

AEP Mission Statement

The Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP) is a non-profit organization established to facilitate greater relationships between professionals and foster mutual professional growth of our members through those relationships.

This manual will assist AEP Chapters in organizing, establishing and running Student Chapters in their regions. AEP is committed to supporting students who are preparing to pursue careers in the environmental field. AEP strives to encourage students in their efforts to gain knowledge of the various environmental professions and network with environmental professionals in their field of expertise. Students represent the lifeblood of our profession. Their involvement with AEP at an early stage in their careers is invaluable to them for contacts in the environmental profession as well as the source for new, invigorating and motivated staff for our environmental consulting firms and public employment. Supporting our students through an effective chapter organization will have a positive outcome for both our organization and the students.



Introduction

This Student Chapter manual is designed to identify the roles and responsibilities for the local AEP Chapters, Faculty Advisors, and students in meeting the goals and objectives of AEP in a professional manner. All student members and Student Chapters shall operate in accordance with the articles of incorporation and bylaws of AEP. The AEP articles of incorporation and bylaws may be found at: www.califaep.org.

All Student Chapter Board members and the Faculty Advisor(s) shall be provided a copy of this manual.

This Student Chapter manual is organized into the following sections:

- Local AEP Chapter responsibilities to student members and Student Chapters
- Student Membership & Outreach Director and Student Liaison responsibilities
- How to grow student membership and start a Student Chapter
- Faculty Advisors responsibilities
- Student members, Student Board members and Student Chapter responsibilities
- Funding for Student Chapters and appropriate use of AEP funds
- State Student Membership Subcommittee
- Suggested activities
- Liability waiver

At the end of this Student Chapter manual, there are a number of attachments, which include:

- Scholarship information and application
- Call for internships
- Speed Networking announcements
- Liability waiver form

Please note, as the student membership grows and evolves, this Student Chapter manual will also progress and develop to reflect the relationship between AEP and its student members.



Local AEP Chapter Responsibilities to Student Members and Student Chapters

The local sponsoring AEP Chapters will provide support to the Student Chapters and encourage growth and networking opportunities. Sponsoring means providing a person who is the liaison back to AEP and helps the Student Chapters plan and carry out activities. The local AEP Chapter also provides financial assistance and may organize and implement certain Student Chapter activities and opportunities such as scholarships, Basics CEQA Workshop, internships, etc. (see “Suggested Activities” for additional events and “Funding” regarding the financial responsibilities for the use and distribution of financial support)

Each chapter should develop an organization that meets its needs for outreach to students. This can take the form of a voting Board position or appointed position, such as a committee chair. The local AEP Chapters that sponsor Student Chapters should have someone who oversees the Student Chapters. For purposes of this manual, that position will be referred to as the Student Membership & Outreach Director.



Student Membership & Outreach Director and Student Liaison Responsibilities

The Student Membership & Outreach Director (Student Director) is responsible for coordinating and developing student membership and participation from local universities for the local AEP Chapter. As necessary, the Student Director should coordinate with the Vice President of Membership and the Chapter President. The Student Director should serve as the contact person for Student Chapter presidents and associated Faculty Advisors as well as the local AEP Chapter Board. The Student Director should assist the Student Chapter Board and Faculty Advisor(s) in planning and executing activities of the Student Chapter. The Student Director will be advised of all Student Chapter activities prior to the event in order to ensure that the activities are consistent with the goals and objectives of AEP.

If a local AEP Chapter sponsors multiple Student Chapters (at different universities), an individual Campus Liaison(s) (Liaison[s]) can be appointed to help support the Student Director. The Liaison(s) may also be a voting member of the local AEP Chapter Board. This position may work independently or form a committee of Liaisons led by the Student Director.

Student Membership & Outreach Director Responsibilities

- Contact and/or meet with the Faculty Advisors and key staff on a regular basis when forming a Student Chapter and as needed once the Student Chapter has been established.
- Meet with student presidents on a routine basis. It is recommended that meetings are held on campus. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss upcoming events, ideas, concerns, etc.
- Typically, the summer months are less active as students are not enrolled in class. It is recommended that the Student Director, Faculty Advisor(s), and incoming Student Chapter President meet over the summer months to mobilize and create a general structure for the Student Chapter activities and events for the upcoming academic year.
- Mentor and foster constructive dialogue with student presidents with their ideas for the Student Chapters and associated events and projects. All student members are expected to conduct themselves with maturity, professionalism, and respect at all times.



