Network Professional Association

Chapter Handbook
Supplement
Student Chapters

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Chapter Definition and Affiliation

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This document is a supplement to the NPA CHAPTER HANDBOOK which is the
policy for all Chapter operations. This document defines additional
conditions related to a Student Chapter.
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Definition and Purpose of a Student Chapter

In order to support students who are pursuing an education in the networking field the Network Professional Association® (NPA) allows students of post-secondary educational institutions to join the organization as student member of an affiliated student chapter. Each student chapter must be affiliated with an educational institution that provides a faculty advisor to the student chapter. The faculty advisor must be a member of the educational staff of the college or university, according to the policies of that institution, and further, must be a member of NPA in good standing.

There must be a minimum of 10 qualified students to start a student chapter. Each student member is a member of the NPA, with individual dues paid to the association in addition to any dues required by the student chapter according to the policies and procedures set forth by the Association. Each student applying for membership must be enrolled in a major field of study leading to entry in the field of networking, and be a candidate for a degree program in accordance with the policies of the host educational institution.

Student Chapter Creation Overview

- An institution desiring to create a student chapter should complete the initial student chapter information form and forward it to the NPA national student chapter manager to begin the application process. The initial student chapter information form can be downloaded from the NPA national web site at http://www.npa.org.

- Upon receipt of the information form the NPA national student chapter manager will establish the initial contact with the educational institution to identify the person or persons who will be responsible for the student chapter activities and to determine the possibility of organizing a student chapter. The NPA student chapter manger will work with interested faculty/staff/students to assign a local student chapter coordinator (coordinator) who will facilitate the creation of the chapter.

- The prospective chapter identifies a faculty advisor (advisor), solicits the support of at least ten students, and determines the steps required to become an officially sanctioned student organization at the host institution. The educational institution approves the faculty advisor; the contact for the student chapter who works most closely with the association. The advisor is the person responsible for insuring that the institutional requirements for organized groups are met. Initially, the advisor and coordinator work cooperatively to develop an effective organizational meeting with information and publicity materials available to be able to answer the questions of the prospective student members. The organizing advisor and the person accepting responsibilities for the continuing operation of the student chapter may not necessarily be the same person.

- The educational institution must specify in writing that the student chapter being organized meets the requirements for student organizations at that institution. Usually, this letter is produced by the dean or other designated institution official. Each student chapter must maintain official status as a student organization for that institution.

- Students interested in the NPA student chapter must be enrolled in a major field of study leading to entry in the field of networking in accordance to host institution policy.

- The prospective student members who have made application for membership meet with the advisor to elect or appoint chartering officers of the student chapter. There must be at least 10 prospective members who have made application for membership to be able to charter such a chapter.

- The student chapter gathers the completed membership application from each prospective member, together with the appropriate association dues for student chapter members. The chapter then submits these items with a transmittal form for new members, and an application for student chapter affiliation to the student chapter coordinator.

- The student chapter coordinator signs the application for affiliation. The items from the student chapter plus this letter of acceptance of sponsorship become the supporting documents for the organization of a student chapter. The materials are then forwarded to the NPA Board of Directors for approval.

Organizing a Student Chapter

As previously mentioned student chapters must be affiliated with both the host institution and the NPA. Student chapters should be sponsored by local professional chapters whenever possible.

The NPA will assign a student chapter coordinator to the prospective student chapter. If there is a local sponsoring professional chapter the coordinator should be a member of the local chapter. The coordinator is responsible for assisting in organizing new student chapters.

During the organizing phase, the institution and prospective student members will look to the coordinator for leadership, direction and answers to questions of both a procedural and general nature. Therefore, a good understanding of the NPA, its organization, its membership benefits and services, and the student chapter program will be extremely helpful.

Who does what and in what order?

1. The NPA National Organization will:
   Select a student chapter coordinator for the prospective chapter. It is suggested that the term of the appointment coincide with the academic year in the interest of continuity.

