HIP HIP HOORAY, YOU DID IT!

Congrats on taking the first step in forming your new student chapter! As a student, participating in the activities of an American Water Works Association (AWWA) Student Chapter at your school is one of the best ways for you to expand your water knowledge, network with water industry professionals, and launch your career. Participating in student chapter activities also allows you to meet other like-minded students – those who want to protect the world’s most important resource!

The purpose of this guide is to outline the process for starting an AWWA Student Chapter at your school, as well as to provide guidelines and advice on how best to manage your chapter.

Organizational Structure

AWWA was founded in 1881 by 22 individuals representing water utilities in the United States. Take a look at how AWWA has grown:

51,000 Members > 43 Sections

United States > Canada > Mexico

India

AWWA Core Principles

1. Protect Public Health
2. Safeguard the Environment
3. Share Best Practices
4. Inspire Innovation
5. Foster Diversity & Inclusion
An AWWA Student Membership is $20 USD annually and AWWA student chapter members are encouraged to be members of the Association. Once someone becomes a member of AWWA, they are assigned a Section by geography. If the member lives in Texas, they become a member of the Texas Section. Student membership is for degree-seeking individuals attending an accredited educational institution enrolled in the number of hours required by the institution for half-time or full-time status.

Learn more about student membership at www.awwa.org/join. AWWA may require proof of student status.

**MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

The following discounts are available to students who are members of AWWA:

- Free webinars for student chapters
- Discounted conference registration for students
- Technical resources: Manuals, training guides, and benchmarking reports up to 33% off the list price
- Electronic publications of Journal AWWA, OpFlow, and Water Science

**AWWA’S STUDENT CHAPTER PROGRAM**

The AWWA Student Chapter Program was created to educate students about the water industry as a career path, and to educate them about water in general. The structure and day-to-day functioning of AWWA Student Chapters is flexible and should accommodate each school’s policies and needs.

However, the intention and guiding principles of all AWWA Student Chapters should be uniform. Consequently, the student chapter must operate within the governing framework of the Section. It is up to the Section to decide what the requirements for a student chapter may be. The Section will host a student chapter and serve in an advisory capacity. If a Section has a chapter or district in the local community, depending on Section policies, the student chapter can partner with the local area Section chapter to operate together. This can be particularly valuable to help provide continuity and sustain the student chapter over time.
STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

STRUCTURE OF AWWA STUDENT CHAPTER PROGRAM

The general structure of an AWWA Student Chapter consists of an executive committee, who run the chapter, a faculty/staff advisor, who provides guidance and assistance to the executive committee, and the general chapter membership, who participate in student chapter activities and vote during executive committee elections.

Student chapters generally report to the Executive Director of the local Section, or another Section staff member responsible for managing/coordinating student chapters. In some Sections, the student chapter will report directly to the local Section’s Young Professionals Committee. Whomever the Section designates as the student chapter coordinator, shall serve as the point of contact and primary resource for the student chapter(s). This person(s) is responsible for the following:

- Providing information, guidance, assistance and resources to new student chapter leadership
- Assisting Student Chapter Presidents with budget development and reviewing them prior submission to the Boards
- Assisting with planning activities as needed
- Sharing relevant Section Board information to the Student Chapter President
- Informing the Section Boards of any pertinent information/needs of the student chapter(s)
STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

The Student Chapter Executive Committee and Faculty/Staff Advisor are responsible for the following:

• Setting goals for the chapter
• Organizing and promoting chapter events
• Providing feedback to and reporting to the Section

The Student Chapter’s general membership is responsible for:

• Actively participating in student chapter events/activities
• Providing feedback to the Student Chapter Executive Committee
• Voting in the annual student chapter elections

AWWA STUDENT CHAPTER CONSIDERATIONS

Final determinations are to be guided by Section policy. Please note these are recommended considerations and not requirements.

