

## Fundraising for Student Organizations 101

Fundraising is a great way for student organizations to raise money for their organization's needs. It can also help inform the community about the organization and its purpose.

Oakland University is a non-profit, publicly-funded institution. We rely heavily on donor support to make tuition more affordable, provide valuable teaching and learning resources on campus and fund student scholarships. Management of this support must be carefully orchestrated in order to maintain good long-term stewardship of donors beyond your time at OU.

In an effort to assist student organizations with fundraising, we have created this guide which includes helpful tips and resources.

### Giving Issues

Rules to know

- Must comply with IRS regulations
- Must adhere to university policies
- Must follow student organization policies (for example, to ensure there is no personal benefit, there must be a secondary sign-off on the account)
- Use of university resources prohibited
  - Faculty advisors and students
    - OU email system cannot be used as a means for advertising or soliciting
    - Position at OU may not be used to further the cause
    - No preferred OU website placement
  - OU will only promote fundraisers in which the university is the beneficiary
    - Many worthwhile causes to support within OU – if your organization wants to support a cause, there may be an existing one at OU (see below for examples)

Tax receipts

- Gifts made directly to student organizations cannot receive tax receipts - this must clearly be stated to donors
- Gifts made directly to OU and designated for an organization will be issued tax receipts
  - Gifts must be used for the donor's intended purpose
  - You can rest easy knowing that if someone says a gift goes to this org, then we can only spend it this way
  - Audit = checks and balances
  - Need to go through OU's Development Office (checks written to OU, online at [Oakland.edu/giving](http://Oakland.edu/giving))
  - [Donor Forms and Resources](#)

## Ways to raise funds

- Events (dinner, golf outings, bowling fundraiser, etc)
  - Must clearly state there is no tax benefit
  - Should be worth the effort to put on the event
    - Time and effort
    - \$ raised
  - Cannot be scheduled during the study period or during/after final exams
  - Auctions (silent or live) should state value of item
  - Must be approved by Director of Center for Student Activities or Club Sports Coordinator
  - Date auctions are not permitted
  
- Sales (t-shirts, raffles, auctions, car washes, etc)
  - Product sales with OU logo must follow logo guidelines (see below, under marketing guidelines) and use approved vendors
  - All raffles (anything with a prize) must have university approval
    - When in doubt, ask yourself – does everyone get the prize?
  - Raffle license required from the State of Michigan
    - Prior approval needed from Development Office
    - Allow 6-8 weeks for processing by State of Michigan
    - Information and details – [Charitable Gaming Michigan Lottery](#)
    - [Raffle License Application](#)
  - Student raffles can affect student aid packages
  - Greek organizations are not allowed to hold raffles or drawings of any kind, per state rules
  - Games of skill (guess # of jelly beans in a jar) do not require State licensing
  
- Direct solicitation (letters, email, crowdfunding, personal solicitation, etc)
  - Crowdfunding
    - Fast, efficient and effective if done right
    - Choosing right platform, goal and audience can be difficult
    - Contact Development Office first - years of experience & can give you specialized tips, ideas and pitfalls to watch out for
    - OU is working to provide a crowdfunding option for student orgs in the future - stay tuned
  
- Sponsorships
  - Any time you plan to ask for an amount of \$1,000 or more, it needs approval
    - Jean Ann Miller, Director of Center for Student Activities and Leadership Development [jam@oakland.edu](mailto:jam@oakland.edu)
    - Gabrielle Sokol, Intramural and Club Sports Coordinator [gesokol@oakland.edu](mailto:gesokol@oakland.edu)
  - Cannot compete with OU fundraising

- If you've heard of them, then most likely we have too
- Publicly traded companies (Chrysler, Lear, IBM, etc.) must also be cleared through same channels

### **Marketing Guidelines**

- Must follow University Communications and Marketing (C&M) guidelines
  - OU logo guidelines: [www.oakland.edu/logo](http://www.oakland.edu/logo)
  - Trademarked - organizations are "borrowing" logo which is owned by OU
    - May be used in electronic or print media
  - What not to do – alter logo, etc (examples on C&M site)

### **On-campus Philanthropy Project Ideas**

- OUCARES
- Counseling Center
- OU Veteran's Affairs
- Meadow Brook Hall
- Keeper of the Dream
- Disability Support Services at OU
- Lowry Early Childhood Center
- Alternative Spring Break
- Many more – hundreds of funds searchable by key word

### **Best Practices**

- Good stewardship - always thank donors, sponsors and speakers
  - Any note of thanks, especially hand-written notes
  - No matter the size of the contribution
  - Supporters who feel appreciated are more likely to help in the future (the organization or you personally)
- Record-keeping is key
  - Donors – names, contact info, gift amounts, etc
  - Fundraising events – details of amount raised, logistics, etc
  - Past members of your organization – names, contact info
- Evaluate your fundraising efforts
  - Create a report following your event
    - Successes
    - Failures
  - Helpful to future leadership of the organization
  - Don't reinvent the wheel

### **Keys to a Successful Student Organization Fundraiser**

- Determine audience – broad or targeted
- Perform a needed service or meet a need
- Be well-publicized using various media
- Bring the organization and the community together
- Capitalize on the talents of your organization

### **Fundraising Checklist**

- √ Brainstorm ideas
- √ Determine your audience
- √ Set goals
- √ List resources needed
- √ Determine type of fundraising (event, crowdfund, etc.)
- √ Consider timing of fundraising (seasonal, weather, other activities)
- √ Set a timeline for campaign
- √ Develop creative marketing campaign

### **Resources**

- Annual Giving can help advise on your fundraising plans
  - Allow plenty of time
  - Provide outline of fundraiser
- Contact: email [giving@oakland.edu](mailto:giving@oakland.edu) or (248) 370-4504