

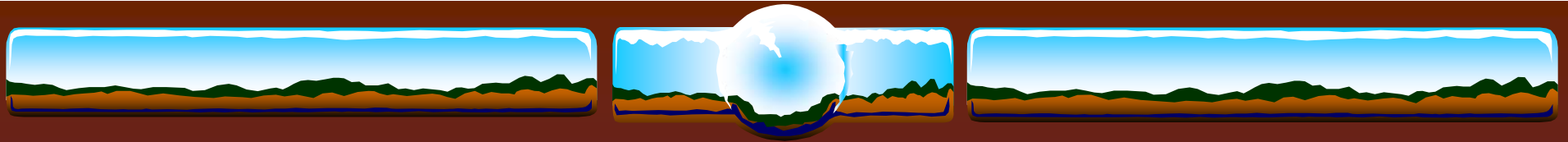
# The Rights and Responsibilities of a Student Organization Advisor

Dana D. Burnett

Professor of Higher Education

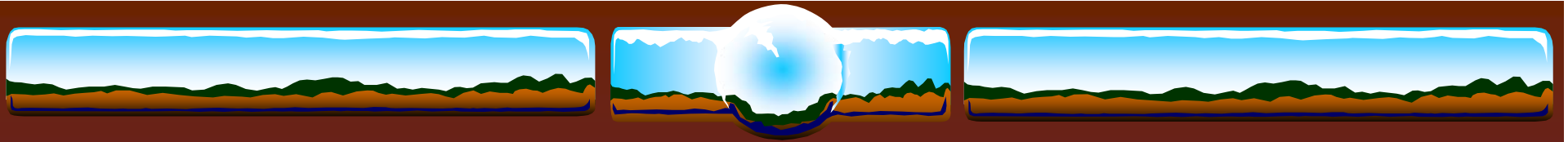
Old Dominion University

With thanks to Dennis Gregory



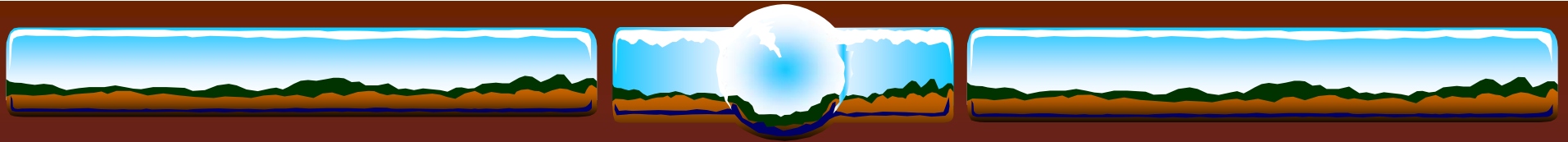
# Organizational Advisor Responsibility

- ❖ Responsibility to the Organization and Its Members
  - ❖ Fiduciary Responsibility to the Organization
  - ❖ If you volunteer or accept responsibility as part of your job, you owe a responsibility of activity
    - ❖ Don't be an absentee advisor
    - ❖ Don't be a "signature" advisor
    - ❖ Model the behavior you want your members to exhibit
    - ❖ "We must become the change we want to see in the world"
      - ❖ Mahatma Gandhi



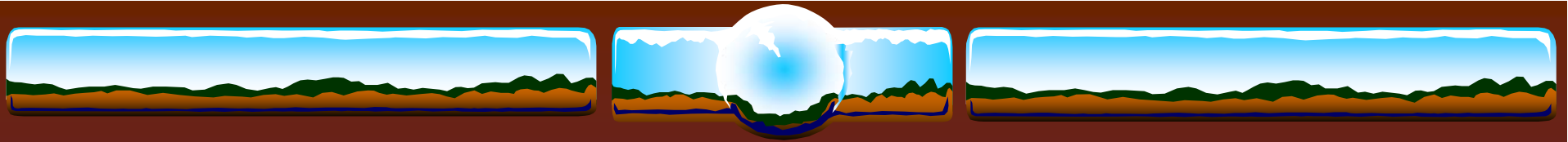
❖ On a college campus, there is a direct correlation between the quality of the advisor and the long term health of the organization

❖ Dana Burnett



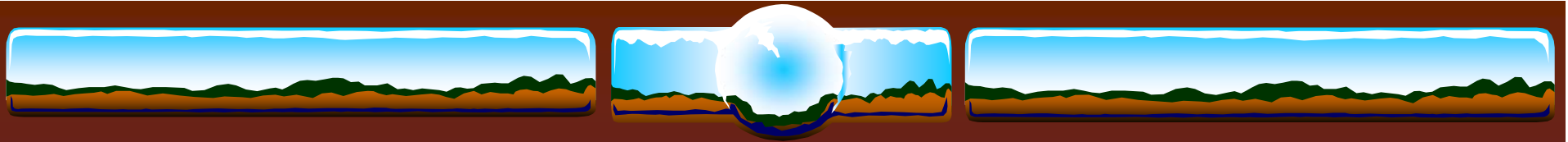
# Organizational Advisor Responsibility

- ❖ Know the policies of the national/international organization and University
- ❖ Get to know University officials responsible for student organizations
- ❖ Get to know the members on a personal as well as professional level
- ❖ Ask good and frequent questions and expect full and timely answers
- ❖ Have higher expectations for officers than you do for general members