How to Grow Student Membership and Start a Student Chapter

Outreach is a key component to growing the student membership and establishing a Student Chapter. Outreach with local universities is the best way to introduce AEP to the relevant departments, faculty, and ultimately the students.

- Identify local universities and key departments
- Contact these key departments at the local universities and schedule a time to meet on campus to discuss AEP, the local chapter, and the efforts to bridge the gap between student and professionals in the environmental field. The local AEP Chapter may also want to consider reaching out to its professional members to find alumni to work with the Student Director to coordinate with their alma mater
- Establish relationships with key staff/faculty at these departments at the local universities. Identify a faculty member(s) to be the Faculty Advisor(s) for the Student Chapter. It is recommended that two faculty member share the job of Faculty Advisor. Having more than one Faculty Advisor provides the opportunity to have continuity if one Faculty Advisor leaves the University. It is important that Co-Faculty Advisors identify each ones role so that all of the duties of a Faculty Advisor are carried fully.
- The Student Director briefs the Faculty Advisor(s) of their responsibilities to the Student Chapter and AEP. (see “Faculty Advisors” section for detailed responsibilities).
- The Faculty Advisor(s) will determine the appropriate steps necessary to have to Student Chapter recognized as an official campus organization. This will allow the Student Chapter to enjoy campus benefits as an officially recognized student organization (i.e., use of classrooms, audio/visual equipment, etc.)
- With the Faculty Advisor(s), schedule a time to meet with interested students. This may be done through a department meeting for new and returning students if the Student Chapter is being created at the start of the academic year.
- Interested students shall work with the Faculty Advisor(s) and Student Director to identify potential Student Chapter board members for its inaugural board (see “Student members and Student Chapter” section for detailed responsibilities). This board will work with the Faculty Advisor(s) to begin completing the required documentation to charter the Student Chapter with the



How to Grow Student Membership and Start a Student Chapter

University. In most cases the documentation will include drafting a constitution or bylaws to govern how the Student Chapter will function.

- Following adoption by the Student Chapter membership and the University, a copy of the Student Chapter constitution or by-laws shall be forwarded to the local AEP Chapter Board by Student Director.



Faculty Advisors Responsibilities

All student organizations are required to have at least one eligible on-campus Faculty Advisor. When possible it is recommended that more than one Faculty Advisor be identified for each chapter. Having multiple Faculty Advisors ensures that if a Faculty Advisor resigns due to retirement, going to another university, etc., the student chapter organization does not fall apart. Employee eligibility and confirmation of their status is verified by the University when the Student Chapter applies for official recognition status by the University. In addition to any orientation the University requires for Faculty Advisors, the Faculty Advisor(s) must also attend a mandatory advisor orientation with the Student Director so that they fully understand AEP's expectations and their responsibility to the Student Chapter. The Faculty Advisor is an integral part of the organization, and he or she should be someone who is familiar with the interests and mission of the Student Chapter and AEP. They must also be a member in good standing of AEP. Upon the request of a Faculty Advisor(s), the cost of their full regular membership will be funded by the State AEP. The Faculty Advisor(s) shall make this request to the Student Director who will forward the request to the State Student Outreach/Membership Committee.

The Faculty Advisor(s) must coordinate and communicate regularly with the Student Director regarding the status and activities of the Student Chapter. Issues and concerns will be discussed promptly with the Student Director and, as necessary, brought to the local AEP Chapter Board in order to develop a resolution quickly and effectively.

