

STUDENT ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER STANDARDS PROGRAM



American Public
University System



CHAPTER STANDARDS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Chapter Standards program was developed to enhance and add value to the organization member experience, to create opportunities for leadership and engagement, and build and promote community. The program outlines university expectations for all student organizations and establishes guidelines for honoring and recognizing chapter achievements.

Based on an organization's performance and involvement in the categories of Leadership, Academic Recognition, Professional Development, University Service, and Community Building, the Office of Student Affairs awards chapters with Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze standing.

Organizations are required to maintain active standing and complete basic requirements to remain recognized by the university. **Standings are determined according to the following point system:**

CHAPTER STANDINGS



BRONZE

40

POINTS

Demonstrates a notable standard of chapter involvement



SILVER

70

POINTS

Demonstrates a very high standard of chapter involvement



GOLD

100

POINTS

Demonstrates excellence in chapter involvement



PLATINUM

130

POINTS

Demonstrates an elite level of chapter involvement

All student organizations are expected to remain active by completing the following requirements:

- Reviewing and updating the Chapter Constitution
- Completing an annual plan and submitting to Office of Student Affairs
- Submitting the Officer Transition Form; each Officer accepts role at end of Campus Leader Training
- Attending quarterly President's Roundtable meetings
- Monitoring organization virtual communities to ensure prompt response to pending requests and posts. The chapter must also engage in active dialogue.

REPORTING

The Office of Student Affairs reviews chapter standards quarterly, with a preliminary report issued **February 1st, May 1st, August 1st**. Final reporting is due by **October 31st** and chapters will be notified of their final standing by December 1st.

Organization leaders are required to report chapter activities through the Chapter Standards Reporting form within one (1) week. Additional documentation, such as pictures or meeting notes can be emailed directly to **studentaffairs@apus.edu**.

Chapters will be evaluated on May 1 and November 1 for significant progress towards Active Standing. Chapters who have not made significant progress, as outlined in the Chapter Standards Program, will be placed on a 30-day probation. After 30 days, with no additional progress will be inactivated.

ACTIVITY

EVENTS & DETAILS

LEADERSHIP

Chapter Elections and Leadership Establishment

Organizations are expected to establish and maintain strong and active chapter leadership. Suggested officer roles include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Webmaster, and Advisor. A President or Chair is required for each organization. Elections should take place in the Fall with new leaders assuming roles in January of the following year.

Quarterly Officer Meetings

Officers are expected to meet regularly to keep up with the roles and responsibilities outlined in the organization's constitution. Meetings can occur by phone, virtually, or in-person and should be documented with meeting notes.

New Officer and Advisor Training

The Office of Student Affairs has crafted leadership modules to enhance and support officers. These modules are self-paced and can be viewed any time. Chapter officers and advisors are encouraged to view the training modules to strengthen and broaden their overall understanding of student organizations. Officers and Advisors must submit the Officer Acceptance Form after training to formally begin their role.

Action Plan Meeting

Chapter leadership may schedule a quarterly planning meeting with the Office of Student Affairs to map out activities and events.

Member Feedback

Chapter leadership is expected to collect and share valuable feedback with members utilizing survey tools such as Survey Monkey, Facebook, Google Forms, etc. Member feedback is used to assist chapter leaders in making informed decisions regarding chapter operations and events.

Chapter Websites

Chapters are encouraged to create and maintain a strong web presence to share information and accomplishments, and to advertise chapter activities. Chapter websites may also be used to promote membership to prospective members. Please note, all chapter web sites bearing the university's name or logo, must be approved by The Office of Student Affairs.

Welcoming New Members After Each Membership Drive

Welcoming new members is a vital part of running a student organization, as it is an opportunity to introduce the leadership, chapter projects, and get new members connected to the mission of the organization early. Our expectation is that chapter leaders welcome new members after each membership drive.



ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

Recognition of Academic Achievement

To recognize members' outstanding academic achievements, chapters are encouraged to formally recognize members who have received honors or accolades. Chapters can acknowledge members through social media, newsletters, or during meetings or events.

Recognition of Outgoing Leadership

To recognize the achievement of outgoing leaders, the chapter is encouraged to formally recognize chapter members. Some recognition ideas include posts on social media, e-certificates of appreciation, "shout outs" in the chapter newsletter, etc.

