



AIGA **ATX**

Student Group Survival Kit

—
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OUR MISSION

AIGA advances design as a professional craft, strategic advantage, and vital cultural force.

As the largest community of design advocates, we bring together practitioners, enthusiasts, and patrons to amplify the voice of design and create the vision for a collective future.

We define global standards and ethical practices, guide design education, enhance professional development, and make powerful tools and resources accessible to all.



INTRODUCTION

When student members organize to become a group, they serve as a microcosm of AIGA complete with their own board, programming and needs for community, inspiration, and organization. It's vital that student groups know about every opportunity available to them and take advantage of the organizational structure of the AIGA Austin chapter to be successful in their own right.

Student groups also represent the single best link between student life and professional practice. Guided by faculty advisers who actively support them, student groups become leaders of on-campus programming and events, which unite students into a larger community and prepare them better for their careers as professional designers.

AIGA encourages the formation of student groups at colleges and universities and is committed to developing these groups as a way of encouraging students to take the first step in demonstrating a commitment to their professional interest and assisting them in understanding the profession. The goal of the student groups is to get the student involved in the local design community, create a community of their own and help them build leadership skills that will be valuable as they move into the professional world.

REQUIREMENTS

These requirements reflect AIGA's experience of what makes a successful group. Adhering to them will help ensure that the group runs smoothly and enables students to get the most out of their AIGA memberships.

- The group needs to have 1 faculty advisor.
- Those serving on the student group board should have active AIGA memberships in good standing.
- Groups should have at least 10 students with active AIGA memberships at all times.
- Consult your university's requirements for student-run organizations.

STRUCTURE

POSITIONS & DUTIES

An effective student group requires leadership by members of the group. It's up to the group to elect its own leadership. The group works with the faculty adviser and the local chapter's Education & Mentorship Branch to determine the roles needed for its leadership structure, and then finds volunteers in the group interested in serving in those roles. Additional officer positions can be appointed as needed.

Faculty Advisor

The faculty adviser is the recognized liaison between AIGA Austin and the student group. They must submit the [faculty advisor agreement form](#) in order to activate the group and renew it each year. He or she is required to maintain an accurate roster of who is in the group by logging into [my.aiga.org](#) and using the "Roster Management" feature to link students who have created accounts. The faculty adviser must encourage students to keep their contact information updated (e.g., change of address, email, graduation date, major) by logging in to their own profiles.

STRUCTURE

The faculty advisor assumes accountability for programming funds collected and spent. He or she must submit a year-end report outlining the group's activities throughout the year, due by July 1. Email the report to [Membership Associate Anna Sparks](#) and the [Student Group Development Chair](#). In recognition of the service faculty advisors give their student groups, AIGA offers them a free membership at the Supporter level.

More information and required forms for proposed faculty advisors available at [www.aiga.org/student-groups-about](#)

STRUCTURE

President

The president is the leader of the student group and works with the faculty adviser on the agenda of meetings. The president introduces speakers and guests at events, leads meetings, delegates responsibilities to other officers and facilitates group functions. The president is usually the single student representative of the group to the chapter board, the school, and other student groups. The president should keep aware of what is going on in the community that would be relevant for student designers, and provide them with that information.

Vice-President

The Vice-president assists the president as needed. If the president is absent, the Vice-president performs the president's duties, such as introducing speakers and leading student group meetings.

Secretary

The secretary keeps agenda records, documentation of meetings on file, records summaries of events and activities. These records should be shared with the faculty advisor and the AIGA Austin Education & Mentorship Branch.

STRUCTURE

Treasurer

The treasurer takes money at events, provides a report of current finances at group meetings and assists the faculty adviser in keeping track of funds. The treasurer does not hold funds, however—this responsibility is held by the faculty adviser (who has access to the group's bank account).

Communication Director

The communication director utilizes all possible online and in-person tools to keep all student members, nonmembers and faculty at the school reminded of upcoming events and current activities. This can include maintaining the group's Facebook page, updating a Twitter account, calling student members, posting bulletins, creating a Google Groups calendar, sending out group-wide emails and making promotional posters for events. Communication directors are strongly encouraged to contact other student groups' communication directors. Next to the president, this position is the most important for a successful student group and for creating strong programming that reflects student membership.

