

Tiered Safety Programs

The Student Group Safety Program is arranged in three tiers to help groups benchmark their current safety activities and set goals for future improvement. Beginning at Tier 1, groups have a solid baseline to build towards Tiers 2 and 3, with the strength of their program increasing as they add additional elements. A student group's safety program may be at different phases in each of the core elements listed below, with the goal to achieve Tier 3 in all 5 core elements.

A strong safety program can be divided up into 5 core elements.



Each tier is described separately. Remember that a group may not be at the same tier in all 5 categories, and that the tiers are simply intended to help you identify areas where you are doing well, and areas to improve.

Training

A student group has a strong training element if they are able to provide useful, engaging training to students who will be using equipment or performing any hazardous procedures. They also ensure that all students have a good baseline knowledge of safe work practices and emergency preparedness, skills that will be useful as they enter the work force.

Tier 1

- All required training from HSRM, OSHA, SUA, etc. is provided.
- Needs specific to the equipment used or work done have been assessed and adequate training is provided.
- New group members participate in a safety orientation.

Tier 2

- Leadership has completed risk assessment/Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) training through HSRM or other resources.
- Group takes ownership of its training, and has developed training unique to its hazards.
- Group has established a standardized and effective method for tracking personnel training and refresher requirements

Tier 3

- All personnel are provided with risk assessment/JHA training
- Personnel within the group have assumed responsibility for presenting or arranging Training.
- Group encourages further development opportunities within safety training, such as first aid classes, CPR, or other non-essential trainings.

Engagement

A student group has good engagement if students, leadership, and other involved personnel are actively involved in the safety program. Through direct involvement, group efforts, and setting safety as a priority, a safety program can become strong.

Tier 1

- Personnel are trained on and aware of their roles and responsibilities in regards to working safely.
- Group members and leadership understand the importance of safety in their group activities.

Tier 2

- Group leadership is open, approachable, and responsive to personnel concerns, comments, and suggestions.
- Personnel are empowered to perform “quick fixes”, such as housekeeping, PPE corrections, etc.
- Personnel actively provide suggestions on safety improvements.

Tier 3

- All group members participate or initiate JHAs, risk assessment, training development, and other aspects of the safety program.
- Safety is promoted as a core value of the group.

Management and Supervision

A student group has strong management and supervision if their leadership effectively reviews and oversees student group work and activities to ensure they are being performed safely. These leaders also manage the safety program and ensure it is well-functioning. Top performing safety management also includes active student and faculty participation.

Tier 1

- Leadership has established a written safety manual or policy that documents the group's requirements for safe work.
- Leadership has acknowledged the need for safety as a core value, and shows that in their priorities and actions

Tier 2

- Leadership has appointed a specific safety officer who is a point of contact for student safety concerns, can dedicate time to safety improvements, and can be a liaison with HSRM.
- Leadership has assumed responsibility for the safety of the student group and all its members, and takes actions to address safety concerns.
- Group has a system in place to ensure PPE and safe work practices are being used appropriately.

Tier 3

- Leadership has established a standardized system for project review, such as checklist or standard procedure
- Leadership has established a Management of Change procedure for work or procedures done.
- Leadership visibly demonstrates their commitment to safety in ways which can be described by group members

Resources

Student groups should have access to or create safety resources such as procedure or tool checklists, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), emergency response plans, equipment manuals, etc. Groups gather useful available resources, or they create their own based on the specific activities of their group. They will also ensure appropriate safety equipment and supplies are available.

Tier 1

- The group has a safety information repository that includes information such as Safety Data Sheets (SDSs), procedure guidelines, the group's safety manual, and other resources. This repository may be a physical binder in the workspace, a website, a Google Drive folder, or other ways of making the information available to group members.
- Emergency equipment is available in all workspaces, including a fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and emergency procedures.

Tier 2

- Group creates checklists and review procedures used for regular work, training, safety reviews, and inspections.
- Group safety manual is edited as the program continues, and other resources become available.
- Group regularly consults with HSRM on safety concerns and for needed safety resources.

Tier 3

- Group safety information is up to date, and safety manual is reviewed and updated regularly
- Group shares important safety information and assistance throughout the group, including lessons learned, best practices, and other important safety information

Continuous Improvement

A student group has a strong continuous improvement element if they review and improve their safety program over time. They can do this by adding elements as they gain time or resources, fixing elements that are not working well, seeking out feedback from a variety of sources, and using that feedback to shape the program over time.

Tier 1

- Safety and program changes are made in response to incidents.
- Group members are aware of a method to report safety concerns.

Tier 2

- Work activities are periodically evaluated to identify hazards.
- Regularly scheduled meetings and walkthroughs with HSRM are conducted to review and discuss safety concerns.
- Leadership considers ways to improve the safety program by making plans or setting improvement goals.
- Leadership works to make safety improvements that are suggested, and takes personnel concerns seriously and acts to remedy them.

Tier 3

- Group leadership has clear plans for ongoing program improvements
- Group uses leading and lagging indicators to help track safety performance over time.
- Group performs routine self-inspections or walkthroughs to assess their work and work space and fix any safety issues
- Near misses, incidents, etc. are proactively identified and discussed resulting in effective preventive actions.

How Can HSRM Help?

Health, Safety, and Risk Management offers a variety of information, resources, and assistance for many aspects of student group safety. Below is a listing of just some of these.

Training

- Providing training or resources to assist groups in leading their own trainings
- Risk assessment/Job Hazard Analysis trainings
- Basic laboratory safety, Globally Harmonized Communications, and other trainings
- Connections to outside training providers

Information

- Legal requirements
- Best practices
- Fire code, OSHA, University regulations, etc.

Resources

- Facilities Maintenance for concerns about space or material storage
- Templates for safety documents (i.e., student group safety manual, checklists, training guidelines, etc.)

Guidance

- Help resolving safety issues if you don't know where to start or what to do
- How to resolve safety issues or concerns once they are identified
- Best practices for how to perform work safely

Review

- Help identifying safety concerns so we can work to resolve them
- Help in identifying areas for safety program development or improvement
- Help resolving issues that your group has not had success with, or issues that reoccur

Risk Assessment

- Help assessing your work or environment to identify areas that need improvement

Exposure Monitoring

- Assessment of noise, chemicals, etc.

What Tier Are You?

Using the core element reference sheets to guide you, mark which tier your group is closest to for each element below.

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
 Management & Supervision	☐	☐	☐
 Training	☐	☐	☐
 Resources	☐	☐	☐
 Engagement	☐	☐	☐
 Continuous Improvement	☐	☐	☐