Graduate Recognition

To recognize graduating members on their academic achievement, chapters are encouraged to participate in Commencement-related events and activities annually. Chapters may also opt to recognize graduating members using creative methods at-a-distance, through virtual recognition events.

CareerLink Mentoring Program

Mentoring relationships are focused on the exchange of academic and professional information. Mentees are seeking information and motivation in the pursuit of their goals, while mentors are those a few steps ahead sharing information and experiences. Organization members are encouraged to participate as either mentees or mentors. Organization members who participate as a mentor or mentee in the program can earn Chapter Standards points by completing a post-relationship mentoring survey. Organizations may also opt to host mentoring-related events or group training sessions.

University Awards Program

To recognize the personal and academic achievement of chapter members, each chapter is asked to nominate outstanding student and alumni members, faculty or staff for the University Awards Program, which includes the Dr. Wallace Boston Leadership Award, the James P. Etter Creativity and Innovation Award, the President's Award, Alumni Awards, or Student Organization Awards.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Guest Lectures

Organizations can invite guests to speak on topics related to the organization's mission and objectives. These guest lectures may occur by phone, virtually, or in-person and should conclude with either notes or a recorded session for distribution.

Chapter Project

Whether virtual or in-person, chapters are expected to host a project that includes students, alumni, faculty, and/or professionals in the field. The project should reflect the mission and objectives of the organization. Examples of chapter projects include, but are not limited to, journals, contests, and/or presentations.

Host Lunch and Learn Webinars

Chapters are encouraged to coordinate with the Office of Student Affairs to schedule, plan, and host a presentation in the Lunch and Learn series.

Cross-Chapter Networking

In order to create unity among campus organizations, chapters are encouraged to collaborate on student organization efforts. Student organizations may invite members of another campus organization to participate in a project, or connect with another chapter of the same organization located at other colleges and universities world-wide.

Career Services Connection

Organizations are encouraged to coordinate with the Office of Career Services to provide targeted resources and information to the chapter. Collaboration options include: a group career coaching session, Career Services overview presentation, or a resume workshop. Organizations may opt to advertise services provided by the university.

Attend Lunch and Learn Webinars

The Office of Student Affairs will host Lunch and Learn webinars, intended to provide organization leaders with information on leading their student organization. Webinars will be advertised by the Office of Student Affairs before the event. Members and chapter leaders are invited to attend on behalf of their organization(s).

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

Submit and Publish Content on University Blogs

We are always looking for guest contributions from professionals, experts in the field, and guest writers for APUS blogs. Organization members have the opportunity to contribute their skills, guidance and field experience to the academic body of knowledge at the university, and if the content is accepted will have publishing credits to add to their professional profile. To get started, contact studentaffairs@apus.edu with a topic and writing sample. It is up to the sole discretion of APUS as to whether or not any submitted User Content will be published on our Websites. For more information on content usage you can visit our [Terms of Use](#).

Serve as a University Ambassador

University Ambassadors share their stories and experiences to help elevate the University brand. Student organization members have a unique story to tell about campus engagement through a variety of activities, events, and experiences. Chapter members can earn points for their organization by participating in the Ambassador program -AND- promoting the Ambassador experience within their organization(s).

Grad Central Station

Organizations have the opportunity to participate in the Grad Central Station held on the weekend of Commencement. Additional information will be shared when available. Save the date for May 9-10, 2025!

Submit your story

We love that our students and alumni are purpose-driven, and you may inspire others to accomplish their goals by being a part of our community. Share your story for the chance to be selected as a featured student or alumnus for video, photo, and/or more! Go to www.apus.edu/studentstories to submit your story. Please direct all questions to mystory@apus.edu.

Participate in Virtual Homecoming

APUS hosts a virtual homecoming event in the fall, and the homecoming event has a variety of activities throughout the week (including lunch and learns, webinars, social media engagement posts, and a virtual hangout) that are geared toward connecting our alumni community. Organizations and/or members can participate in Homecoming events.

Plan an APUS Mission-Driven Activity

Chapters have the flexibility to design events and initiatives that reflect their members' interests while upholding APUS's mission of academic excellence, leadership, service, and innovation. Whether hosting a virtual industry panel, coordinating a service-learning project, or leading an interactive skills workshop, these activities strengthen the APUS communication while fostering professional growth. Consider engaging alumni, faculty, or community partners to create impact-driven experience that cultivate integrity, celebrate diversity, and inspire lifelong learning.



