



Association for
Performing Arts
& Entertainment
Professionals

usitt.org

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College/University

2019-2020 STUDENT CHAPTER FORMATION GUIDELINES

Those teaching or studying at an educational institution may consider organizing a USITT Student Chapter. Before starting a chapter at a university, college, or junior college, it is important for the faculty or staff member who plans to sponsor it and the students who will be involved to give serious consideration to the proposed chapter's future.

Prospective student chapter members need to determine what value the chapter will provide for members. Activities should assist in expanding members' experience and education. Ideas include workshops led by visiting professionals, inter-chapter sharing, and group trips to both local and national conferences. The networking and social activities that accompany such events provide further benefits.

Most chapters adopt service and education as important goals. This allows the chapter to serve as a recruiting device for the institution – certainly a reason for existence – but it may function as a service group as well. In addition to holding workshops on campus, the chapter could travel to high schools or other colleges and universities to sponsor workshops or service days. Chapter members may assist the institution being visited by installing a sound system, building scenery, hanging lighting, or similar activities. Activities should be included in the chapter's annual report to USITT, and are, in essence, the glue that holds the student chapter together.

How to start a Student Chapter (College/University)

- ◆ Identify a faculty member who is willing to serve as sponsor and provide the chapter with active leadership and guidance. **This person must be a USITT member.** Many chapters have co-sponsors (if so, both must be USITT members).
- ◆ Identify prospective members. There should be enough interested students to sustain the chapter beyond any one academic year. You must have **at least six** chapter members who are **USITT student members.** Students who are not USITT members may also belong to the chapter.
- ◆ Hold elections to determine chapter officers or appoint interim officers. Required officer positions are: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. The latter two offices can be combined into a Secretary-Treasurer position.
- ◆ Write By-laws for the chapter. Sample by-laws are available from the VP Members, Sections & Chapters (VP-MSA)
- ◆ Plan activities for the year – a mix of service to the department/profession, fund raisers to support attendance at the Annual Conference and social events works well for many chapters. (Don't forget to practice for Tech Olympics!)
- ◆ Download and complete the Student Chapter application
- ◆ Send your completed application (make sure all USITT memberships are current) and By-laws to the USITT Office and the VP-MSA (contact information provided in the application).
- ◆ If all requirements are met, a Charter certificate will be mailed to the chapter sponsor. Charters run for one year – October to October.
- ◆ Follow through on your plans and have fun!
- ◆ In spring, elect next year's officers and send President's contact information to the VP-MSA.
- ◆ In fall, re-check for six current USITT members, plan a new year of activities, and submit a Charter Renewal form.

For more information about the benefits of establishing a student chapter, sample By-laws, or a Charter Application, contact Andi Lyons, Vice-President for Members, Sections & Chapters at andi@albany.edu Interested individuals may also attend the Student Roundtable meeting at the Annual Conference & Stage Expo to obtain information. Individuals who wish to verify membership may contact the USITT office at 800-938-7488 or lquimby@usitt.org