
How to Start a Club in College

Image: De Anza College

Being actively involved in a club is a great resume booster and provides an opportunity to connect with others who share the same interests. The key is finding a club that will keep you (and its members) actively engaged.

A large university will usually have hundreds of clubs to choose from. Maybe you have a great idea for a club or organization, or maybe there is one already established that you never knew existed.

First, find the page on your university's website that lists all active clubs and organizations on campus.

If this page isn't easily found from the college's homepage, a quick Google search will usually get you to the page you need.

This page will typically list all clubs available at the University.

Didn't find the club you were looking for?

Start your own Club

In order to be an official club, you will need to register with the university.

On the webpage listing clubs on campus, there should be contact info of the appropriate office you need to contact in order to get established as an officially recognized club. This process is typically handled by the office of Student Life, Campus Life, Student Activities Office, or whatever relevant name the office is given at your school.

Once you find the appropriate office on your campus, stop in to see what paperwork needs to be filled out. At this time you can also go over any questions you may have in regards to setting up your club.

Some schools will provide an online registration process, but typically physical presence in the office will be required of the 'Primary Officer' of the club, whether it be in a one-on-one meeting or a registration session that requires the attendance of at least one member of your club. This meeting with a Student Life Coordinator (or similar) is required to verify in fact you are a currently enrolled student at the university (you will be asked to show student ID) and to help draw out the details and process of establishing the club.

What's Required

You will have to provide the name and purpose of your new club. There may also be a minimum membership requirement to create the club; many schools require the membership of at least four students to get started. The club will need to be created and operated by students enrolled in the university, so you'll need to establish who will be the directors of the organization and draw up a constitution. There will be other specific rules required to create the organization, depending on the requirements of your college.

Steps to Establishing a Club

The exact steps a student must take to start a club can vary by school, but it typically follows this process:

- Gather names and emails of 4-5 interested members for your prospective club (currently enrolled students).
- Assign titles: President, Secretary, etc.
- Register and submit organization form with proposed name and purpose.
- Meet with Student Life Coordinator or Activities Board (or appropriate office at your school).
- Draft a constitution (bylaws).
- Advertise your club's first meeting.

Resources

Being an officially recognized club at your college can get you access to university resources. This can include funding, a campus mailbox (both physical and email), a university-hosted website, access to facilities for meetings, and on-campus discounts such as advertising in campus media and bookstore discounts.

Leadership Skills

By starting a club, you can immediately place yourself into a leadership position. You can establish yourself as the President of the club or society you decide to create. Holding a leadership position in a single club holds more value than being just a member of many. Not only is the leadership position respected, but the fact that you took the initiative and created the club on your own shows you're a self-starter; something that will stand out on any application or resume.

If you're unfamiliar with how to run a club, consider reading up on it or discussing further with the Student Life Coordinator. You are the organizer of the club, so feel free to lead it in any way you want by coming up with your own game plan. Perhaps sit in or join another club on campus to see how they operate. Becoming a member of a well-established, smoothly running club can give you an inside look at how a successful club operates.

Example Ideas

There are many new trends taking shape that can be formed into clubs at your school:

- Entrepreneurship Club
- Green or Environmental Club
- Computer Programming Club

- Fantasy Baseball Club
- An Investing or Investors Club
- Business Club
- A Secret Society...

What are your hobbies?

Odds are there are other students on campus that share the same interests... Start a club!