In addition to the responsibilities described above, the general roles and duties for the Faculty Advisors are as follows:

- Serves as an advisor and guide
- Is aware of the policies and procedures for student organizations as identified by the University and ensures that the student leaders and members of the Student Chapter are also aware of them.
- Is familiar with the AEP policies regarding Student Chapters and advises the Student Chapter accordingly
- Is actively involved in the planning of the Student Chapters' activities and programs and also provides signature authority on event approval forms as required by the University
- Encourages leadership and professional development of Student Chapters' members
- Assists with organizational continuity and officer transition
- Alerts student leaders of possible organizational problems and encourages them to explore a variety of strategies to solve such problems



Faculty Advisors Responsibilities

- Serves as a liaison to the local AEP Chapter in junction with the Student Director
- Encourages student leaders to critically examine the organization's structure and activities to ensure compliance with University regulations and AEP policies
- Has regularly scheduled meetings with the Student Chapter officers and members to clearly define the advisor's role and the students' responsibilities.
- Has a meeting with the Student Chapter officers prior to or at the start of the academic year to outline the activities for the year



Student Member, Student Board Members, and Student Chapter Responsibilities

The following are key responsibilities and roles of the Student Chapter and all its student leaders and members.

- The Student Chapters and their members are a part of a professional organization and not merely a campus club. As such, activities will be conducted in a professional manner.
- All Student Chapter activities will be approved by the Faculty Advisor(s) and the Student Director.
- The Student Chapter shall maintain its status as an officially recognized student organization by their respective universities.
- The student members shall follow all rules and regulations of the academic institution at all times, including adhering to the adopted by-laws and all other governing rules as identified by the University.
- **There shall be no alcoholic beverages at any AEP Student Chapter event.**
- At all times, leadership and members of the Student Chapter are to remember that AEP is a professional organization focused on environmental policy not environmental activism.
- No Student Chapter activity or function shall jeopardize AEP's non-profit organization status. It is important to understand that Student Chapter events shall focus on promoting the education of environmental issues and career paths.
- All student members and Student Chapters shall operate in accordance with the articles of incorporation and bylaws of AEP.
- All members of the Student Chapter must be members in good standing of AEP. They must conduct themselves in accordance with AEP's Code of Ethics, be current in their membership dues and not be subject to any disciplinary actions or penalties by the University.
- In order to be a member in good standing, each student member must submit their completed AEP membership application and dues to the State AEP along with proof of enrollment as required.



Student Member, Student Board Members, and Student Chapter Responsibilities

- The Student Chapter shall use the official AEP logo in all chapter materials. Individual Student Chapter shall not modify or alter the official AEP logo in any way.
- A Student Chapter may not create its own independent website. With approval of the Faculty Advisor and the Student Director, a Student Chapter may create a web page that is linked with the local AEP Chapter website. Student Chapter website pages shall be maintained and operated in a professional manner and in accordance with the policies of AEP. Any misuse or abuse of the AEP website shall result in removal and termination of the Student Chapter website page for the remainder of the academic year. Student members who misuse or abuse the website may also be subject to disciplinary action.



Funding for Student Chapters and Appropriate Use of AEP Funds

Student Chapter budgets are identified and determined by the local AEP Chapter Board at start of each calendar year when finalizing the annual chapter budget. The Student Director should provide the local AEP Chapter with information necessary to determine the appropriate level of funding for the Student Chapters. Student Chapter presidents and treasurers may also be consulted.

All Student Chapter activities must be presented and reviewed by the Faculty Advisor(s) and Student Director with input from the local AEP Chapter Board for approval and prior to any purchases. The review process is to ensure that all activities are consistent with AEP and University policies. The review process is also an opportunity to discuss improvements to the suggested activities and any potential liabilities.

Student Chapters will be reimbursed for approved expenditures. Student Chapters will not maintain their own funds or accounts. In order to qualify for reimbursement, an expense report and all related receipts will be submitted to the local AEP Chapter Treasurer. Student Chapters are encouraged to keep a copy of all receipts and to track their expenditures in order to ensure that they do not exceed their budget.

Typically the local AEP Chapter budget for Student Chapters would cover:

- Pizza or snacks and sodas/water for Student Chapter meetings
- Organized approved Student Chapter events (i.e., field trips, community service, panel discussions, student project, etc.)
- **AEP funds shall not be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.**

In addition, as an officially-recognized campus organization, the Student Chapter may also have access to funding through the University. Most universities will have funding set aside for approved activities hosted by officially-recognized campus organizations. Student Chapters are required to consult with their Faculty Advisor(s) to ensure University funds are being obtained and used appropriately. Student Chapters are encouraged to explore this opportunity.