COMMUNITY BUILDING

Individual Service Reporting

Chapters are encouraged to survey and report individual member service hours to the university. Hours may include volunteer time, service event participation, general donations, or support provided to organizations or individuals in need. Members can self-report using the [My Service Hours form](#).

Celebration of Personal Milestones

Chapters are encouraged to recognize and celebrate the important life achievements of its chapter members. Acknowledgements can be made on social media, in newsletters, or during meetings. Examples include marriages, births, or job promotions.

Chapter Meetings

To engage all members, chapters are strongly encouraged to host chapter meetings. These meetings can take place by phone, virtually, or in-person, and should be documented with notes or recorded for distribution.

Chapter Newsletters

To share chapter-related news, events, initiatives, and achievements, organizations are encouraged to create and distribute chapter newsletters at least two times per year.

Philanthropic/Community Service

Organizations have the opportunity to incorporate philanthropy as a part of annual chapter activities. Chapters can collaborate with national organizations that feature a community service focus.

Thanking Those Who Serve

Chapters can participate in the “Thanking Those Who Serve” project. Using the university’s online form, found on the Student Activities Center, members can submit letters of thanks to servicemembers at home and abroad.

National Day of Service

The National Day of Service is held in September each year, with events traditionally being held on September 11. Chapters are encouraged to coordinate or participate in a virtual or physical National Day of Service event. Chapters should promote the project by posting information on their organization’s social media pages.

Chapter Field Trips

Organizations can host field trips that align with their mission throughout the year.

Chapter Meet & Greet

Organizations have the opportunity to host meet & greets during the year that allow members to network together. These events can be held in person or in a virtual environment.

The University Directory

The University Directory community provides students and alumni with opportunities to network and connect. Students and alumni can access the Directory through their e-campus login and then by clicking the Directory link in the navigation at the top of the screen. To receive organization credit for participation in the directory, chapter leaders must host one organization sponsored event, propose/create a learning-related resource, or demonstrate that 10% of organization members have a completed profile. Content requests or questions can be directed to studentaffairs@apus.edu.

Recognize Mission-Centric Celebrations

Chapters are encouraged to highlight and celebrate national and international celebrations that align with the mission of their organizations. Activities may include guest speakers, a lunch and learn, newsletter or email spotlights, blog posts, or social media engagement. Examples include Hispanic Heritage Month, PRIDE, Juneteenth, Police Week, National Reading Month, and Earth Hour, to name a few.

The Legacy Project

Organizations have the opportunity to leave a legacy with the University. The Legacy Project will allow organizations to leave their mark at the University. Each organization will choose a project that best fits the organization and continue that project over the years.

Random Act of Kindness

Organizations are encouraged to promote and host activities that will improve collective and individual circumstances through kindness, care, and empathy. Some examples may include supporting a blood drive, volunteering time in the local community, creating an awareness campaign around mission-centric issues, and sending well wishes to both chapter members and those in the greater community.

Mental Health Resources

APUS offers several opportunities to support students during their academic journey. Using the [Mental Health Resources Toolkit](#) to share teletherapy opportunities with UWill and Peer support through TalkCampus.

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Video Posts

Chapters are encouraged to create and post original videos pertaining to upcoming group activities or about subject matter pertaining specifically to the group's mission. The posts should be made to the organization's social media page(s) and a link to the post provided in the chapter standards submission for review.

Membership Drive Support

Chapters are encouraged to make posts on the group's social media pages during their Spring or Fall recruiting periods encouraging non-member to join. This can include a video or written testimonial. Posts should be public so that they can be shared on university-wide channels.

Participate in the Social Influencer Program

The social influencer plays an important support role on our virtual campus and is a professional development opportunity for students and alumni looking to get involved with the university community and enhance communication skills. Email studentaffairs@apus.edu for more information.

#APUSORGS Hashtag Use

Members are encouraged to share their experiences with the university and the organization when posting online. Make a positive post about the university or the organization using the hashtag #APUSORGS. The post must be public so that it can be shared on university-wide channels. Points will be awarded for both posts on the organization and member pages.