• Five student chapter members
• Faculty or staff advisor
• Bylaws (see AWWA template or as determined by the Section)
• Charter petition (see AWWA template and/or consult with the Section)
• Volunteer job descriptions (Chair, Secretary) (see AWWA template and/or consult with the Section)
• Suggested roles and responsibilities of faculty/staff advisor and student chapter coordinator at the Section
• A copy of the college/university’s regulations for student organizations
• The name of the chapter
• AWWA suggests using “Section Name (along with the name of your college or university) Chapter”
It is open to the Section and the chapter to decide what activities the chapter wants to do or is required to do. Many student chapters hold separate monthly meetings, educational talks, fundraise for a philanthropic organization, attend the Section conference, etc. The local Section can also be a good resource of speakers, events, activities, and financial support. In addition, the chapter could host educational sessions about the water industry on the campus.

Other activities a Section or student chapter may want to consider:

• Establish an internship, job shadow or mentoring program
• Conduct outreach to elementary schools or science fairs
• Participate in the AWWA Fresh Ideas Poster Competition
• Host a career panel
• Hold a water documentary series open to all students at the college/university

MEETINGS

• Orientation for new leadership (including Student Chapter Presidents) should be conducted prior to the first student chapter meeting.
• The Student Chapter will meet at a date, time and location previously communicated to the student members via email, as determined by the bylaws.

COMPETITIONS

The Fresh Ideas Poster Competition is a recommended Section activity which is typically held at the Section’s annual conference. The primary author of the winning poster will represent the Section at the AWWA Annual Conference and Exposition (ACE) Fresh Ideas Competition held annually in June. Membership in AWWA prior to winning the regional competition is not required (but is encouraged).

Questions regarding the Fresh Ideas Poster Competition should be directed at your student chapter coordinator at the Section or the Student Program Manager at AWWA.
The Section’s fiscal calendar is from **January 1st to December 31st**. The budgeting process begins in October and budget requests are typically due by the end of October. The budgeting process means that you are budgeting this year for next year’s student chapter, from August to December. Student Chapter Presidents should work with the student chapter coordinator at the Section to develop a draft annual budget before submitting it to the Section Executive Director or Section staff member. Student chapters can budget for expenses and income (if any) up to a maximum net expense each year, which is determined by the Section. Remaining funds may/may not roll over to the following year. Make sure you work with your student chapter coordinator at the Section to learn more about the specifics of your budget according to your Section.

**ACCEPTABLE EXPENSES**
(Upon prior approval by Chapter Treasurer and your Section)

- Water-related activities such as facility tours, community service projects, competitions, speaker presentations, student chapter recruiting events, etc.
- Food for student chapter activities. This includes food purchased in advance (ex. soda or snacks purchased from the grocery store) or food purchased on the day of the event from a food vender (ex. local restaurant)
- Miscellaneous items for the student chapter, including but not limited to: paper plates, silverware, tape, etc.
- Printing expenses, including printing costs for posters, pamphlets, and other student chapter materials.
- Parking reimbursement for speakers. Remember to collect their receipt and provide them with cash in the amount of the parking expense. Submit their receipt for reimbursement.
- Travel expenses to facility tours and/or service projects (i.e. van rental, mileage)
- Small gifts for speakers or prizes for a raffle

**Student Chapter budget requests for the following items MAY/MAY NOT be approved, depending on Section requirements:**

- Travel expenses to attend Section events/meetings and the Section’s annual conference
- Travel expenses to membership appreciation events
- Entrance fees for tours or activities without a demonstrated water-related element
- Alcohol

*All expense reimbursements are subject to approval by your local Section.*

**FINANCES**

The Student Chapter President is responsible for submitting receipts, invoices and revenues to the Section Treasurer. Expenses and receipts shall be submitted electronically or by mail along with the appropriate reimbursement form.
Some events may require a contract (meeting space, catering, etc.). All contracts must be submitted for review and execution by the Executive Director of the Section or another designated staff member. Student chapter representatives do not have signing authority regarding contracts.

ANNUAL REPORTS

The Section recommends the submission of a student chapter annual report each year. The Student Chapter President is responsible for ensuring that this report is prepared and submitted by email to the Section by May 1.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

AWWA has developed specific policies and procedures for their activities. These policies and procedures are outlined in AWWA’s Board Policy. The following is a list of pertinent policies that should be referenced:

• Alcohol Policy: Provides guidelines for sponsored/hosted events where alcoholic beverages may be served.
• Member Code of Practice: Provides guidelines for professionalism and how we treat each other.