State Student Membership Subcommittee

The AEP State organization provides membership support to both the Local Chapters and the Student Chapters. This support is provided through the State Student Membership Subcommittee (Subcommittee) under the State Membership and Outreach Committee. The Subcommittee is chaired by a member of the State Board and membership consists of the Student Directors from the Local Chapters. Each Local Chapter is encouraged to have its Student Director participate in the Subcommittee.

Each year the chair of Subcommittee prepares a Committee Action Plan for the coming year. The Action Plan identifies Committee activities planned for the coming year including a budget for those activities. The Action Plan will include funding for Faculty Advisors' AEP dues. Sufficient funding should be made available through the AEP State Budget to cover the full regular membership dues for all Faculty Advisors of duly recognized AEP Student Chapters. Upon a request from a Local Chapter Student Director to the State Membership and Outreach Committee a Faculty Advisor's Regular Dues shall be paid from the Subcommittee's Annual Budget.

Grant Opportunities

The AEP State organization provides financial support for approved Student Chapter activities through grants. The grant program is included in the annual State AEP budget and administered by the State Student Outreach Committee. The grant program allows for funds up to \$500 per year to each local AEP Chapter. Grants will be awarded for programs that meet the following requirements:

- Encourages student membership and Student Chapter growth
- Provides career development (i.e., resume preparation, interview skills, professional conduct workshops)
- Provide career training (i.e., Student CEQA Workshop)

Local AEP Chapters may apply for a grant by submitting a detailed description of the proposed program to the State Student Outreach Committee. The detailed description shall include the number of students who are anticipated to participate and the purpose of the program. In addition to the program description, the grant request shall also include a budget for the program that demonstrates how the grant funds will be used. Local AEP Chapters will be advised if their grant application has been approved. If it is not approved, the State Student Outreach Committee will advise the local AEP Chapter as to why the grant application was denied.



Suggested Activities

The following are some examples of programs that can be used to start and going Student Chapters or to provide on-going support to the already established programs. As more Student Chapters are organized local AEP Chapters are encouraged to submit additional ideas to be included in this section of the manual.

Annual Scholarships

(Sample information/application from the San Diego Chapter is attached.)

- One way to raise funds for scholarships is through an Awards Banquet and Ceremony sponsored by a local AEP Chapter. In addition to sponsorships for a program, silent auctions and raffle drawings can also be used to raise funds to support scholarships.
- Requirements for scholarship are determined/identified by the local AEP Chapter.
- Scholarship information and application forms should be distributed to existing and potential student members via newsletters, key departments at local universities (typically addressed/directed to key staff/professors and campus career center), monthly luncheons, and the chapter website. It is recommended that the applications be available for approximately 6 months and that the deadline be after finals but before the start of the new terms. Such as schedule would typically mean that applications are available in late January/early February with a deadline of late June/early August. The local Student Director should discuss the schedule for scholarship applications with the Faculty Advisor(s) to ensure that the maximum numbers of applications are submitted.
- Scholarships can reviewed and recipient(s) selected by the local AEP Chapter Board or a separate committee can be appointed by the Chapter President or Board.
- Scholarship recipient(s) should be notified with an official letter of congratulations along with an invitation to whatever program the scholarship will be announced at (i.e. the Annual Awards Banquet and Ceremony). Regret letters should also be mailed out at this time.
- Scholarship recipient(s) can be acknowledged at the program where it is awarded with a brief biography presented by the Chapter President and/or included in a program for the event.



Suggested Activities

Internships

(Sample information and internship form from the San Diego Chapter is attached.)