LEADERSHIP

Conduct chapter elections; induct officers	5 points
Hold quarterly officer meetings (2 points each)	8 points
Complete required new officer onboarding training	5 points
Create, collect, and share member feedback	5 points
Set-up and maintain a chapter website	8 points
Welcome new members after membership drive (4 points each)	8 points
Action Plan Meeting (2 points each)	8 points

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Host guest lectures (5 points each)	20 points
Coordinate a chapter project (5 points each)	20 points
Cross-chapter network with other organizations	5 points
Advertise Career Services or Virtual Career Fair	5 points
Attend Lunch and Learn Webinars (2 points each)	8 points
Host Lunch and Learn Webinar	10 points

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

Recognize outstanding academic achievement (2 points per quarter)	8 points
Members (mentees or mentors) complete mentoring post-relationship survey (1 point each)	5 points
Host two group mentoring sessions (5 points each)	10 points
Nominate outstanding alumni chapter members for the University Awards Program (2 points per member)	10 points
Recognize outgoing chapter leadership	5 points
Recognize graduating chapter members (2 points per conferral)	12 points

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

Submit and Publish Content on University Blogs (5 points per article)	20 points
Serve as a University Ambassador (2 points each)	10 points
APUS Mission-Driven Activity (5 pts each)	10 points
Submit your story (1 point each)	5 points
Participate in Virtual Homecoming	5 points
Participate in Grad Central Station at Commencement	10 points

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Report individual member service, non-organization related (1 point per member)	10 points
Recognize Personal Milestones (1 point each)	10 points
Host chapter meetings (2 points each)	24 points
Publish and distribute chapter newsletters (2 points)	24 points
Participate in Grad Central Station at Commencement	10 points
Participate in philanthropic/community service activity or event (2 points each)	8 points
Participate in "Thanking Those Who Serve" campaign	2 points
Coordinate National Day of Service Project	5 points
Chapter Field Trips (5 points each)	10 points
Chapter Meet & Greet (5 points each)	10 points
Advertise your student organization in the Directory activity feed annually	5 points
Recognize Mission-Centric Celebrations (5 points each)	20 points
Random Acts of Kindness (2 points each)	12 points
Share University Mental Health Resources (2 points each)	8 points

THE LEGACY PROJECT

(Tiered Point System)

Year One-Create & implement Legacy Project	5 points
Year Two- Continuation of Legacy Project	5 points
3-5 years of implemented Legacy Project	10 points

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Video Post (3 points each)	12 points
Membership Drive Support (3 points each)	6 points
#APUSORGS Screenshot (1 point each)	10 points
Participate in the Social Influencer Program (1 point per member)	10 points

ACTIVE STANDING REQUIREMENTS

Review and Update Chapter Constitution

All organizations must review and update their chapter constitution, with changes tracked. Organizations must seek approval from the Office of Student Affairs and finalize their new constitution by **February 1**.

Annual Plan

All organizations are expected to submit an annual plan by **February 1**. The annual plan assists student organizations and Student Affairs in the planning and implementation of activities throughout the year.

Chapter Leadership Updates

All organizations are expected to update the [Officer Transition Form](#) by **October 31**. The Office of Student Affairs relies on leadership updates to best communicate with chapter leadership. Chapter Officers are required to register and complete the program requirements to serve. All student organization members are encouraged to register and complete the program.

President's Roundtable Meetings

At least one organization leader is required to attend the quarterly President's Roundtable Meeting. These virtual meetings cover university initiatives and information relevant to leaders. **2025 Dates: January 16, April 17, August 12, October 9.**

Virtual Communities

All organizations are expected to maintain recognized virtual community sites by facilitating posts and conversations, accepting member requests, and ensuring information is up-to-date through the year.

Chapters will be evaluated on June 1 and November 1 for significant progress towards Active Standing. After 30 days, chapters who have made no additional progress will be inactivated. After 30 days, with no additional progress will be inactivated.

IMPORTANT NOTE: [Extra Credit](#)

The Office of Student Affairs will substitute or add new activities to assist in the achievement of chapter standing initiatives. Be creative! Your ideas may be added to next year's Chapter Standards Program. Extra credit will be limited to 5 points per program area; 20 points per year.

Examples may include:

- **Leadership:** Present at a conference, encouraging member participation in university surveys, completing the Campus Leadership role reflection
- **Academic Recognition:** Sharing scholarship opportunities
- **Professional Development:** Sharing job openings and career opportunities, attending an organization conference/convention
- **University Service:** Serving on the Alumni Advisory Council, serving as a University Ambassador
- **Community Building:** Hosting a club book discussion, extra community service project, participating in Industry Advisory Council



CHAPTER FINANCES

Chapters will be awarded annual funding based on their chapter's standing, recognizing their commitment to member engagement, creating leadership and development opportunities, and participating in university and community service initiatives.

