or other expert to speak about their work; outside vendors and presenters are wonderful additions to campus activities.

But they also require extra planning and work on your part as club leaders and the Executive Board's part as administrators.

Any services from an outside business or individual are paid for through a contract with the college and because of its legal complexity, the contracting process takes more time than other purchases or payments.

Any activities that require a contract need to be requested a *minimum* of three weeks in advance so that the contract process can be completed in time.

It is always a good idea, if you're unsure about dates or whether a contract could be completed in time; to speak to the Executive Board about your thoughts for an event. They would be happy to advise you on the best lead time to make sure that your event can go ahead smoothly and with all of the activities and components you want to include.

Travel

Travel can be a uniquely beneficial experience for clubs and their members; it also requires an extensive amount of planning and care to ensure that students are safe and worry free.

When traveling for a club event, you are considered to be on official College business. As representatives of the college you are expected to conform to the Renton Technical College Student Code of Conduct at all times. Students are not allowed to consume alcohol or drugs while traveling, even if you are of legal age to do so.

The very first step to take when considering a potential trip is to set up a meeting with **the Office Administrative Specialist:**

Come prepared to answer the following questions at that meeting:

- When are you planning to travel?
- Will this trip be inside or outside the state?
- How many people are you considering taking on this trip?
- Would this trip involve any lodging?

These basic questions will help you sketch out the timelines for things like travel forms, ticket purchasing, funding deadlines and more.

Be aware that because of the unique challenges and concerns surrounding student travel; the initial planning meeting must be scheduled a minimum of:

- **Three weeks from planned travel date if *in state*.**
- **Six weeks from planned travel date if *out of state*, or *involves air-fare or lodging*.**

Advisors

The position of Club Advisor is an important and valued one. Many of the most successful clubs at Renton Technical College are those in which the advisor is an active and engaged figure within the club. An Advisor's primary role is to support, inspire, and empower club leaders; developing their leadership skills and self-confidence while

providing a safe and supported environment. At the same time, Advisors provide an attentive element of guidance for the clubs members as well, listening and engaging with the students in attendance to better provide the club's leaders with an accurate perspective of how the club is functioning.

Some of the important learning outcomes Advisors seek for students within the club are:

- Learn and practice leadership skills
- Grow in artistic, technical, and social skills
- Develop friendships and build community
- Contribute to the life of the campus by providing activities and/or services
- Connect with faculty and peers along academic pathways and interests
- Build an environment that inspires and empowers students

Advisors support the club and its leaders by checking in on important deadlines and forms, ensuring that the clubs leaders are informed on procedures and policies. While a clubs leaders are responsible for all forms and paperwork, they are also encouraged to review those forms with their Advisor. Advisors should always be updated by the clubs leadership about requests to the Senate, the current meeting schedule, and other important updates about the clubs activities.

Advisor Responsibilities

- Attend Club Advisor Training every academic year.
- Attend all club events held outside regular college business hours, including weekends and holidays.
- Have a thorough knowledge of the club's constitution
- Have a commitment to student leadership development within the club.
- Promote professionalism within club membership.
- Be knowledgeable of Student Life policies and procedures as they pertain to clubs, including Financial information in this handbook, Guidelines on the Use of Services and Activities Fees (aka Killian Outline), and Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy.
- Provide oversight and advising for decision making related to spending club funds.

If either club leaders or advisors need support or more information about advising, they can always reach out to the Office of Student Life.

Meet Your OSL Staff

While the Executive Board, Senate and professional staff in the Office of Student Life as a whole does work all year supporting clubs and the rest of the Associated Students; the following positions work most closely with clubs and are good people to reach out to for specific questions or support.

DEI, Student Representative

The Student and Cultural Affairs Senator is invested in everything related to student concerns and well-being. They are always striving to be informed and involved with the activities and communities around all clubs, particularly affinity and cultural clubs.

Events and Engagement Coordinator –

The Events and Engagement Coordinator plans and leads the planning process for majority of events and activities hosted by the Associated Students. They have extra training and expertise in helping you plan and run a successful event for your club.

Office Administrative Specialist – Mary McGhee – MMcGhee@rtc.edu

The Office Administrative Specialist is the professional staff member tasked with handling the behind the scenes paperwork of contracts, payments and reservations that make club events and activities happen. They can also advise you on issues and questions about running a club; as well as assist in logistical questions around planning events, tracking your budget and more!

Mary's experience with student clubs goes waaaaay back to her days as a student and a member of the of the campus LGBTQ organization. As a full-time staff member, she advised and supported student clubs at Cogswell College, Woodbury University, and Seattle Central College. Here at RTC, she has enjoyed poking around in the financial sections of ctcLink and learning to make it do what she needs it to (well, most of the time). She is grateful, though, that her job here also involves some interactions with live humans. She's looking forward to working with the students in RTC's clubs, helping them get their groups off the ground and making RTC a more supportive and interesting place. Mary also leads most of the club leader and advisor trainings.

Director of Student Life- Mica Hunter mhunter@rtc.edu

The Director of Student Life supervises the work within the Office of Student Life, as well as advising the Senate, Executive Board and Associated Students as a whole.