

# TIPS ON LEADERSHIP

## Preparing to Choose a Leadership Position

Involvement and leadership in student organizations is a far-reaching decision. The decision:

- Impacts friendships.
- Is the focus of a student's non-academic time.
- Affects all available time for work, family, friends, recreation, and personal.
- May help you develop marketable skills through practical learning experiences.

Prior to making a commitment to involvement, ask yourself:

- What are your personal needs and values?
- Are the values and goals of the group compatible with yours?
- Do the activities of the group show promise of meeting your needs?
- Will the group allow you enough freedom?
- Will the group provide you the opportunity to grow and develop in the "right" direction?
- What can you offer the group?

Know about the commitment required:

- What is the nature of the position? Is there a job description?
- Is the position elected or appointed?
- How long is the term of office?
- Does the position have budgetary responsibilities?
- Is there a training/orientation program?
- What is the time commitment required?
- Who would I be working with?
- Will I be supervising anyone with their work?

And lastly, consider the advisor's role within the group: (see Advisors, p. 7-8)

- Is the advisor flexible and open?
- Does the advisor contribute to the group?
- Is the advisor committed to the group and willing to commit an appropriate amount of time to you and the group?

Once you have examined your personal goals and interests and have learned more about the position and the commitment required you should evaluate your personal qualities, interests and skills in relation to the position. Ask yourself:

- Do you have the basic needed skills?
- Are you willing to develop any additional skills needed for the job?
- Would you take advantage of training opportunities?
- Can you inspire confidence in yourself and others?
- Do you have a genuine interest in the group and the position?
- Are you willing to make decisions and stand up for what is right?
- Will the job prove to be challenging and rewarding?

When choosing a leadership position remember that many well-intentioned students fail in leadership roles. One of more areas of their life suffer due to over commitment. It is better to make a well thought out decision after considering all the alternatives and weighing all the consequences. By asking yourself the questions above you may be able to avoid a potentially negative experience. "With conscientious efforts, good organizational skills and adequate time commitments, student leadership can be a challenging and rewarding experience.