STRUCTURE

Programming Director

When the group decides to hold an event or activity, the programming director outlines the necessary steps, determines the programming team responsible for executing it, keeps in close contact with the team's progress and reports to the group. The programming director stays current with and reports back to the group on what the chapter is doing. The programming director seeks programming opportunities within the school, with other student groups and around the community.

Membership Director

The membership director assists the faculty adviser in distributing and collecting applications and keeps contact information current for each member.

STRUCTURE

STUDENT OFFICER ELECTIONS

AIGA recommends that student groups follow the standard chapter election procedures: create a slate of nominees for open positions and present the slate to the group's members to approve or reject. Once approved, the nominees become officers. Make sure there's only one nominee per position and that members are given ample time to vote—two to three weeks is more than sufficient. Because students may choose to become officers at any time in their college career, AIGA recommends that officers' terms run for one year.

The number of roles may vary depending on the size of the particular group. The following is AIGA's recommendation of roles to provide a well-rounded structure and allow each officer to serve a distinct function.

STRUCTURE

RESPONSIBILITIES

As a student group officer, you have been appointed by the faculty advisor along with the guidance of the department faculty to be a leader of this group. Because of your passion, enthusiasm, skill leadership potential and other factors, you have been given the honor of representing AIGA at your school. As representative and a student officer you are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities.

- Attending all student group meetings.

Each student officer is expected to attend all student group meetings. The faculty advisor should consult with student officers to select a regular meeting schedule.

- Keeping faculty advisor and national office informed of current contact information.

Having current information both at the local and national level is key to providing you with information and resources, thus maximizing your benefit of being a member. Your faculty advisor will contact you to verify your contact information. Information includes: student's name, daytime and home phone numbers, e-mail address, mailing address, expected graduation date, and major. Students should also login to the AIGA website and update their profile, and link them to the student group.

STRUCTURE

- Serving as a leader to the student group.

You are a member of the largest professional organization serving the communication design profession. Be proud! As an officer in a student group of that organization, you are expected to carry the purpose of AIGA and the vision of your local chapter to the members of your group. Student members will look to you for guidance, information and leadership. The faculty advisor is there to guide, consult and provide leadership as well. Ultimately, the group will be what you make it to be. You have the power to motivate other students, show by example, share your knowledge and ideas. This is your group-run with it!

- Actively promote AIGA and student group.

This can be done in a variety of ways. In order to be effective, you first have to familiarize yourself with the mission of AIGA. The website, journals, publications and other mailings are excellent resources. Students can organize an "open house" meeting, inviting all design students, a bulletin board can be put up in a common area and used to display materials. Often the most effective means is to simply talk to other students on a one-on-one basis. In New Orleans, officers in one of the student groups visit design classes to introduce themselves and talk about their group and the purpose of AIGA. Often this results in students showing up for the next meeting and wanting to join and be involved.

STRUCTURE

- Creating and organizing effective events/activities.

When creating events for your student group, always begin by polling your target audience for what their interests are. In most cases, your target audience is you. Generally, the events you create will have been events students in the past have requested, and will be the same events the following students will want. Plan and organize your events as though they will be the standard for years to come. (More on effective events and activities in Programming)

- Attending local chapter events.

One of the benefits of being a student member is being able to attend local chapter events, often for free or significant discounts. As an officer, you are expected to attend as many chapter functions as possible. This provides a great networking opportunity and learning experience. Stay informed of what your local chapter is doing, and inform your group as well.

STRUCTURE

CONDUCT

AIGA is a professional organization. The conduct and etiquette of a student group officer should follow that of a professional. It is an honor to be selected as a leader of any organization, and a student group officer should present him/herself in the manner of the local board of directors.

- Familiarize yourself with the mission of AIGA and dedicate yourself towards furthering that mission.
- Educate other students on the mission of AIGA.
- Familiarize yourself with the standards and ethics upheld by the organization. As a student and a designer, you will conduct yourself in a manner in keeping with these standards and ethics.
- Carry your local chapter's message to student community.

IDENTITY

USE OF AIGA NAME & LOGO

Once a new student group has been formed, the Education & Mentorship Branch will forward a copy of the AIGA logo to the faculty advisor to be shared with students. Student groups must utilize the logo on all communications the same way chapters do, as well as follow the identity guidelines.

Standards for using the AIGA logo identity do exist and should be used. A copy of the guidelines can be found with this kit, located within the “Student Group Assets” folder.

