

GBM Program Policies and Best Practices 2025-2026

Dear Club Leaders,

Thank you for your continued efforts in making the GBM Program a success. We have made tremendous progress in fostering a more inclusive extracurricular experience at Wharton thus far, and hope to continue doing so by promoting the GBM Program to all undergraduates.

We hope the following guide will help strengthen each club's GBM Program, and to provide more guidance in creating a better GBM experience. **The GBM Program is meant to provide meaningful opportunities for students to participate in clubs, acquire hands-on experience with various topics/industries, and to form connections between passionate students and clubs without holding a formal leadership position.** Not only should a GBM Program ensure that students can identify organizations they are interested in without being a committee member, but it should also help your leadership team identify members with strong potential as future committee or board members.

For students, the GBM Program will alleviate the stress of club applications within their first weeks and help ensure they can find community at Wharton. We hope you can put yourself in your freshman year shoes, and think about the best way you can create a supportive community for incoming students.

Please remember that **ALL Wharton Clubs with a less than 100% acceptance rate for applied positions must offer a GBM Program on the centralized application.** For this upcoming semester, most GBM Policies remain the same as last semester, but we encourage you to read the document in its entirety to enhance your club's and students' extracurricular experience.

Going forward, we will continue to revisit and improve these policies based on the feedback we receive from students and the club leaders in order to achieve the two goals stated above. If you have any questions regarding the policy changes below, we encourage you to contact your Wharton Council club liaison or review our website for more information. Thank you for taking the time to understand the purpose and content of the GBM Program process for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Sincerely,
Wharton Council

Policies

ALL Clubs must submit a GBM Engagement Plan at the start of the semester. The GBM Engagement Plan should act as a timeline of your club's GBM initiatives including socials and meetings so that your club is committed when things get too busy.

- Aim to have at least two GBM meetings monthly or a total of six to ten meetings per semester.
- We understand that clubs have different systems of operation so there is no one single perfect way to write the plan.
- Please reach out to your club liaison if you have any questions or concerns while developing your GBM engagement plan or other required deliverables.



Each club must have a General Body Membership Program Chair¹

The GBM Program Chair will serve as a touchpoint for general body members and be responsible for the following non-exhaustive activities:

- **Maintaining a GBM Engagement Plan**, which should be submitted to us on an annual basis in the Fall unless you anticipate serious changes between semesters:
 - Mapping out all General Body Meetings with a clear timeline: students should be provided a minimum of 6 opportunities to engage with the broader club each semester.
 - Highlight additional opportunities for involvement offered to the general body members
 - Community building social events
 - GBM projects dedicated towards general body members
 - Volunteer events to create a positive impact on the West Philadelphia Community
 - Specific career-related/professional development events (for non-committee members to engage in)
 - Underscore the expectations, and meeting responsibilities for general body members to ensure that members have a clear understanding of what is expected of them when taking on this role.
 - This should help delineate how general body members are different from those on your listserv.
- **Inviting students to join your GBM program**
 - All students must be allowed to join a club's GBM program throughout the semester.
 - GBM's should be given a unique name for the program.
 - **If a student is rejected from a club, they must be offered a GBM position in their rejection email.** The GBM positions should not be advertised as a less meaningful position.
 - Example of a bad rejection email: *I'm sorry to inform you that you have not been accepted into this club, but you can still join our GBM Program.*
 - Example of a good rejection email: *While you didn't get your first choice committee, you have been invited to join our (GBM Program name). We feel as if you would be a great addition to our club in this role.* Then proceed to explain the GBM Program.
 - While not required, participation in the GBM can be promoted as a way to identify candidates that hold strong potential in committee/other leadership roles.
- **Maintaining Lists of General Body Members + Tracking Attendance** throughout the semester.
 - **All events, including GBM, must be tracked through Campus Groups.**
 - You can generate QR codes or ask for a Penn ID reader for easy check-in. There will be training on how to do this during the President's training.
 - Your club should also maintain a separate list of GBM members and people on your listserv. We hope that you differentiate those two roles in a club.

¹ A current board member can serve in this role, in addition to their current role. For some of the larger clubs, we do recommend an additional board member to take this lone title given the workload associated with the role.

Clubs that fail to satisfy these requirements will not be included on the centralized application. This will be tracked by your Wharton Council liaison and revisited at the end-of-semester coffee chat.

Clubs with 100% acceptance rates into committees are exempt from running a GBM Program.

However, if this changes, they must notify Wharton Council, and submit a plan immediately.

Best Practices

We compiled a list of best practices that we believe will help strengthen your GBM program. We encourage you to think creatively about your GBM program so that it provides students with value and unique experiences.

1. Focus on marketing!

- a. Ask yourselves if you would rather join a “General Body Membership” program or a committee with a name that is specific to your club and the role of the GBM member. For example, joining a club’s “Think Tank” or “Volunteer Committee” is more enticing than being offered a general body membership.
- b. When being offered membership, never phrase it as a second-hand position, but instead position it as an opportunity for students to join.
2. Create opportunities for GBM members to become meaningfully involved in your clubs — ask yourself: how can your club provide value to those not in leadership positions? That could mean:
 - a. Special committee for GBM with a task related to your club’s mission
 - b. Host workshops for them to learn about the industry/mission of your club
 - c. Invite GBM members to help review projects that other committees are working onWe encourage you to think outside of the box and identify meaningful opportunities within the context of your club. Perhaps this looks like opportunities for students to make marketing materials, organize an event, spearhead volunteer work, etc.
3. Create mentorship programs between senior members of your club and general body members
4. Ensure that your GBM Chairperson is able to commit to and focus on growing your GBM program and increasing its reach and effectiveness.
5. Organize socials and events where your GBM members and club leaders can get to know each other and mingle.
6. Create a methodology by which the club will collect data about GBM events, communication, and involvement. This data can be used as touchpoints to identify strong potential candidates based on how involved certain members are. Examples of data collection could include:
 - a. Participation rates and email open rates
 - b. Rating quality of participation, satisfaction metrics, etc.
 - c. Event attendance out of the broader scope of general body members
7. Remember to find how GBM members can be valuable to your club and how you can be valuable to your GBM members. We hope to foster a mutually beneficial relationship between clubs and students.

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