



How to ... Establish a Student Subunit

Overview

The American Fisheries Society (AFS) plays a critical role in preparing fisheries students in becoming future professionals. Students can become involved with AFS by taking advantage of discounted registration fees for state and national meetings and membership in the Student Subsection of the Education Section. Moreover, students can make meaningful contributions to both their professional development as well as the AFS by establishing a Student Subunit (Subunit) at their university. Described here are what are felt to be critical steps in subunit development.

1. Consult entities that can help you
 - a. Local chapter:
 - i. Express your interest in forming a Student Subunit
 - ii. Ask if they would be willing to help with an information meeting
 - b. Potential advisor:
 - i. Contact the advisor you feel will be able to best guide the Subunits most appropriately to achieve the goals and missions of the Subunit
 1. Ensure this person is
 - a. Tenured or committed to staying at the University
 - b. Enthusiastic, eager and ambitious about fisheries and the profession
 - c. Active within AFS
 - d. Has networks with various governmental and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, private companies and lake/homeowner associations
 - c. Neighboring Student Subunits
 - i. Determine the
 1. Challenges they experienced in forming and maintaining their Student Subunit
 2. Aspects they would change or do differently if they were to start over
 3. Ways they have utilized to invigorate student involvement
 - d. AFS constitutional consultant
 - i. Currently Jessica Mistak (mistak@michigan.gov or 906-786-2351 x127)
 - ii. Examples of petitions, missions and bylaws can be supplied

2. Recruit potential members
 - a. Send mass emails to all of Fisheries, Biology, Environmental Sciences or related fields students
 - i. Contact the office manager of these departments
 - b. Give short presentations about the Subunit during classes
 - i. Gain professors permission
 - ii. Explain purpose, activities and goals of the Subunit
 - iii. Provide contact information, along with meeting time and location
 - c. Create flyers and posters
 - i. Display pertinent information in a concise and eye catching manor
 - ii. Abide to university graphic standards
 1. Contact the head of graphic standards
 - d. Utilize social media
 - i. Create a page or event on Facebook or Twitter
 1. Invite everyone you know
 - e. Advertise on the department, college, and/or university website
 - i. Contact appropriate personnel
 - ii. Create short advertisement, like the flyer or poster
 - f. Exploit campus events
 - i. Use campus event to promote and recruit members
 1. Take advantage of the diverse fisheries field equipment to entice curiosity of students
3. Assess students' willingness to participate
 - a. Host an informational meeting or gathering
 - i. Contact the office manager of your department your organization will be housed under or university scheduling and conference services about room reservation
 1. Select a location that can be
 - a. Simply found
 - b. Targets the right cohort of students
 - c. Contains all necessary amenities required
 2. Fill out appropriate paperwork for reservation
 - ii. Plan meeting
 1. Select a time that many students can attend, but are not having to wait or go out of their way to attend
 2. Plan what will be talked about and who will talk
 - a. Ask a current executive member of the chapter of AFS you will be a part of to come in a speak
 3. Provide an open and inviting environment
 4. Offer treats and refreshments encouraging students attendance
 - iii. Evaluate enthusiasm and determine if enough interest exists to pursue formal recognition
 1. Hundreds of initial members are not necessary

2. More than one is required though
4. Write bylaws and constitution
 - a. Identify goals and objectives of the subunit
 - i. Contact neighboring subunits and constitutional consultant for templates
 - b. Establish the executive committee and their responsibilities
 - c. Include all members opinions
5. Elected slate of officers for subunit
 - a. Hold a formal election for initial executive committee
6. Pursue formal recognition by the university and AFS
 - a. Contact the Center for Student Involvement
 - i. Determine requirements to achieve recognition as a student organization within the university
 - ii. Fill out appropriate paperwork
 - iii. Figure out requirements necessary to maintain status
 - b. Submit petitions and slate of officers to local chapter and Unit Services Coordinator
7. Pursue and manage startup funding
 - a. Contact professors, office managers, other student organizations, the Center for Student Involvement (or equivalent department),
 - b. Explore options your state AFS chapter and the educational sector of AFS may offer
 - c. Connection fisheries management agencies, municipalities and local businesses
 - d. Choose between a cost center or independent bank
 - i. Cost center
 1. Within university, access to other university entities
 - ii. Independent bank
 1. Access to purchasing card and freedom in account type
 - e. Identify responsible party/parties
 - i. Hold them accountable
 - f. Establish transaction protocol

Summary

Although Subunit formation can be challenging and frustrating, do not despair: Rome was not built in a day and have fun. Following the steps described herein will enhance your department, university, and the fisheries profession. Don't miss the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to AFS by forming a Subunit!

By:

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