



# STUDENT ORGANIZATION CHAPTER STANDARDS PROGRAM 2021



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
- 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](mailto: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.

### 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. It's our expectation that this will be done after each new roster is sent out to organization leaders.

### Action Plan Meeting

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

## 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.

### ClearPath Mentoring Program

ClearPath Mentoring is focused on the exchange of academic and professional information by mentors (information sharers) and mentees (information seekers). Student organizations are encouraged to support the program by promoting member involvement and participation.

### 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.

### 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.

# ACTIVITY EVENTS & DETAILS

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Guest Lectures

Organizations are expected to 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.

### 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.

### 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.

## UNIVERSITY SERVICE

### 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](mailto: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](#).

### 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](mailto:studentaffairs@apus.edu) for more information.

### Attend University Event

Each year, American Public University System hosts events across the United States to foster community engagement among students, graduates, faculty, and staff. These events are ideal for members of our university community to network and mingle with fellow students, alumni, faculty, staff and prospective students. For a full listing of upcoming events, visit [www.apus.edu/events](http://www.apus.edu/events)

### 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](http://www.apus.edu/studentstories) to submit your story. Please direct all questions to [mystory@apus.edu](mailto:mystory@apus.edu).

### Join Insider HQ, an online community designed for our students and alumni

Join [InsiderHQ](#) to access your personal university referral link, share experiences with peers, engage in fun activities, and more. For every "challenge" completed, you will "level up," climb the leaderboard, and earn points to redeem rewards! Please email questions to [Insider@apus.edu](mailto:Insider@apus.edu)

### Apply to become a University Ambassador

The University Ambassador Program is a select group of students and alumni who are passionate about their experience and eager to share university pride with their professional and social circles. See criteria and submit your application below:  
[American Military University – University Ambassador Program](#)  
[American Public University – University Ambassador Program](#)



# ACTIVITY EVENTS & DETAILS

## 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.

### Grad Fest

Organizations have the opportunity to participate in the Grad Fest held on the weekend of Commencement.

### 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 are encouraged to 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 Trip

Organizations have the opportunity to host field trips that align with the mission of the organization 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.



# ACTIVITY EVENTS & DETAILS

## 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**

## ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

- Recognize outstanding academic achievement (2 points per quarter) **8 points**
- Participate in ClearPath Mentoring Program
  - Mentee (1 point/member) **5 points**
  - Mentor (2 points/member) **10 points**
- Nominate outstanding alumni chapter members for the University Awards Program (2 points per nominee) **10 points**
- Recognize outgoing chapter leadership **5 points**
- Recognize graduating chapter members (2 points per conferral) **12 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**

## UNIVERSITY SERVICE

- Submit and Publish Content on University Blogs (1 point/article) **8 points**
- Participate in the Social Influencer Program (1 point/member) **10 points**
- Attend Alumni or Community Events (2 points/event) **8 points**
- Submit your story (1 point/each) **5 points**
- Serve as a University Ambassador (2 points/member) **10 points**
- Join InsiderHQ (1 point/member) **10 points**

## COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Report individual member service, non-organization related (1 point/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 Fest 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**

### 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.

# 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. **2021 Dates: January 13, April 14, August 11, October 13**

## 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 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.*

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Extra Credit Examples

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, Attend 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

# 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 2021, 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.**



# 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.**

## —Applications due February 1st—



### **The Chapter of the Year 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**

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**

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**

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.

# PLATINUM LEVEL



## Criteria

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

- Achieved Gold or higher in the previous two years.
- Have earned 130 in the current year.

## Incentives

- Recognition at the Grad Fest – through signage and during announcements
- One night lodging at Gaylord Resort
- Invitation to Welcome Reception at Commencement
- Recognition in the APUS Library and Archives on a Perpetual Plaque
- Hosting of Independent Chapter Website for 1 year
- Annual Budget - \$1,250



# FAQ SHEET

## **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 is the purpose of the Chapter Standards Program?**

The University strives to build community at the university 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 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.



American Public  

---

University System