- AEP Chapters may support students with learning opportunities by providing an active employment assistance program which functions as an intermediary between the students and the environmental business community at large. Internships have proven to be an important component in building the foundation for students preparing for their careers.
- Internship may not necessarily be paid positions. However, these internships should include relevant experience for students.
- Student Director should circulate the internship form to all professional members and advertising employers (i.e., routine newsletter, chapter website, chapter events, etc.)
- Although one of the goals of the chapter may be to provide students with internship opportunities, the priority and importance should be focused on the students and providing them some valuable work experience to gain insight to the different careers within our industry.
- This internship outreach is only possible with participation from the professional membership. The local Chapter Board members can be encouraged to provide internships from their employer to help support and promote the internship effort.
- The Student Director should encourage professional members who may not have immediate opportunities for interns available to hold on potential interns' resumes in case an opportunity comes up in the future that they can use an intern for.
- When appropriate the Student Director should emphasize to the professional members that the students have been actively pursuing their involvement with AEP in addition to their academic studies; and that the next step is to bring the students closer to the professional community.
- The Student Director should also accept and circulate internship opportunities for undergraduates and/or graduate students who are currently engaged in the pursuit of a career with an environmental emphasis.



Suggested Activities

- The Student Director or another designee of the local AEP Chapter can accept any resumes from students and be prepared to circulate to potential employers who have requested student resumes.

Speed Networking

(Sample announcements from the San Diego Chapter are attached.)

An annual AEP Speed Networking event can be another great opportunity for students to get information from environmental professionals about the various career paths and the industry. This event is an ideal time to exchange resumes and business cards. Students are required to attend in appropriate business casual attire.

The general format for this event pairs one student with one professional for several minutes before the students rotate one seat over to meet a new professional. Professionals are seated on one side of the table and the students are seated on the other side. Professionals are seated in a manner where the same professions are not next to one another. Although the event may not allow enough time for the students to talk to each professional, the event includes time for participants to mingle and socialize. At the end of the speed networking portion of the event, each professional can stand up and introduce themselves and provide a brief job description so students may meet and speak with them after the event.

Student CEQA Workshop

This can be an annual workshop that would provide students with an overview of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and how it is currently implemented by local agencies. It can be hosted annually in the fall as the first student program of the academic years. The Student CEQA Workshop is not designed to replace the annual CEQA Basics Workshop hosted by AEP, but rather it can be an introduction to CEQA and can be an excellent primer for students interested in attending the CEQA Basics Workshop.

When introducing students to CEQA it is recommended that the curriculum examine the historical and political roots of CEQA and how it has evolved over the years since its inception in 1970. It should emphasize larger concepts such as a basis for subsequent discussion of detailed procedures and the preparation of specific documents. Current topics and mitigation monitoring can be presented as well. The workshop can cover the preparation and processing of CEQA documents including an Initial Study, Statutory and Categorical Exemption, Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), and Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Step-by-step procedures



Suggested Activities

can be highlighted from a flow chart of the CEQA process for easy comprehension. Participants would receive practical, hands-on instruction such as the types of forms, how to fill them out, and with whom they are filed. This training should focus on practical real-world applications and be something that can enhance the resume of each participant to demonstrate their mastery of the preeminent environmental regulation/process in California. Former State AEP President Kent Norton has volunteered to teach this class throughout the State. Kent's presentation includes CEQA Basics and Career Opportunities for environmental planners. You may contact Kent Norton directly at (909)930-1380 (office) or (909)518-8200 (cell) or knorton@planningcenter.com.

Resume Writing and Professionalism Workshop

The resume writing and professionalism workshop is another event to address two important factors to prepare students to enter the work force as they conclude their academic careers. Students can be required to bring copies of their resumes for professionals to provide a review, comments, and suggestions.

The resume writing portion of the workshop can address the following:

- Main components of a resume
- Major “dos and don’ts” for resumes, cover letters, and interviews
- Qualities hiring managers look for when hiring interns and entry level staff
- Importance of thank you letters and follow up after an interview
- Strategies for successful communications during a job fair
- Additional practical advice related to the job seeking process

The professionalism portion of the workshop can address the following:

- Appropriate/Professional behavior and manners
- Appropriate attire
- Accountability

The workshop can also include a break out session after the presentation for students to work one-on-one with professionals in various career fields to improve their resume and make an interview successful.