IN 2025, FUNDS WILL BE ALLOCATED BASED ON THE FOLLOWING STANDING:



\$1,250



\$1,000



\$700



\$300



\$100

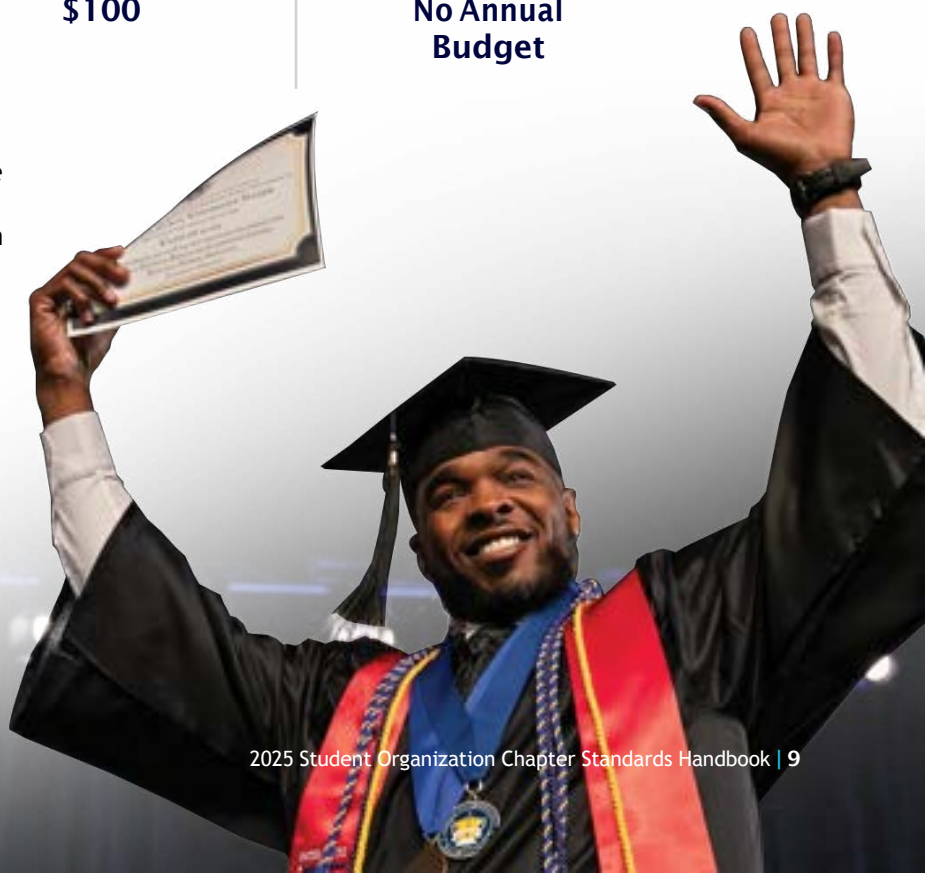


**No Annual
Budget**

Chapter leaders can request to use funds at any time throughout the year using the [Budget Dispersal Request Form](#). Please make sure to submit the form at least two weeks in advance.

Additional funding may be requested throughout the year to support the mission of the student organization. All requests must be approved by the Chapter Advisor and the Office of Student Affairs.

Student organization budget allocation is dependent on university budget approval.



CHAPTER AWARDS

The university recognizes the outstanding achievements and exceptional leadership of the student organizations through Chapter Awards.

Organizations that remain active, per the Chapter Standards Program, will have an opportunity to apply for chapter awards. These awards include: Chapter of the Year, Outstanding New Student Organization, Chapter Advisor of the Year, and Outstanding Campus Leadership Award.



The Chapter of the Year Award

This award recognizes an organization that exemplifies outstanding achievements in leadership, engagement, service, and commemoration. The Chapter of the Year Award is awarded to a chapter who has set a high standard for other organizations to follow.



The Outstanding New Student Organization Award

This award recognizes a recently established student organization that exhibits initiative in organizational development and a strong potential to contribute to the quality of campus life. The Outstanding New Student Organization Award is presented to a student organization that has established a positive presence at the university, and has collaborated with other student organizations or university departments to ensure a firm foundation for the chapter.