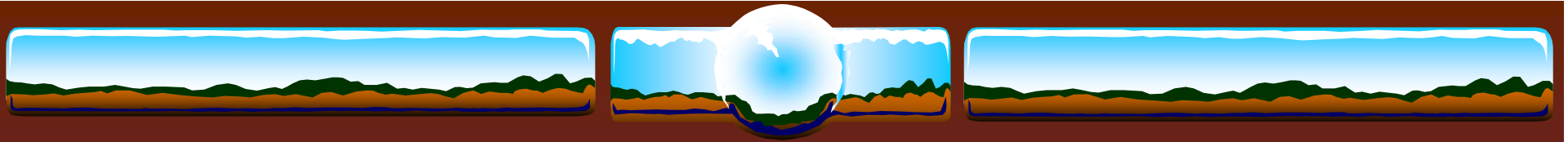
# Organizational Advisor Responsibility

- ❖ Understand issues of liability and risk management if you are involved in an organization which is involved with inherently risky activities
  - ❖ Fraternal organizations
  - ❖ Sports and related clubs and teams
  - ❖ Organizations which travel as part of their activities
- ❖ Understand the other legal issues which may be related to your organization



# Organizational Advisor Responsibility

- ❖ Responsibility to the University
  - ❖ Understand your responsibilities to the organization
  - ❖ If you are a university employee, make sure your supervisor knows you are involved and is comfortable with your role
  - ❖ Understand that when the responsibility to the University and to the organization conflict, the University always has to come first
  - ❖ Understand University policies related to student organizations



# Organizational Advisor Responsibility

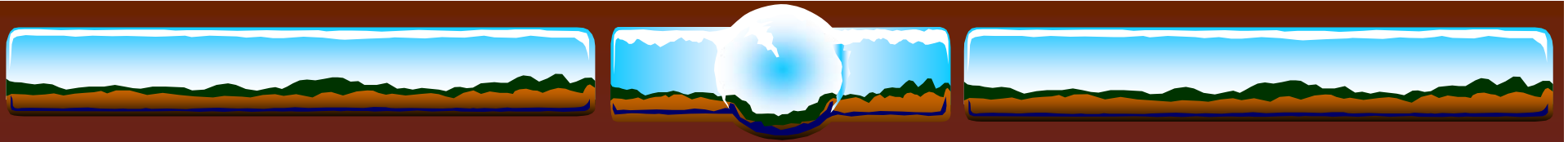
- ❖ Keep University officials informed about the status of your organization and its members
  - ❖ academic issues
  - ❖ conduct issues
  - ❖ health issues
  - ❖ Family issues
  - ❖ Issues which may result in some danger to members or others
  - ❖ Potential liability or other risks



# Organizational Advisor Rights

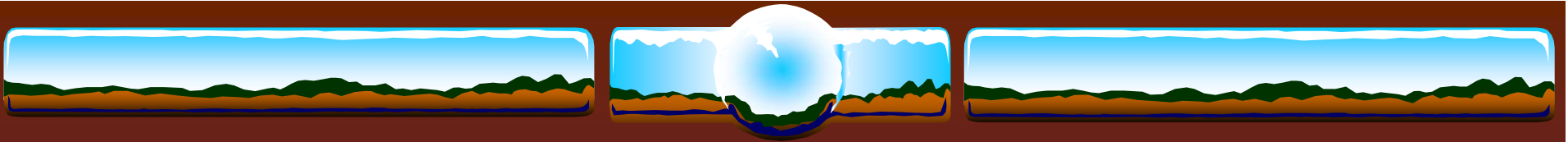
- ❖ A clear description of the expectations which the University and the organization have in your role as advisor
- ❖ Receive training about how to serve as an advisor
- ❖ Ability to reach university officials in a timely way when needed for advice, support and information
- ❖ Ongoing advice and support
- ❖ If a formal part of your duties, appropriate recognition and compensation
- ❖ Indemnification for legal support if acting in the scope of your duties





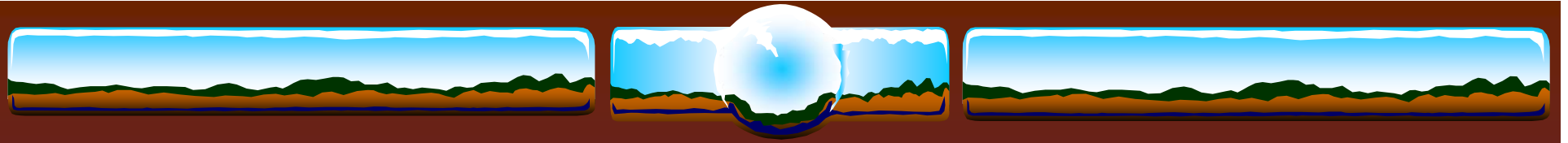
# Challenges

- ❖ Working with College students is rewarding and also potentially hazardous
- ❖ There is always a possibility for controversy no matter how benign the purpose of your organization
- ❖ Make sure you understand the scope of your duties and **ALWAYS** stay within them



# Current Issues Facing Student Organizations

- ❖ Funding Issues
- ❖ Controversial speakers
- ❖ Membership requirements
- ❖ Hazing and other liability issues
- ❖ Issues around travel and budget
- ❖ Alcohol and other substance abuse
- ❖ Student organizations as part of the “Student Success” Initiative begun by President Broderick



## Other Issues

- ❖ Are there other questions that you have that we have not discussed?