2. The Student Chapter Coordinator will:
   - Establish initial contact with the institution to determine person(s) responsible for student activities.
   - Identify an interested faculty member who will assist in the initial phase, preferably one who will agree to serve as advisor to the student chapter once it is organized.
   - Converse with institutional representatives, including the faculty advisor, to:
      1) Explain:
         - NPA
         - NPA's purpose,
         - The NPA student chapter program
      2) Determine:
         - the institution's regulations regarding student organizations
         - the institution's requirements for faculty advisors
         - the institution's expectations of NPA affiliation.
   - Work with the prospective faculty advisor on ideas to publicize the organizational meeting through the campus newspaper, bulletin boards, bulletin boards, flyers at class registration and brief announcements in networking classes.

3. The Faculty Advisor will:
   - Work with the student chapter coordinator to develop an effective organizational meeting strategy.
   - Meet with interested students at the scheduled organizational meeting, to explain:

- o NPA
- o NPA's purpose,
- o The NPA student chapter program

NOTE: *Following the brief presentation, time should be allowed to answer any individual questions to determine if there is sufficient interest to organize a student chapter (it takes 10 qualified students to start a chapter).*

- Obtain a letter from the dean or other designated official attesting that the student chapter meets the requirements for student organizations at the school.
- Verify that the students applying for membership are enrolled in a major field of study leading to entry in the field of information processing, and are candidates for a degree program in accordance with institutional policy.
- Meet with the students who have made application for membership to appoint or select the chartering officers of the chapter. If the chartering members know one another through prior classroom contact, and there are enough members to elect officers, officers may be elected. Otherwise, officers may be appointed. Their term of office can be either until all of the organizational and administrative matters have been completed, at which time chapter officers can be elected, or until the end of the academic year, at which time officers for the coming year would be elected. Minimally, the officers required are a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer (or secretary-treasurer).

4. The Student Chapter Coordinator will:
   Assist the prospective faculty advisor to ensure that all of the institutional requirements to organize a chapter are met.

5. The Coordinator and Advisor will:
   Assist the student chapter officers in the development of a constitution and bylaws.

6. The Officers will:
   Present the proposed constitution and bylaws to the chapter membership at a meeting called for the specific purpose of adopting the proposed Constitution and Bylaws.

7. The Officers and Faculty Advisor will:
   - Obtain a completed student chapter membership application from each interested student together with the necessary dues
   - Complete the transmittal form for new student members and the application for student chapter affiliation
   - Send these items to student chapter coordinator

8. The Coordinator will:
   Review all required items received from the faculty advisor and sign the application for student chapter affiliation. Send all supporting documents to NPA

headquarters along with the transmittal form, completed student membership applications and required funds.

9. <u>NPA Headquarters will:</u>
   - Accept or reject the application in accordance with policy.
   - Notify the student chapter coordinator and faculty advisor, in writing, of the action taken. If rejected, reasons will be indicated.
   - Assign a student chapter number to approved chapters, update the membership data base, add the name of the coordinator to the sponsoring chapter officer list, and prepare the Charter and forward to the coordinator. Send membership certificates, cards, and initial supplies to the advisor.

10. <u>The Faculty Advisor and Student Chapter Membership Committee will:</u>
    Receive and issue the membership certificates and cards when they are received from NPA headquarters.

Student Chapter Operations Responsibilities

Faculty Advisor

The faculty advisor is the liaison between the student chapter and the student chapter coordinator who represents the sponsoring chapter. The advisor is responsible for ascertaining the chapter is functioning in compliance with the policies and procedures set forth by the NPA Board of Directors for student chapters.