The Chapter Advisor of the Year Award

This award recognizes an outstanding faculty or staff member who actively provides support and guidance to a student organization. The Chapter Advisor of the Year Award is presented to an individual who sets the standard and provides exemplary service to the organization and its leadership team.



The Outstanding Campus Leader Award

This award recognizes student leaders who have contributed significantly to an organization by going above and beyond to engage members. The Outstanding Campus Leader Award may be given to three outstanding officers or student/alumni members. Recipients of the Outstanding Campus Leader Award will receive a scholarship for one course.



The Legacy Project Award

This award recognizes an organization that has created and implemented a Legacy Project that will continue with the chapter each year and allow them to leave a legacy at the University. The Legacy Project Award is awarded to a chapter who has implemented and set a high standard for other organizations to follow.

Recognizes a chapter who demonstrates a commitment to ongoing improvement and/or sustained community efforts over time. Legacy projects should be able to demonstrate a long term impact.

APPLICATIONS DUE

January 24th



PLATINUM LEVEL



CRITERIA

In order to receive the Platinum designation, chapters must have:



Achieved Gold or higher in the previous two years



Earned at least 130 points for the current year

REWARDS

- Annual Budget: \$1,250
- One night lodging at Gaylord Resort
- Recognition at the Grad Central Station through signage and during announcements
- Recognition in the APUS Library and Archives on a Perpetual Plaque
- Hosting of Independent Chapter Website for 1 year

CRITERIA

In order to receive the GOLD designation, chapters must have:



Earned at least 100 points for the current year

REWARDS

- Annual Budget: \$1,000

CHAPTER STANDARDS REPORT SUBMISSIONS

After completing any of the chapter standards activities fill out a [Chapter Standards Reporting Form](#) to document the group's participation. The information on the form will be evaluated and the organization's tracking sheet updated within 3 to 5 business days. A designated representative from year organization should collect relevant details about each activity, including date, time, attendees, links, images, etc. For activities that include reporting of individual member participation, organization leaders should collect this information and submit on behalf of the chapter.

FAQ SHEET

What is the purpose of the Chapter Standards Program?

The University strives to build community by connecting students, alumni, faculty and staff with common interests in organizations that complement the university's mission—specifically in the categories of academics, service, and leadership. The Chapter Standards program provides opportunities for member engagement and encourages organizations to build leadership and involve members in projects, activities, and events related to the organization's purpose.

What awards and recognition are provided to outstanding organizations and leaders?

The University is committed to recognizing outstanding chapter and leader achievements throughout the year. Recognition includes, but is not limited to, chapter standards certificates, recognition letters, displaying accomplishments on the public web, and additional acknowledgment at annual Commencement activities.

What role do the chapter advisors play in the Chapter Standards Program?

Chapter advisors lead and provide guidance to student and alumni officers. The chapter advisor's primary role is to build competent leaders and ensure officers are abiding by the rules and policies provided in the Student Handbook and The Student Organization Handbook. Chapter advisors work directly with the Office of Student Affairs to report organization challenges, communicate with national affiliates, conduct/verify financial transactions, and support membership drives.

What role do the student/alumni chapter officers play in the Chapter Standards Program?

Student and alumni chapter leaders and/or officers are responsible for leading a chapter to at least active standing, per the Chapter Standards program. This leadership includes, but is not limited to, planning and executing chapter activities, welcoming and onboarding new members, submitting chapter paperwork (including annual planning and leadership transition documents), and maintaining a social media presence.

How and when are chapter leaders responsible for reporting activities/events/projects?

Chapter leaders are asked to submit activities throughout the year, using the leadership forms displayed within the Student Organization Hub. Preliminary reports are provided to chapter leaders on February 1, May 1, and August 1 to share the chapter's formal progress. Chapter leaders must report all activities within a week of completion. Final reporting is due by October 31st for final analysis.

If an accomplishment does not fall into an activity or event category, does it still count as points towards chapter standing?

Accomplishments and activities outside of the Chapter Standards program are supported and encouraged. Organization leaders should report the items on the Chapter Standards Reporting Form and reach out to the Office of Student Affairs for evaluation. A Student Affairs Liaison will determine the amount of points allocated to the accomplishment.

What is the expectation for organizations that have not been established for a full year?

All student organizations are expected to achieve at least active standing per the Chapter Standards Program regardless of the establishment date. Student organizations established in August, September, and October are expected to demonstrate a good faith effort to achieving active standing.



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