Suggested Activities

Panel Discussions on Careers

Panel discussions provide a beneficial forum for various professionals to speak to students about their career paths. Students can learn from hearing professionals speak about their job responsibilities and educational background. Students also can learn from hearing professionals tell their stories on how they came into their current profession and the challenges and successes along the way.

- Identify and invite professional members from the chapter to discuss their current career, career path, and academic education (ideally the panel would include alumni from that University)
- Professional members and students from other universities can also be welcomed to attend
- Student Chapters may also advertise such event on campus to help draw additional student interest and potentially recruit new members (best to have some membership forms available at this event)

Panel Discussions on Hot Topics and/or Local Issues

Similar to the panel discussions on careers, a panel discussion covering the current hot topic can also be beneficial for students to help them understand the latest issues.

- Identify and invite professional members from the chapter to discuss the current hot topics; ideally the panel would include alumni from that University)
- Professional members and students from other universities can also be welcomed to attend
- Student Chapters may also advertise such events on campus to help draw additional student interest and potentially recruit new members (best to have some membership forms available at this event)

Local Field Trips

Local field trips are a wonderful way to teach students real-world application and solutions. They may include a visit to a local park or facility as well as a local project.



Suggested Activities

- Student Chapter field trips must be approved by the Faculty Advisor(s) and local Chapter Board
- Student Chapter field trips shall be accompanied by the Faculty Advisor(s) and other professors should be invited to participate.
- Field trips should be designed to learn about local environments and issues (i.e., water treatment facility, reservoir, park/trails, etc.)
- The Student Chapter should coordinate and collaborate with the professional members with guidance from their Faculty Advisor(s) to visit a project site (i.e., restoration site, walking tour of a historic district, etc.)

Student Chapter Project

The Student Director can work with the Student Chapter and Faculty Advisor(s) to identify a student project on campus that would help promote a hands-on learning experience for students, allow professional members to provide guidance and mentoring to the students, and help and/or benefit the University. General approach may include the following:

- Coordination with the key University staff to identify and establish the project and the students' responsibilities
- Outline a project plan, schedule, cost, parties involved, and all responsibilities
- Document the project's progress with identification of successes and lessons learned to be shared with future students

Community Service

Student Chapters may organize a group event to give back to the community and also invite the professional members to join. Some community service events may include, but are not limited to:

- beach clean up
- river clean up
- park and/or trail restoration and/or planting event
- holiday donation event
- Earth Day Events



Suggested Activities

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many events that the local AEP Chapter hosts that would benefit from students volunteering to help prepare and run the event. Such events may include, but are not limited to:

- monthly luncheons/events
- annual award events
- workshops

In addition to the Local Chapter volunteer activities, there are also opportunities at the State level for Student Members to volunteer. The State AEP Conference is held annually at a different location each year. Student Members may volunteer at the State Conference in return for attending the Conference at no charge. The Annual AEP Conference organizing committee will provide information to local Student Directors who will coordinate with Faculty Advisors to ensure that the Students are provided the information about the State Conference. (For more information, refer to the State Conference Manual.)



Liability Waiver

Most of the Universities have rules regarding liability waivers that must be signed for students to participate in some or all off-campus events. AEP also requires that a Liability Waiver be signed. Liability waivers must be signed by each student (or their parent if they are under 18) attending the event. There will be two liability waivers, one from AEP and the other from the respective University. All signed liability waivers shall be submitted to the Faculty Advisor(s), who will also have a list of students attending the event to ensure each attendee has signed the liability waivers. Students who do not submit the signed liability form prior to event shall not be allowed to attend.

All off-campus Student Chapter events must be approved by the Faculty Advisor(s) and Chapter Board. It is important for the Faculty Advisors to be familiar with the rules regarding Liability Waivers that apply to these types of events by their University. The Faculty Advisor(s) should also brief the Student Director on the rules for their University. A copy of the AEP Liability Waiver is included with this manual. **<<Liability Waiver Form is currently being drafted. Copy will be included with final draft of student manual once completed.** All Faculty Advisors are responsible for obtaining the required Liability Waiver Form from their University.