The student group may use the AIGA name and logo in conjunction with the name of the student group. For example, AIGA Arizona State University Student Group. The proper terminology is “student group,” not “student chapter.”

Example:



IDENTITY

NETWORK

From design fans to the profession’s leading practitioners, AIGA members come from all backgrounds, all fields, and all levels of experience—from all around the world. Whether you’re a design enthusiast, student, freelance designer, in-house designer, design educator, design thinker, or a business owner, AIGA is here to welcome you into the wider world of design.



COMMUNICATION

Each AIGA chapter has a responsibility of service to its community. The student group of a chapter has a responsibility to carry its parent chapter's message to the student community, and vice versa.

WITH LOCAL CHAPTER

The Austin chapter principally uses email to communicate with students and student groups. If there is a need to get ahold of the board, students should contact the Student Group Development Chair at studentgroups@austin.aiga.org.

You can also find us on Slack, a real-time messaging app for teams. Connect with the AIGA board, its members, and other design professionals in the Austin area. Free to join, AIGA membership not required! [Join the conversation on Slack.](#)

COMMUNICATION

WITH STUDENT MEMBERS

Student groups are encouraged to maintain open channels of communication with their membership. This way, your group can keep students updated on upcoming events, meetings, and provides a platform for your membership to speak through.

- Email

Keeping your board's contact information updated & readily available is important to ensure everyone's voice can be heard. You may want to create a gmail account for your student group. This can be used for signing into social media accounts associated with the group. It should begin with "aiga" followed by the school's name: aigatxstate@gmail.com

- MailChimp

A newsletter can be created to share within the student group and with other groups. Content can include internship and job opportunities, writings from professional designers, tips for software applications, events, and more.

- Social Media
- Slack

Consider using Slack to keep reach out to other student groups and the Austin Chapter.

COMMUNICATION

STUDENT OFFICER MEETINGS

The group leaders must hold regular meetings and advertise them publicly. The student officers work with the faculty adviser to select a regular meeting schedule. Advertise these meetings for the benefit of other students who may wish to serve as officers or get involved in the group's activities. This can be done through Twitter, Facebook groups, by email, and with fliers posted around campus.

Officer meetings need to be run by the president, with the faculty adviser assisting when necessary. Groups are free to structure their meetings however they like; many model theirs after their larger chapter. Each student group officer must attend the meetings, or give advance notice of their absence.

It's important to think creatively in your situation. The goal of every student group's programming is to at least break even financially at all events. Have the group work towards reducing costs at events wherever possible.

FINANCES

INDEPENDENT FUNDRAISING

Student Groups are encouraged to raise funds independently when possible. Program to raise money. Be creative! Try to avoid bake sales and car washes! Leave that to the Greeks on campus, and find ways to educate yourself on design, network with professionals and raise money at the same time.

Fundraising programs can have several useful outcomes. Primarily, they can generate money for the student group to use in programming or special events. But they can also provide education on design or networking with professionals. Student groups are encouraged to avoid more typical college fundraising programs, in order to differentiate themselves from other campus organizations and enhance the AIGA experience in the community.

Fundraising ideas that involve students creating design work that can be used in their portfolios can be logistically difficult to implement but highly rewarding for all involved. By keeping quantities relatively low, the group can be truthful in claiming a product is "limited edition."

FINANCES

LOCAL CHAPTER FUNDING

Financial support is provided to student groups by giving back a portion of the local chapter's membership dues. Student Groups receive \$10 for each participating student with an active AIGA membership. For example, if a group of 30 students join at the contributing member level (\$50/year) the chapter will kick back \$10 per member. In this situation, it would be \$300 for the student group.

These funds are accessible through your Faculty Advisor. With the help of your Treasurer, the Faculty Advisor reports to the local chapter with a summarization of the group's finances & activities each semester. The chapter replenishes the funds at the beginning of each fiscal year.

SCHOOL ASSISTANCE

Be sure you're aware of your school's policy on providing matching funds for campus organizations. Many schools offer funds for organizations per semester or year to hold events and promote the school. These funds may be available immediately or after completing some paperwork, so it's important to check with the faculty adviser or other administrators.

FINANCES

SPONSORSHIP POSSIBILITIES

One of the challenges of running any nonprofit organization is finding the funds to produce effective programming. Just as with AIGA chapters, funds can often come from companies interested in sponsoring your group. There are a number of businesses that seek to build strong relationships with student designers that can continue when they become professional designers.