The advisor has specific responsibilities in assisting and monitoring the performance of an existing chapter:

- Assist the student chapters in planning, organizing and conducting chapter programs and business.
- Assist the Membership Committee in verifying that the application of a potential new member qualifies that person to apply for membership.
- Approve all chapter disbursement vouchers.
- Receive membership certificates and cards from NPA headquarters and ensure their presentation by the student chapter membership committee.
- Receive membership renewal invoices and distribute to member(s).
- Approve all student chapter requests where the college/university is involved. Present the request to the appropriate officials.
- Attend student chapter meetings. Be prepared to provide a report, if necessary.
- Provide support to student chapter Officers.
- Assist in and monitor all student chapter elections.
- Ascertain that a student chapter Code of Ethics is consistent with NPA professional ethics.
- Ascertain that chapter meetings are conducted in accordance with parliamentary procedures.
- Obtain and provide to the chapter membership information pertaining to scholarships, certification examinations, certification reviews, and any other information which could enhance the career of a student.
- Encourage the chapter membership to be come certified.
- Meet with graduating students to discuss with them the benefits of professional NPA membership and the importance of continuing their professional development.
- Encourage student chapter members and faculty advisors to attend NPA sponsored events and professional chapter meetings whenever practical.
- Report on student chapter activities to the national student chapter liaison on a regular basis.

NPA Headquarters

NPA headquarters performs administrative functions and provides assistance to local chapters. These responsibilities include:

- Update the student membership database upon receipt of approved applications for membership in a student chapter. The student member name, mailing address and permanent address ensures that contact can be maintained with the student.
- Prepare the student chapter membership roster on per semester/quarter/trimester basis based on the student membership database. The report will be prepared in two copies, with a copy sent to both the faculty advisor and the sponsoring chapter's president or designee.
- Review and approve any changes to the student chapter constitution and bylaws that have been previously approved by the chapter.
- Identify the closest professional chapter serving the area in which graduating members will be working, upon receipt of the graduating student member employment information.

Student Chapter Officers

The student chapter membership is responsible for electing chapter officers, who will provide ongoing leadership. As a group the chapter officers are responsible for planning, organizing, controlling and administering chapter activities.

The organizational structure of NPA student chapters is similar to that of other organizations student officers are president, vice president, secretary, treasurer (or secretary/treasurer) who serve as the executive board. Additional can be elected or appointed for other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the chapter officers.

There are general and specific responsibilities for each of the officers and committee chairpersons on which successful chapter operation is dependent.

President

- Presides at meetings, convenes special meetings and appoints committees, as needed.
- Disseminates material received from the NPA to the student members.

Vice President

- Presides at all meetings in the president's absence.
- Plans and coordinates the programs for the chapter year. If a program committee chairperson is not appointed/elected, the vice president generally serves as the program committee chairperson.

Secretary

- Keeps all chapter records including minutes of meetings
- Handles any official correspondence which may be necessary.
- Completes the Student Chapter Officers reporting form and forwards it to NPA headquarters. This should be done immediately following a change in any or all of the chapter officers.

- Prepares a brief summary of the chapter's activities and forwards it to the chapter membership and faculty advisor on a monthly basis via e-mail, web site, or other appropriate form of communication.

Treasurer

- Keeps all chapter financial records and disburses chapter funds in accordance with the chapter policy.
- Completes the Transmittal Form for New Student Members for all approved membership applications.
- Remits Association dues together with the completed Transmittal Form for New Student Members and approved Applications for Membership in a student chapter to NPA headquarters.

Additional Elected/Appointed Student Chapter Chairpersons

As student chapters grow it is recommended that the duties required to make the chapter successful be divided among additional people. For new or smaller chapters the following roles can be combined with the roles and responsibilities of the executive board officers.

Program Committee Chairperson

- Coordinates the monthly meeting programs.
- Selects programs which will provide professional enrichment to the members.
- Selects subjects which are in line with classroom topics thus enabling the members to interact with the speaker during the question-and-answer session of the program.
- Plans social and service activities, keeping in mind the primary purpose of the chapter is to create professionalism.
- Conducts tours of the institution of prospective members.
- Welcomes new members to the chapter.
- Performs other program duties as assigned by the president.

