

Think about what it means to **include** and how this definition can impact your student organization. The feeling of being considered, invited to and welcome should be something that all members experience. Think about how diversity, fairness, and social justice play into the events and meetings that your group hosts. Here are a few ways that you can promote inclusion and make for a meaningful experience for *all* members of your student organization:

Group Structure.

Being inclusive within your organization means that you are involving each and every member. Below are examples that you can adapt to illustrate a feeling of belonging for your group:

- **Recruiting:** Be aware of where and how you are recruiting new members to your organization. Does the location and recruiting language show that you welcome everyone?
- **Empowerment:** Create a climate where everyone has a chance to speak and make decisions in regards to the goals of your group. Inspire your general members to get their voices heard.
- **Committees:** Consider creating committees within your larger organization where members can feel part of a smaller, more impactful group. Committees are a great way to build upon the strengths of your members and allow them to learn a new set of skills will impact their future.

Collaboration.

Being inclusive in terms of group membership is an important part in student organizations; however, it is also important for groups to be inclusive with other student organizations. Collaborating with different groups on campus is a great way to meet and work with other people AND get your group's name out there. A great way to collaborate with other groups is to co-host an event or program. It allows for different perspectives, more resources, and often times more productive and meaningful events. Another way to collaborate with other student groups is to ask a student organization to act as an 'expert' or 'advisor' when trying to do a task or program that they do well. For example, if you were planning to put on an event about diversity, ask some of the organizations that incorporate diversity into their mission statements for tips on how to do so. Or you could contact them to present at your event. Involving others makes your program, and your organization, stronger, wiser, and more inclusive. After all, the more the merrier; right?!

Resources.

Confused about what inclusion is? Want more resources on how to be an inclusive student organization? UWM has just established an Inclusive Excellence Center. Contact the Inclusive Excellence Center staff to talk more about what it means to be inclusive within and outside of your student organization. You can reach out to the Inclusive Excellence Center at: iecenter@uwm.edu.

Adapted from Spark 2012-2013 school year

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