Match your sponsor to your event. For example, if you hold a workshop on resumé writing, consider using a paper vendor or copy shop that specializes in selling paper and reproducing resúmes. Approach those potential sponsors with a pitch that describes how attendees can remember and utilize them in the future. These sponsors may be interested in paying for a smaller portion of event costs, such as refreshments, or may want to fund the event provided they get to make some brief opening remarks before the event starts.

Before you approach any company for sponsorship, AIGA requires that you discuss it with your local chapter first—it's possible. They have an existing relationship or are working on creating a relationship with that same potential sponsor. Bring your proposal to your faculty advisor and Education Director. The board may have recommendations or ideas that may help.

PROGRAMMING

AIGA feels strongly that student groups should, as much as possible, be involved in programming their own events. This activity provides an opportunity for training future chapter officers and instills a sense of responsibility towards the organization.

When creating events for your student group, always begin by polling your target audience for what their interests are. In most cases, your target audience is you. Generally, the events you create will have been events students in the past have requested, and will be the same events the following students will want. Plan and organize your events as though they will be the standard for years to come.

IDEAS FOR CREATING EFFECTIVE EVENTS

Think simple, think small.

Your local AIGA chapter already has a list of programming and events slated, all of which you can take advantage of. The quickest way to plan an activity is to program around the chapter events. One suggestion is to organize a team of students to offer assistance to the chapter committees to aid in programming. This will instantly fall in to the “we want to rub elbows with the pros” category.

PROGRAMMING

Keep it simple. Keep it cheap. Keep it fun.

Students like cheap and fun, but have a hard time grasping simple. They have big ideas and are going to change the world with what they think they can do. Effective planning and programming is at its best when it is simple, cheap, and fun.

Get more educated.

Find a design topic your school lacks the resources to teach, and contact a local professional to teach or lead a workshop on that topic. Resume writing, portfolio theory, and advanced software techniques are some ideas to base a workshop on. Think evening, and be respectful of your visiting professional's time.

Field trips are cool.

Remember the trip to the zoo in sixth grade? You learned more about the grizzly bear from that one trip than any biology course you have ever taken. Same with a trip to a local printer, film separator, design firm or paper merchant. These trips may not be readily available in your existing curriculum, and it is so easy to pick up the phone and call a printer for a visit. You are future business to these printers and paper merchants, and they want to get to know you now. Take advantage of this educational opportunity.

PROGRAMMING

GET TO KNOW THE PROFESSIONALS

Students can learn about the real world from two outstanding events: the Studio Tour and the Student Portfolio Review. In Philadelphia, top studios agreed to have host an evening where the students can go visit a real design environment. Each studio hosts a small number of students and after the tour, the students enjoy pizza with the pros! Annual student portfolio reviews are the biggest and most popular event for many student groups. Organized by the education chairperson, other local chapter board of directors and an appointed chairperson, AIGA members and other invited design professionals spend a day reviewing the portfolios of student members. The day closes with a panel discussion, where students can ask questions and professionals can share experiences.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Many cities already have youth groups and schools looking for volunteers to assist in programming and educating. One purpose of AIGA is to educate the public on design and its value. Offer your group time to visit youth-oriented art education programs and take a chance at promoting the profession.

PROGRAMMING

LIBRARY OR VIDEO LIBRARY

Student groups can start their own library, where books and materials can be checked out from the student president or faculty advisor. Local chapters can create a video library of their events that can be checked out to student groups that are located farther away, and the student group can turn the viewing of the video into an event.

DESIGN CRITIQUES

Critiques in which students get together from various classes and critique and review their current projects. The faculty advisor should attend and give guidance. Often students only get feedback from their class during a particular semester. A design critique outside of class helps to give the students new perspective on their own projects and allows them to see what other students are working on. This activity serves to further the students' ability to analyze and critique. As an added incentive, groups can enjoy lunch and raffle design books and supplies at the end of critique.

PROGRAMMING

DESIGN CONTESTS

With the help of their faculty advisor, student groups can organize their own design contests. Professional members in the area or school faculty can serve as judges and prizes can be donated. In New Orleans, a student group has held poster, T-shirt and even button design contests. The faculty judged the entries and the winners were announced department wide. Prizes were paid for from donations from the school and were given away at an assembly of the whole department for maximum visibility and recognition. These contests bring students together, promote good design, educate the student and promote the student group.