Membership Committee Chairperson

- Processes applications for membership.
  - Provides an application to a prospective member, instructing the prospective member to complete and return it as soon as possible to the membership committee.
  - Receives the application and confirms with the faculty advisor that the student is enrolled in a program which meets the requirements to become a member.
  - Presents the application to the Executive Board for approval/disapproval.
  - Recognizes the new member at the regular meeting, if approved; notifies the student, if disapproved.

- Notifies the faculty advisor and the student chapter officers of members who are in violation of membership policy, rules and requirements.
- Directs and coordinates chapter membership drives.
- Promotes the chapter by publicizing presentations in the campus bulletin, on bulletin boards, handouts during registration, and by inviting students to the meetings.
- Reviews the Headquarters Roster together with any internal records to verify that the entries on the current membership list are accurate.

Education Committee Chairperson

- Encourages the student chapter membership to speak at regular meetings or externally as opportunities arise.
- Organizes a tutorial service for information technology students using the student chapter membership as tutors. This could be a social service, or a fund raiser for the chapter.
- Scholarship opportunities should be thoroughly explored by the Chairperson and the Education Committee. When a scholarship becomes available, the student chapter membership, the faculty advisor, and the coordinator should all be notified.
- Encourages participation in seminars offered by the sponsoring chapter, usually at a reduced price for students. Plans seminars internally for the benefit of student chapter members, or as fund raisers.

Public Relations Committee Chairperson

- Meeting and special event announcements should be prominently displayed prior to the event.
- A student chapter Newsletter should be made available to all members to keep them current with chapter activities.
- Information should be sent to the NPA headquarters student chapter liaison.

Student Chapter Activities

The following is a list of activities that student chapters can undertake. Some are mandatory (e.g., regular meetings, election of officers, etc.); others should be given strong consideration by student chapter leaders. The imagination of chapter members can, and should, also be applied to develop additional activities.

Operations

ELECTION OF OFFICERS—Provision is made in the chapter bylaws for elections. Chapter officers should think about nominations, etc. well ahead of the election date and communicate election information to the chapter members.

STANDING COMMITTEES—Immediately following the election of officers, the chairpersons for standing committees implemented by the chapters should be selected. Those chairpersons should then select members to serve on their committees and set about planning for the upcoming term.

OFFICER, CHAIRPERSON TRAINING—A great way to begin a new administrative term is for the new officers to coordinate a meeting at which the objectives and expectations for the chapter are communicated and discussed. The responsibilities and duties for each officer and chairperson should be reviewed at the same time. The faculty advisor should be consulted in planning for the training session and be present at the session.

CHAPTER MEETINGS—Meetings involving the entire chapter membership should be held on a regular, periodic basis. A minimum of six such meetings are required during each academic year. Typically, these meetings should feature a speaker. Chapter business should be limited to brief reports from the standing committees on topics relevant to all members. Committee work should be conducted by the committee at another time. Policy making activities should be limited to executive committee or board meetings unless the entire membership comprises the governing body. The senior chapter officer (usually the president) should conduct the meeting in accordance with recognized rules of order. Not only will this make for more interesting and productive meetings, but it will also provide valuable leadership training for the chapter.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS—The governing body should meet periodically, at the discretion of the body, to set and review plans, establish policy, coordinate chapter activities, etc. Whatever actions are taken by the body should be communicated to the membership promptly. As with chapter meetings, governing body meetings should be conducted with a minimum of committee work allowed.

SHARE A FEW GENERAL GUIDELINES—First, chairpersons should be encouraged to work through their committee people (i.e., to delegate). This serves to relieve some burden from the chairperson, provides an opportunity to involve more members of the chapter in active roles and enhances leadership experience. Second, committee activities should be planned, coordinated and monitored through periodic committee meetings, not during chapter or governing body meetings.

