

Basic FAT Curriculum

The topics for the FAT sessions were determined from the results from 2003's National Study of Student Government Advisers Responsibilities, with emphasis placed on the results from Florida's community colleges. It was approved in August 2007 by the FJCCSGA Advisers Association.

Advisers must attend all eight FAT sessions to receive a certificate of completion. The eight sessions include:

1. Adviser as an Information Resource Person

At this session, advisers will discuss the kinds of information they need to have at their disposal to help students. This includes specific institutional policies and traditions, knowledge about FJCCSGA's structure, meetings, and opportunities for involvement, technology resources on campus, and general information that students may need over the course of a year.

2. Student/Group Development Theory and Models

Advisers attending this session will explore current theories and models of how students and groups develop and function. Special attention will be placed on the role of the adviser in facilitating individual growth and the organization's development. Multiple perspectives will be presented from a variety of theorists.

3. Role Modeling

In this session, advisers will discuss "life in a fishbowl" – when everyone can see one's actions and reactions. As an experience shared by advisers and students alike, the conversation will include the ethical standards for the Student Affairs profession and theories of moral development as applied to student leaders. Special attention will be placed on the roles advisers play in helping students learn to make responsible decisions and on establishing behavioral expectations.

4. Working with Students

This session will examine the many roles advisers play on campus in their interaction with students, including but not limited to: personal counselor, mediator, motivator, and educator. This session will also include a discussion on conflict management, promoting diversity in the SGA, how students use technology, and how students and advisers establish mutual expectations.

5. Meetings & Activities

Participants will learn the responsibilities and duties of the adviser during organizational meetings and events. The conversation will include issues such as seating, speaking rights, body language, and actions during events. They will also address how the adviser's role changes as the group matures and develops, plus look at the impact of technology on meetings and activities. Lastly, this session will include a look at SGA Elections, one of the more significant activities an SGA experiences each year.

6. Student Government Finances

The session will focus on student Activity & Service Fees (A&S Fees) defined in State Statute for community colleges; specifically on appropriate expenditures of these fees, a review of relevant case law, funding models for single and multi-campus institutions, and a background on FJCCSGA's history with this topic. The role of fundraising for the SGA will also be addressed.

7. Legal Issues

In the legal issues program, advisers are introduced to legal terms, sources of law, and issues that advisers are likely to encounter in the day-to-day work. Topics include freedom of speech & assembly, FERPA, and more. While this session does not offer legal advice, it will help participants be aware of potential areas of concern and help them be prepared deal with specific challenges on their campuses.

8. The Legislative Process

The final FAT session examines the "legislative issues" piece of FJCCSGA and will help advisers become more familiar with the process and develop an understanding of how their student can embrace the "representation" part of SGA. The session will look at the relationship FJCCSGA has with the Florida Association of Community Colleges and the Council of Presidents as related to the issues appearing in the FJCCSGA Official Statement of Position, and how students can make their voices heard on campus and in Tallahassee.