EVENT VENUES

Many schools also let nonprofit organizations use facilities like meeting rooms and auditoriums to hold programs. Many AIGA chapters utilize relationships with area schools to take advantage of this to have a free venue. A student group at such a school is encouraged to leverage this relationship as well.

PRESENCE

COORDINATE WITH SCHOOL

By working with the faculty and existing student-run organizations your group can discover new ways to gain exposure. For example, your school may allow your group to be featured on their website or newsletter. You could also offer your skills to help other student organizations in their efforts, which would broaden your audience and bring in fresh perspectives.

DESIGN AROUND CAMPUS

Many groups use posters to promote upcoming events and advertise open officer positions. You may want to make shirts for your group, or possibly arrange to have an art installation set up. These are all ways to apply your design knowledge and raise the group's profile simultaneously. Make sure that you have permission from the school before putting up any installations or posters first!

PRESENCE

FACULTY CENTERED PROGRAMMING

Learn what your faculty needs in order to advance their education or interests. Maybe it's inviting a local professional to come and discuss what they are looking for in new talent entering the marketplace. This will allow the faculty to adjust their curricula or get ideas of how to educate you. This is also a benefit to the local AIGA chapter as a catalyst for discussion between schools and the design firms or agencies.

Want to make your school a better school? Organize a faculty appreciation luncheon for the schools in your region. If your local chapter organizes a student portfolio review, hold it there. Poll other schools for what works at their schools and share it at these meetings. Do what you can to improve what you pay for.

RELATIONS

WITH LOCAL CHAPTER

A student group automatically becomes affiliated with the chapter nearest to it. Our Education & Mentorship Branch works together to combine assets and create programming that will involve more students and build a strong community.

Be a part of the AIGA Austin chapter. Look to see what the chapter has planned for the coming year. Keep up to date by visiting austin.aiga.org frequently, following us on social media, and contacting us at studentgroups@austin.aiga.org. Be sure to promote the chapter's events to your fellow students, both members and nonmembers. Organize carpools or supplemental activities "on the town" that will encourage more students to attend chapter events. The AIGA Austin chapter also almost always needs volunteers to help execute our events— this can be a great way to get to know professional members and make contacts beyond your school.

RELATIONS

WITH OTHER AIGA STUDENT GROUPS

If your student group is near others, consider sharing resources and programming. It takes a large amount of effort to plan, organize and throw an event. Share, share, share the work load. If one student group holds an event, open it up to other student groups to participate not only by attending, but in planning as well.

Share a programming calendar. Work with other groups to plan a well-rounded calendar of student events at each school. If one school holds a resume workshop, share it with the others. If another school sets up one studio visit, set up two or three for your fellow student groups. It is important to remember, we are all in this profession together.

VALUE

STUDENT GROUP BOARD POSITIONS

Aside from the usual benefits of membership, becoming an AIGA student officer comes with its own special value. This includes being known as a local leader in the design community amongst your peers, the chance to develop & execute your own programming, and the training it provides for transitioning to the local chapter board after graduation.

STUDENT GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Your student membership base should also be made aware of the benefits of AIGA involvement. Things like networking opportunities, portfolio development, mentorship & guidance from creative professionals, and a chance to experience their design community from outside the walls of the classroom. These are four key benefits that students can find through AIGA.

CONTACTS

PRESIDENT

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MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Randall J Gregory II

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LINKS

AIGA NATIONAL WEBSITE

<https://www.aiga.org>

AIGA AUSTIN WEBSITE

<https://www.austin.aiga.org>

AIGA AUSTIN SLACK SIGNUP PAGE

<https://aiga-austin-slack.herokuapp.com>

AIGA AUSTIN SLACK

www.aigaaustin.slack.com

AIGA AUSTIN STUDENT OUTREACH QUESTIONNAIRE

<https://aigaaustin.typeform.com/to/odU4D7>

AIGA STUDENT GROUP SURVEY

<https://aigaaustin.typeform.com/to/gpVu1b>

FACULTY ADVISOR AGREEMENT FORM

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd_5FZkKwRKcYEOg2ipJd7Ji0RMbUJcGoTZpU8DCmpU9peHxg/viewform?c=0&w=1