MEETING PROGRAMS—Each chapter meeting should feature a pre-planned program. While the majority of such programs should be relevant to information technology, topics of school or community interest can be included on occasion. Speakers can be drawn from the professional NPA member roles, the faculty, chapter membership, and from the community at large.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATION—The nature of the academic year and the number of changes in chapter membership from term to term make continuity of chapter operation a significant challenge. Each chapter will have certain decisions to make regarding its terms of office and other operational aspects. It is recommended that the chapter adhere as closely as possible to the academic terms set up by the school. The responsibility for planning lies with the chapter's governing body. The responsibility for ensuring that such plans are implemented rests largely with the faculty advisor and the sponsoring chapter coordinator, since they are more likely to be on the scene from term to term. Many student chapters that finish the academic year on a strong note in May cease to exist in September because starting plans for the next term were not established. Don't let that happen to your chapter.

INTERACTION WITH THE FACULTY ADVISOR —The faculty advisor is a valuable resource for advising and guiding student chapter operations. His or her role is not, however, to lead the chapter; chapter officers and members do that. While advisors should be conscious of the need for interaction, the student chapter should initiate the contact if a need arises. Advisors and coordinators should be encouraged to attend student chapter meetings and functions.

INTERNSHIP AND JOB PLACEMENT PROGRAMS—Since the major objective of student members is to eventually secure employment in information technology related fields, the potential for gaining experience through cooperative work/study, internships and field study courses should not be overlooked. It is a fact that the majority of employers look for experience before education. Student chapters should work with the school administration to establish such programs if not now available, and to encourage members to take advantage of programs which are available. The same can be said for the school's job placement function.

Membership Growth and Retention

It is difficult to over-emphasize the importance of continuous recruitment of new members and the retention of current members. Planned recruitment should begin immediately after the new academic term begins and continue throughout the term. Open meetings to orient prospective members, incentive programs, social events, etc. can all be used to identify interested students.

Retaining current members and reactivating student members who return after the summer recess are ongoing responsibilities of the membership chairperson, the chapter officers, and all the members. The student chapter roster, provided by NPA headquarters at the beginning of each semester, is an excellent source of information regarding member status. A planned program of review and contact should be

established. A valuable technique for retention is involvement. Chapters should, through committee work, projects, etc., obtain ongoing, active involvement from as many members as possible.

Education

PUBLIC SPEAKING—Student chapter members can improve their leadership and communication skills by speaking before their chapters or outside organizations (e.g., service clubs, etc.).

TUTORING—Student chapter members can increase chapter and personal visibility by tutoring other students and by helping as laboratory assistants.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND STUDENT COMPETITIONS - Scholarship opportunities should be thoroughly explored by the student chapter education committee. The faculty advisor should be aware of opportunities at your institution.

SEMINAR PARTICIPATION—Student members should take advantage of seminars offered by the NPA and other groups. Usually the registration fees are reduced for students. Organizing an internal seminar is an excellent student chapter project. It can enhance knowledge in specialized areas, gain chapter visibility and possibly raise funds.

Public Relations and Communications

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS—Meetings and special event announcements should be attractively prepared and prominently displayed on school bulletin boards, etc.

STUDENT CHAPTER NEWSLETTER - A newsletter should be regularly printed and distributed to student members, advisors, coordinators and prospective members.

NPA NATIONAL WEBSITE - Newsworthy items should be submitted for publication on the NPA website.

COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER STUDENT CHAPTERS—If there are several chapters in the same geographic area, regular communication between chapters can be mutually beneficial. In one area, student chapter presidents are experimenting with a quarterly round table meeting to discuss chapter activities, problem solutions, etc.

Fund Raising

USES OF FUNDS—Newer student chapters may well ask why a chapter would want to raise funds over and above those needed to fund internal operations. Some examples of uses include improvement of information technology facilities in their schools (e.g., purchase of special software, hardware, etc.); scholarships awarded by the student chapter; and funding the attendance of members at seminars, conferences, etc.

FUND RAISING PROJECTS—Some effective fund raising ideas: Sponsoring school functions (dances, etc.), general merchandise sales, bake sales, and diskette sales.