

# CHAPTER SUCCESS GUIDE: LEADERSHIP TRANSITION



**Leadership transition planning should start from when a new team takes office and always be top of mind as you move throughout the year.**

As student leaders, you have the power to make invaluable changes to campus culture, institutional policies, and people's lives! Students' time on their campus moves quickly, though, as you work your way to a diploma in two, four, six, or more years. To maintain all of the incredible energy and engagement you have on your campus once you graduate, you need people who will be on campus in the coming years who are ready to step into leadership roles and pick up where you're leaving off. There are some easy things you can do to make your inevitable leadership transition easier for everyone.

## Roles and Responsibilities

---

**Chapters are welcome to develop their team, titles, roles, and responsibilities, and structure to match their goals and what makes sense for their team members.** Below are some common positions and a few action words that can help define different folks' responsibilities:

**Chapter President**  
**Co-President:** Lead,  
direct, delegate, manage

**Vice-President:**  
Reinforce and back-up  
Chapter president functions

**Secretary:** Observe, communicate, disseminate

**Outreach Chair:** Partner, collaborate, connect, program

**Communications/  
Social Media Chair:** Publicize, post, message

**Treasurer/Fundraising  
Chair:** Budget, plan, fundraise, design, coach

**Community/Campus Liaison:** Partner, connect, collaborate, streamline (with campus organizations, Active Minds National, local governing entities, and more!)

**Don't forget, your Chapter Advisor(s) are a key part of your leadership team!**

## Steps for an Effective Leadership Transition

---

### RECRUIT AND IDENTIFY NEW LEADERS

Identifying new leaders is an essential step for success in leadership transition. The process of searching for new and engaged student leaders can be challenging, but with the proper training and resources, your team will be ready to tackle what's ahead. Here are some tips for finding new leaders for your chapter:

- Identify leaders in like-minded/partner organizations on campus that may want to solidify partnership by joining the leadership team on AM (i.e., rep from the Black Student Union may wish to serve on the Active Minds leadership board to facilitate a direct line of communication between groups)
- While potential members and leaders can be found in all disciplines and academic paths, it often makes sense to recruit early and often from “helping profession” fields such as psychology, social work, pre-nursing and medical, and education.
- Ask to present information about Active Minds in psychology, pre-nursing, social work, and education classes.
- Add a personal touch for all members so you can learn more about their interests, goals, and hopes for their involvement in Active Minds. Invite new members and leaders to get coffee and ask directly if they may be willing to co-lead projects they are interested in. Intentionally provide leadership opportunities to first and second-year students to give them a chance to try new roles and help you identify and support growth opportunities.
- New chapters and student leaders report that the Active Minds conference is one of the top ways they generate new ideas, build on excitement, and feel connected to the Active Minds national movement. Don’t miss out on this opportunity each year in February/March to engage members and potential leaders.

## LEARN ABOUT SCHOOL'S RESOURCES AND POLICIES FOR LEADERSHIP

Your Student Activities office (or whatever office or group supports student organizations at your school) may be your biggest ally in developing and transitioning your leadership. Many schools offer workshops, leadership skills sessions, and mentorship to new and developing student leaders. These offices will also be able to tell you about any requirements or policies governing student organizations at your school; be sure to look out for some of these key elements when thinking about your transition plan:

- How elections or appointments need to be conducted
- If there are workshops or requirements for incoming or outgoing leader
- When/how to submit your budget/funding requests for next year

## Preparing Your Future Leaders for Success

---

Now that you have found your future leaders, the next step is to prepare them to take on their new responsibilities once you are gone. Here are some tips to ensure that your new leaders are successful:

- **Teach/Show/Share what it's like to be a leader.**
  - Invite members and potential leaders to sit in on or participate in an executive board meeting
  - Invite potential leaders to shadow a role they're interested
  - Think about a non-traditional leadership team with co-presidents, committees, shorter terms
  - Have a meet-and-greet with your current leadership team, especially anyone who isn't graduating, and advisors

- **Share important information**

- We highly suggest each chapter creates a google drive, dropbox folder, or other electronic space with important documents, materials from previous programs (like flyers, budgets, handouts, etc.), previous budget requests, receipts, contact information, etc. Make sure your chapter advisor is the owner or co-owner instead of an individual leader.
- Introduce new leaders to partners, including your Counseling Center Director, contacts in the Student Activities office, faculty or staff allies
- Write down processes/plans for upcoming or recurring programs
- Share relevant passwords and access to online tools
- Have a meeting with outgoing and incoming leaders to share responsibilities, expectations, and ask questions

- **Elect or appoint new leaders early**

- Electing or appointing your leaders a semester or a quarter early will allow for you to show them the ropes before they're on their own
- Offering leadership positions to new members is a great way to attract and retain new members.

## General Tips

---

- **Elect or appoint new leaders**

- Have elections online using survey monkey or google forms (and ask your advisor to be the one who has the password/sets up the account
- Appoint leaders internally with advisor's support

- Have elections for higher-up positions a semester early to provide leaders with time to adjust and have lower position elections at the beginning of the year to entice new members
- **Make sure new leaders are on file with the National Office and your school**
  - Do your inventory (likely in May)
  - Fill out the Chapter Leader Update Form
  - Update club hub and/or student activities office
- **Stagger your leadership team**
  - Strive to incorporate people at different stages of their time on campus as much as possible so that the leadership transition is staggered rather than needing a whole new team at one time.
- **Celebrate your Outgoing Leaders**
  - Graduating student leaders had a LOT this year. Reserve your last meeting of the year to recognize and celebrate your outgoing leaders in ways that are most comfortable to them (public recognition, time to share what people value in them, a card sent from chapter leaders and members, etc.)
- **Make a plan for leadership for the summer.**
  - Ask if/when/how your advisor would like to stay involved over the summer
  - Plan a (virtual) retreat for the early fall
  - Have monthly e-board meetings
  - Set up a GroupMe/FB message/slack thread to stay in touch
  - Plan social media strategy for the summer and fall
  - Make sure you know how to get a table at your student organizations fair

# Resources

---

- Chapter resources, success guides, opportunities, and more can be found on the [Active Minds Chapter Hub](#).
- Looking to chat with a team member from the National Office? Interested in brainstorming? Or maybe you just have a few chapter-specific questions? The Chapters team hosts weekly [office hours](#) where you can learn about chapter success tips, receive answers to questions, work through any challenges you may be facing, and more!
- Don't forget to sign up for Slack so you can chat with student leaders from across the country! Slack is a comprehensive platform that gives you the ability to ask questions, provide ideas, shares successes, and overall build a more cohesive network of Active Minds, mental health advocates, and activists. This platform gives you the space to collaborate on meeting ideas, ask for advice, and network with other student leaders to find creative solutions to chapter-specific questions. [Sign up for Slack](#) and download the app onto your phone and/or computer.